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**Official Report  
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(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 25 March 2008**

**Mardi 25 mars 2008**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
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Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 25 March 2008

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 25 mars 2008

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### BURK'S FALLS AND DISTRICT HEALTH CENTRE

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise today in recognition of the valuable health services provided by the Burk's Falls and District Health Centre and after-hours urgent care clinic, and to highlight a developing situation of great concern.

Unfortunately, funding for after-hours care will end on March 31, 2008, and so too will this valuable community health service. As it stands, the health centre needs funding for care between the hours of 6 and 9, Monday through Friday, and on Saturdays and Sundays from 9 to 1.

The health centre services the communities that run from Novar, just north of Huntsville, all the way to South River; east to Algonquin Park; and west to Whitestone. Like many rural areas, the service area represents a huge geography.

The people of these communities have come to rely on the after-hours emergency services provided at the Burk's Falls health centre. They are reassured by the fact that emergency health services are there when and if they need them. Imagine facing a lengthy drive to a hospital in the winter months on treacherous roads or coping with an urgent health care crisis instead of driving to the nearest clinic.

Rural Ontarians must have health service choices that recognize the unique needs of their communities. We are not all fortunate enough to live around the corner from a hospital or a walk-in clinic.

The total cost of providing these after-hours services is \$107,000. It seems a small enough price to pay to ensure the good health and timely care for the residents of the region.

#### VARIETY VILLAGE

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I rise to recognize in the House the efforts of a prominent, non-profit organization in my riding of Scarborough Southwest.

For over 60 years, Variety—the Children's Charity of Ontario, has sought to improve the integration into society of all children, regardless of their abilities. Variety

Village—its cornerstone operation—is recognized worldwide for its expertise in supporting children with disabilities. Children are taught how to participate in recreational activities with their able-bodied friends and they learn how to adapt to the equipment there.

Today, Variety teaches adaptive recreation at four major educational institutions in the Toronto area. They also train hundreds of teachers and educational assistants across Ontario. They have developed world-class technology used in the evaluation of participant needs.

As a result of the support given by our government, Variety has achieved a renewal of the physical infrastructure of the Variety Village building itself. Some 40,000 square feet of program and office space has been renovated and reopened. Fitness and conditioning equipment has been acquired that is adapted for use by people of all abilities.

Variety is also launching a pilot program called Healthy Buddies, which is an in-class program aimed to tackle child obesity. This program is supported by a grant from our Ministry of Health Promotion and will allow over 2,000 children in Ontario to participate in active living and fitness.

It is a pleasure for me to inform the House about this wonderful facility and organization in my riding. It is creating a wonderful legacy of children facing challenges who go on to achieve their full potential.

#### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thanks to the McGuinty Liberals, our province risks a have-not status. Ontario was once the economic engine of Canada, but we are now at a dangerous crossroads. Since taking office, the Liberals have driven down Ontario's per capita fiscal capacity from roughly \$400 above the equalization standard just four years ago to barely over \$84 this year. This is disgraceful. The McGuinty Liberals' poor economic policies and their unwillingness to cut taxes and reduce regulations on small businesses have put us at risk. The McGuinty Liberals have failed to act, and our once successful economy will weaken in short order.

Don Drummond, the chief economist at TD Bank, recently said that Ontario is not so far from being an equalization province.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** This is a very serious issue, to the members who are laughing just opposite. We have witnessed that Ontario is not far from being an equaliza-

tion province, but they have done nothing. It's a serious issue and we have witnessed the warning signs. Yet they sit by and laugh about it.

For the first time in 33 years the Canadian unemployment rate is at its lowest, yet our province's unemployment rate is higher than the national average. Since the Liberals took office, over 194,000 manufacturing jobs have left this province. That's more than any other provinces combined.

How many more warning signs will it take before this government does what it's supposed to do and protect the people of Ontario? When will they act to make Ontario the successful economic engine it once was?

#### MUNICIPAL FINANCES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** On the cusp of the fifth McGuinty government budget, I rise to make a prediction. Once again we will see a complete failure on the part of the McGuinty Liberals to provide sustainable funding to Ontario municipalities. Municipalities are still covering many sky-high bills that the provincial government should be paying.

In Hamilton, we've had almost 10 years of debilitating costs, like social services, being paid by the property taxpayer for provincial programs and responsibilities. That has created impossible pressure on our city budget, leading to reduced services, like our tree-trimming program; more and higher user fees, like our transit costs; and increased property taxes.

Adding insult to injury, last year the McGuinty government was happy to alleviate the funding pressure on Hamilton's more affluent neighbours by exempting them from GTA social services pooling. Those wealthier municipalities were relieved of the unfair burden while ours continued under the McGuinty government's thumb.

Provincial programs are big-ticket items. Our property tax base is cracking under the weight of all the additional costs heaped on Hamilton by a provincial government that doesn't pay its bills. What are some of those examples? Social housing and its upkeep, administration of social programs, and provincial court security costs where local policing is burdened with providing security for provincial courts. That's unacceptable.

In fact, at my first constituency clinic on Hamilton's west mountain, one of my constituents, Reinhard "Ron" Puschke, said his community's biggest worry is to be hit by the McGuinty government with massive property tax increases in Hamilton—not acceptable. Let's fix it today.

#### ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** In the history of mankind, a very important historic event took place in 1821. Freedom-loving Greeks stood up and heroically exclaimed, "Liberty or death." It was the beginning of the end of four centuries of Ottoman oppression. That tyrannical occupation did not weaken the patriotic fervour of

generation upon generation of Greeks. On the contrary, it created an unparalleled unity and strong determination amongst the oppressed people that had never been seen before. The revolution of 1821 transformed all the struggles of the Greeks and their nation to freedom and independence.

The March 25 anniversary is also celebrated with the Orthodox faith's observance of the annunciation of Virgin Mary. The divine mystery of Christ's conception and birth is one of the pillars of Orthodox Christianity, which in turn has served to inspire Greece's defenders in conflict after conflict.

Greek Independence Day represents the aspirations, virtues and pious character of all Hellenes that cannot remain in a state of siege by physical boundaries. That is why Hellenism has been spread everywhere, and why Hellenism is ecumenical and stands out for the achievements derived from their nation's battles and its faith.

#### 1340

The Hellenes of the diaspora have the highest and most respected regard for the morals of the 1821 revolution, since their survival in the countries abroad has been a continuous struggle. Greeks celebrate this unique date with awe and respect, and a rededication to both God and country, for the sacrifices of their predecessors to the cause of liberty and freedom and for the miraculous grace of Virgin Mary, the mother of God.

I'm delighted that Sophia Aggelonitis, who is of Greek descent, is joining me in the statement. Thank you, and congratulations.

#### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I read in today's *Globe and Mail*, in an article by Karen Howlett and Elizabeth Church, that in today's budget the government will invest in skills training.

Let's look at the issue from the perspective of one organization, the Ontario Electrical League. Electrical contracting companies in Ontario cannot find enough electricians to hire and are seeking to bring young Ontarians into the electrical trade through the government-regulated apprenticeship program. It is also a fact that many more young Ontarians want to become electricians than can find apprenticeship positions.

Many contractors report turning away young job-seeking Ontarians on a weekly or even daily basis. They are turning them away not because they do not have work, but because the government, through its artificially high apprenticeship ratios, does not allow them to hire these young people.

Yet the government of Ontario is maintaining artificial barriers—the highest apprenticeship-journeyperson ratios in Canada—to stop young Ontarians from becoming construction and maintenance electricians.

The government is maintaining these barriers while at the same time investing millions of dollars in promotion and programs to encourage young Ontarians to become skilled tradespeople, including construction and main-

tenance electricians. This fortune is being invested into programs or promotion specifically because the government itself has identified the ongoing shortage of skilled tradespeople in Ontario, including electricians, as a pressing public policy issue.

The solution is to change Ontario's construction and maintenance apprenticeship ratio to an overall 1 to 1, which is also the norm in other provinces across Canada.

In order to have a successful apprenticeship program in Ontario—for all trades—the journeyman-apprenticeship ratio must be fair. Make the ratio 1 to 1, and make it today in the budget.

#### TOWN OF KINGSVILLE

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** Kingsville is a small, beautiful community of 20,000, 21,000 people in southwestern Ontario, in the riding of Essex. Many of you would know that Kingsville is the home of the Jack Miner Bird Sanctuary. More recently, Kingsville is the home of a great greenhouse industry, and it has a small fishing port. In the past, these are the things that you and I would know about Kingsville.

But now, Kingsville is Hockeyville. Kingsville is Ontario's representative in the Kraft Hockeyville 2008 competition. So what I'd like you to do is this: I'd like you to support Ontario, unlike some others who don't, and I'm asking you to be on our side this time. Go to [cbc.ca/hockeyville](http://cbc.ca/hockeyville) or call toll free at 1-888-843-5604, starting on March 29 through April 4. Vote for Kingsville for Hockeyville, and they will be the top of the line.

#### FUNDRAISING

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I rise in the House today to give thanks to all those individuals who have been assisting me in raising funds to send a Caterpillar bulldozer to an African orphanage in Kenya.

I'm sure all members of this House hope for stability in Kenya, and for a return to peace.

Three years ago, I became involved with the Mully Children's Family Charitable Foundation, which provides shelter, food and education to almost 2,000 orphaned children in Kenya. These kids have lost their parents to the HIV/AIDS virus, they've been street kids, and they've been abused beyond our comprehension in this country.

After I visited the orphanage, I found out what they really needed was a bulldozer. This simple piece of construction equipment would allow them to clear more farmland for food and to expand their operations, which would take more kids off the street.

Today, I want to recognize those who have helped raise awareness and organize the April 5 fundraiser in Oakville. I'd like to draw particular attention to the Ontario building and pipe trades; the International Union of Operating Engineers; Mike Gallagher, who is co-chairing the event; and Susan Hay, from Global TV, who is the emcee for the evening.

Ontario building and pipe trades, contractors and construction companies are not only a key part of our economy, building our homes, our hospitals, our schools and our shared infrastructure; their involvement in this fundraising effort shows their commitment to building hope for those who are much less fortunate all around the world.

#### SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Last week, at Cliffside Public School in Scarborough, the Premier made an exciting announcement, outlining some of the major initiatives this government is undertaking to tackle poverty in Ontario.

One of these announcements refers to the student nutrition program. This program helps to alleviate the impacts of poverty by giving children the best opportunity to arrive in the classroom ready to learn. Through this program, volunteers and community organizations are able to ensure that our students receive nutritious meals and snacks at school and in other community settings.

I was pleased to hear that the McGuinty government will invest \$32 million in the student nutrition program over three years, doubling its current funding. This will enable local programs in Scarborough–Rouge River to expand their services, as well as allow additional schools and agencies to offer the program with a focus on low-income communities.

Ontarians want to know that their government is concerned with their health and well-being. This government understands and values that. Our social fabric must be strong across all of Ontario, and a student nutrition program is just one component of that. We understand that healthy food leads to a healthy mind, and that is an investment in students that is just as important as any other.

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** On behalf of the member from Scarborough Southwest, I ask the House to join me in welcoming to the Assembly today Mr. Sheikh Motalib, a member of the Bangladeshi-Canadian community, in the members' gallery.

#### BUDGET SECURITY

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** On Thursday, March 20, the member from Wellington–Halton Hills, Mr. Arnott, raised a point of privilege with respect to an article that appeared in a Toronto newspaper. The member asserted that the article contained information which must have been deliberately leaked by someone with knowledge of today's budget.

As a result, the member asked me to consider the tradition of budget secrecy and find that a prima facie breach of privilege has occurred, because members of provincial Parliament should be first to hear all the contents of the provincial budget and, most importantly, the

government should not selectively leak contents of the budget to the press in advance of its presentation to the House without being challenged.

The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Mr. Caplan, also spoke to the matter.

In his presentation, the member from Wellington-Halton Hills referred to an important 1983 ruling by the Speaker of this House on the subject of budget secrecy. In that ruling, the Speaker found that “budget secrecy is a political convention, as is the practice that the Treasurer presents his budget in the House before discussing it in any other public forum. It has nothing to do with parliamentary privilege.”

The Speaker went on to state, “The disclosure of information relating to the budget has to do with the conduct of a minister of the crown in the performance of his ministerial duties.” The Speaker found that ministerial conduct is addressed through other avenues and remedies, but that parliamentary privilege is not one of those avenues.

A successful question of privilege must convince the Speaker that the particular rights that are accorded to members of Parliament to permit them to discharge their parliamentary duties have, in some way, been violated. These rights are extremely narrow and specific; for instance, the right to speak freely in this place or to attend here without obstruction. They relate to members’ functions within this chamber.

Like previous Speakers, here and in other jurisdictions, I cannot find that the possible disclosure of budget contents amounts to a breach of the privileges of the member. It is undoubtedly, at minimum, a matter of courtesy and respect for this institution that all important announcements be made here first, but there is no procedural support for the proposition that failure to do so gives rise to a successful question of privilege. I thank the member for his question.

1350

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** My question is for the Premier. Last week in this House, and in the past month or two in the unseemly public debate he has carried on with the federal Minister of Finance, the Premier has continuously blamed others, or external forces, for the shaky state of Ontario’s economy. His government apparently has no responsibility; they’ve done everything right, according to Premier McGuinty.

Is it really your position that 194,000 lost manufacturing jobs have nothing to do with your government? If that isn’t your position, what have you done wrong, what have you done that you regret and can we expect changes to address your mistakes in today’s budget?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I thank the honourable member for his question—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** You might want to be quiet, so you can listen to it.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I thank the honourable member for his question, delivered in the usual supportive tone that I’ve become accustomed to here on this side of the House.

We are very much looking forward to presenting our budget shortly in this Legislature. It will be in keeping with the approach we’ve taken since 2003. You will recall, Speaker, that in 2003 the people of Ontario rejected the Conservative approach. Notwithstanding great economic conditions suited to growth—including a low dollar, low cost of oil and a strong US economy—that wonderful opportunity was squandered, and they were saddled with a \$5.5-billion deficit and dramatic cuts to our public services. Ontarians have rejected that approach in the past. They can count on us to reject that approach today, but rather to build on the foundation we’ve laid.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** If I heard that right, the Premier is saying his government’s hands are clean with respect to the current state of the Ontario economy.

I want to remind him of a couple of things. Since 2003, the year you took office, Ontario’s economic growth has consistently been below the national average; not his fault, obviously. Since July 2004—your watch—over 194,000 manufacturing jobs have left Ontario; not your fault. In your first six months in office, you cancelled planned business tax cuts, cancelled elimination of the personal income tax surtax and brought in the largest tax increase in the province’s history, but that was the fault of the big, bad Tories, not of your government.

Premier, do you accept any responsibility for the plight this province finds itself in today, quite possibly going into a recession and on the edge of have-not status? Is this all somebody else’s fault?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We take responsibility for bringing a balanced, thoughtful, prudent approach to a growing economy. We are proud that notwithstanding the fact we’ve had to contend with a dollar that’s at parity with the US dollar or higher, that the price of oil is no longer \$30 a barrel as it was back then but \$100 a barrel today and the fact that the US economy is struggling today while it was firing on all eight cylinders before, we have eliminated the deficit, balanced the budget and invested dramatically in our schools and health care. We have smaller classes, higher test scores and higher graduation rates. We’ve got shorter wait times and more doctors and nurses. And the good entrepreneurial people of Ontario created more than 450,000 net new jobs. Yes, we are proud that we will be able to work with the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** I think most people would suggest that with over \$17 billion in new tax revenue, it’s not a real challenge to balance your budget.

A few more points to draw to the Premier's attention: Since your first year in office, program spending has increased by an average of 7.1% per year, well beyond inflation and population growth; since 2003, over half the jobs created in Ontario have been in the public sector; since 2003, the number of single, employable beneficiaries of welfare is up 11%. One could go on with this revealing and, I would suggest, troubling litany, but the reality is that over this past four-plus years, despite campaign promises, this Liberal government hiked taxes on the backs of working families, of seniors and of business, and we are all now paying the price of their harmful fiscal and tax policies. Will the Premier indicate that he recognizes that decisions by his government over the past four years have significantly contributed to the province's current economic challenges and that we can look forward to corrective measures later today in his budget?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I think a bit of compare and contrast would be helpful here. They had a 60-cent dollar, oil valued at \$30 a barrel and a strong US economy. We've got \$100-per-barrel oil, we've got a Canadian dollar that is at parity-plus vis-à-vis the US dollar, and we've got a faltering US economy.

They left a \$5.5-billion deficit, they fired nurses, closed hospitals, fired water inspectors and attacked public education. What we've done, under trying economic conditions: We have more doctors, more nurses and more hospitals. We have more schools, more teachers, smaller classes, higher test scores and higher graduation rates. We have an economy that continues to grow—not as quickly as we would like it to grow—and we have 450,000 net new jobs.

No, we will not adopt their approach, and yes, we will adopt the approach that Ontarians want us to continue to pursue.

#### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I'm shocked to hear the Premier and his blame message, blame for other people as to what the problems are in Ontario. But I can tell you first hand that in my community people are worried about their jobs, and they're worried about their ability to provide for their families, to pay their mortgages and to put food on the table. They've seen plants closing in my community. They've seen thousands of jobs lost, and those jobs belong to their friends, their neighbours and their relatives. There are warnings everywhere that this province is becoming a have-not province and that a recession may be looming, which will simply mean more job loss.

Economists agree that Ontario needs to take action if we're going to create jobs in the future. Lower corporate taxes would create this environment. Will the Premier commit today to lowering corporate taxes in today's budget so that more jobs can be created and retained?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** This was a mantra that had been dropped, obviously briefly, by the Conservative Party of Ontario. They have now picked it up once again,

and they are running with it once again. They love to talk about tax cuts in the abstract, but they're not comfortable talking about the consequences of reckless and obsessive tax cuts. They're not comfortable talking about closing hospitals.

As the former Minister of Health would know, perhaps Ontarians would like to understand, if we were to pursue an immediate \$5-billion cut in taxes, an immediate \$5-billion deprivation in Ontario revenues, we would have to close hospitals. Perhaps the former Minister of Health would tell us which hospitals in Ontario in particular she would like us to close in order to ensure that we can cut those taxes?

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I would say to the Premier that, regrettably, your health care policies are certainly eliminating access to health care services and reducing. In fact, as you know today, the long-term-care people are looking for \$513 million, and hospitals are also looking for more money.

But let's talk about the economy. Ontario's high business taxes are having the effect of killing jobs.

*Interjection.*

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Yes, they are. They eat away at workers' wages and scare job-creating investments away. I'm going to ask you again Premier: Will you take steps today to protect the jobs of hard-working Ontarians and bring business taxes in line with the rest of the Canadian provinces?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** You know, the dichotomy can be found in the question itself. The honourable member, a former Minister of Health, in one breath says it's really important that we respond to the needs, the requests and the demands being put forward by the long-term-care-home community, looking for half a billion dollars, but at the same time, she says we should cut taxes by \$5 billion.

Leadership demands that you make a choice. You can't have it all ways. The way that we are choosing is the one for which we received marching orders from the people of Ontario. They said no to that approach. It is antiquated. They've got a one-point plan to grow the economy. The 21st-century global knowledge-based economy is much more complex than that. That's why we've got a five-point plan that includes continuing to invest in quality public services for the people of Ontario.

**1400**

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** It's interesting, if we take a look at the provinces of BC, Alberta, Quebec and Saskatchewan, we see that they've all lowered their business tax rates. We also see that they're doing very well. They're actually weathering the economic challenges and they are thriving. It's Ontario, Mr. Premier, that is stuck in dead last in economic growth.

When will you recognize that you are on the wrong track? When are you going to take the steps necessary to make this province the economic engine of Canada again rather than the caboose?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Just to help make the case for Ontarians, as the honourable member was speaking,

her colleague the MPP for Burlington sent a letter to my colleague the Minister of Health specifically asking for an additional \$513 million in operating funding for long-term-care homes. So I say to my colleagues opposite, you can't have it all ways. You can't cut \$5 billion out of the Ontario budget and at the same time address these real needs, whether they're in health care, education, better protection for the environment, or more support for agriculture.

We land on the side of the people of Ontario. They have rejected that antiquated approach. They want us to move forward in a thoughtful way that protects public services while finding a way to work with businesses to grow this economy. We've done that for four years, and we'll keep doing that.

### COMMUNITY POLICING

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. My question is simply this: Does your government believe that all Ontario citizens should be entitled to a similar level of police servicing in this province?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Community Safety.

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** Thank you very much for allowing me to respond to a very, very important issue. There's absolutely no question that our government believes that everyone in Ontario should have a level of policing that clearly demonstrates the importance of policing in every community in Ontario.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** To the minister: If that's the case, then, explain to me why your government has allowed policing services in NAN communities and other First Nations communities to deteriorate to the point that they have. We all know that we're responsible for almost half of the costs of running police services in First Nations communities, yet police stations do not meet the basic standard. You know as well as I do that in some cases the officers have to take out the slop buckets because there aren't sanitary services within those particular police stations. In Kashechewan, we had two people who died as a result of a fire because we had cells that were not to provincial standard or to federal standard. When we look at police levels as far as the amount of officers on duty in one particular day, it is nowhere near what's needed for the community. So if you believe that yes is the answer, then why is it that we're not seeing those types of services in our First Nations communities?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** The member across the way knows full well that we held a meeting on February 25 with representation from the NAN. He was at that meeting. He knows that those people who were at the meeting asked of me (1) that we continue to be very, very supportive and proactive; (2) that we ask the federal government to do more with regard to funding; and (3) to ensure that we live up to our commitment.

We take the issue of First Nations policing very, very seriously. So in our meeting with the public safety minister and Minister Nicholson, we ensured that we in-

formed them of the request from the representations of NAN that were presented to us at our meeting on February 25. We look forward to the federal government being a very active partner in this tri-partnership.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Minister, you're correct—and I wasn't going to go anywhere near the meeting we had a couple of weeks ago, because it wasn't a positive meeting. What the communities asked you for and what NAN asked you for very specifically is—we're responsible for almost 50% of the funding of NAPS policing in northeastern and northwestern Ontario. They asked you to put up your share of what is needed in order for those reserves to meet the basic standard. That's all they wanted you to do, so they can lever the money from the federal government. You refused.

I come back to my initial point. There are people phoning police stations at 3 o'clock and 4 o'clock in the morning, in communities across NAN territory, who cannot get a police officer to come to their house in the case of a domestic dispute or of any other crime. Why should that be allowed when it certainly would not be allowed to happen anywhere else in Ontario?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** In our presentation to the federal ministers, we asked that additional revenues be placed by the federal government into the First Nations policing partnership. We understand, as does the member across the way, that the split is 52-48—52% on the part of the federal government and 48% on the part of the provincial government. We have committed, re-committed and acted in good faith. We will always live up to our 48% commitment to First Nations policing partnerships. We asked the federal government to increase its share. It is their program. It's a tri-partnership between First Nations, the provincial government and the federal government. If the federal government increases its share, Ontario will automatically increase its share, because the split is 52% to 48%.

### HEALTH INSURANCE FOR IMMIGRANTS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Currently, new immigrants to Ontario face a three-month wait period before they can access health care coverage through OHIP. Is the Ministry of Health ready to eliminate this discriminatory three-month wait period for landed immigrants?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** No. At present, the government has no plans to change the regulation introduced by the member's government.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** The Right to Healthcare Coalition comprises community health centres, hospitals, children's aid societies, public health agencies and immigrant organizations from across Ontario. They have over 35 members. They are asking the Minister of Health to eliminate this three-month wait period.

According to the Association of Ontario Health Centres, it would cost \$5 million to provide immediate



coverage to the 130,000 landed immigrants per year affected by the three-month OHIP wait period. Minister, will you do the right thing today and eliminate this discriminatory three-month wait period for landed immigrants for 0.01% of the health care budget?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I appreciate the question from my colleague. I too have had a chance to meet with individuals who were there. I am not too keen on quarrelling about the number, but a \$5-million estimate is indeed a back-of-envelope estimate that is, I'm sure, quite deliberately low.

The rationale associated with the three-month wait is well known and well established, and individuals who are coming to this country from other places are made aware of it in advance. They are given all of the best advice to make sure they have appropriate insurance for that very, very brief period. As I would remind the honourable member, it is a regulation that was initiated when her party was the government of the province of Ontario.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** At the beginning of this Parliament, all members of this House supported fairness for military families. We recognize that military families are under a lot of stress, and the three-month waiting period before they can access health care coverage through OHIP serves no useful purpose.

Immigrants generally arrive in better health than the Canadian-born population, but the healthy immigrant effect diminishes quickly because the stress of settlement and immigration puts them at risk. Immigrant women, especially those of child-bearing age, and children are particularly affected by that policy.

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty said, "In every walk of life, new Canadians are making tremendous contributions to our economy, and our society. And when newcomers to our province succeed, Ontario succeeds.... So, our government will work with you and your family to help you settle here, and succeed here.... We will see that your family has access to"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Minister of Health?

1410

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I think that the words that were on offer from the honourable member as a quote of my leader and our Premier have been well reflected in our government's very substantial commitment to a public health care system in the province of Ontario. I'm pleased to say, just as an example with respect to hospitals, which were mentioned in the first of the honourable member's questions, that our party holds a distinction very different from the two parties that stand across from us in the Legislature. Each and every year, under our government, every hospital has received more resources. That's a trend that we plan to continue and does stand in sharp contrast to the two opposition parties.

#### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** My question is to the Premier. Economic indicators continue to point toward a serious

downturn and even a recession in Ontario. If you're here long enough, things go round and round and they come back. The last time that we saw these kinds of numbers and witnessed this kind of market volatility was in 1991. The government of the day responded with a tax-and-spend policy, which led to four years of hardship and huge deficits. Minister, will your government attempt to stimulate our economy by mimicking those NDP policies and taking Ontario into a longer and deeper recession than necessary?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** I'm very happy to answer this question because I know the people that are from this member's area would be very pleased to see that the Conservative Party would support the initiatives that this Liberal government has brought to bear for business in the province of Ontario. Right now, we have some 208 delegates, for example, travelling to Alberta to take advantage of the oil and gas sector for manufacturing right here in Ontario. Two of those companies come from Milton. I'd be very happy to share the names of the companies with this member opposite so that he too can call these companies and congratulate them on taking advantage of the amount of aggressive support given by the Ontario government for businesses right here in Ontario.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I'll take that as a yes. It is your government that puts public revenues and essential services at risk by not addressing Ontario's competitiveness. Enough budget information has been leaked by the government to support that there will be little in the way of cutting Ontario's business taxes—the highest in North America, I might add. Minister, how large of a deficit will be acceptable to this government once all the business tax revenues have left Ontario?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** I think it's important to note that this gentleman has a colleague sitting right behind him who on Thursday offered me a letter asking for support for a company in his riding of Cambridge. In fact, it was questioning programs that our Ontario government is now delivering to business in Ontario for support to be competitive against American jurisdictions, projects that this member for Cambridge voted against. So I'm very, very happy to say that we have already engaged with this company in Cambridge.

We are very happy to reach out, in a very aggressive manner, to land more business in this province. Despite the voting record of the members opposite, our programs are aggressive and they are competitive on a world stage. We are winning this.

#### CHILD CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the minister responsible for children and youth issues. My question's very simple: What is the McGuinty government doing to prevent private, for-profit, big-box child care centres from coming into Ontario, setting up shop and obtaining our public funding?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We will always ask what's best for the child. Any decision we're faced with, we will say, "What's best for the child?" We have two important priorities when it comes to child care. One is accessibility, so parents can access good-quality child care for their children. We're also interested in accessibility and quality, so that the quality is good but it's also available.

On the issue that you've raised, we're monitoring it very carefully. We are aware of the concerns and we're paying attention to it.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** But this minister should know that big-box child care corporations buy out the smaller for-profits and even the not-for-profits. They gobble them up, and guess what happens? Quality suffers; wages get driven down; quality gets driven down; fees to parents get driven up. That's the reality, and this minister should know it. Why isn't the minister saying no, straight and flat out, to big-box child care in favour of a made-in-Ontario solution of quality accessible, affordable child care that's delivered in the not-for-profit sector in this province? That's what children and families deserve in Ontario.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** You'd be interested to know that when the NDP were in office, they cut 6,000 child care subsidies. When we asked them to stand with us and support families following the cancellation of the federal early learning and child care agreement, they refused. In the words of Kerry McCuaig, executive director of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, in 1994 she said, "The NDP have killed provincial child care." We are completely committed to improving the quality of care for kids who are in our child care and we're committed to having more options for parents.

#### ONTARIO FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRY

**Mr. David Zimmer:** My question is for the Minister of Culture. The film and television industry is becoming an important part of Ontario's economy. If Ontario is to remain competitive, we must ensure support for both traditional economic ministries and emerging industries like film and television. In this increasingly competitive industry, Canadian and international film and television production companies can film anywhere in the world. Minister, what action has your ministry taken to ensure that the Ontario film and television industry continues to be competitive in Canada and abroad?

**Hon. M. Aileen Carroll:** I am very proud that the McGuinty government recognizes the importance of film and television production in this province as a key economic driver. Film and television production and the industry generate almost \$2 billion annually for our economy and contribute to the employment of 20,000 people in Ontario.

This government is committed to supporting the growth of this emerging economic industry as Ontario has the right combination of world-class and world-renowned creative talent, technical expertise, production

facilities and filming locations. We continue to be competitive but, in order to do so, in order to position Ontario in this jurisdiction so that we can grow and thrive, we introduced a domestic tax credit on January 1 which indeed increases from 30%—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. David Zimmer:** I'm pleased to hear that our government has recently supported Ontario's film and television industry by enhancing domestic and foreign production tax credits. This is good news for Ontario and it's good news for the film and television industry. Minister, can you give this House some examples of how film and television tax credits have actually benefited the industry in Ontario, and indeed in Canada?

**Hon. M. Aileen Carroll:** I thank the member for his second very good question. In fact, we have seen an increase of those tax credits from 30% to 35%, as you note, and from 18% to 25%. That means that has increased by approximately \$50 million this year and enhanced the industry.

In addition, I would just mention that one of our most recent successes was the Canadian movie *Away From Her*. This movie was a result of our tax credit program. Indeed, Sarah Polley said that without that tax credit program, the movie never would have been produced in this province. I'm delighted that it was so internationally acclaimed. I would share with everyone the good news that this movie, *Away From Her*, was so highly acclaimed that it received seven Genie Awards, a Golden Globe Award and two Oscar nominations. I think that's proof that this government is doing very well in film and TV production.

1420

#### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. To become an electrician in Ontario, you have to complete a five-year apprenticeship period with a qualified electrician before you become eligible to practise your trade. According to the Minister of Finance, today's budget is going to focus on skills training, and he'll no doubt be bragging about all the programs and big money you'll be spending. But to date, you have steadfastly refused to open up more apprentice positions. Ontario is one of the only jurisdictions in North America that requires up to as many as three qualified electricians just to train one apprentice. If the ratio was changed so that one electrician could supervise and train one apprentice, then thousands of new apprentice positions would open up in the province. On almost a daily basis, there are contractors who are forced to turn away apprentices, not because they don't have work but because we have an artificially high apprentice-to-journeyman ratio that forces them to turn away people who want to work.

Premier, will you draft new regulations that will ensure that young people can access an apprenticeship and get a job in this province?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I am pleased that a member opposite has settled upon what we believe is a very important issue, and that is, how do we turn the challenge for a worker who has lost his or her job into an opportunity for them and for us. Because last year, for example, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business told us there were 100,000 Ontario jobs that went begging for at least four months. The challenge associated with getting somebody to take those jobs is that they don't have the necessary skill set. Our budget will speak to that very, very shortly.

But I can say with a great deal of pride that we have almost 100,000 people enrolled in apprenticeships today. In terms of how many more we're enrolling on an annual basis, we started with 19,000, and we're now up to 26,000 being enrolled on an annual basis. We think that's progress.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** You're just in the pockets of the unions, who don't want to make this change. They say it's a safety issue. Use your brain, Premier. What could be more safe than one electrician and one electrical apprentice working together, a 1-to-1 ratio?

You've lost more than 194,000 manufacturing jobs, and you've got young people who want to work, employers who want to hire them. Without spending a dime, you could make one small regulatory change and put these people to work.

In the gallery today are Mary Ingram-Haigh, Richard Cullis and Stewart Kiff of the Ontario Electrical League. Richard owns Dial One Wolfedale Electric. He'll hire 15 apprentices tomorrow if you make this change.

I ask, Premier, will you stand in your place and tell the unions that this is bad for Ontario and make the change so that people like Richard Cullis can hire more apprentices and so that young people can get on with their lives and help curb the skilled trades shortage?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I commend my honourable colleague for raising an important issue: What is it that we can do together to continue to invest in the skills and education of Ontarians?

I am proud of the fact, on behalf of and working with Ontarians, today we have about 100,000 more young people going on to our colleges and universities, we have 10,000 more who are graduating from high school—10,000 who would have dropped out in the past—and we've gone from 19,000 to 26,000 new apprenticeships enrolling every year. We have a total of about 100,000 more apprenticeships in the province of Ontario today.

Very shortly, through our budget, we will speak in a very real way to the issue of continuing to invest in our workers, especially those who have recently lost a job and who can't take that new job unless they acquire the appropriate skill set.

Again, I thank the member for his interest and look forward to speaking to that very shortly, through our budget.

## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** A question to the Premier: Colleges and universities in Ontario are charging exorbitant ancillary and user fees because of the failure of this government to invest adequately in post-secondary institutions. When the Premier was an opposition MPP, he told this Legislature the following: that turning a blind eye to prohibitively high ancillary fees is the same as "raising tuition fees through the back door."

The Canadian Federation of Students has asked the government to dedicate \$50 million per year in post-secondary funding, starting this year, to end the era of shamefully high ancillary fees. Will the Premier listen?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We've made some real progress working with students in our institutions. In fact, one of the first things I did as Premier was to ask former Premier Bob Rae if he might prepare a report for us. He did, and that good work culminated in our \$6.2-billion Reaching Higher plan. Among other things we now have, we brought back student grants: 120,000 students this year qualified for grants. We are devoting fully one quarter of that \$6.2-billion Reaching Higher plan to improving the quality of student assistance. It has gone up by 27% in our first four years in government.

We understand the needs and some of the challenges that students face in Ontario today; that's why we continue to improve the quality of support that we offer them.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question, Premier, is about ancillary fees and user fees. At the University of Toronto, New College students are facing a fee hike of more than \$1,000 next year to help pay off a \$6-million debt incurred after the construction of a new residence building for New College.

According to the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, capital expenditures are failing to keep pace with the infrastructure needs of Ontario universities and colleges. That's why we're seeing the increases of \$1,000 per student in just one year. Why is this government putting Ontario universities and students in such an untenable position? Why is he doing that?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I hear my colleague but I can't agree with him. Never at any point in our history have we had more young people enrolled in our colleges and universities. Never have we offered more by way of student assistance. Never have we invested more in capital investments in our colleges and universities through the fall economic statement alone.

I would remind my colleague that when they were in government they actually decreased operating funding by 4% while enrolment was moving in the other direction. We are proud of the progress that we have made working with and for Ontario students. There is more to be done and, in fact, we will be speaking to that very issue in this afternoon's budget.

## FIRE SAFETY

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey:** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, as you know, I introduced two private members' bills in the last session recommending that our government consider changing the building code to put sprinklers in new residential units.

The national building code suggests that new three-storey or higher multi-unit dwellings be equipped with sprinklers to help prevent fire fatalities. As an MPP and a concerned citizen, I feel it's imperative we work with fire chiefs and fire prevention officers from across this province to both educate the public and help prevent residential fires.

Both families and communities are devastated every time a home is engulfed by flames.

Could you please tell me what options our government is exploring to protect Ontarians from residential fires?

**Hon. Jim Watson:** Let me begin by thanking the member for Brampton–Springdale. She has been a champion and very persistent on fire safety issues in the province of Ontario.

I am very pleased, as a result of the work that she has done, to announce that just a few weeks ago, we began a public consultation process to ask the public for their comments on a mandatory provision of the building code that would require sprinklers in high-rises above three storeys.

This consultation will go on until April 8 of this year because we know, as the Premier said when this issue came up a few weeks ago, that Ontario has been a laggard with respect to this aspect of the building code. We're the only province in the country that does not require sprinklers above three storeys. Since 1983, 447 citizens of this province have perished as a result of fires in high-rises. We think we can do better and we think this is the right—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey:** This is an important step in the right direction. All I've ever wanted to do was prevent loss of life.

I'm proud that our government is so committed to fire safety and recognizes that smoke alarms alone cannot prevent loss of life. I'm also pleased we're considering various options by consulting with stakeholders across the province.

Minister, I believe governments have a responsibility and a duty to protect the people of Ontario. The proposed options being consulted on will protect families in Ontario for generations to come. Can you tell me what else our government has done to improve fire safety in the last five years?

**Hon. Jim Watson:** I'd refer this to the Minister of Community Safety.

1430

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** Let me thank the honourable member for the supplementary question and congratulate her for her incredible work with regards to fire safety.

Her influence has truly been remarkable with regard to fire safety.

I want to say that Ontario is very, very proud because it has listened to the experts in the field, and it now ranks with British Columbia and Quebec as having the lowest fire fatality rates in Canada over the last 10 years. The preventable fire death rate in Ontario has decreased by 48% and preventable residential fire rates have decreased by 32%. Our ministry has amended the Ontario fire code to require working smoke alarms on every level of every home. We've adopted amendments to the fire code. We will continue to listen to the experts in the field, and we look forward to the Office of the Fire Marshal reporting back—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you, Minister.

## SMALL BUSINESSES

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Premier. I received a letter just recently from Mr. Perry Rizzo, president of Axiom Group Inc. in Aurora. He said this:

"Despite our efforts and leading edge innovation, Axiom has been challenged with unprecedented negative business conditions, which continues to hamper our long-term business commitments in Canada.

"We currently employ ... 100 people in this province, but must now look at all available options, which will lead to the loss of all employment in this region as well as the technology and innovation our firm has created if ... support cannot be achieved."

The question I have for the Premier is, if Mr. Rizzo were listening to you today, given the circumstances of his business, what is your advice, as Premier, to this individual who has made investments in this province and whose business is on the brink of collapsing? What would—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Premier.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** I'm very pleased to have this question, because we like to speak to all businesses in Ontario to make sure that they are well aware of the initiatives that we have brought forward to help businesses today.

For example, businesses very much like the one that this member opposite mentions would have benefited greatly from the items that were in the December economic update, as corporate tax cuts relevant to businesses today. In particular, I might mention that if this business, for example, is not in a profit-making position, then corporate tax rates which this individual is calling for will not help this company, but instead, items like the elimination of the capital tax for manufacturing—that actually helps this company. Because it's also retroactive to January 1, 2007, it helped over the course of last year as well. These are elements, like the reduction in the property taxes on education for businesses—a direct help

to companies. No matter how much money they're making, they are saving money.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would just extend a warning to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. You've been very chippy today. That will be your final warning. I would really like to have you here for the budget.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I spoke with Mr. Rizzo earlier today and I asked him, "If you had the opportunity to ask the Premier one question, what would that be?" Mr. Rizzo said this: "Ask the Premier, apart from all of the programs that he might be discussing, what he will do for businesses like mine that cannot access capital, which is what they need to stay in business during this challenging time. What practical advice does the Premier have for me and what will his government do to ensure that businesses like ours will have access to capital that we need to stay in business?"

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** Once again, we'd be happy to speak directly with this company, as we have unrelentingly; every time we are forwarded information about speaking to businesses, we do so. So I'd be happy to call this company and discuss directly how much we can help and how much we have helped.

In particular, the last budget initiatives, this member opposite knows, have directly helped companies that aren't in a profit position. I have to contrast that with the mantra that the members opposite have been spewing lately, because what you're asking for does not help companies that aren't making money. In fact, we're specifically targeting companies to assist in their investing in opportunities to make them more productive, more innovative—higher levels of technology, better energy efficiencies. Those are the kinds of programs that we've developed and that members of the opposition have unfortunately voted against. But we appreciate—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you, Minister.

#### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Minister, I don't know if you've been following the Hamilton Spectator in the last few weeks. The emissions from Hamilton industries have an extreme impact on Hamilton neighbourhoods as residents are exposed constantly to white, brown, black tarry particulates that are affecting their health, the airshed and the water that surrounds them. Rather than constantly blame the previous government, when is your government going to enforce its own environmental laws?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** First of all, I thank the member for the question. I know that he is concerned for the people of Hamilton and has been for some time.

Certainly, it's the ministry's position that Dofasco, for example, has been told to either meet the standards and improve its operating procedures and consider improving their emissions control equipment or else they will be

ordered to do so. It's as simple as that. The current situation is unacceptable, but we are constantly monitoring that with the ministry. We're meeting with Dofasco and the other steel producers on an ongoing basis, and we have told them that they've either got to implement the program that they themselves have indicated they want to put in place as soon as possible or else they will be ordered to do so.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** The minister probably is correct on that one particular incident, but there are many industries in Hamilton: Union Carbide, Stelco—now US Steel. If this government is serious about the environment, Minister, when will you enforce the existing rules, when will you hire more inspectors, when will you inspect more often and when will you ensure significant fines, not just taps on the hand?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** As I stated before, much work has been done but much more work needs to be done. It's my understanding that over the last four years we've introduced 59 new or updated air standards, which has really been the biggest move on air toxics in the last 30 years. We understand that our government has set tough regulations and limits for the largest industrial sources.

I can tell this member that this is a matter that is of great concern to the ministry. We are, on an ongoing basis, taking the necessary actions in order to make sure that Dofasco and the other steel producers will be adhering to the plans that they themselves have come forward with as soon as possible, and if they're not going to do that, then they will be ordered to do so.

#### BORDER SECURITY

**Mr. Dave Levac:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. As a province, I know that we have started to investigate and possibly may introduce the enhanced drivers' licences. While representing the province at the Council of State Governments' Eastern Regional Conference in Detroit, I was part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative discussions. As a result of 9/11, a very serious concern about cross-border trade and tourism has been raised.

Minister, you were one of the first people to recognize the potential negative impact the WHTI would have on Ontario, and I thank you for having that foresight. As Ontario manufacturers continue to face pressures from the tightened US security post-9/11—not to mention the high oil prices, the weakening US economy—our manufacturers have faced an undue hardship to cross the border and they need our help. Minister, can you provide the House with an update on the progress being made on the enhanced driver's licence as part of a border-crossing segment?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I would like to thank the member for Brant for an excellent question. My colleague from Niagara Falls has been working on this file, as well. I want to tell them that, first of all, we have developed a new, more secure driver's licence that we launched last December. It'll be the platform that will

allow us to deliver a passport alternative. Ontario is working with the federal government to obtain and add citizenship information to the licences of people who want an enhanced driver's licence.

We're also working with both the federal and provincial privacy commissioners to ensure all privacy concerns are addressed. In fact, Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner has said that she is very pleased "with the co-operation and willing attitude of the Ontario government to work with my office and protect citizens' privacy."

We're also working with the Canada Border Services Agency, and I think the initiative that we have taken will allow us to develop the kind of alternative—

**The Speaker:** Supplementary.

1440

**Mr. Dave Levac:** Minister, again, I want to make sure that you get credit, because I remember the opposition laughing at the fact that we couldn't tell George Bush what to do. In fact, because of your work and the work of this government and the 39 other states that signed on, a very large improvement has been made on the WHTI.

Also, through my work with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and the Canadian Council of the Blind, I've witnessed first-hand that Ontarians with physical disabilities and who do not drive still face proof-of-identity challenges. On several occasions, I've met with advocates from several disability support groups and in particular the CNIB and the CCB. The vice-president of advocacy, Mr. Bob Brown, has worked very hard, along with Mr. Dennis Finucan and Dr. Gord Hope, to ask a very simple question of our government over the years they've been working to get this done. Minister, can you provide the House with an update on the progress being made on non-drivers' photo cards?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I applaud the member for Brant for his work with the CNIB and the Canadian Council of the Blind. We recognize that proof-of-identity challenges that are faced by those who do not drive for various reasons, including disabilities, are a major challenge.

Currently, I have my ministry staff exploring the best way to implement a non-driver's-licence photo card. We're reviewing policies in other jurisdictions and are making use of the work completed for the new, more secure, driver's licence card. Consultation sessions were held over the summer of 2007 so that individuals, businesses and other affected organizations could provide their perspectives on the development of a photo card. We have ensured that our contract for the new and more secure driver's licence card allows for production of a non-driver's identity card as well. Ministry staff are also working to ensure that the new non-driver's identity card will be able to be used as a passport alternative.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. The people of Thornhill

and Ontario were first introduced to the concept of the health-based allocation model in the 2006 HBAM. This was supposed to be a new way of ensuring fair access to health funding across Ontario.

This year, residents in Thornhill and across the 905 received about \$700 per capita in hospital funding. However, everywhere else in Ontario, the figure was well above \$900. The word "fair" is the last word that 905ers would use to describe the delivery of these services to them. Will the health minister commit to end this practice of health care discrimination and guarantee, for residents of the 905, that funding will be equalized under today's budget and their families treated equally to those across Ontario from this day forward?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I think it's interesting that for the purposes of his question the honourable member has used a community that has no hospital as the foundation for some hospital comparator. We're going to address that by our commitment to build a hospital and to put beds in the Vaughan community.

I can confirm that HBAM, the health-based allocation model, is a more sophisticated way of funding. That's why the Central Local Health Integration Network received the largest share of resources from our aging-at-home strategy. So on a go-forward basis, yes, I can commit to the honourable member to ensure that resources are allocated in such a fashion and consistent as well with the promises that we made to the people in the 905 in the election campaign just past.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** The minister's answer is not quite good enough. Listening to the minister's double-talk, a 905 resident can justifiably ask, "What makes me different from other Ontarians?" Certainly, 905 residents don't pay any less tax. The 905 is Ontario's highest-growth environment. However, as with infrastructure and transit funding, this government is content to short-change the 905 when it comes to health care dollars. The truth is that the McGuinty government is content to allow the quality of life for Ontarians in the 905 and elsewhere to deteriorate.

Will the health minister commit to 905 residents, here and now, that they will immediately receive equal treatment and equal funding for health services, keep the McGuinty government's 2007 election promise and fully deploy the health-based allocation model announced in 2006, or does he confirm that his plan is to let the 905 continue to languish?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** The first thing that I offer to the people of the 905 is that we will not perpetuate the \$3-billion health care cut that they were promising in the election campaign. Further, in the presence of the mayor of Mississauga, I'm very pleased to acknowledge capital redevelopment at Credit Valley and construction under way, as we speak, at Trillium hospital; construction under way at York Central Hospital; construction under way at Southlake hospital; construction soon to be under way in Markham and in Oakville. All across the landscape of the 905 and the high-growth parts of the province of Ontario is evidence of the largest single renewal

of hospital capital infrastructure in the history of our great province—a credit to our Premier, in partnership with the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. The people of the 905 know that the surest way to get the health care they need is not to elect—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, you'll know that last week, the Ontario Mining Association and member companies were here at Queen's Park talking to all of us. They gave us a statistic that I thought was rather interesting. Last year, we moved, in a group of 68 jurisdictions, from the fifth-best place to do business for mining to 20th. How do you explain that we moved from fifth to 20th in one year?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I appreciate the question. In fact, Ontario is indeed a very positive jurisdiction in which to do business. Last year, the mineral production totals were \$10.5 billion, a \$1-billion increase over the year before. In terms of exploration activities, as the member would well know, coming from Timmins, exploration is up to over \$600 million. So indeed we are very, very proud of the investment climate, recognizing that there are many challenges ahead, working very closely with the community and making sure that we will continue to see positive investment in the future, particularly all across the north.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** To the minister across the way: Base metal prices and precious metal prices are through the roof, so of course there was more money taken in from mining last year, and more exploration, because of the base metal prices. But my question is this—it's a simple one: We were, three years ago, the best place in North America to do business when it comes to mining. Under your watch, under your Premier's watch, we have gone from first to fifth in a couple of years and from fifth to 20th out of 68 in two years. Explain to me why it is the case and what you're going to do to turn it around.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** The fact is, that is not accurate. The fact is that we were number one in exploration last year, and again, I think you should know that well, coming from the part of the province that you come from. The opportunities continue to be very, very positive. We're working very closely with the Ontario Mining Association. We're very proud of the fact that we're also doing this on a sustainable basis in terms of our mine rehabilitation. We're very proud of the fact that we signed an agreement with the Ontario Mining Association to continue to spend \$90 million over six years in terms of mine rehabilitation. I had a wonderful experience up in Timmins with the president of the mining association, Chris Hodgson, with the Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller, as we saw the Kam Kotia mine site being recovered—good, positive news that we

hope will continue to be in place. We're looking forward to those opportunities. This is a great jurisdiction in which to do mining.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Many areas of the province are experiencing economic challenges. This government realizes how important investment is to Ontario. Can you tell the House and myself today what your ministry is doing to productively encourage investments here in Ontario?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** I'm very happy today to reiterate once again especially our Next Generation of Jobs Fund. The Premier delivered a tremendous event a couple of weeks ago where we launched the largest investment fund anywhere in the world—\$1.15 billion, all meant to go around the world and to companies at home to say, "We are partnering with you in investments right here in Ontario." It is unprecedented as a fund and unprecedented in terms of what we're prepared to partner with business to do around innovation, productivity, higher levels of technology, the kinds of future business that we want to see right here in this province. We welcome all members of this House to reach out and talk to the businesses in your own backyards about this great Next Generation of Jobs Fund.

1450

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** It gives me great comfort to hear that our government is committed to this province and to our economy. I know that our province and your ministry are also committed to expanding Ontario's presence abroad. Minister, can you tell us how we are also encouraging investment abroad, outside Ontario?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** We're very pleased to announce that we are now opening 10 international marketing centres around the world. They literally are spanning the globe. It gives us an opportunity, with officials from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, to be on the ground on virtually all continents, speaking directly to business on our behalf. So we will be in Paris, London and Munich, as well as Shanghai, Beijing, New Delhi, Los Angeles and New York. We have our way to speak to businesses, to tell them the Ontario story and why we're so encouraged that so many are choosing Ontario as a place to invest. We look forward to members opposite also speaking about the benefits of having our offices abroad.

#### PETITIONS

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**Mr. Bill Murdoch:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the current Liberal government is proposing to eliminate the Lord’s Prayer from daily proceedings in the Ontario Legislature; and

“Whereas the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer has opened the Legislature every day since the 19th century; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer’s message of forgiveness and the avoidance of evil is universal to the human condition: It is a valuable guide and lesson for a chamber that is too often an arena of conflict; and

“Whereas recognizing the diversity of the people of Ontario should be an inclusive process, not one which excludes traditions such as the Lord’s Prayer;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to preserve the daily recitation of the Lord’s Prayer by the Speaker in the Legislature.”

I have signed this.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** I am pleased to read this petition on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas over the past 25 years, obesity rates have more than tripled for Canadian children between the ages of 12 and 17; and

“Whereas in Ontario, less than half of students beyond Grade 9 take gym classes, a small fraction are involved in school sports programs, and adolescents who are inactive at school are unlikely to be physically active elsewhere; and

“Whereas Canada’s Physical Activity Guide recommends that adolescents get at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity daily; and

“Whereas a second compulsory physical education credit for secondary schools would result in an increase in adolescents being active;

“Therefore we, the undersigned concerned citizens of Ontario,” and Niagara, “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of Education add a second compulsory physical education credit for secondary schools.”

I am pleased to sign in support.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the current Liberal government is proposing to eliminate the Lord’s Prayer from its place at the beginning of daily proceedings in the Ontario Legislature; and

“Whereas the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer has opened the Legislature every day since the 19th century; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer’s message of forgiveness and the avoidance of evil is universal to the human

condition: It is a valuable guide and lesson for a chamber that is too often an arena of conflict; and

“Whereas recognizing the diversity of the people of Ontario should be an inclusive process, not one which excludes traditions such as the Lord’s Prayer;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to preserve the daily recitation of the Lord’s Prayer by the Speaker in the Legislature.”

I support this petition, affix my name to it and send it down with my page from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Daniel.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I am pleased to present this petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and I thank the Westland family in the Trelawney area of northwest Mississauga for gathering the signatures for it. It reads as follows:

“Whereas wait times for access to surgical procedures in the western GTA area served by the Mississauga Halton LHIN are growing despite the vigorous capital project activity at the hospitals within the Mississauga Halton LHIN boundaries; and

“Whereas ‘day surgery’ procedures could be performed in an off-site facility, thus greatly increasing the ability of surgeons to perform more procedures, alleviating wait times for patients, and freeing up operating theatre space in hospitals for more complex procedures that may require post-operative intensive care unit support and a longer length of stay in hospital;

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

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care allocate funds in its 2008-09 capital budget to begin planning and construction of an ambulatory surgery centre located in western Mississauga to serve the Mississauga-Halton area and enable greater access to ‘day surgery’ procedures that comprise about four fifths of all surgical procedures performed.”

I’m pleased to sign this petition, to support it and to ask page Natalie to carry it.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** “Whereas the current Liberal government is proposing to eliminate the Lord’s Prayer from its place at the beginning of daily proceedings in the Legislature; and

“Whereas the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer has been an integral part of our spiritual and parliamentary tradition since it was first established in 1793 under Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer’s message is one of forgiveness, of providing for those in need of their ‘daily bread’ and of preserving us from the evils that we may fall into; it is a valuable guide and lesson for a chamber that is too often an arena of conflict; and



“Whereas recognizing the diversity of the people of Ontario should be an inclusive process, not one which excludes traditions such as the Lord’s Prayer;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to preserve the daily recitation of the Lord’s Prayer by the Speaker in the Legislature.”

I affix my name in full support.

#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** I have a petition in regard to employment insurance. It’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the federal government’s employment insurance surplus now stands at \$54 billion; and

“Whereas over 60% of Ontario’s unemployed are not eligible for employment insurance because of Ottawa’s unfair eligibility rules; and

“Whereas an Ontario worker has to work more weeks to qualify and receives fewer weeks of benefits than other Canadian unemployed workers; and

“Whereas the average Ontario unemployed worker gets \$4,000 less in EI benefits”—

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** That’s awful.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** That’s right, that’s awful.

—“than unemployed workers in other provinces and thus, unemployed are not qualifying for many retraining programs;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to press the federal government to reform the employment insurance program and to end the discrimination and unfairness towards Ontario’s unemployed workers.”

Since I agree, I’m delighted to sign my name to it.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a petition to do with the Lord’s Prayer, and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty has called on the Ontario Legislature to consider removing the Lord’s Prayer from its daily proceedings; and

“Whereas the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer has opened the Legislature every day since the 19th century; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer’s message is one of forgiveness, of providing for those in need of their ‘daily bread’ and of preserving us from the evils we may fall into; it is a valuable guide and lesson for a chamber that is too often an arena of conflict; and

“Whereas recognizing the diversity of the people of Ontario should be an inclusive process, not one which excludes traditions such as the Lord’s Prayer;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to preserve the daily recitation of the Lord’s Prayer by the Speaker in the Legislature.”

I support this petition.

#### PUBLIC WASHROOMS

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I have a petition that I’ve read before in the House and I’m going to read again. It’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and reads as follows:

“Whereas the Toronto and greater Toronto area has the highest rate of Crohn’s and ulcerative colitis in Canada;

“Whereas this disease requires patients’ fast access to public washrooms;

“Whereas there is a lack of public washrooms on the current TTC subway system and lack of access for these patients;

“Whereas the Ontario building code only requires the TTC to build public washrooms at the end-of-line stations;

“Whereas the York subway line is about to be built with provincial dollars;

“We, the undersigned, therefore request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to amend the Ontario building code to provide public washrooms at every station on the York subway line.”

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

1500

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario signed by a great number of my constituents.

“Whereas the Ontario disability support program is designed to meet the unique needs of people with disabilities who are in financial need, or who want and are able to work and need support; and

“Whereas it is appreciated that the McGuinty government increased the maximum monthly rates in 2004, 2006 and 2007;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to establish an independent commission to make recommendations for setting social assistance rates. These rates need to be raised to provide for the real cost of living.”

Thank you very much for allowing me to make this presentation.

#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the federal government’s employment insurance surplus now stands at \$54 billion; and

“Whereas over 75% of Ontario’s unemployed are not eligible for employment insurance because of Ottawa’s unfair eligibility rules; and

“Whereas an Ontario worker has to work more weeks to qualify and receives fewer weeks of benefits than other Canadian unemployed workers; and

“Whereas the average Ontario unemployed worker gets \$4,000 less in EI benefits than unemployed workers in other provinces and thus ... are not qualifying for many retraining programs;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to press the federal government to reform the employment insurance program and to end this discrimination and unfairness towards Ontario’s unemployed workers.”

I fully support this petition; I affix my name to it.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I want to thank Bruce and Joy Osmond from Wasaga Beach for sending me this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty has called on the Ontario Legislature to consider removing the Lord’s Prayer from its daily proceedings; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer has been an integral part of our parliamentary heritage that was first established in 1793 under Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer is today a significant part of the religious heritage of millions of Ontarians of culturally diverse backgrounds;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to continue its long-standing practice of using the Lord’s Prayer as part of its daily proceedings.”

I agree with this petition and I’ve signed it.

#### ANTI-SMOKING LEGISLATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I’m very pleased to recognize the efforts of Natalia Castano and many of her neighbours in the great city of Peterborough for this petition, which they submitted through their MPP, Jeff Leal. I’m pleased to read it on his behalf. It’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

“Whereas children exposed to second-hand smoke are at a higher risk for respiratory illnesses including asthma, bronchitis and pneumonia, as well as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and increased incidences of cancer and heart disease in adulthood; and

“Whereas the Ontario Medical Association supports a ban on smoking in vehicles when children are present, as they have concluded that levels of second-hand smoke can be 23 times more concentrated in a vehicle than in a house because circulation is restricted within a small space; and

“Whereas the Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Ontario Tobacco-Free Network indicates that eight in 10 (80%) of Ontarians support ‘legislation that would ban smoking in cars and other private vehicles where a child or adolescent under 16 years of age is present’; and

“Whereas Nova Scotia, California, Puerto Rico, and South Australia recently joined several jurisdictions of

the United States of America in banning smoking in vehicles carrying children;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to approve Bill 11 and amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act to ban smoking in vehicles carrying children 16 years of age and under.”

I agree with this petition; I’m pleased to affix my signature and to ask page Christopher to carry it for me.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the current Liberal government is proposing to eliminate the Lord’s Prayer from its place at the beginning of daily proceedings in the Legislature; and

“Whereas the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer has opened the Legislature every day since the 19th century; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer’s message is one of forgiveness, of providing for those in need of their ‘daily bread’ and of preserving us from the evils that we may fall into; it is a valuable guide and lesson for a chamber that is too often an arena for conflict; and

“Whereas recognizing the diversity of the people of Ontario should be an inclusive process, not one which excludes traditions such as the Lord’s Prayer;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to preserve the daily recitation of the Lord’s Prayer by the Speaker in the Legislature.”

As I am in agreement with this, I’ve affixed my signature and given it to page George.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Mr. Kim Craitor:** I’m pleased to read in another petition I received from my riding of Niagara Falls. I do want to thank Jesse Webb for helping to put this petition together, which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas over the past 25 years, obesity rates have more than tripled for Canadian children between the ages of 12 and 17; and

“Whereas in Ontario, less than half of students beyond grade 9 take gym classes, a small fraction are involved in school sports programs, and adolescents who are inactive at school are unlikely to be physically active elsewhere; and

“Whereas Canada’s Physical Activity Guide recommends that adolescents get at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity daily; and

“Whereas a second compulsory physical education credit for secondary schools would result in an increase in adolescents being active;

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

“That the Ministry of Education add a second compulsory physical education credit for secondary schools.”

I am pleased to sign this in support.

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** On behalf of the member from Essex, I'd like to recognize the presence in the west public gallery of the mayor of LaSalle, Mr. Gary Baxter. Your Worship, welcome to Queen's Park today.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe we have unanimous consent to suspend proceedings until 4 p.m.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Agreed? Agreed.

I'd like to inform the members here and members who aren't here that the bells will begin to ring at 3:55 to remind you to return to the House.

*The House suspended proceedings from 1507 to 1600.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### 2008 ONTARIO BUDGET

##### BUDGET DE L'ONTARIO DE 2008

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I move, seconded by Mr. McGuinty, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Duncan has moved, seconded by Mr. McGuinty, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

I will ask the indulgence of the members, while the pages deliver the budgets, that you keep the aisles clear for them. This is an important day for the pages. They want to break the record of delivering the budget in less than 25.08 seconds. So keep your aisles clear and don't be grabbing the budgets from the pages.

Have all members received copies of their budget?

The Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I rise to present Ontario's 2008 budget, the first budget of the McGuinty government's second mandate.

Lors de notre premier mandat, nous avons éliminé le déficit du gouvernement antérieur tout en faisant des investissements dans la santé, l'éducation et l'infrastructure.

Prudent planning allowed us to invest in people while paying down debt and cutting business taxes.

Our economy today remains as strong and resilient as Ontarians themselves and it outperformed expectations for this year.

Still, it is being buffeted by a number of challenges that are creating uncertainty.

Resilience in the face of uncertainty speaks to the strength of Ontario's fundamentals and reminds us that

while some sectors are struggling, many more are prospering.

Aujourd'hui le gouvernement McGuinty poursuit la mise en œuvre de son plan économique en cinq points.

The plan is as sweeping in scope as it is balanced in approach.

This afternoon, I will outline major new investments in skills training, infrastructure and innovation.

The plan will strengthen long-term economic productivity, while stimulating investment and job growth. It will help us move to a greener, more sustainable future.

In addition, the government will propose a number of tax cuts and regulatory reforms to reduce the cost of business and enhance the quality of life of our people.

Finally, the budget will address partnerships: partnerships with aboriginal peoples, businesses, farmers, municipalities, unions and, yes, partnerships with the federal government.

In 2007, stronger-than-expected economic growth of 2.1% occurred despite a significantly more challenging external environment.

I am pleased to announce that this year's surplus is projected to be \$600 million.

This is our third consecutive balanced budget, and we are projecting six consecutive balanced budgets in total, a feat not matched in Ontario in more than a century.

Since we took office, real GDP has grown by 10% and the economy has created more than 456,000 net new jobs.

The economy is growing, more people are working, real income is up and unemployment is down.

Private sector forecasters expect modest economic growth in 2008 to strengthen to 2.8% by 2010.

Over that period, Ontario is expected to create 230,000 net new jobs.

Yet we know that certain sectors, some communities and far too many families are not sharing in Ontario's prosperity.

A slowing US economy, record high oil prices and a higher-than-anticipated Canadian dollar are reducing growth forecasts and creating greater uncertainty here in Ontario.

It is therefore important that the budget maintain our record of prudent fiscal planning and careful management.

The government continues to implement opportunities for efficiencies and cost reductions while balancing the budget and investing in priority public services. This has been our track record since 2004.

In the speech from the throne, our government outlined a five-point economic plan.

The fall economic statement began to implement that plan, and today we build on those initiatives.

The budget makes investments in the skills and education of our people. It accelerates our investments in infrastructure, it supports innovation, it lowers business costs and it strengthens key partnerships to maximize our future potential.

It is a balanced approach that is both prudent and pragmatic.

Since taking office we have been investing in the skills and education of our people so that everyone has a real opportunity for success.

Today we have much to celebrate. Over 90,000 more young people are going to college or university than five years ago. Ten thousand more young people are graduating from high school every year.

Ontario has a higher percentage of people with a post-secondary education than any western nation.

But there is more to do.

The centrepiece of today's budget is a new investment of \$1.5 billion in our Skills to Jobs Action Plan.

The plan will train unemployed workers for new careers, expand apprenticeships, build more spaces in colleges and universities and help students with education costs.

Some 20,000 unemployed workers will get long-term training that launches them into well-paying careers through our \$355-million Second Career strategy.

Our government will also expand apprenticeship programs, targeting 32,500 new registrants—a 25% increase over the next three years.

#### 1610

Most important, our people will be training in areas where growing industries are experiencing a shortage of workers.

Starting this fall, we will also provide a textbook and technology grant for every full-time college and university student in the province.

Une nouvelle subvention sera aussi accordée aux étudiantes et étudiants des régions rurales et éloignées afin de les aider à assumer les frais de déplacement.

Finally, we will help build new and improved post-secondary and skills training classrooms and facilities through \$970 million in new capital funding.

Skills are one component of our investments in people.

To help ensure that Ontarians have an opportunity to be at their best, particularly our children, the government is working on a strategy to reduce poverty.

As a start, to improve dental services and make a difference in the health and well-being of thousands of low-income families, the government is providing \$135 million over three years.

To ensure that no child has to start the school day hungry, we will provide nutritious food to thousands more children by doubling our investment in the student nutrition program over the next three years.

To help some 690,000 Ontario Works and Ontario disability support program recipients, our government will increase social assistance benefits by 2% in 2008-09. This is in addition to the Ontario child benefit we initiated last year. Starting in July, the OCB will provide up to \$600 for each eligible child. This is up from \$250 in 2007.

May I pause for a moment and give credit for this great program to my esteemed colleague, predecessor

and friend the honourable Greg Sorbara, the member for Vaughan?

We are also expanding the 211 system across Ontario. It is a telephone and web-based resource tool for referrals to local community, government and social services.

Our health care system is one of our key competitive advantages. It helps make the province an attractive place for businesses to invest and create jobs.

Our government is building on the success of the last four years by continuing to invest in and improve universal public health care.

To help Ontarians stay healthy and provide better care when they need it, the McGuinty government will invest \$40 billion in 2008-09.

Nous sommes déterminés à faciliter l'accès aux soins de santé.

We will increase access by adding 50 more family health teams, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

We will expand nurse practitioner-led clinics by providing \$38 million over the next three years.

To help improve the quality of long-term care, we will provide \$107 million over three years towards our goal of 2,500 more personal support workers.

Since taking office, we've increased investments in long-term care by 38%. We've funded 6,100 new staff, including 2,300 nurses in long-term-care homes.

This year, we've provided funding for 1,200 more nurses. We have added more frequent and unannounced inspections as well.

Finally, to help seniors stay in their homes, we have a \$700-million aging-at-home strategy.

We also intend to increase prevention and the early identification of chronic diseases, starting with diabetes, with \$190 million in new funding.

We will also increase cancer screening and, for the first time, we will cover the cost of PSA testing.

Our government will continue to make record investments in the education of our people.

Continued prosperity and a competitive global economy depend on a well-educated workforce. By making investments in our schools, we have built a strong foundation for student achievement.

In the 2008-09 school year, grants for student needs, the cornerstone of education funding, will rise to \$18.8 billion.

Our government is now investing \$9,821 per student—up 24% from the time we took office.

In that short period of time, we've hired 9,000 additional teachers to ensure that our kids do better at school.

Our investments and the hard work of teachers and students have resulted in remarkable progress: higher test scores, more students graduating and more going on to college, university or apprenticeships than ever before.

Seniors have contributed much to Ontario's success.

So today, I am proposing a new property tax grant to help low- and moderate-income senior homeowners pay their property taxes and stay in their homes.

In early 2009, the province would provide 550,000 senior homeowners with grants of up to \$250. The grants would rise to a maximum of \$500 in 2010.

Over five years, this amounts to \$1 billion in savings for our most deserving senior citizens.

The McGuinty government is already making the largest investments in Ontario's infrastructure in a generation—and we plan to do much more.

Our government has modernized schools, social housing, hospitals, roads, bridges, public transit, community facilities and water systems.

This has translated into thousands of jobs—and a more productive, competitive and greener economy.

This budget includes an additional \$1 billion to invest in municipal infrastructure with:

- \$400 million for roads and bridges outside Toronto,
- \$497 million for public transit projects in the greater Toronto area and Hamilton area, and
- \$100 million for social housing improvements.

Perhaps our most important infrastructure undertaking is a new border crossing at Windsor.

As part of the environmental assessment, the Detroit River International Crossing Study is expected to provide recommendations very soon on a new crossing and access road.

Ontario will fully fund its share of the cost of the final proposed road link between Highway 401 and the new border crossing.

Sufficient funds to cover the cost of the project are built into the government's 10-year, \$60-billion infrastructure plan.

Business, union leaders and others from right across the province want to get on with this project.

Mr. Speaker, so do we.

Construction is scheduled to begin in 2009 and is anticipated to be concluded in 2013.

Finally, at a time when they are most needed, this project will create thousands of jobs in the Windsor-Essex area.

To compete in the global economy, we need to foster Ontarians' creativity and innovation.

**1620**

Today our government is announcing nearly \$300 million for new innovation initiatives.

The McGuinty government will provide \$250 million over the next five years to the Ontario Research Fund for investment in research infrastructure.

To help launch the next wave of Ontario innovators, I am proposing today a bold new 10-year corporate income tax exemption which will be unique to Canada.

It is a tax incentive for new corporations that commercialize research from any Canadian university, college or research institute.

Ontario is also home to some of North America's top entertainment and creative industries. Between 1999 and 2007, this sector alone created 80,000 net new jobs.

To further help this growing sector, we are proposing to enhance the Ontario interactive digital media tax credit. We will also be investing in Ontario libraries to

help them bridge the digital divide and have provided more than \$100 million in support for cultural and heritage programs right across the province.

To help create jobs and strengthen northern communities, our investment in the northern Ontario heritage fund will rise to \$100 million annually over the next four years.

Our government has also recently launched the Next Generation of Jobs Fund to help innovative businesses grow and create jobs. It's a \$1.15-billion investment to support companies and privately led groups whose products may, for example, reduce pollution, save energy or make transportation more efficient. Applicants are guaranteed a decision within 45 days of submitting a complete proposal.

I now want to turn to our plan to lower costs for Ontario's businesses.

Make no mistake about it, no matter what anybody says, the best place to invest and create jobs in Canada is right here in Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just remind our guests in the audience that they shouldn't be partaking in the celebratory activities.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** It's hard not to stand up for Ontario, Mr. Speaker.

Our government has made significant progress in reducing costs for Ontario businesses.

In fact, just three months ago, I proposed a package of business tax relief worth \$1.1 billion over three years.

Today I am proposing \$750 million over four years in new targeted business tax relief. Let me outline a few of these initiatives.

To help our manufacturers now, we are proposing a further retroactive capital tax cut for manufacturers and resource firms going back to January 1, 2007. Eligible companies would receive \$190 million in rebates upon passage of the budget bill. Let's get on and let's pass the budget bill to get the help into the hands of our manufacturers and resource companies.

We also plan to enhance capital cost allowances. This would save Ontario businesses \$433 million over three years and encourage our manufacturers and forestry companies to invest in new equipment.

In this budget we will accelerate business education tax rate cuts by four years so that northern business property tax rates will be at the maximum of 1.6% in 2010. Over three years, this will save northern businesses a total of more than \$70 million.

Small businesses create jobs for Ontario communities and we thank them for their advice on reducing the business education tax rates and the paper burden.

This year, we will modernize business and financial regulations and streamline approval processes—to help reduce red tape for hard-working Ontario business people.

This will begin with an aggressive cap-and-trade initiative—when new regulations are introduced, others

will be eliminated. It will be the most aggressive of its kind in Canada.

The McGuinty government is also committed to strengthening competitiveness in key sectors.

Le secteur minier compte parmi les récentes réussites éclatantes de l'Ontario.

To encourage further growth, the government will invest \$20 million for geological mapping and close to \$7 million to implement the Ontario mineral development strategy.

Our forest products sector is the mainstay of many northern Ontario communities. Since 2005, the McGuinty government has provided over \$1 billion in support to the forestry sector.

To help address the challenges the sector is facing, the government proposes to reduce the stumpage rate for poplar hardwood to encourage new investment.

Ontario's tourism sector has been resilient and tourism employment continues to grow.

To help encourage further growth, the government is investing \$110 million to strengthen and expand tourism in Ontario.

A competitive economy is a green economy, and so we are increasing funding to fight climate change and create an environmental curriculum.

I am also proposing to extend the RST exemption for Energy Star household appliances and light bulbs as well as for bicycles and related safety equipment.

I am most pleased to announce that the government will also support bio-economy research in Thunder Bay and launch a new centre for invasive species management in Sault Ste. Marie and encourage Ontarians to buy locally by contributing to the Pick Ontario Freshness strategy.

Partnerships for progress are essential to Ontario's social and economic development.

We are building stronger relationships with the aboriginal peoples of Ontario. The new Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs will have an annual budget of almost \$50 million and guide more than \$600 million in programs right across the government.

We are especially proud of the new \$3-billion agreement with Ontario First Nations to share revenues from our gaming operations which was concluded last month.

Buy Ontario is about more than being sure we purchase our fruits and vegetables from Ontario farmers—it's about recognizing the importance of the agri-food sector to our future prosperity.

The groundbreaking risk management program established this year, coupled with the \$1.1 billion we will spend in the coming year, will help ensure that Ontario farmers continue to have a full partner in their provincial government.

Since taking office, we have worked hard with our partners in the public sector.

Nurses, teachers, civil servants all make an invaluable contribution to the strength of our economy.

Collective bargaining is never easy, particularly at a time when the economy is challenged. We look forward

to negotiating new collective agreements this year with our partner unions that honour the contribution of their members and respect the needs of all Ontarians.

As we move forward, we want to build new partnerships.

The financial services sector is a major and growing part of Ontario's economy. We are world leaders in banking, insurance and finance.

#### 1630

Toronto is the third-largest financial centre in North America. More than 350,000 people work in financial services—an increase of 50,000 in the past 10 years.

Moreover, the vast majority of these jobs are high skilled and well paid. Financial services attract other jobs and investments to the province.

This government is committed to working with our financial services sector to identify ways we can support their continued growth. We'll have much more to say about this in the coming days.

Since 2003, we have worked very hard to establish a real partnership with Ontario's municipalities.

We have more than doubled operating assistance to our municipal partners and are uploading the Ontario drug benefit program and the Ontario disability support program, which will save municipalities some \$900 million annually by 2011.

I want to thank our partners who have been working on the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review—some of them are here in the galleries today: Doug Reycraft, from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Toronto's Mayor David Miller; Stratford's Mayor Dan Mathieson; and, of course, Ontario's youngest mayor, Hazel McCallion.

Partnerships are never easy. They involve hard work and compromise, but deliver real rewards.

Ontarians expect the federal government to be a full partner in responding to today's challenges and building tomorrow's prosperity.

We have a plan to meet and overcome the challenges currently facing Ontario. But we would get better results much faster in partnership with the federal government.

We are moving forward with help for our unemployed workers, but we need a federal partner to ensure that Ontario workers get their fair share of employment insurance benefits.

Average benefits for an unemployed Ontarian are over \$4,000 a year less than in other provinces.

We are moving forward with better health care, but we need a federal partner to provide Ontarians with equal per capita health care funding this year, not 2014.

We are moving forward with infrastructure, but we need a federal partner to provide Ontario communities with an equitable share of funding. That should have begun last year.

We need a federal partner that will come to the table for our manufacturing and forestry sectors the same way it does for other sectors in other parts of the country.

We want a strong Ontario, because a strong Ontario means a strong Canada, and we are proud Canadians.

To conclude, I would like to begin by thanking the dedicated team of public servants in the Ministry of Finance who have made an invaluable contribution to the creation of this budget.

The McGuinty government's five-point economic plan takes a pragmatic, balanced approach to the province's finances.

En investissant prudemment dans la formation et l'infrastructure, nous créons des emplois aujourd'hui et nous soutenons notre productivité future.

The innovation initiatives in this budget ensure that Ontario will continue to be on the cutting edge of new technology.

They will propel us to a greener, more sustainable economy.

Competitiveness is defined by a broad range of factors, including education, health care, a cleaner environment and, yes, taxes.

This plan strikes the right balance and enhances those public services that make Ontario the best place in Canada to live, work and, yes, invest.

This plan undertakes initiatives for those sectors, communities and families that are most impacted by the reality of our external challenges.

Premier McGuinty is fond of saying that for the economy to truly succeed we need everyone at their best.

This fundamental value is at the root of all we do.

The resilience of Ontario's economy will continue into the future because of the ingenuity, perseverance and compassion of our people.

This plan affirms our conviction that prosperity is found where quality public services are funded by a competitive tax system.

Working together, we can build an even better future. We can build a future that is as prosperous and inclusive as Ontario, we can build a future as sustainable as it is competitive, and we can build a future that is as full of hope as the people of Ontario themselves.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to revert to introduction of bills.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Agreed? Agreed.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### BUDGET MEASURES AND INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 2008

#### LOI DE 2008 SUR LES MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES ET L'AFFECTATION ANTICIPÉE DE CRÉDITS

Mr. Duncan moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 44, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters / Projet de loi 44, Loi concernant les mesures budgétaires, l'affectation anticipée de crédits et d'autres questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member for a short statement.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I've already done that, sir.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I have a message from the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor signed by his own hand.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 2008, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly. Dated March 25, 2008.

The pages did an excellent job. They just didn't quite make it; 27.64 seconds, though. That's fabulous, so thank you very much.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I move adjournment of the House.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I might point out, on behalf of those pages, that there are 107 members in this House now, so we have to rethink that record.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The Speaker thanks the member for that point, so you know what? You've just set the new record. Congratulations.

The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. All those in favour? It's carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 1640.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Sophia (L)	Hamilton Mountain	
Albanese, Laura (L)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the committee of the whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (L)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / procureur general
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (L)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Bisson, Gilles (ND)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Brotten, Laurel C. (L)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Brown, Michael A. (L)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (L)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires autochtones, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b>	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique
<b>Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. M. Aileen (L)</b>	Barrie	Minister of Culture, minister responsible for seniors / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Colle, Mike (L)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (L)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b>	Essex	Deputy Speaker, Chair of the committee of the whole House / Vice- Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Delaney, Bob (L)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (L)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (L)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (ND)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b>	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (L)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	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–Oshawa	



<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Oakville	
<b>Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter</b> (L)	Mississauga East–Cookville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme
Gélinas, France (ND)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John</b> (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hampton, Howard (ND)	Kenora–Rainy River	Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
<b>Horwath, Andrea</b> (ND)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Third Deputy Chair of the committee of the whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hoy, Pat (L)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	
Jaczek, Helena (L)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Brampton–Springdale	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (ND)	Welland	New Democratic Party House leader / leader parlementaire du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Kular, Kuldip (L)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (L)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (L)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (L)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (ND)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah</b> (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Children and Youth Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mauro, Bill (L)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (L)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted</b> (L)	Ancaster–Dundas– Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
McNeely, Phil (L)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (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	
Miller, Paul (ND)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John</b> (L)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Carol (L)	Huron–Bruce	
Moridi, Reza (L)	Richmond Hill	
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Naqvi, Yasir (L)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (L)	Sault Ste. Marie	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (L)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b>	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie
Prue, Michael (ND)	Beaches–East York	
<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (L)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (L)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Runciman, Robert W. (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Leader of the Official Opposition, Opposition House leader / Chef de l'opposition officielle, leader parlementaire de l'opposition
Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (L)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (L)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (L)</b>	Nipissing	Minister of Revenue / ministre du Revenu
<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / vice-premier ministre, ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Sorbara, Greg (L)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (L)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (ND)	Toronto–Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship / ministre des Petites Entreprises et de l'Entrepreneuriat
Van Bommel, Maria (L)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b>	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Research and Innovation / ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (L)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Zimmer, David (L)	Willowdale	

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Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Paul Miller  
Bas Balkissoon, Mike Colle, Kim Craiton,  
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**Social Policy / Politique sociale**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vic Dhillon  
Laurel C. Broten, Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo,  
Helena Jaczek, Dave Levac, Shafiq Qadri,  
Khalil Ramal, Laurie Scott, Peter Shurman  
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch







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