



No. 76A

N° 76A

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 38th Parliament

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

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 15 May 2006

Lundi 15 mai 2006

Speaker
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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



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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 15 May 2006

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 15 mai 2006

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF
UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): Last Saturday my wife, Jane, and I were honoured to be present at the Canadian Federation of University Women, Orillia branch, as they celebrated their 50th anniversary at a gala dinner at beautiful Geneva Park.

CFUW Orillia has provided a valuable service to the Orillia area for the past five decades. As the MPP for Simcoe North, I often meet with CFUW deputations, and they provide me with important feedback on humanitarian and women's issues. Locally, they also fundraise to provide scholarships to young women at our local secondary schools.

The guest speaker on Saturday evening was Ms. Sally Armstrong, an Order of Canada winner, an Amnesty International award winner and a very prominent journalist and author. Ms. Armstrong spoke on the important topic of discrimination against women in Afghanistan.

I'd like to thank CFUW Orillia president Jeanne Page, gala evening chairperson Joan Gordon, regional director Linda MacGregor and CFUW national president Rose Beatty, as well as all of those women who have been a part of the CFUW Orillia for the past 50 years. Their work is truly appreciated, and I wish CFUW Orillia all the best as they begin the next 50 years of their existence.

NURSES

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce): Last Friday, I had the opportunity to participate in Take Your MPP to Work Day with a local nurse named Janet Hullah. Janet is from Community Nursing Services. This is the second time I've had the opportunity, and I must say that it is a wonderful chance to see first-hand all of the good work that nurses do on a day-to-day basis.

I also had the chance to see first-hand the services that were provided and meet some of the clients who truly value the services that they receive from their nurses. These clients truly appreciate the visit, and they know they will be treated with care, respect and compassion.

Nurses are a very important part of our health care system. I encourage everyone to spend a few hours in their shoes to truly appreciate and understand the dedication and excellent service that they bring to their jobs. The enhanced funding of \$714,900 to the Huron CCAC and \$1,928,700 to the Grey-Bruce CCAC will go a long way in meeting the needs of the people from my riding of Huron-Bruce.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo): I recently had the privilege of meeting with a number of long-term-care providers my community. They expressed grave concern that they cannot meet the increasingly complex care needs of the residents they serve, many of whom are recent discharges from hospital. They cannot do so without an immediate injection of new dollars to increase staffing levels. They cannot meet the nutritional needs of the residents on \$5.34 per day, nor can they adequately meet the feeding needs of the residents without more staff available to assist this increasingly frail population. They expressed very legitimate concerns about how they could pay their utility bills from an accommodation envelope that hasn't seen relevant adjustments in years. These homes need the funds that were promised and committed by the McGuinty government in the last election. They need the additional \$4,000 per resident to provide an additional 20 more minutes of care.

I would say to this government: Listen to the frail and vulnerable population. Remember that these people deserve dignity. They deserve to be fed, bathed and toileted within appropriate guidelines and with compassion and care.

I urge the Liberal government to immediately fulfill your election promises to provide more funding—\$4,000 for 20 minutes of additional care. Show the residents that you do care.

LANSDOWNE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Mr. Dave Levac (Brant): I appreciate the opportunity to address an issue today that I was very fortunate to attend on Friday, which was the announcement for our children's treatment centres. On Friday at the local Lansdowne Children's Centre, we made a funding announcement that is going to be extremely valuable to our treatment centre there. Lansdowne Children's Centre is

very innovative. The executive director, who just left for Peterborough—and that's their gain and our loss—Diane Pick, has been a very creative instrument there for our children with special needs. They work very well with both school boards—\$240,000 to knock 150 more children off the waiting list to have these services to prepare them for school. More importantly—

Interjection.

Mr. Levac: And in St. Catharines as well. But more importantly, this is another one of those commitments that we had made as a government to ensure that the children who most need those services receive them. All three groups that were outside of my announcement heaped praise on the government and showed appreciation of the hard work of all the partners—the Rotary Club, the private sector, the personal donations that individuals make, the parents of those children, the school boards of those children. More importantly, at the end of the story, a parent stood up and said how wonderfully Lansdowne Children's Centre treated their child, who can now attend school for the first time since he was born.

This is a great announcement for us across the province. I thank Lansdowne Children's Centre for the services they provide.

1340

TOURISM

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): I rise today to raise concerns about the McGuinty government's failure to recognize the contribution that tourism can make to the economy of this province as well as to the small municipalities in areas such as my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Tourism in our area is still recovering from the effects of SARS, and more recently is facing challenges from the rising value of the Canadian dollar. Visitors to our region are down significantly, and more needs to be done to assist tourism operators in attracting visitors, not just to Toronto but to outlying areas as well.

Where are the initiatives that promote our rural and northern communities? Likely you won't find them, because this government has seen fit to slash the tourism budget.

Hotels and resorts are telling me that bookings are down significantly. Eva Dwyer of Winnetou Resort reported that five or six years ago they were 80% booked in March. Now they are lucky to be 10% booked, with shorter stays being the norm. US visitors are down significantly.

Cochrane is a perfect example of a community that could benefit from a tourism partnership with the province. The Polar Bear Habitat there is a world-class attraction, yet they only have \$20,000 for advertising.

While tourism agencies like Muskoka Tourism and Georgian Bay Country are doing their best to attract visitors to Parry Sound–Muskoka, the province must partner to help their efforts. Effective partnerships

between the government and tourism operators can yield great benefits for the province, for business and for municipalities. Yet this government has seen fit to cut the tourism budget by \$100 million in the 2006 provincial budget.

ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): I want to raise for the members, but specifically for the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Premier, what people are having to go through, not only in my constituency but I'm sure it's happening everywhere else in Ontario.

I had the opportunity, like all of you, to go back to the constituency on Friday last week and meet with constituents; in this particular case, with Melanie. Here is a young woman, 30-some years old, who has had her life in control, has always been very good at being able to provide for herself, a good career, everything going the right way. All of a sudden she is struck with a mental illness in regards to depression and now finds herself in a situation of not being able to work.

What is frustrating her—and, I would argue, what frustrates me and others—is that she needs to get on to ODSP, the Ontario disability support program, but it takes eight to 10 months to be approved or rejected once a person has applied to the program. In that whole time, she is doing without. She has had to move in with her mother—she doesn't get the money she would normally get for room and board—and is surviving on \$200 a month.

I can tell you, talking to that young woman on Friday, that it is clear to me, as it is to everybody else, that that situation is causing her more stress than she needs at this particular point in her life. We need to get the government to respond to this issue and to make sure that ODSP application is done quicker so that people can get the decision they need and we provide proper supports in the meantime. It's unbelievable that the government allows this to happen.

CERTIFIED MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANTS

Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre): It's indeed a pleasure to rise in this House and offer a warm welcome to representatives from the Certified Management Accountants of Ontario, who are with us in the Legislature today.

The CMAs are here for two reasons. The first is to learn more about the priorities of the provincial government and the roles that are played by elected officials from all parties, political staff and civil servants in achieving them. The second is to update us all, as public policy-makers, on some of the major issues affecting the management accounting profession in Ontario and across Canada at this time.

It might interest members to know that the CMA profession boasts more than 20,000 members throughout the province and 47,000 members across Canada and internationally.

As accomplished financial professionals, certified management accountants provide valuable business advice and leadership to organizations of all sizes in every sector of the Ontario economy. They are found in all areas of the broader public sector, including the Ontario public service and even among the Ontario cabinet and federal members of Parliament.

We owe the CMAs a debt of gratitude for the contribution they are making to rigorous new standards for public accounting in Ontario. It is much appreciated.

Finally, a number of CMA's from ridings across Ontario are here today to let us know how they are making a difference in our communities. I encourage each and every member of this House to attend the reception that CMA Ontario is hosting this evening here in the legislative dining room from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

ED LUMLEY

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh): My riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh has been home to many prominent Canadians, from Ontario's first Premier to brilliant actors, sports figures and incredible community activists. The dedication, talent and spirit of these individuals have been recognized in many ways, and recently another outstanding individual has been honoured: Ed Lumley, former Cornwall mayor and former Stormont-Dundas MP and federal cabinet minister, has been named chancellor of the University of Windsor, his former alma mater.

Although Windsor was his hometown, Ed has called Lancaster, in the eastern part of my riding, home for some time now. Since moving to the region, he has dedicated himself fully to the community, both through public service as an elected official and through other means, such as his recent participation in the Cornwall Community Hospital fundraising campaign. Former Prime Ministers Pierre Trudeau and John Turner both saw the benefits in harnessing his abilities as minister for several portfolios.

Ed's tireless community involvement has previously been recognized locally when Cornwall named its premier sports arena after him. It is gratifying to all from my riding to see this well-deserving individual recognized in his hometown as well. No doubt those graduating students who will receive their diplomas from him will tell that story for decades to come.

On behalf of all my constituents, I congratulate Mr. Lumley on being named chancellor of the University of Windsor, wish him well in all future endeavours and thank him for his tireless commitment to the people of my riding.

CYSTIC FIBROSIS

Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex): May 1 marked the beginning of Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month. Cystic Fibrosis is the leading genetic cause of death in Canadian children, and the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has been at the forefront of the fight to cure CF for the last 40 years.

The foundation is a Canada-wide health charity, with more than 50 volunteer chapters, that funds vital CF research and care. Its mandate is to help individuals with CF, principally by funding CF research and by supporting high-quality clinical and transplant care. As one of the world's largest non-governmental granting agencies in the field of CF research, the foundation supports more than 45 top-ranking research projects in 2006.

Research funded by the foundation is exploring all aspects of the CF puzzle, from investigating new methods of fighting infection and inflammation in the lungs to finding new approaches in CF therapy that correct the basic genetic defect of CF.

With the aid of funding from the foundation, CF researchers working at institutions across Canada and right here in Ontario have achieved many milestones on the road to a cure for CF. Canadian researchers are viewed as leaders in the global effort to find a cure and effective control for the disease.

I'm pleased to welcome today to the members' gallery from the foundation Paul Arsenault, who's the vice-president of the board of directors, and Kelly Gorman, the manager of social action.

Finally, I'd like to invite all members to join my colleagues from Beaches–East York, Whitby–Ajax and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care tonight for an all-party CF reception in committee room 230, from 5:30 to 7. The theme of tonight's reception is the role of newborn screening in the diagnosis and treatment of cystic fibrosis.

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would ask for unanimous consent for members to be able to wear the CF pin for the month of May.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): The member has asked for unanimous consent to wear the CF pin for the month of May. Agreed? Agreed.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill): I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman): Mr. Racco from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly presents the committee's report as follows and moves its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 41, An Act to create a comprehensive system of rules for the transfer of securities that is consistent with such rules across North America and to make consequential amendments to various Acts / *Projet de loi 41, Loi instituant un régime global de règles régissant le transfert des valeurs mobilières qui cadre avec celui qui s'applique dans ce domaine en Amérique du Nord et apportant des modifications corrélatives à diverses lois.*

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

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

BIRTH OF MEMBER'S GRANDCHILD

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Yesterday was Mother's Day, and to mark that day my daughter-in-law, Angela, gave birth to our ninth grandchild. It was her first baby, and so as a new mom, it was a great day to have a baby. The baby's name is René Van Bommel III. René Jr. is the proud new father of this eight-pound, 12-ounce boy, and René Sr., Darlene James and I are the absolutely ecstatic grandparents

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): That, of course, is not a point of order, but maybe a point of shower.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, May 15, 2006, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion 140. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1351 to 1356.

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

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Fonseca, Peter	Patten, Richard
Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve
Balkissoon, Bas	Hardeman, Ernie	Phillips, Gerry
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bentley, Christopher	Jackson, Cameron	Racco, Mario G.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Klees, Frank	Ramal, Khalil
Boutrogrianni, Marie	Levac, Dave	Rinaldi, Lou
Bradley, James J.	Marsales, Judy	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Matthews, Deborah	Smith, Monique
Brownell, Jim	Mauro, Bill	Smitherman, George

Cansfield, Donna H.	McMeekin, Ted	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Caplan, David	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Chudleigh, Ted	Miller, Norm	Wilkinson, John
Colle, Mike	Milloy, John	Witmer, Elizabeth
Cordiano, Joseph	Mitchell, Carol	Wong, Tony C.
Dhillon, Vic	Munro, Julia	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	O'Toole, John	Zimmer, David
Dunlop, Garfield	Parsons, Ernie	

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

Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 56; the nays are 5.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): It is an honour and a pleasure to rise in the House today and share good news with the people of Ontario.

What a difference two and a half years make. Since we took office in October 2003, we have seen an unprecedented \$7 billion of new investment in the auto sector.

When we formed this government, we wanted to take a targeted approach to investing in our province's anchor industry. We wanted a plan that would bring new investment and keep jobs in Ontario, create new opportunities for Ontarians and their families and make Ontario a global leader of innovation in the industry, and that's what we've done. We created our Ontario automotive investment strategy to do just that.

Today, I am proud to say that we have delivered on our commitment once again. On Friday the Premier and I, along with members who are tireless advocates for their communities, Mrs. Sandals, John Wilkinson and John Milloy, made an important announcement. Linamar Corp. announced that it is investing \$1.1 billion at its Ontario-based operations and it is creating 3,000 jobs over the next five years—high-paying, high-value jobs; the kinds of jobs that Ontarians want and deserve.

This Guelph-based company is a remarkable success story. In less than 40 years it has grown from a single operation to 34 plants around the world, 22 of them right in the Guelph area. What a show of confidence in our province and our workers.

Linamar has an ambitious growth strategy. It plans to develop, adapt and commercialize state-of-the-art machining, manufacturing and environmental technologies in automotive powertrain systems. What this means

is that the next generation of auto parts will be designed, developed and built right here in Ontario. That's why our government has joined in partnership with Linamar. Our \$44.5 million of investment will help Linamar upgrade the skills of both its current workers and new hires, and establish a technology centre in Guelph. This will ensure that through apprenticeship programs, Linamar will have access to a steady pipeline of skilled workers now and in the future.

This is the latest announcement stemming from a strategy that focuses on targeted investment, on securing high-value jobs for thousands of workers and their families. But this is about more than just one more auto investment in Ontario. This is another signal that our industry is gaining great momentum. This proves again that Ontario is the best place in the world to do business. After all, we are, for the second year running, the leading auto manufacturing jurisdiction in North America.

Today I want to congratulate and thank the hard-working families of Ontario who have made this dream a reality. It is they who deserve the credit, and it's Ontario families who rely on the auto sector who benefit from these great new investments.

I would like to remind the members of what has taken place in Ontario's most important industry. Our auto investment plans have leveraged nearly \$7 billion in new automotive investments in the province. Specifically, our \$500-million automotive investment strategy has leveraged more than \$5.4 billion in new investments at Ford, General Motors, DaimlerChrysler, and parts makers Nemaq and Linamar. And we've attracted another \$1.3 billion, including the new Toyota plant in Woodstock and through the Navistar investments in Chatham and Windsor. This is good news, not just for the communities that benefit from the investments but also for all of Ontario. We understand that a strong auto industry means a strong Ontario.

Once again I say, what a difference two and a half years can make. I look forward to standing in this House again with more good news about good jobs and investment in our province, because it's investments like these that bring greater opportunities for Ontarians and their families. That is a commitment we are proud to deliver on today.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services): Helping Ontario's children to achieve their full potential is a key priority for our government. It is our goal to help provide Ontario's children with the support and opportunities they need to ensure that their abilities overshadow the challenge of their disabilities.

Ontario's children's treatment centres, located across the province, play an essential role in helping us to achieve our goal for children and youth with special needs. These centres are community-based organizations that serve approximately 40,000 children and youth with physical disabilities and multiple special needs every

year. They range in size and scope, but each provides physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech-language therapy as core services. Children's treatment centres serve children and youth who have disabilities, including but not limited to cerebral palsy, brain injuries, developmental or learning difficulties, Down's syndrome, spina bifida, autism or pervasive developmental disorder, and chronic and/or long-term medical conditions.

Last Friday, I was pleased to announce that, as part of our government's ongoing commitment to children and youth with special needs, we are providing Ontario's children's treatment centres with \$10 million in additional annualized funding. This represents a 17% increase over 2005-06. With this investment, our children's treatment centres will be able to serve almost 4,800 more children and youth with special needs, starting this year. Through this new funding, we are providing more services and making them more accessible, better coordinated and more responsive to the needs of children, youth and their families. This is great news for communities. This is great news for the people who work at children's treatment centres with such compassion and diligence, and most importantly, this is great news for children and youth with special needs and their families.

Our government is committed to helping families whose children have special needs. Last Friday's announcement is one of the many ways our government is helping children and youth with special needs and their families. Our government has now invested more than \$120 million in new funding since 2003-04 for services that are making a difference for young people with special needs across the province. Since 2003-04 we have also more than doubled spending on autism-related services, providing supports for more children with autism as well as more supports for teachers, more therapists and more coordinators. We have also increased annualized funding for mental health services for children and youth by \$38 million.

In partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, we have launched Akwe:go, a program that provides aboriginal children and youth, through 27 centres across the province, with the tools, supports and activities needed to help them make healthy choices. We have officially opened One Kids Place, a new children's treatment centre in North Bay. And we have announced a new children's treatment centre for Simcoe county and York region, so children and youth with special needs in that region can access services closer to home.

Our government is working hard on many fronts to make a real difference for our province's most vulnerable children and youth.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

ÉDUCATION POSTSECONDAIRE

Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): Ontario's most valuable economic resource is our people, and we are fortunate to

have some of the most highly skilled and educated people in the world. It is a legacy of our strong and affordable education system. If Ontario is to remain globally competitive, our continuing prosperity depends on quality and accessible post-secondary education. Our goal is to ensure today's students have access to a high-quality, relevant post-secondary education experience and that our institutions can keep pace with the needs of future generations of students.

Notre population étudiante et toute la population de l'Ontario méritent la meilleure éducation postsecondaire possible au Canada. Notre gouvernement s'est donné comme but de la leur offrir.

Today, I'm pleased to announce that our government is taking the next step to ensure students will have the best education we can offer, including education on civility in public places, and that taxpayers will see results for their investment. We have enshrined the link between quality and post-secondary education in law through legislation that establishes the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. This independent body will ensure continued improvement of the post-secondary education system by monitoring quality in the sector, access to post-secondary education and the accountability of colleges and universities.

1410

I'm pleased to appoint the Honourable Frank Iacobucci as chair of this important body. Mr. Iacobucci is a former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and, last year, was interim president of the University of Toronto. In addition, he has served as Deputy Minister of Justice, Deputy Attorney General of Canada and also Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Canada.

With his extremely distinguished and varied background, Mr. Iacobucci is eminently prepared to take on this important challenge. He will establish our Higher Education Quality Council as the arbiter of quality in our post-secondary education system.

A key part of the council's role will be to monitor and report on performance measurement and guide the post-secondary education system towards improved quality. It will also monitor and make recommendations on the student access guarantee.

The council will undertake research on quality, participation and access and advise government on the best way to measure performance and institutional collaboration. The council will also provide enhanced transparency and accountability in the sector through regular public reports on the results that are flowing from the government's investment.

I look forward to working with Mr. Iacobucci as he helps us reach our goals by guiding quality improvements at Ontario's colleges and universities.

By ensuring a quality post-secondary education system, the government is supporting its goals for strong economic growth now and in the future. Our government believes it is not good enough to just stay the course on education quality, but that Ontario's institutions must strive to be the best in Canada.

Investing in people makes our country stronger. Training and education gives people opportunity and hope and can give young people, including those who are presently excluded, the skills and confidence to contribute and succeed in our growing economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Responses?

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton): I'd remind the government that Ontario needs announcements like this one at a pace of one per week for the next six months to offset the economic carnage of last fall and winter, when 80,000 manufacturing jobs were lost in Ontario.

I also remind the minister that these jobs are coming on stream over the next five years. People at Imperial Tobacco who lost their jobs and people at ABB in Guelph who lost their jobs have to be pretty patient over the next five years to wait for these jobs to come on stream.

This announcement also doesn't help the people of Collingwood, where Goodyear Tire, Kaufman Furniture, Nacan Starch, Bluewater Pottery and Backyard Products all shut down over the last six months—and that was just in Collingwood. Your government has yet to do one thing in that area to help some of the 80,000 families affected by layoffs and shutdowns across Ontario. You've been asked to meet with the mayor and the town council of Collingwood to talk about developing a plan for the future, and you haven't even done that.

This announcement could be a start, but you need at least one a week for the next six months to make up for the carnage that your economic policies have brought to this province since you've been in office.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): My comments are in response to the announcement made by the Minister of Children and Youth Services. When we're looking at this announcement, we need to be clear about just how old some of these announcements are, particularly, in my own case, the question of the announcement for a new children's treatment centre for Simcoe county and York region. I participated with other members in that announcement 18 months ago. While obviously it was appreciated that this government chose to go forward with a plan that had been worked out by the previous government, nevertheless I think we need to understand that it is something that was announced 18 months ago.

In looking at the amount of money that is suggested today in this announcement for children's treatment centres, I think we should see it as a down payment. The minister herself in her remarks suggests that this will help almost 4,800 more children and youth, starting this year, but we need to put that in the context that as of March 31, 2005, there were almost 10,000 children waiting. So this is a down payment.

What we're seeing here is that this money goes towards helping fewer than half the number of children

who are actually on waiting lists. It's disappointing too in the fact that various institutions, like Erinoak, which frankly are bursting at the seams, need some specific money to look at the way in which they might be able to continue to serve the needs of their community as well.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): I want to commend the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities for his announcement and his selection. I am quite familiar with Frank Iacobucci's resumé; it's a very impressive one. As someone who has been involved in the justice issue, I can attest he has done a great job.

Minister, you have begun accountability agreements with our colleges and universities similar to the ones that have been put in place for hospitals. I notice that you indicate in your statement transparency and accountability responsibilities for this new office.

The other MUSH sector transfers do not have this quality assurance kind of oversight, so I'm not sure if you are trying to insulate yourself from some of the difficult decisions they may have to make, or if you truly believe that the academic transfer agencies can be that much more independent of the arm's reach of a minister. We will watch with interest to see how that evolves.

Some of the early reports we are getting from universities and colleges are that the staff-to-student ratio is not moving and that the monies you have given are still dead last in Canada in terms of provincial participation. We would hope that we are actually getting new hires, and I'm pleased that—

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

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): On behalf of New Democrats, I think about those thousands of workers who have lost their jobs in the automotive sector over the last two and a half years. When the minister says, "Look what two and a half years gets us," tell that to the people of Oshawa, Oakville, Windsor, St. Catharines and, soon, St. Thomas.

This particular announcement is one that I'm sure everybody is happy about and wants to have happen, but we can't lose sight of where we have been up to now; that is, that we have had net job losses directly in the automotive sector since this government has come to office. Today, we have yet again the Dalton McGuinty government doing another sort of pre-election announcement in preparation for what will be the fall election of 2007.

I say to the government across the way that your record will be one that you are going to have to run on, and in those communities where thousands of auto workers have lost their jobs because of this government's inaction, that will not bode well for you in the next election. That is not to even talk about what's going on in the automotive parts sector, which has been equally affected by this particular downturn in the industry.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina): I want to say that the appointment of Mr. Iacobucci to the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario is a good one. I have the highest regard for Mr. Iacobucci, and so what I'm about to say does not detract from what I'm about to criticize the minister on, and that is the following. I believe we should be measuring the quality of our post-secondary education. How we do it and what we're going to measure is the key. I would like Mr. Iacobucci to measure this:

(1) We have about \$1.4 billion worth of maintenance projects that need to happen quickly. They haven't happened in a long, long time, and I wonder whether Mr. Iacobucci is going to measure the quality of the state of repair of our buildings and comment on that.

(2) We have high class sizes in our post-secondary system, which are affecting the quality of the education our students are getting. I wonder if Mr. Iacobucci is going to measure, by way of his research, the effect of high class sizes on the quality of our educational system.

(3) I wonder whether Mr. Iacobucci, in his mandate, is going to be able to measure the effect that high tuition fees students are paying—the previous government increased them, and this minister is doing the same by an incredible increase to post-graduate students—has on the social and economic lives of those students and on the social and economic impact it has on our life in general.

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(4) The Ombudsman is independent. He or she reports to the Legislature. Mr. Iacobucci is not going to be reporting to the Legislature; he will be reporting to the minister. As such, there is a different kind of reporting that is not, in my view, the independence we were looking for as it relates to the Ombudsman. When we have that kind of reporting, then we can seriously say that that is independence.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York): In response to the Minister of Children and Youth Services: If anyone is to be commended today, it is the Ontario Association of Children's Rehabilitation Services and their CEO, Vicky Earle, because it is that group that has pressured this government consistently for the last two years, up to the announcement of today. They have worked extremely hard to ensure that this government understands what is needed for the children of Ontario, particularly those children who are in special needs.

Madam Minister, we know what the statistics are and we have been provided those by Vicky Earle. In 2005 there were 9,086 children who were on the waiting list. They waited an average of 31 weeks in order to get services in Ontario. That is up 25% since the time that you took office in 2004, when the waiting list was only 24 weeks. They have also advised us that this has been a crisis of which they have informed you throughout your

mandate. They have told you that they need \$14 million, and today you've given them \$10 million. They have told you that with \$14 million, they could decrease the waiting list to 12 weeks. They're not going to get anywhere near that with the money you have provided.

These are our children. The average age is four and a half years. Those are the children who are most in need. They are most in need because, as they get the service, they will be able to develop as fast as only young children can learn and take advantage that fast. We know that what you have done today is something good, but it's not enough. We want to know why the government waited so long. Why did it take you three years to get it only half right? There is so much more that needs to be done. Please do it.

DONALD DOUCET

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to speak up to five minutes to recognize a fallen police officer.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Agreed? Agreed. The member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. David Oraziotti (Sault Ste. Marie): It is with great sadness that I rise in the House today on behalf of the government and the Legislature to honour senior Constable Don Doucet and offer our sincerest condolences to the Doucet family, as they have lost a loving husband and father. We deeply regret that the 41-year-old Sault Ste. Marie police officer was killed in the line of duty yesterday, May 14, at approximately 2:40 a.m. Don was a 12-year veteran of the Sault Ste. Marie police force.

This is the first time since the force was formed in 1860 that an officer has given his life in the line of duty. This tragic loss has caused tremendous sadness in my community and indeed the province. We have lost an officer who truly loved his job and dedicated his life to the service of others.

Constable Doucet was promoted to detective but chose to continue his work as a patrolling officer. Constable Doucet was an exemplary role model to his colleagues and was chosen as one of the few training officers in the Sault Ste. Marie police force, acting as a mentor to new officers for the first three months of their job. He took great pride in working on the streets of our community, helping out his neighbours and working side by side with his colleagues.

This didn't stop when he took off his badge. His neighbours spoke fondly yesterday of a man who kept their streets safe even when he was off duty. They recalled an incident where Don had caught a couple of youths who had stolen Christmas decorations. The constable walked the kids back to the house from which they had taken the lights and made them apologize directly and take responsibility for their actions. He didn't have to involve himself in that situation. He wasn't on duty and

they weren't his children, but he believed in a notion that is too often ignored in our hectic, fast-paced society: community. The word is thrown around a lot, but it involves more than just a membership by default of where one lives. It's an active process that involves forging relationships and looking out for everyone, young and old alike, and vulnerable as well. Those kids learned a lesson that day because Constable Doucet understood that. It's an important part of his legacy.

His community involvement also went well beyond his own street. Constable Doucet involved himself in many charitable activities in the community. On behalf of the police force, he helped organize a successful cancer fundraiser. He volunteered his time to participate in numerous charitable sporting events with the Sault Ste. Marie police force. He played in a charitable match between the police and the OHL's Soo Greyhounds, and he participated in basketball fundraisers against local teachers.

It is a testament to his involvement in Sault Ste. Marie that there has been a tremendous outpouring of grief by our community leaders. Our city's police chief, Robert Davies, said, "The men and women of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service are deeply saddened with the tragic loss of one of our own members who died while serving the citizens of Sault Ste. Marie.

"We extend our thoughts and sympathies to Constable Don Doucet's wife, Debbie, and children, Jocelyne and Courtney. Constable Doucet is the first officer in the history of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service to be killed on duty."

Our city's mayor, John Rowswell, said, "On behalf of the citizens of Sault Ste. Marie I would like to express our condolences to the Doucet family in their loss of a very special person. The men and women of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service patrol our streets day and night with the intent of keeping us safe and out of harm's way. Actions of others can result in an officer not coming home at the end of the shift, and their family and co-workers suffer the loss of someone dear to them. This is what happened last night."

Police officers, as we all know, are special individuals who, in the routine of their day-to-day work, put themselves in harm's way to serve and protect all of us so that we can enjoy the rights and privileges we too often take for granted. In a day and age when our access to information through media inundates us with lawlessness and conflict in many parts of the world, we are reminded of the vital role our police officers fulfill in our towns and cities throughout Ontario.

Everyone expects that when their husband or wife or son or daughter goes to work, they'll come home, but this tragic event is a stark reminder of the many dangers faced by police officers each day in serving all of us.

It is within the Doucet home that Constable Doucet's loss will be felt the deepest. There, he was known as Dad to his daughters Jocelyne and Courtney, and husband to his wife, Debbie. Their immeasurable sorrow cannot possibly be consoled by any words said today, so all I

can humbly offer on behalf of this Legislature is our sincere gratitude for their husband's and father's selfless commitment to his job and to his community.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): On behalf of our leader, John Tory, I am pleased and honoured to be able to stand here today and pay tribute to the life of Senior Constable Donald Doucet of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service. Although I never had the opportunity to become acquainted with Donald, I understand that he was in fact a very dedicated and devoted patrol officer.

As the first Sault Ste. Marie officer ever to lose his or her life in the line of duty, Senior Constable Doucet was a passenger in a patrol car when the car collided with a minivan early on Sunday morning.

Out of his 12 years with the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service, Donald Doucet spent 11 years on patrol. He did in fact try detective work for one year, but quickly asked to be put back on patrol.

Earlier today, I had a phone conversation with Chief Bob Davies of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service. I wanted to pass on our condolences and to ask him what kind of man Donald Doucet was. Chief Davies summed it up in four words: "Donald Doucet loved life."

He loved his wife, Debbie, and their two beautiful daughters Jocelyne, 19, and Courtney, 16. He loved working with his fellow officers, and he loved to go to work. He loved working on community programs such as the Canadian Cancer Society fundraiser Clip a Cop, charity basketball games, and the charity hockey games, where he would take part in hockey games where the police service and members of the OHL Soo Greyhounds would participate. He loved outdoor activities and was an avid golfer. Yes, Mr. Speaker, he loved life.

Once again, a police officer has given his life in the line of duty. Last week at this time, we paid tribute to Senior Constable John Atkinson of the Windsor Police Service, who was brutally murdered, and today to Donald Doucet of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service, who died as a result of an impaired driver. These two police services are over 1,000 kilometres apart, and all Ontarians must stop and reflect upon the lives of police officers. Each and every day, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, the men and women of our police services put their lives on the line so that all Ontarians can live in a safe and secure environment. We thank them for that service.

Again, on behalf of John Tory and our PC caucus, and in fact on behalf of all Ontarians, we send our deepest regrets to the Doucet family and to all the members of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service.

1430

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): Today is another very sad day. It is always sad when someone who works in the public service loses their life. It is always sad when this happens in the line of duty. It is always sad when someone who gives so much to the community is, in a split second, taken from the community, taken from their colleagues, and in this case taken from their family.

I think what everyone would recognize in this incident is how senseless it is: a police officer riding in a cruiser, doing the routine work, and in a matter of seconds something beyond their control, something beyond their capacity to prevent, and that police officer is no longer with us.

This is a terrible price that police services and other emergency services pay. It reminds us once again of our responsibility and our duty to do all that we can, and to do a better job to ensure that this doesn't happen, or that it happens certainly less often than it now seems to be happening.

On behalf of New Democrats, we extend our condolences to the children of officer Doucet—his daughter Jocelyne, his daughter Courtney—and of course to his wife, Debbie.

By all accounts, he was not only an excellent police officer, but he was a first-rate member of the community, someone that I'm sure everyone in Sault Ste. Marie was proud of and that we would be proud of.

This is a very sad day for Sault Ste. Marie, a very sad day for the community and, as I say, a very sad day for the colleagues of Officer Doucet.

We send our condolences, but we must all recognize that we need to do a better job here, that we need to do a better job across Ontario to ensure that senseless things like this happen far less frequently.

The Speaker: I ask that all members and guests please rise with me to observe a moment of silence for Senior Constable Don Doucet.

The House observed a moment's silence.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): My question is for the Minister of Health. In this morning's Toronto Star you have been quoted as planning to review delisted OHIP services. This is certainly a conversion, since it was your Premier and your government that delisted three key health care services—chiropractic, physiotherapy and eye exams—in the 2004 budget, while at the same time asking Ontarians to pay about \$2.5 billion more in health taxes.

I ask you today, Minister, as you do this review, will you commit that eye exams will be a top priority for renewed OHIP coverage, since we all know that this is preventative health care and that for many Ontarians an eye exam can prevent serious eye disease and also blindness?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): The honourable member, having read the story in today's paper, will know the answer to the question.

There was an opportunity for us to reconsider a list of decisions that the cabinet took, while she was serving as

Minister of Health, to delist a variety of OHIP-funded services. Upon reflection, and the Ombudsman has been doing some work in this area, it seemed that one of those items that was delisted was a prosthesis, testicles for boys who lose those due to cancer. It was felt, based on the medical judgment, that the psychological benefit of having these prostheses available as an OHIP-funded service was appropriate for reconsideration. Accordingly, I've indicated in the paper today that the government will be moving forward to relist those services for those young boys in Ontario who, according to their medical assistants, require them. That will be the limit of the reconsideration at this time.

Mrs. Witmer: There are hundreds and thousands of people who have expressed concern about your massive \$2.5-billion tax increase and the delisting of those three key services: eye exams, physiotherapy and chiropractic, so I would ask you again: Knowing that about 1.2 million people benefited from chiropractic services, will you commit that you will consider for OHIP reinstatement coverage so that people can remain active and functional?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: As a matter of course, we have a circumstance which compounds the challenge, and that is the Conservative Party position on the issue of health care funding. The honourable member likes to stand in her place and talk down the reality that the health care system in Ontario has been given the benefit of additional resource from the people of Ontario. It's her party's strategy to cut health care spending by \$2.5 billion a year. The honourable member or her leader has yet to reconcile the circumstance where on the one hand they come to the Legislature every day asking for additional spending, and then on the other hand they say that they'll be cutting health care spending by \$2.5 billion.

I take the honourable member's point. Of course we look for all opportunities to be able to expand health care services in Ontario. That's why we funded 49 new community health centres and 30 residential hospices, just as two examples of the new health care services that are coming to life to support important community priorities.

Mrs. Witmer: The minister knows full well that we are not going to be cutting health services and should desist from lying.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Order. I need to be able to hear the member ask her final supplementary.

Mrs. Witmer: The member opposite knows full well that you had almost a \$3-billion surplus in your last budget. You easily could have eliminated the health tax yourself. You just didn't want to balance your budget. You don't care about people in the province of Ontario who have to pay the interest costs.

I say to you again that you hurt a lot of people—seniors, hard-working families, people on fixed income—when you delisted those services; you hurt people who can't get physiotherapy services, who don't have

day-to-day mobility or who are unable to manage their chronic pain. I ask you today, Minister, will you be on the side of the hard-working people in Ontario and will you reinstate coverage for physiotherapy services?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: I think that anyone listening in to that honourable member, with the role that she played in the previous government, would take with a grain of salt any suggestion about what they might or might not do.

We are all very much aware of, hardened and seasoned by, a very famous quote from that party while in government: "It is not our plan to close hospitals." Yet the circumstances for 28 Ontario communities have become rather clear, with the tremendous reductions in health care services that are occurring there. Through the work that—

Mrs. Witmer: It wasn't your plan to raise taxes either.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: The honourable member heckles, but she has not yet come clean with Ontarians. She has not fessed up. She has not taken accountability for the reality that as a member of the Ernie Eves government she stood, along with all those others, at Magna and pretended that the government of Ontario was in balance when in fact we know the reality was that the government of Ontario was \$5.5 billion in deficit that year. This, of course, is the record of that honourable member and—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

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TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. This Victoria Day weekend, the first long weekend in Ontario, many families will be heading out on their first break from their daily struggles. In fact, you won't be surprised that the tone of the article is anything but praiseworthy of you and your lack of a plan. In fact this is what I found the most telling. It says here, "The driver would not be surprised that you can't get there from here." The reason is, Minister, you simply have no plan for the gridlock that is confronting the people of Ontario. You have no plan, except for a few more photo ops, to ease the gridlock. In fact, your department itself is in gridlock. You know that, and I think that's well explained in the article.

The article goes on to say they are in no better shape today to handle problems with transportation than they were 10 years ago. We know much of the problem in my area—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): The question, I think, has been asked.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation): I want to thank the member for asking this question. What he needs to know is what the previous government did, and that's why we are in this situation.

Our government is making a \$1.2-billion investment in highways every year. But more than that, we are taking a very balanced approach to the congestion issue. We are also investing in public transit. We just announced \$858 million for three projects. In addition to that, we are making an over \$800-million regular investment in public transit.

Our government was the first ever in this province to provide stable funding to the municipalities so that they can address some of their issues. I will be pleased to quote more numbers when the member asks the supplementary.

Mr. O'Toole: Minister, it appears that your plan is looking in the rear-view mirror, looking to when we were government. In fact, much of what you've announced was done when Minister Klees was in charge of that department—the high occupancy vehicle lanes, the subway planning—most of the plans.

In fact, if you want to go through the list that's mentioned here, the completion of 407 east to Highway 35/115 in my riding—where's the plan? The extension of Highway 404 through Keswick, Highway 427 to Highway 400 to Barrie, Highway 410 to Orangeville? In fact, what's really missing here is any plan. You have a lot of quick lines, a lot of photo ops, a lot of numbers you like to quote, but where's the plan? Gridlock is the evidence that you lack a plan. You've got lots of numbers. Most of them are 10 years out. Minister, just tell the people of Ontario what the plan is or get them a roadmap out of town.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: I actually have a lot of respect for Mr. Klees over there, so I'm not going to personally get to him.

I was actually at an announcement at Highway 410 today, and this is what the mayor of Brampton said. She said that 410 was announced three times by the previous government and they did not deliver it. She said that this is the first government ever who not only promised but actually started construction. That is our record, and we are proud of our record.

Mr. O'Toole: I know once again you are looking to Mr. Klees to help you out of a tight situation when you lack a plan.

Going through the article here, the list goes on: the extension of 427 and 410 north, past Lake Simcoe, the 407 eastward. But more importantly, every time, even in the budget, you mention that you're going to fund some \$600 million for transit, and you know yourself that that transit isn't going to be visible or available for 10 years.

Just admit that most of the things that have happened—the HOV lanes happened because our government had a plan. You have no plan. There's nothing on the ground. I would ask you, Minister, to come clean with the people of Ontario and tell them what your plan is after three long years. The traffic's getting worse and there's clear evidence that you have no plan.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: Do you know who needs to come clean? That member. They cut public transit money from \$600 million to zero under their watch. They had the EA

for the 407, which was started in 1994, and they shelved it in 1999. If they had started on the environmental assessment for the 427, we would be building that highway right now.

No government in their own mandate can start the construction of a highway right from scratch and build it in their term. You need to have the EA done, but there was no environmental assessment done. If they had a plan, they should have done something. That is their record, and it stinks. That's why we are in this mess. We are now moving ahead with a balanced approach to address the congestion issues in the GTA and throughout this province.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the Acting Premier. The economic health of Ontario depends on a reliable source of electricity at sustainable and affordable prices. It's been more than six months since the Ontario Power Authority report was released, and yet the McGuinty government refuses to announce its response to that report. My question is, when are you going to respond to the report of the Ontario Power Authority and admit that the McGuinty government's real energy policy is your \$40-billion nuclear power scheme?

Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The Minister of Energy.

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): I thank the member for his question. To the year 2011 we have over 11,000 megawatts of new supply in the ground, ready to go; 3,000 of that is up and going already. So the long-term integrated plan is for beyond that.

I agree with my Premier. This is important. It's a huge issue, and we have to take everything under consideration. Interestingly enough, it was that member who said, "Go out and listen to the people. Talk to them." Now that we have done that, and we are now listening to them and looking at what they had to offer, they're saying, "Don't be bothered with that. It's not important."

It is important to us. We are going to get it right. We're going to take sufficient time in order to do it. This is for post-2011. We want to make sure that we get the right information out to the people in order to put together the right plan to keep the lights on in this province, something they didn't do.

Mr. Hampton: To correct the minister, what I insisted is that you take the Ontario Power Authority supply mix plan and put it to a full environmental assessment, something the McGuinty government refuses to do.

But it's not just the Ontario Power Authority plan that you want to hide away. Over a month ago, Minister, you committed to reviewing the outrageous salary increases given to Hydro One's chief executive officer, Tom Parkinson. You know him; you gave him a \$500,000 bonus, \$1.5 million in pay. And here it is: Despite your

promise, you found the time to raise hydro rates for low- and modest-income Ontarians by 15% and cause them a lot of pain, but still no review of those outrageous pay increases. Minister, will you immediately release your Hydro One Tom Parkinson executive gargantuan salary review?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: If the member actually wants to see what was in Mr. Parkinson's salary compensation, it's quite public and it's quite available. I indicated that what I would do is have a review from the chairs of the compensation committees of all of the organizations. If the member had simply picked up the phone and asked me that question, I would tell him that the review is under way. That's exactly what I committed to do: to have an understanding of how they got to their compensation, for all of the agencies. That's exactly what I am doing. I'm sitting down—as a matter of fact, I have another meeting today

So he didn't have to ask here; he could have just simply picked up the phone and I would have reiterated what I said before: that we would in fact sit down with the chair and the compensation committee and ask them how they came to the conclusions that they have come to.

1450

Mr. Hampton: It was this minister who promised an executive salary review at Hydro One. We now find out that that salary review is nothing but a rubber stamp for the \$500,000 pay increase. Oh, and by the way, it's almost \$900,000 a year that the top-paid person at Ontario Power Generation gets; then there's the almost \$800,000 that Dave Goulding at the Independent Electricity System Operator gets; and, oh yes, Dalton McGuinty's former fundraiser Jan Carr now gets close to \$700,000 at the Ontario Power Authority.

Minister, here's the reality. You're jacking up electricity rates for people who don't have the money to pay. You're driving industrial electricity rates through the roof and killing thousands of manufacturing jobs, particularly in the pulp and paper sector. When are you going to level with the people of Ontario? When are you going to admit that the real energy policy of the McGuinty government is a \$40-billion—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): The question has been asked.

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: I thank the member for his question. Actually, the reality check is that he should just check Hansard. I indicated that I would sit down with the chair and the compensation committee and ask them how they came to their conclusions around the review of their salaries. I did not say that I would do a salary review. So I think he needs to get a statement more accurate than what he has indicated. However, having said that, I am still saying that we are having those discussions, that they're ongoing.

I find it amusing, to say the least, that suddenly, when you're on the other side of the floor, compensation seems to be irrelevant, and yet it was this same gentleman who, when in cabinet, approved very extraordinary expenses for his own CEOs. So I guess what's good for the goose isn't good for the gander.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My next question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. The families of the residents of Ontario's three regional centres for the developmentally disabled are concerned that their family members who currently reside at the three regional centres won't have the community supports they will need after the McGuinty government closes those centres. Can you tell those families, Minister, what is the McGuinty government's minimum standard of training for people who want to house a developmentally disabled person through a government-funded home share program?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for franco-phone affairs): I thank the leader of the third party for his question. I wanted to reassure the leader of the third party that this government is doing everything we can to make sure that those leaving our three institutions will be housed in a very, very secure, comfortable and professional environment. They will have properly trained people working with them.

A week and a half ago, I visited one of the institutions, and have met with those coordinators who work with the institutions and with the community to make sure that they will have the proper place with professionals in place. I was reassured that it is done in a great way and in a very supportive way, with professionals in place to welcome these individuals. As to the training that these people will have, for the supplementary—

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

Interjection.

Mr. Hampton: I don't think the Ministry of Colleges and Universities has anything to do with this. This is about the minimum standards set by the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

This is an ad that was placed in Kingston, an ad for the home share program in Kingston. The ad seeks families to take in severely handicapped people from the regional centres that you're closing. When the people who run this program were contacted and asked what kind of training would be required to take in a severely handicapped person, they replied, "You don't need any experience and you don't need CPR or first aid" training. "You will have access to training but it's not necessary."

My question is this: Is this the McGuinty government's acceptable standard of care for people who are developmentally handicapped and need someone to help look after them?

Hon. Mrs. Meilleur: I wanted to reassure the leader of the third party, the community out there and the parents that this government takes its responsibility very seriously. We are investing almost \$376 million in additional capital and operating funding. A lot of this will be used to make sure that we provide good residential homes for these individuals—and also the community

there and the professionals who will work with them. Also, part of the money we're investing is to give training to those who already work with our people with a developmental disability. We will continue to invest. You know, it's very sad to always hear these questions that will give the impression out there that this government is not taking its responsibility seriously. I was reassured again, last week—

The Speaker: Thank you. Final supplementary.

Mr. Hampton: Minister, I want you to know that the families of the 885 residents in Ontario's three regional centres for the developmentally disabled are very concerned. They're very concerned that when they ask about minimum standards they don't get a response. They asked the same home share program in Kingston some other questions. They asked, "Why does the government prefer home share to group home programs?" They were told, "The first option is always home share simply because it's cheaper. It costs the government \$17,000 to service a disabled client in home share, compared to \$70,000 to place that disabled client in a group home."

Minister, why is the McGuinty government evicting residents of these centres for the developmentally disabled when guarantees for those people and their families are clearly not in place?

Hon. Mrs. Meilleur: First of all, the closure of these three institutions was supported by all governments. The NDP government supported it, the Tory government supported it and we're just continuing to place these people where they should be in the community. The leader of the third party should listen to the parents of those who were placed recently in the community to see how satisfied they are and the great change that they have seen in their loved ones since they have been placed in the community.

Institutions are not the way to look after our people with developmental disabilities. There have been a lot born since we stopped admitting in these three institutions. They have been placed in the community, and that's where they should be. We have professional people, very caring people, who look after them.

NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question today is for the Acting Premier. The situation at Caledonia has been ongoing now for almost three months. Our leader, John Tory, has visited the community at least twice. Toby Barrett, the MPP for Haldimand-Norfolk, is visible at Caledonia on almost a daily basis. I will be visiting Caledonia on Wednesday of this week. The residents of Caledonia have not seen the Premier, they have not seen the Minister of Natural Resources and Aboriginal Affairs and they certainly have not seen the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Acting Premier, officers at Caledonia feel abandoned. The community feels abandoned. In fact, I talked to OPP officers the other day and they said, "We feel like the meat in a sandwich." They feel abandoned by the McGuinty Liberals. Acting Premier, why haven't you, the

Premier and these key cabinet ministers shown your faces in Caledonia?

Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): Speaker, the minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

1500

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): I would ask the members of the Legislature, in a situation like this, to work with us to try to settle this very complex and difficult dispute.

We are putting all our efforts to work with the Caledonia community and the Six Nations community. We have appointed top-flight people to deal with this, as you know, with former Premier David Peterson; Jane Stewart, former MP and cabinet minister in the federal government; and Barbara MacDougall. The two levels of government are working together on this situation. We would ask that all the members of the Legislature support this effort.

Mr. Dunlop: Acting Premier, as the Caledonia situation is prolonged, we now know that on the Victoria Day weekend, as it approaches, approximately 200 OPP officers from across Ontario will be on guard at Caledonia. These officers are needed in their detachments this weekend for such things as impaired and aggressive drivers, crowd discipline at our provincial parks and traffic control on our highways. Certainly Victoria Day weekend historically has been one of the most busy weekends where they require a strong police presence.

As detachments bring in additional officers on overtime, the budgets of the OPP and municipal contracts are soaring out of control. Caledonia is costing the OPP millions of dollars. This is after you have cut \$31.3 million from the field and traffic division of the OPP. Minister and Acting Premier, how do you intend to properly fund the OPP following the Caledonia situation?

Hon. Mr. Ramsay: I know the member is aware that the Solicitor General has addressed this question. He has spoken about the global budget that the OPP receive on an annual basis. He has also explained to members of the House the nature of a provincial police force as vast as the OPP, that basically it is designed to respond to emergencies. That's what a police force is. It does its day-to-day policing but it also has the reserve to respond to emergencies. That's the nature of a province-wide police force that is as great as the OPP. It is well within its capacity to deal with a situation such as this, as complex as it is. They have adequate resources to deal with this.

I would ask the member to have the patience, as we've asked, and as the Premier has asked the people and the community to allow us the time to respond and to solve this dispute.

DISABILITY BENEFITS

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Brian Woods, a citizen of Ontario living in Lindsay, suffers from heart disease and diabetes. He has bleeding holes in his feet. He is nearly blind. He is also on ODSF and struggles very hard to get by on that money. He requires a special diet to manage his diabetes.

But when he has applied for his special diet supplement, your ministry has consistently refused him. It took him a year and a half to go through the entire process to finally, with the Ombudsman's help, gain the money he needs. But a few months later, after he had finally won his case, you and your staff announced that you were cutting his nutritional allowance in half. Minister, this is a very ill man. When are you going to restore his diet supplement, and more importantly, when are you going to stop trying to take it away?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): Let me thank you first of all for the question, because there has been a lot of misinformation given by some people about the special diet allowance.

The special diet allowance was put there for a reason. It's to give a supplement to those who are suffering from a medical situation, a disease, which needs a special diet. We wanted to make sure that everyone who needs a special diet will get it.

We have asked the Ontario Medical Association to help us develop a list of medical conditions which will give these people the supplements they need for their diets. We have a list that we are reviewing, because recently there was a large increase of these requests for special diets, and in the—

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

Mr. Prue: Madam Minister, this is a very ill man. He's so ill that the Ombudsman had to intervene. Mr. Woods went to the Ombudsman, and the Ombudsman came out on his behalf. Not only did he give him the nutrition allowance he needed, but he gave him \$6,500 in arrears that your ministry should have given Mr. Woods all along.

He's not the only one struggling to be heard in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. Last week, before the estimates committee, you admitted that people without children on ODSF are actually worse off today than they were when the McGuinty came to power. I believe that's true.

When are you going to give folks like Brian the supports they need to get by in this very difficult time for them? When are you going to stop cutting the diet allowance? When are you going to start giving people enough money to have adequate meals?

Hon. Mrs. Meilleur: I want to emphasize that this allowance is for people who require a special diet. We are taking action to ensure that the special diet allowance is doing what it was designed to do. This ministry has reviewed the special diet allowance program. We have worked with the Ontario Medical Association to create new application forms that clearly list the medical condition that requires a special diet. These changes will help to keep the program accountable and sustainable, allow-

ing medical professionals to do their jobs and determine medical conditions only. Rest assured that every Ontarian who has a medical condition listed by a professional will receive the special diet allowance.

ASSISTANCE TO ARTISTS

Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): My question is for the Minister of Culture. I want to ask the minister a question related to a promise that was made by the government on the status of the artist. According to Stats Canada in the 2001 census, the average artist in Ontario earns only about \$26,000 per year and the average compensation for employed dancers is \$14,945. According to the Cultural Human Resources Council, base salaries in not-for-profit organizations are well below salaries for similar positions in other not-for-profit sectors and the national average for all.

The government had said, "We will immediately establish a minister's advisory council for arts and culture.... This council will produce a report on the status of the artist ... in the 21st century. This report will be used to develop status of the artist legislation for our artists in Ontario, following the successful lead of Quebec and Saskatchewan...." Minister, what are you doing about this?

Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture): I'd like to thank the member from Ottawa Centre for the interest in the socio-economic status of the artist initiative. The member I know is also a visual artist in his own right.

First of all, artists who create here play an important role in our province. Last week, many members of this House met with actor representatives. One of Canada's leading actors, Sonja Smits, said, "The truth of the matter is that at long last, hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested today into our provincial and cultural institutions, and it's time to do something for the artists and performers who light up those buildings."

This morning, I met with the members of the subcommittee of my advisory council for arts and culture, who have been working on this for over a year. It is our intention to move forward to improve the socio-economic status of the artist, recognize and enhance the labour status of artists, promote artists and their work and enhance artist health and well-being.

Mr. Patten: I'm glad to see that you're moving on this, Minister. I won't tell you what my income is from the sale of some of my paintings this year. But I will say that I have a letter from an artist in my riding who identifies a few specific areas. I'll cite two or three areas, and I wonder if these are things that your advisory committee or your legislation would attempt to deal with:—Opening the doors for training programs for artists who, from time to time, only perform part-time because they need other skills to earn a living, i.e., opportunities for training;

—An opportunity for the protection of children who may be working on a film on what may be a dangerous set. Are you planning on addressing that?

—Another is allowing artists to average their incomes over a number of years for tax purposes, because one year may be good and the next year may be very poor.

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Hon. Ms. Di Cocco: There are many areas that are being looked at. I have at this time an interim report on the socio-economic status of the artist that have dealt with a number of these matters. I'm look forward to a full report.

Again, I'd like to thank all the members of the advisory council and the ministry staff, as well as artists and art organizations, for their work during the consulting process and for providing sound advice.

I'd also like to note that I have heard the concerns of the artists, actors and the arts community. I'm aware of the vulnerable state of artists in Ontario and intend to move forward towards helping to improve the socio-economic status of the artist, as the member has asked in his question. I want to say that my advisory council has held consultations across this province and received 3,600 responses from artists all over this province.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): My question is to the Attorney General. The Canadian Association of Journalists annually bestows the Code of Silence Award to the country's most secretive government department. This year, that dubious prize has been handed to our own Michael Bryant, Ontario's Attorney General, for presiding over a department that, in the words of CAJ president Paul Schneidereit, hides important information "behind outrageous and unjustifiable fees." I want to ask the minister, how does this latest recognition of your department as "the most secretive government body in Canada" fit with your government's promise of democratic renewal, and what will you do to respond to the concerns raised by the CAJ, as symbolized by your most recent distinction?

Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General): I want to thank the member for his question. Indeed, I have apparently been given the Code of Silence Award. I would like to comment on the matter, but I'm afraid it's before the courts.

Mr. Klees: I can understand why he would not want to comment on this distinction. The fact of the matter is that, contrary to the previous government, which implemented fees that were a recovery of costs, this Attorney General is responsible for increasing fees on top of that fee schedule that is referred to as "unconscionable."

That Code of Silence Award was not given to a former Attorney General from a previous government. It was given to this Attorney General. So I ask in a very straightforward way, what is this Attorney General going to do to address the fundamental issue this award represents; that is, that he now has the honour of heading up what has been referred to as the most secretive department of any government in this country?

Hon. Mr. Bryant: Let me start by saying that the men and women who work in the Ministry of the Attorney

General are the most dedicated public servants that anybody could ask to work with, and I want to thank them for the work they do.

Quite seriously I say to the member that I can assure him that there is no cost to retrieve and view files associated with any criminal and family matters. There's no cost for those matters even when staff need to retrieve files from the archives. I can assure the member as well that I am particularly interested in this issue. That is why I struck the first ever Ontario Panel on Justice in the Media, including not only a number of people who work in the justice system but people like Trina McQueen and John Honderich, who have enormous experience, so they can bring whatever concerns there may be to the table. I'm anticipating receipt of their report very soon.

I can assure you that we want to make sure that we have an accountable justice system. I'll continue to work with the dedicated public servants in the Ministry of the Attorney General and will accept the particular award that has been bestowed upon me by the member—

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

AUTISM SERVICES

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. A summary of the autism budget and expenditures shows that in 2003-04, six months under your government, \$80 million was budgeted to be spent: \$2.6 million was diverted to other children's programs; \$1.5 million was diverted to the Ministry of Education and training; \$32 million was returned to the consolidated revenue fund unspent. In 2004-05, \$89 million was proposed to be spent; \$21 million was spent on other children's programs instead of autism.

At the end of 2004-05, there were 399 children who had qualified to receive IBI but were still on a waiting list. There were another 287 who were waiting to be assessed. Can you tell me, when 399 children were sitting on a waiting list for IBI service, how could you have ever transferred \$21 million to other children's programs?

Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services): I'm really happy to have the opportunity to speak about what our government is doing for children and families suffering from ASD. I think it's really important that we look at what we're doing, not just where we have come from, because most people in this Legislature who are prepared to be frank and sincere about this issue would have to acknowledge that we have increased our funding for autism services substantially.

I can give you an illustration of the impact of that: Wait lists for assessments are down by 68%. That means that as soon as a child is assessed, they start to receive a continuum of services that address the needs of the child at their particular stage of development.

I also think it's really important to recognize that the number of kids receiving IBI has increased by —

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

Ms. Martel: Minister, the facts speak for themselves, and this comes from your ministry. At the end of the 2004-05, there were 399 kids sitting on a waiting list for treatment, and instead of giving them treatment, your ministry diverted \$21 million to other children's programs.

Lauren Murray of Dryden, Ontario, who was cut off from the IBI program when she turned six—cut off under your government—has now received a letter from child care services in Sudbury that she could qualify for service as a result of Justice Kitley's decision. There is an IBI therapist in Dryden who is available three days a week to provide IBI service to Lauren Murray. The problem is that child care resources did not have enough money from your ministry to pay for this therapist. This situation is being repeated over and over and over again in every community in Ontario.

Tell the families with children with autism, Minister, how it is that when 399 kids were sitting on a waiting list, you had money to return to the consolidated revenue fund and you had money to spend somewhere else.

Hon. Mrs. Chambers: The member from Nickel Belt is stuck in the past. I would like to have the opportunity, and I thank her for the opportunity, to tell her what's happening in the year 2006-07. For example, every single child is being assessed in a consistent manner on a first-come, first-served basis regardless of age. Let's get the facts up to date: Every single child in this province is being assessed on a consistent basis regardless of age.

We are also building capacity in the system because, obviously, in trying to reach out to care for more children, we need more resources to do that. So we introduced a new college-level program, which started last year. We planned for an enrolment of 100 students in the autism and behavioural analysis program; we have 300 people registered in that program. That's good news for children with autism and their families. We have—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale): My question is for the Minister of Energy. The blackout of August 2003 was an important warning to us all that Ontario needed to review its energy supply strategy. This is no truer than right here in the city of Toronto. In the 1960s, Toronto had half the population and 1,200 megawatts of generation power in the city. Today, we have twice the population and no generation capacity in the city.

1520

The demand for electricity is testing the limits of our energy supply. The residents of Toronto and Willowdale are increasingly aware of the particular challenges faced by the city of Toronto. Conservation is a big part of the solution. Minister, how is our government working with the people of Toronto and Willowdale to create a culture of conservation?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): I'd like to thank the member from Willowdale; he's dead on. Summer is coming and there are things that we need be able to do. One of the things that we're able to do is put forward the peakSAVER program with Toronto Hydro, as an example. There's a commercial side, and what they do is actually switch off, to go to the generators on the commercial side, and they cycle down for air conditioning on the residential side. When I was at the demonstration, within five minutes we had cycled off, cycled down or generated eight megawatts. It will go up to 36 megawatts in a very short period of time. They hope to be able to peak shave off 200 megawatts by 2007.

These are just the kinds of examples that local distribution companies are working on for saving dollars during those high electricity times when they can shave the peak off at the local level. This is something we encourage through the local distribution companies, and Toronto has taken the lead with what they're doing with seven or eight very large commercial institutions.

Mr. Zimmer: Thank you, Minister. The residents of Toronto and Willowdale are willing to do their part to increase conservation efforts, but they need to know that their government is going to do everything necessary to ensure that they have access to a safe, reliable supply of electricity. What is the government doing to ensure that we keep the lights on for the people of Toronto and Willowdale?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: The Independent Electricity System Operator, Ontario Hydro, the Ontario Power Authority and Toronto Hydro indicated that unless we had generation of 250 megawatts over and above conservation, by 2008 the city would be facing rolling blackouts on a regular basis. We have put that plan in place—250 megawatts will be in place by 2008, 550 megawatts by 2010—so the lights will stay on for the people of Toronto; in addition to that, 250 megawatts in conservation and another 300 megawatts in conservation. We know conservation alone won't do it. We've got a combination of conservation and generation.

At the end of the day, the lights will stay on for the people of Toronto. If you recently saw the headline in the *Globe and Mail*, you'll know why. Our climate is changing. Long, hot summers are coming. We need to be prepared, and we will keep those lights on for the people of Toronto and the people of Ontario.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question is again for the Acting Premier. You are aware that we are now holding committee hearings on Bill 56, the Emergency Management Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005.

Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General): Is that where all your members are?

Mr. Dunlop: That's good, from someone who just won a major award.

Acting Premier, last Thursday we listened to deputations. Most of them did not support the bill. A few peo-

ple did support it, but most of the people at the hearings wanted to make a lot of amendments to the legislation. Minister, in particular, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals clearly pointed out that animals have been totally excluded from this legislation and that there should be an emergency plan included on the safety and evacuation of animals. Both Kashechewan and Katrina indicated the need for good emergency plans for animal and animal welfare.

Acting Premier, will you see that the government amendments come forward to include animals in Bill 56?

Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): This government takes committee hearings very seriously, unlike the previous government. Goodness gracious, I had forgotten about the numbers around committee hearings. Why don't we just go over them again? The Tories used time allocation on 102 occasions over eight years. Just to add insult to injury, they did time allocation with no committee hearings at all on 43 major pieces of legislation. Then they did time allocation with no committee and no third reading debate. That is no debate and no committee on 22 major pieces of legislation.

This government is proud of its record of holding hearings. We are holding hearings on virtually every piece of major legislation. We listen carefully to what the people have to say in committee. We amend bills after committee, unlike the previous government.

This government is making this Legislature work on this issue and many others. The days of no debate are gone; they're—

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

Mr. Dunlop: Acting Premier, that's just about the most pathetic answer I've ever heard anybody from that side of the House make. That is pathetic.

Acting Premier, in case of a major emergency, when people need to be evacuated, they quite often refuse to go and leave their pets alone. You are already refusing to act on the Grant Thornton report recommendations on the future of the OSPCA. The OSPCA is receiving only \$119,000 in funding from the province, in spite of increased numbers, in spite of recommendations in the Grant Thornton report, and it now appears that you don't even want to help animals in case of an emergency.

You asked for the Grant Thornton report. It's your report. Minister, what have you got against the welfare of pets? Why do you not appreciate the fine work being done by the OSPCA in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: That's a real dog of a question. Let me tell you, you cut funding to animal welfare. You refused to deal with the issues.

I'm going to answer the question for Fido over there. Here's what we've done so far. We have invested \$2 million in one-time funding to offset increased financial pressures at the OSPCA. Sound financial management is part of that organization's long-term plan. It is their responsibility.

Our government remains committed to working with the OSPCA, working through long-standing governance

issues. We agreed to fund the governance review. We also agreed to fund an independent audit to assist OSPCA officials in making sound planning decisions.

We're working with the OSPCA on this, on emergency matters. We are having public hearings on an emergency bill. This government's record cannot be questioned by that member, who had eight years to do something and refused to do anything other than cut funding like they did, not only for animals—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question.

Mr. Klees: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm sure that most members of this House would take offence at the words used by the Acting Premier directed toward the member for Simcoe. None of us in this place should be subjected to that. We are all honourable members, and I would ask that the member withdraw his comment.

The Speaker: If there was something of offence—I did not hear anything myself but if there was—Minister of Finance.

Interjections.

The Speaker: All right, New question.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question to the Minister of Health. You recently received a letter from a resident council of a long-term-care home in my riding that reads, "We, the residents of the Elizabeth Centre Nursing Home in Val Caron, are writing to express our concern over the very small amount of \$5.35 per person per day to cover our daily food...."

"Five dollars and thirty-five cents is grossly inadequate to provide nutritious meals that are appealing and still meet the various diets here at the Elizabeth Centre Nursing Home in Val Caron...."

"This is our home and we would like quality food.... We cannot go out to eat, nor can we prepare our own meals. We are limited in so many ways and" we would like a good meal.

Minister, in the last election your party promised residents like these that you would provide an additional \$6,000 in care for every resident. That would really mean an increase in their food allowance to meet the needs of these residents. Minister, when will your government actually provide the \$6,000 per resident for care that you promised?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): First, the honourable member well knows that our party's campaign platform made no such commitment. She knows that. But part of the \$740 million in additional resources we have invested in the long-term-care sector has been increases for costs associated with the provision of food for residents in our long-term-care homes. This is in addition to the increase, for the first time in a couple of decades, of the comfort allowance for those same residents and the work we did to freeze the co-pay through two years to fulfill an element of our campaign platform promise. So we've made decent progress there.

I would say that our efforts as a government on the issue of food in long-term care do stand in rather positive and stark contrast to the honourable member's party, which did not increase funding for residents in long-term-care homes for food but did for our prisoners.

1530

Ms. Martel: In the last election, the Liberal Party absolutely did promise an additional \$6,000 of care for every resident in every home in this province, and it's certainly true that in the last budget this government had the money to keep that promise. That is why the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors said on March 23, 2006, "'We're disappointed and, quite frankly, very frustrated,' said Donna Rubin, CEO. 'With the province recording higher-than-anticipated tax revenues, we expected the government to make good on its commitment to revolutionize long-term care.'"

Over the last three budgets, the amount of annual funding going directly to care has only increased by about \$2,000, not \$6,000. Minister, I ask you again, when will you keep the promise your party made in the last election to provide an additional \$6,000 in care for every resident in every home so residents at the Elizabeth Centre can get the nutritious food they deserve and need?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: One more time I say to the honourable member that our party's platform for the last election, which was in a series of booklets, did not include the promise that the honourable member continues to refer to. If she wants to send that over to me, from our party's campaign platform that was distributed to a wide variety of people across the province, that will be fine.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: Well, there we go. The honourable member—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was waiting. I was giving the honourable members an opportunity to go through the list of campaign promises that they made and didn't fulfill, but then I realized it's so late in question period that they were probably going to run out of time.

The reality is clear. We've invested \$740 million of additional resources in long-term care. This has resulted in the hire of more 2,300 additional staff who are providing tremendous supports for people on the front line. We've increased the amount of money available for food. Like I said before, when they were in government, they had the opportunity, but they chose to leave residents in long-term care behind while they increased the food allowance for prisoners.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. I have been up on my feet in this House a number of

times speaking about our government's significant investment in transportation infrastructure. These investments in roads and public transit are critical to getting the citizens, workers and goods in this province to their destination as quickly and safely as possible.

When it comes to transportation, our government gets it. There are certainly challenges in accommodating the level of growth we are experiencing in this province, particularly in the GTA, but we are tackling these challenges head-on. The official opposition, on the other hand, doesn't seem to get it. I couldn't help but notice that their website, gridlocked.ca, is embarrassingly out of date. This website lists a number of initiatives our government was to follow through on if elected. Minister, to help them update their website, can you explain the great strides we have made toward fulfilling these commitments?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation): I want to thank the member for his question. He is absolutely right that the previous government's record—actually, they have no record of addressing congestion. Their record is that they cut the funding for public transit to zero. Their record is that they downloaded highways to the municipalities. That's their record. They had no plan.

We have put \$1.2 billion into the highway system. We have given another \$1.2 billion under Move Ontario to do special projects in the GTA. This is in addition to the public transit money we have already given. So I am not really looking at congestion—whatever their website is called. I don't look at that, because they didn't have a plan when they were in power, so how can they have a plan now when they're not in power?

PETITIONS

ORGAN DONATION

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas 1,920 Ontarians are currently on a waiting list for an organ transplant; and

"Whereas the number of Ontarians waiting for an organ transplant has virtually doubled since 1994; and

"Whereas hundreds die every year waiting for an organ transplant; and

"Whereas greater public education and awareness will increase the number of people who sign their organ donor cards and increase the availability of organ transplants for Ontarians; and

"Whereas the private member's bill proposed by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees will require every resident 16 years of age and older to complete an organ donation question when applying for or renewing a driver's licence or provincial health card, thereby increasing public awareness of the importance of organ donation while

respecting the right of every person to make a personal decision regarding the important issue of organ donation;

“Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 67, the Organ and Tissue Donation Mandatory Declaration Act, 2006.”

I affix my name in support.

RECYCLING

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas waste from Ontario public schools that could otherwise be recyclable is contributing to increased landfill sites; and

“Whereas diverting waste is critical to sustaining a healthy environment now and in the future; and

“Whereas there is a need to encourage recycling initiatives in all schools; and

“Whereas the private member’s bill proposed by the geography club from Georgetown District High School under Making the Grade will require all Ontario school boards to have two recycling bins in each classroom, one for paper and one for drinking containers. As well, cafeterias must have adequate recycling containers outlining items acceptable to be recycled;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the private member’s bill that will amend the Ontario school boards Education Act to divert waste from Ontario high school classrooms and cafeterias.”

It’s signed by hundreds of residents of Ontario, and I affix my signature.

EDUCATION FUNDING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Petitions? The member for Durham.

Mr. John O’Toole (Durham): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to present a petition on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario government already fully funds 93% of faith-based schools in Ontario, but the remaining 7% receive no funding, solely because they are not Catholic;

“Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Committee ruled in 1999 and again in 2005 that this arrangement is discriminatory and violates basic international human rights law that Ontario formally agreed to uphold;

“Whereas all three parties represented in the Legislature support Catholic separate school funding, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Canada, so that the only fair and viable solution to the discrimination is to extend funding to the small religious minorities that are currently excluded;

“Whereas the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that Ontario has the constitutional power to provide funding to non-Catholic faith-based schools;

“Whereas Ontario is the only Western democracy that fully funds faith-based schools of one religion to the total exclusion of all other religions, while all other provinces except the Atlantic provinces fund faith-based schools and have thriving public school systems;

“Whereas the cultural survival of the affected minority groups is at stake;

“Whereas faith-based schools produce responsible and productive citizens; and

“Whereas the Multi-Faith Coalition for Equal Funding of Religious Schools in December 2004 submitted to the Minister of Education a detailed proposal for the funding of non-Catholic faith-based schools in a manner that is fair and accountable and protects and enhances the public interest;

“We call on the Ontario Legislature to pass legislation to provide equitable funding in respect of all faith-based schools in Ontario, without religious discrimination and without any reduction in funding for public education, with accountability requirements and standards in place to ensure that the public interest is safeguarded.”

This is a fair-minded petition. I’ll be signing it in support of my constituents.

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

RESTRUCTURATION MUNICIPALE

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition that has been signed by over 8,300 residents of the city of greater Sudbury, and there are more like this to come. I want to thank Councillor Claude Berthiaume of ward 2 and Mr. Boucher of Rayside-Balfour for having presented these petitions to me. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the citizens of the city of Greater Sudbury believe they are overtaxed and underserved and feel like second-class citizens;

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

“Direct the city of Greater Sudbury council to hold a referendum. The purpose of this referendum would be to obtain the citizens’ opinion as to whether they prefer to maintain the city’s new structure or return to the previous regional municipality structure.

« À l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« Alors que les citoyens de la ville du Grand Sudbury croient qu’ils payent trop de taxes, voient une diminution dans les services et ressentent que leur voix ne compte pas;

« Nous, les soussignés, pétitionnons l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario comme suit :

« Exiger que le conseil de la ville du Grand Sudbury tienne un référendum. Le but de ce référendum est de connaître l’opinion des citoyens : savoir s’ils préfèrent conserver la présente structure de la ville ou de retourner à l’ancienne structure de la municipalité régionale. »

I agree with these petitioners. I have affixed my signature to the petition.

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EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill): I already tabled this petition today on behalf of Minister Monte Kwinter. I also have a number of petitions that I want to read.

“Whereas the Ontario government already fully funds 93% of faith-based schools in Ontario, but the remaining 7% receive no funding, solely because they are not Catholic;

“Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Committee ruled in 1999 and again in 2005 that this arrangement is discriminatory and violates basic international human rights law that Ontario formally agreed to uphold;

“Whereas all three parties represented in the Legislature support Catholic separate school funding, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Canada, so that the only fair and viable solution to the discrimination is to extend funding to the small religious minorities that are currently excluded...;

“Whereas the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that Ontario has the constitutional power to provide funding to non-Catholic faith-based schools;

“Whereas all other provinces ... except ... the Atlantic provinces fund faith-based schools and have thriving public school systems;

“Whereas the cultural survival of the affected minority groups is at stake;

“Whereas faith-based schools produce responsible and productive citizens; and

“Whereas the Multi-Faith Coalition for Equal Funding of Religious Schools in December 2004 submitted to the Minister of Education a detailed proposal for the funding of non-Catholic faith-based schools in a manner that is fair and accountable and protects and enhances the public interest;

“We, the undersigned, call on the Ontario Legislature to pass legislation to provide fair and equitable funding to faith-based schools in Ontario, without religious discrimination, with accountability requirements and standards in place to ensure that the public interest is safeguarded.”

Those are some of my constituents, and I file on their behalf.

MACULAR DEGENERATION

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration (wet), and there are other forms of macular degeneration (dry) that are not covered;” as well as Stargardt’s,

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

“There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration, resulting in loss of sight if

treatment is not pursued. Treatment costs for this disease are astronomical for most individuals and add a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program.”

I affix my signature in full support.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. John O’Toole (Durham): It’s a pleasure to present yet another petition from the riding of Durham, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas long-term-care funding levels are too low to enable homes to provide the care and services our aging seniors and parents who are residents of long-term-care homes need, with the respect and dignity that they deserve; and

“Whereas, even with recent funding increases and a dedicated staff who do more than their best, there is still not enough time available to provide the care residents need. For example 10 minutes, and sometimes less, is simply not enough time to assist a resident to get up, dressed, to the bathroom and then to the dining room for breakfast; and

“Whereas these unacceptable care and service levels are now at risk of declining;

“We, the undersigned, who are members of family councils, residents’ councils and/or supporters of long-term care in Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase operating funding to long-term-care homes by \$306.6 million, which will allow the hiring of more staff to provide an additional 20 minutes of care per resident per day over the next two years (2006 and 2007).”

I’m pleased to support that, in thinking of the seniors who need this respect and dignity, and to present it to Patrick, who is here for his last week as a page.

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): I have a petition from the Fairvern long-term-care home in Huntsville to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“We, the undersigned, who are members of family councils, residents’ councils and/or supporters of long-term care in Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase operating funding to long-term-care homes by \$306.6 million, which will allow the hiring of more staff to provide an additional 20 minutes of care per resident per day over the next two years (2006 and 2007).”

I support this petition and affix my signature to it.

PROPERTY TAXATION

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas many owners of seasonal trailers kept at campgrounds have raised their concerns over the impact of property taxes on seasonal trailers and the unfairness

of imposing a new tax on persons who use minimal municipal services;

“Whereas this new tax will discourage business and tourism opportunities in Ontario and will cause many families to give up their vacation trailers altogether;

“Whereas the administration of this tax will require a substantial investment in staff, time and resources across the province of Ontario;

“Whereas some representatives of the recreational vehicle industry, campground proprietors and trailer owners have suggested an alternative sticker or tag system to establish fees for seasonal trailers;

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario immediately abandon the assessment and taxation of recreational trailers used on a seasonal basis in 2004; and that the government of Ontario consult with all stakeholders regarding the development of a fair and reasonable sticker or tag fee that would apply to recreational trailers used on a seasonal basis.”

As I am in full support, I will affix my name.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

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

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

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

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

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

I've signed this also.

ORGAN DONATION

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): I have a petition to support organ donation that reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas 1,920 Ontarians are currently on a waiting list for an organ transplant; and

“Whereas the number of Ontarians waiting for an organ transplant has virtually doubled since 1994; and

“Whereas hundreds die every year waiting for an organ transplant; and

“Whereas greater public education and awareness will increase the number of people who sign their organ donor cards and increase the availability of organ transplants for Ontarians; and

“Whereas the private member's bill proposed by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees will require every resident 16 years of age and older to complete an organ donation question when applying for or renewing a driver's licence or provincial health card, thereby increasing public awareness of the importance of organ donation while respecting the right of every person to make a personal decision regarding the important issue of organ donation;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 67, the Organ and Tissue Donation Mandatory Declaration Act, 2006.”

I support this petition.

1550

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLEAN WATER ACT, 2006

LOI DE 2006 SUR L'EAU SAINE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 3, 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 Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington): I'm pleased today to be able to rise in support of Bill 43, the Clean Water Act, and speak to it. It's actually quite appropriate that we be debating this act this week, because if listeners think back six years, as we approach the long weekend in May, it was the long weekend in May six years ago when Walkerton experienced such a tremendous crisis, a crisis in the quality of its drinking water that led to the deaths of six innocent people and the illness, and continued health problems in some cases, of thousands. So it's quite appropriate, as we approach the May long weekend, that we're looking at this issue again.

And it isn't just Walkerton. I think people often have short memories, or perhaps limited memories, and think of Walkerton as the only problem. In fact, that particular spring there were problems with wells all over our area of southern Ontario or south central Ontario, however you'd like to label us. I know that certainly in my area outside Guelph there were all sorts of people who had their private wells tested and found that the particular weather conditions that spring led to runoff issues that contaminated a number of private wells.

It isn't just the contamination of wells that are in agricultural areas. We've encountered all sorts of other issues with clean water in Ontario as well. For example,

in Beckwith township we had a leaking landfill site which polluted the drinking water. Kitchener has had a drinking water problem due to contamination of some of their groundwater sources with industrial solvent. I know Stratford had an issue with its waste water when solvents from a car wash got mixed in with the system. In Guelph, as all along the Grand River Conservation Authority watersheds, there have been reports of sewage treatment plants, during high water or high rainfall times, overflowing and spilling into the river. I know that Guelph has been found to be one of the offenders in that respect. Thankfully, the Grand River Conservation Authority, which is very vigilant in these matters, has identified the spill problem, and the Guelph sewage treatment plant has addressed that problem to hopefully reduce the number of spills.

I mention all this to emphasize the issue that Walkerton is not a one-point-in-time, isolated incident. There are incidents all over our areas which require our attention and, in fact, require this legislation. As Mr. Justice O'Connor said in looking at this whole issue in his inquiry, our first line of defence is to protect our water and, as far as is possible, prevent contamination. We can always treat contaminated water, but it is much better that we prevent the contamination in the first place. That is the primary goal of the bill that's before us today, the Clean Water Act. In fact, what the Clean Water Act will require initially is that municipalities all over this province work together in watershed groupings to identify what are the potential and significant risks to groundwater and surface water supplies, to our drinking water, and considerable effort will be going into that risk identification, the mapping of watersheds and the identifying of risks and threats to our drinking water within those watersheds.

In fact, our government has invested quite heavily in that. In my area, the Grand River Conservation Authority is the lead agency in terms of conducting the assessment—the risk assessment, the threat assessment—and they have already been allocated \$1.1 million to carry that out. So our government has been quite committed to ensuring that the source protection authorities have adequate resources to carry out that first step, which is to identify the threats to the drinking water.

Once each source protection authority, normally the local conservation authority, has identified the threat—and I would like to note that the conservation authorities will not be doing that in isolation. As they do this work, they will be working with municipalities, they will be working with stakeholders in their local watershed. Everyone will be working together within the watershed. As the next step, once we have identified the risks, this legislation then calls for us to put in protection plans, so that we have protection of our water supply. But first of all we have to understand what's going on, what are the threats, and then secondarily we will need to develop science-based solutions to address those threats. This process is laid out in the legislation that is before us.

Occasionally, we find that people have concerns because they have heard some really alarmist things

about this legislation. One of the items that will come up sometimes is: How is this going to affect individual property owners? In the first place, for those property owners who don't draw their drinking water from a municipal source, this will actually be helping, because as part of the overall risk assessment the water quality threats for owners of private wells will be identified as well. But in terms of the actual somewhat alarmist reactions that we've heard from time to time, certainly the intent of this legislation is not to do extreme things like putting meters on private wells. It would be just plain silly to be metering private wells belonging to private residents.

There are possibly cases where, when a private landowner is in fact creating the risk, there may be some restrictions on their use of the land in terms of continuing to create that risk. But this would only be in a case where a private landowner's land use is posing a significant risk to their neighbours. In cases where they've already tried to manage that risk, that will be taken into account. In fact, one of the programs that I have been very impressed with—and, Speaker, it just happened that you and I were on a tour the same day, looking at some of the work that the Grand River Conservation Authority has done with farmers in our area in the Grand River watershed. Of course, one of the threats to the watershed can be when herds or manure-handling facilities are too close to the watershed and the manure leaks into the watershed. The Grand River Conservation Authority has been doing a marvellous job of working with farmers along the watershed, both to improve the manure-handling facilities along the watershed and also to work with farmers who have herds that previously had access to wander into the streams and rivers to fence the streams and rivers, to restore the shoreline and make sure we no longer have herds wandering through the rivers, which unfortunately does pollute the drinking water for those downstream of the herd.

The Grand River Conservation Authority is an outstanding example of the way that responsible farmers and people who are concerned about conservation and the quality of our drinking water can all work together, not only to protect the quality of our drinking water but actually, in this case, to improve the quality of our drinking water at source. Ultimately, the purpose of this piece of legislation is to make sure that, as a society, wherever we live in Ontario—I've been talking about the Grand River Conservation Authority, but there are lots of other examples of exemplary work that's going on around the province. Regardless of where we live in Ontario, one of the things that is most important to all of us, to every single citizen of this province, is that we have clean water to drink, and that is exactly what this bill will ultimately ensure. Thank you very much.

1600

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments? The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You took me for a shock there

for a minute; I didn't know it was going to happen so quick. It didn't go 20 minutes. But that's fine.

I just want to say a few things about this bill—a dangerous bill for rural Ontario. What it will do, as I see it, anyway, is shut down rural Ontario. It goes too far now. Hopefully, when it goes to committee, the government of the day will listen to people in rural Ontario and make this a bill we can live with. But the way it is now, some of their key components—one of them says that the local municipalities will be able to find the problems. Well, they already know where the problems are, and that's why we have a Ministry of the Environment. That's why they phone them, and they can look after these problems. Now we're going to make it that the landowner is going to have to fence his well and things like that. This is going to really upset the people with private properties.

It goes on to say, though, that the local municipalities will be able to easily find out the problems. Then it says that they will be able to correct it and enforce it. That leads me to think that this government is not going to send any money out to the local municipalities for them to be able to hire people to look after this. If they put it onto the conservation authorities, they get their money from the local people.

This whole thing is going to cost rural Ontario—the estimates we had about four years ago for something as big as this—around \$7 billion. I know that the province doesn't have that much money, and certainly rural Ontario doesn't have that kind of money. This is what really bothers me; it doesn't spell out who's going to pay for things like this.

So I'm really concerned that this bill may be the death knell of rural Ontario. We've been having a hard enough time now, under this government, surviving in rural Ontario; this will just be one more thing they want to do to us in rural Ontario. I think this government will—I'll finish later on.

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York): I listened with great interest to the member for Guelph–Wellington, as many government members will, stand up and speak in support of the bill, even though the bill may not contain all the provisions that she may logically wish that it had. She was talking in general terms about how the government would be able to react to situations of poor water quality. I would only tell her that, as much as I would like to trust that this government will do the right thing by water quality, there certainly is nothing in the bill that would assuage any of the fears that I might have: fears because the bill is so loose; fears because the bill does not contain direct provisions; fears because we all know that governments change and that, without a very firm foundation contained within the body of the act, it is all too easy for cabinets, it is all too easy for the Lieutenant Governor in Council, it is all too easy for caucuses to ignore what is the necessity of clean water in favour of industrial development or development around homes or new subdivisions. I think that if there is a failing here—if I could direct her to it, maybe she could reply to it in

comment—that is the failure I see in the bill: It leaves far too much to government largesse, it leaves far too much to future cabinet decisions, and not enough is contained to actually provide the kind of framework, the kind of protection that people in Ontario are looking for.

Certainly since we have witnessed what happened in Walkerton and also in a whole slew of other places around Ontario with less disastrous consequences, we know that the law needs to have a firm foundation. It needs to have a framework, it needs to have boundaries over which things cannot be stepped. I would like her to include in her two minutes, if she could, whether or not she is satisfied that there are sufficient guarantees within this bill to do that.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge): I'm pleased to add a couple of minutes of comments on the speech given by the member from Guelph–Wellington. As other members have and are likely to comment on during the course of the ongoing debate, I noted the impact that Walkerton had and continues to have on our recognition of the need for clean, safe drinking water and the implications when we ignore the systems in the province of Ontario.

I want to speak, if I can, just quickly on my riding in a general way, for those who aren't necessarily in rural Ontario, but also on the knowledge and affinity of the people in my riding to ensure that there is clean water, that it meets the needs of Ontario and, by extension, even though they may not be familiar with well systems as part of their day-to-day activity, their knowledge and desire to ensure that everyone in Ontario has access to clean drinking water; that that's important.

During my time in municipal governance, we dealt with landfill issues in the Brock west landfill site in Pickering, which was a joint Metro and Durham landfill to a large extent, in York region. It sits right on top of Duffins Creek. Duffins is known as probably one of the best cold-water fisheries left along Lake Ontario and certainly in the Golden Horseshoe area. The contamination that resulted from parking a large, significant landfill on top of that creek impacted the water quality and was a constant matter of discussion in our community and throughout Durham region, as part of that process.

I can tell you that people in my riding, although they may for the most part not generally draw their water from the wells or small communal systems, certainly have an affinity for seeing a need for clean drinking water and clean recreational water in the province of Ontario. I think this bill will go a long way to help achieve that.

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): It's my pleasure to add some comments to the speech from the member from Guelph–Wellington, who I know is very concerned about water quality, particularly because she has a cottage on Lake Muskoka, and I'm sure is probably going up to visit her daughter Allison this Victoria Day weekend. In fact, I'm surprised she hasn't left early just to get up there to enjoy—

Interjection.

Mr. Miller: The whip is saying, "No way." She can't leave until Thursday to head up to Muskoka.

Certainly representing an area like Parry Sound–Muskoka, nothing is more important to the quality of life of the people there than our water quality. In the riding, we have had some instances where water quality on the lakes has been compromised, particularly this year in Three Mile Lake, where blue-green algae formed late last summer, into September. Of course, it's devastating for the whole lake and for the area, so it is something we can't play around with.

The member from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge talked about a landfill site being on top of a water source and contaminating it. The exact same thing actually happened in the town of Bracebridge as well, where the Rosewarne Drive landfill site is located. It was built on top of an aquifer that was one of the water sources for the town and which has now been taken out of commission. Water quality is something we can't fool around with.

The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound raised the spectre of the cost, and I have heard the \$7-billion figure thrown about quite a bit. It is important to figure out, as we do improvements, who pays, because it is not fair to saddle the cost on farmers or on small rural municipalities. If it's going to benefit all of Ontario society, then obviously we should all be paying for any changes that make sense and that will protect our water.

1610

The Acting Speaker: That concludes the time for questions and comments. I'll return to the member for Guelph–Wellington, who has two minutes to reply.

Mrs. Sandals: I would get up there earlier, but the whip won't let me go, so we're just going to have to wait a few days. But it does actually bring up an interesting question here. One of the things that has always surprised me in my home away from home, in Muskoka, is that there isn't a conservation authority. So unlike the Grand River watershed, where there has been a conservation authority which has been looking at issues of watershed mapping and risk assessment for quite some time and which is in the process, happily, of refining their understanding of the watershed, there are other areas of the province where there is not a conservation authority and historically there has not been the same expertise, which is one of the reasons this act requires that, throughout the province, watershed mapping and risk assessment must take place and talks about, where there is no conservation authority, clusters of municipalities working together to do that in lieu of an actual conservation authority. That's also the reason why we have already committed \$51 million towards the process of doing the risk assessment and the mapping.

The members are quite right. We have not come up with a bill yet for what it is going to do to put the plans in place because, as I just explained, we have authorities in areas throughout the province which are at vastly different points in evaluating the degree of threat, the degree of risk and the degree to which they're going to intervene in order to solve the problem. So it would be clearly unreasonable for us to simply pull a figure out of the air and say, "This is the bill." First of all, we need to get the analysis, and that's exactly what this legislation does.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? I recognize the member for Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): I'm pleased to have an opportunity to put a few comments on the record on Bill 43, a very important bill. A starting point would be that Bill 43 is An Act to protect existing and future sources of drinking water and to make complementary and other amendments to other Acts. That's something that you'd find all members here—indeed, I would infer, Mr. Speaker, as the member from Waterloo–Wellington, that you would be supportive of that conceptually being the right thing to do, as I would, speaking on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham. It's important to understand that how we get to where the ideal state would be often is where we disagree, not that the ideal state is not where we all want to arrive.

In our work in looking at this bill, we certainly did listen to constituents. I would say, with your indulgence, I did respond to many of them. For instance, Dorothy McFarland, who lives in the country and operates a rural business, had things to say on this particular bill, as well as families in my riding from the area of Zephyr. I met with a whole host of constituents from that area. Many people were in attendance. Rural businesses were at the meeting as well as Ministry of the Environment people, and they were concerned about having reliable, safe drinking water in the broadest sense.

I was most surprised I think when I met with the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition. I respect the work they do, because a lot of my riding of Durham is agricultural and many of them have environmental farm plans. In fact, they know that their factory, their wealth generator, if you will, is the very land that they till and the food that they plant that we all enjoy, so they want safe, reliable, sustainable practices on farmland. I would say that a certain quality of water is very important to livestock operations. Whether it's the beef or chicken industry, or for that matter, any livestock industry—horse racing and all the rest of it—they need to have high-quality water to make sure that the health of the animal population is sustained.

There is no discussion, quite honestly, of where we would like to arrive collectively, not to mention the importance to human health of safe, clean drinking water.

When I talked to the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition, they raised some questions that I need to put on the record. In fact they have been put on the record, probably, by the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, who is very passionate and often speaks on environmental issues in his riding, which I'm sure later on today he will mention. He's very passionate. He has questioned a couple of ministers here in the last few months quite vociferously, quite aggressively, you might say, on issues affecting water quality and sewage treatment facilities that aren't maybe up to the standard he would like for his riding.

But when I met with the farm coalition I paid particular attention. There are several sections of the bill—in the limited time I have; we're being timed out on debate

on this bill, unfortunately, on such an important topic—I want to put on the record.

Section 48 is permit costs, which many people are saying to me—it's downloading. Every time you implement a regime of tightening regulations and enforcement, it costs money, as it should. In this case, this really needs to be addressed. It's downloading on water quality. Unfortunately the province isn't stepping up to the plate here and saying, "We're going to do this. We're going to take charge and we're going to do it right."

The other section that's quite troubling is section 83, and I ask people to pay particular attention to this. This is the section dealing with expropriation, and hopefully I'll get a chance, again being limited in the amount of time that we can contribute to this debate. Another one is section 89, which is quite troubling. In fact, what it sets up is the government being immune from legal action or litigation. It sets up a wall of immunity from any prosecution or liability going forward. So I caution viewers and those reading Hansard to pay particularly close attention to the evasiveness of section 86, and to section 88 as well.

I'm going to continue, in this brief time that I've been given to speak on this, on what I'd say is a third-party stakeholder that by and large would be unencumbered or uncompromised in their sticking up for the environment. Let's just read that again: The Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition—just think of it: That's the first priority of these people, so they're not politically swayed by slick language. Here's what they say; I'm quoting from their presentation: "The current purpose section, section 1, is too broad. As currently stated, it may be interpreted to mean all water everywhere, instead of focusing on the municipal protection of municipal drinking water supplies." That's very important.

Apparently in the pre-consultation on the Environmental Registry, many of the stakeholders asked them to be very specific, that it was the act to protect the existing and future sources of municipal drinking water versus all water. This is where it has become too broad. This is the statement in which the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition is stating their concerns, suggestions and solutions, if you will. I commend them for the work they've done, actually, focusing on protecting municipal drinking water sources.

The current purpose statement in Bill 43 is, "The purpose of this act is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water." In fact I did take the time, and it's a fairly technical bill. I wouldn't dismiss it that way. I'll read it:

"General

"Part I of the bill states that the purpose of the bill is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water (see section 1). It 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 (see section 4). Regulations may be made designating drinking water source protection authorities for

drinking water source protection areas established in other parts of Ontario (see section 5)"—because not all parts of Ontario have existing conservation authorities.

Setting up that people bureaucracy and technology bureaucracy will be downloading. There's no money in this bill to help them set up that infrastructure, human and otherwise.

1620

Another point that's been made quite regularly, in paying attention here—I did serve, a privilege, in representing CLOCA, the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, and am familiar with the Lake Simcoe conservation authority as well as the Kawartha Conservation Authority, which all have sort of tributaries in the source water, headwater, discharge and recharge areas in service in Durham.

This section here, as I said before, is so broad that I'm not sure if we're going to actually get there from here. The Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition is suggesting amendments to section 1; right off the bat, section one didn't pass the test:

"The purpose of this act is to meet the following objectives:

"(a) to provide for the protection of those water sources that are drawn on to provide drinking water to municipalities currently and in the future;

"(b) to complement other provincial statutes that when taken together provide a multiple-barrier approach to protecting Ontario's municipal drinking water;

"(c) to establish a planning mechanism that enables the required level of protection to individual municipal drinking water sources while considering the social, cultural and economic implications of that protection"—there's nothing that doesn't have some risk assessment that needs to be considered;

(d) to provide a scientifically based framework for decision-making around the use and protection of Ontario's municipal water drinking sources."

So they've taken time to review—and I've covered very briefly in the limited time I have—the preamble, if you will, the general provision of the purpose section.

It goes on:

"(e) to provide a source of funding for research, education and awareness...."

This is one of the great deficiencies of this bill: There's no money in it. In fact, you're gutting many of the ministries, except for the key commitments that you've made in health care and education. To digress for a moment, in health care, the waiting lists are getting longer. There are people in my riding who are calling, saying their elective surgeries are being cancelled. On the education file, Bill 78 is on right now. Almost every board in Ontario is in deficit. So it's promising more, getting less, and this is the same thing.

My fears are now raised to a whole new level with Bill 43. They're downloading the very administrative infrastructure—human and physical and technical—to the municipalities. In many cases, and Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound will speak to that, they just don't have the tax

room left to do what this bill is forcing them to do without any sense of consultation.

I'm going to go on, because I was so impressed by this submission by the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition. This is a stakeholder group that has eminent trust and credibility. This isn't some political spin-doctoring going on; this is the truth which I speak.

Under section 2, the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition states, "Section 2 of Bill 43 contains several definitions that are intended to clarify the meaning of several words found within the text of the bill." They're intended to clarify. "OFEC has several concerns with this section.

"Specifically, OFEC believes that the words 'threat,' 'hazard,' 'pathway,' 'exposure' and 'risk' need to be" further "defined. These words were used very effectively by the Technical Expert Committee," referred to as TEC, "to describe the process to be used to determine whether or not a land use that poses a threat actually constitutes a risk. TEC described risk as a mathematical function using the following equation...."

It's this technical kind of linkage between highly sensitive words to precipitate some kind of fear or anxiety that I think they're referring to here. It says, "OFEC also believes that the term 'adverse effect' needs to be defined. In essence the primary objective of Bill 43 is to try and prevent the occurrence of an adverse effect on a municipal drinking water source. Landowners or any individual who might potentially contribute a substance that manifests itself as an adverse effect has the right to know just what constitutes an adverse effect in the context of the bill. Having the term 'adverse effect' appear in the definitions of 'drinking water threat' does not serve to define the term."

So, quite clearly the argument here is a bit technical, but they've got generalized terms and, in my view, in legal speak the next step is probably reverse onus. In other words, the person who has been charged with adverse effect is responsible for defining or demonstrating that they do not have a contributing adverse effect. Do you follow me, Mr. Speaker? It's a legal sort of argument. But reverse onus is becoming kind of a definer of this government. They're putting the pressure on the person who has been subject to the issue to prove that the accusation is indeed false. They haven't proven that it is false or not false—in this case here, providing a threat or perceived risk.

Here's what the Farm Environmental Coalition recommends, and this is why I see them as such reasonable persons to deal with. These are the amendments they're recommending. Is the government even listening? I hope Ms. Broten has staff here listening, because this may improve the bill. We all agreed, right from the outset, that we do want safe, clean municipal drinking water; in fact, all drinking water for humans and other things that we share the planet with here. So their amendments here are the appropriate level.

"'Threat' means a chemical, chemical compound or pathogen associated with a land use activity capable of

contaminating a present or future water source to the extent that it would provide degraded water, should the water be used as a municipal drinking water source. Threats can be managed to reduce the associated hazards."

Another amendment: "'Hazard' relates to the probability that a threat will be introduced into a municipal drinking water supply. A low hazard rating indicates that management practices have mitigated the inherent threat, whereas a high hazard rating indicates that such management practices are absent."

They go on to define more clearly these hazards or pathways, exposures, risks or adverse effects, and I'll conclude by saying, "'Adverse effect' means impairment of the quality or quantity of municipal drinking water source" very specifically. But the bill leaves this for the courts and others to interpret. In that vein—and I've got to get the rest here on the bill—the government itself, what's it doing? Again, I don't want to leave the impression that we're not in support of this bill. It's the general nature of it, as stated by the environmental farm coalition, and it's this lack of resources being put in place and the potential reverse onus provision by legal prosecution.

But here's the real slippery slope of it all: What the government has done in section 48—which I said I'd try to get in the discussion here and bring it to the attention of those who realize how important this is. In section 48, "Order for risk management plan," it says, "If the director has approved an assessment report for a source protection area under section 15 or 16 or under an agreement under section 23, in a surface water intake protection zone or wellhead ... area identified in the report, at a location or within an area specified ... a person is engaged in an activity that is prescribed by the regulation and is identified in the report as an activity that is or would be a significant drinking water threat at that location or within the area, the permit official may issue an order requiring the person to prepare and submit to the permit official, within such time as is specified in the order, a risk management plan."

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There I am, they come up and say, "You're constituting a threat," and I've got to get some consultants in, some aquifer people, some hydrogeologists and all these experts. Then \$25,000 later, I submit the report, and this person, the permit official, who may be somebody who may not have the authority to even review the report, is going to make a determination if I did what the Farm Environmental Coalition group are suspicious of. It's so general. Here's the poor farmer, here's the poor person living in the country, and there's something suspected that would be an adverse effect. They're guilty before they're proven guilty. That's a problem for me and for my constituents in the riding of Durham, for fair-minded people. The process is slated against the individual. And that's tragic, in what I thought was a democratic province. It saddens me but it alerts me, as a person who participates here.

Another section is section 83. This one here is a classic; it really is. You could cut it out and put it on the wall, because if you're dealing with, in this case, the McGuinty government, here's what they're doing in quite a few of the bills now. I've seen it in not just this particular bill. Some of the planning bills—the greenbelt bill is a perfect example. People are still wrestling with that.

The O'Connor family got back to me and Mrs. Elliott from Whitby–Ajax, and we have finally got the ministry to listen to how there's no science in some of this stuff. These people have spent thousands of dollars, generations working hard with their hands in the soil, to defend themselves through a process that's designed against the individual's right of appeal. There's no mechanism here for appeal or to resolve these disputes, and yet I'm responsible for hiring the hydrogeologist or whatever expert is required to determine if the well is or is not a potential risk and that I contributed to that risk or that somewhere upstream in the whole aquifer system there wasn't somebody else whom they haven't found yet who perpetrated the act.

But 83 gives a lot away here of the secret agenda that was mentioned earlier to Michael Bryant, saying this was the most secretive government. Mr. Klees read the question. It's worth looking at Hansard today, for those viewing. He got the award for being the “behind closed doors” government. Section 83 says, “A municipality or source protection authority may, for the purpose of implementing a source protection plan, acquire by purchase, lease or otherwise, or, subject to the Expropriations Act, without the consent of the owner, enter upon, take and expropriate” the land, and it's in this vein that I'm now at the point of saying I'm not sure I can support the bill as it's currently structured. It's not that I do not support the conceptual goal, because we do. John Tory and our caucus have wrestled with it. What's failed here is the process. There's no recourse for the people of Ontario. I can't support that approach to legislation.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Prue: I listened, as always, intently to the member from Durham. He often comes up with ideas and thoughts that have never really occurred to me, and of course he's got a couple here. Section 83, on expropriation—I don't know of many government bills that would not allow a government to expropriate. I don't know.

Interruption.

Mr. Prue: Somebody's phone is ringing here and ought not to be. I think I'd better wait for the Sergeant-at-Arms to grab it and take it away—the things that ought not to be.

Most government bills and most governments will allow for expropriation where it is in the public good. I don't know how—and I listened intently to what he had to say here—this bill is any different from any other bill. Whether you're expropriating a house to make way for a road, whether you're expropriating a property to make way for a public park, whether it has some muni-

cipal or provincial purpose, certainly expropriation of land is a well-known government tool. I can think of where even in my own community that has been done to good effect. I look down to the Brick Works in the Don Valley, just off Bayview Avenue, which was slated to be housing but today is a remarkable urban achievement of a park. That was land that was expropriated. So maybe he can explain to me how this is unique to this bill, because I'm not sure that it is.

I also listened intently to a couple of his other points. The lack of financial commitment certainly rang a bell with me. Because in all government bills, particularly where it is going to cost municipalities or other funding agencies to enforce bills if they're downloaded or uploaded—whoever is going to pay, there should be adequate compensation for the person doing the work. I haven't seen that in this bill, and I listened intently to the member from Guelph–Wellington, who said that's going to come later. But I think the bill needs to clarify that purpose in committee hearings so that we all know if there are sufficient funds.

Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment): I listened carefully to the comments advanced by my colleague and I want to say that I do listen to the comments of those who are critical of the way we've moved forward with the Clean Water Act in an effort to ensure that we have the best piece of legislation possible when this legislation is ultimately passed by this House. I very much look forward to debate at committee and I look forward to receiving more comments as we proceed with further debate in this House.

I do want to speak to a couple of the issues that were raised by my friend opposite. I thank him for the fact that he indicates agreement from all members here with respect to the purpose of this legislation, but I want to talk about a couple of things as we move forward, some of the misinformation that exists.

Certainly we have worked closely with those groups such as OFEC in the agriculture sector. We have listened to their comment, and we absolutely acknowledge that agriculture will be an extremely important sector to help in the watershed planning and decide on how to proceed to respond to those significant drinking water threats identified in an assessment report.

As has been indicated, under Bill 43 an individual's land cannot be expropriated without fair compensation from the municipality, in accordance with the Expropriations Act, as we have in many other pieces of legislation. But I also want to comment with respect to compensation for property owners, because they will be at the table and they will have an opportunity to raise their concerns, discuss the impacts of the possible measures, and in most cases make a decision with that community group who are all working together, across the watershed, in order to ensure protection of their own watershed. I know that farmers, who are good stewards of the environment, will work with us and continue to work with us as we move forward.

The last point I want to make is with respect to the funding. This is a significant upload of municipal respon-

sibility to the province: \$67.5 million has been committed for watershed mapping and planning.

I look forward to talking about this further in the days to come.

Mr. Miller: I'm pleased to add some comments on Bill 43 to the speech by the member from Durham. I note that he spoke at length about environmental farm plans, and I know that many of the farms in Parry Sound–Muskoka do have environmental farm plans and are extremely responsible.

I wanted to come back briefly, while the Minister of the Environment is here, to the Three Mile Lake situation in Parry Sound–Muskoka, where we had a situation last summer and fall with blue-green algae. I would say that the district of Muskoka has been very active in taking a lead role in looking into this situation. The cottage association has been involved. The MOE has been supportive, and I am pleased to see that this summer the MOE is going to be doing a study of Three Mile Lake to try to determine the source of the contamination and the increased phosphorus, whether it be from a farm in the area or whether it be from septic systems from the cottages surrounding the lake, or from a natural source.

But I ask, seeing as the minister is here: Why is the MOE not more proactive in terms of the septic systems, particularly rural septic systems and particularly around lakes, and more proactive in trying to approve the latest and greatest in terms of phosphorus reduction septic systems so that we have the best septic systems available to the people of Ontario? It seems to me that the MOE does not take a proactive role in terms of approving new septic systems, and this would be of huge benefit to an area like Parry Sound–Muskoka and vast areas around Ontario that have lakes. We could have great reductions in phosphorus if we had the latest technology approved here in the province of Ontario, whereas in the States and other jurisdictions, there are new technologies that are approved that aren't approved here. So I would like to see the ministry take a more proactive approach in terms of those new septic systems.

I certainly hope this bill goes to committee and that the farm community and the voice of rural Ontario are heard when it goes to committee.

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): In response to the comments that were made by the member from Durham, I want to focus on two points.

Number one does have to do with funding or financial resources related to the bill, not just in the short term but in the long term, as both municipalities and conservation authorities deal with the requirements that are listed in it.

Secondly, I would just make a point with respect to the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition. I listened to the comments about concerns for resources and I listened to the minister's comments where she talked about the \$67 million that had been allocated by the ministry for watershed mapping and planning. I think what needs to be clearly on the public record is that the bill is much bigger and about much more than just mapping and planning, although that obviously has to be done in order

to ensure that we are protecting waters at source. But the reality is that the municipalities, or the conservation authorities and municipalities together, are going to have that capacity and the responsibility through the bill to implement, amend, monitor and enforce source protection plans. I think that those are going to come—the plans, especially—with significant costs to them over time. So I think we'd all better recognize that the \$67 million that has been allocated for mapping and planning isn't going to do the trick and isn't going to support what needs to be supported in terms of protection of the water source over the long term.

1640

I don't think we've really heard the government say very specifically where the significant amount of money, far above, over and beyond the \$67 million, is going to come from. My colleagues and I are going to make some suggestions about a promise that was made by the McGuinty government on royalties for water taking. Perhaps that could be used as the fund from which money could be drawn to support these initiatives.

Second, I know that the minister has said, and the coalition was up front in saying, that there have been meetings with ministry officials and with the minister both before and after the bill was tabled. But it is clear, from information that all of us got in April, that the concerns remain. I hope that during the course of the public hearings there will be a way to resolve these outstanding concerns from the agricultural community.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Durham has two minutes to respond.

Mr. O'Toole: I'm sure the member from Beaches–East York will be speaking later on this, and I look forward to that with pleasure. The Minister of the Environment is here and hopefully she's actually listening. The member from Parry Sound–Muskoka technically is going to be speaking on this. The member from Nickel Belt summarized quite quickly. A nice transition here is the \$67 million she mentioned. I was on the committee post-Walkerton and the rest of it; the environment and energy committee was the cabinet committee I was on. As such, this is a huge bill. She's absolutely dead on. This thing is in the billions; it's not some small number.

I think a good place to start it, Minister—you're here, and I mean respectfully that you will listen. The best advice I've heard is to look at the municipal water systems and the infrastructure that those water treatment and inspection and enforcement—get that first, get that right, and I'm sure you'll have convinced a great deal of the public.

Where this cynicism arrives here—I'm going to continue on section 83, "Expropriation"—it's worth looking at—and the mechanism for resolving disputes. But go further to section 88, where "no cause of action arises as a direct or indirect result of" anything that the minister does. If you go on to clause 88(1)(c) of that, "anything done or not done by a source protection committee, source protection authority, municipality or local board, by a minister, ministry, board, commission or agency" is

not considered a cause of action. In other words, they're forgiven all their oversights or wrong orders that may be issued, or charges.

It says here, "No remedy

"(2) No costs, compensation or damages are owing or payable to any person and no remedy, including but not limited to a remedy in contract, restitution, tort or trust, is available to any person in connection with anything referred to in clause (1) (a), (b), (c) or (d)."

So you've expropriated, basically, without any consultation or ability to work with the individual. In fact, you may even have brought a charge to cause them some legal course of action to prove that they aren't guilty of the risk or hazard. It's in that tone that I still can't agree, Minister, that you've got it right, and yet we should have clean—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you very much.

Before I call for further debate, I want to acknowledge the presence in the visitors' gallery of a number of the members of the Certified Management Accountants of Ontario. Welcome.

Further debate?

Mr. Prue: I'd like to preface my remarks today with a couple of things. The first one is to remember my former colleague, a feisty member of this House from Toronto—Danforth, Marilyn Churley. I think she would want to be here today for this debate because, in the time that I was here, the four years I was here when she was here as well, she must have stood up on this very topic at least a dozen or two dozen times and would constantly be asking people to think about clean water, not just about Walkerton but about the entire environment, the entire ecology in which we live and the necessity of having clean water. She is not named, of course, in this bill, but maybe she should be because it was her actions, concerted over a number of years, that have brought us to this point today. Wherever and as far as we go, it probably won't be enough for her, and maybe not enough for the members of our caucus, but it is, I would acknowledge, at least some movement that has taken place in a very vital way.

The second thing I want to talk about is the water, the water that is here on every one of our desks every day that is brought so brilliantly by the young pages who come. You just have to give a little signal and they'll bring you more water. The water they bring us is tap water. In case anybody who watches TV wonders, it doesn't come out of one of those fancy little bottles that you pay a dollar or two dollars for or whatever you pay for them. It comes right out of the city of Toronto taps, which is considered one of the finest water systems in the world. I often wonder, when I see people lining up to buy bottled water in this country and city, why they are doing so, because the water that comes out of our taps in this city is actually clearer, cleaner and has fewer pollutants in it than bottled water that you would buy in most of the rest of the world, including some of the very large brands. I don't want to give them any real publicity here.

The city of Toronto has taken an unusual step. It's the first city I know of in Ontario, and certainly in Canada, which will no longer allow bottled water to be served at

their functions, or to the members of council—you might have seen them if you watched it on television—because they are very concerned that people will not trust what is our greatest natural resource, perhaps after our people, that we as Canadians have, and that is the clean drinking water that is so abundant and available to all of us.

We have to protect that water; we have to protect the environment in which it exists. We have to do much more than governments have done in the past to protect water. Certainly we all know what happened at Walkerton. We all know the tragedy of that medium-sized Ontario town. It certainly did not do any great things for the reputation of Ontario, for that town, for the region or for Canada when people drinking ordinary, safe, what they thought was pure and clean drinking water fell ill, and some of them died.

We as Ontarians, as Canadians and as legislators bound ourselves, back in those days, to say that we would clean up that mess, that we would make sure that in Ontario there would be an abundant supply of clean drinking water. I want to commend the government in part for this bill because it does two things. It provides a better public process for (1) developing the assessment reports for water, and (2) source water protection. Having said that, I want to be critical but in a positive way, because what the bill has done and sets out to do is ensure that Ontarians, for a considerable period in the future, will have this abundant supply of fresh and source water.

I looked at the bill. My job in opposition is to be somewhat critical. I don't have to say that everything in the bill is right, and even when I ask members to provide all of it, they say that there's more coming. So I don't expect that this bill will capture everything it should, but there are some critical things that need to be talked about, that need to be hashed out and put into the bill in committee. Some of those involve definitions and the key terms.

Most bills and most laws have in their first, second or third section a compendium of definitions so that it's very clear, in technical terms, what we're looking at and so that it's very clear, when you read it, what important words might mean. In law, if it is not defined, it is given the ordinary meaning as it's understood. Very often in technical terms it's not what the ordinary layperson might understand. I have to ask the government to take a look and ask itself what has been left to the regulations and whether it is right that these key terms have been left to them.

The first one that puzzled me was the "ground water recharge area." That has not been defined and has been left to the regulations. There's nothing in this particular bill that defines "ground water recharge area," and that is absolutely vital to areas like the moraine; it's absolutely vital to the source protection waters whence many people, livestock and farms get their water.

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I have to ask you why there is no definition and no key term for "highly vulnerable aquifer." Although it is contained in the legislation, we do not know precisely

what that means. I believe the legislation has an obligation to define that and not leave it to some government regulation in the future and certainly not to leave it to the whims of a cabinet, if not this one, then a future one or the one after that, to come up with what they think it means and potentially to loosen the term and make it even more highly vulnerable than a highly vulnerable aquifer already is.

There's no definition and no key term for the phrase "surface water intake." That has to be a major consequence because the water intake to any river from a rivulet or a creek or to any lake from a river or as it flows out potentially through the Great Lakes and to the ocean—that should be defined, because we need to know what "surface water intake" means within the legislation.

Likewise, we need to have defined terms such as "vulnerable area," "significant risk" and "adverse effect." None of these are defined within the body of this legislation and they ought to be. It would not take a great deal of work for the government to take some time, look through the definitions and make them as airtight and as strong as possible, so that when this issue goes before the Lieutenant Governor in Council now or in the future there can be no confusion for future governments and future members of this Legislature; they'd know exactly what that means.

Members from the government party have spoken and often the words—and I'm going to paraphrase them and make them simpler—are, "Trust us. We're going to do this. Trust us." I don't know whether I can do that. It's not because these are not trustworthy individuals on the other side; I'm sure they are. But it is difficult to trust a government with the very many pressures that will come upon it, pressures from all sides, and we've certainly seen pressures on all sides affecting this government and how it deals with things.

We've seen the pressure that came to bear in the last election, when this government ran on a platform to stop housing in the Oak Ridges moraine. We know the pressures that came down on the government, because I believe that they had some kind of intent anyway to do something about the housing on the Oak Ridges moraine, but it was, unfortunately, the first promise that this government was forced to break.

I'm going to be generous. Maybe there was nothing they could do because the laws were already there. The corporations had already put up the money. It was going to cost too much for them to drag it through the courts for years. Maybe there was nothing they could do. But I want to tell you that on the Oak Ridges moraine there were 6,600 houses slated for development. This is on an area with 35 river systems. We know that in the end the government was forced to back down from their commitment. We know that housing is being built there, and we know that the source water protection that you may have had in your mind's eye prior to the last election is no longer there.

We also know the pressures the government has around source water protection and the big pipe. Now the

big pipe may not be known to many people outside of the greater Toronto area, but the big pipe is exactly what it says: It's a giant sewer pipe that's being built to take the stuff away from all of the communities north and west of Toronto. There are alternatives to that big pipe. It is opposed by most environmentalists because it contravenes the Oak Ridges moraine act, but it's being built notwithstanding because of the developmental pressure and the pressure being put upon the municipalities in the area.

We know it would be possible to stop the big pipe, and we also know the devastation it is causing to the communities that live there and to the ecosystem of the moraine and the greater Toronto area. We know that enough water to fill a large swimming pool is being removed every minute between now and 2007 as a result of the big pipe. We know that that is being drained out of the aquifer. We know it's being taken away. On the ground around the big pipe, streams and wells have dried up; 120 wells have dried up to date. That is water that is no longer in the ground, water that has probably been there for millennia. It is gone, and it's a direct result of urban sprawl.

We also know that the water table in the area surrounding the big pipe dropped by from 5 to 55 meters over 65,000 square miles during phase one construction, and that the once vibrant Robinson Creek has been reduced to a trickle. This is the reality of what happens to governments when you try to be on all sides and why I think this bill needs to be strengthened.

We also have problems—and time will not allow me to get into all of them—with the north Leslie development and the impact that's going to have on clean water and the Clean Water Act. We know about site 41 in Napanee, which is going to be a site involving garbage, and the Richmond landfill, also in Napanee. We know about the problems that you are going to encounter with your Clean Water Act if you proceed with Dufferin Aggregate in Milton. All of these things are going to have impacts upon the government. If these proceed, it is going to make it virtually impossible for the Clean Water Act to do what it is supposed to do, and that is, ultimately, to protect the people of this province.

In the year 2003, the Liberal platform said that you were going to find a way to make money from our water, money that could be used beneficially for the people of this province. In that platform, you said you were going to make those people who profited from our Ontario water pay a royalty. This was confined, I think, largely to two groups of people. The first group was those people who bottle water and sell it to those who are thirsty around the world and, as I started off to say, those who do not know that the water that comes from the taps in places like Toronto is actually purer and who go out and pay for something they can have for fractions of a cent, something they will pay dollars and dollars for because it comes in a plastic bottle. I haven't seen anything, nor is there anything in this bill, that talks about the royalty, but there could be and there should be. The other major

group that uses a lot of water, probably more than all the bottled water combined, are the big slurry companies. I know that there is a very large slurry company in the Minister of Agriculture's riding that uses more water than all of the bottling companies combined.

As a government, we need to make sure that royalties are paid on that water, particularly if the water is leaving our ecosystems, if the water is being polluted, if the water needs to be treated. We need to get royalties from that. I would suggest to the minister—my colleague from Nickel Belt has already spoke about this—that \$67 million simply is not going to be sufficient to do everything necessary. If this bill can be strengthened or if a companion bill can be put forward, and if the Liberals could live up to their election promise to actually put a royalty on that type of water, those millions of dollars, if dedicated to clean water, would go a long way to improving this act. It will allow the government and municipalities and conservation authorities to have the money and the wherewithal to do the major restructuring so we can ensure that the water continues to be clean and clear.

We need to look at what else is not in the legislation. I know it is difficult to make legislation retroactive. I have voted against government bills, whether it was the Conservatives or the Liberals in power, when there was an attempt to make a bill retroactive. But here in this bill there is considerable cause for concern to me, and that is that there is a grandfathering of the activities that we know are destructive of our ecology. They are allowed to continue if they exist at the time of the coming into force of this bill. Clearly, if we know that these are activities destructive to our environment, if we know they are causing destruction as we understand it under the Clean Water Act, we have an obligation to make sure that they are not grandfathered, that they are not protected. In fact, we have an obligation to try to shut them down. I ask the minister to think very clearly and carefully about this provision of grandfathering those destructive activities within the body of this bill and to look to change them.

1700

I would also like to talk about the bill I see. The bill has a provision that allows for a conflict to be resolved to the greatest protection of the source water. I agree with that. I think that is a really good thing. If there's a conflict of one set of laws versus another, the set that resolves to protect the water in the best way will be the one that is found to be paramount, the one that will be used.

However, we come back to the whole thorny issue—and I've spoken about it peripherally a couple of times—of the Lieutenant Governor in Council making the regulations and having the discretion. If it is not within the body of the act, if the act itself is not beefed up, then it leaves a huge discretion that even if the laws may be in conflict, if the Lieutenant Governor in Council, i.e. the cabinet, can make detrimental changes, it will all be to no avail. I ask the minister very carefully to look at that.

We have had in this province some good things and some bad things about all of this. Justice Dennis

O'Connor said in his report—I'd like to quote just one small paragraph of what he had to say about watersheds, because I think it's important. He was eloquent. He certainly set us on the right track. "Watersheds are an ecologically practical unit for managing water. This is 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 he was trying to say there, in a nutshell, is that when we all pollute just a little, it may not seem to be a bad thing for the environment, but when person after person, company after company, farm after farm, city after city continue to degrade the water table, the water quality will inevitably deteriorate, and that all of us have an obligation in our own way to protect that which we can.

We have seen the problems of Walkerton. We have seen the problems that exist today in Attawapiskat and continue to exist in that small town. We have seen, in too many small towns and small cities across this province, boil-water advisories in the last number of years. I know that where my own parents live, near Bancroft, Ontario, for two summers of the last five they have had boil-water advisories in their town.

We know that in the city of Toronto and in the area I represent there are too many degradations to the creeks and rivers flowing into the Don River. The city of Toronto is taking the step now of mapping the entire area to see where the outfalls are. I guess this is just a sad story of amalgamation, because the city had done this before, as had East York and as had North York, but because they all had different systems and different numberings, they have to do it all again. It's pretty sad, because all that money is being wasted to document that which is already known, but it is going ahead notwithstanding.

In the last 20 seconds or so, we have an obligation here to do something that's right. I am asking the government opposite to take my criticisms as constructive ones. We need to do the very best we can to protect our source water, and any and all things to improve this bill would be welcomed.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Hon. Ms. Broten: I want to tell my friend opposite that I do appreciate his comments, and in the time I have, I want to speak to a couple of those issues.

I want to start by speaking to the issue of funding. I know I have said in the Legislature, with respect to the current funding of \$67.5 million—and I think it's also important for those watching and those listening to know that neither local taxpayers nor industry are going to bear the burden of source water protection planning costs, because we have committed to fund that study that will take place. Ministry of the Environment, in partnership with MNR, has approved expenditures amounting to \$120 million between 2004 and 2008 to support that local watershed-based plan development. That will then give us the information that we will need to determine the cost of implementing source water protection plans, because as we move forward, that's going to depend on the findings and the technical studies and the risk assessment

for each source protection planning area and each vulnerable area that's defined.

We know there will be some hardship cases, and that's why we're proposing to develop a comprehensive approach that's going to address those specific situations. I know some very big numbers about the actual costs have been floated out in this Legislature. I want to make it clear that those communities who have undertaken source water protection initiatives in the province have found that their costs have ranged—and this is implementation costs—from approximately 76 cents per month per water user in Waterloo to \$1.62 per month per water user in Oxford county, and that's over a 10-year horizon. We don't know what we will find when we undertake our watershed mapping and planning. We know that that information will then be brought forward and we will have an examination of the steps that need to be undertaken.

The last thing I want to point out is that the Clean Water Act will not act in isolation; it will act with other pieces of legislation: the EPA, the Environmental Assessment Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Protection Act. All of those will work in concert to protect the water in this province.

Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax): We certainly agree that it's vital to have a safe and reliable source of water in this province and that the protection of our water supply is vital to all of our success; we agree with that in principle. And we're very proud of the work that was done by our party to implement the recommendations of the Walkerton report.

But there are also some issues that need to be addressed to make sure that all Ontarians bear some responsibility for ensuring that we have a safe and reliable source of drinking water in the province and that certain groups, such as farming, stockyards and certain heavy industries, don't have to bear a disproportionate responsibility. As the legislation stands, these groups will need to be assessed for any significant threat to source water, but "significant threat" has not been defined. With respect to farmers, there's a significant concern that some of the practices they've carried on in the family farms for decades and that have been considered normal will now be considered to be serious threats under this proposed legislation. They're also extremely concerned about the costs involved in becoming compliant with this legislation.

So while the goal is very important, we need to make sure that we take a balanced approach as we move forward with this legislation to make sure we achieve the goal of achieving a safe and reliable water supply on the one hand, but that we also recognize that the livelihood of very many people in this province depends on making sure that we have a cost-effective and reasonable solution as well.

I certainly urge the minister to take these factors into consideration as we move forward with this legislation.

Ms. Martel: I appreciate the comments made by my colleague from Beaches–East York, and I just want to reiterate or reinforce two points he made.

The first has to do with what is not in the bill, very much with respect to key and significant definitions that will really determine whether the government can meet its objectives in terms of protection of water at source. The situation that exists at present, that terms such as "ground water recharge area," "highly vulnerable aquifer," "surface water intake protection zone," "well-head protection area" or, finally, "vulnerable area" remain undefined in the legislation and are going to be determined in regulation, which of course will be a process behind closed doors that the assembly will have no part of, concerns me greatly.

If we want to be able monitor whether this legislation is going to work and how well it's going to work, then we should have those definitions in the legislation, where they belong, up front for the public to see. Frankly, that should have been done even before this legislation was presented, given the long time it has taken for the bill to get before us today.

The government is doing the same thing in Bill 102, which I spoke to at some length a couple of weeks ago. So much of the definition, so much of the planning and so many of the new processes that the government claims are going to save taxpayers money are left to regulation, left to be determined at some other point whether all of these things in fact will work. Key components of the legislation, like the definitions for important terms, need to be right in the bill.

Secondly, with respect to the funding, because the minister mentioned it again, the fact is that the money that has been allocated to date is money for watershed planning and mapping. The dilemma is that there is going to be a cost and it's going to be a cost in the long term. Part of the way to deal with that would be to set up a trust fund with the royalty money that Premier McGuinty said he was going to charge water takers. If we do that, then we will have something in place for the long term.

1710

Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham–Kent Essex): I'm pleased to rise and make a few comments to Bill 43. The member opposite did make some very poignant comments through his presentation this afternoon.

Water is important to all of us; that's a given. But in my area of Chatham–Kent Essex—we have Lake St. Clair, we have Lake Erie, we have the Detroit River, we have the Thames River—some of our farms are actually below lake level. We pump water out, we pump water in and we have countless numbers of wells. So it is an area that takes water very seriously and, I think, will be pleased with this legislation, so that now we can better understand what we have as a resource called water: where it is, what it is and what threat, if any, it might be under. If it's under any threat at all, we will learn about this.

A lot of the decision-making and prior input will come from local communities themselves. I understand from this legislation that some of the action taken might only need be voluntary.

I share with other colleagues that we must ensure that there is support for the long-term viability of our small

towns and our agricultural community. As far as the agricultural community goes, they understand all too well that air, water and soil are important not only to their neighbours but to themselves and their livelihood. They need that clean air, clean soil, clean water, and they want to protect that not only for their own families but for their communities out and around them. So I welcome this legislation and this debate this afternoon, and I look forward to other comments that persons would have on Bill 43.

The Acting Speaker: I will return to the member for Beaches–East York. He has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Prue: I listened intently to my colleagues the Minister of the Environment and the members from Whitby–Ajax, Nickel Belt and Chatham–Kent Essex.

Two of the members talked about the significance of the definitions in the bill. I did spend some considerable time on that, and I'd just like to go back to that to reinforce the position that I have taken. It is much more advantageous to all members of the Legislature and to the general public if those key elements in the bill are defined up front. If they are defined and they have the scrutiny of the Legislature and of the legislative committee, they are going to have much more impact and will be far better than if they are done, as my colleague suggested, in secret by cabinet and can change from time to time as the bill changes its lifestyle and as it goes along. It's much better to set those things concretely at the beginning so that everybody understands whence the bill flows.

I would like to talk for a second about what the Minister of the Environment had to say, because this too—although I take her at her word that the intent is for the first year or two to find the necessary funds to do the mapping, to mitigate any of the hardships being undertaken by people in the short term, in the longer term we need to do far more than this. And in the short term it troubles me just a little, because we will be without a strengthened law. We will be mostly with the law that allowed Walkerton to happen. We will be with the law that mostly allows the flooding and the problems in towns like Attawapiskat, the boil-water advisories in many of our small towns. We need to act precipitously; we need to act as quickly as possible. I would just suggest that if that is the long-term goal, it's a laudatory one, but it should be made much shorter.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Dave Levac (Brant): I appreciate the opportunity to engage in the discussion about Bill 43. Just before I start, though, I want to hold up my glass of water and tell everybody it's half full, not half empty. It's half full; we're on our way. And the other one is full. Because the member from Beach–East York—or Beaches–East York; I think that's what it is, isn't it, member?

Mr. Prue: It's still Beaches.

Mr. Levac: It's still Beaches. I thought I'd share that with you.

Anyway, the member has brought up some good points that we need to debate and discuss. The salient

point that everyone is making, even the member from Durham: We're talking about the effectiveness of providing us all with safe drinking water so we don't get killed or hurt.

But I want to talk about context. The first part of the context is that the previous government did commit to implement Justice O'Connor's Walkerton inquiry. Everyone has indicated a willingness, in the context of this debate, that the 121 Walkerton inquiry recommendations are going to be fulfilled, including the 22 of those 121 that talk about provisions for source water protection in Ontario. That's the premise and the context of our discussion.

We will establish, and have been up to this point establishing, a collaborative, locally driven, science-based multi-stakeholder process to protect drinking water at its source. Somebody once told me during the debate at the time of the Walkerton crisis—let's call it a crisis, because it was—that it was just a story about two drunk people who caused a problem and that it will go away. I know that all members would agree that there is a premise to be said about that, that it's a fair statement to make, but in isolation only. If you take a look at where we've come from to where we are now—we would still be burying carcasses in the fields and allowing our animals to do whatever they do in the streams. We would still be doing things like that when science has taught us that we really shouldn't be doing that. Why? Because some of our communities across the province choose to take their water from that source. It makes sense for us to make sure, now that we know the science behind it and the discovery of where all this came from and who would be culpable for that, except for the small point that people would say, "It's just two drunk people"—they need to understand that this isn't about trying to lay blame anywhere. This is about a problem we have identified and have all agreed—so far, anyway—that we need to protect our water and need continually to take steps.

Here is one of the things I want to bring up as part of our debate, and that is to ask everybody to engage in the question of how change is implemented and the question of moving into tomorrow because of our advancements in science. We've been taught an awful lot about what our water did before. We couldn't have answers even when people were getting sick because we didn't know. Science comes along and—I'll take a local moment here and say that the inventor of the electron microscope, Dr. James Hillier, is still alive. He comes to Brantford from time to time. He has gone to the United States with tons of patents and has done very well.

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): Is he from Brantford?

Mr. Levac: He's from Brantford originally, and he still comes home. He was born and raised in Brantford, went to BCI. He invented the electron microscope. Before that, we couldn't figure out what was going on in a lot of our science. So it's progressing, and we're getting better at it.

That's a long-winded way of saying, let's keep up with the times and understand that science is teaching us what we need to improve upon.

We talked about the context, and now I want to talk about the scope. The scope of this particular act, the proposed Clean Water Act, Bill 43, "is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water" in Ontario. That's very specific in terms of where we're getting our drinking water. Some people have made some comments about bottled water. Some people have made comments about wells. Some people have talked about communal wells in some communities. I think the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound talked about the communal system, that small communities that actually have a communal well system are going to be affected by this. Those are all types of the sources of water that we're coming from.

So the legislation outlines six key areas in the scope of what we're talking about: the terms of reference, the assessment report, the source protection plan, the implementation of source protection plans, new municipal authorities and the Great Lakes. Taking that across the province, it makes an awful lot of sense for us to put this in context.

I want to talk for just a short, brief moment about the hard-working ministry staff that we have out there. We have three or four different ministries that have involvement in water, but the Ministry of the Environment is the key holder here. I want to say thanks very much to all of those hard-working staff members from the ministry who put themselves out, using their background, their science and their ability to communicate as well, because that's part of their job: communicating with municipal and regional officials about what can be done and how it can be done, and they work very well with our farmers as well, explaining and working. I want to say thanks to them. I also want to say thanks to the Grand River Conservation Authority and, by extension, all of the conservation authorities, which work with farmers and cities. They do a very good job, and that speaks highly of the farmers themselves, about learning new ways to protect the land. The member from Essex, Mr. Hoy, told us that they work well that way and they want to take care of it for themselves as well as for their community. You couldn't find better stewards than our farmers, who make a living off the land. There's no way they'd want to do anything that would hurt their ability to work the land. So they're co-operating very well too, and I want to say thanks.

1720

One of the problems I've come across is in the COMRIF grants in my municipality. It's a compliment, but at the same time it's a sad story and I brought it to the minister's attention. They didn't qualify, because there were municipalities in the province that actually had worse water treatment plants. Because Brantford was doing a great job of keeping on top of keeping their water plant modern, up to date, safe and secure and planned for the future, they didn't qualify. They weren't in bad

shape. I'm hoping that we get to the point where we bring everybody up to standard and that stops, so then we can level the playing field, move forward and actually stop rewarding bad behaviour for letting it get into disrepair. That's my hope there.

There are another couple of quick points I want to make. I could probably speak for a couple hours. Maybe I'll look for unanimous consent. No, I'll wait. We'll see what I can get through.

There was a concern brought up about whether or not they can appeal. Yes, you can. For source water protection planning to work, it will need to consider the views of local municipalities, property owners, business, industry, farmers, environmental groups and others. That's why the act provides people with the right to be involved extensively in the development of the plan. Individuals who are impacted by the source protection plan may seek a hearing through the Ministry of the Environment on the aspects of the source protection plan. In other words, they can appeal and look for other answers. Implementation instruments that are being designed in the bill to also allow municipalities to do bylaws, permits and other orders can be appealed by the Municipal Act. That protection is written in.

Whether or not there's going to be funding: Listen, I've gone through some of the paperwork and found this rather interesting. I want to share this with the listeners.

The downstream effects of sewage bypasses in the Grand River: There's an article talking about the difficulties because somebody has bypassed permissions around heavy rain. They simply turn off a valve, then push the water that's nasty and send it down to Brantford. First of all, stop doing that, and second, that's the reason we have to have these abilities, because one affects the other.

When you look at it, when it goes past Brantford, it also goes all the way down to the lake, through the Six Nations. Why might we be having problems at the Six Nations water plant? I'm going to ask the opposition members, friends of the Conservative Party, to get on the phone and get hold of the federal members to make sure they honour that \$10 million that has been promised. There was a \$10-million promise made and, in fairness, I understand that the Conservative government has indicated right now that it thinks it has the \$10 million for the Six Nations water plant. They've been under boil-water for a long time and it's a federal issue. The local member, Mr. Lloyd St. Amand, has been working very hard on making sure that that money comes forward, and I understand that that's the potential. So I'd ask my friends across to get on the phone and put on that extra pressure to make sure they get that water.

Let me explain to you what happened in 2005 and 2006. The protection region of Lake Erie, the total funding for the city of Brant, the city of Brantford, the city of Guelph and the region of Waterloo, through both the Grand River Conservation Authority and the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, received \$1,111,224 for 2005-06 in terms of planning. I'm thankful that the

government has stepped forward with that. By the way, there's \$162 million in total, if anyone is interested in the chart.

What we need to actually make sure we accomplish in this discussion—I'm going to go back to the half-full glass of water. The member opposite told me that he thinks it's the total demise of rural Ontario as we know it. I think that's a little overstated.

Interjection.

Mr. Levac: Just a little. It's a challenge. I accept it as a challenge, and I think the minister has acknowledged that she has heard clearly that rural Ontario is asking some very serious questions about that. I remember the very same questions being asked when you were sitting on this side of the House as government. So good for you for repeating the questions the previous government had, that this government has, and to make sure that rural Ontario has a voice and that we don't do something that's going to disadvantage rural Ontario as opposed to helping rural Ontario. I have some rural sections of my riding—Glen Morris, Paris, Burford, Kingsville, Mount Pleasant and St. George—and they use communal wells; some use individual wells and we have individual farmers there. Quite frankly, they're asking me the same questions and I'm giving them the same response that the minister will be informed of their concerns, that the minister has assured me that rural Ontario will be given some time to implement, which we've talked about in the legislation and in the guidelines. I'm absolutely convinced that we are on the right track, and that we are going to be talking about source water protection through the one area that I'm on record as saying time and time again—in my case the Grand River Conservation Authority—that it's a fact that we have world-renowned scientists and people on the Grand River Conservation Authority. They're world-renowned. They are experts extraordinaire.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Top-notch.

Mr. Levac: Top-notch. GRCA is second to none when it comes to having an understanding of watershed management.

Watershed management doesn't just include water alone; it's the whole environment as a full piece. Here's the important piece that I want to make sure everybody understands: It isn't just about natural environment, although that's the key focus. It's about making communities inside of that liveable. So I want to compliment the GRCA, its wonderful staff, its volunteers and the board for the work they do. We do have a Grand River watershed caucus and we meet with members of the Tories. I don't think we've got an NDP member on that caucus, but we have a Liberal and Tory caucus that meets and we do take under consideration some of the concerns and issues that each one of those municipalities brings before us. We talk about it, and we talk with the GRCA and we talk with the municipalities, and the mayors get on the phone and share information about what's going on down the river.

I want to end on this challenge: that we include in our discussions, which I know has happened, discussions

with our First Nations. The bill is very explicit. The minister is setting up a consultation process specific to the Grand River, in our case, and talking with Six Nations. First of all, they get it. They understand it. They've got what's called the seven generations. Inside of the seven generations they have to ask each other, whenever they make a decision about what to do in their life, "How does this affect seven generations in front of us?" so that their great-, great-, great-, great-, great-grandchildren will be able to live with the decision they've made. Tonight we're talking about something that we will have to be answerable for generations from now: "Where were you in the debate on source water protection?" I hope that it's done in the spirit of what I've heard tonight from all parties, and that is to ensure that we have safe water. Without water we have nothing else—nothing. The planet can survive without us. We can't survive without the planet—that's the air, the water and the land. Tonight we're talking about one of the three pieces that we need. Six Nations have taught us that for generations. Are we listening? My challenge to us beyond Walkerton, beyond the O'Connor report and beyond the boil-waters is, exactly what are we doing in order to ensure that we have something all of us absolutely need? Fact, straight out: We have to have our water. It's sorry to us if we get this wrong; sorry to us if we don't do enough to ensure that we have safe water for the future.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak. I've got about 50 more minutes' worth of discussion, but I will allow us to do our two minutes so I can hear the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Is this bill going to committee now?

Mr. Levac: One of the things we've made a commitment to do is send this to committee so we can hear from others. I'm hoping that we hear from rural Ontario, from farmers. I'm hoping we hear from the municipalities, because there are different ways in which we can take care of our water. I appreciate the opportunity to share my half-full glass.

1730

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo): I certainly want to thank the member for his very passionate and eloquent remarks. I know he feels very strongly about the need to protect our water, and I don't think anyone would disagree with that need.

We certainly have learned from Walkerton and a few other experiences here in Ontario that we cannot take safe, clean water for granted at any time. We need to ensure that we do protect our water supply, because it is absolutely vital to each and every person in this province.

However, I have to say, having been environment minister in Ontario after Walkerton and after receiving the Walkerton report and moving forward and implementing more than 50 of Justice O'Connor's recommendations through the Safe Drinking Water Act, I am a little disappointed at the foot dragging I have seen on the

part of this government. If we take a look at the number of implemented recommendations after two years of this government being in office, I see that it only stands at somewhere in the neighbourhood of 60, according to the Ministry of the Environment website. I believe that it is absolutely critical that this government focus and move forward much more quickly than they have in the past two years.

This legislation, like much of the legislation we see, contains little in the way of detail. Again, it is passing responsibility to municipalities and also to farmers, who are being asked to cover the costs and do the work of protecting watersheds. It does speak to the delay of implementation of plans for another five years.

Ms. Martel: In response to the comments that were made by the member from Brant, I want to focus specifically on his comments about the inclusion or participation of First Nations; he referenced Six Nations in particular. I want to tell you why this is important from my part of the world as well. If you look at what the Nickel District Conservation Authority is working on now—because they have been working since July through a new source water protection project, the SWP project—their hope is that both the watershed and waters to be protected are going to include both the Wahnapiatae River and the Whitefish River. Very specifically, Greater Sudbury's watershed at the moment includes part of the Wahnapiatae River and its tributaries, part of the Whitefish River and its tributaries, and the entire Vermilion River and its tributaries. The SWP project hopes that once provincial legislation is passed, the watershed will include all of the water bodies associated with Wahnapiatae and Whitefish Rivers.

I can tell you that on the Wahnapiatae River there is the Wahnapiatae First Nation, which is in my riding, and on the Whitefish, there is the Whitefish Lake First Nation, which is also in my riding. Both of those have a very long association with those headwaters and with tributaries that flow from them.

In terms of how we ensure that we include First Nations in this very important discussion, I think we need to do two things, and I'm not sure that they're very clear in the legislation or are articulated well in the legislation. First of all, the role of First Nations and their traditional environmental knowledge needs to be recognized in the protection of source waters and the development of source protection plans. Second, First Nations memberships on source protection committees need to be mandatory in watersheds with First Nation traditional lands. That's certainly the case in the area that we are talking about in my riding. There should be mandatory participation not only for the Six Nations membership in the member for Brant's riding but also for those in mine, and I hope there will be amendments made that will make that very clear.

Mrs. Sandals: I am pleased to respond to the comments from the member for Brant. I agree with him totally in his comments on the Grand River Conservation Authority and the exemplary work they do and the

leadership they've shown in watershed management in Ontario. It's interesting that this bill, when we're looking at clean water, reflects on the work that the Grand River Conservation Authority does in many ways, because it addresses both the issues of water quantity and the water quality.

While in the member's part of the watershed, in the south end of the watershed, people tend to be reliant on surface water, when you go farther up the watershed, to the more northerly part of the watershed in my neck of the woods, we tend to, when we're looking at drinking water, be much more reliant on groundwater sources.

This bill, when it's looking at requiring authorities and municipalities to look at risks to water supply, requires the authorities to look at both quantity and quality, at surface water and groundwater. One of the things that the Grand River Conservation Authority has been very active in looking at is how that groundwater is regenerated to ensure that we have both quantity and quality of groundwater, and has been mapping not just the surface water flow but also the groundwater flow, which quite frankly aren't necessarily in the same direction given the faults that you may have.

There has been a great deal of attention paid in our part of the province to how that watershed system works, how it's integrated. Hopefully, through this bill, we will see that attention to detail spread throughout the province.

The Acting Speaker: We have time for one last question or comment.

Mr. Murdoch: I'd like to thank the member from Brant for his passionate speech on this bill. He mentioned that I thought this would be the downfall of rural Ontario. As it sits, it will be.

We talked about how you're going to take it out and how we can all work together on this, which if we do, for a change in this House, then maybe we will come up with something right. We all do agree that we need clean water; there's no disagreement there. It's how we get to it. Unfortunately, looking at this bill, there are a lot of things that seem to be left out or are maybe just not explained properly. Hopefully, when we go out to committee, we will get some of these answers.

As mentioned by a member in the NDP about a lot of regulations, this is the type of bill where we're going to need some of those regulations ahead of time, or people just aren't going to trust the bill. That's the problem. I get to speak on this later, and I'll be able to explain that people out there are really concerned about this coming from big government: "Will they listen to the little person? Will this not cost rural Ontario a whole lot of money?" Those answers aren't in there. We're really concerned in rural Ontario that this could be a big boondoggle, and if all the money is left to rural Ontario to pick up, it's not right.

This water needs protection, but it's protection for everybody, especially people in the urban cities. Unfortunately, this may become one of those rural/urban things again and the people of rural Ontario end up

picking up the bill to protect the water, which a lot of times they do now.

This whole thing too—I wonder what's going to happen to the Ministry of the Environment. Are they going to disappear? I'm glad to see that the ministry is here and listening to us, and when I get a chance to say some more, I will.

The Acting Speaker: That concludes the time for questions and comments. I'll return to the member for Brant, who has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Levac: I want to thank the members from Kitchener–Waterloo—eloquent as always—and Nickel Belt, Guelph–Wellington and Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

To the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, you need to talk to the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound because, when you talk to us about not moving fast enough, it was rural Ontario that asked us to slow down, and we listened to them. You'll have to forgive me if we're not listening to you, member, but we're listening to rural Ontario, who tells us we needed to slow down a little bit on the implementation of all these rules and regulations. We favoured the farmers, who told us, "Whoa, slow down a little bit," so we're going to.

We will make the commitment, as you did, that we're going to implement the inquiry. We're going to implement it, we're going to get it right, and we will do so with the help of everyone. I appreciate that.

The member for Nickel Belt indicated about First Nations, and I will indicate to her that the MOE already has been and is in discussions with First Nations and the federal government right now on a regular basis to discuss how best to involve First Nations communities. They're participating in the in-front conversation, which I just found out. I'm glad you asked that and I hope you take it in the spirit that it's being delivered: that we will be talking to them about source water protection planning and their clean water on-territory, which means there could end up being what we're hoping for at Six Nations: a water treatment plant on top of it, not just simply wells. That's what we're hoping for. The discussions are ongoing.

1740

To the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, there are two things here. You made a point about what we can do, and you think that the Ministry of the Environment might eventually disappear. It wasn't us that put a 40% cut on the Ministry of the Environment; it was the previous government. They cut their budget by 40%. I remember yelling and screaming about it, and I think you did too. To be fair, I think you mentioned it, because you knew it was going to affect rural Ontario. What I'm going to say to you is that I accept what you said and the premise in which you delivered it, and that is, let's get together and get this right. I really think we can do it, and I hope that we all do it.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Murdoch: I'm glad to have a chance to say a few things on this bill. I was wondering if maybe I could get all-party consent to go my 20 minutes, because I see the

time clock now is only at 10 minutes. I don't know what happened there, but I wondered if—

Interjections.

Mr. Murdoch: Well, now we're down to 10, and I have at least 20 minutes or more. I mean, it would be a lot longer. So I would ask for consent to have 20 minutes, and that would probably work us until 6 o'clock.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound has asked for unanimous consent of the House to continue on to do a 20-minute speech. Is there consent in the House for him to do that? Agreed? I heard a no. I return to the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Interjections.

Mr. Murdoch: The government of the day could change the rules for me, and I thought they might like to do that, but they may not want to listen to me for any more than 10 minutes. I was going to try to be nice to them, but what can you do? Because as I said before, and I agree with the member from Brant, it does need all three parties for this bill to ever work. It will never work if you don't get that, because there will always be partisan things happening. This is one of the most important bills we're probably ever going to debate in this House. That's why I wanted at least 20 minutes. Anyway, we'll live with what I have.

I have a concern here. There was a headline in the newspaper in Owen Sound that said, "Clean Water Bill Concern for Grey: Proposed Law a Threat to Privacy Rights of Rural Property Owners, Some Councillors Fear." This comes from Grey county council.

"Farm groups and some rural Ontario municipalities have objections to a provincial clean water bill that provides environmental inspectors with what one mayor describes as 'police state' powers." This is coming right from county council.

"The Ontario Clean Water Act received first reading in early December in the Ontario Legislature. Government officials have indicated they'd like to see it passed into law by summer.

"At a meeting earlier this week, however, members of Grey county council instructed Warden Bob Pringle to organize an information session on the bill for area municipal leaders. Chatsworth Mayor Howard Greig described the proposed law as a threat to the privacy rights of rural property owners and a potential new cost for municipal governments and farmers."

Let's just stop there for a minute. That's one of the problems with the bill: It doesn't say who's going to have to pay for all these concerns. Now, I understand and I applaud the government for the money they've sent out to conservation authorities to be able to do the planning and mapping out. The member from Brant bragged about his conservation authorities. Well, I would like to inform him in the House now that probably the best two conservation authorities come from my riding, and that's the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. They have led many, many things at the association for conservation authorities and

probably are two of the best in Ontario—I'm not saying the one from Brant isn't doing a good job—and they appreciated the money that they got to do this planning. But the concern will be, who's going to pay for these inspectors?

Even if it's left to the conservation authorities, if the money doesn't come from the province, then it has to come from the local municipalities. Then that's the local people, that's rural Ontario, again paying for something that needs to be done, but it's protecting large urban Ontario also. If any new laws have to be enacted, then the money must come from the province, because they collect the money from everybody in Ontario, and this is a problem not just in rural Ontario but for all of Ontario. So that's one of the big concerns.

“The bill ... is extremely scary,” Greig told council members during their February session in Owen Sound. He objected to the proposed powers for enforcement officers who would be allowed to enter the property of any land owner without a warrant on the suspicion that there is pollution.”

Now that's a dangerous thing in this bill. We have property rights and we believe in property rights. It may not be in the Constitution, but I'll tell you, most people in rural Ontario believe that they have some sort of property rights. If this bill, which it looks like it will, will allow—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Sounds like the Lanark Landowners.

Mr. Murdoch: Absolutely right. The member from St. Catharines is talking about the landowners' association. While it's called “Lanark,” it's all over Ontario now. It's not just in Lanark. This association now represents people from all over Ontario and it's getting bigger. If this government today wants to enact more laws like this one where an inspector can just come on to your property, then you're in trouble. That's the kind of thing you're going to find out when you go out into the field and when you go out with the committee meetings, that we're really concerned about this kind of stuff.

It goes on to say, “This has the potential of shutting down agriculture in southern Ontario,” Greig said.” So you see, I'm not the only one who's saying this bill is bad the way it sits today.

“Both Greig and Georgian Bluffs Mayor Carl Spencer objected to provincial plans preventing municipal government or regional conservation authorities to enforce a new law using permit fees from property owners.”

Another one: “West Grey Mayor Delton Becker, a former chair of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, said the bill may provide municipal governments with powers that ‘we really don't really want.’

“They're having a real problem stepping up to the plate on conservation,” Becker said of provincial officials. ‘The province should fully fund whatever they wanted to do,’ he said.”

This is coming from a former chair of a conservation authority, not only from Delton Becker but from another former chair—myself. I was chair of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority for five years. That authority, as

I say, does a great job, but if these new laws come in, they're going to be tied to them and there are going to be problems just like Grey county council is saying.

I have some more on this, but one of the other problems I want to get in before my short time is up is: “The preparation of drinking water source protection plans begins with the establishment of a drinking water source protection committee.” Who is going to put that committee in charge? I wonder if there's anybody over there on the government side who will tell me, because I don't believe it's in the bill, who that committee is. I think there is some talk about there will have to be a farmer on it, a landowner and a business person, but it's not set in stone, and it doesn't tell us who's going to tell us who these people are.

As you know, in the past, when you get a government in power, they generally appoint their cronies to these positions. If that's what happens this time, if it happens—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: That was only the Conservatives doing that.

Mr. Murdoch: I hear from across the way my good friend from St. Catharines saying, “Only Conservatives do that.” Well, I hate to inform him but, unfortunately, Liberals are as bad or worse. They're doing this.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: No.

Mr. Murdoch: I know it's hard for him to understand that, but they are.

If this happens, though, and you happen to be the government—I'm not saying the other government didn't do this. This is the problem, it's been done forever. We're not going to necessarily get good people in there. You may get some good Liberals in there; you may not. If you get a committee set up politically, then other people are not going to be able to work with that committee and we're going to be no better off than we are right now.

I'd like somebody to explain that to me maybe later on. Maybe the Minister of the Environment—because I know she's listening—will come and tell me who's going to do this. Maybe they'll allow the municipalities, since they think the municipalities are going to have to pay for a lot of this—maybe they'll give them some say in this. But that is something that has to be sorted out, because if it isn't, then we're just back to the same old, same old, and this bill will not ever be accepted by rural Ontario, for sure.

But it goes on. I was just going to read—there was one person who didn't agree with Grey county and Grey county council, but guess what? She comes from the city of Owen Sound, so not understanding maybe everything that's out there. There was only one councillor on the whole council of Grey who didn't agree that this bill is in trouble—one councillor, and she happened to come from Owen Sound. I'm just saying, I'm not the only one who has concerns with this. We're not the only party that has concerns; the NDP also has concerns. And if this is going to work, as we've talked about with the member from Brant, it's going to have to work with all three parties.

I'm sure you're going to take back who is going to sit on the authority.

The other one that's in there that John O'Toole brought up today, and it really does bother me, is section 83, where "A municipality or source protection authority may, for the purpose of implementing a source protection plan"—we don't know yet who's going to set out the plan—"acquire by purchase, lease or otherwise, or, subject to the Expropriations Act...."

Governments of all stripes here have done too much of that. If we're going to get into that at all, then this plan is not going to work. It's not going to be accepted.

One other thing before my time is up: You can't expect farmers to do all the fencing of the creeks. I know the member for Brant offered that, but somebody's got to pay for that. That should come from everybody in Ontario. Sorry, my time is up.

1750

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Ms. Martel: I appreciated the comments that were made by the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, particularly his last points about financial resources. I'm going to speak to this again, which is what I've been trying to raise as a concern through the course of the afternoon.

In the information we got from the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition, they said the following with respect to this concern: "Bill 43 is silent on the subject of providing funding assistance to farmers for the adoption of beneficial management systems. This contradicts advice provided by Justice O'Connor in the report on the Walkerton Inquiry: part 2 (2002) in recommendation 16...."

"More generally, there should also be public funding for research, and education and awareness initiatives related to the objectives of the Clean Water Act.

"An excellent model is the stewardship fund that is embedded in Manitoba's Water Protection Act. Interestingly, Manitoba's stewardship fund is in the form of a trust; a strategy consistent with recommendation 123 of the implementation committee report to the Minister of the Environment on watershed based source protection (2004).

"The establishment of such a mechanism will demonstrate a commitment by the government of Ontario to the level of funding necessary to ensure that the Clean Water Act meets its objective of providing a more secure source of drinking water to the various municipalities...."

"A section should be added to Bill 43 that indicates a mechanism whereby the province can provide funding to support the objectives...."

The reason I raise that is because I think that's a legitimate concern, and it's one I'm getting not just from farmers but also from a constituent who already wrote to the Minister of the Environment on November 8—her name is Elin Maki Flora—to outline her support for the bill. I want to indicate that she did do that. She said at the end, "Please note that many of us now believe after the Walkerton tragedy and the continuing boil-water advisories across the province, that we must all pay for the full cost of clean ... drinking water, and that this ... is a right.

Water is our lifeblood, and it is one thing that must not fall victim to budgetary constraints."

So far, the money that has been announced has been for planning and development. That's okay, but we really have to be thinking about what mechanism will be put in place to support this in the long term.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: First of all I want to lament the fact that the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound was limited to 10 minutes. Unfortunately, I remember arguing vociferously against the rule changes that his government imposed upon the Ontario Legislature, and now, as they would say in the rural areas, the chickens have come home to roost. That is most unfortunate because there are certain bills and issues that are important to members.

Were I your whip, I would have put you speaking earlier on so you would have had the 20 minutes. I know it's a difficult job being a whip or House leader, so I'm not criticizing the whip. But you have had first-hand experience from Walkerton with a difficult situation.

The Conservative Party has a dilemma so very often on these issues. You get one member up, my good friend Elizabeth Witmer, the member for Kitchener-Waterloo, a very good friend of mine, who said the government wasn't moving quickly enough on these issues. Then I heard my good friend from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound get up and say that the government is moving too quickly, and we have to go around the province to hear from people. We're not implementing it fast enough, yet we're implementing it too fast.

The same is true on funding. One day your critic, who is my good friend from Erie-Lincoln, says that the government's spending is out of control, and your leader, John Tory, is up, saying, "Spending is out of control and you've got to stop spending." My good friend who is now the federal finance minister used to talk about too much spending, and yet I hear from Conservative members now that we should be spending more from the provincial treasury.

I know it's a dilemma. It's a very difficult dilemma, and it must be really challenging for my friend from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I just wish he had another 10 minutes at the least to elaborate on these issues. I'm sure he will do it at another time.

Mr. Miller: It's my pleasure to add some comments to the speech from the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, who I know was keen to speak to this bill and get his concerns, especially to do with rural municipalities and farmers, on the record. He did a good job of talking about concerns from his area to do with, I think he said "police state," powers envisioned in this bill. I hope this bill doesn't just produce rules and regulations and plans without real results, as government can often do: create great bureaucracies but not necessarily get results.

We heard the member from Brant earlier talking about problems with storm sewers. I would identify that as a real problem in many municipalities. I can tell you that that's the type of problem in an area like Parry Sound-Muskoka that has many lakes and rivers: having storm sewers that drain, under high water conditions or when you get a large downpour, directly into our rivers, some-

thing that is a negative that should be fixed. I hope we deal with real situations and get real improvements versus just making lots of paper and plans.

What about landfills as well? In Bracebridge we had a situation where the landfill contaminated one of the parts of the water supply for the town of Bracebridge. There are jurisdictions in the world, in European countries, where landfill sites are banned. That would be something I would consider. I think we should look seriously at energy from waste as an alternative to landfill sites, generate some power from waste, and protect water, which has to be our most precious resource on this earth.

In my last 10 seconds, I would just like to ask, what about the municipalities that have applied for water system upgrades and have been turned down? I believe it's South River, Sundridge and Nobel in my riding of Parry Sound.

Mr. Levac: I could not resist the opportunity to tell people that this glass is more than half full. It's there. It's good water.

The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound reminded me of something that I wanted to talk about, and that was the fencing thing. The stewardship councils, the Grand River Conservation Authority and the municipalities in Brant got together and started to assist the farmers. They started a program where, to move forward, they voluntarily stepped up to the plate and started making the corrections that had been wrong in the first place: keeping the streams clear, making sure that the fecal matter did not enter the streams. It was almost all voluntary.

There will be some hardships. The member has hit on something that we do have to analyze. We do have to get together and figure out and get ourselves wrapped around how we are going to put this into play for everybody. It's nice to say that we've got these councils and it's nice to say that we've got these other opportunities, which are working on some farms, but other farmers can't do it because they simply can't afford it. So the naturalization of the stream beds on the farms is one of the best ways—and it's shown in science to be one of the best ways—to keep our water clean. That's the simple act of keeping them a certain amount of space away from those creeks and streams. Fencing is one of those aspects. Some of that, by the way, is being done voluntarily in my riding; I can assure you of that. That has been discussed. So there has been some funding forwarded by the municipality, because they think it's that important to move that along.

The second component of this is that I did receive a letter from—and maybe you can speak to this—a person who was into water, an aqua guy or whatever; I can't remember what his name was. He was saying that there

isn't a problem with the source water; it's just making sure that all the municipalities have the ability to clean their water before we drink it. He basically said, "Get away from all that." I'm not sure I agree with that, but that's an interesting premise that maybe we should debate as well.

The Acting Speaker: That concludes questions and comments. The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Murdoch: I'd like to thank the members from Nickel Belt, St. Catharines, Parry Sound–Muskoka and Brant.

The member from Nickel Belt mentioned the costs again. Maybe everybody doesn't have a copy of this, but there's a summary of key amendments recommended by the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition. It's an excellent piece of literature. They've got "myth or reality." One thing is, "The Clean Water Act will not impose a significant cost on agricultural owners." That's somewhere in the act. "If this is true, why is there so much resistance to establishing a provincially supported agricultural stewardship fund for the few impacted agriculture landowners?" That would hopefully be something that the province could do.

The member from St. Catharines mentioned the whip. It's not the whip's fault; it's my fault. I wasn't prepared. John O'Toole even offered me his 20 minutes, but I hadn't had everything up, so it's my own fault that I only got 10 minutes. It would have been nice if I'd had longer, but I didn't, and that's okay because we will have committees. I will be able to go to some of those committees. Hopefully there will be one in my area. It would be nice to see one maybe in Walkerton. If anybody said that I don't know too much about the clean water impact, Walkerton is in my riding. I went through all the trials and tribulations and all the problems that we had there, so I am pretty well up to date on that. I think it would be nice if one of the committees did meet in that area. Walkerton certainly would be a good place.

The member from Brant brought up the special idea about, "Yes, if we clean the water at a source somewhere maybe that would work." I'm not so sure about that either, but it certainly could be looked at. If you have a letter on that, let's get it out there, and maybe send me a copy too. I'd appreciate it.

The Acting Speaker: It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until later on this evening at 6:45.

The House adjourned at 1802.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

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