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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 16 April 2008**

**Mercredi 16 avril 2008**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 16 April 2008

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 16 avril 2008

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### ORANGEVILLE SWEET ADELINES

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Today, it is my pleasure to stand in the Ontario Legislature to acknowledge a tremendous accomplishment by the Orangeville Sweet Adelines, in my riding of Dufferin–Caledon. On April 12, the Orangeville Sweet Ads won first place, division AA, at the regional competition in Syracuse, New York, for a mid-sized chorus. To win the medal, their two performance numbers were *How Many Hearts Have You Broken* and *I Never Meant to Fall in Love*.

The Orangeville Sweet Adelines' medal is particularly special, because the region they compete in is considered one of the most competitive in the world. Chartered in 1981, under Sweet Adelines International, the group has participated in 24 competitions, but this past weekend was the first time they've risen to the very top.

The group competes with 53 dynamic women under the direction of Pat Vipond. Pat has directed the Orangeville Sweet Adelines since this group was formed, and her energy and leadership must be acknowledged as exceptional.

I'm very proud to congratulate the Orangeville Sweet Adelines for achieving this wonderful accomplishment. If you've never had the opportunity to hear a Sweet Ads chorus, you are missing a unique opportunity to hear excellent barbershop harmony performed by the very best. On April 12, in Syracuse, no one did it better than the Orangeville Sweet Adelines. Congratulations.

#### POVERTY

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Last week, I had the opportunity to participate in a bus tour organized by the United Way of Peel Region. This tour gave me the opportunity to see first-hand the challenges facing Peel as it tries to address the needs of an exploding population that is becoming increasingly ethnically diverse. In fact, more than half of the constituents in my riding of Mississauga–Brampton South are immigrants.

The challenges facing communities like Peel motivated our government to take significant steps toward reducing poverty and improving the quality of life of Ontario

families. In our budget, we have proposed \$135 million to provide better dental care for low-income families, \$32 million to double funding for the student nutrition program, \$1.5 billion in skills and training, increases to Ontario Works and ODSP rates, increasing the Ontario child benefit to \$600 annually per child this year, and we have recently increased the minimum wage.

I'm very proud to be a part of a government that is choosing to address poverty and support social services in Peel. I would like to thank the United Way of Peel and its volunteers for not only hosting the bus tour but also for being on the front line in our war against poverty in Peel.

#### SERVICE ONTARIO

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise in the House today to thank the staff and administration at Rowanwood retirement home in Huntsville for the evacuation of the home, which was engulfed and destroyed by fire on Sunday, April 13. Of the 56 residents, only four were hospitalized for observation and treatment of smoke inhalation. The remainder of the residents are staying at Hidden Valley Resort in Huntsville. I would like to thank the fire services of Muskoka for their speedy response to the emergency, as well as Muskoka Victim Services, the town of Huntsville and residents of Muskoka for their support.

These residents have lost all their possessions, including personal items and government identification. It is a very trying time for them. What I find really odd is that Service Ontario's mandate doesn't allow staff to do more than provide forms to get birth certificates and health cards to these seniors. Apparently, under this government's watch, two and a half years ago the Service Ontario mandate changed: no more hands-on help. Staff are not allowed to help the public fill out forms or file them online. Instead, they may only refer them.

Yet again, this government is more interested in covering its backside than really helping its tax-paying citizens. There are people across this province who cannot read, do not speak English or French, are too ill to complete forms or don't have high-speed technology. These Ontarians need your help. Apparently that doesn't matter. The government's direction is clear: referrals only. Maybe it's time to change the name from Service Ontario to "referrals only Ontario."

### CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION

**Ms. Sophia Aggelonitis:** I had the opportunity to help launch an exciting program that will teach high school students in Hamilton the life-saving skills of CPR. The program is a joint initiative between our government and the Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation of Canada. Through the ACT high school CPR program, students will bring information about heart disease prevention and a heart-healthy lifestyle to their current and future families. They learn how to react in an emergency by calling 911 and administering CPR.

I am proud to support a program that gives youth the skills to save lives at home and in our communities. The program is establishing CPR in high schools across Ontario. Students in Hamilton join more than 700,000 Ontario youths who have already been empowered to save lives. In Hamilton we have 20 participating schools, and we plan on training over 4,400 students per year. According to an Ontario pre-hospital advanced life support study, eight in 10 cardiac arrests occur at home, and citizen CPR can improve survival rates by almost four times. By empowering youth with CPR training, we are helping to increase the citizens' response rate around the province.

Our government is committed to strengthening local level programs that deliver opportunities to make our communities safer for fellow citizens. As we move toward creating a sustained focus on health promotion in the province, the McGuinty government will continue to work with our partners—

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

### ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm pleased to rise in the Legislature today to make a few comments on the OPP presence in the community of Caledonia. The Caledonia conflict has now been going on for just over two years, and each and every step of the way the OPP have become the meat in the sandwich for this government. The OPP have taken criticism in Caledonia—criticism they do not deserve. Shamefully, for over two years we have not seen a visit by the Premier or by the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to support the OPP in Caledonia.

The OPP presence in Caledonia has taken close to \$50 million out of the OPP budget. OPP officers have spent close to 100,000 officer days at Caledonia. Due to these expenses, both financial and with the shifting of resources, services in other areas of the province are being stretched to the limit. We know that this government has taken a "Don't worry, be happy" approach to Caledonia, and tens of millions of dollars per year will continue to flow.

With that in mind, the Progressive Conservative caucus is calling on the McGuinty government to step up to the plate now. Using the federal 2,500 officers program beginning this year, 2008-09, we should add 1,000 new

officers in Ontario over a five-year period. That would allow the OPP an additional 100 officers per year and 500 additional OPP officers at the end of five years.

It is now time for the McGuinty Liberals to assist the OPP and give Commissioner Fantino and his officers the resources they need to work with. The OPP are tired of being the meat in the sandwich at Caledonia for this government.

**1340**

### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Members of the Tibetan community are on a hunger strike at Queen's Park as I speak. You see, they don't see Tibetan human rights as a challenge that needs to be discussed with the perpetrators of the abuses, as the Minister of Trade would have it, or trade missions undertaken while their monks and relatives back in Tibet are being murdered and imprisoned as just business as usual.

Neither do they understand a Premier who states that human rights is a federal responsibility and only discusses it or reveals trade missions when the glare of the world media is upon him. They don't condone a Premier who refuses to admit the press when meeting with trade delegations from China. Refusing freedom of the press is what the Chinese government has done to Tibet.

Tibetan Ontarians have three demands: that the borders of their own country be open to journalists; that the political incarceration and murder of Tibetans cease; that the Chinese government meet with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama.

Why won't the Minister of Trade and the Premier of their own province, Dalton McGuinty, ask the Chinese consul and the Chinese government to meet these modest demands? Why don't the Premier and the Minister of Trade care about Tibetan human rights?

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I rise in this House today to speak about a wonderful event that I took part in with my good friend Minister Bentley this past weekend at White Oaks Mall in London called Think Global: Act Local. This event showcased many different companies and groups in the London area that are doing their part to limit their ecological footprint and help others become environmentally friendly.

Mr. Bentley and I had the chance to meet and speak with our constituents and raise awareness of the many ways that we can do our part and reduce waste. The companies and organizations at this event were handing out many energy-saving and environmentally friendly items such as evergreen seedlings and energy efficient light bulbs. The bulbs will, on average, save \$50 in hydro costs in the lifetime of the bulb and reduce 315,000 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases. By using these bulbs, we are reducing 1,400,000 kilowatt-hours of energy used.

I would like to take this time and thank Mr. Hans Schreff from London Hydro for donating the light bulbs. I would also like to thank Mrs. Harper, a teacher from my riding. I had the pleasure of presenting her with a basket of evergreen seedlings to plant trees at their school and help do their part to make London a cleaner and greener city.

### MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I rise in the House today to highlight how this government's municipal infrastructure investment initiative, or MIII, will be helping municipalities in my riding of Ajax-Pickering build stronger and more resilient foundations for the future. The MIII will let communities decide where they need help to renew essential infrastructure.

As you know, the McGuinty government announced \$300 million for MIII last fall and then added an additional \$150 million to help meet the response that was met. Together with municipal contributions, the total MIII investment in local infrastructure improvements exceeds \$676 million.

I was quite pleased when I heard that in my riding the town of Ajax received \$655,350 for the construction of Millers Trail North and that the city of Pickering will receive \$1 million for the expansion of the Pickering Recreation Complex. This will also be a great benefit to my good friend and colleague from Pickering-Scarborough East. Because the town of Ajax and the city of Pickering are being provided with the funding now, they can get these projects under way for the upcoming construction season.

I know I'm not the only one in the House who is pleased with the MIII. Because of this funding, there are 101 new roads and bridges; 600 new water and sewer plants; 42 projects involving community centres, libraries and arenas; and 40 other projects all across the province. These will create jobs.

It is with this kind of smart, sound investment that this government will continue to ensure Ontario's communities—

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

### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** I am pleased to speak about a very important event that is taking place here today. It's the fourth annual Premier's summit on agri-food.

We are once again bringing together leaders from across Ontario's agri-food industry to continue a dialogue on the challenges and issues facing this sector. The theme of this year's summit is Buy Ontario, and participants are discussing the opportunities for producing, processing and marketing local food to Ontario's consumers.

With the recent budget announcement of \$56 million over four years for the Pick Ontario freshness strategy,

the McGuinty government will continue our commitment to meet consumer demand for fresh, Ontario-grown food.

With the innovation, creativity and unique partnerships that have been established and nurtured over the past four years at the Premier's summit, we will continue to build awareness among Ontario's consumers of the broad range, high quality and freshness of Ontario products.

A highlight of the summit is the Premier's awards for agri-food innovation. These awards are part of a \$2.5-million, five-year program that recognizes innovators who contribute to the success of Ontario's food economy.

On behalf of Minister Dombrowsky, I would like to invite all members of the House to join us for a reception with our agri-food stakeholders, beginning at 3:45 in room 247, where you can expect to find some really great Ontario-grown food. Remember: Local is the new global.

### TABLING OF SESSIONAL PAPERS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table the 2006 annual report of the Chief Election Officer of Ontario, and the report on the election returns with statistics from the record of the 2007 provincial general election.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Did I win?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** You're here, aren't you?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Oh, okay.

### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated April 16, 2008, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to standing order 106(e)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Pursuant to standing orders 59(a) and 60(a), I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on estimates, on the estimates selected and not selected by the standing committee for consideration.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Mr. Hudak, from the standing committee on estimates, presents the committee's report as follows:

Pursuant to standing order 59, your committee has selected the estimates (2008-09) of the following ministries and offices for consideration:

Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, seven hours;  
 Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, eight hours;  
 Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 10 hours;  
 Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, five hours;  
 Ministry of Research and Innovation, seven hours;  
 Ministry of Labour, eight hours;  
 Ministry of Energy, seven hours and 30 minutes;  
 Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, seven hours and 30 minutes;  
 Ministry of Finance, 10 hours;  
 Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, five hours;  
 Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, seven hours;  
 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; eight hours.

Pursuant to standing order 60, the estimates (2008-09) of the following ministries and offices not selected for consideration are deemed passed by the committee and reported to the House in accordance with terms of the standing order and are deemed to be received and concurred in:

Ministry of the Attorney General, 3.01—ministry administration.

**Interjection:** Dispense.

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

Pursuant to standing order 60(b), the report of the committee is deemed to be received and the estimates of the ministries and offices named therein as not being selected for consideration by the committee are deemed to be concurred in.

*Report deemed received.*

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE POLICY

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on justice policy and move its adoption. It's dealing with Bill 16, An Act to amend Christopher's Law (Sex Offender Registry).

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Mr. Leal, from the standing committee on justice policy, presents the committee's report as follows and moves its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 16, An Act to amend Christopher's Law (Sex Offender Registry), 2000 / Projet de loi 16, Loi modifiant la Loi Christopher de 2000 sur le registre des délinquants sexuels.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

1350

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### DAY NURSERIES AMENDMENT ACT, 2008 LOI DE 2008 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES GARDERIES

Mr. Lalonde moved first reading of the following bill:  
 Bill 60, An Act to amend the Day Nurseries Act to allow more children to be cared for in rural areas / Projet de loi 60, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les garderies afin de permettre que des soins soient fournis à un plus grand nombre d'enfants dans les régions rurales.

**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?

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** The bill provides that persons legally entitled to care for children without a licence under the act may care for as many as three additional children during after-school hours without being in breach of the licence requirement of the act, if the premises where the children are cared for are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. I just remind the members once again that on the introduction of bills, it is to be a short statement. The issue of dealing with the detail of the bill is best left for private members' business. But I will work with the Clerk's table to provide clarification for everyone on the introduction of bills.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2008, for the purpose of considering government business.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1354 to 1359.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** All those in favour will rise one at a time to be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia  
Albanese, Laura

Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob

McNeely, Phil  
Milloy, John

Arthurs, Wayne	Dickson, Joe	Mitchell, Carol
Balkissoon, Bas	Duguid, Brad	Moridi, Reza
Bartolucci, Rick	Duncan, Dwight	Naqvi, Yasir
Bentley, Christopher	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Pendergast, Leeanna
Best, Margaret	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Gravelle, Michael	Ramal, Khalil
Broten, Laurel C.	Hoy, Pat	Sandals, Liz
Brown, Michael A.	Jaczek, Helena	Smith, Monique
Bryant, Michael	Kular, Kuldip	Smitherman, George
Cansfield, Donna H.	Kwinter, Monte	Sorbara, Greg
Caplan, David	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Van Bommel, Maria
Carroll, Aileen	Leal, Jeff	Watson, Jim
Chan, Michael	Levac, Dave	Wilkinson, John
Colle, Mike	Mangat, Amrit	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Craitor, Kim	Matthews, Deborah	Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** All those opposed?

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Prue, Michael
Bisson, Gilles	Klees, Frank	Runciman, Robert W.
Chudleigh, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Savoline, Joyce
DiNovo, Cheri	MacLeod, Lisa	Shurman, Peter
Dunlop, Garfield	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
Elliott, Christine	Martiniuk, Gerry	Wilson, Jim
Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Paul	Yakabuski, John
Hillier, Randy	Munro, Julia	
Horwath, Andrea	O'Toole, John	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 51; the nays are 31.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I declare the motion carried.

*Agreed to.*

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### SEAT BELTS

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I rise in the House today to raise awareness about a very important day that is of interest to all of us. Today is the launch of our annual spring seat belt campaign, which runs until April 27.

Earlier today, I had the great pleasure of attending a kickoff event where I was joined by many of Ontario's road safety partners, parents and caregivers, who are doing their part to help keep our roads among the safest in North America. Included in that group was Sergeant Cam Woolley of the OPP.

Road safety does not just happen. It takes commitment and determination from our community partners, road safety advocates and government.

With more than 93% of us buckling up, Ontario is ranked fourth in Canada for seat belt usage. This is above the national average. This is good news, but we must do more to reach out to those who are not getting the message.

Just over 30 years ago, Ontario was the first province to make seat belts mandatory. Since then, many road safety measures have been introduced to keep our families and communities safe. The McGuinty government introduced our one person, one seat belt law, which

requires every occupant in a motor vehicle to buckle up properly.

We made child booster seats mandatory and require all children under the age of eight to be safely secured in their child car seats every time, no matter how short the drive is.

We targeted drinking drivers by increasing sanctions for repeat offenders and enabling the courts to seize vehicles from people who continue to drive drunk.

We cracked down on street racing and stunt driving.

We are protecting police while in the line of duty on Ontario roads by making their vehicles more visible, especially at night.

As of January 1, 2008, we require every school bus to be equipped with a safety-crossing arm. We have made sure that the owner of any vehicle that illegally passes a stopped school bus faces charges, regardless of who is driving at the time.

And we've increased several fines for drivers who do not obey the laws.

These are just some examples of our government's action that demonstrate our commitment to improving road safety.

Unfortunately, traffic collisions kill nearly 800 people each year in Ontario—nearly one third of those killed were not wearing seat belts. Ontario's annual spring seat belt campaign is a great opportunity to get our message out and to remind drivers and passengers to buckle up.

This year, as in the past, we are reminding parents and caregivers to make sure their child safety seats and booster seats are properly installed. We know kids are safer in child car safety seats and booster seats, yet more than 10% of children under the age of eight who are involved in a fatal collision were not protected by a seat belt, child car safety seat or booster seat.

Child car seat inspection clinics, such as the one I attended this morning, and similar sessions across Ontario, help keep our kids safe. Campaigns are taking place around the province to safeguard not only us, but our most important asset—Ontario's children.

Our government will continue to work closely with child and road safety advocates to help spread the word that seat belts, child safety seats and booster seats save lives.

As the warmer weather approaches, let us all remember to take a few minutes to make sure everyone is buckled up and safely secured, so that we all reach our destinations.

I'm confident that every member of this House wants to improve road safety all year round. In fact—if I may deviate momentarily from the text of this—one thing that I have noticed in my time in the Legislature is that when members come together on an issue, one of the areas we see that happening in most often is in traffic and road safety. I commend all members of the House for being part of this in one way or another.

So let us all take this message with us, and help spread the word: Buckle up. It's the law.

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

## SEAT BELTS

**Mr. Frank Klees:** On behalf of the PC caucus, I want to express our support for the spring seat belt campaign. As the minister indicated, we are all in support of doing whatever we can do to improve road safety.

I want to also give credit to the support that has been given to this annual campaign by the partners: the Ontario Safety League, St. John Ambulance and, of course, the police services across the province.

Cam Woolley was mentioned—always a strong spokesperson for road safety. I want to give very special credit to the York Regional Police, who, for the last number of years, have taken this very seriously and have launched a very strong seat belt campaign every spring.

I want to also share with the House the results of that campaign for 2007, and I want to challenge not only the people of York region but residents across the province to improve on those compliance results that we have a record of today.

In York region for 2007, the results from Markham, Vaughan and Newmarket were 94% compliance. For King, East Gwillimbury and Richmond Hill, it was 95%. For Whitchurch-Stouffville and Georgina, it was 97%.

I am pleased to say, as the representative for Aurora, that Aurora's compliance rate was 98%. So while I want to congratulate my constituents for their compliance rate, I want to speak to those 2% who are not yet complying. I want to encourage them to get with the program and, as the minister said, buckle up.

I want to speak, however, to the Attorney General. I want to say to him that all reports that I have from Newmarket court, which I am told is ground zero for non-processing of tickets because of a lack of resources in that courthouse—I'm told that tickets that have been issued for seat belts are bargained out in most cases; they are never enforced.

In fact, where an individual has two or three charges, in most cases it was the seat belt tickets that were bargained out of the process. This is a serious problem. I want to ask the Minister of Transportation to have this discussion with his colleague the Attorney General and ensure that our courts are properly resourced.

**1410**

The minister made reference to a number of pieces of legislation that have been introduced to improve school bus safety. We support that. What we don't support, however, is the fact that the government has failed to properly fund transportation within our school system. So I speak to the Minister of Education, and I ask her to take this issue seriously. The Minister of Transportation has recently completed a safety blitz in which 12 school buses were pulled off the road for non-compliance with safety standards. On the one hand, we have to improve compliance; on the other hand, it comes down to the funding priority of this government. Our school bus operators want to comply, and we have been hearing for many years that the lack of funding is making it impossible for many operators to maintain their buses to the

standards that are demanded. At this point in time, we call on the Minister of Education to do her responsibility—and she's not listening. She has her back turned to me at this point. Clearly, she doesn't consider it a priority.

The fact is, if, as the minister stated, we in this House consider road safety a priority, this is where the priority of this government should be. Ensure, members of cabinet, that the proper resources are allocated to the Minister of Transportation so that she can transfer the appropriate funding to school districts across the province and envelope that funding to make sure that it's not then bargained away within the school board to other areas that are shorted by the Minister of Education. That's the official opposition's position.

## SEAT BELTS

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I always look forward to a statement from the Minister of Transportation, who is also one of the deans of this Legislature. He said something at the end of his presentation that I have to agree with, and that is that all members of this assembly in all parties have always been four-square behind making sure that we make our roads safer. If it was an NDP government, a Conservative government or a Liberal government, everybody has taken that responsibility because we know in the end that we do what we have to do in this place. We can make our highways safer and save lives in the end, and that's what it's all about. I say to the minister, I agree with you on that point.

But I want to deviate a bit and talk about road safety, because I know that the minister knows well that yes, it's important that we wear seat belts, but when you're running down Highway 11 and it's full of potholes because it hasn't been paved because we don't have the money to fix that road, it's a pretty rough ride. I just say to the minister across the way, there are all kinds of roads, either provincial or municipal, that are not getting the funding that they need in order to make sure that they're maintained to the standard that this province has taken for granted for so many years. I say that under the watch of this government and under the watch of the previous government, road maintenance has really gone to heck in a handbasket when it comes to making sure that we make our roads safe.

**Interjection:** Heck in a handbasket?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I couldn't say the other one.

**Interjection:** Hell in a handbasket.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I couldn't say the other one, brothers.

**Interjection:** Hansard has it.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** There they go. I'm being heckled by the opposition. This is pretty good.

I just want to say that when it comes to municipal roads, there is a real problem. You know as well as I do that in St. Catharines, Timmins, Welland and places in between like Hamilton, municipalities are struggling. They're having a problem trying to fix the potholes in

their municipalities and doing what needs to be done in order to deal with the increasing traffic in our municipalities. Heck, in the city of Timmins, we now have traffic jams because of what's happening in the mining industry—not because the government has done something particularly well, but because the price of gold is \$1,000 an ounce. We have more car and truck traffic causing congestion on our roads. Cities across this province are struggling trying to figure out how they can maintain the roads and how they can deal with the issue of traffic.

But Minister, I want to say that you know I have the passion for making the bridges of Ontario safe. You know as well as I do that we have a real problem in this province, as we saw in the province of Quebec. If you don't do the work that needs to be done to maintain bridges, eventually it becomes an issue of public safety. I brought to the attention of this House and to you on a number of occasions this week the issue of making sure that we either upload the responsibility for maintaining bridges for communities under 100,000, such as Quebec has done, or we take the opposite approach and provide infrastructure funding so it happens.

You saw what happened in Latchford: The bridge fell. You saw what happened in Chatham. You saw what happened in the city of Timmins, with Highway 67. Those bridges basically failed. Why? Because we don't have the money to maintain them.

I say to the government across the way, you have a choice. You either do nothing, which is unacceptable—that's what's happening so far—or you say, "I'm going to give you the infrastructure dollars to make it happen." Your colleague sitting behind you certainly isn't doing that. Or you say, "I'm going to upload to the province the responsibility for maintaining bridges for municipalities under 100,000."

So I say to the minister across the way, yes, we agree: Buckle up is a good campaign and it will save lives. But at the end of the day, if you want to make our roads safer, it's also about maintaining a good road infrastructure, something that is desperately needed in this province.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No response to the response, Minister of Transport.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I want to thank the members for their co-operation in the introduction of guests. We certainly welcome guests and we've streamlined the process, but I just ask, to keep the process moving along, that we hold our applause until the end, after I read all the introductions. Thank you.

On behalf of the member for Thornhill, welcome to the grade 5 class from York Hill elementary school. Today they were in the east and west galleries.

On behalf of the member for Beaches–East York, Mr. Nick Volk from Habitat for Humanity, in the west members' gallery.

Welcome, on behalf of page Adam Laskaris, his mother, Kathryn Laskaris, who's in the east members' gallery.

On behalf of the member for Simcoe North, Ms. Angela Lyons from Joyland Beach, in the west members' gallery.

On behalf of the member for Wellington–Halton Hills, welcome page Laura Shum's mother, Jane Shum, and her family friend George Chow.

On behalf of the member for Chatham–Kent–Essex, I'd like to welcome former MPP and member of the 35th Parliament, His Worship, the mayor of Chatham–Kent, Randy Hope.

Welcome our guests today to Queen's Park.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### LEGISLATIVE REFORM

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** My question is for the Premier and it has to do with the rule changes. I know the Premier's counting on this being inside baseball, that the public won't understand or care, but we think they will understand that this is a very cynical move designed to further undermine the role of the opposition, to diminish the already diminished significance of private members' legislation, curtail the legislative process and further minimize or marginalize news coverage of this place.

Premier, the rule changes your majority plans to impose are an affront to parliamentary democracy. I ask you to stop this process and refer the issue to a legislative committee. Will you do that?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I am, of course, pleased to receive the question. You won't be surprised to learn that I strongly disagree with the perspective brought by my honourable colleague in this regard.

Let's understand what we're talking about here. We're talking about changing a part of the tradition that's been around here since 1893.

What we're proposing, specifically, is to expand our work hours by 35%. We're talking about expanding our private member opportunities by 50%. And we are all but eliminating evening sittings, which we think is in keeping with our desire to make this a more family friendly workplace. We think that represents progress.

1420

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** I think that response ties into my initial comments, that the Premier believes the public won't understand this issue or won't care, and that's by going on with the explanations he just provided, without knowing the facts. Those of us who operate and work in this place know the real facts. This government, in its usual heavy-handed, disdainful approach to the opposition parties, ignored not only our reasonable efforts at compromise but also a number of very solid options provided by the Clerk's office. This whole process was designed not to improve this place, not to make it family

friendly, not to bring the rules into the 21st century. No, it was designed for one purpose only: to make life easier for the Liberal government by eroding scrutiny and accountability. These changes are reprehensible, and I ask the Premier to halt the process and refer the question of rule changes to a legislative committee.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I had the opportunity earlier today to speak with a group of representatives of various farm organizations. I'm not sure I could ever muster up the courage to tell them that we are, as a sacrifice now, about to begin work in this place at 9 o'clock in the morning. In our original proposal, we talked about working on Fridays. They said no to that. They said, beyond that—

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** That's an embarrassment. How can you demean your members like this? You should turn around and apologize for that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Niagara West—Glanbrook will come to order. Premier?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** The original proposal was that we sit on Fridays, and the opposition said no, and we agreed to that. We also proposed that we begin question period at 9:30 in the morning, and they also said no to that. So we've changed that to 10:45. They asked that we review this, and I think that's a good idea. We'll have a legislative committee review it during the course of the summer to make sure we have this right. Again, I think it constitutes real progress.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** The Premier talks about negotiations and discussions; that's like the executioner talking to the prisoner: "How do you want to die? Is it electrocution or hanging?" There were no meaningful negotiations, just a hollow exercise designed to provide cover.

I want to say that this process is even more offensive because the Premier's party has taken advantage of the very sincere and genuine efforts of the member for Nepean—Carleton, a new MPP and young mother, attempting to make this place more family friendly. You've used her heartfelt concerns as a smokescreen to bring in harsh and arbitrary rule changes that not only do not benefit members with young families but make life more difficult and this place less attractive.

Premier, I ask you once again: Stop demeaning the members of this Legislative Assembly and refer this issue to a legislative committee.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I just don't see how starting work here at 9 o'clock in the morning is such a tremendous sacrifice. We only sit about 100 days of the year. If you consider the challenges faced by a family living in the 905, for example, where the parents have to work in downtown Toronto, I can tell you that they make some tremendous sacrifices for more than just 100 days of the year to come in to work. I think it's time for us to become more in sync with life at the beginning of the 21st century, I think it's more appropriate for us to work an expanded week where we work 35% more, and I like the idea of creating more opportunities for private members' initiatives.

## LEGISLATIVE REFORM

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The government wanted me to speak, so here I am. I was prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt on making Queen's Park more family friendly—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The question is to—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The Premier, Mr. Speaker.

But this proposal is an insult to those of us who have been working hard, on a non-partisan basis, to make Queen's Park and politics more attractive to women raising children, particularly for those of us outside Toronto, which I would have expected he would know, supposedly coming from the city of Ottawa.

To the Premier: Why did your House leader ignore a unanimous call to create an all-party committee to make Queen's Park more family friendly, then go behind our backs and leak it to the press—cabinet-friendly, not family-friendly, changes to the standing orders?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the House leader.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I want to thank the member for her question and for her important participation in this debate.

Just to remind the House, after the Premier wrote to the official opposition, the third party leader and the House leaders, the next day, the member for Nepean—Carleton said, "I'm encouraged that the government is thinking outside the box and looking at ways to make the Legislature more family-friendly." This is more debate, more private members' business, more scrutiny and opportunity for scrutiny after question period. I think that this is in the best interests of the Legislature, and we will let the debate here begin.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I noticed that the Premier wouldn't answer a woman's question, but might I remind—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I just ask the honourable member—when I made the comment yesterday about trying to bring civility to this, I directed it at all members. I just ask that we try and be conscious of the language we use.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's just so hard. because they have accused me of wanting to be at home baking cookies. Then they decide to thump their chest when I ask a question, point fingers and raise their voices, and now they won't answer my questions.

But might I remind them, they lost four women last year? Marie Bountrogianni, Jennifer Mossop, Mary Anne Chambers and Judy Marsales decided not to run in this place again. The Premier knows he had unanimous consent, all-party consent, to make this chamber work in a better way so we could keep more women in this Legislature. Instead, we got a family-friendly plan that is not family friendly at all.

Will he put the all-party panel to work so we can correct his mistakes, get this right and truly make the Legislature more family friendly, not —

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. The government House leader.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** Well, it was certainly as a result of concerns expressed about the timing of when question period might start—originally it was proposed 9:30 a.m.—that we moved it to 10:45 a.m.

I don't understand what the member's objection to this is exactly and what it is exactly about this proposal that she objects to. Of course, that's the kind of thing that would be considered over the course of the summer, after this it would be—while it's being considered by the committee.

I would say to all members of this House that I realize it does involve some change here, and I realize every other standing order rule change involved significant and volatile debate. I look forward to having this debate in this House, as we are proposing more debate time, more private members' business, and normal-working-hour days and no more night-sitting fright nights.

**Ms. MacLeod:** I wish he had responded to the series of letters that I sent him requesting that this committee actually be struck and started, but he didn't. He chose not to; he chose instead to leak what he was planning to do to the press. That's where we always find things out.

This penalizes members who have children, who live outside the GTA, by limiting our commute options on Mondays and on Thursdays by giving a free pass to his cabinet, while the rest of us debate private members' business. We'll never know again because of the moving target which is their plan, this four days of inconsistencies and uncertainties.

Will they stand up? Will they work with the opposition so that we can truly make this a family-friendly place, rather than just listening to what they have to say a day later in the press? Will they stand up and do something about it and work with us? We'll work with them—

*Interjections.*

1430

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I agree with the Hamilton Spectator. It said that the government "is on the right track in his proposed modernization of how business is done at Queen's Park. It's the sort of approach that's needed to work toward remedying the gender imbalance at the provincial level"—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** These proposed changes—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member for Niagara West–Glanbrook, I've warned you on a number of occasions. This will be your last warning. Thank you.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** The editorial goes on to say, "The proposed changes are a small, but meaningful step in the right direction and could have a positive impact on the willingness of women to run for provincial office," says the Spectator.

This involves more debate time. That has to be positive. It involves more private members' business, and that has to be positive. It involves, in fact, more

opportunity for media and public scrutiny after question period before stories are filed, and that's—

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

#### LEGISLATIVE REFORM

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is also for the Premier. The reality is that these changes to the rules governing the way this Legislature works are anything but family friendly. So my question to the Premier is this: How can you possibly call these rules family friendly when members, particularly from outside the Toronto area, will now have to come in for sure on a Sunday night to participate in Monday morning debate and cut short their time with their families? How can the Premier call this change family friendly?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, we're talking about the hours during which we sit when we sit for about 100 days of the year. Many other folks have got to get up and attend a place of work some 250 days of the year. We're talking about an initiative here that will mean more debate time; we're increasing it by 35%. We're talking about creating more opportunity for private members' initiatives, which we think will enhance the quality of public policy that comes from here. We're also talking about effectively eliminating night sittings, save and except for the final eight days of a session when the government could elect to hold sittings in the evening at that time. Again, I think that, overall, this will help us to have work practices that are more in keeping with the world around us. I think it represents real progress.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The reality is that the very process leading up to these changes was anything but family friendly and anything but democratic. The family-friendly committee that was supposed to meet in a collegial way and talk about these issues never even met. I know, because I'm a member of that committee, and we have yet to have a meeting. Will the Premier now admit in front of this entire Legislature that the changes that are supposed to be family friendly and increase democracy in fact do the exact opposite?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We had originally proposed that we sit on Fridays. The opposition said no. I think there is good reason behind that, because it allows us to be in our ridings. We also suggested that question period should begin earlier in the day, specifically at 9:30 in the morning. There was opposition to that as well. So we said, "All right, let's extend it then to later in the morning, to 10:45." There was also concern about evening sittings. You may know, Speaker, that in the past—well, at this point in time the government has the option to elect to hold evening sittings at any time. We're now agreeing to restrict evening sittings so they can no longer take place except possibly during the last eight days of any one particular session. We think, again, that it introduces more stability. We think—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The reality is that the most anti-democratic aspect of these rules changes is in fact the moving of question period to the 10:45 a.m. slot. The reality is, question period is the absolute, most important accountability mechanism in the British parliamentary system. That's the reality. It's not the debate; it's the question period.

Your changes, though, or the changes that this government is introducing, reduce the time for researchers and writers and staff to prepare opposition questions for question period. What could be more anti-democratic than that? Will the Premier admit that in fact these rule changes that are supposed to be family friendly are in fact family friendly to only one group, and that is the Premier and his cabinet?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, I can't accept that. I spent some considerable time in opposition myself, served as leader of the official opposition for an extended tour, and I can tell you that I just can't accept that you can't get up in the morning, find out what the latest news is, and if you want to pursue that, develop a line of questioning, get the facts necessary and prepare your arguments. I simply cannot accept that that cannot be done before 10:45 in the morning.

I said something at the outset which may have left the wrong impression. I don't want to take away from the important work that takes place outside this Legislature during non-legislative hours. We may be here for 100 days of the year, but I think the single, most important shared responsibility we have is to look after our constituents back in the ridings. But I think when we do sit, it's time for us to sit at more reasonable hours. We're talking about more debate time, more private members' initiatives and—

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

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is for the Premier as well, but it's on a different topic. Why is the McGuinty government refusing to hold a separate inquest into the March 2006 murder of eight-year-old Jared Osidacz at the hands of his violent father, who was a known and convicted perpetrator of domestic violence?

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

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** Listen, as a father and a grandfather, I can only imagine how tragic these circumstances are. I have to be perfectly honest, I want the family to find out the answers. I don't think there's a person in this House who doesn't want the family to find out all the answers. The chief coroner of Ontario has decided that there will be an inquest into the father's death, and all questions surrounding Jared's death will be explored.

I don't want to presuppose the findings of that, but I have to be perfectly honest with you: I think we should have confidence in this process, in this inquest and look at the recommendations.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Back to the Premier: Bill 89 was passed unanimously in this Legislature 19 months ago, and it was supposed to guarantee Julie Craven standing at a stand-alone inquest into Jared's death, and we know that hasn't taken place. The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services has the absolute power, and we know he does, to order an inquest into all of the systems that failed Julie and failed Jared. Will he call that inquest and do the right thing by this murdered child?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** The member is correct: All sides of the House supported Bill 89. There's absolutely no question of that. The intent of the bill was supported by all three parties.

I trust the system. I trust that the inquest will be a thorough inquest. I look forward to the recommendations. I can only hope that the questions the family has are answered. And no, I'm not going to overrule a coroner's direction before the coroner has had the opportunity to hold the inquest. Certainly we all hope that the mother and the grandfather will have those questions answered with this inquest.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Back to the Premier: Section 22 of the Coroners Act says that the minister can call an inquest on any matter, "Where the minister has reason to believe that a death has occurred in Ontario in circumstances that warrant the holding of an inquest...." Does this not warrant the holding of an inquest?

Every member of this place knows that having an inquest for Jared is the right thing to do. It's what this Legislature actually wanted when we all unanimously supported Bill 89, so shame on you if you're not prepared to do that.

Jared's mom and granddad are here today. Will the Premier do the right thing: Respect section 22 and have his minister do the right thing by this family and order that separate stand-alone inquest into Jared's death? Or is this government completely heartless when it comes to murdered children and victims of domestic violence?

1440

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** No, I'm not going to order an inquest at this time. We are going to allow the process to unfold. The chief coroner has certainly given assurance that all the questions into Jared's death will be answered. I look forward to the recommendations from that inquest. You know, I have to be perfectly honest with you: I have faith in the system. I don't know that we should be playing politics with this. We have a mother and a grandfather—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Can I just ask—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** This is the final warning to the member from Durham. Some of the comments that are coming out of your mouth are not acceptable to civility. The members may not be hearing them; I am hearing them. This is your final warning, and if you persist I will ask that you be escorted from the chamber.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** On a point of order: What I'm questioning is, the minister is saying, "To be perfectly honest—"

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** That's not a point of order. I just ask that you be cautious with your words. Minister?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** I want to assure the mother and the grandfather that, if standing is granted, my ministry officials will do everything possible to work with you through the financial application so that there will be complete representation of the family's concerns.

#### TOBACCO CONTROL

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** My question is for the Minister of Health Promotion. On both sides of this chamber, we recognize the importance of educating our children on the dangers of smoking; on this side, aboriginal children too.

In November 2007, the Canadian Convenience Stores Association commissioned a study through their We Expect ID program. It has been called the butt study, because researchers visited 55 schools and collected thousands of cigarette butts to analyze. In Durham, 28% of cigarette butts found around schools were illicit, it was 36% in Peel, with Mississauga as high as 44%, and in the minister's backyard here in Toronto, 23%.

Can the Minister of Health Promotion inform the people of Ontario why this government believes ignoring the ongoing sale of illicit cigarettes and the uneven application of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act is somehow beneficial to the health of our school children?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** I thank the member opposite for the question. As the Minister of Health Promotion, the part of the question relating to contraband and illegal cigarettes does not belong with my ministry, but I am going to address the issue relating to my Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which is aimed at all people in Ontario, including aboriginal people.

As many of you are aware, and I believe the member opposite is also aware, 13,000 Ontarians die each year from tobacco smoking. Tobacco smoking is the number one preventable cause of death in Ontario. Every year, tobacco smoking costs our province \$1.6 billion. That's why I was recently at an aboriginal youth summit talking to aboriginal—

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

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** It would be nice to get a straight answer. The minister touts herself as a great guardian of Ontario's youth. She repeats this mantra daily. But under her watch, contraband cigarettes, without any government inspection, product testing or review, are finding their way onto our streets; it's a fact. These illicit cigarettes are often being sold for as low as a dollar a package to school children right out of the trunks of cars—no proof of ID, no questions asked.

This government cannot claim that the Smoke-Free Ontario Act is a success until it acts to eliminate these

illegal cigarette operations that are targeting school children in Ontario. When will this minister have this act fully enforced against all illegal operations and stop the illegal sale of cigarettes to Ontario's school children?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** I remind the member that this matter belongs with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and I will refer the question to him.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** You should have referred it right at the moment. New question, please.

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** She needs an opportunity to answer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Do you choose to answer the question?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** Okay. I will go back. Yes, I will answer the question. As I said earlier, the issue relating to contraband cigarettes is not within the purview of the Ministry of Health Promotion; it is within the purview of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I am certain the member opposite is well aware of that. However, I am going to repeat: Within my ministry, we have increased by a significant amount the number of people who are benefiting from the programs that we have in this ministry to reduce smoking.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Minister of Transportation, as I've made some comments about civility and language, this is your final warning as well.

#### POVERTY

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. The Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, also known as ISARC, is today having a forum entitled Eradicating Poverty in the 21st Century. Social assistance rates are at an all-time low in Ontario, tens of thousands of families languish on affordable housing wait lists, children go to school hungry and our First Nations families live in Third World conditions with little or no support from this government. At speech time, lip service was given to ISARC forum participants, but concrete solutions were glaringly absent. The Minister of Children and Youth Services claimed that some families got a 27% improvement in their benefits under this government. Exclusive of inflation, nearly every penny is federal money. Will the minister admit that any benefits that have accrued to these families have next to nothing to do with her ministry or the McGuinty government?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The Minister of Community and Social Services, please.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'm very glad to answer that question. I think that this government has been listening to our partners in the community. Since 2003, we have made improvements to the betterment of children and their families. We have to remember: There are poor children in our communities because their parents are poor. We have increased social assistance since 2003 by 9%. The member from the opposition party may

comment, but they have nothing to be proud of from when they were in power.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I will take it from this minister's answer that she is repudiating what her fellow minister had to say on 27%, because you have admitted that in fact it is 9%.

The minister has a lot of nerve—both of them, actually. I don't know of a single ODSP recipient or a family trying to survive on Ontario Works who you would fool with these answers. I don't know whether you fooled anyone in ISARC either. People in ISARC know you still claw back money from poor children. People in ISARC know your ODSP rate increases are less than inflation. People from ISARC know that there's no money in the budget for new housing. When will you and your government come clean and admit that any monies that have accrued to the poor people in this province are entirely from federal monies?

1450

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** With the adoption of the Ontario child benefit, this clawback will stop this coming July. I know that the member opposite wants us to help only the children on social assistance, but we are doing more than that. We are helping all children, including those where the parents have very modest incomes. We will be helping 1.3 million children in Ontario and we will be investing a lot more than either of those two parties did when they were in power. So the low-income family will qualify and will receive monthly benefits, and on the housing side, we are improving also. We will work with our—

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

#### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** My question is to the Minister of Labour. All over the province of Ontario, construction cranes can be seen on busy construction sites building new schools, expanding hospitals and developing new community centres.

As you drive through my riding of Ottawa Centre, there are new commercial and housing developments in neighbourhoods like Centretown and Westboro welcoming new businesses and families to the fine city of Ottawa.

Minister, with all the development occurring in Ontario, safety on construction sites is always a concern. I know that the health and safety of Ontario workers is a top priority for this government. As we enter into the busy construction season, can the minister tell this House about how the Ministry of Labour is working to protect the health and safety of Ontario construction workers?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I want to thank the member for his interest in this area. It is indeed a priority for our government to improve the health and safety of workplaces right across this province, in particular when we talk about the construction sector.

I'm proud to say that since forming government in 2003, we have set ambitious goals to hire 200 new health and safety inspectors and to reduce injuries by 20%. On the hiring of the inspectors, I'm proud to say that we've reached our goal of hiring 200 new health and safety inspectors. I can also tell you that approximately a third of those health and safety inspectors are working very diligently in the construction area, improving the health and safety of construction sites right across this province.

I am looking forward to Monday. On Monday, I'll be speaking at the Industrial Accident Prevention Association's annual meeting, where I'll be reporting the results of our initiative to reduce injuries in this province by 20% by the year—

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

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the minister for that information and to commend him and the ministry staff for the excellent work they are doing to ensure that all workers in Ontario are in a safe working environment.

I have met with construction, labour and management groups in my riding on many occasions and I am impressed by their knowledge and level of commitment on the topic of health and safety.

Can the minister tell us how the Ministry of Labour works with the construction sector to improve health and safety throughout the province?

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** Don't be a dilettante, Brad. Praise the member.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Member from Welland.

Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say first and foremost, while we're proud of the progress we've made, much of that progress has been made due to the partnerships that have been formed: partnerships formed by members of safety committees across the province, by businesses, by business owners, by construction operators, and by labour, as well as the Ministry of Labour and our entire government. We're very, very proud of these partnerships, because it's these proud partnerships, these successful partnerships that have led to many of the successes we have seen over the last four years.

The Ontario Construction Secretariat indeed will be here in this Legislature this afternoon, hosting all members of this Legislature. So I invite all members to join them to discuss some of the very important issues to do with the construction industry. We all know this is an important sector in our economy, a sector that I think all sides of the House surely respect.

Working in partnership—

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** For God's sake, Brad, praise the member.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** This is a final warning. The member from Welland, your tone has been a little loud today. This is a final warning to you.

New question.

## NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** To the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs: Last week, I faxed your office a letter addressed to you and I informed you of a potluck planned for the Ontario-government-owned Douglas Creek Estates in Caledonia. It's being held this coming Sunday, April 20, and some of my constituents are concerned that this type of event is provocative and would renew tensions between various groups. Haldimand councillor Craig Grice and resident Dave Brown just finished chronicling the past two years of mayhem at DCE this morning in the media studio.

I also made you aware that April 20 is the second anniversary of the OPP raid at DCE. Aside from the potluck, the agenda features the Oka raid of 1990, the Ipperwash raid of 1995 and a previous RCMP raid at Six Nations.

Minister, have you given the organizers permission to host this kind of event on Ontario government property?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I say to the member that it's a potluck dinner that he wrote me about. He has an objection to a potluck dinner taking place by members of Haudenosaunee Six Nations. I can tell you that the last time a potluck dinner took place on these lands, lands that the member knows very well are right now utterly vacant, members of the broader community, the town-folk of Caledonia, joined the members of Haudenosaunee Six Nations. The member tries to suggest that there's something integrally dangerous about a potluck dinner. I say to the member that I would respectfully disagree. It's a potluck dinner, for goodness' sake.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** You've missed the subtleties of the question. The last time there was a potluck—that was October 15, 2006—all hell broke loose. Large gatherings were held at both Douglas Creek Estates and the Lions parking lot in Caledonia. Two days prior, your predecessor, then-Minister of Natural Resources Ramsay, had discussions with and wrote to the chief representative of the Haudenosaunee Six Nations. He informed them that the province had not provided permission for additional persons to be on the DCE site. He also urged the chief representative to find an alternative location for what they then called a picnic. Keep in mind that this is Ontario-government-owned property. It's taxpayers' land.

I'm asking you, Minister, have you written and urged the organizers—and the precedent has been set—to find an alternative location for this provocation, this potluck?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** The alleged provocation is a potluck dinner. This is a gathering of people who bring food. The member seems to suggest that there's a level of protest activity taking place on those lands right now. That is not the case. The member would suggest, if you looked out at those lands, referred to in the community as the DCE lands, that all hell is breaking loose. Nothing could be further from the truth. Nothing offends the community of Caledonia more than this suggestion made over and over again, that this is some inherently dangerous place where dangerous activities take place.

I say to the member, he doesn't seem to support negotiations between Haudenosaunee Six Nations and the government. He doesn't seem to support a potluck dinner. Is there any doubt that people continue to think that this is the party consistent with the reports in Ipperwash—

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

## SPORTS AND RECREATION FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Promotion de la santé. On Monday, North Bay city council passed a motion calling on the provincial government to provide dedicated funding for sports and recreation facilities and programs to promote physical activities. North Bay is supporting recommendations already sent to the minister by Parks and Recreation Ontario. Recognizing that this is a health promotion issue, North Bay has forwarded the motion to the Minister of Health Promotion. This is exactly what the NDP's Communities at Play proposal is calling for.

Does the Minister of Health Promotion agree with North Bay city council and with Parks and Recreation Ontario that her ministry must provide dedicated funding for sports and recreation?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** I would like to inform the member from the third party that, as the Minister of Health Promotion, I am very cognizant of the value of sports and recreation facilities. As well, as a person who learned to swim as an adult at a public school and had three children who went to school and learned to swim at a public school, I am well aware that school pools are things that we use for recreational activities.

This government has invested over \$136 million in 77 sports and recreational infrastructure-related projects. The member from the third party is well aware that the issue relating to school pools is within the Toronto District School Board's purview.

1500

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I was talking about a motion for North Bay. They don't have any pools in the schools in the north. There has been some money given out for sports and recreation, but those are one-time grants. Parks and Recreation Ontario has already recommended that the government make an immediate minimum investment of \$100 million to a dedicated fund for sports and recreation to promote physical activities. In Sudbury, Mayor Rodriguez also supported the NDP Community at Play proposal.

One of the cornerstones of health promotion is physical activity. Why won't the Ministry of Health Promotion live up to its name and provide dedicated funding for sports and recreation?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** The Ministry of Health Promotion has been involved in many different sports and recreational facilities development, and we continue to be involved in it.

In 2004, we established Active 2010, Ontario's sports and physical activity strategy. Our plan is to get as many

Ontarians active as possible, because we understand the importance of physical activity. In 2008 alone, we invested \$61.5 million in 29 sports and recreational infrastructure projects. We continue to invest in recreational projects. For example, in 2007 this government provided to the riding of Timmins–James Bay \$1.3 million toward swimming pool renovations, basketball courts and arenas.

#### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Mr. Mike Colle:** My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation. Baycrest geriatric health care centre, one of the world's premier academic health science centres focused on aging, is located in my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence. Baycrest is not only leading the way in exceptional research and clinical triumphs, but it enhances the quality of life of our elderly and enriches the lives of our seniors. The researchers and doctors at Baycrest, some of the finest in North America if not the world, have requested that our government assist in the establishment of a new research Centre for Brain Fitness, that could transform how we look at aging and diseases such as Alzheimer's. I would like to ask the minister: What is our government doing to help make this centre a reality?

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** I appreciate the question. I don't think there's anyone in this House who doesn't have a loved one or a friend who in their later years develops, unfortunately, the tragedy of a neurological disorder as the result of aging. But the good news for Ontarians and for the world is that we have one of the finest research institutes in the world at Baycrest, right here in Toronto. I want to thank the member for Eglinton–Lawrence and so many other members of our caucus and from all sides who have decided that it would be worthy that we would invest some \$10 million of the taxpayers' money helping the good people at Baycrest deal with the tragedy of neurological disorders. Just think of a disease like Alzheimer's. They are coming up with innovative new approaches that will allow our doctors to quickly diagnose neurological disorders. That opens up whole new areas of treatment. In our ministry, we believe in making those 21st century investments to make sure that we can meet a growing global plague in regard to neurological disorders for our seniors, that we can do something about it and we can transform the lives of our loved ones.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** This investment in our aging population demonstrates our government's commitment to research and innovation as a means of building a stronger, healthier Ontario by improving our quality of life while producing new tools for diagnosis and treatment that we can market in the world. All over the world, people are coping with the mental effects of aging. The Centre for Brain Fitness at Baycrest will lead to major advances in our ability to identify and administer treatments. I'm very proud that innovations taking place at Baycrest will make

such an important contribution to science and the global economy and enrich the lives of Ontario's seniors.

Minister, can you please explain what the international economic spinoffs are of this investment at Baycrest?

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** In the 20th century, we learned how important it is for us to have healthy hearts. What they've decided or what they're leading us to at Baycrest is the importance of us having a fit brain, that through our life we have to do the same thing that we've done for our hearts, and that will be the transformation in the 21st century.

We've asked the good people at MARS, the medical and related sciences discovery district here in Toronto, to partner with the great researchers at Baycrest and to bring along that commercialization perspective. Why? Because of the aging baby boom, we have more and more people who will be plagued by these diseases, more and more of our friends, our parents and our grandparents who are looking for some hope that they will be able to be quickly diagnosed and that we'll be able to intervene and allow them to enjoy the quality of life.

There's nothing more tragic than to see a loved one who is not able to relate to their own family and friends. So we believe there actually is a global market, that in Toronto at Baycrest we can seize that opportunity—

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

#### SCHOOL CLOSURES

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** To the Minister of Education: I take my role as opposition critic very seriously. In my house and in my career, when we make promises to our children and our community, we keep those promises. My comment is on the example the McGuinty government is setting by refusing to keep its promise to students across this province.

My question to the minister is, when will the students and their families of rural Ontario begin to benefit from your \$550-million announcement and stop heading toward closure and extinction?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Our promise to the children of Ontario is that we were and are restoring publicly funded education in Ontario from the desperate straits that it was in when we came into office in 2003. We have put more than \$4 billion into education. Money has been invested to keep rural schools open. We have a supported schools grant. We have a school foundation grant that guarantees that there will be a principal and a secretary in every school that a board deems viable.

We have 10,000 more students graduating from high school every year. We have 90% of our primary class sizes at 20 students or fewer, and we have students across the province doing, on average, 10 percentage points better on tests. Our literacy rates are up. And the students in Ontario and the people who work in our schools know that they have a government in Ontario that believes in publicly funded education.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** Regardless of all the money that's being thrown at education, the truth is that this minister is firing teachers. It is not the previous government; this minister and the education Premier are firing teachers. Their termination is happening on the watch of the McGuinty government, which has been in power for five years.

The blame game is over. The truth is that the 90 teachers currently fired by the McGuinty government in the Peterborough area will be a drop in the bucket if the \$550 million that you promised rural communities doesn't arrive soon.

My question is, why does this government refuse to answer the question of when your government will send the \$550 million that you promised to rural schools?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** This question about the \$550 million—we are committed to \$3.1 billion of investment in education over four years. Rural schools will get that money in the programs and initiatives that we put in place.

Let me talk about when the previous government was in office. Between 1998 and 2003, there was an increase in enrolment of 50,000 students. But do you know that in that period, with an enrolment increase, 500 schools closed across this province? We, on the other hand, are dealing with an enrolment decrease of 90,000 students, and yet we continue to invest in publicly funded education. Investment is up, test scores are up, class sizes are down, and we will continue to support publicly funded education in this province.

1510

### SCHOOL POOLS

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** To the Minister of Health Promotion: I understand her ministry's responsibility is to promote health. The Malvern pool, and indeed all the pools in our Toronto schools, keep children physically active, swimming, and off the streets. For Toronto parents and grandparents, keeping pools open is a no-brainer. Yet for the minister, and indeed the Premier, it doesn't appear to be their problem or their responsibility. Minister, are parents missing something, or are you?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** To the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think the member opposite, who actually was a member on the Toronto board of education, knows perfectly well that the building of swimming pools in schools is a municipal anomaly around the province. The fact is that swimming pools in municipalities around the province are not located in schools for the most part. There are a few, but those 28 pools outside of Toronto are managed by those school boards.

Since we came into office, this school board has received \$360 million a year more. There is a \$5.4-million grant, a program enhancement grant, that can be applied directly to sports programs, and it is a matter of this board looking at its priorities. I know, for example, there

are more than 90 schools that are not being used, that are not inhabited by kids, and those schools could be leveraged to provide capital dollars to help with the provision of those school pools.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question was to the Minister of Health Promotion, not to the Minister of Education, who used to sing a different tune when she was a school trustee. But today my question is still to the Minister of Health Promotion, whose job it is to promote health. School pools are part of that. It is the ministry's responsibility to protect the investments that have been made to make sure our population stays fit, healthy and out of local hospitals. If the Ministry of Health Promotion won't step in to keep schools open, why does it exist at all?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That song that I sang when I was a school trustee had the backdrop of a very different orchestra. That was the government on the other side of the House which was playing every discordant note that it could find on publicly funded education.

There is nobody in this Legislature who believes in physical fitness more than I do, or the member sitting beside me. It is our belief that we have provided the resources to the Toronto District School Board that it needs to manage its resources. I sincerely hope the Toronto district board of education looks at its priorities, works with the city of Toronto and makes sure that the assets that it needs to keep our kids healthy are kept in place.

### MUNICIPAL FINANCES

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Yesterday's report from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities showed that more than 90% of the Canadians polled by the FCM said that municipal governments are underfunded. From that report, we also learned that Canadians think only health care is more important to them than helping cities and communities with their infrastructure.

My local mayor, Anne Marie DeCicco-Best of London, is a supporter of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and a great advocate for building strong communities. My mayor and local councillors cannot fund municipal infrastructure alone. They need help from both the provincial and federal governments.

Would the minister tell me—

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

**Hon. Jim Watson:** I just want to thank the member. I also, through him, want to thank the mayor of London, because Her Worship the mayor has done some incredible, positive work, particularly in the affordable housing file through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

I'm very proud, as a result of the effective London caucus in this Legislature, that the community of London has benefited to the tune of \$3.3 million in social housing repairs, \$11 million in the MIII fund for the innovation industrial park and \$5.8 to improve municipal roads and bridges. We're uploading the ODSP this year and, starting

next year, the ODB. That's going to save millions of dollars for the municipality of London. We're there to work in partnership with communities like London because we understand that the downloading of the previous government did hurt these municipalities. We're there to help.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I appreciate what the minister has just told us. I know my constituents will be pleased with the investments that this government has made in London. It's going a long way in helping the city repair infrastructure, which we need badly.

But there is another level of government that can help our cities as well, and that's the federal government. That government has a role to play in building safe, strong communities in this province and across the country.

This FCM survey shows that Canadians would have preferred that the federal government invested in cities instead of cutting the GST from 6% to 5%. I know that our provincial government has partnered with the federal government before. I know that when we work together, we are better able to help municipalities.

**Hon. Jim Watson:** Thank you for the question. It's true: When governments are working together, great things can happen in communities across this province and across the country. Our government was proud to have signed the affordable housing program agreement with the previous federal government, which brought \$301 million into the province of Ontario. It has helped to create thousands of new affordable housing units and rent supplements.

Regrettably, the federal program starts to run out next March 31. All of my colleagues—provincial and territorial housing ministers—finally, after two and half years, got a meeting with the federal minister of housing two weeks ago in Gatineau, but we could not even get a commitment for a formal FPT meeting. We need the federal government at the table to help with affordable housing because this is a basic need in a civil society. We call on all members to contact their federal members of Parliament and tell them that housing is a priority—in London, Ottawa, Toronto and the north, throughout Ontario.

#### CORMORANTS

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, the cormorant overpopulation, with a projected growth that could double every five years, is really devastating the fisheries and wildlife value throughout the Great Lakes basin because the managers cannot use all of the control techniques they have. I know that the previous government initiated a five-year study, which is long completed now, that should give the details to allow a more controlled atmosphere to take place.

Minister, will you commit to changing the designation of the cormorants under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act so they can be treated the same as agricultural pest birds such as crows, so that the fish and wildlife managers have the additional population control methods they need to control the cormorant population?

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield:** The member has a really good point. The issue around the cormorant is very significant in this province. You're correct: There was a research study, and it is completed, and we're now going through the science of that.

Having said that, we're really quite prepared to look, concurrently with how we're dealing with the study, at how we manage the cormorants, who are currently having a negative ecological impact on other species, in particular fish. We also know it's having some challenges with vegetation.

We know we can deal with private landowners; they have the opportunity. The MNR is quite prepared to go on a site-by-site basis and look at that negative impact at the same time. Then we'll be able to review that science and be able to look at this in a more holistic approach, because one of our challenges is how to deal with the United States, because it's a migratory bird.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I just want to take this opportunity to welcome some students from St. Joseph's High School in my home community of St. Thomas in the Speaker's gallery today. Welcome.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Speakership has its privileges, Minister.

1520

#### PETITIONS

##### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. Frank Klees:** On the occasion of Pope Benedict XVI's 81st birthday today, I want to salute him on behalf of all Ontarians. I also want to express publicly my gratitude for his support of my private member's bill, An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day in Ontario, and I present these petitions:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I'm pleased to affix my personal signature to these petitions.

## HOME CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have a petition from SEIU and the people of Barrie, Midland, Innisfil and Coldwater. It says:

“Whereas the Ontario government has continued the practice of competitive bidding for home care services; and

“Whereas the competitive bidding process has increased the privatization of Ontario’s health care delivery, in direct violation of the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act, 2004; and

“Whereas competitive bidding for home care services has decreased both the continuity and quality of care available to home care clients; and

“Whereas home care workers do not enjoy the same employment rights, such as successor rights, as all other Ontario workers have, which deprives them of termination rights, seniority rights and the right to move with their work when their employer agency loses a contract ...”

They ask this government:

“(1) to immediately stop the competitive bidding for home care services so home care clients can receive the continuity and quality of care they deserve; and

“(2) to extend successor rights under the Labour Relations Act to home care workers to ensure the home care sector is able to retain a workforce that is responsive to clients’ needs.”

I fully support this petition, and will affix my name to it and give it to page Bethany.

## ANTI-SMOKING LEGISLATION

**Mr. Kuldip Kular:** This petition is for children in smoke-free cars, supporting Bill 11.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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 the petitioners, so I also put my signature on this petition.

## LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I want to thank Trinity United Church in Beeton for sending me this petition.

“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. Jeff Leal:** I have a petition today for children in smoke-free cars, in support of Bill 11.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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 ... 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 support this petition and will affix my signature to it.

## LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I have a petition for the Legislative Assembly. I notice it’s signed by Clive Whitlock,

who is the over-70 marathon champion of the world. He has run three or four marathons here and is an amazing individual.

“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 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’m pleased to sign my name to it as page Laura comes and takes it.

#### DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there currently exist problems of exposure to theft and the weather when displaying a disabled person parking permit on a motorcycle while parked in a disabled parking space;

“We, the undersigned, petition our members of Parliament to promote the development of a special fixed permit, as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, for use by disabled persons who ride or are passengers on motorcycles, even if that requires an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act.”

This is signed by Ontarians, often in the Welland, Fonthill and St. Catharines area of the province. I’m pleased to affix my signature and to send it to the table with page Victoria.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk:** I have petitions provided to me by the Calvary Church of Ayr, the Cambridge Alliance Church and the Paroisse Sts-Martyrs-Canadiens, and it reads:

“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;

“Therefore 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.”

As I agree with the petition, I sign my name to it.

**1530**

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Central East Local Health Integration Network ... board of directors has approved the Rouge Valley Health System’s deficit elimination plan, subject to public meetings; and

“Whereas, despite the significant expansion of the Ajax-Pickering hospital, its largest in its 53-year history, a project that could reach \$100 million, of which 90% is funded by the Ontario government, this plan now calls for the ill-advised transfer of 20 mental health unit beds from Ajax-Pickering hospital to the Centenary health centre in Scarborough; and

“Whereas one of the factors for the successful treatment of patients in the mental health unit is support from family and friends, and the distance to Centenary health centre would negatively impact on the quality care for residents of Ajax and Pickering; and

“Whereas it is also imperative for Rouge Valley Health System to balance its budget, eliminate its deficit and debt and realize the benefits of additional Ontario government funding;

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

“That the Rouge Valley Health System continue to provide the current level of service to our Ajax-Pickering hospital, which now serves the fastest-growing communities of west Durham; and

“That the Ajax-Pickering hospital retain the badly needed 20-bed mental health unit.”

I will affix my signature to that and pass it to page Ida.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** “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 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.”

As I am in agreement with this, I have affixed my signature to give it to page Adam.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly that has been sent to me by people who live not merely in my home city of Mississauga but also in Oakville, Brampton and Toronto. It is addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly and 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 agree with this petition. I’m pleased to affix my signature and to ask page Lucas to carry it for me.

#### BREASTFEEDING

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

“Whereas Health Canada, the Canadian Paediatric Society and the World Health Organization recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, with continued breastfeeding, along with other food sources, for up to two years and beyond for optimal health; and

“Whereas many Ontario health care services lack adequate resources needed to assist women to achieve success by the recommended, well-established timeline;

“We are asking the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to take a leadership role in ensuring the provision of adequate breastfeeding support for women in Ontario by:

“(1) creating a provincial breastfeeding policy in Ontario;

“(2) initiating a process whereby all Ontario hospitals become baby-friendly as per the WHO/UNICEF guidelines;

“(3) adequately fund health-care-providing organizations to properly train all health care providers working with new and expectant mothers in hospitals and community settings;

“(4) increase the number of both hospital and community-based clinics in Ontario; and

“(5) fund the creation of a provincial centre for excellence for breastfeeding, which would serve as a training ground for professionals, a centre of research and a fully functioning clinic accessible to all women who require assistance.

“Given the documented and well-known health benefits to our population and subsequent financial benefits to our health care system, it is irresponsible for our provincial government not to support and increase breastfeeding resources in Ontario.”

I affix my signature.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Central East Local Health Integration Network board of directors has approved the Rouge Valley Health System’s deficit elimination plan, subject to public meetings; and

“Whereas it is important to ensure that the new birthing unit at Centenary hospital, a \$20-million expansion that will see 16 new labour, delivery, recovery and postpartum (LDRP) birthing rooms and an additional 21 postpartum rooms added by October 2008, this will not cause any decline in the pediatric services currently provided at the Ajax-Pickering hospital; and

“Whereas the significant expansion of the Ajax-Pickering hospital, the largest in its 53-year history, a project that could reach \$100 million, of which 90% is funded by the Ontario government—it is important to continue to have a complete maternity unit at the Ajax hospital; and

“Whereas it is also imperative for the Rouge Valley Health System to balance its budget, eliminate its deficit and debt and realize the benefits of additional Ontario government funding; and

“Whereas the patients and parents of Ajax and Pickering deserve the right to have their children born in their own community, where they have chosen to live and work;

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

“That the Rouge Valley Health System continue to provide the current level of service; and

“That our Ajax-Pickering hospital now serves the fastest-growing communities of west Durham; and

“That the Ajax-Pickering hospital retain its full maternity unit.”

I affix my signature to that and hand this to Bethany.

## OPPOSITION DAY

### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty Liberal government's failures to develop and implement effective long-range plans to ensure the economic well-being of Ontario have led the province to the brink of "have not" status and placed in jeopardy our ability to support cherished services such as health and long-term care, the environment, infrastructure renewal, education, transportation, tourism development, secure and affordable energy supplies, safe communities and agriculture.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Runciman has moved opposition day motion number 1.

Mr. Runciman.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** My comments are going to be rather brief. I think there are a total of—I won't get into the numbers, but a significant number of our members want to participate in this discussion.

The general intent of the motion is to draw attention to the Liberal government's ad hoc approach to governing, their failure to plan beyond a very abbreviated horizon and their wastefulness with taxpayers' money—in essence, their overall mismanagement, a failure of government that has short- and long-term costs for many of the services we cherish in this province, such as health care, education and the stewardship of our environment. In the brief time I have, I am going to mention just two examples.

In last month's end-of-year giveaways, we saw millions of tax dollars doled out to a lot of surprised recipients with very little rationale behind the decisions—only the direction to cash the cheque quickly. It seemed to be yet another Liberal pull-a-name-out-of-the-hat approach to spending as much as you can before the end of the fiscal year, with no rhyme or reason.

One of the projects that deserved recognition missed out on the hat draw for the fourth time, and as a result, a UNESCO world heritage site which the Minister of Municipal Affairs should be concerned about could suffer serious environmental damage. The sewage treatment plan in the village of Merrickville could, according to engineers, suffer a catastrophic failure at any time, resulting in significant pollution of the Rideau system. The Ministry of the Environment has expressed in writing its deep concerns with what appears to be, in their words, "an inevitable tank failure." Yet this critically important environmental project didn't have its name drawn in the Liberal lottery. That's because there was no priority list, no plan; just ad hockery. In this Liberal government's haste to shove taxpayers' money out the door before March 31—and, I stress, without plan or process—they are jeopardizing the environmental well-being of a world heritage site and, by extension, threatening the economic health of that area.

### 1540

Another example, on a different tack, is the deficit situation facing the Cornwall Community Hospital. Cornwall isn't alone, of course; we're hearing that approximately 75 hospitals in the province are facing deficits. The Cornwall situation can, once again, be ascribed to a failure to plan and to instead rely on short-term, one-off political fixes to get you through the next election.

The Cornwall hospital, given changing demographics, should have been the beneficiary of at least two initiatives that should have occurred but didn't. Number one is the change to the hospital's funding formula—long overdue. Number two is a provincial program that could alleviate the challenges and costs associated with alternative-level-of-care—ALC—patients occupying active treatment beds, creating a host of problems, including a plugged emergency room in Cornwall and cancelled surgeries.

The time is long overdue for the Liberal government to address the challenges facing the Cornwall Community Hospital through appropriate policy initiatives and long-term plans, but given their track record of seat-of-the-pants management and throwing money at the crisis of the day, we cannot, regrettably, be optimistic. We sincerely hope that the failure to act does not result in service cuts and job losses at the Cornwall hospital.

Those are just two examples of how the McGuinty Liberal government's failure to implement effective long-term, long-range plans is jeopardizing the economic well-being of our province and, as a result, services we all cherish. My colleagues will have further examples.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's a pleasure to speak to the motion by the member from Leeds–Grenville and in fact the entire Progressive Conservative caucus.

For those watching from home, what's interesting is—and whether they're dedicated viewers of the government channel and watch proceedings in this House all the time or whether they're just channel-surfing and happen to catch this for a minute—I want to reiterate how critical the discussions are that happen in this chamber, how absolutely important these discussions are for the lives of real Ontarians.

Sometimes, as school groups come through here, they watch what's going on. It seems chaotic, it seems unimportant, but at the end of the day it's extremely important. At the end of the day, people's lives are dramatically affected by the decisions and the discussion and the discourse of this very chamber.

I know that viewers at home like it when I use metaphors from literature, so I'm going to use one. My metaphor today is the emperor's new clothes, because we have a government over here under Dalton McGuinty that likes to pretend that it's resplendently attired. In fact, the emperor has no clothes indeed.

For example, they like to pretend that this is a government—after all, they struck a cabinet committee to look at this issue—that's going to do something or has done something about the incredible scourge of poverty in our province. We have one in eight children living in

poverty now. As you heard the member from Leeds–Grenville, we're rapidly becoming a have-not province. This is the symptom of that: the levels of poverty that we have.

Today, ISARC came to this House—a group of leaders across faiths—and spoke about their concerns. Their concerns were housing, poverty and minimum wage. Their concerns are the same year to year. Every year they come beseeching this government to act and every year they go away empty-handed, just like the one in eight children go away empty-handed when they have dealings with this government. They heard, in no uncertain terms at that meeting today, that the poor today are worse off than they were under Harris-Eves—worse off in any measurable way.

The emperor of Dalton McGuinty and cabinet, which has no clothes, likes to pretend it is wrapped in the cloak of social justice. No such cloak wraps the administration of Dalton McGuinty. In fact, the paltry 2% increase that those who are permanently disabled—on Ontario disability—received is surely a slap in the face. It's an absolute insult. Those are among the poorest. So right now we have disabled Ontarians who cannot pay their rent or feed themselves under the empire of Dalton McGuinty.

Minimum wage: This government likes to say that it wants to act on poverty but it has to study the problem. Interestingly enough, jurisdictions around the world have acted on the problem. If we piled up all the studies that have been done around the poverty issue, we would have more housing than we have under Dalton McGuinty. This problem doesn't need to be studied any more; this problem needs to be addressed, needs to be acted on. As a housing activist said, "We don't need to be addressed; we need an address." That's what they need. Again, we have an administration that pretends to be dressed but isn't.

If they really wanted to raise the poor out of poverty, de facto all they need to do is to raise the minimum wage above the poverty line. They, of course, voted down my bill to do just that. But that minimum wage bill would have immediately taken a quarter of a million people out of poverty and also affected the 1.2 million in total who live on \$10 an hour or less—immediately change it. They would have reached their 25 in 5; no problem. Will they do it? Absolutely not.

Housing: We have had a budget that just came in with not one line item for new affordable housing. This is even more of a disgrace than it appears at first blush, because they have \$165 million worth of federal funds that they will lose if they don't get the shovel in the ground in the next year. Those funds will be taken back by the federal government. But instead, of course, we have a Minister or Housing who says, "Give us more."

Quite frankly, I would ask: Why should the federal government give you more money if you don't spend the money they already gave you? That's \$165 million they're going to lose, according to the Toronto Star editorial, unless they spend it within the year. We all know how long housing projects take to get going. This

is the end result of complete inaction for the last five years. Again, the emperor doesn't have leggings on, doesn't have a shirt, doesn't have a cloak; wears nothing. The emperor has no clothes.

But you have to give it to this administration, don't you? They are the masters of spin. They are the masters of the photo op. They are the masters of consulting rather than acting. If you ask a Liberal cabinet member about an issue, you get a consultation out of it, or you get a website. You get a website or a phone line so you can phone up to find out how little you actually might get from this government.

Another portfolio that I happen to have and cherish is the small business portfolio. When this government does decide to act—and that's rare, as we all know—it tends to do so at the expense of small business in this province. We've seen this time and time again. We saw a story that made great news, the Karl's butcher shop story, where red tape and regulation came crashing in on a business that had been in business for over 40 years. It had to put in \$200,000 just to renovate this store, even though the Toronto Board of Health said everything was okay. Did they know about the regulation? No, they didn't.

That's the way this government deals with small business. We know that retailers now are being asked to bear the brunt of changes in the tobacco legislation. Much as we think, "Absolutely, we should be doing everything we can to get teenagers in particular to stop or not start smoking," why can't this government come forward with the money to do that? Why can't they put their own ads in those spaces? Why can't they do something to help the small retailer?

#### 1550

The business education tax: My resolution last year called for a reform. It hasn't been reformed. The business education tax is a huge burden for small business. Again, this government has done nothing.

We saw yesterday—and again, here's another instance of this emperor wearing nothing: the issue of swimming pools in Toronto. Ever since this government got in—do we remember the campaign promises of 2003, when the emperor, Dalton McGuinty, said that he would fix the funding formula? Well, guess what? Five years later, the funding formula is not fixed. One of the by-products of not doing what they were supposed to be doing and promised they would do is that now we're going to lose our swimming pools across the city.

We have 15,000 signatures; 15,000 people saying, "This emperor doesn't have any clothes on." Some 15,000 people signed and said: "Do something. You've got the money; spend it. Do something." We put forward our own program that the Ministry of Health Promotion could shoulder this, could save these swimming pools, and not only in Toronto, but health and recreation facilities across the province, whose infrastructures are crumbling, who are at the end their life spans. Again, will this government work, will they do something to address the needs of children when we know that a huge percentage of children right now are going to grow up obese with

type 2 diabetes and everything else? No, they'd rather spend the billions at the end of the story, and even then, of course, we know we live in a province where a million Ontarians go without access to a family doctor.

So again, for those listening at home and just tuning in, one feels always in the position of that little child saying, "I know the emperor says they're dressed; they're not dressed. They have no clothes on." We live in hope, in the opposition benches, that that little voice, that that one child—you know, interestingly, yesterday that child had a face and a name: Michaela. She came here; she sat in the members' gallery.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** He called her "sweetheart."

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Absolutely. She said, "The Premier came to my school, and he promised to do something about saving my pool"—a child's voice.

When the emperor, Dalton McGuinty, meets with the emperors from the Chinese delegation and they sit down and talk, I guess we should've had press there. If we had press there, maybe they would've caught on tape that particular McGuinty promise broken—in this case, to a child.

So children are starting to notice. Children are very wise. Have you noticed that? They're very wise. Children are starting to notice. Little children are noticing the emperor doesn't have any clothes. Children are starting to notice that this is an administration that does not keep its promises. We've seen this in the past, of course. It was very cute—Michaela said in the press conference, "Maybe I should have got it in writing." But unfortunately, in the opposition benches, we all know that even if you get it in writing that doesn't count for anything either with Emperor McGuinty across the way. One would hope you could trust the Premier, but children across this province are discovering they can't do that. They come now, and they say, "The emperor has no clothes."

What else? What else has this government said that it would do for Ontario? The promises are legion, of course, and the promises are, to a promise, broken. But if we continue along—and this is so much fun. Again, if you're just tuning in, please, take this seriously. We're having some fun in the opposition benches here, but take this seriously. This is your government, and they are breaking their promises to you. They are not acting in a crisis situation. It is a crisis situation. When 200,000 good manufacturing jobs are lost, it's a crisis. When one in eight children are living in poverty, it's a crisis. When one million Ontarians go without a family doctor, this is a crisis. When we are slipping into have-not status, this is a crisis. When not one line of this last budget mentions anything about new housing dollars—and I know what I'm going to hear from the minister of infrastructure and housing. I know what I'm going to hear already: "\$100 million." Well, actually, there's no \$100 million for new housing. That's for the repair of existing housing stock. It happens to be a third of what the Toronto-based Save Our Structures group asked for, a third of what's needed just to repair Toronto housing stock. But this is spread across the province so everybody will get a nickel or a

dime. This government is fond of doing that, announcing \$100 million, but when you spread it across the province, in whatever area we happen to be speaking about, it ends up not being much.

Housing—that's a crisis: 170,000 households waiting for affordable housing is a crisis situation. Again, what is the emperor doing? The emperor is marching down the street with no clothes on, and children are starting to notice. They are telling their parents, and their parents are telling other parents. As we saw, with 15,000 signatures, a lot of parents are starting to notice that what's said across the aisle here in this House is not what's done. What's spun is not what's done. This is a government that's heavy on spin and photo ops and websites and phone lines, but very, very light on action.

It's interesting. On Friday, I'm going to have the great pleasure and delight of flying with some members of Parliament down to Michigan to meet with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Here is how bad it is, Ontarians, as you watch this; here's how absolutely naked this emperor is across the aisle: that the Premier could stand up in this House and say that human rights is a federal responsibility and not a provincial responsibility, as if human rights are not everybody's responsibility. When a Premier of Ontario stands up, turns his back on 4,000 of his citizens, turns his back on their human rights and says, "We're taking the lead of the federal government on this," abrogating his own responsibility, I would say we are in a crisis. This is a crisis, and this government has brought this crisis to a head.

So outside, while we're speaking in this chamber, we have a group of around 20 Tibetans who are on a hunger strike. They're not eating until the minister of trade comes back from her little junket to China. They are not eating because their relatives are dying. Their relatives back in Tibet are being arbitrarily arrested, are being murdered, and they can't find out about it. Why? Because the borders are closed to foreign journalists.

We asked this government, first of all, whether they were going to China or not. We had to—it's a crisis when you have to find out by scuttlebutt and gossip and rumour and innuendo when your government is going on a trade mission in the midst of human rights violations in Tibet. That's sad. It's more than sad; it's a crisis. The emperor McGuinty is naked. Like a rat hiding, they were flushed out into the open and actually had to admit what they were doing, because, of course, the press finally made them do it. When they actually had to admit what they were engaged in, then and only then—when their backs are to the wall, when 300 protestors are on the front lawn, then and only then do they do something. And then it's a wishy-washy little resolution, which, of course, we agreed to. It's better than nothing. It's better than nothing, which is what the Tibetans would have received had we not spoken up in the opposition benches.

This is a matter of basic human rights. So not only is this government not wearing any clothes when it comes to poverty, housing, small business, manufacturing, health, the environment—which I'll get to in a minute—

but basic human rights. They can't even stand up for their citizens' basic human rights.

1600

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Excuse me. Can I just remind the member that the debate is about the opposition motion on the order paper?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Yes, Madam Speaker, certainly. I'm getting back to the opposition motion, which is essentially that this government has done nothing to help our economy and is plummeting Ontario into have-not-province status. I'm using as my metaphor—because it's fun, because it's real, because it's timely—the emperor has no clothes, which we all remember reading as children—that little child who points and says, “You know what? I know the emperor says they're wearing something, but they're not.”

This is a government of spin, and the spin says, “We're clad and we're righteous,” and of course they're not. They aren't.

To get back to the economic environment: This is a government that says, “We can't do much in Ontario because we are subject to global pressure.” You've got to love the emperor's line on that, right? “Not much we can do.”

“We can't raise the minimum wage.” That somehow has something to do with globalization.

“We can't build housing.” Somehow that has something to do with globalization.

“We can't bring in a Buy Ontario program.” Some of that's got something to do with globalization.

It ties very neatly into the fact that it's a federal responsibility for human rights, because it's never their responsibility—not for human rights, not for the upcoming recession, not for the loss of 200,000 manufacturing jobs. No, it's never their responsibility. It's always the federal responsibility or the global responsibility, never their responsibility.

I'm going to share, as I said, my time with the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, so I'm going to leave him some time. But let me just close, reminding people of how important this is and how important it is that this government act, and act now.

I used the metaphor of the emperor with no clothes for a reason. This is a majority government. That may not mean as much as it does to members on the opposition benches at home. What it means is that this government can do what it wants, when it wants. Boy, oh boy, they don't consult a great deal about that. We discovered that with the orders changes that were thrust upon us this morning. They can do what they want, when they want.

They have the opportunity, they have responsibility to act and they have the means to act on every single issue I addressed. So if they say they can't act, or not yet, or “We're going to consult,” that is them—picture it—not acting. That is them being the emperor; Dalton McGuinty, Emperor McGuinty, with no clothes on.

So, like Michaela said when she came in here, “The Premier made me a promise and he broke it.” Very simple child's words, right, Ernie? A child's words, very

simple, just like the child in the story the emperor has no clothes. It's spin; it's not substance. It's spin; it's not action. It's spin when Ontario is in a crisis.

With that, I'll leave some time for the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. Do stay tuned. Keep your members accountable. Ask your MPPs—wherever you are when you're watching—what they are doing now about poverty, what they are doing now about the loss of manufacturing jobs, what they're doing now about building new units of affordable housing, what they're doing now to alleviate the tax burden on small business; what they're doing now, not what they might do some day, because then you'll see just how naked they really are.

**Hon. Jim Watson:** It's a pleasure to participate in this debate. Obviously, our side of the House is not going to support the motion. We don't believe in the negativism of the official opposition. We have faith and confidence in not only the economy of this province, and this country, for that matter, but also the people.

I just wanted to bring members through a little bit of a history lesson, where we found ourselves as a government when we had the honour of being elected to this Legislature in October 2003. We all remember the \$5.6-billion deficit that we inherited. We also remember the mismanagement that took place before that, that got us to \$5.6 billion. We all recall that the government of the day swore up and down that the books were balanced.

In August, before the election, the finance minister, Ms. Ecker at the time, put out a press release and indicated that the books would be balanced. This was the budget—those of you following this on television will remember—that didn't even take place in the Legislative Assembly. They were showing their contempt for the Legislature and for elected MPPs and they held it in an auto parts factory.

We were also left with an infrastructure deficit. All of us who had the pleasure of serving in municipal government understand what happened during that period of time when the Conservatives were in office: the down-loading that took place, that in many instances crippled small and large municipalities alike because the services that were thrust upon them were never revenue-neutral. I recall vividly at AMO Mr. Harris saying, “Pinkie swear,” this would be cost-neutral to the municipal sector. The Auditor General of Ontario in fact proved that it was never cost-neutral. The Conservatives could barely keep the lights on. You remember the chaos and the confusion surrounding hydro policy. They had more positions than a yoga instructor when it came to hydro. One day they were going to privatize; the next day they weren't going to privatize.

They created chaos in our school system. We lost over 25 million equivalent school days as a result of strikes in the public school system. Since our government has had the honour of taking office under the leadership of Premier McGuinty, we have not lost one school day to a teachers' strike in this province.

We all remember the sad track record of health care in this province under the previous government. It's a little rich to hear the Leader of the Opposition talk about cherished services such as health care when they closed 28 hospitals.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** How many did you reopen, Jim?

**Hon. Jim Watson:** I can tell you the number of hospitals that we're reopening. We're opening a cancer centre at the Queensway Carleton Hospital; we have 100 projects around the province of Ontario that are taking place right now as we speak, because we recognize, with an aging society, with an aging population, that we need more health care, not less health care. Yet in the official opposition, the Conservative Party's stated plan is to take \$3 billion out of the health care budget in the province of Ontario. How can they possibly explain that: "We are going improve health care when we put less money into the health care budget"?

In my own home town of Ottawa, we lost the Grace Hospital, we lost the Riverside Hospital and they tried to close the CHEO cardiac unit. It was thanks to the member from Ottawa South, our Premier, who fought back, and we're not only saving the CHEO cardiac unit, we're expanding CHEO in the city of Ottawa. They tried to close the Montfort Hospital. *Tout le monde dans la ville d'Ottawa sait bien que l'Hôpital Montfort est très important non seulement pour les francophones dans la population de l'est de l'Ontario mais pour l'est de la ville d'Ottawa—Orléans—mes amis M. McNeely, M<sup>me</sup> Meilleur et M. Lalonde.* All of these members were out supporting Gisèle Lalonde and the SOS Montfort group. It was a court order that finally clobbered the head of the health minister over there and said, "You can't close the Montfort Hospital." So we're proud of the fact that we're investing record amounts of money in health care.

We're able to do this because the economy and the measures that we have taken have helped to produce over 450,000 net new jobs since we've had the honour of forming government. In fact, in the first quarter of 2008, 57,000 net new jobs have been created in the province of Ontario, a track record I am very proud of, and for those 57,000 people who have found work, they and their families are very proud of what they've been able to accomplish. We saw what happened with the reckless tax cuts that were funded entirely by debentures by the Conservative Party. Many of us remember getting those \$200 cheques, but do you know what? In exchange for the \$200, we got more debt on the provincial books, we got more property tax increases because of the downloading, because those costs were passed on to the municipal sector. That's why I am so proud to be the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in Premier McGuinty's government, that in fact has started to upload costs—land ambulance, a 50-50 upload; public health, a 75-25 upload; an ODP upload; an ODSP upload—because we recognize that these kinds of programs should not fall to the property taxpayers of the city of Ottawa or any community in our province.

**1610**

We have a five-point plan. It's a little bit more precise and sophisticated than the blunt instrument the Conservatives try to trot out every election of tax cuts. We have brought, in fact, specific tax cuts: the capital gains tax cut to the manufacturing sector. We're investing in skills and education, a \$1.5-billion, three-year skills-to-jobs action program; rebuilding infrastructure, \$1 billion; boosting innovation, \$300 million in new investments and proposed tax incentives, including something that I know the Premier and our Minister of Research and Innovation—something that's very important to eastern Ontario, which is in many ways a Silicon Valley North: a 10-year Ontario income tax exemption for new corporations that commercialize research developed by qualified Canadian universities, colleges or research institutions. As I've mentioned, we're cutting business taxes: \$750 million in business tax relief over four years, starting in 2007-08, and we're partnering with businesses, such as the \$1.15-billion Next Generation of Jobs Fund.

What I find ironic about the official opposition, and really their leader in exile, who's the federal finance minister, because he's out there pulling the strings—sometimes I don't know who the monkey is and who the organ grinder is when it comes to that party. They are taking their directions from Mr. Flaherty. This is the same guy who brought downloading to the municipal sector. He's the same guy who cut social assistance to the most vulnerable in our community.

We have a different approach on this side under the leadership of our Premier. What I find interesting: A day doesn't go by when a member of this cabinet does not get a letter quietly passed over asking for more money for their ridings. Yet, at the same time, they want to cut spending by \$5 billion. I can start naming some of the individuals who have sent letters. A couple of them are sitting right over there; they're putting their hands up. The point of the matter is, you can't have it both ways. It reminds me of that old story where the veterinarian wanted to set up shop with the taxidermist and they put a sign in their window saying, "Either way, you get your dog back." You've got to choose a side. We're on the side of public services. We're on the side of making sure that individuals who are the most vulnerable in our society are taken care of. We're not going to go and play the game of the Conservative Party of talking down the economy. We're proud of the men and women who invest in this economy, who sacrifice to create the jobs in a very tough economic environment. We're very proud of the fact that despite tough economic challenges, we're investing in public services, health, education, skills training, post-secondary education, and supporting and partnering with our municipal partners.

I'm proud to be part of a government that talks up the economy, and not one that talks down to the people of this great province.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I rise today to speak to this opposition day motion before us, and to try and draw this government's attention to some concerning situations

with respect to the economies in municipalities down my way. I'm thinking specifically of Haldimand county. Haldimand councillor Craig Grice was at Queen's Park today.

Since this session has opened, I have reported to this House virtually every day on the impacts and the need to mitigate the impacts of land disputes, not only in Haldimand, but Brantford and Brant county as well. I've told members a number of times of the construction site protest by HDI, the Haudenosaunee Development Institute. The extortion demands have brought development to a halt throughout Haldimand county, and now we see this in Brant and Brantford. You don't hear Skilsaws, you don't hear hammers pounding, and the municipal leaders hear this silence, the sound of their economy going down the drain.

When these municipalities attempt to work with government—to quote our motion—“to implement effective long-range plans to ensure” their economic well-being, they're met with roadblocks. It falls on deaf ears and only exacerbates the problems they're already dealing with. I think of the official plans of Haldimand, Norfolk, Brant, Hamilton and elsewhere languishing without approval, for years in some cases, waiting for Six Nations' approval. I also think of recent reports of the province's principal land claims negotiator offering up a two-year development freeze along the Grand River to bargain for an exchange and to attempt to stop the protest.

Recently in Haldimand, I find it unconscionable that despite their best efforts to convince this government that long-awaited support for land-dispute impacts is needed immediately, support for individual families—I think of Dave Brown. He was at Queen's Park today. He and his family live on Argyle Street in Caledonia. Support for businesses and certainly municipalities like Haldimand—they left that 2008 budget table with a few scraps. In spite of testifying at pre-budget hearings, coming to ROMA, in spite of having rallies in towns like Caledonia, there's no mention in the budget, no mention of any assistance for Haldimand's recovery plan. They did submit an official recovery plan. They requested a total of \$56 million; they requested \$8 million for sewer infrastructure. They met with officials at ROMA. Basically, they've been shut out from that \$450-million infrastructure fund.

Area headlines following that slap in the face by government really underlined the disturbing attitude emanating from this government. I'm referring to Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bryant. He provided advice to the mayor of Haldimand country, Marie Trainer, and he told her—I find this hard to believe—to “stop pooping” on Premier McGuinty. I find that unacceptable language. According to the regional news, this was “verified by Councillor Lorne Boyko, who admitted he thought the comment was a bit odd, coming from a provincial minister.”

After being shut out of the funding, the mayor was quoted as saying, “I think they are pooping on us,” referring to the members opposite. Our Haldimand mayor

is frustrated, and she states, “At what point do we stand up and say, ‘Enough is enough’?”

I'll mention that that same sentiment, because of the ever-growing land disputes, is coming from Brantford. I quote the Brantford Expositor: “‘I thought enough was enough,’ Mayor Hancock said in an interview. ‘The city and the people are being hurt by these actions, and what's being done is simply wrong.’” That was Brantford's mayor commenting on the increasing actions of native protestors stopping development in his city, something Haldimand residents have been dealing with for two years now.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'm just going to touch on a few things today in reference to the motion. I'd like to start off with jobs. The government is quite thrilled about their job creation program, and they were bragging last week about the fact that they had created 300 jobs in Essex-Kent. I would like to invite them to the Hamilton area. We've lost about 17,000 jobs in the last nine years. My problem with this is that if job creation—and they talk about training people so that they can get jobs. That's great. But if there are no jobs to go to, where do these people go for a job? Fort McMurray, in Alberta? I don't think that's helping the economy in Ontario. I can safely say, coming from the Hamilton area, that in the last 20 years no major company has opened up in the Hamilton area—no jobs, just jobs leaving, going back to the States, going back to Europe, going to Mexico. No new jobs. I'm not sure if Ontario ends at Burlington; maybe this government thinks it does, because we're not getting a lot in the Hamilton area and the Niagara region. It's almost getting to a point where it's a depressed area; it's really bad.

**1620**

As far as infrastructure goes, they announced \$1 billion. Well, after we broke it down, it looks like Toronto is getting \$466 million, Mississauga is getting a good chunk, and I think the balance is about \$380 million for the entire province. By the time everyone else gets a piece of the action, there isn't going to be a heck of a lot done in the Hamilton area, I'll tell you that.

Yes, they did announce a \$14-million pedestrian bridge, a welcome addition to the east end of Hamilton. We need that to get across the Queen E. There's no doubt that that's a good program, but it doesn't even come near to the infrastructure problems we have in the Hamilton area. I could take them on a tour of the bridges of the area as a former tradesman and show them the rotting angle irons, the rotting beams and the cement crumbling on our overpasses.

This is happening all over the province. As has been witnessed this week, we've had some major accidents in the province, with bridges collapsing. This infrastructure program the government has announced doesn't go far enough at all. It doesn't even meet the requirements that we in Hamilton—I think you could spend the entire \$1 billion in Hamilton and then move on from there.

There are no new businesses, as I said. I think the latest one that pulled out was Ancam. You were there,

Madam Speaker, when Ancam pulled out. A thousand jobs at the height of their business; five years ago, they had 1,000 employees between the Burlington plant and the Hamilton plant—gone. They sold the equipment and went back to Germany; they took some of the technology and left the country. There are no replacement jobs. These people are out of work, some of them with over 30 years' experience. Training? These people are already trained; they're already tradesmen. They're already capable of doing jobs, but they have nowhere to go to get a job. You can announce all the training programs you want, but if there are no jobs, you're flapping in the wind, so to speak.

Let's go to the environment. I could write a book on the environmental problems in Hamilton, having myself been in the steel industry for over 30 years. We've been ignored. They haven't addressed it. They don't have enough inspectors, they don't enforce the violations and they don't fine them—nothing. The fines are just pocket change for some of these companies. It's unacceptable.

The latest problem, as you've seen in the papers, is the melt shop at Dofasco and the carbide plant next door, and US Steel, which now owns Stelco. They've been polluting for years, and it's getting worse. Why? Because they haven't upgraded their environmental secondary programs since the 1980s. Why? Because they're losing business, they haven't got enough employees and there aren't enough jobs in the area. They can't generate enough money, so the government needs to step in and help them out. Did they? No.

Liberty Energy is a new company that wants to open up one new incinerator, and the city wants to build another incinerator in Hamilton. All we asked for was a proper EA process to be followed, an individual EA on this new technology they're bringing into Hamilton. Our airshed in Hamilton is already overburdened. We have pollution everywhere. I'm not quite sure that the number of dioxins that are going to come out of this stack are acceptable; according to the investigations, they were. I personally never had an opportunity to tour the plant in California. I have had no exposure. I have asked for exposure to their technology. I haven't had a meeting with them. I've requested a meeting; they don't want to talk. I mean, I have some knowledge of environmental controls and things that are conducive to the steel industry. They just seem to be avoiding the situation.

The highlight of this was when I brought this forward to Mr. Gerretsen, the minister. I wrote him a letter, dated March 6: "I am deeply disappointed in the Ministry of the Environment's decision to deny the application for review of the three certificates of approval for Dofasco's KOBM melt shop in Hamilton....

"I am requesting that you intervene in this situation by taking immediate action to reverse this decision.

"The residents of Hamilton East are desperate for the Ministry of the Environment to send inspectors to survey the emissions from Dofasco's KOBM melt shop and" other industries in the area "and, subsequently, enforce the emissions laws"—enforce the laws. Do what it says

on the books. Enforce the laws to protect the people. It's not happening. This government should be ashamed of themselves on their environmental record. They just keep allowing, overseeing and following up too late.

What happens? The people suffer. The respiratory problems in my area are very high, probably one of the highest in the province. The horrendous, visible emissions from Dofasco's melt shop should be enough to warrant an inspection and enforcement. I sent him the shocking photographs of the clouds hanging over Hamilton East—Stoney Creek and central Hamilton. You're well aware, Madam Speaker, coming from that area, what the people face on a daily basis with cleanup. That's the stuff you can see. Those aren't the microscopic things that go into your lungs and into the tissues. That's only what you can see. So you can be sure there's more behind what you see.

What are they doing about it? Nothing. Did I get a response from the minister? No, I didn't. Dated March 6 of this year—no response. Are we once again sweeping environmental problems under the carpet? Are we once again going to ignore the health and welfare of the citizens in our city? It appears to be what's going on.

Education: The Liberals stood up today, and the minister was talking about her great record in literacy and bragging about the numbers. I hate to break the bubble, but in Hamilton the numbers are down. I just had a meeting with the school board. Why are they down? Because poverty goes hand in hand with poor marks. Why? Because the kids are undernourished, there aren't enough EAs, there aren't enough teachers for English as a second language and there's no one-on-one anymore. And they brag about class sizes.

Then the famous funding formula: They haven't fixed it. How do they treat our board? They say, "You have empty seats in the core of the city," in the older schools. So they either close the schools down or won't give us money because they say there are empty seats. But what they don't take into consideration is the growth of the city, the suburbs where they need new schools. They're in dire need of three new schools in Ancaster, Mount Hope area, the upper mountain, Binbrook area, Winona—growing by leaps and bounds. We don't even have enough schools. I as a parent would not want to ship my children halfway across the city, spending three hours on a bus every day, for an education. Why? It's hard to control, they'll be tired, and I'm not sure how much they're going to learn, missing all that time in travelling. It's just unacceptable. They have to fix the funding formula and move into the new century with some understanding that this funding formula is outdated, it needs a lot of renovations and it needs it done immediately.

Tourism: The Hamilton area is well noted for its tourist attractions: the botanical gardens; right down the road we have Niagara Falls; we have the wine tours. We have a lot of excellent tourist areas. They're not sinking a lot of money into tourism in the Hamilton area—not enough. They're giving a tidbit. It's not enough. We need more. We have a great area. We now have a very well

run airport that's just dying for more planes and more passenger destinations that we could use to expand the Niagara region. It's a beautiful area. It's a hidden jewel.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Any help from government?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** No help—including the Eramosa Karst, which I've been fighting for. The member for Niagara West—Glanbrook is also fighting for it. It's a jewel. These are the feeder lands for the karst. Part of it has already been designated, but the government falls short. All of a sudden they don't want to discuss the other 60 or 80 acres. They're telling us, "Oh, it's a municipal problem. Municipal has designated it as a development area." I hate to tell the government, but they froze that, and they want to go on with meetings. The government claims they've met with the people, that they've met with all the players. Wrong. They didn't meet with the people, the Friends of Eramosa Karst. They did not meet with them in an official capacity.

**1630**

The minister said he toured it, and he asked if I've toured it. I only live near there. I've toured it many times. I've toured it and I've looked at the problems. They're ignoring it. Instead of catering to developers, why don't they do the right thing and have the feeder lands designated as part of that protected area under the Hamilton Conservation Authority? They are more than willing to take over those lands, and they're happy to do it. They've even put forth requests to do it.

As they do the shuffle about whose responsibility it is to designate the land, it's my understanding, from a very good source, that the Premier can sign a letter doing so on those lands. The minister never mentioned that: that the Premier and the cabinet can sign a letter designating that land. If he looks in the rules, that's what can be done. No talk of that; I haven't heard anything about that.

Let's talk about health. Not-for-profit home and nursing care is still grossly underfunded in our area. We have temporary relief in the extremely flawed home care competitive bidding process, but we don't fix it. We're still not fixing it. We're still going ahead with this plan that has been obviously proven unsuccessful.

Wage security protection: I'd like to talk a little bit about Bill 6, which I brought forward. The government says they want to create jobs; they want to have educated workers. But what they don't want to do is take care of people when they lose their jobs. They don't want to pay their severance. They don't want them to get their back pay. They don't want them to get their holiday pay. That's what Bill 6 would have addressed.

What happened to Bill 6? Bill 6 got squashed at committee. They put it on the back burner. All they did was put a show on in the House that they're for working people in this province—"We're going to help them, we're going to work with them"—and as soon as my bill got to the place where it counted the most, all five members of the government turned it down, and one left because he had a phone call.

They're not walking the talk. It's just all for show. I'm very disappointed. When I came to this House, the first

thing I was told—I heard more than one from the other side say, "We want to work as a team with the opposition. We want to do what's best for the people of Ontario."

I guess I was a little naïve, because I believed that maybe we could work with them. But in my short tenure here, I can see that's not the case. If it isn't their idea, they shoot it down. If it's a good idea, will they work with us to bring it forward to the committee? No. They'll shoot it down because it's not theirs. Sinful. Terrible. I don't know how they can even look in the mirror with that kind of attitude.

We're supposed to be here—all of us—to help the people of Ontario. It doesn't work that way. It's unfortunate that people talk about helping people but, when shove comes to push, they don't do it. It doesn't happen.

Needless to say, the NDP and myself will be supporting the member's motion, not because the government didn't do anything. I'm not going to sit here and say they didn't do anything. They did something, but not enough. They just cut it short—real short.

All I know is that in my area—and your area, Madam Speaker, which we represent—we were grossly ignored in this budget. We were underfunded. This is the kicker: The government brags about the \$12 million and the \$10 million for the bridge and all this that they sent to Hamilton. They were supposed to get that money. They made our mayor and our council think that they weren't going to get it this year, so when they got it, they were so excited that they got what they were promised before that they sent a letter thanking for something they'd already been given, because they didn't think they were going to get it. So it's piggybacked on—where's the new money? It's money that we were supposed to get anyway—our allotment for infrastructure and for uploading. They like to call it uploading. I'm not sure where this new money's coming from.

One of the members talked about the big investment in one of our facilities downtown, the YMCA. That's great, but how about the 32 arenas? How about the ball diamonds that are in dire need?

In our community, we have a world-class rugby team that has played in England and Australia and won tournaments. They don't even have a field to play on. We have people who want to play cricket. Cricket? That rings a bell. Didn't \$1 million go to a cricket club in Toronto? I didn't see one cent coming to Hamilton. I don't want to be facetious, but let's spread it around a little bit. We need cricket fields and a permanent rugby field because rugby is a type of game that chews up the field. They need their own facility and clubhouse. We have an excellent rugby team. They're well known throughout England, Scotland and other places. They've been to New Zealand. But what support do they get locally from our government? Nothing.

So why don't we start opening the coffers for things that are west of Burlington? Why don't we start giving some money to the city that needs it the most, one of the oldest cities in our province, one of the most over-

burdened with infrastructure problems, waterworks, bridges—jobs? We need it now, not a promise three, four years from now. We've been on the back burner for the last 15 or 20 years. When is this government going to wake up and start doing stuff for that part of the province?

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm pleased to have a chance to join the debate and speak to the opposition motion and express the views of my constituents. I would say that I come into this House to speak about the views of my constituents. In their opinion, as I had a chance to recently travel around my community and meet with my constituents, I can tell you that they hold a strong view that the actions being taken by our government and the continued improvements that we are making to—in particular what I want to speak today—our health care services are improving the quality of their lives. At the end of the day, all partisan politics aside, that is what our goal in this House should be: to work each and every day to improve the lives of our constituents.

I want to talk about how sometimes as we debate in this place and talk about dollar figures, it does not crystallize in our minds what an investment means to real people. If I can talk about the government's wait time strategy, the dollar figure associated with it in the 2007-08 year was \$281 million in new funding to reduce wait times in Ontario.

What does that mean for Ontarians and my constituents? That means that more surgeries, more MRIs, more CT scans were able to be undertaken. If we can improve the services that we provide in our hospitals, we're able to make sure that people get treatment faster.

So if I take a look at a real example of something that can improve the quality of life of constituents, I can look at cataract surgery. If we look at cataract surgeries, 99,000 more cataract surgeries were able to be undertaken. That meant that the wait time for cataract surgeries went down by 61% and, in real numbers, 191 days. For constituents who live in my community who are waiting for cataract surgery, a reduced wait of 191 days drastically improves the quality of their life, and that improvement in the quality of their life is directly linked to the fact that we are making investments in health care.

That is why I'm so proud to be standing here again as part of a majority government that, for the first time across the board, has sought to tackle wait times, to measure them. Unlike the previous government, which didn't want to measure wait times, frankly because they didn't want to know what the results would be, we have measured those wait times and we've made that information public.

It's important to work with the experts, the professionals, to put in benchmarks of what's an acceptable period of time for someone to wait for that surgery. In 10 key medical services, we have very aggressive access targets. We're working very hard to achieve those targets, and we are doing that. That means that people who live in my community who might go to Trillium Health Centre, which is one of the health centres across

the province that is helping us meet these goals of ours, are seeing improvements in their health care, and that's what this is about.

#### 1640

As a government that goes to people to ask for their commitment to have us come here, we said on their doorstep that we want to come here and work on their behalf. I can tell you that in the health field, the actions that we're taking, the investments we're making and the long-term planning that we're undertaking are precisely to improve their quality of life.

When we take a look at emergency departments, we now have an emergency department action plan. I can tell you that an emergency department is really a gateway for many people to health services. Whether it should be or shouldn't be, it is. Unlike simply having more hip, knee or cataract surgeries, when you want to improve the wait times in emergency rooms, what you need to do is figure out who's in that emergency room. Who should be accessing health care somewhere else? When it comes to our emergency department action plan, yes, we are making sure that we retain more emergency department physicians. We're launching pilot projects, and changing ICU and emergency department procedures. But, very importantly, we connect to that our increased resources for home care, to help people get out of the hospital and into their homes, and our increased resources to make sure, for those who are in those emergency rooms and should be seeing a family physician, the fact that we have more family physicians, more family health teams and greater resources to community health centres means that those individuals can receive the care that they need and have long-term commitments by a physician or a medical team to them, which can help improve their lives in the long term.

On that front, this resolution speaks to long-term planning. We need to look ahead, and the actions of the government have consequences for many years. I want to talk a little bit about some of the specific things that have been precisely put in place by our government to ensure that we have a long-term view: increased child immunization, 1.8 million children have been vaccinated with three new free vaccines for chicken pox, pneumococcal disease and meningococcal meningitis. That saved an average family \$600 per child. We now also have a program where we are having the HPV vaccine beginning this fall, which is also saving families \$400 per child.

But it is about so much more than the dollar savings. It is about having a long-term view, improving the lives of Ontarians and recognizing that we need to break down the silos when it comes to how we approach government action, that we need to take a look at an expense that can be put forward to assist Ontarians to screen their newborn children, for example. Let's undertake that. We will improve the quality of life of that child and of that family, and at the end of the day, we will have benefits in other aspects of health services. For us, it is so much about long-term planning, and I would really urge my friends opposite to take a look at things such as the new

newborn screening exam and the new programs that have been brought in with respect to chronic disease management.

Frankly, for many, many years we had a government who now sit in opposition—thank goodness, for those of us in Ontario who access the health system—who did not want to see advancement and improvement to the health system. What they wanted Ontarians to do was to seek health care elsewhere, to go about their business and not depend on the health system.

But we believe in public health care. We believe in medicare. We've been making investments to that system, because under our watch, that system will be continually improved upon—and it has been—and we will see families who know that they can depend on and turn to those services, because we believe in Ontario families.

I would suggest to you that a very big day that we held in October last year would indicate that in the opinion of Ontario families, we are very much on the right track, and they want us to continue along that pathway. That is exactly what we are going to do for the years ahead.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Let me say at the outset how privileged I feel to have the opportunity to speak on behalf of the people of Wellington–Halton Hills in this Legislature this afternoon, for I'm ever mindful of the trust and the responsibility that is implied in the office they have conferred upon me. It is their aspirations that I seek to embody, their interests that I seek to further and their values that I seek to represent. Therefore, it won't surprise you, Madam Speaker, that I support this motion.

For many years, the government has known, or at least should have known, about the economic challenge in which we now find ourselves. Economists and other experts told us very clearly that global pressures were on the horizon. It was more than three years ago that we began to hear a new word, a new term: "outsourcing." That word meant manufacturing jobs leaving Ontario and being replaced by manufacturing jobs abroad. This should have been a wake-up call for the government of Ontario. Unfortunately, for the over 190,000 Ontarians who have lost their good-paying factory jobs, their government consciously chose not to prepare. It chose not to address the tax and regulatory burdens that are undermining our competitiveness and leading Ontario into a have-not status. It chose not to act in an effective, meaningful way. If this government had heeded the warnings of our caucus, it would have developed a long-term strategy to ensure Ontario's ability to compete and thrive in a global marketplace.

Nearly three years ago, I brought forward a motion in this House to do just that. My motion called upon the standing committee on finance and economic affairs to begin an investigation into Ontario's economic and industrial competitiveness and, secondly, to develop an action plan for Ontario to maintain and expand our domestic and international markets. Such a study could have been undertaken at no incremental cost to taxpayers. It could have consulted the foremost experts on economic policy, business, as well as labour, to determine how the

government of Ontario might respond to the challenges which were then on the horizon. With the support of industry and economic stakeholders across the province, my motion was also adopted in this House with the support of every single government member, save one. Even that, however, was not enough to move the government from its inertia. Once again, they chose not to act. Now paying the price are thousands of families in and around my riding. Faced with unexpected job losses, people are struggling to pay their bills and meet their obligations to their children. For some families it might mean cancelling that long-awaited summer vacation; for others it might mean that their kids couldn't play hockey this year; and for some it means that there's no food in the house, which leaves no alternative but the food bank. For others it may mean the loss of their homes.

The practical reality of job loss is bleak and the challenge of re-entering the workforce is daunting, especially for those who for many years have earned a decent income in the manufacturing sector and who may still be years from retirement. I think of the 1,100 people who worked at the BF Goodrich plant in Kitchener who lost their jobs in 2006. The company moved its operations to facilities in Indiana and Alabama. According to the January 31 edition of the Guelph Mercury, Engle Canada's Guelph plant will lose 225 manufacturing jobs next month and most of their manufacturing work will soon be done in Austria, while the assembly operations will be done in Pennsylvania. The Kitchener Frame plant, formerly Budd Canada, is also at risk of closure by 2010 unless the company finds new contracts. Some 500 have lost time and wages in the past month because of a strike at American Axle and Manufacturing, which appears to be ongoing. As recently as 2003, this plant employed 1,900 workers.

Of course, these examples provide only a snapshot of the disruption caused by the manufacturing crisis in our area and repeated across the province. As someone who is privileged to represent Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich townships, as well as part of the city of Kitchener, I have great affection for the people of these communities. But I also know that they, like too many others across the province, are experiencing tremendous hardship because of this government's inattention to changing economic times. We would be in a much stronger position today if the McGuinty government had taken the opportunities presented three or four years ago to listen to the experts and to develop a long-range plan before the manufacturing jobs meltdown had actually materialized.

We need leadership from a Premier who seems willing to preside over the genteel decline of the province of Ontario. We on this side of the House reject that very premise of inevitable decline and believe that Ontario will be great again starting in 2011 with the election of a Progressive Conservative government.

**1650**

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to be here today, obviously enjoying the debate. We've heard from the opposition parties. They've been doing what I sup-

pose is their job, to try to lend some positive ideas that might make the province of Ontario a better place. But certainly if you read the motion that is before us today, there's not much in there. There's really not much you could say is constructive criticism; there's a dearth of ideas. Certainly I think there are a number of people around the Legislature who bring ideas forward on a daily basis.

But the people of Ontario, last fall, had the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction or satisfaction with the way that this province had been governed for the past four years. All three, all four—or five parties, actually, came forward with ideas as to how they would like to see the province run for the next four years.

The Conservatives and their leader came forward with their ideas. The election was held and the Conservatives were there; their leader was not. The NDP put forward some ideas. The election was held and the NDP came back with 10 seats. That says something. That says that the work that had been done in the four years preceding the last election was the type of government the people of Ontario really wanted to see, and they wanted to see it for the next four years.

I believe the reason for that is that the McGuinty government, during the previous four years, from 2003 to 2007, had touched the lives of Ontarians in the areas that are most important to them: in their schools, in their hospitals, in their places of employment—places that had been ignored by the previous government, when you saw public education under siege, when you saw teachers being laid off, teachers being treated as if they were second-class citizens, teachers being treated as if teaching was not an honourable profession, as if looking after our children and educating the young people in our society was not a noble profession.

That changed under our government. We were able to reach an agreement with those people that we entrust the education of our children to, and we were able to move forward on that agenda.

And it shows in the investments. If you just look at my own community, you'll see some of the investments that have been made in my own community of Oakville, the region of Halton. Since we took over from the Conservative government, we have increased funding—for example, let's take the French public schools in Halton: a 62% increase in funding over four years; French separate school, a 52% increase in funding. The Halton District School Board has experienced a 42% increase in funding under our government, and the separate schools have been the recipients of a 39% increase in funding.

That tells you that you have a government in place today, and you've had a government for the past four years, that places the value of our children's education right at the top of their priority list, not where it was under the previous government that's bringing forward this motion today. There's a huge difference.

You finally saw the advent of growth funding in communities that have been experiencing growth. Under the previous government—and I know this because I was

a member of council at the region of Halton, the town of Oakville—neighbourhoods and parents used to fight each other, because the previous process forced the closure of schools before you could open new schools in the growth boards. We said, "That's no good." We said, "We think much more highly of our students than the previous government did," and we brought in growth funding. You've seen new high schools.

Now, you hear an awful lot from the opposition about jobs. You hear an awful lot about the economy. You hear about the loss of jobs in some sectors of the economy. What you don't hear the opposition talking about is that we're closing in on the creation of close to half a million net new jobs in the province of Ontario. That's net new jobs, and they're good jobs. Those are jobs in the financial sector, jobs in southern Ontario, in northern Ontario. Throughout the province of Ontario, we're seeing the creation of new jobs, and we're doing it in a strategic way.

I think nothing typifies that strategy more than what was introduced in the last budget, where we said to the people of Ontario and to the people of Canada, "If you bring forward an idea in a post-secondary educational institution in Canada and you incubate that idea in the province of Ontario and you commercialize that idea, you get a 10-year income tax rebate." Just think back. Could you imagine a Mike Harris bringing in something with that type of vision? Just think back. Could you imagine Ernie Eves doing something like that, or John Tory coming up with something like that? This is an imaginative policy, an imaginative process, that is moving us ahead.

There are a number of areas where you've seen major improvements, so when I see this motion here today, I look at it and I shake my head, because if that is the best that that party can do, we have a long way to go.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** What about Ford in Oakville? Tell us about Ford.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** My friend from Peterborough wants to know about the auto industry.

Take a look at the auto industry: Ford of Canada, under the previous Conservative government. I sat there as a member of my own community and watched the Ford truck plant close, watched it shut down, watched it move out of this country, and watched the Conservative government at Queen's Park sit on its hands and do absolutely nothing.

What happened when we took over? We moved in, we brought in a plan that has generated to date close to \$8 billion in new investments, close to 8,000 new jobs in the auto industry. We've just announced 300 jobs in Windsor that were referred to—and I won't name the member; he knows who he is. Some members think that's peanuts; some members think that's a good time to say "Whoop-pee." To those families in those plants, that means a paycheque. That means the dignity of work. That means being able to pay a mortgage, to buy groceries, to do the things that everybody in Ontario is entitled to do.

We just announced this week 500 net new jobs in Oakville at the Ford assembly plant. We find the models that are being produced now as a result of our investment under the integrated auto strategy we have. The Ford Flex is a new product being introduced. The Ford Edge is selling incredibly well. The MXK is selling incredibly well.

What has happened is that we have been able to turn the auto industry around, not just in my community of Oakville, where it's so important, but right throughout this province we're seeing the creation of new jobs. The next generation of automobiles that are going to be built will be built in Canada, by Canadians, and they'll provide income to people in Ontario who have relied on the auto strategy, relied on the auto industry for many years. What people don't realize is that for every one job you create on the auto assembly line, you create another eight jobs in the community. That's something we don't think of—the spinoff effects of jobs. Quite often we just look at the jobs. If you take the figures that have been announced, you take a look at Woodstock, a Conservative-held riding—8,000 new jobs as a result of the auto strategy.

I could go on and on. I could walk you through the hiring of new police officers in my community. A balanced budget: You'd think when economic times were so good, why could that government not balance the budget? Why could the previous government not balance the budget and why couldn't they come forward and admit to the people of Ontario that they didn't have the wherewithal to balance the budget?

Times are good economically. We finally have balanced budgets in the province of Ontario now under the McGuinty government, respect for our cities, infrastructure plans—you could go on and on.

Under the previous government, the worst province—

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker: Just to clarify, did the member say that times are good economically?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** That's not a point of order.

The member for Oakville.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I don't think the Tories would know a good time if they saw it.

Wind energy: the last in Canada under the Tories. Where are we now under the McGuinty government? The first in Canada. Some of the largest solar farms in the world are now opening in Ontario. What happened when the NDP were in power? You may or may not know this: They cancelled every conservation program; coal emissions were going up. Conservatives—more coal, more coal, more coal. That's all it was: "Let's burn more coal."

They even voted against the greenbelt. I'm going to end there because we've got more speakers, but I think that typifies the sort of response we've had, that there's a greenbelt out there now that is the envy of the world. It should have received the support of every member of this House, and there are a lot who voted against it.

Thank you for your time.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's a real privilege today to stand in support of the opposition day motion. Quite frankly, the motion is really a testimony that the McGuinty government has no plan. I think it was best summarized by the member from Wellington-Halton Hills in his private member's bill that he introduced some time ago that pointed out there was no plan for the economy.

**1700**

Fundamentally, the proof is what we see each day. I think we can start by looking at the record currently, and if you look forward, you're even more uncertain. The economy basically is in shambles, by any measure, in terms of our linkage with the United States and the economy and not recognizing that, about being competitive in our tax structure both at the individual level as well as the business level. Small business creates most of the jobs, and everyone knows that the red tape in small business is trouble.

The previous speaker mentioned energy prices. They have no energy plan except to raise prices. That's their conservation plan, to raise the price so you cannot afford to use electricity to heat your house and cook your food.

Also, if you look at the current questions in the House today with respect to education, even with the friendly measures of the government with education they have serious problems. In the Toronto District School Board they're going to change the board from its current governance structure to a new structure. They don't know what to do about the pools thing. Those pools never closed when we were in government, and yet we did make educational funding changes.

But the most important thing, I believe, is the health care debate. The health care debate erupted a couple of weeks ago when David MacKinnon from the Ontario Hospital Association said that all the hospitals in Ontario were in deficit. They've been quite loyal to this government because the government has tried, in the form of the health tax, the largest single tax increase, and you have to ask yourself—they had this large tax increase, the health tax or the health premium, and now we know that 70-plus hospitals are in deficit. We also know the rules around that, how they're guarding themselves. This is the treachery of the whole dilemma we're in, the lack of a plan.

But there really is a plan. The plan is not to be accountable. You see it in the legislation they've passed. The first bill that started to worry me was Bill 8, which mandated that hospitals had to balance their budgets or they had to have a budget reduction plan. In fact, it's called the hospital service accountability agreement. Now hospitals are having to cut.

How do I know that? I was at a meeting at Rouge Valley hospital the other night. We all know they're cutting the mental health program in that community and those victims, those patients, the people who suffer that illness, are outraged and spoke very eloquently about how they have no regard at all for the health program. Before that, we knew that the program was going to be cancelled. They clawed \$3 million out of the health plan

for the Lakeridge Health system. It was all about community mental health and mental health supports.

The plan they have now—they have the new LHIN, and we know from the Central East LHIN, in my riding, the Uxbridge Cottage Hospital is in serious trouble. They could lose their emergency department. I was at a meeting last night in Port Perry. They're looking at the potential of their hospital emergency. There is a fundraising campaign in my riding at both hospitals, and I just want to convince members that this government—and here it is. "George Smitherman, Ontario's Minister of Health, implied that the public should not be fooled by the concerns raised by the deficit-ridden hospitals." He said they'll have to defend themselves and he blames it all on the LHINs. The LHINs are just a guardian protecting Smitherman from taking any real criticism.

There's no plan except to raise your taxes and cut your services. So beware of the Liberal government.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I'm delighted to be able to speak to the opposition motion, although obviously I have rather a different take on it. In fact, I would like to speak about two components of our plan to grow the economy, because the idea from the people over here who have nothing to say except that the sky is falling is just totally false. We do have a plan to grow the economy, and I would like to talk about investing in education and investing in infrastructure.

First of all, let's have a look at what we're doing in education, because we understand two things about education. We understand that, fundamentally, if you invest in the education of an individual, you will make that person's life better. They will be healthier and wealthier and they will have a better quality of life. But we also know that if you invest in somebody's education, you're growing the economy. We can't compete with Mexico's cheap wages; we know that. But where the Ontario economy successfully competes is on a highly skilled workforce. We know that when we invest in education, we're investing in our economic growth.

We've done some very important things over our mandate. If you look at secondary education, we are now having students stay until they're 18 or until they actually graduate from high school. But we understand that you can't simply tell kids they have to hang out until they are 18. You have to supply programming for the kids who are struggling so they have a way of staying until 18. What we have done is we have put a student success teacher in every secondary school in Ontario. We have investments in every secondary school so that the kids who are at risk are getting help. They're getting help with more co-op credits so that they can get job experience. They're getting help with high-skills majors, so they have programs now that teach them skills. For those who can't do academics, they have skills-based programs, and that's a success. Our dropout rate has gone down and our graduation rate is going up.

As a result of that, what we are seeing is increased participation in post-secondary. Did you know that there are 100,000 more students in our post-secondary system

today than when we took office? That's 100,000 students, 100,000 people who are going to be better qualified to get jobs in our economy, because the people with education have jobs.

For the first time, we have grants for low-income students. We are helping to recruit students from families who have never gone to post-secondary before. We have programs to recruit first-generation immigrants. We have programs to recruit people who maybe live in northern or rural areas where there isn't a history of people participating in post-secondary, because we know that for those students to succeed and to help our economy, they need to go to school.

I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about some of the investments. I'd like to talk about infrastructure investments in my own community of Guelph, because we know that when you invest in infrastructure, you do two things, again. You help address the deficit in public infrastructure that the opposition left behind, and we know there's billions of dollars in public infrastructure deficit. They left behind two deficits. One of them was the infrastructure deficit, and we're addressing that. But when you invest in infrastructure, you also ensure that in the short term there are jobs. So I'd like to tell you about some of the things that are happening in my community.

In the municipality, we just had a great announcement. My municipality applied to the MIII fund, the municipal infrastructure investment initiative, with an application to invest in a convent, an historic building that was going to be torn down. With the \$5 million that the city of Guelph is receiving from the province, we are able to invest in that convent and turn it into a new civic museum. Thank you, Minister Caplan. We truly appreciate this funding. I had a whole parking lot full of people standing there clapping, because the community really wanted this investment and we found the money to do it.

We have invested in roads and bridges. We've invested in public transit. We have invested in social housing repair, \$1.3 million to repair the social housing in Guelph and area.

What about some other investments? At the University of Guelph, in the last few months alone, we have, from the fall economic statement, invested over \$8 million in campus renewal. The universities have told us over and over again that they have a deferred maintenance problem, that they need to go and fix the old buildings: \$8 million from the fall economic statement; another \$11.97 million—almost \$12 million—that I was pleased to announce at the University of Guelph in a building that was new when I was a student and is now, like me, a little bit old and grey on top. We were actually under a crack in a wall that had just appeared this week.

**1710**

We were able to say to the university, "Here's almost \$20 million in funding, in just the last few months alone, for you to fix buildings on this campus."

But we know that we also need to invest in new teaching spaces. Minister Milloy was in my riding just recently to announce \$9.5 million for a new primary care

small animal clinic. That will help the students learn how to provide primary animal care, not just the specialized care that OVC specializes in, and that will help pet owners all over the province, with more highly trained veterinarians.

Madam Speaker, I want to tell you and the viewers out there that this government does have a program for investing in Ontario and keeping our economy working.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I am pleased to rise in support of this motion by my colleague from Leeds–Grenville.

Like Emperor Nero, Premier McGuinty fiddles while Ontario burns. Is it a metaphor? Is it an expression that we use, maybe a little bit too much? Perhaps, but it certainly applies in this instance.

This province slips ever closer to have-not status with each passing day. The four horsemen of the apocalypse—sitting there across the front benches on the government side—repeatedly get up in this House and tell us that everything is okay. And if it isn't okay, don't try and hold them accountable, because it's always someone else's fault. This government is extremely good at making promises and this government is exceptional at breaking them.

I've got to tell you from my own experience as a talk radio host in the past, I used to love this Premier, because he gave me so much grist for the mill. It began within weeks of his taking the premiership of the province with something called a health premium, which turned into a health tax. Everything that sounds like it isn't a tax seems to do that; most recently, a tire fee—a tire fee, not a tax.

Then there are things like a health care revolution, which, to me, seems to be turning into something more akin to a health care revolt. This government repeatedly falls short on commitments due to its inability to engage effectively in long-term planning.

Before I spent time as a radio talk show host, I spent about 30 years as a chief executive officer. A CEO is not unlike a minister. You run what is, in effect, a substantial company. The biggest single thing that a CEO has to manage is change, and it's strategic and long-range planning that addresses that.

What have the results been over the last four years? Some 200,000 manufacturing jobs lost on the watch of this government.

People may not see the future of Ontario now, but believe me, it will come.

No dependable long-term funding solution for municipalities facing the cost of repairing or replacing aging infrastructure: A perfect example comes from my own riding of Thornhill. The John Street bridge—a major artery in Markham—shut down earlier this month, causing major re-routing for people, due to the structure being so badly damaged due to age and weather that it has to undergo emergency repairs, as it is no longer safe for traffic.

On the health file, no movement on the Vaughan campus of care, which is the much-vaunted Vaughan hospital; Minister Smitherman himself has referred to that in this House. There should've been approval already

for master planning, but another Teflon-coated minister skates by.

No long-term plan to solve the perpetual hospital budget crunches experienced across the 905, at places like our own York Central Hospital, where they are experiencing a shortage of between \$2 million and \$3 million; despite the fact that we've got great, dedicated doctors and nurses, medical and administrative staff, horror stories on wait lists are coming from that hospital—as recently as yesterday, talking about a woman waiting in a much-needed bed for a D and C. Three days it took.

Projected population growth in the greater Golden Horseshoe of approximately three million people, with no significant action taken to address transportation and infrastructure needs and the growing pains that are going to accompany the influx of newcomers.

Parents of autistic children taken to court by a government that should be helping them obtain the type of education to which their children are entitled.

A Smoke-Free Ontario Act that has not been applied properly by the Minister of Health Promotion and has, in fact, led to burgeoning trade in illicit cigarettes and tobacco products, putting our kids at risk—the opposite of its intent—at a cost to taxpayers of approximately \$600 million.

I could go on and on, but the truth is that this government is not interested in the type of sound, long-term policy development and decisive action that will help move this province forward. The McGuinty Liberals opt for Santa Claus-type, one-off announcements that play well to the media and make stakeholders salivate but provide no real, meaningful, long-term solutions to the problems Ontarians face every single day.

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** I'm pleased to join in, this afternoon, in this particular debate. I almost wish that we could have been here this morning, the quality of the debate is so good this afternoon. The opposition day motion speaks to the “cherished services” being in jeopardy—our ability to support cherished services is in jeopardy. That's anything but the truth. The services that the people of Ontario cherish are health care, education and a social service network that provides support for those who are vulnerable in our community; provides a competitive tax base; supports industry so that job creation opportunities exist where government can partner; it supports cherished services where governments find means by which they can work together. For the past five years, this government has been doing each and every one of those things.

We have invested the taxpayers' dollars very heavily in our education system, and we're seeing real results from that. We're seeing higher graduation rates, higher test scores, students staying in school longer or getting training longer in schools than they did through the age of 18, and lower dropout rates as well. We have focused our attention, through budgets, on things like the Reaching Higher plan, which is investing very heavily in the post-secondary education system and providing the type of training and skills that the next generation of

workers are going to need. So we paid very close attention to the education system. We created a variety of new chairs so that we can attract the best and the brightest to teach our young people.

The people of this province want quality health care. Those of us on this side of the House who have spoken to today's resolution almost to a person have spoken about health care within their communities. They've spoken about family health teams, they've spoken about new hospital capacity, they've spoken about more of their constituents having access to primary physicians. They've talked about wait times being reduced in key areas. They've spoken to the wait times being in a place where people can find them and have an opportunity to evaluate whether their hospital or hospitals near them are providing the level of response that they expect. We're focused on those key public services that the people of this province do cherish.

On the economic front, the opposition would have you believe that the economy is going to hell in a handbasket. Daily in this Legislature, they tend to run down the economic resilience of the workers in this province and the businesses in this province. But it's not the reality. The reality is very much different. The reality is that the economy, since 2003 in this province, has created almost 450,000 net new jobs. That's an astounding number of net new jobs, new opportunities for employment. Where they've created jobs, the vast majority are in the private sector. But we've also created public sector jobs. We've provided opportunities in education and in health care and in those very cherished services that people so much want. We've provided opportunities in police servicing, in emergency services, in fire protection—in those services that people desperately need when they find themselves in jeopardy.

Yes, we've invested in public sector jobs, which churn the economy as well as the private sector, creating an environment where some hundreds of thousands of jobs have been created. It's why we invested, in the early days, in the auto industry. It's why, when Minister Cordiano at the time announced the auto investment strategy, we committed to major investments: because we recognized the importance of the auto industry.

**1720**

The opposition parties didn't like that particular strategy. Well, it has leveraged some \$7 billion of investment in the auto sector. In the absence of those investments, the opposition may have had a reason to complain about key elements of the industry in this province, but with those kinds of investments, it leaves very little opportunity for them to really complain about those types of investment strategies.

We need to have partners. People cherish their services, but they cherish them in partnership because we all know—and there are those in the Legislature on the opposite side who would be quick to remind us—that there is really only one taxpayer. It's why we've partnered with municipalities to ensure that using that one taxpayer's dollars is helping to rebuild the sorely

neglected infrastructure that was left to wither for 10 years or more under previous governments.

But we also expect our federal colleagues in elected office to be full partners with us. We're challenging them. We challenged them here in this Legislature to come to the table with us and invest in this province. The last thing we need is for those in the federal House to be suggesting that this is not a place to invest, that Ontario is not a good place to do business. We resent and respond negatively to those types of assertions by those in the federal government.

If the federal government would treat unemployed workers here in Ontario the way they're treated elsewhere, unemployed workers would find themselves \$4,000 better off per year. At a time when they need the support of government the most as they restructure their employment opportunities, as they look for new work opportunities, this is when they need the support of the federal government in all provinces, including Ontario. Thus we need to be treated fairly, in similar fashion to other provinces; that's why we need to have them invest those additional dollars. We need them to invest that \$4,000 per employee on an annual basis here in the province of Ontario to help them during their time of transition.

We're moving forward on infrastructure needs, and we need the federal government to continue to be at the table in those initiatives. We don't need them making one-off announcements. We need them clearly at the table with us so we can collectively decide with our municipal partners on priorities, not making one-off announcements trying to one-up either us or municipal governments.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. The work continues. This province is resilient. We will continue to do well, and I look forward to continuing the work we do here in this Legislature.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** One thing that we do know is that after an election, Dalton McGuinty and his promises are soon parted. In fact, it's almost 24 hours later that he begins breaking his promises, and people are seeing the results, particularly when it comes to health care.

I recently had the chance to visit Strathroy and did a round table with the chamber of commerce and local taxpayers. Monte McNaughton, a business leader in the area, helped organize the event. People noted how concerned they were about the state of health care, specifically services at the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital in Strathroy and Four Counties Health Services in nearby Newbury. For example, three long-term-care beds have been taken out of service at SMGH in an attempt to help with a projected \$2.2-million operating deficit, according to executive officer Mike Mazza. That is certainly not what Dalton McGuinty or his local candidate promised in the recent provincial election.

Mazza also notes that taking the beds out of service ultimately caused a backup of patients into emergency. The SMGH board of governors has approved a plan to look at further reducing services.

At nearby Four Counties hospital, one of the smallest hospitals in the province, just a few weeks ago, in a devastating blow to its community, Four Counties announced it is being forced to close its 38-year-old outpatient physiotherapy program in an attempt to balance its budget—a 38-year-old program being forced to close by McGuinty government policies. This means that many of the town's 23,000 rural and elderly residents served by Four Counties Health Services will now have to travel farther and pay from their own pockets to replace those services. Instead of putting taxpayer dollars into front-line services, they're going into middle management, like these new LHINs that are a new layer of bureaucracy, as opposed to front-line care. I do note that the CEO for the southwest LHIN, Tony Woolgar, was paid a handsome \$241,626 this past fiscal year, a 6% increase over what he got the previous year, as part of a growth to 35 of these individuals making more than \$100,000 per year.

We see similarly in the Niagara peninsula that Dalton McGuinty is breaking promises to seniors and other taxpayers when it comes to health care. The Niagara Health System decided recently to postpone 190 surgical procedures at their Greater Niagara General Hospital in Niagara Falls, contrary to what Dalton McGuinty or his local candidate said in the last election. This ultimately is leading to the closure of operating rooms at Douglas Memorial Hospital in Fort Erie to free up staff and equipment for GNGH. However, that kind of band-aid solution is not supported by doctors and surgeons, because you can't take nurses and equipment from one hospital to another. Ultimately, that's a cut in service and certainly not what taxpayers expected if they had cast their ballots for Dalton McGuinty.

Sadly, as well, doctor shortages in Niagara are the highest in the province, with 95 vacancies in the region for GPs, including 26 vacancies in Niagara Falls, 20 in St. Catharines, nine in Fort Erie, two in Niagara-on-the-Lake and, in my neck of the woods, in west Niagara, nine vacancies, and four in Pelham—not exactly what Dalton McGuinty promised in the last campaign; in fact, quite the opposite. Meanwhile, the local LHIN for our area is paying their CEO \$266,831. That's a 13% increase over what she made the previous year. I think people in Niagara would rather see those funds going to front-line care, doctors and nurses, than paying more bureaucrats at these LHINs.

We're also seeing potential school closures like the Niagara District Secondary School. The only high school in Niagara-on-the-Lake could very well permanently shut its doors on August 31, 2009, forcing 400 students to bus to St. Catharines to find their education. We all know that in Waterdown, the Waterdown District High School has 1,300 students and has 17 portables, among the highest in the province.

People rightly wonder where their tax dollars are going when they see these types of front-line services being cut and fat-cat Liberal bureaucrats and political staffers getting paid big \$100,000-plus salaries.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I've been following this debate this afternoon with great interest in the opposition day motion. But I do want to get on the record that on May 9, we'll be opening a brand new hospital in the community of Peterborough, something that we're all looking forward to. Just this last Monday, I had the pleasure of announcing \$29 million for the post-construction plan for the new hospital in Peterborough. That is simply amazing. I want to acknowledge the hard work of the mayor and the private fundraising campaign, my good friend Dave Morton, Jim Devlin and Dan McWilliams, because we've all come together over the last four years. There will be a tremendous celebration on May 9. I ask everybody in this Legislature, including you, Madam Speaker, to join us at 10 a.m. on Friday, May 9. It will be an Ontario-wide celebration to see the kind of commitment that this government has made in health care in the province of Ontario.

I know the health premium has been a difficult thing. I heard from a lot of people, my constituents. But you know, they're seeing the results today: five family health teams that have taken 10,000—repeat, 10,000—people off the waiting list for primary care. Those are results. That's what this government is all about. If you look in our budget, we're going to provide more—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Thank you. Further debate?

1730

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'm pleased to participate in this debate on behalf of my constituents in Newmarket–Aurora. I want to speak in support of this motion and specifically to the failure of the McGuinty government to develop and implement long-term plans for infrastructure renewal and transportation.

Dalton McGuinty and his ministers seem to favour the back-of-the-napkin approach to planning, and unfortunately my constituents are being left to pay the price. The residents of York region are forced to deal with crumbling infrastructure and clogged roads as a result. But the fact is that York region is being ignored by the McGuinty government. The fact is that this government has perfected the art of political spin and dog-and-pony media announcements.

There are many examples of this government turning its back on York region, but I want to draw attention to the fact that two major transportation projects have been abandoned by this government. The result will be more gridlock, a loss of quality of life and a threat to the economic viability of the region. Those two projects relate to the Bradford bypass and the extension of the 404 beyond Ravenshoe. These are two projects that had been prioritized by the previous PC government. They're strongly endorsed by the local region. Because York region is such a rapidly growing area, the importance of these transportation projects is noted by our government previously, and here is what is so disturbing today.

This government boasts of being able to bring forward new announcements, and we have an announcement of \$500,000 one day, and \$1 million the next. Of course, as

residents read about these announcements, they believe that all is well. The fact is that it is not. York region chairperson Bill Fisch had this to say about these two projects not being included in the priority plans of this government:

“The fact that the route isn’t even on the map, quite literally, in the province’s Places to Grow legislation is simply unacceptable.

“Long delays in planning for the construction of the bypass have led to increased traffic congestion on arterial roads and a constant overburdening of concessions, side roads and rural routes that were never designed to handle the high volumes of traffic they now must accommodate on a daily basis. The route is of more necessity now than ever and one that can’t afford to remain in legislative limbo much longer.”

Those were comments by the regional chair.

Here is the question that I have for the government: Where are the Liberal members of this Legislature who represent the rest of York region? They are here but they are under a code of silence. We hear nothing from them. Not one word has been spoken in this Legislature by any of the other members of this Legislature who are either Liberal cabinet ministers or backbenchers. Why are they not speaking out on behalf of York region? Where is their voice on behalf of the people who elected them and expected them to stand up for the needs of York region? My colleague Julia Munro and I are here today to say to this government that we will not allow you to turn your backs on the people of York region. And if your members, the Liberals members, aren’t prepared to stand up now on behalf of those constituents, Ms. Munro and I will, and we’re doing that today. The very least that members of this government can do is to vote in favour of this resolution so that the Premier will understand that there are serious needs in infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I too am pleased to rise in support of this motion in the Legislature today. We heard a lot of awful stuff on the other side today about the creation of jobs in Ontario. They like to bandy about a number of 450,000 or something like that.

They don’t want to talk about the over 190,000 jobs, good manufacturing jobs, that have been lost in this province under the McGuinty regime just since 2004. They want to talk about the jobs they’ve created in the automotive industry that I heard about from the member from Oakville. Over half the jobs that have been created under this government are in the bureaucracy itself. They say, “Oh, this party here wants to see cuts to services.” Absolutely not. But we do want to see a government that is accountable and recognizes that it is not a feather in your cap simply to spend money. It is a great accomplishment if you get results.

In your own home, Madam Speaker, you don’t have an unlimited supply of money. You’ve got to get results on whatever the budget allows you. You don’t have \$5.2-billion surpluses showing up at the end of the year. Where was the planning—we talk about the lack of

planning—for this \$5.2 billion? I’m very pleased with the money that we received in my municipalities in my riding, but where was the planning? What municipalities are asking for is a sustainable plan in the province of Ontario, not ad hoc spending at the end of the year. When you have money that has to be thrown out the door in a very quick fashion, you don’t necessarily spend it in the best way.

I know there’s a formula, but I submit that the formula does not really address the priorities. For example, a formula that says, “Based on kilometrage of roads and the population, this is how we’re going to divvy up the money for roads and bridges in the province of Ontario”—you also have to look at the needs of the communities. When you don’t have plans, you just throw it out on a formula.

In my county of Renfrew, our roads deteriorate much faster than roads in southern Ontario that could be years and years older but are still in good shape. So you don’t just base it on kilometrage and population; you actually have to base it on the conditions and the need so that if you’ve got a sustainable and a long-term plan, you’d be actually looking at that need.

We also have to look at the needs in key industries in certain areas. In my area, in Renfrew county, the forestry industry is hurting and suffering under the McGuinty regime. Was there any help for the forestry people in this McGuinty budget? No. When you have \$5.2-billion of surplus spending, if you had planned and thought about it and actually went out and listened to the concerns that were registered at the pre-budget hearings that went on across this province, and not just find a way in the last week of the budget—“How can we get this money out the door as quickly as possible?” If you had planned, you would’ve been able to come up with a solution.

You’ve got the money. People in this province ask themselves, “How does a government that has \$96 billion at its disposal”—and that’s what this government has: \$96 billion, up from \$68 billion when they took power. “How does a government that has that kind of money at its disposal still have a situation where we have longer lines in our emergencies, where we are cancelling surgeries because beds are blocked because we haven’t supported our long-term-care homes?”

These are the kinds of problems that are creeping up in this province. Eventually, as they say, it’s going to come back to haunt them, because this government is not addressing those problems. They’re throwing out the money in a way that they get the maximum bang for the publicity buck.

Let’s talk about skills-to-jobs. I saw an ad last night on their new skills-to-jobs plan. I’d like to know how much they’ve spent on the advertising, but in that spanky ad on Global Television, part of it was that there was a plane in it. I noticed the plane. That’s important, because when those people are trained, they’re going to be getting on the next plane or the next train and heading out to Alberta for a job because this government has done absolutely nothing to create the climate that will offer these people

jobs once they're retrained. Those are some of the concerns.

**Hon. Jim Watson:** What about forestry?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing says he wants to talk about forestry. We could talk about forestry until, as they say, the cows come home. Your lack of support and your lack of recognition to the forestry industry—

**Hon. Jim Watson:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker: I'd like to point out that the Tory motion does not include the word "forestry," so I think they've turned their back on that industry.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** In this motion we tried to encompass everything, but we didn't have enough paper. Domtar doesn't print enough paper to list all of the mistakes and problems that have been created under this government, so we had to shorten it just a bit.

1740

For the benefit of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: We didn't cover it all, but when it comes to breaking promises, nobody covers the ground like Dalton McGuinty. We've heard from different speakers today about the number of times that he has broken his promise since being elected Premier.

I want to keep my remarks short and wrap up by saying: Let's remember that one of the most important things to municipalities in this province is a long-term commitment to sustainable funding that is fairly spread and with a formula that addresses the needs of municipalities fairly across this province. That's where this government has failed, that's why this government is on the economic wrong track, and that's why all of the forecasters tell them that they're on the wrong track, but they don't seem to see the forest for the trees.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to be able to take the last few moments and respond to this resolution. Our motion reflects the concerns that we share with many, many Ontarians. People want to know that their government has a vision and, as a result of that vision, has built a plan and identified strategies to carry out that vision. But not by this government; no, instead, there is no long-term plan to ensure the economic well-being of Ontario. Rather, Ontario is at risk of becoming a have-not province.

People understand that there are external forces. They understand the question of the dollar, they understand the decline of American markets for Canadian goods and they understand that there is a variety of external pressures. However, they do expect that their government is going to have a plan to minimize these external pressures. That is what is behind the motion that we are debating here today: the lack of a plan. Instead, we see almost 200,000 manufacturing jobs lost. We see a looming energy crisis. We also see, constantly throughout people's individual private lives as well as their business lives, increasing red tape.

When I look around in my own riding of York–Simcoe, I'm caught immediately by the fact that there's an infrastructure deficit. People in Cedar Point who want water and sewers, the many, many constituents of mine who must get on the overcrowded arteries that were built years and years ago—they are not up to date with the kind of growth that we've seen. Highways like the 404 and the Bradford bypass are highways that are essential to eliminating that kind of gridlock.

In York region, I am joined by the member for Thornhill and the member from Newmarket–Aurora in recognizing the inequity of the delivery of human services. There, again, is a demonstration of the lack of a plan. All of our human services function on a per capita value way below that of the provincial average.

It's those kinds of things that make the people I represent believe that this government has no plan.

Last year, economic growth in Ontario was the lowest in the country. Ontario has the slowest growth in private sector job creation in Canada. Think of it: Ontario is behind every other province in Canada.

There is one place, however, where we are ahead, and that would be in taxes on new businesses. Ontario has the highest tax rate on new business investment in Canada. Wouldn't a responsible government draw up a plan to deal with our economic problems? Shouldn't a government that cared put in policies that help businesses create jobs?

When will this government start to take meaningful and effective action? Ontario cannot afford to wait until we enter a recession. We need action now, before thousands more lose jobs, before more businesses close, before Ontario becomes a have-not province.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Mr. Runciman has moved that, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty Liberal government's failures to develop and implement effective long-range plans to ensure the economic well-being of Ontario have led the province to the brink of "have not" status and placed in jeopardy our ability to support cherished services such as health and long-term care, the environment, infrastructure renewal, education, transportation, tourism development, secure and affordable energy supplies, safe communities and agriculture.

It's addressed to the Premier of Ontario.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

Please call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1746 to 1756.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Mr. Runciman has moved opposition day motion number 1. All those in favour, please rise.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert

Hudak, Tim  
Jones, Sylvia

O'Toole, John  
Ouellette, Jerry J.

Barrett, Toby  
Bisson, Gilles  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Elliott, Christine  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Hillier, Randy

Klees, Frank  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Martiniuk, Gerry  
Miller, Norm  
Miller, Paul  
Munro, Julia

Runciman, Robert W.  
Savoline, Joyce  
Scott, Laurie  
Shurman, Peter  
Wilson, Jim  
Yakabuski, John

Craitor, Kim  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe

McNeely, Phil  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Moridi, Reza  
Naqvi, Yasir

Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** All those opposed to the motion will please rise.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 24; the nays are 49.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** I declare the motion lost.

#### Nays

Albanese, Laura  
Arthurs, Wayne  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bentley, Christopher  
Best, Margaret  
Bradley, James J.  
Brotten, Laurel C.  
Brown, Michael A.  
Brownell, Jim  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike

Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad  
Duncan, Dwight  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Hoy, Pat  
Kular, Kuldip  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Mangat, Amrit  
Matthews, Deborah

Oraziotti, David  
Pendergast, Leeanna  
Phillips, Gerry  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Ramal, Khalil  
Ramsay, David  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Sousa, Charles  
Van Bommel, Maria

*Negated.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** It being almost 6 of the clock, this House will stand adjourned until 6:45 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 1759.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

**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) <b>Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter</b> (L)	Oakville Mississauga East–Cookville / Mississauga–Est–Cookville	Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme
Gélinas, France (ND) <b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John</b> (L)	Nickel Belt 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) Hillier, Randy (PC) <b>Horwath, Andrea</b> (ND)	Oxford Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington 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) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	
Jaczek, Helena (L) Jeffrey, Linda (L) Jones, Sylvia (PC) Klees, Frank (PC) Kormos, Peter (ND)	Oak Ridges–Markham Brampton–Springdale Dufferin–Caledon Newmarket–Aurora Welland	New Democratic Party House leader / leader parlementaire du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Kular, Kuldip (L) Kwinter, Monte (L) Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L) Leal, Jeff (L) Levac, Dave (L) MacLeod, Lisa (PC) Mangat, Amrit (L)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton York Centre / York-Centre Glengarry–Prescott–Russell Peterborough Brant Nepean–Carleton Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (ND) Martiniuk, Gerry (PC) <b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah</b> (L)	Trinity–Spadina Cambridge 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) <b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (L)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan 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) <b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (L)	Ottawa–Orléans 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) Miller, Paul (ND) <b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John</b> (L)	Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Carol (L) Moridi, Reza (L) Munro, Julia (PC) Murdoch, Bill (PC) Naqvi, Yasir (L) O'Toole, John (PC) Oraziotti, David (L)	Huron–Bruce Richmond Hill York–Simcoe Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre Durham 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
<b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	Simcoe–Grey	Second Deputy Chair of the committee of the whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Estimates / Budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Tim Hudak  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Gilles Bisson, Kim Craiton, Bob Delaney,  
Garfield Dunlop, Tim Hudak, Amrit Mangat,  
Phil McNeely, John O'Toole, Lou Rinaldi,  
Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Finance and economic affairs /  
Finances et affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Jean-Marc Lalonde  
Sophia Aggelonitis, Ted Arnott, Wayne Arthurs,  
Toby Barrett, Pat Hoy, Jean-Marc Lalonde,  
Leeanna Pendergast, Michael Prue, Charles Sousa  
Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**General government / Affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Présidente: Linda Jeffrey  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: David Oraziotti  
Robert Bailey, Jim Brownell, Linda Jeffrey,  
Kuldip Kular, Rosario Marchese, Bill Mauro,  
Carol Mitchell, David Oraziotti, Joyce Savoline  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Présidente: Julia Munro  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Michael Brown, Kevin Flynn, France Gélinas,  
Randy Hillier, Lisa MacLeod, Julia Munro,  
David Ramsay, Liz Sandals, Maria Van Bommel  
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

**Justice Policy / Justice**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Jeff Leal  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Christine Elliott, Peter Kormos,  
Jeff Leal, Reza Moridi, Yasir Naqvi,  
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski, David Zimmer  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Kevin Flynn  
Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon, Bob Delaney,  
Joe Dickson, Kevin Flynn, Sylvia Jones,  
Norm Miller, Mario Sergio, Peter Tabuns  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Public accounts / Comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Jerry Ouellette  
Laura Albanese, Ernie Hardeman, Andrea Horwath,  
Phil McNeely, Jerry Ouellette, Liz Sandals,  
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel, David Zimmer  
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,  
Gerry Martiniuk, Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch,  
Michael Prue, Tony Ruprecht, Mario Sergio  
Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Social Policy / Politique sociale**

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





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