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of Debates
(Hansard)**

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des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 1 May 2006

Lundi 1^{er} 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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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Monday 1 May 2006

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Lundi 1^{er} mai 2006

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HARRY JEROME AWARDS

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): On Saturday I was very pleased to attend the 24th annual Harry Jerome Awards with a number of my PC caucus colleagues. The awards are given out every year by the Black Business and Professional Association, honouring members of the black community for their achievements and the inspiration they provide for others. One of the guests at my table showed me why these awards are so important. Monique is 18 years old. She just finished her first year at York University in English and communications. Her goal is to be a winner of a Harry Jerome Award. I wish her the best of luck, and if she wins, she will be in good company.

The winners this year include: Simone Samuels, Dr. David Burt, Dr. J. Douglas Salmon, Jaleesa Rhoden, Nadija Cheavon Anderson, Stephen Lewis, Joyce Ross, Icilda Elliston, Larry Gibson, Louis Mercier, Edward Ndububa and Winston Stewart.

CLASS SIZE

Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe): I have some very exciting news that I want to share with the House today. The Thames Valley District School Board is helping the McGuinty government reach the goal of having class sizes of 20 students in junior kindergarten through grade 3 by 2007-08.

I want to congratulate the Thames Valley District School Board for making significant progress. In the 2005-06 school year, grades 1 through 3 classes averaged around 20.8 students, and in the 2006-07 school year, classes will average 20.4 students. Class sizes are also decreasing in grade 4 to grade 8.

More than 2,100 schools have reduced their primary class size. Educators understand, as the government does, that children learn better in smaller classes with more individual attention. This is more good news for a government that has successfully taken on the task of restoring confidence and health to an education system that was decaying after years of the previous Conservative government's neglect.

Not only are class sizes getting smaller, there is also peace and stability in the education sector, because for

the first time, four-year collective agreements are in place, guaranteeing no strike during that period. And more good news: Test scores have gone up. Students are making real progress.

Again, I want to congratulate the Thames Valley District School Board for small classes—

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

PHYSICIAN APPRECIATION WEEK

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): Halton region has selected the week of May 1 as Physician Appreciation Week. This morning, I joined our mayor, Rob MacIsaac, in celebrating and honouring the hard work and commitment made by the doctors at Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital. Throughout this week, the Halton hospitals are holding celebratory events in honour of their committed teams of professionals. On Wednesday evening, a special tribute dinner will be held to recognize over 600 Halton physicians.

Physician Appreciation Week also highlights another key area of concern, and that is the shortage of family doctors throughout Halton region. Now, Burlington, Halton Hills and Milton are designated as underserved by the ministry. However, Oakville is in a similar circumstance, but has not yet received this designation. In all, another 30 family doctors are needed in Halton due to rising patient need as our community continues to grow. According to the GTA/905 Health Care Alliance, Burlington is growing at a rate almost three times faster than the provincial average. However, despite a commitment from the health minister, JBMH has yet to receive a funding commitment earmarked for growth. It has been almost four years since the Health Services Restructuring Commission, implemented by the previous government, recognized that high population growth in Burlington would require an expansion of services both at the hospital and with the local family physicians.

As we celebrate Physician Appreciation Week in Halton, I urge the health minister to address high-growth areas like Burlington. Our hospital expansion is still pending approval, in spite of the Premier's telling us that it's pretty hard to find a community in Ontario where there's not some kind of hospital expansion—

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

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham): Today is a very special and important day for Asian Canadians in On-

tario, as May 1 marks the beginning of Asian Heritage Month. I am both proud and honoured to recognize that this is the first official year that we are celebrating Asian Heritage Month in Ontario after my private member's bill, Bill 113, An Act to proclaim the month of May as Asian Heritage Month, gained royal assent last spring.

For me, the passing of Bill 113 demonstrates a commitment from this government to encourage a deeper appreciation of the people of Ontario's cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. Since making Ontario their home, 1.5 million Asian Canadians have played and continue to play an integral role in the economic growth and success of this province. This month symbolizes our appreciation of their many accomplishments and contributions in the arts, culture, science and technology, business and education, and in politics.

This month, I invite and encourage you to share in the festivities of Asian Heritage Month in your community to learn more about the traditional foods, music, and literature of south, east, west and far east Asians alike. As our Premier has said on many occasions, our greatest resource is our people. Asian Canadians are one of many groups that make up and have helped shape our rich and diverse province. Please join me in celebrating Asian heritage today.

1340

EDUCATION WEEK

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): I rise today on behalf of the official opposition to acknowledge Education Week in Ontario. Public school boards across Ontario are celebrating this week with the theme Making Every Student Count. Catholic school boards are celebrating Catholic Education Week with the theme And God Saw that it Was Good.

This week has been set aside as a week to honour and recognize those who work with Ontario's education system, and we join in acknowledging the dedication of all who contribute to the acquiring of knowledge, the building of character and the development of responsible citizens. This includes teachers, principals, administrative and support staff, and parents, who must always be embraced as key partners in education.

In keeping with the theme of Education Week, we must also acknowledge the significant contribution to our province that is made through the province's independent and faith-based schools. Just as Ontario's Catholic schools celebrate the unique identity and distinct contribution that Catholic education makes to Ontario's education system, we cannot ignore the petitioning of those who are calling on this Legislature to treat all faith-based schools in Ontario fairly and equitably and without religious discrimination, to ensure that indeed we make every student count.

NURSES

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): Today, registered nurses came to Queen's Park to deliver 8,000 signed

postcards as part of the Ontario Nurses' Association's Still Not Enough Nurses campaign. I want to recognize the president of ONA, Linda Haslam-Stroud, who is in the members' gallery today, and thank her for ONA's ongoing commitment to reminding the McGuinty Liberal government that it has fallen far short of meeting its promised target of hiring 8,000 new nurses. The failure to meet this election promise is of greater and greater concern as up to 30,000 registered nurses will be eligible to retire by 2008.

We know that Ontario's registered nurses provide valuable, high-quality health care in hospitals, long-term-care homes, community health centres, home care, public health units and other community-based agencies. But these nurses are working longer and harder than ever before, and they know that conditions in their workplaces are not improving.

ONA has provided 12 solutions to the government that would improve conditions for registered nurses and ensure there are enough of them to provide the high-quality care their patients deserve. But the government is not listening, and the working lives of Ontario's registered nurses are becoming more difficult, more stressful and more challenging. Changes are required immediately to improve working conditions for Ontario's RNs so they can provide the quality of care they want and need to provide Ontario patients.

This government has to recognize the potential for 30,000 registered nurses to retire by 2008. It's a looming health care crisis that will have a major impact on patients and patient care. At a time when the McGuinty government had a \$3-billion windfall in its most recent budget, it had the money to—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Members' statements?

DEFIBRILLATION EQUIPMENT

Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex): I'm proud to stand today and introduce for his first visit to the Ontario Legislature Joan's and my grandson, Benjamin Allen Crozier, along with his father, our handsome and bright son David, and our beautiful daughter-in-law, Jolean. They're visiting from Calgary.

At the same time, I want to remind members of a bill I introduced earlier in the session, Bill 71, which is An Act to promote the use of automated external heart defibrillators. I want to encourage the House leaders and other powers that be that it would be a great step forward in the province of Ontario for the health of our citizens and the well-being of those who are found in a cardiac arrest emergency if we were to pass this bill, which protects those who place defibrillators and those who use them from any liability.

Thank you very much, Speaker, for the opportunity to cover two very important projects: one that I am enthusiastic about, and the other, three that I love.

DARFUR GENOCIDE

Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): Yesterday I attended a rally organized by Canadian high school and university students right here at Queen's Park. Over 1,000 people attended. The essence of this demonstration was best expressed by the Honourable David Kilgour.

The 21st century's genocide has now entered its third year, while the world watches. According to an analysis of United Nations data, fully 215,000 Darfuri civilians have been murdered since early 2003, with approximately 200,000 more dead from disease and malnutrition.

With more than 400,000 Darfurians already dead, will the international community allow this to increase to half a million before acting? To 800,000, as in the case of Rwanda? To one million? At what point will we find the political will to stop the killing, burning and raping in Darfur?

Here is a three-point intervention proposal: (1) Establish a no-fly zone over Darfur; (2) hold an assembly of representative leaders and stakeholders from across Darfur and establish a legitimate and functional regional government for this area; and (3) create an implementation force of international peacemakers, hopefully coordinated by the African Union and the United Nations.

All of this of course will require hard work and focused determination. If successful, however, this genocide could finally be halted and Darfuri villages can begin to rebuild their shattered lives in peace.

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): John Kenneth Galbraith was one of the defining intellects of the 20th century. His recent loss will be felt both in his adoptive country and here in his homeland of Canada. His influence has permeated the globe; his concepts of governance and economic policy will be studied for generations to come.

Born in Iona Station, Ontario, Mr. Galbraith served in the administrations of four American presidents as well as serving as John F. Kennedy's ambassador to India. He is one of the few two-time recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Mr. Galbraith understood that government plays an essential role in ensuring the equal development of all aspects of a society. His book, *The Affluent Society*, outlined how the American government in the post-war era was growing in private sector wealth, while suffering from poor social and physical infrastructure, perpetuating income disparities.

This situation is not unlike the one this government found in 2003. The previous Tory government had ignored the wisdom of Mr. Galbraith, to the detriment of all Ontarians. We are correcting the Tories' mistakes by investing in Ontario's infrastructure and ensuring that its hospitals, schools, roads and social programs are strong.

Mr. Galbraith was correct: Good government ensures that all elements of a society progress equally. This

government is proud to carry on that tradition. We express our condolences to the family of John Kenneth Galbraith and thank them for his legacy of ideals.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH
OF HAMILTON ACT, 2006

Mr. Levac moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr25, An Act respecting The Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamilton.

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

Pursuant to standing order 84, this bill stands referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the membership of certain committees.

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

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I move that the following substitutions be made to the membership of certain committees:

On the standing committee on estimates, Mr. Delaney replaces Ms. Di Cocco; on the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, Mr. Arnott replaces Mr. O'Toole; and on the standing committee on social policy, Mr. O'Toole replaces Mr. Arnott.

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

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 1, 2006, for the purpose of considering government business.

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

All 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 1357.

The Speaker: Order. I need the members to take their seats.

Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 121. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve
Balkissoon, Bas	Hardeman, Ernie	Peterson, Tim
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hudak, Tim	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bradley, James J.	Jackson, Cameron	Racco, Mario G.
Broten, Laurel C.	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Brownell, Jim	Klees, Frank	Ramsay, David
Bryant, Michael	Kular, Kuldeep	Rinaldi, Lou
Cansfield, Donna H.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Runciman, Robert W.
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Ruprecht, Tony
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	MacLeod, Lisa	Sandals, Liz
Chudleigh, Ted	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Cordiano, Joseph	McMeekin, Ted	Smitherman, George
Craitor, Kim	McNeely, Phil	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Crozier, Bruce	Miller, Norm	Sterling, Norman W.
Delaney, Bob	Milloy, John	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Van Bommel, Maria
Duguid, Brad	Munro, Julia	Watson, Jim
Dunlop, Garfield	O'Toole, John	Wilson, Jim
Elliott, Christine	Oraziotti, David	Wong, Tony C.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Yakabuski, John
Fonseca, Peter	Parsons, Ernie	Zimmer, David

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

Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael
Horwath, Andrea	Martel, Shelley	Tabuns, Peter
Kormos, Peter	Murdoch, Bill	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 66; the nays are 8.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

HOME CARE

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): This morning I had the privilege of releasing a report which will be crucial to our government's efforts to transform health care, specifically home care services. Home care is a vital part of our health care system, and it's crucial that people know they're getting the best services possible and that the quality of service will continue for as long as needed.

To help make this happen, we needed an independent review of the competitive bidding process used by CCACs to select service providers to deliver home care services. The person we asked to conduct this review was the Honourable Elinor Caplan. Elinor, of course, is well known to many members of this assembly, having served with great distinction as Minister of Health as well as holding other senior cabinet posts in the provincial and

federal governments. It would be difficult to identify someone more qualified in this role than Elinor Caplan, and she did not disappoint.

The report she produced, *Realizing the Potential of Home Care: Competing for Excellence by Rewarding Results*, is indeed a comprehensive review of Ontario's community care access procurement process—the process used by CCACs to obtain everything from medical supplies and equipment to the services of a broad range of health care and support professionals, including nursing, professional support, personal support and home-making, and therapy services for their clients.

Elinor Caplan and her staff consulted with 37 CCACs, 1,000 members of the public and 500 home care clients. They also conducted 200 interviews with groups and organizations and reviewed more than 80 submissions. From that, they analyzed a mountain of information to determine the impact of the current procurement process, and they made recommendations for improving the process. I'm delighted to announce that our government completely supports the recommendations for improving the working environment for those dedicated personal support workers and other home care workers who make such an invaluable contribution to the quality of our health care system.

We will be moving forward on three key areas: stabilizing the workforce, client-focused quality home care, and strengthening procurement practices.

We'll increase the minimum base wage for personal support workers under CCAC contracts from \$9.65 an hour to \$12.50 an hour—a 30% increase—and we will enhance their compensation for travel time and mileage.

We will work with the home care sector, requiring agencies to show increases in full-time and regular part-time positions for personal support workers. This new funding will give more workers better employment benefits, such as increased access to statutory holiday pay, severance and termination provisions and improved compensation, as I mentioned, for travel time and mileage.

We'll ensure better job security for everyone who works in home care by permitting the extension of CCAC contracts for up to nine years. Enhanced job security for home care workers is obviously beneficial to those employees, but continuity of employment also results in continuity of care, which benefits patients; and better patient care is, of course, the primary motivation behind the changes that we're introducing.

Other reforms include improvements to the way CCACs arrange for services for clients, including rewarding outstanding service providers by designating them as preferred providers and giving them longer contracts. We'll also streamline the procurement process by centralizing and coordinating the prequalification process, simplifying their procurement documents and standardizing the evaluation tools and processes to enhance consistency and transparency.

We're committed to ensuring that people who need home care receive client-focused, quality services. To

this end, we'll establish new capacities for local health systems to target improvements in home care, including providing an annual report card for Ontarians. We'll promote quality home care services by identifying, validating and sharing best practices, developing performance indicators and setting performance benchmarks.

In addition, our government will support the report's recommendation that there needs to be a research chair specific to home care to ensure that research continues to improve and inform the quality of home care services.

We'll also support a third-party case management review that will consult key stakeholders, including the Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres and the CCACs, to ensure that the system has common definitions and takes a more consistent approach to system navigation and case management.

The acceptance of these recommendations is aligned with our government's ongoing efforts to build a high-performing health care system through streamlined accountability and performance measurement.

Client satisfaction is an integral part of quality. To ensure open and transparent communication with clients, we'll expand the present ministry's long-term-care action line to provide the public with access to an independent third party to hear home care complaints. To this end, we'll hire independent complaint coordinators to hear client complaints and address their concerns.

Home care isn't a faceless, anonymous business; it's the most fundamental provision of help, from one person to another.

These actions are part of the \$117.8 million in additional funding the government is providing for home care and community services in 2006-07.

In closing, I want to say that I'm proud of this report. It gave me great pleasure to move forward on these recommendations on behalf of Ontarians.

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

BOIS D'OEUVRE

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): It is a pleasure for me to rise in the House today to inform the members that Ontario welcomes the announcement last Thursday of a framework leading to the resolution of the softwood lumber dispute between Canada and the United States.

Les membres de l'Assemblée savent que le conflit a imposé un lourd fardeau sur les entreprises ontariennes et avait mis en danger le gagne-pain de milliers de travailleurs forestiers de l'Ontario.

The members will know that this dispute has imposed a considerable burden on Ontario companies and posed a threat to the livelihood of thousands of Ontario forestry workers.

It has dragged on for far too long. We now have a long-term agreement that will bring greater stability and predictability.

A tremendous amount of work went into the negotiations that finally led to the framework.

Tout au long des négociations, nous avons défendu les intérêts de l'Ontario avec une résolution inébranlable.

Throughout this process, we have steadfastly defended Ontario's interests.

When we first heard some of the details of the proposed framework, it was just not acceptable to Ontario. It put Ontario at a distinct disadvantage and would have meant widespread job loss in the softwood industry.

I said that day that Ontario would not agree to a deal that threatened Ontario's softwood producers unfairly and I lived up to that commitment. We urged the federal government to re-examine it so it would better reflect our historical export volume. I am pleased to say that they listened to us and did so.

The McGuinty government fought hard for our softwood producers and northern communities and was able to bring about a deal that was better than the original framework. We stood up for Ontario and were able to secure a fair deal.

Nous avons défendu l'Ontario et réussi à obtenir un accord équitable.

The framework announced on Thursday takes into account Ontario's principal objective of recognizing our historic trading volumes.

I appreciate the support and involvement of the Premier in addressing this matter. Also, I want thank our team: Mike Kergin, our negotiator, and Mike Willick and Bill Thornton, two of our assistant deputy ministers, who successfully defended this province's interests with integrity and determination. There are many others in the MNR who have worked on this file over the years, and I would also like to thank them for their hard work and dedication.

Aussi je félicite mon collègue du Québec, Raymond Bachand, et son prédécesseur, Claude Béchar, de la coopération et de l'appui que le Québec n'a pas cessé de nous donner.

I would also like to recognize my colleague in Quebec, Raymond Bachand, and his predecessor, Claude Béchar, for that province's continued co-operation and support. I also appreciate British Columbia's Forests and Range Minister, Rich Coleman, for working with Ontario on this file. BC and Ontario have shown great support for each other in getting the changes to the framework that we both required.

Finally, I congratulate Prime Minister Stephen Harper, my counterpart David Emerson, and Ambassador Michael Wilson for ensuring that all Canadian interests were protected.

These last few years have been very difficult for all of the affected provinces as we have sought to eliminate the tariffs imposed by the United States.

Ontario looks forward to continuing to work with the federal government and other provinces to finalize the agreement and to come up with an implementation process.

1410

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour): This morning, I had the pleasure of addressing some 2,000 delegates at the annual conference of the Industrial Accident Prevention Association. It is the most important health and safety conference in the country, with 5,000 professionals attending.

This year, I brought the participants some important news about injury prevention and cost avoidance to businesses here in the province of Ontario. Over the past two years, there have been 14,649 fewer lost-time injuries to workers in Ontario. This means that over 14,000 Ontario workers have escaped injuries that might otherwise have occurred. It means that their families have not had to see their loved ones injured or possibly permanently disabled. It also means that Ontario businesses have avoided \$960 million in costs associated with workplace injuries. These costs include employment replacement, injury investigation, overtime pay for other employees and reduced productivity due to loss of skilled employees.

Our goal, as announced in July 2004, was to reduce workplace injuries by 20%. We said we would do this through a comprehensive, integrated health and safety strategy. This strategy would use education, training, legislation, regulation and enforcement. It would encompass all of our health and safety partners. Our goal is that by 2008 there will be 20,000 fewer lost-time injuries per year in the province of Ontario than would otherwise have occurred.

I'm here to tell you today that we are succeeding. In fact, we are ahead of schedule. Stop and think for a moment: I'm talking about 14,000 people. That's equivalent to the population of Wasaga Beach. I'm proud of our government's achievement in this regard. We're at the halfway point of our strategy, but what we intend to do is decrease workplace injuries by 20% by 2008.

The workplace health and safety strategy is saving thousands of workers pain and suffering from serious workplace injuries. With fewer accidents, employers are benefiting from reduced production costs, lower retaining costs, less equipment damage and other cost-avoidance savings.

One key element of our strategy is our high-risk initiative. The initiative focuses on workplaces with the highest injury rates and costs. When the high-risk initiative was announced, these firms represented just 2% of all firms insured by the WSIB but accounted for 10% of all lost-time injuries and 21% of injury costs in Ontario. Our initiative assists and educates people in these workplaces toward healthier and safer work practices. At the same time, we continue to give priority to investigating workplace fatalities, critical injuries, work refusals, work stoppages and immediate hazards.

Another key element is our last-chance program. In 2005, safe workplace associations were challenged to work with the ministry by providing 5,000 workplaces

with a last chance to voluntarily improve their injury track records. I'd like to thank the five safe work associations that rose to that challenge: the Industrial Accident Prevention Association, the Ontario Service Safety Alliance, the Electrical and Utilities Safety Association, the Transportation Health and Safety Association of Ontario and the Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare. These five workplace associations reached out to provide assistance, training and education. I'm pleased to say that the remaining seven workplace associations will now be joining the original five.

There are real costs that are being avoided. According to the WSIB, each injury in 2004 cost \$57,000 on average. In 2005, that amount rose to over \$70,000. In total, about \$960 million in costs were avoided. Looking at success in other terms, lost-time injury rates have been reduced from 2.2 to 2.0 per 100 workers for 2005.

At this point, I want to thank the ministry staff and those dedicated inspectors, because they deserve a lot of credit for our success. There will be more soon. When we launched the high-risk initiative, we set about hiring 200 additional health and safety inspectors. Right now, 131 of those individuals are on the job. I'm proud to announce today that in recognition of the unique and highly successful high-risk and last-chance initiatives, Ontario has been selected to chair the 2007 International Association of Labour Inspection conference next April. The Ministry of Labour and this government are working hard toward healthy workplaces.

NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

REVENDEICATION TERRITORIALE DES AUTOCHTONES

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): The situation at Caledonia has continued now for some 62 days. This is a situation that affects not only the local communities of Six Nations and Caledonia, but all Ontarians who seek to live in a peaceful environment. I would like to commend the aboriginal and non-aboriginal residents of the area, who have shown patience with this situation.

La situation à Caledonia dure depuis 62 jours. C'est une situation qui touche non seulement les communautés des Six Nations et de Caledonia mais aussi tous les Ontariens qui désirent vivre en paix.

Je tiens à féliciter les habitants autochtones et non autochtones de cette région, qui ont montré de la patience durant cette situation.

We know that a solution will come easier if all parties remain calm and continue to be patient. The McGuinty government has spent many weeks and long hours on this situation to achieve a peaceful resolution. Many people at both the political level and the bureaucratic level are working to resolve this matter.

I'm pleased to report that the Honourable David Peterson, the respected former Premier of Ontario, was just appointed this weekend to work with the Six Nations and Caledonia communities to find short-term solutions

to the immediate problems in Caledonia. He is meeting with the parties today following informal meetings with some of the parties yesterday. Mr. Peterson will focus on urgent concerns, aiming to restore calm and return the communities to normal conditions. This work will pave the way for discussions on the longer-term underlying issues.

Canada and Ontario are committed to naming federal and provincial representatives later this week to address long-term issues, as was agreed to in the three-party agreement signed by the parties to the negotiation on April 21.

In addition to the efforts by Mr. Peterson, provincial staff will continue to work with the municipality and business leaders. The province is also discussing what other types of assistance might be needed to help the communities recover. Last Friday, Ontario made a commitment to the developer and builder for immediate funding assistance related to Douglas Creek Estates.

The McGuinty government, with the support of Canada and the communities involved, is optimistic that we can achieve a balanced solution to this situation.

I would also like to add that the public can be updated on the Caledonia situation by accessing Ontario's toll-free number at 1-866-876-7672, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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

HOME CARE

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): I want to acknowledge with appreciation the announcement today by the Minister of Health with respect to long-term-care support in this province and to acknowledge the work of Elinor Caplan in her report and the substantive number of recommendations which the government has seen fit to implement or announce the implementation of in less than one year. Mind you, it was 11 and a half months, but it was less than one year.

Minister, clearly every PSW—personal support worker—will embrace their 30% increase, but I do want to suggest to you that we've been speaking to you in this House at length about the need to increase \$1 per day per resident in this province in long-term-care facilities. We've impressed upon your colleague that this government has withdrawn its support for a certain amount of funding for pay equity in developmental services and children's mental health and children's rehab services. So although this funding is good news, it sends a signal to other workers who are marginalized by the amount of compensation as to how much they're receiving or, in effect, how much they're worth to this government.

Minister, you talk about your wait time strategy, and this is clearly part of a potential solution, but there will be communities, like mine in Burlington, which will have to rely more on home care because it has closed almost 50 beds in its hospital. So you're going to be setting up a two-tier type of response for wait times in various communities because of the failure of your wait time strategy

to acknowledge a consistent approach in making sure there are sufficient beds.

I note with interest your need to expand the long-term-care action line and the complaints line. As a former minister, I can tell you that if you're going to proceed with some of these recommendations to ensure that more and more medical procedures are taken on at home, much of this will become coaching and introduction.

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But there are many people out there who do not feel that they should be removing their own sutures, should be doing their own catheterization or should be doing the kinds of dialysis work directly for a family member. That is perhaps why we need the action line, expanded in order to handle those.

Finally, I would like to thank you for not discriminating between the private sector and the not-for-profit sector and that you will be awarding them, under the terms here, up to nine years of a contract. Previous governments have indicated that discrimination would continue, but I'm pleased that you will not be one of them.

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): I'm pleased to respond, in the couple minutes I have, to the two statements from the Minister of Natural Resources: the one on the softwood lumber agreement and the other on Caledonia.

First, to do with the softwood lumber agreement, I'm pleased that there is a deal to end the dispute. I'm happy that Ontario's quota, its regional market share, has been increased to historical levels.

I am unhappy that the US coalition will receive hundreds of millions of dollars in this deal. I did spend last Thursday and Friday with the Ontario lumbermen's association. I would say they're not unanimously happy with the deal but they're generally happy, and I think they're glad to see it over with.

Also, I think that it's in part out of necessity, in that these companies, the forestry industry, need some of the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been tied up back to them just to survive. Just last week we had another pulp and paper mill, at Smooth Rock Falls, announce what hopefully is a temporary shutdown—more lost jobs brought on by the McGuinty Liberals' limited-supply, high-energy-price policy.

I note that the provincial government here should be doing like BC is doing, and that is looking at other markets. British Columbia has the most proactive approach in terms of looking to places like China for new markets. I noted an article in today's CP saying that in China they've got a billion people. We're making fibre for Kleenex. Why don't we start selling some to them?

NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): On the Caledonia situation, I'm pleased that former Premier David Peterson has been appointed to help find a short-

term peaceful solution. I say to the government, why has it taken 62 days? The member from Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant, the local PC member, was there on day two of what started out as a small protest and has built into a large standoff. Frustration levels have grown. Why has it taken this long for the government to show some leadership on this file when the local MPP was there, and has been there many times, meeting and building trust on the situation?

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): I would like to comment on the softwood lumber deal. If the price of lumber never goes below \$365 per thousand board feet, we have a deal, but there lies the problem. This particular deal, the way it's structured, when lumber prices go down, which they will at one point if you look at the historical numbers, will end up self-imposing either a quota or a tariff on our producers at the very time when the market gets tight when it comes to sales. That will hinder that industry to a certain extent.

The other thing that I want to say that I find reprehensible in this particular deal is the issue of leaving over a billion dollars in the pocket of American producers. It is a little bit like if somebody comes in and robs your house one day, and all of a sudden you find out that they stole \$100 out of your wallet but the cops said, "It's okay. You can keep \$25. The crook needed it."

At the end of the day, those Canadian producers were not subsidized, they were playing by the rules of NAFTA, playing by the rules of free trade. The ones that were not were the Americans, and they should return that money back here to Canadian producers who deserved get it.

Interjection.

Mr. Bisson: We can get into that. The other thing that I don't like in this particular agreement, and we need to have closer scrutiny of it, is the veto that the Americans are retaining in the deal to give themselves the ability to veto Ontario or BC or other provincial forest policies. That is not acceptable. We are a Legislature. We are responsible for the policies of this province, and neither the federal government nor George Bush's government should have the right to veto what we do in this province. That's something that we need to have more scrutiny on to make sure that doesn't happen. But from the appearances of the original deal, it would appear that the Americans have given themselves a veto.

To the last point, this does absolutely nothing to bring back the workers that have been laid off up to now in places like Smooth Rock Falls and others. This government's got a sorry record when it comes to forestry, and the quicker they come to that realization and decide to do something about it, the better off we'll be.

NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): I want to respond to the minister responsible for native

affairs. The McGuinty government wants to pretend that it has done something incredible at Caledonia. The record shows otherwise. What we've seen at Caledonia is a government that has not shown leadership and a government whose actions are loaded with contradictions.

The first part: The McGuinty government knew for over a year that there were long-standing, serious land claim issues that needed to be addressed with respect to the Six Nations. What did the McGuinty government do? Virtually nothing. Only after those long-standing, serious issues escalated into a protest and a blockade by Six Nations representatives did the McGuinty government appoint a mediator. But while the mediator was trying to get the First Nations to the table and trying to address some issues, the McGuinty government falls asleep at the switch and permits the Ontario Provincial Police to use force. Imagine this: On the one hand, you're trying to negotiate and discuss with the provincial government, and then the Ontario Provincial Police come in and escalate the situation.

People on all sides of this dispute have suffered as a result of the McGuinty government's lack of leadership and their contradictory approach to the issues involved.

HOME CARE

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): In reply to the statement by the Minister of Health, let me say that the worst thing that ever happened to home care in the province of Ontario was the establishment of cutthroat bidding by the Conservatives in 1996. The second-worst thing that ever happened to home care was the decision of the McGuinty Liberals to continue cutthroat bidding in home care when they assumed government. The reality is, cutthroat bidding has been a disaster for home care workers, for patients and for the non-profit sector that used to deliver so much of those services in this sector.

The minister's announcement does nothing to deal with the inherent flaws in the cutthroat bidding model. Ms. Caplan wasn't asked to look at replacing cutthroat bidding in home care; she was told to keep this model in place, tinker around the edges and give the appearance of doing something, when in reality the major changes that would have to be made are not going to be made.

At the Bill 36 hearings, the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario said this about cutthroat bidding: "Ontario's experiment with competitive bidding in home care has been a failure. It has resulted in: a shift to for-profit providers (the share of the total volume of nursing services awarded to for-profit providers increased from 18% in 1995 to an estimated 46% in 2001); a loss of the social infrastructure associated with not-for-profit providers; critical shortages of community nursing staff that are directly linked to system instability...."

Today, the minister should have been announcing an end to cutthroat bidding and no—

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH PREMIUMS

Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln): To the Deputy Premier: As you know, today is the last day to file income tax returns. Time is running out for taxpayers to squeeze even more money out of their pocketbooks and hand it over to Dalton McGuinty for his massive tax hike, the so-called health tax. That deadline is midnight tonight. Your tax grab, as you know, works out to up to \$900 per working person in the province of Ontario.

Deputy Premier, working families and seniors can barely make ends meet in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. When will we see the deadline for this health tax? When will you finally repeal it?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I know that my colleague the Minister of Finance, were he here, would give a more spirited response than I'm able to.

I find it interesting that the honourable member, on the day before the federal budget, would choose to ask a question about this rather than stand up and represent Ontario's interest in being heard and being on the record with respect to adjustments to the fiscal imbalance. The circumstances that the honourable member likes to speak to about Ontarians—he seems to have lost sight of the fact that much of that money collected goes up to Ottawa for support of other programs across the breadth of the country, and that it isn't offering an appropriate share to the people here in the province of Ontario.

With respect, I'm happy in supplementary to talk about investments in the Niagara region that have been made possible as a result of this government's decision to work with the people of Ontario to enhance the quality of their health care.

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Mr. Hudak: The minister knows full well that the health tax doesn't go to Ottawa; it's sucked up in the provincial treasury right here in Toronto in the province of Ontario. Minister, I don't think you understand it. In Dalton McGuinty's Ontario, gas today is well over \$1 a litre. Electricity rates are way up, some 55%. Natural gas home heating costs are going through the roof. Interest rates are increasing. Assessments and property taxes are up. User fees for drivers' licences, for chiropractic care, for eye care, are up in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. In total, some \$2,000 more is coming out of the pockets of working families and seniors than before Dalton McGuinty was elected.

My colleague talks about Ottawa. In Ottawa tomorrow the new Conservative government is reducing taxes to taxpayers across Canada, but here in the province of Ontario the McGuinty government has been absolutely gluttonous in its attack on the pocketbooks of working families. Minister—

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

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: There was quite a little bit there, but one thing that was lacking in all of that was an acknowledgement of what used to be the prime message of that party: that's there's only one taxpayer. But now they see the distinction. They talk about the reality that the government of Canada is awash in cash. Yes, that's something we know—good stewardship, apparently, on the part of the federal government. But still, with one more opportunity to have spoken up, this honourable member, on the part of that party, is unprepared to stand in his place and say where they stand on the issue of the fiscal imbalance. When will they begin to voice a view on behalf of Ontarians in a national context?

Apparently the honourable member is now mouthing the words of one who used to sit in the front row, and one wonders if this is akin to a budgetary leap. The honourable member does not stand in his place, does not talk—will not talk—about a \$300-million investment in the new hospital in Niagara, will not talk about a new land ambulance circumstance for Niagara that he couldn't deliver—

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary.

Mr. Hudak: I don't think we on this side need to take any lessons from these guys on budget leaks, from what we saw just a month or so ago.

I'm saying to the minister, in Ottawa they understand how hard-pressed taxpayers are today with higher taxes, higher heating costs, higher hydro, and they're keeping their promise to reduce taxes. Here in Ontario, I remember a Premier Dalton McGuinty who looked into that camera and said, "I would not raise your taxes." He must have had his fingers crossed, because taxes are way up in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario.

I'll say to the minister one more time, you have been gluttonous in your attack on the pocketbooks of working families and seniors, some \$15 billion in additional revenue. That much revenue and spending would make your friend Bob Rae blush. When are you finally going to cut taxes and give a break to working families in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: The honourable member's starting point on this was that there are no lessons that they can learn from us, but there's one hard lesson that the people of Ontario learned from them at a certain place outside of this chamber, when they delivered a budget that was off by \$5.6 billion. And now the honourable member stands in his place, two and a half years later, still pretending his way through this, still pretending that the people of Ontario do not know the reality. But they do. It is that that honourable member, as a cabinet minister, still owes repayment to the people of the province of Ontario, because his salary should have been docked.

But let's talk about auto insurance rates, down by 13%; and for the people of Niagara, a satellite medical school; for the people of Niagara, new investments in family health teams and community health centres; for the people of Niagara, new investments in residential and home hospice; and for the people of Niagara, more

investment in home supports. The reality of our government is, we're fulfilling our promise to restore—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): My question is to the Acting Premier. Despite all the rhetoric, people in the province of Ontario are not getting the right service at the right time when it comes to health care. On Friday, you made an announcement that was solely in response to our wait-time questioning over the past several months. You said at that time that the data was updated; it wasn't. You said the data showed clear reductions; well, they don't. Minister, wait times continue to rise in communities across this province. I would ask you today, when are you going to start telling the whole story and when will you tell us about your plan to achieve your targets, with your timelines?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I want to say, firstly—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: What's that? You're not even in your seat. I don't think you're supposed to be heckling me. I know the boss is away, so those rules don't apply, but I think that rule applies even when he's not here.

To the honourable member, Mr. Tory's comment in the paper on Saturday indicated that he didn't think it was appropriate to offer measurement on the reductions on the median, recognizing that half of the people had the service delivered within that and half of them didn't. So we'll do it on the 90th percentile, which is what he's suggesting: cancer surgery, down 6%; angiography, down 30%; angioplasty, down 7%; bypass surgery, down 8%; on cataract surgery, down 4%; on hip replacement, down 6%; on knee replacement, down 4%; MRI scans, down 12%; and CT scans, down 9%. I ask the honourable member, does she want to talk about rhetoric or real numbers? These are the real outcomes, backed up by science, and I challenge the honourable member to debate—

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

Mrs. Witmer: It would be more appropriate if this minister, despite all the rhetoric and despite all the promises, could actually lay out for us once and for all a timeline related to all these wonderful announcements that we hear, sometimes 10 and 20 times over.

Let's take a look at the wait times. If we take a look at what you did last week on Friday, we see that you have ignored the July 2005 data that were first mounted on your site back in October 24. Here is what the Premier said: "Wait times are categorized on the website by procedure, hospital and local health integration network—beginning with the data as of July 2005. This information will be updated regularly." You said the information was up to date and reliable, but your announcement on Friday referred only to data as of August and September. The July data, which I have here, are gone. I ask, why did you not include the July data to give people a truthful picture?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: I'm very happy to answer the honourable member's question. The circumstances are that we seek to establish benchmark data that can be reliably compared. When the first wait-time information was provided, several hospitals weren't reporting, including the University Health Network, which is our largest hospital. The only appropriate scientific basis from which to do the numbers is that which includes the full first-term benchmarking. The honourable member asks when we will deliver on these results. The reality with respect to cancer procedures and cardiac procedures is that they are already being delivered within the access targets that we led the nation in helping to develop late last year. This is evidence of progress. We acknowledge that there's more work to be done on cataracts, hips and knees and others. But I think it's important that the honourable member stand in her place and acknowledge the work being done, not by our government but by front-line health care providers in every community across this province of Ontario. They're working in ways they never have before. Hips and knees and cataracts were all going up, and now the wait times are all going down. More work—

The Speaker: Thank you. Final supplementary.

Mrs. Witmer: Despite all the rhetoric, the reality is that on wait times there is no plan. You have never laid out for the people of Ontario any timelines as to how you are going to achieve your targets. In fact, you're only speaking about five areas. What about the hundreds of other procedures in this province? When are you finally going to demonstrate some leadership, some vision, and come to us with a plan that includes timelines as to when and how you're going to achieve those targets? So far we haven't seen it.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: The honourable member waits around for the plan and fails to acknowledge the fact that the plan is in action, the results are improving and the times are going down. She has no evidence of this, except that evidence abounds; it's there for her to see. But the reality is that even if she can't see it, for the 750,000 people who have logged on to our website, information never before available is there for them to see. The reality is that here in the province of Ontario we've introduced accountability—an essential reform—and now we're working on transparency, to create the capacity for the people who own this system, the patients of Ontario, to be able to make decisions which will avail them of the best possible health care.

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There is always more work to do in health care, but I am proud of the work that's been done on the front lines of health care by providers all across the province. The patients of Ontario, experiencing better results, understand that there is a focus like never before and results are being achieved as we speak.

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Housing, Dalton McGuinty

promised that his government would pass a new rent control bill, a real rent control bill, within 365 days of taking office. We're now on day 941 and still no rent control legislation. We're told once again that it's coming, but what we hear is that this bill is going to continue that odious practice known as "vacancy decontrol," a gift to landlords, punishment of tenants. My question is this: Minister, can you tell us who was it that promised, "We will get rid of vacancy decontrol, which allows unlimited rent increases on a unit when a tenant leaves. It will be gone." Who promised that?

Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): Let me just tell this member—and I appreciate the question from him—that this government has done an awful lot when it comes to affordable housing in this province, which was basically, for the 10 years prior to that, totally neglected at both the federal and the provincial levels.

We as a government reached an agreement with the federal government—as a matter of fact, it was exactly one year ago today when an agreement was signed by the federal government—whereby \$702 million would be made available for affordable housing. That process started in a number of different ways, in housing allowances and new affordable rental housing, and we're doing that work right now.

With respect to the question he asked about rent reform, it is coming and it will be sooner rather than later. I'm sure that once the package is presented to this House, this member will see that it's good legislation for good landlords and good tenants.

Mr. Hampton: I'm shocked. Once again, the Minister of Housing didn't answer the question. The question was, who promised to end vacancy decontrol? Do you know who it was? It was Dalton McGuinty, in his release *Improving Affordable Housing*. But what are we seeing? No rent control bill in the first year—a broken promise. Now, what is equally clear, you're going to continue vacancy decontrol—another broken promise. Tell me, Minister, since you're going to give a gift to landlords and punish tenants once again, why should tenants trust anything the McGuinty government says about rent control?

Hon. Mr. Gerretsen: Let me just say that the rent increase guidelines that this government has set over the last couple years, at 2% for the year previous to the current one and 1.5% this year, are the lowest rent increase guideline that have existed under the rent control system that's been in operation for some 30 years. The rent bank that we set up, by which we contributed some \$14 million to individual housing service providers around this province, has helped close to 5,000 individuals and families who are involved in emergency situations, where they cannot afford their rent because of a loss of job or health-related reasons. Those people have been given help through the rent banks and have been able to stay in the place they live, etc.

What we're doing in the housing area is unprecedented in this province, and certainly a heck of a lot more

than that government ever did in the early 1990s or certainly what the party opposite us did for 10 years prior to this—

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

Mr. Hampton: The question is about Dalton McGuinty's specific promise to end vacancy decontrol. It's about Dalton McGuinty's specific promise that it would be gone. But now it appears that this is just like the promise to freeze hydro rates, just like the promise to freeze taxes and just like the promise to help autistic children. Minister, why should tenants trust anything the McGuinty government says? Are you going to stand up for tenants, or are you going to sell out to landlords once again?

Hon. Mr. Gerretsen: Once again, this member simply cannot understand or accept the fact that this government has done an awful lot for the vulnerable groups in our society that, because of low-income situations, need support with their housing. We've done it with respect to the rent bank. We've done it with respect to the lowest rent guideline increases in over two years. We've done it with respect to new affordable housing that's been built or is currently under construction. We've done it in so many different ways that I'm sure that when the new act comes forward in the next little while, the member will totally support this landlord, which is going to help good tenants and good landlords in this province, as they should be.

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the Acting Premier. We don't need laws for good landlords. But my question to the Acting Premier is this: About four or five days ago, the McGuinty government was saying that the proposed deal on softwood lumber was a bad deal; it was a terrible deal. But then, in a matter of 24 hours, the McGuinty government says that this looks like a wonderful deal, a silk purse.

Can the Acting Premier tell me, when the United States gets to keep \$1 billion of Canadian lumber producers' money, when Canadian producers and Ontario producers will face new quotas and new taxes, how is this a good deal for Ontario lumber producers?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): To the Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): What I say to the member is that it's a better deal, and a lot better deal than it was last week, thanks to the intervention of British Columbia and Ontario. We made that happen here.

I would have preferred, obviously, if the companies received all their money. That is hard-earned money of our companies right across this country. In that negotiation, you win some and you lose some. But what

Ontario stood for was to make sure that the reference period—that's the period of record for exports—was from 2001 to 2005, so that Ontario retained its average quota that it's had over the last five years. That means that Ontario now is going to be able to prosper, as we're going to continue to have 2.3% of a growing market in the United States.

Mr. Hampton: Canada won tribunal after tribunal at the World Trade Organization and at NAFTA. Those tribunals said that the United States was acting illegally, that they owed Ontario lumber producers and Canadian lumber producers \$5 billion. What did the McGuinty government sign on to? They get to keep \$1 billion for their illegal activity. Not only that, but if they choose to in the future, they can put on a quota; they can hit us with a tax. In fact, they can do a lot of things.

Can you tell me, Minister, will this deal stop US lumber producers from attacking other Canadian industries now that your government has rewarded George Bush and the US lumber lobby with a \$1-billion payout that is in contradiction of NAFTA?

Hon. Mr. Ramsay: I have a feeling that the member across the way would like to be in the House of Commons and maybe forgets he is in the Ontario Legislature. We do not negotiate international arrangements or treaties, but what we do is give input to the federal government. In this case, when we saw that what was being agreed to was a penalty to Ontario that would put Ontario producers at a disadvantage, we stood up for Ontario producers and we won our case. We did that by working with the other provinces and with our colleagues from Quebec to British Columbia. We basically said to the federal government that this wasn't good enough; they needed to make this change. They made the change, and from now on our companies are going to prosper and do well, as the mills and the lines in those sawmills begin to ramp up and hire people back. That's good news for Ontario.

Mr. Hampton: I think workers across northern and central Ontario will really be pleased to know that the McGuinty government pushed. You pushed so hard, you gave away \$1 billion. You pushed so hard that there can be an export tax on our lumber. You pushed so hard that there are quotas on our lumber. And you pushed so hard that we now learn that the deal gives the United States a veto over provincial forest policy in the future.

Minister, you pushed so hard. Do you think it's acceptable to give George Bush and the White House final say on Ontario's forest policies? And if not, why did you sign on to such a bad deal?

1450

Hon. Mr. Ramsay: I know what the workers in northern Ontario care about. They care about jobs and they care about getting rehired by the companies. The companies are going to start to do that because now we're going to have some certainty going forward, because our companies are going to get most of their money back. They're going to be able to reinvest; they're going to be able to help the pulp and paper plants that they need as a chip market for their product.

From now on, we're going to get a stronger forest industry in northern Ontario. That means more jobs and stronger, sustainable communities. That's what we want for Ontario.

NURSES

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. In 2003, the McGuinty Liberals ran on the promise to hire 8,000 new nurses. Now, two thirds of the way through your mandate, this promise is nowhere near being met. In fact, the Ontario Nurses' Association has launched a campaign called "Not Enough Nurses" to focus on your broken promise.

Today you received 8,000 postcards from ONA calling on you, as Minister of Health, to keep your promise to hire 8,000 more nurses. Minister, where are the 8,000 nurses you promised to hire?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Let's review the math, because I know my honourable friend is very, very good with numbers.

The Ontario College of Nurses said that in the first three years the Conservatives were in office, from 1995 to 1998, there were 6,279 fewer nurses. In the first three years—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: You're still not in your seat.

In the first three years that our government has had the privilege of being in office—not even three full calendar years yet—Doris Grinspun from the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario said that nurse hiring in Ontario has gone up by 4,500. Accordingly, I think that there's evidence of very good progress.

Let me talk about some other progress that has been made: a higher percentage of nurses working full-time, up a full 8% since we came to office, to 59%; a higher percentage of nurses under 30; for the first time in nine years, the average age of nurses is holding steady; and the percentage of nurses who are working for one employer is up 4%, to 94%. We have more work to do.

Mrs. Witmer: The minister chooses to be selective. What he failed to mention was that during our term we hired more than 12,000 nurses. That was confirmed by the nursing association in the province of Ontario. In implementing all of the recommendations in the task force, we have a track record of commitment to nurses that we can be very proud of.

I say to the minister, I sent you an order paper question: "How many nurses have you hired since 2003?" On April 15 you responded, "Three thousand sixty-two," but you said that one thousand of those are temporary positions. We now learn that 50 more nurses were probably laid off last month—this is what ONA tells us—as a result of the new accountability agreements in the hospitals.

I say to you, where is your plan and where are your timelines that are going to help you keep that promise of

8,000 more nurses? Tell us. You never have a plan or timeline.

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

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: The member made the reference that there was some selectivity going on. She obviously managed to forget that it was her party and the leader of her party, the Premier, who called nurses in Ontario “redundant like hula hoops.” The honourable member has forgotten about the fact that she sat there proudly, served in that government and voted alongside them on every single vote. This is her record as well. She can't just disassociate herself from those earliest years that she didn't like.

The reality is that in less than three years we've increased nursing employment by more than 4,000. Across the breadth of other health care professions, we've increased hiring as well.

Nursing Week is coming very soon, and during Nursing Week, I can assure the honourable member, she will see initiative for us to continue the trend, continue the pattern, continue the growth, supporting older nurses, supporting the new nurses and making sure—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): To the Acting Premier: My question is about Dalton McGuinty's worst-kept secret—his real energy policy, the Dalton McGuinty scheme to spend \$40 billion of hydro consumers' money on expensive, unreliable and environmentally risky nuclear power plants.

Today, media reports suggest that the McGuinty government is determined to keep these nuclear projects on budget. My question is this: Can the Acting Premier provide a single example in the history of Ontario of a nuclear power project that has been on budget?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): I thank the member for the question. As a matter of fact, Pickering unit 1 was on time and on budget.

Interjection: On our watch.

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: The important thing to note is that that was, in fact, as was indicated, on our watch.

Jim Hankinson at OPG put together a plan that brought that unit back on time and on budget, and they are to be congratulated for the work they have done.

Mr. Hampton: Well, the minister should read some of the media reports.

Here's the history. Pickering A and Pickering B: projected cost, \$1.8 billion; actual cost, \$4.5 billion. Bruce A and Bruce B: projected cost, \$4.8 billion; actual cost, \$7.8 billion. Bruce restart: projected cost, \$340 million; actual cost, \$720 million. Darlington: projected cost, \$4 billion; actual cost, \$14.3 billion. Pickering restarts: over budget.

Bloated cost overruns and an environmentally risky strategy: Can you tell the people of Ontario what's going to be different this time that hasn't happened before in Ontario's history?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: As a matter of fact, when you look at the history around the nuclear industry, one of the greatest challenges that did exist was the political interference in many of those cost overruns. I think Darlington is a really good example, when you go back and look at the interference in terms of the production when it was brought on line.

The other issue, though, I think that it is important to recognize is that Pickering unit 1 was brought in on time, on budget and under this government's watch, and that in fact OPG is to be commended for the work that they have undertaken. There is no question that it is a serious business and they take it seriously. They have put together a far better plan. They have worked very closely with the industry, they have learned and profited from issues in the past, and I think we have a level of comfort in knowing that they can proceed in the future. No decisions have been made when it comes to the mixed fuel supply report, but when in fact they are, I'm sure the member will have something to say at that time.

YOUTH SERVICES

Mr. Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North): My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services, the Honourable Mary Anne Chambers. Minister, as you are aware, the city of Toronto saw several instances of gang-related gun violence, particularly last summer. I myself had the unfortunate duty of attending the funerals of four young men from my own community of Etobicoke North, so I consider this matter urgent.

I was therefore heartened to have been able to welcome the Premier to my riding this past Saturday. We were at the Toronto West Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Premier announced on behalf of our government a new Down with Guns program. This is part of our government's ongoing efforts to address this issue. Minister, would you please inform this chamber about this initiative, this component of our anti-violence strategy?

Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services): The member from Etobicoke North will recall that in January of this year, the Premier and I met with a coalition of faith leaders here in Toronto as well as with Dr. Rivers, a minister from Boston, and we looked at the issues that we had been and have been experiencing. We requested that the coalition provide us with a strong proposal as to what they could bring to the table to help our young people, particularly those who are at risk but not actually in trouble with the law.

1500

I'm really pleased that the faith community—the Coalition of Christian Leaders—and the Toronto Community Foundation did bring forward a proposal, a strategy that will focus very strongly on mentorship in the

areas of family, education, employment and helping young people to understand their civic rights and responsibilities.

Mr. Qaadri: Thank you again, Minister, for your commitment to this urban challenge. With the leadership of the faith community, I trust this innovative initiative will provide youth with greater opportunities and alternatives, something particularly needed in ridings such as my own, Etobicoke North. But this initiative is part of an overall program and strategy to address the causes of crime and provide opportunities to help our young people achieve their potential. Would you please inform this House about other initiatives of our government to address getting tough on the causes of crime?

Hon. Mrs. Chambers: This initiative is one of several, actually. A couple of months ago, for example, we announced a youth opportunities strategy that will focus on employment opportunities—some very unique programs. I want to mention one, which is the first of its kind in Canada, called youth in policing, starting in Toronto and expanding to other parts of the province next year. In Toronto alone, 100 young people will have the opportunity to work with the Toronto Police Service for the summer, building relationships and learning more about policing. It's really exciting how well this has been received. Toronto police have received more than 1,000 applications for these positions. We are also offering more in the way of summer employment, mentorship opportunities and mediation-type opportunities. We are working to keep kids in school until 18, learning to ensure that when they do leave school, they're in a good position to contribute to their communities.

ENERGY RATES

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke): My question is for the Minister of Energy. Today is the day when consumers across the province will again start to feel the effects of your failed energy policy. On top of the health tax that your government has forced them to pay—higher taxes and fees—today they will start to feel the pinch of a further 16% in hydro rates across this province; 55% since your government has taken office.

Minister, we know that this is a result of your failed energy policy and your irresponsible promise to shut down almost 25% of our generational capacity. People across this province need to know, as they face job layoffs and ever-increasing costs across this province—and you know the numbers, Minister; you have the data—what they can expect going forward for hydro rate increases in this province this year, next year and beyond? Please tell them, Minister.

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): I thank the member for his question. He does give new meaning to the words “new math,” though. The average increase across the province is 10%, and it does vary. There's no question that this is the first time you have had both distribution and rate increases at the same time.

There are ways and means that we can help people mitigate those costs. The first thing we did was put in

\$100 million which will actually serve up to 1.5 million low-income and fixed-income people. The other thing we have done is put a 100-megawatt directive with the Ontario Power Authority, again specific to social housing and low income or fixed income. That actually puts out a rate of about 1.8 cents per kilowatt hour, where we will replace their refrigerators, stoves and windows, and look at ways to mitigate their costs. We do have in place, as well, a long-term strategy, working with LIEN, the low-income groups, on how we can work with and put together a far more comprehensive policy, to deal with—

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

Mr. Yakabuski: I'm not really sure what the minister was trying to tell us, but do you know what? I don't think Ontarians are sure either. They are seeing a price increase today of 16%—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock. Order. I need to be able to hear the member ask his question.

Mr. Yakabuski: That's greatly appreciated, Speaker.

Minister, your answer does not wash. People in this province are facing job layoffs. And you know what? Under your government there are going to be a lot more of those low-income people who need help because they're going to be losing their jobs under your energy policy and your taxation policy.

Skyrocketing property taxes under your regime, and skyrocketing fuel costs—add those to skyrocketing hydro costs, and people in this province don't know where they're going to turn under this government. Where can we expect to see, under a policy that sees energy replacements in this province from unreliable sources, such as your Premier saying wind, or volatile sources such as natural gas that have seen increases in Massachusetts of 32%—where can we see prices going forward in this province so that people have some idea of how much more money you're going to be taking out of their pockets?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: The first thing we're going to do is be a little more up front with the people of Ontario. Rather than hiding \$1 billion, like you did with an artificial rate cap, and then trying to put together a market with antiquated Ontario power, we in fact have been straight. We will maximize our existing transmission and generation. We will build new, and we've already put in place a—

Mr. Yakabuski: Where's the transmission, Donna?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: I said, we will maximize existing transmission and generation, build new, and create a conservation culture.

The difference that we will do is we will actually put the price up front so people know the real price of electricity that they have. We will not hide it in an artificial debt that was \$24 billion and finally is coming down for the first time in many years, and we will be able to say to them that there are ways to mitigate those costs because we will put in place, and have put in place, strong conservation initiatives for the people of this province.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): For the Minister of Children and Youth Services: Minister, here's a very sad children's story. In the land of Ontario, long ago, before Stephen Harper came to power and even before Paul Martin came to power, a man named Dalton McGuinty promised 25,000 new child care spaces in Ontario. He promised to invest \$300 million of his own provincial money, not federal money. Three years later, he broke that promise, even though he had enough money to keep it—a \$3-billion budget windfall last year. Minister, how will this story end? Are you ever going to keep your promise to fund child care in Ontario?

Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services): It sounds like the member from Hamilton East should, in fact, take up storytelling. It seems to be a passion of hers.

In spite of the fact that the federal government has announced that they will cancel the five-year agreement they struck with Ontario, I'm really quite pleased to say that our province has committed to maintain and sustain every single space that will have been created by September of this year. That represents 14,873 new spaces, about 59% of the three-year target. We will make wage improvements. We will increase the number of subsidies, enabling more families to access child care. I am very proud of our province's leadership on this file.

Ms. Horwath: Minister, the bottom line is, you're not committed to the 25,000 spaces that you promised when you were running for election. Other provinces, however—notably Quebec—have decided to press forward with their own plans. As Carol Goar notes in the Toronto Star today, your government “professes to believe that preschool learning is one of the smartest investments a government can make.” Assuming you still believe that, when are you going to keep your promise to fund child care spaces in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Mrs. Chambers: If the member was truly sincere about this issue, she and her party would be standing by their federal colleagues in calling for the government of Canada to honour the agreement that we worked. really hard to establish for parents and children in the province of Ontario. So I question the agenda, I question the intent, I question the politics, when in fact nobody in her party has stood up on behalf of parents and children to honour a \$1.9-billion commitment that our government worked hard—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you, Minister. Stop the clock. I think we are in danger of imputing too many motives—any motives. There was more than one.

Mr. Kormos: All you have to do is impute one.

The Speaker: Exactly.

Interjections.

The Speaker: That's not very helpful either. I remind members that all members here are honourable members, that all intentions here are honourable and that all dis-

cussions need to take place through the chair, through the Speaker.

New question.

1510

LANGUE ET CULTURE FRANÇAISES

M. Richard Patten (Ottawa—Centre): Ma question s'adresse à la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones. Dans les dernières semaines à Ottawa, plusieurs activités et événements clés ont eu lieu dans la communauté francophone. Le lancement de l'Assemblée de la Francophonie de l'Ontario a eu lieu, représentant l'aboutissement d'un long processus de réflexion collective et de rassemblement des francophones autour d'une vision partagée.

La finale de l'émission *Francoeur*, le premier téléroman franco-ontarien, a été célébrée lors d'une levée de fonds pour la Fondation franco-ontarienne. Le projet des Monuments de la francophonie, qui érigera des structures honorant les Franco-Ontariens, a annoncé les six premiers sites retenus. Il y a eu le lancement officiel de l'Amicale francophone d'Ottawa vendredi dernier.

La francophonie dans la région d'Ottawa se porte bien. Mais que fait votre gouvernement pour appuyer ces initiatives?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur (ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones): Je voudrais remercier le député d'Ottawa—Centre qui est, on le connaît bien, un francophile très engagé.

Oui, en effet, il y a un mois passé j'étais au lancement du nouvel organisme l'AFO, qui remplace l'ACFO. C'est un nouveau point de départ pour les francophones en Ontario. Les francophones parleront haut et fort et parleront avec une voix à travers cet organisme.

Cette fin de semaine, vendredi, j'étais à l'ouverture et au lancement de l'Amicale francophone d'Ottawa, justement, dans Ottawa—Centre, un organisme qui va prôner et reconnaître les francophones de la région.

Pour ce qui est de l'appui des initiatives de notre gouvernement, notre gouvernement récemment a contribué 50 000 \$ au Festival franco-ontarien pour justement appuyer le relancement du festival.

De plus, on a donné 140 000 \$—

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

M. Patten: Je suis heureux d'apprendre que le gouvernement fait sa part pour appuyer les initiatives à Ottawa, là où il y a la plus grande population francophone de la province en fait des nombres.

Il est temps que le gouvernement ontarien se met à appuyer les francophones de la province. La population de l'Ontario comprend un demi-million de francophones, une importante communauté dont l'apport est à la fois économique, culturel et social.

En cette année de l'anniversaire de la Loi 8, Loi sur les services en français, où nous avons lieu de célébrer les accomplissements et les acquis de la communauté

franco-ontarienne, que fait votre gouvernement afin d'encourager, de promouvoir et d'appuyer la francophonie en Ontario?

L'hon. M^{me} Meilleur: En effet, cette année nous allons célébrer le vingtième anniversaire de l'adoption de la Loi sur les services en français. Il y a beaucoup d'événements qui vont avoir lieu pour célébrer le vingtième anniversaire parce que le gouvernement veut mettre l'accent sur la mobilisation, et puis reconnaître ce que les francophones ont apporté ici en Ontario.

De concert avec le ministère des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration, le gouvernement de l'Ontario va inaugurer un prix qui va être décerné à des francophiles et francophones qui ont contribué à l'essor du fait français en Ontario. La période de nomination se terminera à la fin de juin.

La semaine dernière, j'assistais au Festival franco-ontarien de théâtre en milieu scolaire, qui aussi regroupait toutes les écoles secondaires francophones dans la région pour un festival de théâtre.

Toutes ces initiatives et encore plus seront—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question.

REGIONAL CENTRES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton): My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, you will recall that in September 2004, your predecessor announced the accelerated closure of Ontario's three remaining residential institutions for adults with severe developmental disabilities, including Rideau Regional Centre in Smiths Falls in my riding.

When that announcement was made, the group which represented the people who were in this residential care centre were not consulted. They're called the Rideau Regional Centre Association. They represent some of the 400 people who are left in this institution—their brothers, sisters, children, cousins etc. On April 18, this group asked to meet with you at Rideau Regional Centre. Will you meet with them at Rideau Regional Centre?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): I have to remind the member of the opposition party that the decision to close the Rideau Regional Centre was taken many years ago and was supported by his government.

I wanted to also say that, yes, I will be going to the Rideau Regional Centre this coming Friday. Four weeks into my new position, I'm going. I have been there before, but I'm going back. Of course, the decisions and the opinions of the parents of these individuals will be taken into consideration when a decision will be taken on where these people are going to be placed. So there will be a full consultation, and we wanted to make sure that these individuals will be placed in the most appropriate—

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

Mr. Sterling: The minister should not be caught up by the rhetoric of her predecessor, because there were very

few people who were discharged from any of these three institutions in the last 10 years. You have accelerated that process.

In 2004, your predecessor promised that all of the relevant ministries would be brought to the table with the community to ensure the economic impact of the closures would not affect those communities too greatly. In the town of Smiths Falls, of 9,000 people, Rideau Regional Centre employs 840 people. When this centre closes, they will lose their jobs, and it will be a catastrophe for Smiths Falls. Minister, when will you and your cabinet colleagues release your plan, as promised, for Smiths Falls and the communities affected by the closure of Rideau Regional Centre?

Hon. Mrs. Meilleur: I just wanted to correct what the member said. Since the decision was taken to close this centre, already 6,000 people were placed into the community, so for the three centres together, 6,000, and recently there were another 130 who were placed out in the community. I remind the member of the opposition again that this decision was supported by the three parties: by the Tories, by the NDP, and by our party.

We are going to proceed. As you know, there was a decision from the court that supported what we are doing and also congratulated the staff for the good work they have done and—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question.

1520

WASTE DIVERSION

Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth): My question today is for the Minister of the Environment. York and Durham regions are presently pushing forward with plans to incinerate municipal waste. Meanwhile, your government is absolutely nowhere with respect to your promise to divert 60% of waste from landfills. Your failure to act means communities across the province are faced with the spectre of new incinerators and more pollution.

Minister, how can you allow incineration when you have done nothing to keep your promise to divert 60% of waste from landfills?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment): I am so pleased to have a chance to talk about the waste diversion in Ontario. Perhaps the member opposite missed the speech I gave last week, when I spoke to Waste Diversion Ontario at their AGM and, at that meeting, indicated the next two steps we will be taking with respect to waste diversion in this province. We will be building on the fantastic work that Waste Diversion Ontario has done with respect to the blue box program, being the first government, as we are, to ensure that they have funding—\$60 million in 2005. We will be moving forward with programs to divert household hazardous waste, building on the success of the blue box program and the electronics program. Perhaps my friend might like to do a little bit of research before he asks questions with respect to the state of diversion in the province

because, as of last week, we are moving forward on two very exciting projects.

Mr. Tabuns: Minister, in 2004 you failed to implement a used tire recycling program. You're now proposing to allow Lafarge, a multinational cement company, to burn scrap tires in their Bath, Ontario cement kiln, despite studies showing that burning tires can dramatically increase emissions of dioxins and metals into the environment, and despite objections from local residents and provincial environmental groups. How can you consider allowing tires to be burned in Bath when you failed to deliver a tire recycling program?

Hon. Ms. Broten: Perhaps, since my friend is jumping around in a number of areas, I will speak to the issue of the Durham/York plan. As you know, I have repeatedly said that our government is open to the examination of new technology, and that if municipalities, in managing their municipal waste, want to bring forward an application with respect to new technology, we'd be pleased to receive it.

Let me tell him what the chair, Roger Anderson, said about the recent approval we put in place: "We are very pleased to have the government's support on this environmental assessment. Thanks to the leadership of the Honourable Minister Broten, we can now move forward with the Durham/York residual waste study. With this work plan approval, the regions can now work towards a plan that delivers a made-in-Ontario solution for waste disposal."

With respect to the Lafarge facility, I say to the people in the Bath community and beyond that the process is underway. There's an opportunity for them to comment. I invite them to do so, and I will look at the entirety of the comments that come before me as I make my decisions.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. David Oraziotti (Sault Ste. Marie): My question is for the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. A little more than a week ago, the Sault Area Hospital and Infrastructure Ontario issued a request for qualifications to shortlist bidders for the new Sault Area Hospital. This major milestone on the way to a new publicly owned, publicly controlled and publicly accountable hospital for my community is wonderful news, and I applaud you, Minister Smitherman and the Premier for the commitment you have demonstrated to the project thus far.

As you are aware, using the alternate financing and procurement strategy clearly outlined in the Building a Better Tomorrow framework, we are able to undertake numerous projects to replace and modernize our vital public infrastructure. But despite such great news, some individuals continue to question the AFP approach. Can you please clarify our government's position on the ownership of the Sault Area Hospital?

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): I want to thank the member from Sault Ste. Marie for the question. The Sault Area Hospital, like all hospitals in the

province of Ontario, will not only be publicly owned but publicly controlled and publicly accountable through local hospital boards. Any suggestion to the contrary is simply incorrect, and any effort to deny the good people of the Soo access to a publicly owned, modern, state-of-the-art facility will be resisted, certainly by myself and by our government.

The facts speak for themselves: The title of the building and the land will be held by the hospital corporation. Any decision related to the operations and management will be made by the local hospital board. In other words, the Sault-Area Hospital will be publicly owned, publicly controlled and publicly accountable, end of sentence, full stop, period, right there. The McGuinty government has affirmed and reaffirmed its commitment to a strong public health care system, and I'm happy to repeat again for this member and for the entire Legislature that we champion a public health care system.

Mr. Oraziotti: Thank you, Minister. I appreciate your unequivocal clarification of our government's commitment to the public ownership, control and accountability of all hospitals in Ontario, including, of course, the Sault-Area Hospital.

It also appears that others support the AFP process. On CBC news, John Tory said, "I think the principle of what's being done here is right." Former NDP finance minister Floyd Laughren said on TVO, "I don't think it's in their interests to resist it. It's a knee-jerk reaction that doesn't make sense. I don't understand resisting letting the public sector use those funds."

But Minister, there have also been some suggestions that employees of the new Sault-Area Hospital will lose their union protection and status. Can you please clarify this issue for our community?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: I'm only too happy to, because this government has demonstrated time and again deep respect for the crucial role that our unions play in the delivery of important public services, and this respect also applies to the new hospital projects in the Soo and all across the province of Ontario.

Employees in the new Sault-Area Hospital will continue to have the terms and conditions of their existing collective agreements honoured, and they will continue to be represented by the current collective bargaining agent. We are proud of the approach that we're taking to building this new hospital. I'm especially proud of our commitment to public ownership, control and accountability. We as a government are very proud of our respectful approach to labour relations. Unlike the NDP, unlike the Tories' approach to P3s, the McGuinty government's made-in-Ontario AFP approach to leveraging private sector expertise and innovation ensures that the fundamental values and priorities of Ontarians are enshrined and protected. That is, all hospitals will be publicly owned, controlled and accountable; all terms and conditions—

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

AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Last Thursday, I met with farmers in my riding who represent a cross-section of the commodity groups in this province. They want to know, after almost three years in office, why there is no long-term vision or plan for agriculture in this province, and particularly they would like to see a vision that says that your government will do everything in its power to save the family farm in Ontario. They want to know also why you're not leading discussions with respect to CAIS with the federal government.

With respect to CAIS, Minister, you know that CAIS isn't working for the grains and oilseeds producers. They would like to know why you're not bringing forward the risk management plan that they've suggested.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I'm happy that I have the opportunity to respond to the honourable member. I am sure that when you had these discussions with the farmers in your community, you were able to remind them of the commitment of this government, and our—not just our desire, but on many occasions I have personally met with the federal Minister of Agriculture to make it very clear that we need both a short-term plan, for the immediate need, and a longer-term plan, and indeed that the CAIS program needs to be repaired. There's no doubt about that. Ontario has brought those concerns to the federal-provincial table.

We are looking forward to going back to Newfoundland in June to have all of the members of that table—our bureaucrats are bringing us recommendations on that. So remember, honourable member, in our budget we have a commitment to a long-term strategy. We've asked the federal government to come to the table. I'm sure you reminded them of that when you spoke with them.

1530

PETITIONS

LANDFILL

Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton): It's my pleasure to introduce a petition today. I was in my riding of Nepean–Carleton on the weekend and some members of the community, in particular Gilles Charles and others in Stittsville, wanted me to bring this petition to the floor of the Legislature.

“Whereas there is currently a proposal to more than double the size of the Carp landfill in west Ottawa; and

“Whereas this site has been in operation for some 30 years and had been expected to close in 2010; and

“Whereas the surrounding community has grown rapidly for the past 10 years and is continuing to grow; and

“Whereas other options to an expanded landfill have yet to be considered; and

“Whereas the municipal councillors representing this area,” and the MPPs, Norm Sterling and Lisa MacLeod, “all oppose this expansion;

“We, the undersigned, support our local representatives and petition the Minister of the Environment not to approve the expansion of the Carp landfill and instead to find other waste management alternatives.”

I affix my signature to this petition, as I support it wholeheartedly.

IDENTITY THEFT

Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): I have a petition addressed to the Parliament of Ontario and especially the Minister of Government Services. It reads as follows—and I just want to add that it was given to me by the Consumer Federation Canada, a very important organization:

“Whereas identity theft is the fastest-growing crime in North America;

“Whereas confidential and private information is being stolen on a regular basis, affecting literally thousands of people;

“Whereas the cost of this crime exceeds billions of dollars;

“Whereas countless hours are wasted to restore one's good credit rating; and

“Whereas we, the undersigned, demand that Bill 38, which passed the second reading unanimously in the Ontario Legislature on December 8, 2005, be brought before committee and that the following issues be included for consideration and debate:

“(1) All consumer reports should be provided in a truncated (masked-out) form, protecting our vital private information, such as SIN numbers and credit card numbers.

“(2) Should a credit bureau discover that there has been a breach of consumer information, the agency should immediately inform the victimized consumer.

“(3) Credit bureaus should” also and “only report inquiries resulting out of actual applications for credit and for no other reasons.

“(4) Credit bureaus should investigate any complaints within 30 days and correct or automatically delete any information found unconfirmed or inaccurate.”

Since I agree with this wholeheartedly, I am indeed delighted to sign this petition.

LANDFILL

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton): To the Legislative Assembly:

“Whereas there is currently a proposal to more than double the size of the Carp landfill in west Ottawa; and

“Whereas this site has been in operation for some 30 years and had been expected to close in 2010; and

“Whereas the surrounding community has grown rapidly for the past 10 years and is continuing to grow; and

“Whereas other options to an expanded landfill have yet to be considered; and

“Whereas the municipal councillors representing this area, Eli El-Chantiry and Peggy Feltmate,” and the MPPs, Norm Sterling and Lisa MacLeod, “all oppose this expansion;

“We, the undersigned, support our local representatives and petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ensure that the Ministry of the Environment does not approve the expansion of the Carp landfill and instead to find other waste management alternatives.”

I support that, and I know the member for Ottawa Centre does as well.

COMMUNITY MEDIATION

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. I'd like to thank Balraj Cheema of Mississauga for having collected the signatures for me. It reads as follows:

“Whereas many types of civil disputes may be resolved through community mediation delivered by trained mediators, who are volunteers who work with the parties in the dispute; and

“Whereas Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services established the Peel Community Mediation Service in 1999 with support from the government of Ontario through the Trillium Foundation, the Rotary Club of Mississauga West and the United Way of Peel, and has proven the viability and success of community mediation; and

“Whereas the city of Mississauga and the town of Caledon have endorsed the Peel Community Mediation Service, and law enforcement bodies refer many cases to the Peel Community Mediation Service as an alternative to a court dispute; and

“Whereas court facilities and court time are both scarce and expensive, the cost of community mediation is very small and the extra expense incurred for lack of community mediation in Peel region would be much greater than the small annual cost of funding community mediation;

“Be it therefore resolved that the government of Ontario, through the Ministry of the Attorney General, support and fund the ongoing service delivery of the Peel Community Mediation Service through Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services.”

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition. I'll affix my signature to it and ask page Haakim to carry it for me.

HIGHWAY 26

Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 was approved by MPP Jim Wilson and the previous PC government in 1999; and

“Whereas a number of horrific fatalities and accidents have occurred on the old stretch of Highway 26; and

“Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 is critical to economic development and job creation in Simcoe–Grey;

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

“That the Liberal government stop the delay of the Highway 26 redevelopment and act immediately to ensure that the project is finished on schedule, to improve safety for area residents and provide economic development opportunities and job creation in Simcoe–Grey.”

Obviously, I agree with that petition, and I have signed it.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce): I have 93 signatures on this petition:

“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 those 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....”

I affix my signature to this petition.

RECYCLING

Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton): I have a petition 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.”

I’m very pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): The petition I’m presenting to you today was signed by hundreds of residents in my riding of Davenport. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Portuguese Canadians number 171,545 in the Toronto census metropolitan area, many of whom encounter serious barriers (language, culture and location) to accessing community and long-term-care services; and

“There are no long-term-care homes dedicated to the needs of Portuguese-Canadian seniors; and

“Camões House for the Aged and Portuguese Community Centre of Toronto is proposing a partnership with a local long-term-care provider to purchase up to 160 existing beds in the Toronto area (for a nominal fee), to develop a Portuguese-Canadian long-term-care home in Toronto. This partnership is tentative and is dependent on the approval of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care;

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

“We encourage the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, his staff, and members of the Legislature to support the Camões proposal, and to make the appropriate administrative and policy changes required to develop a Portuguese-Canadian long-term-care home in Toronto.”

Since I agree, I’m very delighted to sign this petition.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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 those 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.”

I have signed that in support.

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COMMUNITY MEDIATION

Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale): This petition is to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

“Whereas many types of civil disputes may be resolved through community mediation delivered by trained mediators, who are volunteers who work with the parties in the dispute; and

“Whereas Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services established the Peel Community Mediation Service in 1999 with support from the government of Ontario through the Trillium Foundation, the Rotary Club of Mississauga West and the United Way of Peel, and has proven the viability and success of community mediation; and

“Whereas the city of Mississauga and the town of Caledon have endorsed the Peel Community Mediation Service, and law enforcement bodies refer many cases to the Peel Community Mediation Service as an alternative to a court dispute; and

“Whereas court facilities and court time are both scarce and expensive, the cost of community mediation is very small and the extra expense incurred for lack of community mediation in Peel region would be much greater than the small annual cost of funding community mediation;

“Be it therefore resolved that the government of Ontario, through the Ministry of the Attorney General, support and fund the ongoing service delivery of the Peel Community Mediation Service through Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services.”

I support this petition, and page Billy is going to carry this over.

LONG-TERM CARE

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

“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 those 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).”

As I am in complete agreement, I have affixed my signature to the petition and give it to Morgan to deliver.

PROPERTY TAXATION

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

“We, the undersigned property owners and tenants, strongly oppose the current value assessment. The 2004-05 current value assessment is too high, and we will show strong resistance. There may be a revolt.

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

“Most of our funding has come from ratepayers’ groups and citizens from across the city of Toronto.”

I present this petition to you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GREATER TORONTO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY ACT, 2006

LOI DE 2006 SUR LA RÉGIE DES TRANSPORTS DU GRAND TORONTO

Mr. Takhar moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 104, An Act to establish the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority and to repeal the GO Transit Act, 2001 / Projet de loi 104, Loi visant à créer la Régie des transports du grand Toronto et à abroger la Loi de 2001 sur le Réseau GO.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation): I am pleased to lead the debate on our proposed legislation to create a Greater Toronto Transportation Authority, known as GTTA.

First, let me point out again why it is critical to act now to curb traffic congestion in the greater Toronto

area. There are approximately 5.5 million people living in the GTA and Hamilton area. It is no surprise that our highways are already operating at close to capacity and have been for some time, yet it is estimated that in the next 25 years we will see an increase of nearly two million vehicles in the GTA and surrounding areas.

Transport Canada estimates that the cost of congestion in Toronto alone is \$1.6 billion annually. If we don’t take further action, by 2021 commute times within the GTA could increase by more than 50%, increasing the costs of congestion by about \$7 billion a year.

I said “if” we don’t take further action. Well, our government is taking action. If our legislation is passed, the mandate of the proposed GTTA will be to create a seamless, integrated and coordinated transportation system. This can be achieved under the governance model we have put forward, which brings municipalities, the province and transit agencies together.

Mr. Speaker, I should have said I will be sharing my time with the member from Ottawa–Orléans.

When commuters are travelling, they don’t see municipal boundaries. People want to go from one place to another, like from Hamilton to Richmond Hill or from Whitby to Mississauga, quickly, easily and in a convenient way. Our proposed GTTA puts people over politics and would make travelling by train, bus or subway a real and reliable alternative to using a car.

It is equally necessary to improve existing road infrastructure to enable the efficient movement of people and goods on our roads. There must be a balance. The proposed GTTA will support the growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe, which will be released soon. The growth plan will encourage the development of dynamic, vibrant communities that are less car-dependent and more supportive of public transit.

The government continues to demonstrate our commitment to reducing gridlock and improving the flow of traffic. We must look at the GTA and the Hamilton area as one economic region.

We were the first to open high-occupancy vehicle lanes on provincial highways. As a result, the number of people who have switched to public transit or carpooling to take advantage of those HOV lanes continues to grow. There are now about 1,000 vehicles an hour on the eastbound Highway 403 HOV lane during the peak period of the morning rush hour, and about 1,100 on the southbound Highway 404 HOV lane. I should say this exceeds our target.

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We’ve delivered on our commitment and are the first government to offer municipalities a stable source of funding they can rely on to improve public transit through our hugely successful provincial gas tax program. As a result of the gas tax program, public transit ridership is up by 3.4% across this province. That is the equivalent of about 18 million fewer car trips every year. By making the largest investment in over a decade, we are getting our infrastructure and public system back on track after years of neglect.

While the population was growing and congestion was increasing, the previous government's decision in 1999 to eliminate all provincial support for public transit systems had a devastating impact. In my view, this was a very short-sighted decision that left municipalities financially responsible, the province years behind, and commuters suffering with long travel times.

The members of the opposition have already attempted to undermine the proposed GTTA model. I would like to take a few moments and reflect on the performance of the previous government's failed attempt, the Greater Toronto Services Board, normally known as the GTSB. In an attempt to be all things to all people, the previous government established a 42-member board for the Greater Toronto Services Board, the GTSB. This board was made up solely of elected members. The board was too broad to make clear decisions and ultimately created a division between the 416 and 905 areas.

Not only was the board's size a problem, but their mandate was not clear. The GTSB, under the former government, included responsibility for water, sewers, transit, roads and highways, social services and housing, economic development and trade, and growth management. Clearly, the previous government had no focus or clear direction on how to tackle congestion. Ultimately, the result was that the GTSB failed to deliver any concrete things.

This government recognized the need for an additional authority whose sole focus is transportation. If passed, our legislation proposes a balanced governance model, a clear agenda and a focused mandate of integrating transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

If passed, the proposed GTTA will have an 11-member board made up of elected and non-elected members from the participating municipalities and the provincial government. With a clear focus on transportation, the proposed model will be a decision-making body. Students, seniors, business people and commuters will also play an active role by forming an advisory group to offer advice to the board during their decision-making process. We recognize the importance of listening to their experiences, issues and suggestions.

The GTTA's mandate is clear. Its focus is creating a seamless, integrated transit system. Our proposed GTTA model will develop a five-year rolling capital plan, a long-term plan, and a five-year investment plan, and will ensure that transportation and investment plans are consistent with the growth plan. The board will report directly to the Minister of Transportation to ensure that transit ridership continues to meet provincial targets.

The record of this government is \$1.2 billion in transit investment this year. We are moving forward to create the GTTA, which will, for the first time, bring a clear agenda of integration and coordination.

This government recognizes the importance of expanding our transit infrastructure to continue meeting the needs of growing communities. We have listened to the concerns of our municipal partners. That is why this government announced \$670 million for York region and

the city of Toronto to expand the subway system, \$95 million for the city of Brampton for the AcceleRide program, and \$90 million to the city of Mississauga for the Mississauga Transitway system, to enable them to move forward with their major transit initiatives. Our proposed GTTA will build on these projects and bring further results.

If passed, this legislation will allow the agency to bring together the province, the regions of Durham, Halton, Peel and York, and the cities of Hamilton and Toronto, as well as local transit agencies, to create a seamless, integrated, more convenient transportation network in this region. Commuters will see a difference. Having a single authority coordinating planning and scheduling will mean that people will spend less time waiting for a connecting bus or train.

Our objective also is to make sure that it reduces duplication. Having one agency oversee the GTA fare card system means that people won't have to fumble for change or a different pass every time they cross a municipal boundary. As I said before, when people are travelling from one place to another, they are not looking at municipal boundaries. They just want to get from one place to another, and they want to do it in a quick, reliable and seamless way. They will be able to use a single fare card for seamless travel across the GTA and Hamilton area. We will be piloting this project in Mississauga in 2007, which will basically have a one-fare-card system from Mississauga to Union Station, and we plan to implement it fully in 2010.

Having one agency coordinate transit vehicle purchases means better value for all of us. We want to make sure that our purchasing dollars get the best value, and that's why we are moving in that direction.

It also makes sense for GO Transit to be transferred into the GTTA at an appropriate time. I always said that it should happen at the appropriate time. We should not do what the previous government did: download it one year and upload it another year. In the meantime, it created havoc throughout the transit system. As the province's largest interregional transit provider, GO Transit supports the GTTA's mandate of planning and identifying strategic investments. It also supports our goal of integrating transit and fare systems. The province will continue to provide annual funding for GO Transit's operational and capital requirements, as it always has done, and according to the same formula that we have adopted before.

Getting something right takes time. That's why we spent the time to consult with the municipalities and we spent the time to consult with regions, transit operators and other stakeholders. We consulted with the Canadian Urban Transit Association, the Ontario Community Transportation Association, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Toronto Board of Trade and the Canadian Automobile Association. Because we have taken the time to consult with these municipalities and organizations, we were able to deliver the best possible model for the GTTA.

A fully functional, operational organization such as the GTTA cannot happen overnight. The first thing is to bring everyone to the table. Our proposed legislation does this. We have laid the foundation. We are taking real action to ease congestion and improve transit and transportation in the GTA and Hamilton area.

1600

I also want to say that the governance model that is being proposed in this legislation makes a lot of sense. We will have four representatives from the city of Toronto, one representative each from the regions of Durham, York, Peel and Halton, and we will also have representation from Hamilton on this board, as well as two provincial representatives. That will create a balance that will help us move forward in a very constructive way.

We are also using what we have learned from the experiences in other jurisdictions. Vancouver, for example, began with a small authority, which now works very well integrating transit and transportation over a wide area.

Here is what people are saying about our proposed legislation. The mayor of Burlington, Rob MacIsaac, told the Hamilton Spectator, "Our economy, our environment, and pocketbook need a coordinated approach that will allow people real choices about how to get around, and businesses to deliver their products on time."

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton): The next chair.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: The member opposite says that he's the next chair. That's news to me. Maybe he picked it up somewhere in the newspapers.

Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion told the National Post, "The time has come that we in the greater Toronto area recognize that we are one economic unit, that people are living in one municipality and working in another." I happen to agree with Mayor Hazel McCallion. She's absolutely right. We should treat this as one economic region because the prosperity of the whole region depends upon one good transportation system.

Let me quote the York region chair, Bill Fisch. He told the Toronto Star, "This is a very good beginning. It means we'll all be able to work together in a more coordinated fashion than we have in the past." Those are his words.

The Toronto Board of Trade issued a statement with the following endorsement from its president, Glen Grunwald: "Premier McGuinty and Minister Takhar deserve major credit for keeping their word on creating a GTTA and providing sensible rules and priorities to get it started."

From Len Crispino, president and CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce: "This is a smart move by the government." I couldn't have said it better myself. Our proposed GTTA will take a region-wide approach to creating an integrated, seamless and more convenient transportation network including road, rail and public transit services. Our goal is to reduce gridlock by creating seamless travel.

Now is the time for us to move forward. We cannot let traffic congestion eat into Ontario's prosperity, as our quality of life depends on it. We have to keep traffic moving so that our goods get to the market on time and our people get home to dinner and spend quality time with their families.

I want to urge members from all sides of this House to support this legislation. It is important for us because congestion is becoming a real, major problem in this region. So we really need to come up with a seamless, integrated system in this region. The GTTA makes a lot of sense because it will have a smaller board, it will have a focused mandate and it will have a very clear direction that it has to deliver consistent with provincial priorities. So I would like to urge all members of this House to support this legislation. Thank you for giving me the time to speak.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Ottawa–Orléans.

Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans): As my colleague the Honourable Minister Takhar has just said, quick, reliable and safe transportation is vital to our economic success and quality of life.

Let me talk more specifically about some of the key elements of this bill. Our transit and transportation problems and solutions are inter-regional in nature, crossing municipal boundaries. GTTA will play a critical role in planning for a seamless, integrated transit network so that people can use public transit to travel easily from Hamilton to Newmarket to Oshawa.

We need to take a region-wide approach to transit and transportation, one that meets the growing number and the growing needs of commuters in this region. This is consistent with the government's overall approach to planning, as outlined in the proposed growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe area. The plan seeks to reduce the burden on our highways by fostering the development of dynamic communities that support effective and efficient public transit.

One of GTTA's first tasks will be to create a long-term, region-wide, multi-modal transportation plan identifying priorities that will make a difference to all the commuters. The GTTA will be a catalyst, working with municipalities to identify key transportation projects. The agency will submit a rolling five-year capital plan, with an investment strategy submitted annually to the province.

We have been developing a framework for the GTTA by consulting with municipalities and other stakeholders for some time now. As a result of those consultations, we are delivering the best possible model for the GTTA. We are laying the foundation for timely and reliable transportation across the region, and I'm convinced that we have it right.

We do not want to create another Greater Toronto Services Board. We all know that the GTSB did not work. Its 42-member board was completely made up of elected officials, which led to political bickering and delays in decision-making. Our proposed GTTA will report to the Minister of Transportation. The authority

will be overseen by a mixed board—meaning both elected and non-elected officials—nominated by the province, municipalities and regions and appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Under our proposal, GTTA will be governed by representatives from Durham, Halton, Peel and York regions, the cities of Hamilton and Toronto and the province. An advisory committee of stakeholders representing users of transit, seniors, students, persons with disabilities and the business community will also be created. A memorandum of understanding will be established between MTO and the proposed GTTA detailing responsibilities, including financial, auditing and reporting requirements and interaction.

Because we consulted with municipalities, our proposal has the support of municipalities, as you heard in Minister Takhar's statement. Here is what Toronto mayor David Miller told reporters: "It's actually a breakthrough to have the appointees be appointees by Toronto." Brampton mayor Susan Fennell said, "The GTA, as a region, is rapidly expanding. Today, more than ever, we need a seamless transportation network to help reduce congestion on our roads." Hamilton mayor Larry Di Ianni said, "It's crucially important for Hamilton to be part of this, and that's why I think our lobbying efforts have paid off. It will allow us to be part of the mix, to direct some dollars and to champion some projects that will be good not only for the whole area but for us." Mississauga Transit director Bill Cunningham says, "The long-awaited GTTA will help eliminate the duplication of services that currently exists between municipalities."

Our government is bringing forward legislation that, if passed, will fulfill another election promise to integrate transportation in the GTA and Hamilton and relieve congestion and gridlock. That will take much more than a quick fix. As Minister Takhar pointed out in introducing this legislation, we need a broader, comprehensive framework. We need to lay the foundation to ensure that the transit and infrastructure are in place to support strategic growth throughout the greater Golden Horseshoe. We need a vision that puts transit in areas where we need future growth to happen. Our economy depends on how quickly and efficiently we can move people and goods through the region. Transit is our first priority.

In short, our bill would improve the quality of life for Ontarians and drive our prosperity. I know all members will support our efforts and support our proposed Greater Toronto Transportation Authority legislation.

1610

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Sterling: I look forward to this debate and the committee hearings in regard to it.

I think part of the problem is that this minister cannot seem to forget that the former government did a great deal with regard to public transit and other matters, and he spends most of his time in this gratuitous, inane debate about what previous governments did and didn't do, half of which is true.

For instance, he said, "We were the first ones to open HOV lanes." Yes, you were the first ones to open HOV

lanes, but you didn't build the HOV lanes; the former government built the HOV lanes and made the decision to go ahead and do it. It was the former government, Mr. Minister. Out of respect, you should not make those kinds of statements if you expect to be taken seriously in debate. You're talking to a former minister who made the decision.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): They painted the lines.

Mr. Sterling: Yes, they painted the lines, basically. The decision was made before, and the construction was planned and committed to by the previous government.

I look forward to adding to the debate as we go forward, but let's remember that this is a very, very small step being put forward by the government. Unfortunately, the minister and the government have overstated their case and therefore deserve a lot of criticism in that regard.

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): It's a pleasure to make some comments. I listened closely to the presentation that was made by both members. I'm reminded, in terms of the comments that were made by both members, that what's being proposed in the bill we are debating today actually doesn't match up to what had been proposed in this Legislature by MPP Greg Sorbara. That was done a couple of years ago when he presented a resolution in this House designed to tackle gridlock in the greater Toronto area. In part, he talked about the creation of a Greater Toronto Transportation Authority. He made it very clear that the GTTA would have to be given the financial resources and the mandate, in his words, "to repair the damage from years of neglect...." Of course, that was a reference, from his perspective, to the former government; I won't go into that. A similar commitment with respect to resources and clout was made by the Liberals in their 2003 election platform on page 115. In reading what has been proposed, in reading what was promised and in looking again at the resolution that was put forward by Mr. Sorbara, it seems to me that the government legislation that we're dealing with falls short of both the promise and the resolution that was put forward at the time by Mr. Sorbara. So I guess the Liberals, at some point in the debate, are going to have to square that circle or circle that square and tell us why it is that that seems to be the case.

I'm also very concerned about the provision that would allow the GTTA to borrow money for infrastructure improvements under sections 28 and 31. Such financing could really undermine the role of the GTTA to increase ridership, as fares might go up to try to pay for the interest on loans for capital projects rather than using those for operating costs. It also could be used by the Liberals as a mechanism for the province not to assume, or reassume, a role in being a viable funding partner for public transit in the province.

Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe): Thank you for giving me the chance to speak in support of this bill. I believe it's a very important initiative and a very important bill. I want to congratulate the minister, who's always

working to relieve the pressure on the highways, especially in Toronto.

As you know, almost 5.5 million people live in Toronto and the GTA area, so it's very important to create some kind of initiatives and mechanisms to ease the tension and the gridlock around the Toronto area. Many people who want to visit or cross Toronto at the present time are having a hugely tough time. Sometimes it takes them hours, a long, long time. As the minister stated in his introduction, many people want to go to work and come back to have dinner with their family, and they cannot do it at the present time because of the gridlock, because so many cars are being used by commuters. Many people are using the same highways and roads, and there's never been a huge investment in the past to solve that problem.

I want to congratulate the minister for coming out with a strategy to help Ontarians, because many people come to Toronto—not just people who live in Toronto. Many people cross Toronto.

I had the chance to meet with manufacturers in this province, and they told us that it's vitally important to them to solve the highway issue, that commuting issue, because the faster they can go back and forth through Toronto, the more money they make, and they make their products more competitive. That's why I think we can save almost \$1.6 billion annually through this investment and also help many people to come and invest in Ontario, help many people to move their goods through Ontario.

This investment is great. This bill is important for Toronto and it's important for Ontario. I also want to congratulate the minister for his continuous effort to support all the roads and bridges across the province of Ontario.

Mr. Dunlop: I had another comment I was going to make on the minister's speech until I heard the fact that they're going to save \$1.6 billion with this commission.

Mr. Ramal: Yes.

Mr. Dunlop: I would love to see the data for how you actually came up with that figure. That's \$1.6 billion, not million, you're talking about, right?

Mr. Ramal: Billion.

Mr. Dunlop: It's a billion. So you're going to save that by the use of this authority: Is that what you are trying to say? That will be something. It's going to be in effect in September, so we're going to watch very closely the \$1.6 billion you're going to save the citizens of the province of Ontario by implementing this plan.

In the minister's final response, when he gets up to comment, I'd like him to comment on Highway 400 in Simcoe county. That's the part of the province you keep forgetting about. They've got a highway up there too. It's called the 400 highway, and the worst gridlock you could ever imagine is on that. You haven't tried to do an HOV lane on that, and you've done almost nothing with GO Transit. I'd really like to hear what your plans are to move the people in and out of the county of Simcoe, particularly in light of the fact that you've created a greenbelt area, and now we have all this huge pressure of

a leapfrogging effect of development in Simcoe county without any of the services in order. You've created a development that has sped up the development in Simcoe county by 25 years. That's what's happened here: It's 25 years ahead of its normal growth rate. Now there are no services provided by the government, not even any sewer and water main projects announced in the recent COMRIF for the county of Simcoe. Somehow, you think you're going to add 500,000 or 600,000 more people to the county of Simcoe without any of the infrastructure in place for something that you have created.

The Deputy Speaker: Minister, you have two minutes to respond.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: I want to thank all the members who participated in the discussion. Let me just start by saying that nobody can dispute the fact that there is congestion on our highways, and nobody disputes the fact that that congestion has gotten worse. That didn't just happen; it happened because the previous government—here is the record. It's all in the numbers. In 1995-96, we were spending in excess of \$660 million on public transit. Come the year 1999-2000—

Mr. Sterling: Yes, we gave them tax points.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: Do you know how much? Sixty-four million dollars. Then they thought that \$64 million was too much money, so they thought, "Next year, we should go to \$38 million." Thirty-eight million dollars, and they thought that would resolve all the congestion problems in this province. That is their record.

They talk about the HOV lanes. Yes, maybe the ministry planned them at that time. But it's like those plastic cheques that they delivered all over the province when they were giving out money, but they never really gave any money to any of these projects. At the end of the day, we end up delivering to all these projects.

To us, congestion is important. It's not about politics; it's about the economic region and the prosperity of this region. We need to address the issue of congestion, and we feel that one route to do it is through the GTTA. Even though we didn't wait for the GTTA, we actually announced three major projects: one for the subway, one for Mississauga Transitway and one for Brampton transit. We knew it would take time for the GTTA to be up and running, but we needed to address those issues right away.

This is the only government who is really committed to delivering and addressing the issue of congestion in this whole economic region as one unit, which the previous government really didn't do.

1620

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Sterling: I believe that we have unanimous consent to defer our leadoff when our critic is not here.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to defer the leadoff? Agreed.

Mr. Sterling: It's a pleasure, actually, to speak on this bill because this kind of proposal and some of the former attempts to deal with some of the coordination of the transportation needs of the greater Toronto area were my

specific responsibility in the year 2002-03. I would not portray our lack of funding to the public transit system as the government continues to try to do, as the member opposite has, because essentially what happened was that in 1999 the Ontario government, the former Conservative government, took up a much greater responsibility for education funding across the province of Ontario. When we took on more responsibility for education funding, this left tax room for the municipalities to make up funding—they had formerly received a direct cheque from the Ontario government—to replace that with moving into that tax room vacated by the government at that time. That's something that the Liberals continue to misinform the public about with regard to what actually happened during that period of time. We picked up more of the tab on education. The municipalities had more money to spend on their public transit systems.

In spite of that, we did step up to the plate with regard to the Sheppard subway. In fact, I had the pleasure of opening that subway. This government put close to \$600 million into that particular project which, of course, was for transit. And I delivered cheques to the city of Ottawa for, I believe, \$13 million one year, and my successor delivered something like \$17 million. We had the millennium funding, where we delivered \$45 million to the city of Ottawa, some for improvement of some of the arterial roads as well as for some improved park-and-go situations. Bus centres at the Centrum mall in Kanata: I think we contributed about \$4 million to that particular project as well. So we were involved very much with the cities with regard to their transportation systems.

We're fortunate in the Ottawa area. The city of Ottawa, because of its very large boundaries, doesn't have the same problems we have here in the greater Toronto area or where the system or the population has grown out and slopped over several other counties or regional areas. Therefore, bringing together all of the municipalities is no longer necessary in the city of Ottawa. We could speak with one voice and the systems can be made with regard to our transportation system in Ottawa, even though I have some reservations about some of the directions the present city council is going in, and of course it's of great debate within the context of the civic elections.

Creating a transportation authority for a large geographical and a large populated area like we're talking about in the GTTA is not an easy matter. Therefore I was surprised, quite frankly, in the last election when the government made this grandiose promise that they were going to create the GTTA, the Greater Toronto Transit Authority, because it sounds good; it sounds really good. You say, "Well, here's one body that's going to be able to take care of all of our needs for transportation."

The former government tried to put together a like mechanism under the Greater Toronto Services Board, which covered the same area and had not only transportation within its portfolio but also other services as well. That particular model failed. It didn't fail because of the number of people on the board, although it was a

large number: 42. It failed because of parochial politics. What happened was, when the board met and was trying to make decisions for the whole, the municipal politicians couldn't leave their parochial interests at home. Consequently, decisions were not made, plans were not made and spending decisions were not made to go in unison, as we would have liked to see. So the board collapsed and the GO Transit authority sort of evolved out of it.

I can remember the head of the Greater Toronto Services Board talking to me and saying, "Mr. Sterling, either give us some real power or dissolve us. There's no sense in us having an organization where people come to talk about issues if we don't have real power." I guess that's my greatest concern with regard to the GTTA, that we're creating this board, again with heavy political interests—and I quote Mr. Grunwald, who is head, I believe, of the Toronto trade association—

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West): Board of trade.

Mr. Sterling: Toronto Board of Trade; thank you. He has expressed his concerns about the new organization being "far too politicized." I believe those were his words. While he and his organization have been a strong proponent of the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority—I'm going to call it GTTA so I won't trip over it again, Mr. Speaker—he has some concerns about this bill in that I believe of the 11, nine will potentially be municipal politicians representing different areas. I suspect that as we go down the road, we will hear again that the GTTA is not moving forward as perhaps people would like it to move forward because of the highly politicized nature of the new GTTA.

The other part of it is this: You create a board, you create a corporation to do certain things, and you want them to do certain things, but basically it's an advisory kind of board. They're not taxing for the money. They have to get that money from somewhere else. So essentially what we're saying is we're going to put people in charge of spending taxpayers' money who are not responsible for taxing or collecting that money. Time and time again, organizations have been formed with this intent, but it has never worked out because there has to be a very direct connection between the pressures of collecting that money and allocating that money and those spending that money, and this just doesn't have it.

As you read through the sections of the act, you get more and more the idea that this is really the GO Transit system under a new name and that the major function of this GTTA board will, in fact, be running the GO Transit system. Because we do away with the GO Transit Act, they make the bylaws with regard to GO Transit and in fact that's their day-to-day function, and the organization's day-to-day function will be running the GO Transit system—a worthwhile and necessary function, but we're already doing that. The only powers that this act has and gives to this new GTTA is (1) they can expropriate land for the purposes of carrying out its objectives and (2) it can borrow money. Nowhere in the act does it say where the money is going to come from to

pay for it except that, as my friend from Nickel Belt has said, their only source of revenue, really, for what they're going to do is to collect fares.

1630

The other matter that I wanted to talk about was this seamless connection with regard to the one-fare system. This is not a new idea; in fact, we were starting down the road to doing this three years ago. I'm surprised that it isn't already done at this stage of the game, because you don't need a piece of legislation to do this—at least not the way this legislation is written, anyway. A private corporation could have been set up, a non-profit corporation probably, and the system could have been started three years ago, as we were about to do in 2003. I don't know what happened, but I think I know what happened: The assistant deputy minister for transportation probably got impatient with this government and left this government and went to be one of the chief bureaucrats in the city of Toronto. He was the assistant deputy minister who was in charge of planning for the Ministry of Transportation. Quite frankly, had he not left, and had people worked with that particular ADM, we would have had about a two-and-a-half-year start ahead of where we are at the present time with regard to this initiative. There was nothing to stop and we were about to enter into agreements with the, I believe, 18 different transportation authorities across the greater Toronto area to have a one-fare system. The biggest block to that was the TTC, which didn't want to join in. So there was a great deal of push and pull between them.

But if you read this act as to what they can do or cannot do, this GTTA cannot impose their will with regard to a one-fare system on anybody. Under section 16, it says clearly that it can operate a local "transportation service within the regional transportation area by agreement with the municipalities." It can do the same, operate a transportation service, which the one-fare system would be, in areas "outside the regional transportation area by agreement with the municipalities to be served by the system or service." So while the minister talks about a one-fare system, he's going to have to get the city of Toronto council to sign on. He's going to have to get all of these different transportation authorities to sign on. Now, you don't need a piece of legislation to get agreement to create a one-fare system. It should have been done two and a half years ago. It should have been done and should have been in place now.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: Nine years ago.

Mr. Sterling: Well, it should have been done nine years ago, but it was on the plate when we left the government in 2003. This government has languished and done nothing since that time. So we now have a piece of legislation which sort of says the same things that were being said in policy papers three years ago. We could be 60% or 70% of the way down the road. Quite frankly, I would have put more teeth in the act. I would have said that after a certain period of time the authority would have the ability to demand that the transportation authorities become at least part of that very small piece of the

overall pie with regard to providing transportation in the greater Toronto area.

We also heard about these great investments—\$670 million—which the government has put into the subway. Well, they haven't put a cent into the subway. They've given \$670 million to certain trustees, as we understand, for a future subway. That subway is not going to be built for four or five years, because I assume that they would have to go through the environmental process, provided that this government doesn't give them a bypass to the environmental assessment process. You have to go through a significant amount of work before you build a subway. I understand that some of that is on its way, but this subway is not going to be there for a long period of time. In fact, perhaps I'll be the minister opening the subway too, five or six years from now.

Mr. Dave Levac (Brant): Maybe Garfield.

Mr. Sterling: Or maybe Garfield Dunlop will be. I hope it's Garfield.

Anyway, the other part of it is that this money was given to transportation not because of a desire by this government to do anything for transportation; it was a desire to avoid a balanced budget this year. That's why we came back earlier, in March. We were supposed to come back here in April, but they wanted to spend this money tout de suite, before the end of the fiscal year, which was at the end of March, so they wrote out these cheques so fast that they didn't even know where the cheques were going. One of the cheques was \$670 million for a subway, to trustees in Toronto. They wrote another \$400 million to the rest of Ontario. They wrote I think \$95 million to Mississauga and \$65 million to Brampton.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: No, it's the other way around.

Mr. Sterling: The other way around? Okay, \$95 million to Brampton and \$65 million to Mississauga. We in eastern Ontario, in Ottawa, are really grateful for \$32 million even though we're the second-largest city in all of Ontario. We really got the short end of the stick once again. We got \$33 million out of \$1.4 billion—2% to 3%, even though we're 8% of the population served. You shortchanged us big time and the people of Ottawa know it.

That whole guise of this government being concerned about transportation was really a ruse to get money out the door so that instead of a balanced budget last year, we have a deficit of about \$1.4 billion or something like that so that they can say, going into the election year, "We finally balanced the budget." Of course we're going to tell people the truth, when we get into next year, and that we in fact will have a deficit. We'll be asking the auditor to look very closely at the agreements.

I think I raised in this Legislature as well that they wrote cheques to municipal and county governments. They wrote cheques to two county governments that I know about that don't even have roads and bridges in their responsibility. They wrote a cheque for over \$1 million to the county of Frontenac, and they don't have a bridge or a road to take care of. They're all lower-tier

municipalities. So that county council can decide how and what they want to do with that money. They could spend that million bucks whichever way they want. Hopefully it will go back down to the lower-tier municipalities but there ain't no guarantee, because it's their money, free and clear. They did the same with Hastings county. They were so anxious to get this money out the door that they didn't even know what they were doing. They wrote a cheque to the county of Hastings for \$1.6 million, and they don't have a road or a bridge to take care of. "Here's a cheque for \$1.6 million, county. Please spend it on your roads and bridges." The finance minister said that every cent was going to be spent on roads and bridges, so he was handing out cheques. He wanted to get them out so fast at the end of the year that he didn't even know whom he was writing them to, that they didn't have any roads or bridges to take care of, because they're all taken care of by the lower-tier municipalities.

Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound): Think of what they'll do next year, Norm.

Mr. Sterling: I don't know what they'll do next year. It will be quite interesting to see.

The GTTA—let's get back. It's hard to talk about this particular bill, because there's really not a lot in the bill other than the name. The name is good, "GTTA" is a nice name and all the rest of it, but there's really no guts or power or money behind this particular organization. Anyone who participates in an organization like this will be like the former head of the GTSB: He will be coming to us after the next election and saying, "Mr. Sterling, give us guts, give us some money or disband us."

It's an interesting experience and I hope that I'm wrong.

1640

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth): Like others who have addressed this issue today, I look at this bill, and the more you look at it, the more you see nothing in it. I see an empty vessel. I see a structure that doesn't have funding. I'll ask the minister when he gets an opportunity to speak today to talk about how exactly this Greater Toronto Transit Authority will fund itself. Will it in fact be able to carry out the plans it is supposed to be putting forward? Will it actually be able to levy money from the municipalities that will be covered by its authority? Will it in fact intercept funds from higher levels of government before they get to those municipalities?

If this organization has no money, it will deliver no effect. It will be a talking shop. As my colleague has just said, we will have people coming back to us in a few years saying, "This structure is of no use, has no purpose and, frankly, we think it should be folded," as long as they put forward what they've put forward today. There is every reason, when you look at the bill, to see why it gets panned in the press, why the Toronto Star in their editorial this morning said that this was not the solution to transit problems in the greater Toronto area because in fact there's no authority, no money and no future.

That is part of the problem, but there's a more fundamental problem, and that's that this government is not addressing the question of sprawl. If you don't address the question of sprawl, and I'll talk about that at greater length, then you can have as many GTTAs as you want. You can call them by a variety of names. They won't move traffic, they won't get people out of their cars, they won't deal with pollution, they won't deal with smog and they won't deal with the crisis in transportation in this area because, in the end, the sprawl will strangle the transit.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Hon. Mr. Takhar: Actually, the discussion has been very—

The Deputy Speaker: Hold on for just a second.

My problem. The Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: The discussion has actually been very interesting. The member from Lanark-Carleton said that they gave money to the municipalities. I think the municipalities will say it was the other way around and they will disagree with that. Let me just quote Hazel McCallion and what she wrote to the Mississauga News. She said, "Huge backlogs in transit that the former Harris government created by cutting off the capital funding of buses contributed towards the deficit of the Toronto system." She went on to further say, and I have her letter right here, "I hope that you give me an opportunity to express to the Mississauga News the appreciation of the city of Mississauga that the Liberal government under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty has taken action on trying to help the municipalities by providing a gas tax, and in fact not only capital funding, but they have made it very lenient by allowing us to use it for the operating budgets of transit systems." This is a third party saying that. It's not even me saying it. I don't know what the member is talking about.

What they really did in 1997 and 1999 was that they basically downloaded about 4,900 kilometres of roads to the municipalities, and that's what they gave the money for. Now they're saying that it was for the transit system. Their transit record is that they had \$666 million in 1995-96, when they took over government, and that went down to \$38 million or less than that in four or five years. That is their track record and that's why we have congestion on the roads. Now they're objecting that we're trying to address the issue of congestion. I don't understand this.

We need to move ahead with the GTTA because the GTTA will create a seamless, integrated transit system in this province.

Mr. Dunlop: Another photo op.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: It's not about photo ops. That's your—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Simcoe North, come to order. Go ahead.

Hon. Mr. Takhar: That is their track record. That is their photo ops; the plastic cheques. That is what they actually specialize in.

What we plan to do is we have put \$400 million for bridges and roads in this province. They downloaded 4,900 kilometres to the provinces.

Also, I should say we gave a \$600-million project to Ottawa—\$600 million—and out of that the provincial contribution was \$200 million. With that, Ottawa is making progress. I'm very proud of the kind of the work that they have done.

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): I want to compliment my colleague with Lanark on his presentation on Bill 104. I also want to put on the record that I realize that the Minister of Transportation has had three years to struggle with his cabinet to get endorsement and approval, to get this thing forward to the point of legislation.

My major frustration with this legislation is that it's been promised in three budgets. I recognize that there is a pecking order in cabinet and certain ministers have more authority and get more results, but let's hope that we can move through public consultation and through the process of clause-by-clause and get moving on this issue.

I know the minister put on the record supportive comments from my mayor of Burlington, Rob MacIsaac, who I've indicated publicly would make an outstanding nominee. I know he's been on the list for consideration to run the GTTA. I personally would support that. Here is a person with long municipal experience, but he also understands the tension and the dynamic that exists between regional upper-tier municipalities and city lower-tier municipalities. This is one of the big challenges that we have in terms of fair integration and making the GTTA work. I do hope that the government will be able to speak in an articulate, clear way about its vision for the tension between upper-tier and lower-tier. On the record, I think that Rob MacIsaac would make an outstanding nominee.

Minister, you talked about the downloading. Currently your ministry is in negotiations with the region of Halton to download Highway 7. You don't have one penny on the table. You talk a big stick in opposition, but let's see how you perform as minister.

Ms. Martel: The debate is heating up a little bit; that's always interesting.

I want to just follow up on a comment that was raised by the member from Lanark–Carleton, and that has to do with money, funding, pecunia, however you want to describe it. The reality is that the government brings to the House today legislation that will make the GTTA responsible for developing regional transit plans to try and increase ridership. But the sustained, viable financing mechanism to go with increasing ridership and to support those plans is nowhere in this bill. Who's going to pay for these plans? Who's going to pay for whatever capital infrastructure changes are going to be required as a result of these plans? What's also interesting is that there is no legislative requirement in the bill that the province or the federal government—it might be hard to do the feds—no requirement in the bill whatsoever that the province is going to approve or fund the projects that the GTTA put

forward. The group can go ahead and lay out great five-year priority plans, but if there's no money, there ain't going to be much of an improvement in transit.

We're not the only ones concerned about this very serious matter of financing. The board of trade president, Glen Grunwald, said the following: "We're concerned by the lack of strong financial tools that will provide sustainable revenue. The authority will need sufficient funds to tackle major projects and create partnerships. The last thing we want to end up with is a great car that doesn't have enough gas in the tank." I think that says it all. And I say to the minister, who's here today, where is the provision for your government to fund the projects? How is this going to be sustainable? Who's going to pay for it? Where is that articulated in the bill?

1650

The Deputy Speaker: Member for Lanark–Carleton, you have two minutes to respond.

Mr. Sterling: Let me explain once more what tax points are about. The minister obviously doesn't understand that when one level of government vacates a tax area, like we did in 1999—

Interjection.

Mr. Sterling: Can I speak, Mr. Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: We've had a fair amount across the floor today, but the floor is yours.

Mr. Sterling: He says that the mayor doesn't agree with me. Well, the mayor loves to receive cheques. Any mayor loves to receive cheques. She loves to receive tax points, and so we gave tax points. You don't want to recognize that particularly in the 905 area, that was a significant transfer of wealth to the municipalities so they could fund their public transit systems. That was the arrangement. Now there's this claim that there was no funding, and that is patently false.

Notwithstanding that, the idea of the GTTA is not a bad one in terms of trying to get some coordination. My concern, when the board of trade came to me when I was Minister of Transportation, was exactly the questions we're hearing today. I said to them, "Can you put in front of me a structure where there is a responsible relationship between those who are spending the money and those who are collecting the money?" I never received that response. I assume that this government has now made the decision to go ahead with this bill, which is, in effect, a farce.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Tabuns: As we all know in this Legislature, a properly funded and well-functioning public transportation system is crucial to making the GTA a healthy, prosperous place, and to making sure it works for residents and for industry. We're all familiar with the figure, provided by the Toronto Board of Trade, of \$2 billion as the cost of gridlock in the GTA; the number given today by the government is \$1.6 billion per year. We're talking about very large numbers impacting on residents, on business, on industry, on job creation in this region. So the question of dealing with gridlock is crucial to the future health and prosperity of this area.

Anyone who has tried to move across the GTA by transit knows that it's balkanized, that it's inefficient, that the fundamental problems of transportation in this whole region have to be addressed. In fact, that's the reason we have a bill before us today. People need to get around.

When you talk to people in the 905 region, as I happened to be able to do on Saturday night—I was at the Harry Jerome Awards, and one of the people I was seated with came from Ajax-Pickering. I was saying, "What are the issues in the area you live in?" He said, "The number one issue for the people I talk to is gridlock. They get in their cars, they try to go to work, they try to get across the region. At 20 or 30 kilometres an hour, they inch along, at times stop-and-go on the 401, trying to get to places they have to get to."

In the end, this government—in fact, any government in Ontario that wants to have support in the greater Toronto area—is going to have to come to terms with gridlock. The problem is that what we have before us is an approach that's called a solution but that doesn't deal with the fundamental problems that create gridlock in the first place, and thus is doomed to failure.

This government promised to deliver the GTTA in each of the last three years. Knowing the political consequence, the seriousness of dealing with gridlock, of dealing with this transit issue, I expected that we would see a serious bill, that we would see in the GTTA an institution with the mandate and funding mechanisms that would really start to deal with the problem in a fundamental way and reverse the difficulties that people in this area face. But what we have before us falls very far short of what is needed to actually deal with gridlock and with the transit issue. I think that's going to be a big issue for everyone in this House who represents a riding in the 905 and everyone in this House who cares about keeping the economic heart of Ontario rolling.

Let's start at the beginning. Before we go to the substance of the bill itself, let's talk about traffic congestion and the pollution issues and health issues and economic issues that shape the approach that any government should have to deal with this problem. In the 1990s, we started seeing the resurgence of something called the new urbanism, an approach to new development that reflected the urban form in North America that actually was able to sustainably support transit. One of the foremost proponents of the new urbanism was an American architect, Andrés Duany. Duany made a very interesting video in the mid-'90s about the urban form that he confronted. He opened his video with a slide that he had taken of something called the town centre. I don't know where this town centre was located in North America. It could be a town on the outskirts of Los Angeles. Increasingly, it could be a city in the GTA. It could be in the outskirts of Montreal or New York. But the slide is quite extraordinary. It is two eight-lane highways intersecting with a giant parking lot on each corner. This is a town centre. Duany, quite correctly, quite accurately, said that this town centre is a formula for gridlock. This town centre, as set out, means that you don't have the kind of

critical mass at the centre of a city that allows you to have a rational, sustainable, affordable transit system. That is what we have increasingly in the GTA. We have a system that is so low-density, so sprawling, so irrationally jumbled together, that even a very smart, very well-thought-out, very well-financed and legislatively powerful transit authority will not be able to solve the transit problem.

When we look at sprawl, we have a number of fundamental issues that arise from—I was going to use the words "planning a city"—allowing an urban form to arise that has no rhyme or reason other than the immediate profit of a developer who wants to put up a shopping mall or a subdivision. The reality is that in the very low-density suburbs we have in the GTA, people need to have a car to get around, because in order to go from one spot to the other, there is no transit system yet existing, and probably will not exist in the future, that can actually give people the mobility they need. The urban form they deal with is too jumbled, too spread out. So when you look at two-car ownership numbers in the downtown core of the GTA, which is the inner city of Toronto, more like 50% of people have two cars in their household. When you get to the outer ring of the GTA, you're talking about close to 100%. People have to have a car to get around. The simple reality of millions of cars is that they will overwhelm road systems. The experience in Los Angeles—they built expressway after expressway, decade after decade, and year after year the speed of traffic on those expressways went downward. You can't solve the problem of an irrational and jumbled urban form by simply building more roads and more expressways. If you have an urban form that demands car ownership and use, then there are things that fall out from that. Some of the things that fall out from that are air pollution and climate-change-forming gases.

1700

Air pollution: Cars are responsible for about 40% of the smog-producing pollutants in our atmosphere. You know very well the impact of smog on the GTA and Ontario. We've talked about the \$1.6 billion or \$2 billion that is the cost of gridlock to this regional community. But if you look at the human cost in health, the OMA says that in Ontario there are about 1,800 deaths a year from air pollution. Cars aren't all of it, but they're a big chunk of it. If you look at the cost of that to the Ontario economy, the OMA's calculation is about \$1 billion a year: a very significant number and a very significant human impact.

If you look at climate change—a problem increasingly recognized around the world, a problem that people have to deal with—we in the GTA are starting to see some of those impacts, not just in heat waves but in the storms that climate scientists predicted would hit more frequently and with far greater force. The Toronto Star in the last few weeks had articles about sinkholes that have opened up on different roadways, causing huge traffic problems because the scope of the storms that dumped rain on the GTA was far greater than the 100-year-old

storm design guidelines that engineers were used to using. So they sweep out culverts; they cause problems with the flow of water that undermines roads. We will see more and more of that. We will see far higher infrastructure costs in the future from the practices we have today.

Here's an example: In the mid-'90s, New York City did a study about the impact of climate change called "The Baked Apple?" Because of the rise in sea level in this century, New York City will find that its sewer outflows no longer flow into the sea but in fact the sea will flow into its sewer system. For New York City, there will be a massive cost to redo its sewer system. Here in Toronto, we won't have to deal with a rising sea level. What we will have to deal with is dropping levels in Lake Ontario. We and our children will face real costs for not taking action on climate change.

When we have gridlock, when we have urban sprawl, when we have a car-dependent regional community, when we enhance, we accelerate the damage to our air and to our climate that these factors bring about.

When we look at the sprawl in this area, which will ultimately make the GTTA irrelevant, we should look at the record of this McGuinty government in actually addressing sprawl. Looking at the greenbelt legislation, about 143,000 hectares of developable land have been left open for "future development." That's within the greenbelt plan, an area equivalent to about 75% of all the lands currently developed in the GTA. So it's roughly allowing almost a doubling of the size of the GTA at densities so low that car use will be necessary for most people to get around. Following the patterns we have seen today, it will be at or lower than the density of Los Angeles, meaning that we will continue to have car-driven transportation and an undermining of the potential for any transit authority to actually provide the service that people need to get out of their cars.

If you look at those numbers from another angle, the Neptis Foundation, which has done a lot of work for environmental groups looking at sprawl in the greater Toronto area, calculated that there was enough land there for 60 to 70 years' worth of growth at current density levels; for us, a disaster, because if you look at the \$2-billion or \$1.6-billion figure that's already talked about for the cost of gridlock, think about the cost in a number of decades. By 2031, it's been projected that the average commute time for people living in the GTA will be 300% longer than it is now. Listen to the number that was provided by the McGuinty government earlier in this debate: 2021, looking at a gridlock bill, a transportation slow-down bill of around \$7 billion. These are huge burdens on the economy, not to talk about the questions related to air pollution, not to talk about the questions related to climate change, not to talk about the questions related to the quality of life; simply the cost to business of slow-down in delivery. As long as the government sticks with its pro-sprawl, pro-road policies, this bill before us today will be irrelevant.

One of the measures that this government has taken in the last while is something called the Places to Grow Act

and their proposed growth plan. It calls for increased urban density, reduced infrastructure costs, decreased sprawl, less transportation-based pollution, and increased protection for environmentally significant lands and prime agricultural farmland. It is an act, frankly, that is largely hollow. When you go to comments by Environmental Defence Canada that were made at the time that the bill was introduced, first of all, they noted that the time frame that municipalities would have to make their plans consistent with this Places to Grow Act—I have to say that I don't like these Orwellian titles. Nonetheless, the Places to Grow Act said that municipalities would have five years to bring their plans into conformity with this act. In fact, in the proposed growth plan they talk about 10 years to come into conformity. The reality is that if you don't act very quickly to break the momentum of this sprawl, if you don't act very quickly to change the direction, you are not going to be able to change it later. Five years, 10 years—completely unreasonable. But in fact that's where the government is going, and because the government is going there, I'm quite comfortable in saying that this Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Act will be of no consequence. It will not make a difference, in the end, to what we have to do in this House.

Secondly, Environmental Defence noted comments from Mr. Bedford, former chief planner with the city of Toronto, who said that a 40% target for restraining the growth of the area was not enough, that if this bill did not put in place far tighter constraints on sprawl, we would simply have all the problems we've had to date, we would have problems that would continue to undermine the quality of life here, continue to undermine the quality of the air we breathe, continue to undermine the future for ourselves and for our children. When you have an act before you that sits on a foundation of sand already, you can be quite assured that it will not stand the test of time. It may not even stand the test of this particular government's mandate.

1710

At present, the greenbelt excludes south Simcoe. That's a region that is already experiencing significant pressure from urban sprawl. My colleague here has introduced a private member's bill about south Simcoe. As you know, proposed developments for south Simcoe include a proposal for construction of an entire city. That's 100,000 people, massive by any scale, leap-frogging over the greenbelt to the other side. These developments, 100,000 people, are being proposed on land not designated as urban residential in any of the county of Simcoe's official plans.

South Simcoe has quickly become the principal site where development has leapfrogged over the greenbelt, and it's fuelling increasing sprawl and furthering highway dependence. Is the government taking on this private member's bill? Is this government pressing the issue that the member from that area has put forward? I've seen no evidence of it. What we continue to get is business as usual, with sprawl and empty acts that purport to deal

with the transit problem. That's what we have: sprawl and empty, hollow promises.

The highway dependence that the whole McGuinty-proposed growth plan is based on is seen most clearly in Highway 404. The extension of Highway 404 is termed simply "a highway to sprawl" when you talk to environmental groups. When you talk to or you listen to the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, the Pembina Institute and Ontario Nature, they all have the same review: Highway 404 just means more sprawl every day.

What we have, and I've seen this with the Clean Water Act and other things that come forward in this House, is a bill that's put forward to deal with a problem, however weakly or strongly that bill may in fact be, and on the other hand concrete action on the ground or a mission of action on the ground by this government that undermines and makes useless the bill that has come forward for discussion. This is an ongoing and profound problem with the McGuinty government and one that we in this House are going to have to address, and unfortunately it won't be this government that addresses it.

These events of allowing sprawl to continue, of extending the highway system to fuel sprawl, connect in some way to the bill before us. How they connect is not clear to me, how the McGuinty government sees this as working I don't know, but I do know this: When we finish debating this bill, when this bill, if it ever does go forward, is adopted by the House, it's not going to do what it has to do. It's not going to do what the bill is supposed to do in its stated purpose.

So going on: Instead of implementing the seamless, integrated ticket system between the various GTA transportation authorities within 18 months of the GTTA coming into existence that was promised by the McGuinty Liberals in their 2003 election platform, we know it will be years before an integrated ticket system comes into place, before it's up and running. This is a bill that will put in place an empty vessel. It will be void of funding mechanisms, and it has a mandate that appears to be largely advisory.

When the minister was asked by reporters, "How is it that the GTTA will resolve the priorities among the different transit systems? What authority will they have? How will they actually compel co-operation where compulsion is required? How will they actually make sure that what's needed for this area actually comes to be?" the minister's answer was short and straightforward. He said that the GTTA would use its powers of persuasion. That is an admission that this authority, so-called, will simply be a talking shop and will have no consequence for transportation or gridlock in this area.

My colleague has quoted Glen Grunwald from the Toronto Board of Trade, who said, "We're concerned by the lack of strong financial tools that will provide sustainable revenue." I'm going to quote again what he had to say. He went on to state, "The authority will need sufficient funds to tackle major projects and create partnerships. The last thing we want is a great car that

doesn't have enough gas in the tank." Well, I think Mr. Grunwald needs to speak up a bit more loudly at this point. This car doesn't have gas in its tank. This car is an electric car; it's not plugged into the grid. It is an empty shell, and until the larger question of sprawl is dealt with, it will continue to be an empty shell; until the question of funding and real authority is dealt with, it will continue to be an empty shell.

There is no legislative requirement that the province or federal government approve or fund the projects that the GTTA recommends. And I'm sure that you are, as I have been, very familiar with reports—beautiful reports, wonderfully researched, lovingly illustrated—that are passed out to legislators and city councillors in this province and across this country—wonderful reports that simply sit on the shelf. I have no doubt that this GTTA will hire very capable transportation planners. Those planners will make plans. They'll do the research. They'll do polling. They'll take a look at maps. They'll talk to experts across North America. They'll probably talk to experts in Europe and Asia. But what they bring forward when there is no money will simply sit on the shelf. So what we'll see, every day, every week, every month, are longer delays on the roads, shorter and shorter times that people will spend at home at the end of the workday, longer and longer times to get things delivered in the GTA so that businesses can operate, so that people can be employed.

If the government is serious, if the government is actually serious about transit, then the government has to make provisions to provide funds to the GTTA. It has to, in its budget—it should in its legislation—make it clear where the funds are going to come from, how they'll be disbursed, what the spending priorities are for this government. I don't expect to see that. Prior to 1995, the province funded 50% of the TTC's operating funds and 75% of its capital costs. It wasn't just the NDP government; it would have been the Liberal government; it would have been the Tory government. Prior to 1995, there was a funding formula in place that allowed public transit in the city of Toronto—Metro Toronto at the time—to function the way it needed to. I'm not saying it was perfect, but frankly a far better transit situation than we face now. GO Transit: The "GO" is supposed to stand for "government of Ontario." It refers to Queen's Park's funding role in keeping that transit running.

The reality is that the Conservatives downloaded the costs of the TTC and GO Transit to municipalities that were already strapped for cash, municipalities that were already facing difficulties in making ends meet. I was a city councillor in Toronto in the 1990s. We were constantly engaged in rounds of cost cutting because we were constantly facing income crunches. Then in 1997, just to make sure that the municipalities really were able to deliver the services they had to deliver, they had a whole host of costs downloaded on to them. The McGuinty Liberals came to power saying that they would deal with this download, that they would deal with this long-term, profound problem that municipalities face, not just in the GTA but across Ontario. But that situation has

not in fact been rectified. The GTA's two major public transit systems are starved for operating funds and they're starved for infrastructure funds.

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GTA municipalities from the west through to the east have said already that they're totally frustrated with the fact that they're now responsible for what should be the government of Ontario transit infrastructure—the GO Transit system. They're stuck with the cost, they don't have the resources to build it, and this legislation, this rewrite of the GO Transit legislation, does nothing to change this—nothing at all. So again I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to those who are in other places listening to this: The greater Toronto transit authority legislation will not deliver what's needed to deal with gridlock, to deal with transit problems in this region.

Recently, the GO Transit board passed a \$1.7-billion, 10-year expansion budget. That budget sends a very strong message to the McGuinty government. They're expecting the provincial government to provide the GO Transit system with the necessary funds to implement this 10-year plan. The GTA municipalities are already on the hook. They're on the hook for \$98 million to fund infrastructure work for GO Transit in 2006-07. But the GTA municipalities, in whose name this legislation is being put forward, are fed up—completely fed up—with shouldering a transportation service that is rightfully the responsibility of the province.

Instead of resuming the full funding for GO, which frankly would probably tremendously help transit in this region, the government is warning the municipalities that they risk losing gas tax money if they refuse to pay for GO Transit. So I ask myself a question: If in fact the municipalities don't get the funding to maintain their own regional transit systems, what is the GTTA supposed to coordinate? A system of balkanized transit systems that, on their own, are breaking down from lack of cash. In the end, you can put forward all the legislation you want. If you don't put the money along with it, the legislation is largely irrelevant. If you don't deal with the sprawl issue, even if you put the money in, the legislation will be largely irrelevant.

The GTTA is supposed to be able to borrow money to pay for infrastructure improvements. That's sections 28 and 31 of the act. If that money is taken, if revenue from fares is diverted to pay for the loans needed to finance that infrastructure instead of getting the money from the province to finance the infrastructure, we further reduce the operating funds that we need to make sure that this region has the transit it needs. Furthermore, if the GTTA doesn't have a revenue mechanism identified in legislation that allows it to pay back the place where the money is going to come from for those loans, then you have to ask how on earth it's expected that they will actually be able to borrow money from anyone, because they won't be able to say, when they go into a bank or a financing facility, "Yup, lend us \$10 billion; lend us \$20 billion. We don't have any source of revenue, but we have fabulous legislation on the books." How credible is

that? In my opinion, it's totally not credible. Consistent with the act as a whole, it's not credible legislation, not credible premises on which it's based. For public transit to thrive, for the GTTA to successfully move people out of their cars and onto buses and trains, the provincial government in the legislation has to make arrangements for the GTTA to receive ongoing, sustained funding to cover operating and new capital costs. We're not seeing any evidence of that in the legislation before us and, unfortunately, I don't expect to see any evidence of that.

Let's compare this with the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority. Look at the legislation that they have, look at what it's produced, and look at what exists in other provinces. Vancouver faces similar gridlock problems. You might even say, in the opinion of some people, that it faces more profound gridlock problems. They have profound air quality problems. In 1999, the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority was created to help deal with the growing problem of gridlock and disparate transit authorities working at cross-purposes in many instances. Like the GTA, over the past decade, commute times in the Vancouver area had shot up by 36%, and anyone who's tried to get through Vancouver at rush hour knows that that figure is probably very generous. It is one slow and tortured move.

How does the McGuinty Liberal legislation compare with the greater Vancouver transit authority legislation? The reality is, it doesn't compare very well at all. Unlike the GTTA, the greater Vancouver transit authority funds itself through fares, through property taxes, through a tax on parking spaces, through a generous portion of provincial gas taxes, with no strings attached, and now a share of the federal gas tax as well. Last year, the greater Vancouver transit authority began taxing free parking spaces through a levy on the owners of malls, plazas and industrial parks.

The reality is, who benefits from a reduction in gridlock? Who benefits from the investment we make in transit? Certainly all of us. But those who are caught in gridlock now, inching along on the QEW, the 401, the 427, they use those parking lots, and their contribution to the cost of dealing with transit makes life better for them very directly. A reminder again: In the greater Toronto area, we're looking at between \$1.6 billion and \$2 billion a year as the cost of gridlock, and the government figure used earlier today was that in 2021, that cost could be up around \$7 billion to \$8 billion a year.

If we're going to cut that huge operating burden on the economy in the greater Toronto area, we have to find funding for transit authorities, and the greater Vancouver transit authority has been given the tools to do that. The combination of these measures that I outlined gives it annual revenues in excess of \$830 million. It's presently undertaking a \$1.9-billion expansion of Vancouver's SkyTrain for the upcoming 2010 Winter Olympics. The greater Vancouver transit authority lays out policy and direction for buses, light rail, trolleys, commuter rail and ferry services that provide service in Vancouver and in the greater Vancouver area. Most importantly, it has the

mechanisms to fund them, which is a crucial central deficit in the bill before us, a bill that's a watchdog with no teeth whatsoever.

There's a song in the film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, a hobo song, dreaming of a paradise where the guard dogs have rubber teeth. Well, this is a transit authority with rubber teeth: It will not bite into the problem before us. It is a Greater Toronto Transit Authority that will sit as a bill somewhere, that may well be populated by some planners and people sitting on a board, but it will not deal with the problem that members around this House are dealing with.

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The GTTA misses the crucial element of funding and at present, as I've just said, it's largely a symbolic measure. It recognizes the importance of integrated transit planning and the GTTA, but it's missing the key pieces of the puzzle. Without those key pieces, integration will not become a reality. We see big expansion in this region in the years to come. We know that unless these problems are dealt with, we won't be able to come to grips with them.

I've had an opportunity to look at cities in other jurisdictions in other parts of the world: Cordoba in Spain and Amsterdam in Holland, cities interestingly very different. Cordoba is a town in which the city ends and rural areas and farmland begin, a far more rational plan because in fact it is easy to walk through that city. It is easy to walk to the edge of the city and out into rural areas. We can't do that here. We're in an urban form where it takes many hours to actually get to rural areas, particularly at rush hour, particularly on Friday on a long weekend at rush hour. We have, at this point, abandoned the compact city. What I hope is that we don't abandon the potential to have a somewhat more compact city in the years to come.

The suburbs we deal with have been a relatively new phenomenon. Until—what?—the 1940s or early 1950s, most cities in North America were serviced primarily by transit. If you look at the old city of Toronto, it had an urban form that was dense enough to support entirely through the fare box the Toronto Transit Commission, a commission that didn't need to be subsidized by government. Then starting in the 1950s, the United States being the foremost proponent or experimenter or developer, we started getting car-driven suburbs. Here in Toronto, we started seeing that expansion first within the boundaries of the old Metro Toronto and, as transit tried to follow those boundaries out, it became less and less economically viable on its own, requiring more and more government subsidies.

It's interesting, if you look back to the turn of the century to the 1920s, you had developers who pushed for what were called streetcar suburbs—Long Branch, Mimico—suburbs that were developed because transit systems were built out to them, not suburbs that were built wherever a patch of land could be secured, then requiring governments to build an infrastructure that followed.

Here in North America, starting in the 1950s with this growth of car-dependent suburbs, we saw ourselves being drawn inexorably into an urban form that was extraordinarily expensive to support, extraordinarily difficult to get around. Now we have the old city of Metro Toronto that is somewhat sustainable, where you can still run a transit system with a moderate subsidy now going out into the outer GTA, where the cost of subsidizing that transit system will be huge. We will face large costs both in terms of subsidizing that transit system, and in dealing with the health costs of that sprawl itself.

When we think through these costs—I guess the government must have thought through these costs, which is why it decided to bring forward a bill that had no money attached to it. That allows you to actually say you're doing something without having any impact on your budget at all. I can see why it would be attractive. I can see why the Minister of Finance would say to the Minister of Transportation, "Well, I know you've got a political problem here. I know you are getting pressure from people in the 905. I know that we have to look like we're doing something. Bring forward a bill. I'm sorry to say we don't have the money for this, but if you bring forward the bill, it will take a while for it to be debated. Maybe it will be—I don't know—December 2007 before it's brought forward, so we're safe until October 2007. Don't worry about it. Go ahead." So you see this sleight of hand constantly in play to deal with what is a profound problem for the people of this area.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've talked about the local at some length. I want to talk about the impact of not dealing with sprawl in terms of its climate change effects. I mentioned that earlier in my speech. As you and many others in this Legislature will know, climate change poses an increasingly profound problem to people in this society locally and people in human society globally. We've seen fluctuations in world temperature over the last few centuries that have increasingly gone in one overriding direction, and that's consistently upward. Governments have tried to come to grips with that problem. Governments have tried to come to grips with it in the Earth Summit in the early 1990s. At that point, the United Nations, in concert with countries all over the world, set up the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to look at the realities: Are we dealing with a problem that arises naturally from fluctuations in the earth's climate that have nothing to do with humankind, or is this a problem that is driven by human activity?

Their first report indicated a balance of probabilities leading to human activity being the cause. But increasingly, as the IPCC has gone along, it has identified human activity as the cause, and that has tremendous consequences for us on two sides: one, that in fact climate change can profoundly alter the basis upon which our society is organized; and two, because it's man-made rather than natural, it gives us the opportunity to exercise will, to have the impact that we as humans intelligently could have if we decide to take this problem on.

Many people, when they think about climate change, want to have a sense of what it will look like. What does a hotter world look like? One example that people can look at is North America in the mid-1930s, when world temperatures spiked. Many of us remember from textbooks and from movies, some of us through living through it, what the 1930s were like: the dust bowl, the destruction of agriculture on the prairies, not just in Canada but in the United States; heat waves—the very famous heat wave in the late 1930s that forced people out of their homes throughout Toronto. People were sleeping on roofs; they were sleeping on the beaches. In New York City, people went and slept out on the beach on Coney Island. Hundreds died from the heat. There was a huge impact at the time, tremendously reminiscent of what happened in Europe in 2003. The heat wave that rolled through Europe led to the deaths of 30,000 people in France. It led to a reduction in crop productivity, a 30% reduction in crop productivity in southern Europe in 2003.

When you look at the projections that the IPCC has developed for world food production, they give one concern. When you look at an increase in world temperature of between about 1.6 and 5.9 degrees Centigrade, you realize that we are looking at very big shifts in world temperature. One of the things you find in that report is that world rice production declines about 10% for every one degree increase in world temperature. Let's say you get a three- or four-degree increase in world temperature. That's a 30% or 40% decline in world rice production. That is of profound consequence to the stability of many societies on this globe.

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In the late 1990s, the government of Canada did a study called the Canada Country Study, asking, what would actually happen to Canada in a greenhouse world, using the low end of the IPCC projections? It was very interesting because, again, just as in the 1930s, you would see a drying out of the interior of North America, an increase in precipitation on the coasts and greater incidents of very heavy rainfall events because you've got hotter air able to hold more moisture and, when it rains, more is able to come out.

For the prairies, one report in that Canada Country Study cited that there was a reduction of up to 30% in agricultural productivity. The prairies are one of the bread baskets of the world. We export to the Middle East, to Europe and to Asia. What we produce matters, and seeing a sharp reduction in our agricultural productivity matters. Here, the production of food in southern Ontario wouldn't be that bad. There would be some assistance in having longer warm spells and a longer time without frost, but a greater need for irrigation. Irrigation is not cheap. It would impose large costs on farmers today, who don't have to have the infrastructure for irrigation.

We start seeing very substantial costs to our society if we don't get a handle on climate change. We see it in terms of agriculture, but we also see it in terms of forest fires. The Canadian Forest Service is predicting a 50%

increase in forest fires in Canada if climate change goes on at the rate that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts. I was in Quebec a number of years ago when they had the massive forest fires in the north. In Montreal, you could smell the smoke; you could see the smoke coming down from the north. People in Washington, DC, could smell the smoke from those burning forests. In British Columbia right now, the pine beetle used to be killed by very cold winters. It's munching its way through thousands of hectares of forest. An area about the size of England has been destroyed, open to massive fires, open to the destruction of an industry and the destruction of a way of life.

We as a society have to come to grips with climate change. Part of that process is coming to grips with the generation of electricity. We have to phase out coal. We have to limit the burning of any other fossil fuel. We have to deal with gridlock and transit. We have to have a transportation system that's environmentally sustainable, and that means one that's based primarily on public transit rather than one based primarily on private cars. That's why, when we have this legislation before us, we have to ask ourselves, how seriously will it address the problem? Unfortunately, it can't. I said at the beginning of my speech that it can't because it's built on a foundation of sand, because this government is not taking action on sprawl and will not take action on sprawl. In fact, this government is taking steps—I'll cite Highway 404—to accelerate sprawl. This government is not taking private members' bills seriously, ones that address sprawl in the Lake Simcoe area.

If you don't deal with those problems, you can't say later, "Yes, I really cared about it. I put forward a bill that had no funding and no authority." No; you're wasting everybody's time. You're saying that in fact you're just putting forward bills because you want to be able to say to your constituents and your voters, "Yes, I cared about it; yes, I was going to do something about it."

In 2003, the McGuinty government—the McGuinty Liberals at the time—made an important observation about their proposed Greater Toronto Transit Authority. They stated, "The new GTTA will be given the clout and resources to tackle gridlock and ensure free movement of people and goods in a rapidly growing region." I have to say, I can't argue with that. It makes sense to me. Good idea. In order to address that serious issue of gridlock and underfunding of transit authorities in the GTA, we're going to continually call on this government to answer the fundamental question: Where's the money?

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill): I would like to make some positive comments. Contrary to my friend on the other side from Toronto–Danforth, I happen to believe that the GTTA is a major achievement for the people of the greater Toronto area, and certainly for the minister, Harinder Takhar, who did recommend it.

There is no question that we have a major public transportation problem, and for a simple reason; that is, when the Conservatives were in power they chose to cut

every subsidy whatsoever for public transportation, at least for a couple of years. Of course we have to do what was lost when those people were in power, and at the same time we must also invest more money to address the additional needs that have been created because of the expansion of the greater Toronto area.

Our area is over 5.5 million people, and every year it will be going up about a couple of hundred thousand people between Toronto and the 905 area and, of course, Hamilton, which is affected by the GTTA. There's no question that unless we make major investments—we're talking about billions of dollars here, not millions of dollars—for many years to come, we will have major economic liabilities to deal with.

For instance, a study that was done not too long ago indicated that about \$2 billion in economic benefits were lost every single year in the Toronto area only because we were all jammed, we were all blocked, and we couldn't move within Toronto as we should.

Of course, if that trend continues, by 2021 that \$2 billion or whatever could become about \$7 billion a year. The only solution is by having a GTTA where all the municipalities will look at their long-term needs and plan in that manner, not on municipal boundaries where we react instead of planning. The GTTA is the solution.

Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax): If I may, I'd like to present something of a regional perspective with respect to the GTTA. During the 2003 provincial campaign, the Liberal Party made the commitment to create the GTTA and said, "We will bring a region-wide approach to identifying and meeting GTA transit needs by creating the GTTA. The new GTTA will be given the clout and resources to tackle gridlock and ensure free movement of people and goods in a rapidly growing region."

The answer with the legislation that has been proposed is a completely toothless piece of legislation that has no money, no power and no ability to do anything, especially with respect to Durham region, where the budget gave us absolutely no money to address the transit needs of our region or any money to address the really serious problem with gridlock that we're experiencing in Durham. There was money given to the western part of the city, to the city itself and to the northern part, but not a cent was allocated to Durham.

That's totally unacceptable. It's one of the fastest-growing regions in Ontario. We have the same problems that everybody else does with gridlock, especially more so, which is causing, as the honourable member from Danforth has mentioned, serious problems with pollution, with people being stuck on the highways for two hours every day trying to get home, not to mention the quality-of-life issues that it presents and the problems of even getting businesses to locate there when they can't move their goods and services across the region.

My question to this government is: What's the point of creating the GTTA if you're not prepared to put the resources into it to make it work?

Ms. Martel: I'd like to congratulate my colleague from Toronto–Danforth on the presentation this after-

noon on the focus with respect to his concern about urban sprawl and the focus on the lack of power that is represented by the GTTA in this bill.

The Liberals, during the last election, promised that the GTTA would be given (a) clout, and (b) resources. The reality is, we have a bill before us, Bill 104, that provides us with neither. No one should think that this is going to work or work properly given the absence of both of these things.

First of all, with respect to clout, part of the failure in the past of the Greater Toronto Services Board was that it had no power to implement its mandate. The reality is that a similar thing is happening here with this government with this new board that it proposes to establish: no clout, no power to implement the plans that it brings forward.

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Secondly, as importantly—perhaps more importantly—resources: financial resources, the money that's going to be necessary to implement the plans that the government is asking the GTTA to develop. There's nothing in the legislation that commits this government to funding these plans—nothing, zero, no provision whatsoever, no clause whatsoever that would make it incumbent upon this government to actually fund the work that they're calling on this authority to do. And there is no provision whatsoever that would say that there might be some negotiations with the federal government as well so that both the province and the feds would be in a position to support the plans that come forward.

What you've got here is a shell. They have a good idea. There's no doubt that we need coordination with respect to transportation. The reality is, unless the GTTA has both the clout and the money, there won't be any positive change coming out of this at all.

Mr. McNeely: It's just surprising that we should get the comments from the third party that we've been getting on this. They should be very supportive of this excellent legislation that is needed in the greater Toronto area and is going into place. The GTTA supports the greenbelt and Places to Grow legislation, because Places to Grow supports vibrant and dynamic communities with less car dependence and more public transit.

They're saying, "There's no money." How much money do you think is good money to start off? It's \$670 million for the TTC and York for subway expansion, \$95 million for Brampton, \$65 million for Mississauga. It would appear that the Durham regional chair, Roger Anderson, is quite happy with those investments that are being made and with the legislation: "I look forward to working with the minister as the legislation goes through the House. The coordination of transit systems across the regions and cities is an important part of smart growth." So Durham's regional chair, Roger Anderson, has it right. I think all of the politicians that we've heard about have it right. They're on board, and I think it's time the third party got on board.

I can understand the official opposition not being on board for public transit. They've never been on board.

Actual transit ridership declined in the years that they were looking after public transit. We built \$600 million worth of bus Transitway in Ottawa with that 75% funding. They took all that funding out.

So I think we have to look at what the third party is saying. I think this is what they want. This is what the Liberal government wants. This is what's good for Toronto. We have the politicians on board. We're going in the right direction. One thing I just want to end with is, if you have been in gridlock today, thank a Tory.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Toronto–Danforth has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Tabuns: The member from Ottawa–Orléans speaks well and his sentiments head in the right direction. My problem, as I thought I made clear in rambling on for as long as I did, is that I don't see either the funding mechanism within the authority, or the authority within the authority, to deliver the goods, on top of the fact that this is a government that has made very sure that the ability for sprawl to continue in the greater Toronto area is fundamentally protected. So until I hear from the government how they're going to restore transit funding to the municipalities in the GTA that don't have the

resources to adequately fund that transit, until I see how this transit authority is going to actually fund itself over the long term and provide the necessary infrastructure to allow the different municipalities to deliver what they have to deliver on a coordinated basis, I find it very difficult to believe that this legislation before us is anything but hollow. I don't question the sincerity of the member. I just don't see the reality in the bill.

My colleague on the other side of the House spoke as well about the wonders of the bill but does not address these questions: Where in the bill is funding set up? Where is it protected? Where is it guaranteed that funding will continue there? Where's the mechanism? Without that, without a structure to actually make the money flow, then this bill in the end can be nothing but a very pleasant, very interesting construct with no impact.

The Deputy Speaker: There are at least three excellent timepieces in the Legislature, but I'm going to use the one that only I can see and say that it being near 6 of the clock, this House is adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1756.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

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Delaney, Bob (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for seniors / adjoint parlementaire au ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Dhillon, Vic (L)	Brampton West–Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest–Mississauga	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Di Cocco, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (L)	Sarnia–Lambton	Minister of Culture / ministre de la Culture
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)	Hastings–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Duguid, Brad (L)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Municipal Affairs) / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement (Affaires municipales)
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)	Windsor–St. Clair	Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Ajax	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Oakville	Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for democratic renewal / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Fonseca, Peter (L)	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health Promotion / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Gravelle, Michael (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	
Hampton, Howard (ND)	Kenora–Rainy River	Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Horwath, Andrea (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	
Hoy, Pat (L)	Chatham–Kent Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Erie–Lincoln	
Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Burlington	
Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Children and Youth Services / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Parkdale–High Park	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Oak Ridges	
Kormos, Peter (ND)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	New Democratic Party House leader / leader parlementaire du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Kular, Kuldip (L)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Leal, Jeff (L)	Peterborough	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de l'Énergie
Levac, Dave (L)	Brant	Chief government whip / whip en chef du gouvernement
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Marchese, Rosario (ND)	Trinity–Spadina	
Marsales, Judy (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade (Small Business) / adjointe parlementaire au ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce (Petites entreprises)
Martel, Shelley (ND)	Nickel Belt	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Deborah (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services and minister responsible for women's issues / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires et ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mauro, Bill (L)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
McMeekin, Ted (L)	Ancaster–Dundas– Flamborough–Aldershot	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de l'Éducation
McNeely, Phil (L)	Ottawa–Orléans	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Transports
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	Chief opposition whip / whip en chef de l'opposition
Milloy, John (L)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Mitchell, Carol (L)	Huron–Bruce	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal / adjointe parlementaire au ministre du Renouveau de l'infrastructure publique
Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)	Stoney Creek	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and minister responsible for francophone affairs / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de la Culture et ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Munro, Julia (PC)	York North / York-Nord	
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	Deputy opposition whip / whip adjoint de l'opposition
Oraziotti, David (L)	Sault Ste. Marie	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources and minister responsible for aboriginal affairs / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Richesses naturelles et ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Parsons, Ernie (L)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Disabilities) / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires (Personnes handicapées)
Patten, Richard (L)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Peterson, Tim (L)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Prue, Michael (ND)	Beaches–East York / Beaches–York-Est	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Education, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de l'Éducation, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health Promotion / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Racco, Mario G. (L)	Thornhill	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Travail
Ramal, Khalil (L)	London–Fanshawe	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Northumberland	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (Rural Affairs) / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales (Affaires rurales)
Runciman, Robert W. (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House leader / leader parlementaire de l'opposition
Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Davenport	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Sandals, Liz (L)	Guelph–Wellington	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services / adjointe parlementaire au ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Scott, Laurie (PC) Sergio, Mario (L)	Haliburton–Victoria–Brook York West / York-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Housing) / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement (Logement)
Smith, Monique M. (L)	Nipissing	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Sorbara, Greg (L)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Lanark–Carleton	
Tabuns, Peter (ND)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford	Second Deputy Chair of the committee of the whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Tory, John (PC) Van Bommel, Maria (L)	Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (Agriculture and Food) / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales (Agriculture et Alimentation)
Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Wilkinson, John (L)	Perth–Middlesex	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Deputy opposition House leader / leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC) Wong, Tony C. (L)	Kitchener–Waterloo Markham	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Research and Innovation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de l'Éducation
Yakabuski, John (PC) Zimmer, David (L)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke Willowdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General / adjoint parlementaire au procureur général

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Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Tony C. Wong
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Khalil Ramal, Mario Sergio, Tony C. Wong
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

Social Policy / Politique sociale

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal
Ted Chudleigh, Peter Fonseca,
Kuldip Kular, Jeff Leal,
Rosario Marchese, John O'Toole,
Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O.Wynne
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Electoral reform / Réforme électorale

Chair / Présidente: Caroline Di Cocco
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,
Kuldip Kular, Norm Miller, Richard Patten,
Michael Prue, Monique M. Smith,
Norman W. Sterling, Kathleen O.Wynne
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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Ces listes figurent dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions paraît si l'espace est disponible.

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