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de l'Ontario

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 13 May 2008

Mardi 13 mai 2008

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk
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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Tuesday 13 May 2008

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mardi 13 mai 2008

*The House met at 0900.
Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO
AMENDMENT ACT, 2008**

**LOI DE 2008 MODIFIANT LA LOI
FAVORISANT UN ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE**

Mr. Bryant, on behalf of Ms. Best, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 69, An Act to protect children from second-hand tobacco smoke in motor vehicles by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act / Projet de loi 69, Loi modifiant la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée pour protéger les enfants contre le tabagisme passif dans les véhicules automobiles.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Margaret R. Best: Good morning, and thank you very much. It's my pleasure to be here this morning, and I'm pleased to share my time with my esteemed colleague the member from Oak Ridges–Markham, my parliamentary assistant, Dr. Helena Jaczek.

I would like to begin by acknowledging our colleague David Oraziotti. He is not just a great representative for his constituents in Sault Ste. Marie, but for children and all Ontarians. Mr. Oraziotti's dedication and drive has brought us to this debate on Bill 69, an act to amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

The primary objective of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act has always been to protect children from second-hand smoke in enclosed public spaces and workplaces. This amendment would extend province-wide protection to children in motor vehicles. It is an important part of my mandate to lead our government's smoke-free Ontario strategy. Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death in Ontario. It kills 13,000 people every year in our province. Thanks to the hard work of this government, Ontario is recognized as having one of the most comprehensive tobacco control strategies in North America. Legislation is an integral part of this strategy. The proposed amendment that we are debating today builds on our commitment to a healthier, smoke-free Ontario. It is the next step in the direction of a healthier Ontario. Second-hand smoke in vehicles is particularly harmful, and even more so for our children.

Recent studies suggest that the concentrations of toxins in vehicles can be up to 27 times worse than in a

smoker's home. The Ontario Medical Association found that children exposed to second-hand smoke are more likely to suffer sudden infant death syndrome, acute respiratory infections, ear infections and asthma. The medical science is clear: Second-hand smoke is dangerous to our children's health. Our children are our most vulnerable citizens, yet a Health Canada study in 2005 estimated that 140,000 children in Ontario between the ages of 12 and 16 were exposed to second-hand smoke in vehicles during a one-month period.

As a government, we took note of the evidence. We listened to our stakeholders; we listened to Ontarians. What did they tell us? They told us that more needed to be done to protect our children from second-hand smoke when they are passengers in the confined space of a motor vehicle. As a government, we are very much aware that when acting in the public interest, public support must be irrefutable. In January of this year, a poll released by the Canadian Cancer Society showed that over 80% of Ontarians, including 66% of smokers in Ontario, support a ban on smoking in vehicles with children present. We are confident that the public is ready for this proposed ban to protect the health of our children. Our stakeholders are leading this momentum. In fact, some of Ontario's leaders further demonstrated their support for this proposed ban just two weeks ago in the Legislature upon the first reading of this proposed legislation. They included representatives from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, Ontario Lung Association, Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco, Ontario Public Health Association, and the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. Peter Goodhand, of the Canadian Cancer Society, has said: "Children don't have a choice when it comes to exposure to second-hand smoke while travelling in a vehicle. We congratulate the Ontario government for taking this step to protect our children's health. We urge the government to pass and implement this legislation as quickly as possible."

Given the large number of Ontarians who stand in support of this proposed ban, we are expecting that this proposed legislation will have significant voluntary compliance. Additionally, if we are successful in passing this bill, my ministry plans to deliver a multi-layered public education campaign with our partners, including public health departments across the province.

As with any legislation, there are those among us who will make enforcement necessary. Thus, the proposal includes a partnership with police services across the province to enforce the legislation, if passed. But in addition to public education and legislation, we are lev-

eraging all the components of the smoke-free Ontario strategy. For example, the ministry supports an extensive network of young people who have been nurtured under the smoke-free Ontario strategy to convince their peers that smoking is indeed a deadly choice. T-dot is a precious resource. It stands for Tobacco Don't Own Toronto, a working group of Toronto's Youth Alliance Action, and believe me when I say they are a force of young people to be reckoned with. Earlier this year, I had the great pleasure of meeting with students at Sir Wilfrid Laurier Collegiate Institute in my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood with the youth action alliance, and I was thrilled by the energy and enthusiasm of these young people. I was so impressed by their courage to come forward as role models among their peers. Those young people are making the right choice.

0910

We want to give young children a voice from the back seats of cars. We want to ensure that their voices are heard and that we protect their right to a healthy start, a smoke-free life. The Ministry of Health Promotion is committed to this endeavour for the sake of our children. The Premier and our government are committed to this; our partners are committed to this. I appeal to all Ontarians to commit to a smoke-free Ontario and smoke-free vehicles for the sake of our children. The medical science is clear: Second-hand smoke is indeed dangerous to our children's health. As with seat belt legislation, we owe it to our children to keep them safe and healthy.

At the time when David Oraziotti introduced his bill, we said we wanted to hear from Ontarians. Well, the people of Ontario have spoken, and we have listened. Now we're taking action.

The people of Ontario are ready for legislation to protect our children from exposure to second-hand smoke in motor vehicles. This proposed legislation is about the safety and well-being of our children. It is about making a healthier Ontario. It is also about a wealthier Ontario. The cost to our health care system for tobacco-related illnesses is \$1.7 billion annually.

With the introduction of this bill, and now with this second reading, I urge the members opposite to work with us to pass this legislation for the health of our children. Your vote in favour of this bill to protect our children from second-hand smoke in motor vehicles is giving a voice to our most vulnerable citizens. This is a voice to our most precious resource: our children, our future.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I recognize the member for York South-Weston.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Oak Ridges-Markham.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for Oak Ridges-Markham.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: It's a great pleasure to rise in support of our Minister of Health Promotion and Bill 69, An Act to protect children from second-hand tobacco smoke in motor vehicles by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

This is another step in the war against tobacco use. It's a war that was heralded, in the words of King James I of

England, several centuries ago, in 1604. He wrote that tobacco use is "a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lung...."

On a more scientific basis, in 1964, the call to arms came from the US Surgeon General, Dr. Everett Koop, with his landmark study relating smoking to a number of health hazards, particularly to lung cancer. In fact, Dr. Koop wrote another article saying he wished for "a smoke-free society by the year 2000."

Well, we're not there yet, but we're making excellent progress. When I first graduated from medicine in 1973 from the University of Toronto, the fight against tobacco use was on a patient-by-patient basis. When we came across someone who smoked, we certainly counselled them to quit. I remember well seeing my first patient, a woman in her 60s with lung cancer, and realizing that this preventable disease, for the very most part, would have been prevented had she either quit smoking or never started.

Over the next decade or so, there was a gradual realization that there was a need for large-scale public education campaigns; in other words, a social marketing approach. That approach was very much spearheaded by a former chief medical officer of health for this province, Dr. Richard Schabas. When I arrived at the regional municipality of York in 1988, as the new medical officer of health, I found that members of regional council actually smoked throughout meetings of the health and social services committee. It took a couple of months to convince them that perhaps this was not the best message to their constituents. In fact, the ashtrays were removed and there was no longer smoking in regional council.

Throughout the 1990s, most medical officers of health in this province spent a great deal of time trying to convince municipalities to pass bylaws to ensure that public places were smoke-free. In the region of York, with nine area municipalities, we ended up with a patchwork of bylaws. They differed in some respects. It took us some six years, in fact, to pass a bylaw that covered the whole region; in other words, to level the playing field. It was a very important further step that this government took with passing the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which levelled the playing field across the province.

The McGuinty government has made significant progress in this war against tobacco. We are a government that likes to measure things and show progress and show some results. In 2003, the government committed to reducing tobacco consumption by 20%. In fact, we far surpassed that goal: The reduction is over 30%. This is an incredible 4.6 billion fewer cigarettes smoked. With our Smoke-Free Ontario Act, we do have 99% compliance with smoke-free bars and restaurants.

I'd like to commend the member for Sault Ste. Marie for leading the charge in terms of smoking in cars where children are present. His private member's bill, Bill 11, was commended at the time by the Ontario Medical Association, and also by Vance Blackmore, president of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, who said, in regard to that private member's bill, "The passage of

the Smoke-Free Ontario Act was a clear message that the government understood the significant dangers of second-hand smoke and is committed to minimizing involuntary exposure to it. We believe that this bill is a worthy amendment to the act, as it will protect children from involuntary exposure to it while in any vehicle.”

Recently, in regard to this bill, Bill 69, Dr. Charles Gardner, chair of the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health, said, “As a health practitioner, medical officer of health and CEO of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, as chair of the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health and as a parent, I applaud the Ontario government for bringing forward this legislation, which will safeguard the health of Ontario’s children in the Simcoe Muskoka district and throughout Ontario.”

In fact, the Ministry of Health Promotion has heard from more than 24 Ontario municipalities who have either written or called for a ban on smoking in cars with children present. I’m particularly pleased that this includes the regional municipality of York, as well as such diverse municipalities as the town of Tecumseh, the city of Kenora, the township of Terrace Bay, Peterborough and Toronto, just to name a few.

As the minister has stated, public education is the cornerstone of our war against tobacco. We anticipate that voluntary compliance will, in fact, be the majority of situations. However, even this legislative debate will bring greater awareness and education to the citizens of Ontario. As the minister has stated, if this bill is passed, the Ministry of Health Promotion plans to deliver a multi-layered health public education campaign with smoke-free Ontario partners across the province that will reach out to people wherever they think about their vehicles and their children. With our partners the public health units, this concept will be introduced in prenatal classes, in youth alliances, youth advisory groups and the various high schools that have wellness councils. There will be no lost opportunity to introduce the importance of this particular act. We know that in a recent poll by the Canadian Cancer Society, over 80% of Ontarians, including smokers themselves, are very supportive of this legislation.

0920

One of the areas that is of particular importance is to continue to invest in cessation programs to help smokers quit. I don’t think it’s really appreciated just how addictive nicotine actually is. I know that in the case of my own father, at the age of 87, as a lifelong smoker, unfortunately hospitalized, he understood, of course, that he wasn’t going to be able to smoke in the hospital. But he asked that a cigar be brought to him so he could sniff it occasionally. That’s how addictive tobacco actually is.

So we have invested in, as an example, the STOP program, the Smoking Treatment for Ontario Patients study, through the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and it’s designed to examine and support best practices to quit. The focus is on nicotine replacement therapies and counselling to find what the most effective mechanism actually is. In the first two years of the study, we’ve

reached more than 38,000 smokers. In January, the Minister of Health Promotion announced that our government will be providing an additional \$2 million to support an additional 15,000 more smokers to participate in this study. Our goal, in fact, is to reach 175,000 Ontario smokers through this particular initiative.

As Minister Best has said, this is all about the health, safety and well-being of our children. In the words of the Ontario Lung Association, this is about “giving a voice to the back seat.” This is the next step in a healthier smoke-free Ontario. I urge all members of this House to support this legislation.

Mr. Norm Miller: I’m pleased to add some comments to the minister’s speech on Bill 69, An Act to protect children from second-hand tobacco smoke in motor vehicles by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, and also the speech from the member from Oak Ridges–Markham.

As the member from Oak Ridges–Markham said, 80% of the population supports this move to ban smoking in cars, and I think that sort of demonstrates the way this government comes up with legislation. I think they poll people, and then, based on what’s popular, introduce legislation. Certainly, I support this legislation; however, it’s something we shouldn’t need. We shouldn’t need to legislate common sense, and certainly it’s common sense that you don’t smoke in a vehicle with your children. I think the great majority of people who are parents don’t smoke in cars, and those who do are probably not likely to worry that there’s a law about whether you can or cannot smoke in your car. As with a lot of the legislation this government is introducing, I think this is probably more about public relations.

I think we should be concentrating on education. Anything we can do to discourage people from smoking is a good thing, so we should look at educating particularly our young people so they don’t become addicted to the habit of smoking.

I know that smoking is a habit that is probably as addictive as any and a very difficult one to break. My brother started smoking when he was a farmer, many years ago—roll-your-own cigarettes with the farmer he was learning to farm with. It took him about 30 years to quit, but he finally quit, and I think he feels a lot better because of it. I know it’s very difficult for a lot of people to quit. I think the government should concentrate on more education so that people don’t start this bad habit.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to make a few comments following the Minister of Health Promotion, as well as the member from Oak Ridges–Markham, and maybe even some of the comments made by the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka.

As was mentioned by the minister, there is strong support for this bill. Bill 69, the Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act, is trying to help protect people from second-hand smoke, especially children. Among New Democrats, there is historic support for health promotion and children’s well-being, so this is certainly in line with our party’s philosophy. There is widespread support for

the bill by partners, health organizations and agencies, as you mentioned: the Ontario Medical Association, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, the Ontario Public Health Association, the Ontario Lung Association, the Canadian Cancer Society, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, public health units, the Non-Smokers' Rights Association—and the list goes on. The list goes on because this bill is a tiny, weeny, little step toward protecting people from second-hand smoke.

We have an opportunity, as the member from Oak Ridges–Markham mentioned, to do a whole lot more through educational programs and health promotion programs. Unfortunately, none of this is in the bill as we see it. They are part of other programs yet to come, yet to be funded, yet to arrive. The Minister of Health Promotion focused on, I think she called it, “a mighty force to be reckoned with” of a youth group that is really much in support. I will talk further about the importance of getting youth 16 to 19 involved.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Let me start by saying in regard to the comments from the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, this is much more than wetting your finger and sticking it up in the air and testing the winds of public opinion. This is indeed a very good, very strong piece of public policy that we're bringing forward. It's a bit disturbing to see someone make such light of it. I want to congratulate the Minister of Health Promotion for bringing it forward and also, of course, our colleague from Sault Ste. Marie, David Oraziotti, who began this some time ago with his private member's bill.

I can remember clearly my time on municipal council back in Thunder Bay when, as a municipality, we began a series of consultations within our community about bringing in a smoke-free bylaw, the gold standard bylaw back in 2000 or 2001—I forget exactly what year it was. We became one of the first municipalities in the province, and of course there are many more that have done it before and since, who brought in legislation and bylaws around exactly this kind of thing. The support for this is large. It's about protecting people who can't protect themselves. I would maybe make a bit of a parallel with our pesticide act that we just brought in. It's centred on children.

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Mauro: There is a groundswell of public support for this stuff, about protecting people who can't protect themselves. There are still people out there who don't think second-hand smoke is bad for you. To suggest that we can just do some education and forget about it—I think this is a great idea that has great support.

I can remember, after we passed our bylaw in the city of Thunder Bay, touring northern Ontario and going into communities that did not have their own municipal bylaws yet around second-hand smoke and smoking in public places. I can remember going into the establishments and actually feeling like I'd gone back a bit in time, that there were still communities who had not reacted to this. I'm happy that we brought in the broader Smoke-Free Ontario Act. I'm happy that we're bringing

in this piece of legislation, that protects young children. I congratulate the minister on the legislation. We're looking forward to all-party support on this particular bill.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'm pleased to spend two minutes and comment on this, what I think is a very good piece of legislation. I certainly could have used it when I was growing up. Both of my parents smoked in the car, God love them. I know my mother is probably watching right now. But it wasn't their fault; that was what people did in those days.

Mr. Toby Barrett: You were smoking too.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I was smoking indirectly, I guess.

In addition to this legislation—I did note that the minister said that Ontario was the lead in all this, but according to the notes that I've been provided, Nova Scotia, the Yukon and British Columbia have already moved forward with similar legislation. So we're actually leading from the back of the pack. But I do congratulate the minister for bringing it forward. It's overdue.

I, by coincidence I guess, last night was pulling into the underground garage at my apartment here in Toronto, and as I was going down the ramp, coming up the ramp was a fellow with two kids strapped in kids' seats in the back seat—he did that right—but he had a cigarette hanging out of his mouth as he was pushing the button to get out of the garage. I thought, “Holy mackerel.” In this day and age, you don't see that too often. So I think the legislation's fine.

0930

You're going to have to do an advertising campaign, though, or a public awareness campaign. I wouldn't spend a lot of money on it, but I would maybe put up a few signs in some of these underground garages, reminding people as they're getting into their car not only to strap their children in properly, but not to smoke. Because the poor kid—it's protection of the innocent. That's Parliament's biggest responsibility in life, in my opinion: to protect the innocent and protect those who cannot protect themselves. This legislation does that. I'm also pleased to see that it'll be enforced by police officers and not just left up to the smoking police, as I used to call them when I was Minister of Health.

Again, congratulations to the minister. Good luck with it. I hope it has a real effect on public health in the province, and I'm sure we all agree with that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments, I believe. I'll return to one of the government members for two minutes in reply. The Minister of Health Promotion.

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I would like to thank all the members who spoke today in support of this proposed legislation. I would also, again, like to thank the member for Sault Ste. Marie for his bill. Also, I would like to thank my colleague the member for Oak Ridges–Markham for her input today, and all the members who have had input with respect to this piece of proposed legislation as we move forward.

I also would like to say that this is a very important day for our children, the children of Ontario, in terms of

protecting their health. As we heard from the member opposite from Simcoe–Grey, who stated that he wishes this bill was in place when he was a child because both his parents smoked, this is a voice for those who don't have a voice, the children who sit in the backseats of cars.

Certainly, we intend to have a public education strategy, which is a key component of this proposed legislation, if it is indeed passed. I want to say that this has truly been a tremendous experience, listening to the voices of the people of Ontario and taking up the position that they asked us to take in moving forward. I would commend everyone—including all of our stakeholders—who has been involved with us right from the beginning. I want to take this time to ask the members and everyone to continue to support this legislation by talking to people and speaking out whenever they can in enforcement of this particular bill, if passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm pleased to join in the debate this morning on behalf of the official opposition in respect to Bill 69, An Act to protect children from second-hand tobacco smoke in motor vehicles by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

You notice that right there in the title of the bill, it actually begins with "An Act to protect children." I think that all of us—as I've stated many, many times in the Legislature, as have the opposition members—believe very strongly in the protection of our vulnerable members in society, especially in respect to the protection of children. They certainly are the future of our province here in Ontario.

It would be challenging, I think, for anyone to be against this bill. I'm the critic for the Ministry of Health Promotion, and the title of the ministry itself is health promotion. It promotes health and the safety of Ontarians. I'm sure the Liberals across the way focus that promotion of health and safety to include all Ontarians. We want to protect our children—there's no question, that's not the issue—wherever they are in the province of Ontario and whatever circumstance they are in.

Certainly, this minister wants to be seen and perceived as doing the right thing—protecting children. So being perceived to do the right thing includes this introduction. It's been reintroduced a few times in the Legislature and in the press. It is with that in mind that I look forward to the debate on the merits of the bill and to put forward some of my thoughts on what can be done with this legislation.

There is a bit of history to this bill that we see before us today. It was introduced previously by the member for Sault Ste. Marie, and the minister was very good in mentioning in the comments that it was introduced as private member's legislation before by that member for Sault Ste. Marie. Interestingly, when it was introduced, the Premier himself denounced what the Minister of Health Promotion has brought forward in Bill 69. He used some carefully crafted language when the private member's

bill was introduced and I think he said that it's a slippery slope.

What is concerning is that in the same article the Minister of Health Promotion said she is content to debate a ban at the end of the year, which would have been the end of this year that we're in, 2008. So this is all after the private member's bill was introduced by the member for Sault Ste. Marie. We have the Premier saying, "Caution. I don't know for sure what to do yet," the Minister of Health Promotion saying maybe at the end of this year we'd be doing that. I trust that the minister is sincere in doing what she says, in bringing forward this legislation. Certainly, we'll question the reason the legislation all of a sudden became a priority.

I want to quote from the December 2007 Kingston Whig-Standard: Health Promotion Minister Margaret Best "was noncommittal about whether the province would support the latest proposal"; the Windsor Star, December 7: Margaret Best, Minister of Health Promotion, "shied away from saying whether she would support the bill." This is in relation to the private member's bill again, I say.

Maybe the direction hadn't been given by the Premier's office to point at what the Premier thought was a slippery slope at that point; he doesn't want his cabinet colleagues to disagree. Regardless of how you look at this, there are some interesting agreements or disagreements that have unfolded over the past several months with respect to the Liberals' position on this particular aspect of protecting children. But we are here debating it as legislation today, so we're happy to see that.

In my own riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, I've been pleased to work with my local health unit, the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit, in promoting awareness of the dangers to our children of both smoking and second-hand smoke. They did a great job of spearheading the petitions I've been reading in the Legislature. They got on board with one of the high schools in Lindsay, I. E. Weldon Secondary School. A very eager group of young ladies got many signatures on petitions. They came to my office and they had the press there—learning how to do politics and how to get legislation and changes moved forward into law. I said to them that we must follow through with this, so we're going to keep in touch with them as part of the education that started with petitions to change the legislation. They brought it to their MPP—myself—who brought petitions forward to the Legislature in support of the legislation. I think it's a great learning experience and education is a big component of this legislation, as I have discussed and will address later.

Interestingly enough, the local health unit is also currently involved in a campaign called CATCH, which is lobbying against contraband tobacco products, somewhat of a sensitive topic that we've been discussing in the Legislature over the past month or more. Certainly, it's been sensitive for the Minister of Health Promotion and the many ministries that are involved, but I'll defer those comments about that situation to a little later.

When the bill was first introduced by the member for Sault Ste. Marie, the health promotion minister, as I said, was content to wait till the end of the year. The local health unit that came to my office said, "Bring this on. Here are the petitions." At that point, I think there were over 1,000 petitions that we received from my riding with respect to this matter. I know that many of my colleagues in the Legislature have read similar petitions in that respect. I think that helped, and certainly some of the polling numbers, as my colleague from Parry Sound–Muskoka said, maybe changed that discussion so that we're not having it at the end of this year, we're having it now. It's kind of one of those conversions on the road to Damascus that seem to happen over there on the Liberal side of the House. They've seen the light. They're changing their ways, in this respect anyway, in their timelines.

I wanted to put some statistics on the record that give me concern and certainly give the Liberals, I'm sure, reason for bringing in this province-wide program to educate parents and others on the dangers of second-hand smoke and smoking in vehicles with children.

0940

My colleague from Kitchener–Waterloo, the health critic for the PC Party, brought forward a resolution directly addressing the need for such an education program in December of last year. It was, "That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should protect the children and youth of this province from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke in automobiles by immediately implementing an effective province-wide campaign to educate parents about the dangers of smoking in vehicles when a person who is less than 16 years of age is present." I say that the member for Kitchener–Waterloo, our health critic, had great foresight. She filed it on December 13, 2007.

Many of you in the Legislature know that I was a health professional, a registered nurse, for over 20 years. Many of you have children at home and you see that children breathe faster. There is a rapid rate of respiration compared to an adult. They breathe faster and therefore they absorb more of these harmful chemicals. They have much less capacity to withstand the effects of these harmful chemicals. They have higher rates of metabolism than adults do too. It's just part of growing. So the exposure to harmful chemicals increases significantly when they are subjected to smoke within a vehicle.

Every time a person breathes in second-hand smoke, whether a child or an adult, that person inhales over 100 harmful chemical agents. You look at the statistics out there and it's frightening. I've been in the nursing field, and I know many people are parents, but it still is a staggering statistic, that they're inhaling over 100 harmful chemical agents from second-hand smoke. There are a large number of risk factors that are increased by inhaling second-hand smoke that have negative effects on infants and children as well. I wanted to read some into the record:

"Every time a person breathes in second-hand smoke, he/she consumes over 100 harmful chemical agents—

carcinogens and toxins. Involuntary smoking involves exposure to the same numerous carcinogens and toxic substances that are present in mainstream tobacco smoke. There are 69 identified carcinogens in tobacco smoke.

"Of the 69 cancer-causing chemical agents, 11 are human carcinogens, 7 are probably carcinogenic in humans, and 49 of animal carcinogens are possibly also carcinogenic to humans.

"Chemicals found in second-hand smoke include:"—besides what I just mentioned—"carbon monoxide (found in your car's exhaust); ammonia (found in window cleaners); cadmium (found in batteries); arsenic (found in rat poison." Fairly frightening.

"Cigarettes produce about 12 minutes of smoke—smokers inhale 30 seconds of the smoke, the rest of the smoke lingers in the air for non-smokers to inhale.

"There is a growing awareness that adult tobacco use is also a child health problem.

"Prenatal and postnatal exposure to SHS"—second-hand smoke—"has multiple significant negative effects on a child's health during both childhood and subsequent adulthood."

I know the member for Simcoe–Grey was mentioning about his parents smoking when he was younger. My parents did not smoke but some of my family members did. Their children just harassed them today, totally, about, "How could you smoke with us in the house, in the car, around us?" But at that point, it's education. They didn't realize what they were doing. Certainly no one did it intentionally, but it is quite frightening when you start to read the statistics, some of which I'm reading today.

"SHS is known to increase the risk of low birth weight; serve as a trigger for asthma symptoms and lower respiratory infections; associated with sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS); ear infections; increased risk for development of cancer and heart disease in adults; negative impact on behaviour, attention and cognition."

When they say, "Levels of SHS in homes can reach those found in bars," 30 years ago no one would have ever dreamed of the effects of second-hand smoke and the statistics that we have before us today.

"Exposure in vehicles"—which is the bill we're discussing here today—"is known to be especially potent because of the restricted space—exposure to SHS in a vehicle is 23 times more toxic than in a house.

"When specific cancer types are considered, it has been found that leukemia and lymphoma among adults are significantly related to exposure to maternal tobacco use before 10 years of age.

"A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* concluded that approximately one out of every five instances of lung cancer in non-smokers could be attributed to childhood SHS smoke exposure."

After seeing all those statistics, I don't know how anyone can smoke out there anymore.

"The most frequently diagnosed cancer in Ontario is lung cancer—about 8,100 people will be diagnosed with lung cancer in 2008.

“Furthermore, blood carboxyhemoglobin levels of both the individual using tobacco and the individual exposed to SHS increase significantly after smoking has occurred—children have much higher respiratory rates and metabolism than adults....” It’s a really serious problem. It impacts them twice as bad. We kind of got technical there, but basically you don’t have as much oxygen-carrying capacity in your hemoglobin when you’re smoking or have been exposed to second-hand smoke. So it’s proven that children absorb the chemicals much faster than adults do, especially in enclosed areas like cars, which we’re speaking to.

I know with the programs that are available here—there are 11,000 participants in nicotine replacement therapy. In the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Smoking Treatment for Ontario Patients, which is the STOP study, for 11,000 patients the cost of that six-week course is about \$2.5 million.

I guess the question could be that the nicotine replacement therapy—are we actually assisting those children in Caledonia who are exposed to a higher rate of second-hand smoke by reducing cigarettes that are available to them? Certainly, I know that smoking rates among Canadian aboriginal youth far outstrip those of their non-native peers. Statistics Canada figures show that 61% of First Nation girls aged 15 to 17 are smokers, compared to 15% of girls of that age in the general population; while 47% of First Nation boys 15 to 17 smoke, compared to 13% of their non-native peers. That topic has been brought up many times in the Legislature, but there are certainly some startling statistics that show we need to protect those children who have access to illegal cigarettes at reduced prices and don’t understand the impacts they’re having.

I certainly agree that it’s our duty to work towards doing what we can to bring this awareness of education to Ontarians about these harmful effects, especially with children in confined spaces, as in cars, which we’re speaking to today. Again, I’m going to refer to the resolution from my colleague the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, our health critic, from December of last year, which specifically indicated the need for a province-wide education campaign for parents and others about the dangers to children associated with smoke in their vehicles. Again, we’ve had examples this morning in the Legislature of just yesterday seeing adults smoking with children in their cars. There’s just no excuse. We have to act on this. I’m glad, as I said, about the road-to-Damascus conversion from both the Minister of Health Promotion and the Premier to have advanced this legislation earlier than the end of the year, as was first reported.

The minister referenced this in her statement following the introduction of Bill 69: A 2005 Health Canada study estimated that in a one-month period, 144,000 children in this province are exposed to second-hand smoke in vehicles. I’ll repeat that figure, because it’s quite astounding: 144,000 children are exposed to second-hand smoke each month. The resolution was brought forward by the member from Kitchener–

Waterloo, our health critic, in December. I bring these time frames out intentionally. If the Liberals across the way had been responsible enough to act on that and have an education program put in place, there could have been a better chance for those 144,000 kids affected each month to breathe more safely and easily. I guess the political climate just wasn’t right back in December. It’s right now.

As I said, it’s legislation that we’re supporting. It’s up to the government, at the end of the day, to ensure that people have the facts and are aware of the hazardous effects of second-hand smoke, particularly in respect to the dangers to children.

0950

The Ontario Medical Association has been loud and clear about the dangers to children of exposure to second-hand smoke. They’ve been calling on this action for four years. One of the Liberal members had stated that back in the 1960s, I believe it was, that information had been brought forward. I know we’re in 2008 now, but those statistics have been around and some awareness had been around back then. It’s interesting that it has taken so long to get the studies done, but we are here now.

In January of this year, the head of the Ontario Medical Association, Dr. Janice Willett, stated clearly that Ontario can’t afford to drag its heels on this issue, “I sure hope it’s at the top of their docket,” and “We think it is a no-brainer.... It’s about protecting the most vulnerable who can’t protect themselves.”

At that point, the minister was still content to wait until the end of the year, but it was missing a clear opportunity. As I say, education and awareness are the key components to protecting children from the harms of second-hand smoke. The Canadian Cancer Society, which does a great deal of work for all of us in the province of Ontario, quotes a California study:

“In 2005, the state of California’s Air Resources Board compared a large number of studies measuring second-hand particle concentrations in different environments and found that in-car concentrations, with smoking and no ventilation, were up to 60 times greater than in a smoke-free home, and up to 27 times greater than in a smoker’s home.

“The research showed that even under full ventilation,”—you just can’t roll the window down in the car—“interior respirable particle concentrations were at least 13 times that of outdoor concentration. With no ventilation, these particle concentrations reached levels as high as 300 times outdoor particle concentration.

“Second-hand smoke increases the risk of asthma and ear infections in children and is related to sudden infant death syndrome and respiratory health....

“‘We encourage parents and caregivers not to wait for this bill to pass to protect their children,’ Goodhand said. ‘When you buckle up, butt out.’”

I think that’s a great slogan that we can move forward with. Again, that was from the Canadian Cancer Society.

As we’ve said and my colleagues have brought forward, it’s education, education, education. It is for our children.

The Ontario Lung Association is another stakeholder group that has been pushing for this legislation. They put out in their April 30 press release, “Second-hand smoke is a leading trigger for children with asthma, causing more asthma attacks and symptoms. As high as 20% of Ontario children suffer from asthma, one of the highest rates in the country.”

If anyone has had a family member with asthma, or as I’ve seen many times as a nurse, when an asthma attack happens, it needs immediate attention and can certainly lead to death. In many of our rural ridings—I actually worked with a nurse who had an asthma attack on her way to work and subsequently died because she couldn’t get there fast enough and there was no help on the roads. I’ve seen an increase in the general population and people who I’ve been in contact with in respect to childhood asthma. I’ve never seen so many cases of childhood asthma. This is certainly one of the triggers for childhood asthma and for all asthmas and needs to be taken very seriously.

“The science speaks for itself,” as the president and CEO, George Habib, from the Lung Association says. “Children face the greatest health risk and are the least able to protect themselves against second-hand smoke in their family vehicle. This legislation gives a strong voice to the backseat, in the best interest of children. It’s absolutely the right thing to do.”

He refers to the “recent Ipsos Reid poll conducted by the Ontario Tobacco-Free Network found that 86% of Ontario non-smokers and 66% of Ontario smokers support legislation that would ban smoking in vehicles carrying children under the age of 16.” With that, I say that’s great. The smokers are actually realizing this.

I think that many of you will see that most people don’t smoke in their own homes anymore. If there are other people there, they go to the back porch. There’s a lot of pressure.

I tease my one girlfriend. We were in line together at the cashier, and the people ahead of us were buying cigarettes, and the child actually started crying and said, “Mommy, they’re going to die. They’re buying cigarettes.” I think that the education component of the harmful effects of cigarettes has done a great job with our children, because they’re now educating their parents. It was a little embarrassing, because we didn’t know the people and the child was already crying that those people may pass on because they were buying cigarettes. Certainly, we can see that the anti-smoking campaign—we’ve had a good start with our children, and they’re trying to educate our family members and society at large that the harmful effects of smoking and second-hand smoke are devastating.

I know the lung association is a great organization, as well. It’s one of Canada’s oldest voluntary non-profit health promotion organizations which I’ve found—that’s the good part of this job: As you get the chance to do research and delve into issues, you find these wonderful statistics. The lung association is concerned with the prevention and control of asthma, chronic lung disease

caused by smoking, and with air quality and its effect on lung health. It was incorporated in 1945 and has community offices across the province. They do a great job, because there is nothing scarier than not being able to catch your breath and the panic that incurs—and of course that just enhances the already problematic situation of not being able to breathe—and anxiety. It’s very, very difficult to try to calm someone down when you’re in a medical setting and you have all the tools available; it’s really, really hard when it’s out in the community and that happens. So there are certainly challenges that we have out there.

Dr. Suzanne Strasberg, the OMA board chair, says, “Protecting the health of Ontario’s children is one of our most important jobs. Given that the concentration of smoke in cars can be up to 60 times greater than in concentrations indoors, the need for such a ban is undeniable.” I don’t have a date on that. That was in response to the legislation that was brought forward.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation, which is very big in our communities, is a volunteer-based health charity that leads in eliminating heart disease and stroke, reducing their impacts through the advancement of research and its application, and the promotion of healthy living and advocacy. I know many of you have recently worked with them with respect to the defibrillation programs that have been in our riding, with defibrillators placed everywhere. They’re a great organization. Again, education is key with them. They do a great job of going out into our communities.

The CEO of their foundation, Rocco Rossi, said the new rules are designed to protect children from 4,000 dangerous chemicals found in second-hand cigarette smoke and most drivers think the legislation is an idea whose time has come.

“The car is already a regulated environment with specific rules for seatbelts and child seats, so the amendment is not the ‘slippery slope’ as some have suggested or feared”—which is referring to the Premier’s comments from last year. “It reflects the natural and prudent desire to protect those who can’t protect themselves; namely our children.”

Again, he quotes the statistic that 66% of smokers and 86% of non-smokers support legislation that bans smoking in cars when children under 16 are present.

“This will provide an enormous health benefit as they grow into adulthood. We encourage all parties to support the legislation.”

I think we’re hearing comments in the Legislature today that we’ve seen support from many groups in the community—they have been promoting this for years—and that we should move ahead in this matter.

I know that the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario is supportive of this legislation.

It being Nursing Week this week, I want to thank all the nurses in the province for all the hard work and front-line work that they do in assisting those who are unwell and also in the educational component. As a nurse, myself, I can tell you that a lot of your day is educating

patients you're dealing with. We have nurses in the community, as well, who educate a lot of families and children and first-time mums, so they're exposed to a large spectrum of the public. They're front-line in life and death situations but also in education and prevention. So I thank them on behalf of all of the Legislature. I know that many of you, in your ridings, are going to be out and either following a nurse or speaking to nurses this week, it being Nursing Week. I know that I have two functions in my riding that I can attend. I'll be speaking to some nurses at Haliburton Highlands Health Services. Also, I'll go to Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay, where I nursed until I was fortunate enough to be elected into the Legislature. I always make a point of going there on the Friday of Nursing Week to congratulate and praise them and assist in the activities they do. So I thank my home hospital and warn them that I'll be there Friday again.

1000

I've read that other stakeholders have been in support of this legislation. I know the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health has been a strong advocate. Again, they do an amazing job—Mental Health and Addiction 101, the innovative response to such questions, the education and training department they have. They present 14 interactive, online tutorials. April 22 was the Celebrating Innovation in Health Care Expo; they were at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. So again, getting out in their communities, exposing people to the services they offer with online tutorials, which is the new Internet stage that we are at in life. That exposes a lot more people to the education system and to help. So again, it's a good organization that does a lot of health prevention and promotion.

I want to speak a little bit about some of the concerns that we have in the legislation. I want to thank the ministry staff for the briefing they gave last week. They phoned and offered the briefing on the bill, and I want to thank them for that. We asked them questions about the legal and enforcement concerns that we have and how that's going to work.

The proposed legislation specifically states that the law would prohibit persons from smoking or having lighted tobacco in a motor vehicle if another person who is less than 16 years old is inside the same vehicle. Any person—it can be the driver or the passenger—in the car who is smoking with someone under the age of 16 present would be committing an offence.

It includes cars moving or stationary, regardless of windows or a sunroof being open or a convertible. So you can't just say, "Well, yes I was smoking, but the windows were down, the sunroof was open." As I've said, in some of the statistics and studies that I've read, that doesn't cut it. You're still exposed to the second-hand smoke.

Those failing to comply are guilty of an offence and subject to a \$250 fine. I know from the ministry briefing—and we asked this—that it's not considered a traffic violation. It's under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, so it's not considered a traffic violation. There's no in-

creased fine for the second, third or further violations by the same person. So the fine for repeated offences remains the same, it's \$250, \$250, \$250. That is a little different. I know the private member's bill that was introduced had a different range of fines, so that's a little bit of a different part of the legislation that I just wanted to mention.

So where would the offence fall on a person's record? I guess there's a heavy reliance on the police to enforce this legislation, if passed, which begs the question, how would the legislation be enforced? My colleague from Simcoe North articulates very well that the province is already far short of having enough police officers to enforce the Highway Traffic Act. Yesterday, he made a statement in the Legislature about the importance of the work that our police officers in Ontario do, as we recognized their work during Police Week. I want to join in his sentiments and congratulate and thank the 31,000 front-line police officers who protect the streets, roads, waterways and communities across our great province.

On this side of the House, we have a tremendous amount of faith and respect for the work of our law enforcement officers. Some of them were here in the Legislature not long ago bringing forward their concerns that they see on the front lines, and how we can all better collectively make our communities safer. I know I meet with my police officers on a regular basis. I see them in my riding. Unfortunately, I've been to too many of their retirement parties as of late, but I thank them for their many decades of work in that respect. You see them out in their communities—and always in a good way; they haven't pulled me over or anything—out at functions, because they do a lot of community work not just in their jobs, but in their off hours. I know that Cops for Cancer has just recently been through our ridings. There was a big celebration with Cops for Cancer in Peterborough on Saturday, where they had children with cancer—unfortunately, I know a few of those right at this present time. They had given the children with cancer—they rode for the last part of the journey and they were given a bicycle. I think that's just one example of the tremendous work that our police officers do, not just in protecting their communities but giving back to their communities for the various causes they have. I certainly haven't succumbed to the shave-your-head-type fundraisers they do, but I know they have been out there recently, doing that type of fundraising and encouraging children and other members of the community to get involved in that.

Back to the enforcement side of this: It is the police who will be enforcing this. To simply suggest that those officers will be able to enforce this new legislation because they happen to be the ones enforcing traffic safety begs further questions. I've already said that it's hard to have enough police officers to enforce the traffic act. I know that the minister of public safety has tried many times to take credit for the addition of 1,000 new cops, and he has talked about full funding. We know that his government never really fully funded one officer. The most they've put in is 35% toward an officer that costs

\$100,000 for the taxpayers. The previous PC government put in the framework for those 1,000 new police officers. The current provincial government is only really putting 35% of the pay toward those officers. The ministry of safety blames the federal government for some failures in adding new police officers, despite the federal government's kick-start assistance. When you start having 600 OPP officers on a weekend between the two years of unrest in both Caledonia and Deseronto, you need new officers—

Mr. Mike Colle: Is this about the smoke-free act?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, because we're talking about officers and enforcement.

In Caledonia, and you add to that Deseronto, you need new officers. You're taking those officers out of other communities in the province. Instead of following his leader's cue in blaming anyone else for their failures, how about the minister work with the federal government in providing those 1,000 new officers for the province of Ontario? It doesn't seem unreasonable. Again, you can't put politics ahead of principles. Bill 69 adds further reliance on an already stretched police force in the province.

Not all young people and children carry identification with them, so again, in the briefing, when we talked about the enforcement, we asked, "How do you know if they're 16, they're younger, they're older?" If a police officer feels that a person is 16 or younger, a fine can be assessed to the person in the vehicle who is smoking a tobacco product. What if that young person believed to be under 16 just happens to look young, but is actually older than 16? The onus is then placed on the person who is charged with the offence to prove that he or she was incorrectly charged.

So now we have to go the courts because not all children—or if there happen to be their parents with them—identification is not easily obtained. People don't carry that around with them at that age. So we're going to have to go to the courts, then. We already know that the courts are burdened and they're backlogged. It's going to be up to the municipalities, I guess, which are also overburdened with regulations and increased costs of services, to track down those who haven't paid their fines under this legislation. I know that there are a number of municipalities, some in my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, that have passed resolutions to support the intent of Bill 69.

As always, the devil is in the details. I certainly think it's vital that we get this to committee and flesh out how this is all going to work together—police officers, municipalities, the fines, whose record it goes on, the reverse onus of someone proving that their age is actually over 16. Part of legislation and why we go to committee is to work out some questions we have, and all the stakeholders can come before us and provide those details, certainly in terms of what I mentioned but also the educational perspective of the health units, the communities, how the Ministry of Health Promotion is going to be involved with those communities, and the enforcement

and education angle. A full-scale, proper education component is probably going to be the most important aspect of this legislation in order to protect kids.

I mentioned some of the legal issues. I'd like to expand on that, because there is a huge double standard being promoted by the government across the way. The Premier stated, with respect to this legislation, Bill 69, "We need to do everything we can to keep our children safe and healthy." It's a profound statement, which I agree totally with.

1010

I do have to question the Premier's and the Liberal government's sincerity when I brought up many, many times—and I do mean this very sincerely and am concerned about this—the illegal smoke shacks that exist. I know that we have highlighted in Caledonia the illegal cigarettes that are for sale, especially being so close to two schools. It's unfortunate that the Minister of Health Promotion and the parliamentary assistant, the member from Oak Ridges-Markham, voted against the protection of children in Caledonia. We tabled that on April 29 in the Legislature, that the sale of these illegal cigarettes is being facilitated by the Liberal government because the smoke shack is on crown land, metres from the schools. It's unfortunate that the government has been quiet on that. The question has been deferred and we have eviction notices here and there, and third parties sending eviction notices. We're trying to piece the tale together. But if children can purchase cheap and dangerous cigarettes without so much as being asked for identification, that is not acceptable. We have to change that. We're saying that; we brought the motion forward. I have asked many questions in the Legislature, because it's not fair to the children there. They're exposed. The harmful effects that they will see—we want to help prevent those harmful effects from second-hand smoke and from smoking, which is what is occurring. If there's easy access, there aren't the education programs there. You can go on your bicycle, buy a package of cheap cigarettes, put it in the hamper, drive off and give it to your friends, who could be as young as seven. That's not good health promotion in the province of Ontario.

There are statistics quoted—I have a cigarette butt survey that was done in November 2007 by the Canadian Convenience Stores Association. They commissioned the study through the We Expect ID program. The researchers visited 55 schools and collected thousands of cigarette butts to analyze. In Durham, 28% of cigarette butts found around schools were illicit; 36% in Peel; with Mississauga, as high as 44%; in Toronto, 23% were illegal cigarettes in this butt study done by the Canadian Convenience Stores Association. I'm highlighting this because it's frightening. That's a huge demographic that we're missing. We can't be guardians of youth and ignore the large numbers—I think 37%, it is now—of illicit cigarettes that are being sold in this province to the people of Ontario.

Contraband cigarettes—no government inspections, product testing or review—finding their way into our

streets: I read the list of hazardous materials you find in legal cigarettes. Can you imagine what would be in illegal cigarettes? I ask that question. We don't know, but it's not going to be less hazardous products; it's going to be more hazardous products being sold, as I said, at a low value to school children, in smoke shops—in this case they exist on government land, so it's a huge government responsibility—but also out of the trunks of cars. We all have these stories from our ridings of the illegal cigarettes that are sold out of the trunks of cars. They're not asking for ID. They're not saying that it's been tested. There are just no questions asked. There's a huge revenue we're missing which could help the government; they could be using it for education programs and for more programs, if needed, to help people stop smoking.

If illegal cigarettes account for 30% of all cigarettes sold in the province, and it's estimated to go to 50% by the year 2010, I say it's not working. Your health promotion, your anti-smoking—you can't ignore that 37% statistic of illegal cigarettes in the province. So when you have success—the government claims that smoking is down 18.7% in its time in office. Well, I hope it is down, but you really can't ignore the statistics that 37% of cigarettes are bought or sold illegally in Ontario. That skews your whole number system. It's good that the government's promise to cover the cost of smoking cessation products for all will be introduced, but you are ignoring a huge study out there that says that 37% are illegal.

We've tried to assist the government, pointing out these illegal smoke shops on government-owned land with schools so close by. That's just not a good picture. We want to help all the people in Ontario; we can't exclude some. I'm hoping that the government is taking steps to shut that operation down, and further steps for enforcement to stop the 37% illegal sale of tobacco. It's a huge health factor. As I said, you just cannot ignore it. You can't turn a blind eye to this burgeoning trade of smoke shops. They're projecting that 50% of sales are going to be illegal sales by the year 2010. We can't ignore that. We can't have double standards. The minister can't sit idle on that side of the Legislature and say she is protecting all the children of Ontario when the children who are buying the illegal cigarettes and the adults who are buying them are not being protected. We are not protecting them. We are not helping them.

When the website says “to protect all Ontarians regardless of where they are located in the province,” that's what we expect to see and that's what we've been trying to chase this government down on: letting them know where we know there are illegal smoke shops, especially that they're on government property. They could do something maybe a little quicker on that facility, but that shouldn't exist anywhere in Ontario because we are exposing more children to cigarettes, getting them addicted to cigarettes. We have to protect children all over the province. Bill 69 is a good step forward, but we can't ignore that other fact that was brought forward about the illegal smoke shops and the number of people smoking contraband cigarettes.

The protection of children was brought forward by another colleague of mine, the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills. He brought forward some very thoughtful amendments to Bill 12, the adoption disclosure bill. That was to ensure that children who were abused, removed from the home and subsequently adopted could be automatically protected. We're talking about protecting children from having their personal information disclosed. So it would have protected children who had been physically or sexually abused from parents who abused them. The Liberal members on that committee voted that down.

Once again, we want to protect children. We want to protect all children in Ontario. A health professional whom I have great respect for, the member from Oak Ridges–Markham, who is closely tied to the Liberal Party regardless of the political opportunity over principles, voted that down, and that's protecting children. You are saying that the Liberals are creating a legal right for a violently abusive birth parent to find out the adoptive name of the child they abused—then with protecting the safety and peace of mind of the abused victim. They are abused children. They're not going to mature in their adulthood as quickly because they didn't come from a normal background, and we need to protect them further.

Again, we brought that forward to protect the children, and Bill 69 is about protecting children. This should be a consistent concept that weaves its way through all legislation that we see in this Legislature before us, including the members of the Liberal Party. So when you defeat that type of amendment that would have protected children and victims, that's political opportunism; that's not responsible government. Time allocation was brought forward and the members of the Liberal Party voted that down.

The member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills has been one of the first politicians, actually, not just with his work with the adoption bills—many have been seen here protecting those children. But he was also one of the first politicians who talked about the dangers of smoking and second-hand smoke in the workplace, way back in 1983, certainly before I was elected to the Legislature. I can't say it was before I was born, but we can always try. But in 1983, the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills brought forward and talked about the dangers of smoking and second-hand smoke.

Again, we want to protect children on all fronts. I mentioned earlier about the fact that my colleague and critic for the Ministry of Health brought forward the resolution back in December with respect to second-hand smoke in vehicles with children present. In January, she sent a letter to the Premier—January 2007, by the way—with respect to the fact that the Minister of Health Promotion—not the same minister at this time—was content to wait and not debate the importance of this issue.

1020

Some of the contents of the letter from Ms. Witmer: “As we recognize National Non-Smoking Week, I call on your government to take action to immediately

implement a new anti-smoking initiative to introduce an effective province-wide campaign to educate parents and others of the dangers of smoking in motor vehicles while children are inside.

“However, despite the fact that health advocates across Ontario are actively expressing their desire for you to make this issue a top priority for your government,” the Minister of Health Promotion is postponing this. Such delay “is of great concern since reports suggest second-hand smoke in a vehicle is 23 times more toxic than in a house, due to smaller enclosed space.”

She concludes:

“When I consider research which indicates that children and youth are particularly susceptible to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke, I ask you, can this province afford to gamble with the health of even one child?” I can certainly tell you that no, it cannot afford to gamble with the health of even just one child.

I congratulate the member for her advocacy on behalf of the children of this province, for bringing this forward to the attention of the Premier. I think it’s one of the reasons why we are debating this legislation today. We are happy to see that it has been brought earlier than first noticed.

When we talk about bringing forward an educational campaign for parents and others of the dangers of smoking in vehicles with children inside—again, that statistic of 144,000 children per month exposed to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke—we had to wait until the right political opportunity came along. When I received the summary from the Ministry of Health Promotion, it indicated the following: If the bill is passed, the ministry will work with police organizations and public health units to educate people about the dangers of second-hand smoke and encourage voluntary compliance, and support implementation of the proposed ban, including ensuring that the appropriate enforcement mechanisms are in place.

As I’ve said many times but I am repeating so we can get to this part, the educational aspect is very critical in this legislation. I’d like to know the specifics of how the Minister of Health Promotion plans to spend—we see that she has a budget—because it’s going to cost money. So where are those educational dollars to bring awareness of the dangers of second-hand smoke? What is the plan? I guess that’s the basic line of that.

Another concern about Bill 69 is the fact that it’s an amendment to the existing Smoke-Free Ontario Act and is only specific to tobacco. It does not include other legal, yet dangerous, materials such as medicinal marijuana. That’s certainly an apparent loophole.

In March, my colleague from Burlington, under the very best intentions of protecting people, including children, from the negative effects of second-hand smoke and from materials beyond just cigarette tobacco, presented her Bill 42. I was certainly pleased to speak in support of it. She crafted it in a way to close the loophole in the McGuinty government’s own anti-smoking legislation, which fails to include medicinal marijuana and

controlled substances in the definition, thereby allowing these products to be smoked in public places where cigarettes are not allowed. It just doesn’t make sense. I’m sure it’s just a loophole. We were trying to bring that loophole in the smoke-free Ontario legislation forward.

It has been on TV many times—Gator Ted’s is the facility that’s involved, and they were here on the day that the member from Burlington brought forward that legislation. I think it was on CTV last week; it was in the news again.

Unfortunately, in the private members’ committee, where this bill was being discussed, the Liberals used their majority. They killed that bill moving forward, even though in the Legislature the day we debated it, it did get support from all party members. I was hoping the Premier would pay attention to the fact that his party members, on that day private members’ bills were brought forward, were in support of that, but he silenced them.

I’m asking the Minister of Health Promotion to maybe put some pressure at the cabinet table to look at that again. I’m sure it was just a loophole, it was oversight, when it was first introduced. But, really, it’s not fair to have the public and children exposed to second-hand smoke of medicinal marijuana. There’s a place and a time. It is medicinal marijuana, it does have a purpose, but we’re saying it shouldn’t be in a public spot where the exposure to second-hand smoke from medicinal marijuana. That’s what the excellent member for Burlington—she heard from her constituents and brought that legislation forward. We’re saying—we’re talking about Bill 69 here—maybe we should look at that angle as it relates to both Bill 69 and the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

Again, we cannot have double standards. I’ve mentioned a few double standards in the Legislature today and before. We are here to say that we think you’ve got this wrong; this is how we can help; this is what we’re proposing. I’m hoping that the government does act on this private member’s bill that the member for Burlington brought forward. We need to ensure—the government is trying to appear to ensure—that we are safe when travelling in a vehicle where a person is subjected to the toxins that are coming out. Again, it’s not just tobacco; it’s medicinal marijuana. It’s a fair question, as are the many examples I’ve mentioned here before.

I know, Mr. Speaker, we’re almost getting—it’s been a long hour. We’ve shared many statistics.

Interjections.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Look at my great team behind me: “Don’t quit now. We want another hour.” I don’t know if you’d get unanimous consent for another hour from everyone involved.

Interjections.

Ms. Laurie Scott: There are more people than at the 9 o’clock start, for sure, where we were very skeletal and we didn’t have any motion to bring coffee in. I don’t know if that would entice more members to start in the Legislature at 9, but it was a good mention by my colleague last week when we started this new rotation.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I heard you were speaking. I rushed in at 9:05.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Well, I'm just thrilled to hear that. We didn't quite get to 10 members at the start of the Legislature this morning, but I'm sure that the whips will get everybody trained so that there are enough people here to start at 9 o'clock in the morning. So that's good.

It's been an excellent opportunity to speak about many issues this morning on the protection of children in Ontario from many different angles. This has been good for the Ministry of Health Promotion. It was a new ministry created, I believe, in 2003. Another member was in, and now we have a new member of the Legislature as the Minister of Health Promotion. I'm sure she has the best intentions. She has been given some tools by the present government in order to do what the ministry says it is to do, and that's health promotion in many different aspects.

We're here to say, "How are you spending that money? Are you getting the education values in this respect? Is the prevention going to work and is it going to be enforced?" We've asked many questions about Bill 69 on that, as well as woven in other concerns we have about protecting children all across the province of Ontario.

Governments have to lead by example. I brought up my strong concerns, and I know they've been brought up many, many times by other members in the Legislature, about protecting all Ontarians equally. We're talking about smoking in vehicles and banning that smoking; we're talking about second-hand smoke for children in cars. But you have to say to yourselves, "Now, here's the province of Ontario. How are we going to enforce it? Where are some spots where we need to clean up our act or better protect children?"

I brought up the smoke shacks that certainly would be appealing to children who want to experiment. They haven't heard all the information about the dangers of smoking; maybe they have parents who smoke. That concerns us when there is a smoke shop that is so close to two schools, the one example that we've been using, trying to highlight the fact that 37% of cigarettes for sale are illegal and have not been tested and contain more hazardous materials than cigarettes that are tested and legally sold.

We have good business practices in our small businesses or our convenience store operations that sell tobacco, and they're trying to comply in the timeline they have with the power wall. They are making sure they're identifying the young people who are coming in. They're doing all the right practices. Then we have, on the other hand, the over 30% of cigarettes that are bought illegally. No one's making those checks.

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You, as government, have to set examples. All of us in this Legislature have to protect the children. There are problems out there; we're helping identify them for you to act on. You would be good leaders and better at protecting children if you'd take some of our concerns

forward and enforce the protections that are needed out there for the children.

So I want to say that we should do more. I want more discussion on the illegal smoke shops and the illicit cigarettes that are being sold.

Bill 69 is a step forward in protecting children from second-hand smoke in cars. The public health units in my area, as I've mentioned, have been fantastic at carrying forward this message. I assume they're going to be given a larger part in this education. But it's up to all of us to help educate the public about these serious effects.

When we're discussing the safety and the health of our children, it's of the utmost importance that we look at all the facets, where the loopholes are.

Under much pressure from either surveys or polls or newspapers or politicians—even politicians within the Liberal Party forcing their government to bring this earlier, the OMA asking for four years, the lung association asking for a long time. We're happy to see that the legislation was brought forward. We want to get it to committee to get it through its steps—the democratic process of hearing the feedback on how it's going to work and how we get to measure its success.

We've mentioned that the police officers are a very large part of this. Will there be enough of them to watch for this? They enforce seat belt laws; they enforce speeding laws. Is it only if they happen to pull them over for another violation that they can make this charge? I'm sure that they would if they could. But are they intentionally going to pull over cars when they see a puff of smoke coming out? Are there enough of them? Is that going to be a priority? I'm hoping the minister has consulted with our police officers, since they're key to the enforcement here—how the fines are going to work, what the follow-up is going to be.

I know that we're getting close to our new question period time of 10:45, and I'm sure there are some questions and comments from members of the Legislature on this. Thank you for the opportunity to do the leadoff for the PC Party. I look forward to questions and comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I certainly have a few comments for my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. She mentioned that she's a nurse herself, and this being Nursing Week, I figure it would be appropriate to say congratulations. I hope Nursing Week goes well for every nurse in this province.

I also want to focus on the role that nurses have been playing in trying to move the Smoke-Free Ontario agenda forward from way back when.

Another colleague mentioned that the idea of banning smoking was first introduced in 1960 and we talked about it again in 1983 following some of the new research on the terrifying effects of cigarette smoking on health.

I also want to mention that I was working in the hospital sector in the early 1980s, and I can remember going

to patients' rooms and actually lighting up cigarettes for people who were not able to get out of bed, and it was really okay. I remember going into a hospital in Sudbury where the floor around the beds was all burned because bedridden people would drop their cigarettes and there was nobody there to pick them up. They went to tiles so that they could just replace the tiles around the bed, because month after month they would get burned. That was the way of life. My colleague mentioned that she was at meetings where everybody talked about public health yet smoked. The same thing happened in my experience: The hospital cafeteria was blue with smoke and so were patients' rooms.

We've come a long way. This bill is a tiny, weenie little step on a long journey.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I was intently listening to the debate, the speech from my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, and I think she is supporting this bill. I think it was there somewhere in the first five or 10 minutes, and I congratulate her and the PC caucus for supporting this particular bill. I want to congratulate the Premier, the Minister of Health Promotion, the member from Sault Ste. Marie and the member from Oak Ridges-Markham for their leadership in forwarding this bill.

Leadership is about listening, and in this instance we have a clear indication that the Premier, the Minister of Health Promotion and her parliamentary assistant listened to Ontarians and took action in that regard. They listened to the member from Sault Ste. Marie and the bill he proposed and then took action. That is leadership, and they are to be commended.

I've heard a lot about this particular bill from my constituents in Ottawa Centre, and I must say that there is overwhelming support from the people of Ottawa Centre that we should ban smoking in cars when there are children involved.

I'll be very honest: There is a very small minority of people out there that does not support this bill, and I've heard from them as well. I will give them the point of view—the point of view in this House, the point of view I've given to them—that this legislation is about harm reduction. This legislation is about protecting those who are vulnerable. If somebody wants to continue smoking and if they are an adult, they are free to do so. We hope that they quit, because it's in their best interest in terms of health, but that is something that's up to them. But this particular legislation is trying to protect our children, to ensure that they are not subject to second-hand smoke. We know that studies have proven that in confined spaces like cars, the risk is much higher.

Once again, I will be voting in support of this legislation.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Bill 69 bans smoking in cars where children are present. The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock did an excellent job during this past hour.

MPP Scott made reference to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. I worked there for 20 years. Our job was to provide a foundation of research for policy-makers, and it does raise the question: Where is the

research with respect to this particular initiative? What percentage of the population smokes in cars when children are present? I would like to know what the health objective is here. What will be monitored? How will this initiative be evaluated with respect to any success or failure? How will it be enforced? Is this a law that we don't need? Will the parents who are doing this respect this particular law? In the end, will it solve the problem?

We know that six months ago, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, banned smoking. Is this government merely trying to catch up? Is this the flavour of the day? Do we see a herd mentality here?

So I ask the McGuinty government, where are the data? Where are the statistics? Where is the research evidence to go forward with this type of approach? I ask the question—we do have to project into the future—what is the next step? Parents have children in their apartments. Will we see this government ban smoking in apartments, in condominiums or in homes? Where does the realm of parental responsibility lie with this present Ontario government?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's a pleasure to speak to this, even for a brief time. I'll save most of my comments for the next day of debate.

First of all, I wanted to highlight that certainly everybody in the NDP is going to support this bill. It's an inch where we need a mile, but we will support it.

I think what is telling is the difference in the budget of the Minister of Health and the budget of the Minister of Health Promotion. It's \$350 million to \$375 million for health promotion and \$40 billion for health. So clearly, this is an administration that's more interested in patching people up than in keeping them healthy in the first place.

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If they were interested in keeping them healthy—

Interjection.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I see that the Minister of Education has entered the room and is heckling me, but that's okay.

We would be putting money into our school pools, for example. We would be putting money into a number of ventures, including some stiff environmental laws, because after all, the high rate of asthma that our children are facing now—which is really quite unprecedented. I know that when my son was young, he had a brief bout of asthma, but now one in four children are taking puffers to school in some schools. We need to do something and we need to do something dramatic.

The other problem with this bill, of course, is enforcement. Our overworked, under-resourced police force are now going to have yet something else put on their plate, with no money with which to do it. If anybody's going to drive around with their local police forces—and I certainly have, with the 14 and 11 divisions in my riding—you'll see that the last thing on their minds is enforcing smoking in cars. They've got far weightier matters and they're stressed to the max even trying to deal with those—so again, enforcement.

This is motherhood and apple pie. Of course we'll support it in the New Democratic Party. We just wish that was it was a lot more than simply a salve, falling on the heels of Nova Scotia, and actually made a dramatic difference to health in this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes the time for questions and comments. The member for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I thank my colleagues for their questions and comments on our leadoff on Bill 69.

I was chuckling to myself when the member from Nickel Belt was telling stories about the cigarette butts on the tiles, and the tiles being replaced. I remember when I first started nursing in the 1980s, the nurses themselves actually smoked on the night shift at the nurses' station. So yes, we've come a long way.

We need to do more. This is a small step. We're certainly supporting this when we speak in this respect to the safety and health of our children. As I've said, that does trump everything, and what we have to do as legislators is to protect those vulnerable people in our society.

I mentioned the history of the bill. It was first introduced by the member from Sault Ste. Marie. It didn't look like we were going to have a lot of movement from the government quickly, but that has changed now. I know that the Ontario Medical Association has said that sooner is better for the health of children that are involved. The Ontario Medical Association, the Lung Association and the various groups that I and other members have mentioned in our comments have been calling for this legislation for years.

Other provinces such as British Columbia and Nova Scotia have already taken action. This has been a comment that we're not leaders here in the province of Ontario, we're kind of following the rest of the pack, but at least the legislation is being brought forward earlier than the Premier and the Minister of Health Promotion said it was going to be brought forward.

We know the bill needs to go to committee. We need to get some feedback from stakeholders, but we also need to talk about the enforcement, the police officers that are already overburdened. How are they going to enforce this? What education component is going to be involved? How are we to know that the Ministry of Health Promotion is spending the money in appropriate spots for education? And of course, if this impact is on municipalities—what the enforcement is.

I thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker. I see my time is up.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The time being close to 10:45, the debate stands adjourned.

Second reading debate adjourned.

WEARING OF CARNATIONS

Hon. Michael Bryant: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I am seeking unanimous consent for members

to wear carnations in support of the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On behalf of the member from Brant, we'd like to welcome some members from his constituency office staff to the Legislature today: Jessica Fennema, Anam Ahmed, Tina Draycott and Heather Gaukel.

On behalf of the member from Sarnia–Lambton, two guests in the west members' gallery: Marg Gagne and Norma Campbell, both from Lambton county.

In the Speaker's gallery, I'd like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Mouldi Sakri and his assistant Mr. Mohamed Elloumi to the gallery today.

On behalf of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, we'd like to welcome guests from the MS Society of Canada, who are seated in the Speaker's gallery: Kris McDonald, Mike Roche, Ian Greaves and Asad Wali.

On behalf of page Cali Van Bommel, in the Speaker's gallery: her friends Emma Snyders, Kerrie Snyders, Abbie Snyders, Hannah Snyders and Maggie Snyders.

On behalf of page Hannah Jansen, family members who will be visiting today: Nancy Millson, her grandmother; Lillie Millson, her cousin; Gregory Millson, her cousin; Brad Millson, her uncle; and Sherry Millson, her aunt.

On behalf of page Joanna Wang, in the east public gallery: Grace Zang, her mother, and Kerry Wang, her father.

Welcome to all of our guests visiting Queen's Park today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: My question is to the Premier, and it has to do with the crushing blow to Windsor and Ontario's economy with yesterday's announcement of 1,400 job cuts at General Motors.

GM is the largest recipient of grant money from this government—\$235 million—and it has announced the largest number of job cuts. The more money this government invests in a company, it seems the more jobs are lost. The Premier frequently talks about his five-step plan. We wonder if that's one of the steps.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: We remain very much determined to continue to find ways to partner with the business sector, the auto sector in particular. Ontarians have enjoyed some tremendous successes in that regard. There have been 13 separate projects in which we have co-invested. Each of these has required that the private sector enterprise make a significant new investment in

the Ontario economy. Many of those have created new jobs—in fact, thousands of jobs—and some of those have secured existing jobs. But all of those have, as a common thread, the requirement that there be significant new investment made in the Ontario economy.

If we could have found a way to secure all existing investments in the auto sector and in every other part of the private sector found throughout the province of Ontario, we would have done so, but obviously that's not the kind of thing that is feasible. We will continue to work with the auto sector and others to secure new investment.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: Perhaps the Premier in the supplementary can be a little more specific, because these are secret deals, essentially. The minister has said that she doesn't want to reveal the details. We've no idea what strings were attached, if any.

GM recently offered \$200 million to settle the American axle strike. Is that Ontario taxpayers' hard-earned money? We know that \$117 million has already flowed to General Motors out of the \$235-million commitment. How many jobs followed that \$117 million of taxpayers' money? How many jobs did it create in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'll let the Minister of Economic Development and Trade speak to some of the specifics, but let me give you one example. We were in stiff competition to land a new Toyota assembly plant here in Ontario. Competition was coming from south of the border. We came to the table with \$85 million, and we secured a \$1.1-billion investment on the part of Toyota. That means 1,300 new jobs. But it doesn't end there. Because we had that new nucleus of Toyota investment here, they then added Toyotetsu, a truck assembly plant, that created another 250 jobs. They then landed the Toyota Boshoku parts plant, which landed 365 more jobs. They then landed Toyota Tsusho Canada, which now ships parts, which has created another 10 jobs. They then added Maple Automotive Corp., which puts wheels and rims together for the RAV4. That's 30 jobs. Then they created Green Metals, Inc., which employs 10 workers who are recycling metal from the Toyota plant.

That's the result of a single new investment. We were proud to come to the table, and we'll continue to look for ways to have more new investment in the province of Ontario.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: I hope viewers noted that the Premier didn't respond to the question. He's getting a note now. You would think yesterday and earlier that he would have known what \$117 million of tax money that flowed to GM had done in terms of results. He clearly doesn't know. He doesn't have the answer here today, and that should be troubling to anyone who's concerned about the state of the Ontario economy. These job cuts at GM are another sad example of how wrong this government's policies are.

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In January of this year, David Adams, the president of the Association of International Automobile Manu-

facturers of Canada, said: "As it currently stands, Ontario is now one of the most expensive jurisdictions in the world to manufacture vehicles."

The consequences of your economic missteps are coming home to roost. For over two years we've called for an economic stimulus package: Reduce business taxes, kill red tape and kill the capital tax. When are you going to act to address this crisis?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm just not that negative on our economy. We just recently announced new investment in a Ford plant in Windsor. That was something that my colleagues opposed. We've learned recently that GM is going to produce its first-ever hybrid truck in North America here in Ontario.

The fact of the matter is, we remain very competitive, something I would ask my colleagues opposite to acknowledge. The single greatest dimension of our competitiveness has to do with the quality of our workers. There is no better group of people on the face of this planet—they are so effective, so determined to produce a quality product—than is found in the Ontario auto-workers. I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to them. The CAW in particular has the strongest competitive advantage we enjoy and we will continue to work the international markets to secure still more investments, which our workers are capable of landing—

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

NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: My question is to the Attorney General. Minister, you were copied with a letter dated April 29, 2008, from Chief Bill Montour of the Six Nations Council addressed to Minister Bryant. The letter reads: "First of all, I want to thank you on behalf of the Six Nations of the Grand River community for your intervention in the police action on Saturday April 26, 2008. Your intervention has been instrumental in the reopening of the Caledonia bypass."

Minister, this letter raises very serious and troubling questions about the interference of ministers in the enforcement of the law in this province. Have you commenced an investigation into this matter, and if not, why not?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I remember that the question was asked, I believe, for the first time last week. The minister spoke directly to it and said he did no such thing. The question was repeated to my colleague, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and he said he did no such thing. Because a letter is written, it does not make it so.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: I don't think the Attorney General, in his role and with the responsibility he has, should slough it off in terms of the concerns expressed in this letter.

Chief Montour's letter doesn't just stop there, and I'm quoting again: "During the early evening of Saturday, an OPP camera vehicle was driving past the protest site

taking pictures of individuals. The people believe this action by the OPP was initiated to be able to identify certain individuals for future charges to be laid. To this end, I'm asking you to again intervene with your colleague ministers to ask the OPP to not lay charges."

Attorney General, have you investigated Chief Montour's request? Has anyone in this government intervened and asked the OPP to not lay charges? And if you haven't looked into this, why haven't you?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I'm going to give it to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. Michael Bryant: I'm very—
Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment he just made, please.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: I withdraw.

Hon. Michael Bryant: This is a question coming from a party that every single day in the Legislature asks the government to interfere with police operations on a regular basis and then today stands up, suddenly converted by the Ipperwash inquiry, which was on that government, and has decided that interfering with police operations is wrong.

In fact, interfering with police operations is not only unconstitutional and contrary to the Ipperwash inquiry; it's certainly contrary to the actions of every member of this government. I will say it again: The approach of this government is to leave operational matters in the hands of—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary. The member for Haldimand-Norfolk.

Mr. Toby Barrett: This letter is evidence that as far as Chief Montour is concerned, both the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister of Community Safety intervened with the OPP regarding the Caledonia blockade. Chief Montour is pleased with their intervention in the past, and he's asking them to do it again.

Minister, you have known about this since April 29. You have a duty to the crown and to Ontarians to uphold the law. Why have you taken no steps to investigate this? Will you commit today to calling in the RCMP to investigate these very serious allegations?

Hon. Michael Bryant: The member may want to ask the Attorney General if he directs the police. I can tell you, this Attorney General does not direct the police. In fact, members of the executive council do not direct the police: not this minister, not that minister, not that minister. But that party would know about how to direct police, because they literally wrote the book on it. We had to hold a public inquiry into that party's activities. That's the party that wanted to "get the Indians out of the park."

This is the party and the government that called the Ipperwash inquiry and is implementing the Ipperwash inquiry and is following the recommendations of the Ipperwash inquiry.

Interjections.

Hon. Michael Bryant: No—shame on you.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Mr. Howard Hampton: My question is for the Premier. Yesterday, General Motors announced the closure of their last remaining auto plant in Windsor. It will effect the layoff of 1,400 workers. Premier, for the last few years you've been boasting about your auto investment strategy. Can you confirm that you gave close to \$250 million to General Motors and there was absolutely nothing in your agreement with General Motors that was going to guarantee jobs in Windsor? Can you confirm that your government gave General Motors \$250 million, or close to that, and forgot all about the GM workers in Windsor?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm pleased to take the question. We did in fact co-invest together with GM. That was known broadly as the Beacon project. That involved investments in Oshawa, St. Catharines and Ingersoll. It did not attach itself to Windsor and this particular plant. There are specific conditions found within this particular co-investment package to ensure that we do secure that new investment and those new jobs. But, as I say, it did not attach itself to pre-existing investment.

Mr. Howard Hampton: Premier, you and some of your cabinet ministers over the last while have made several visits to Windsor and generated several press releases. Here's one from August 2007, just before the election: "McGuinty Government's Auto Investments Deliver High-paying Jobs for Windsor." Can you tell those 1,400 General Motors workers who are now going to be out of work how your investment generated high-paying jobs for them in Windsor?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: There are 13 projects in total. We co-invested with DaimlerChrysler, and that benefited Windsor. We co-invested with Valiant Corp.; that benefited Windsor. We co-invested with International Truck and Engine, Navistar, and that too benefited Windsor. Those were new investments.

So it is true that the people of Windsor have met with some terrible news in the loss of those jobs, and we'll do everything we can. I was on the phone this morning with Mayor Eddie Francis and a couple of the CAW representatives from the GM plant. We'll do everything we can to work with them to help them see themselves through this. But we've also landed new investments. We've secured new investments in many communities across the province, including other investments which have in fact benefited the community of Windsor.

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Mr. Howard Hampton: Premier, there seems to be a problem with your math here. Windsor now has the highest unemployment rate in Ontario. The mayor of Windsor is asking WestJet to implement a direct flight from Windsor to Fort McMurray so that laid-off workers in Windsor will have some place to go to work. Auto jobs are disappearing out of Windsor faster than anyone can ever remember.

Tell me: You gave General Motors \$235-million-plus of taxpayers' money. How could you totally forget about

the GM workers in Windsor while you were handing General Motors \$235 million of Ontario taxpayers' money?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I can see why it's in the leader of the NDP's interest to confuse this issue, but it's pretty straightforward. What we said is that when we came to the table with our new auto investment strategy—which was not supported by the NDP or the Conservatives, and which has landed over \$7-billion worth of new investments and created thousands of new jobs in Ontario—the thread that was running through our new investment strategy was that we had to secure new investment. We had to either create new jobs or secure existing jobs, but there had to be new investment, and that's what we have done in each and every case as we rolled out this auto sector strategy. We have secured new investment, we have lent strength to more Ontario communities, and we have created thousands of new jobs. I'd like to be able to say that we could have secured all the pre-existing investments, but that was something that was just not on.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Mr. Howard Hampton: To the Premier: I'm all too painfully aware of the reality. General Motors gets close to \$250 million, and now we're seeing up to 3,500 jobs disappearing between Oshawa and Windsor. Ford gets \$100 million, and we're seeing jobs disappear—another shift going at the St. Thomas assembly plant. Chrysler got money, and we continue to hear about jobs disappearing. This is the real economic story. And that's the question here: How can the McGuinty government hand out hundreds of millions of dollars, and meanwhile the workers who work in the auto plants that got the hundreds of millions of dollars see their jobs disappear, and Dalton McGuinty says that it's a success story?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I would encourage the leader of the NDP to pick up the phone and talk to Buzz Hargrove. Talk to the CAW leaders at the GM plant in Windsor, and ask them for their take on the role that this government has played when it comes to securing new investment in the auto sector in the province of Ontario, because we've been working very closely with them. You might want to ask all those families that have benefited from these thousands of new jobs, whether it be the workers at the new Toyota assembly plant or the members of the CAW working at all the other plants that have expanded or been created as a result of our co-investment. You might want to ask them, because I get from his question that he feels we shouldn't be doing any of these kinds of investments, that we should leave those people, those workers and those families on their own. We're taking a different approach. We have a responsibility to work with those families, to work with the CAW and to work with the auto sector.

Mr. Howard Hampton: I'll tell you what I think CAW workers see: They see General Motors getting a lot of money, they see Ford getting a lot of money, they see

Chrysler getting a lot of money, and they see their jobs disappearing. If the Premier wants to claim credit for some non-union jobs appearing somewhere else, he can do that. But I think what those workers want to know is, how could the McGuinty government hand out hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money to multinational corporations and get no job guarantees for those workers in Windsor, those workers in Oshawa and those workers in St. Thomas? How could the McGuinty government hand out hundreds of millions of dollars and get no job guarantees for those workers who are losing their jobs?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It's a steady refrain coming from the leader of the NDP. I know he does really understand the issue. The choices here, as I see them, were either to proceed with this auto sector strategy—which we have, and we've pursued it aggressively and enjoyed some real successes on behalf of Ontario families and auto sector workers, landing over \$7 billion worth of new investment and creating thousands of new jobs. That was choice number one. Choice number two was to do nothing.

They didn't support a single initiative that we made. They didn't support a single use of taxpayers' dollars to secure these new investments. They didn't support a single creation of a new job here in the province of Ontario. They didn't support any of that. They are bringing kind of a laissez-faire—it's surprising for the NDP—let the economy kind of wash across Ontario families and give up.

We're bringing a different approach. We think we have to roll up our sleeves and we have to work as hard as we can to secure new investment, and we're going to keep doing that.

Mr. Howard Hampton: I think we're seeing the new McGuinty strategy: When you're caught, try to create confusion.

Let me be very clear, Premier. I'm in favour of an industrial hydro rate strategy that maintains reasonable, predictable, affordable industrial hydro rates for manufacturers. I support a refundable manufacturing investment tax: Where investments are made, a tax credit can be applied for. But what I don't support, Premier, is the McGuinty government handing out hundreds of millions of dollars to large corporations like General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, and at the same time workers who've worked 25, 30, 35 years in those plants are handed a pink slip and sent out the door.

Do you think that's a fair policy, Premier: to hand out hundreds of millions of dollars while workers who've basically given their working lives to those companies are sent out the door with no job?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I can see I'm not going to convince my friend opposite of the perspective that I bring to this. Fortunately, I stand to be judged by Ontarians, and I think they've got a pretty fair perspective on all of this. I think they understand that what we've put in place is a plan, opposed by both opposition parties, to secure new investment. Yes, we have brought taxpayer

dollars to the table in order to secure that new investment and to create thousands of new jobs and to secure some existing jobs. It's not the kind of plan that enables us to secure guarantees with respect to existing investment. That's just not on. My friend opposite, in fairness to him, doesn't understand the competitive environment when it comes to what we're doing here in North America.

It's an aggressive plan, it has secured new investment, it has created thousands of new jobs, and it's the kind of plan that we will continue to pursue aggressively.

NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: My question is for the Premier and it has to do, again, with the letter from Chief Bill Montour of Six Nations council, which was addressed to Minister Bryant. What we've heard today is Minister Bryant effectively calling Chief Montour a liar. If you read the letter, the chief is essentially thanking the minister, on behalf of Six Nations, for his intervention in a police action. Your Attorney General has abdicated responsibility here today in terms of following up with an investigation of a very serious allegation that deals with obstruction of justice, Premier. I'm asking you if you will direct your Attorney General—clearly, he needs direction—to initiate a thorough investigation of this allegation.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. Michael Bryant: Look at that. Not only is this an instance where suddenly the official opposition is interested in interference; the official opposition is now asking the Premier to interfere with the chief legal officer's discretion.

Again and again and again, we say, on this side of the House, that interference is not something that ought to take place. It has certainly been reinforced by the Ipperwash inquiry conclusions, and it's something that we abide by on this side of the House, unlike that side of the House.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: I guess we're getting a little tired of the rhetoric from this minister in not dealing with the issue at hand.

Chief Montour has made a very serious accusation dealing with potential obstruction of justice. Your Attorney General is abdicating his responsibilities in the House today. Your Premier won't deal with the issue.

I'm asking you a straight-out question here, and try to answer it directly for a change: Are you calling Chief Montour a liar?

1110

Hon. Michael Bryant: I can tell you one thing: Chief Montour, if he were here right now, would say that you hold no brief for him and you have zero standing to stand up for his reputation and views. I can tell you, I have a relationship where I have discussions with Chief Montour. Tell me a single member of that caucus who has bothered to pick up the phone and try to establish a

relationship with the chief of Six Nations. How many? Zero.

That is a caucus that, time after time, has tried to fan the flames. This is a government that will continue to seek not only the recommendations of the Ipperwash commission but will continue to ensure that there is zero interference with police operations. We will continue an aggressive, determined effort to try and resolve these issues in a peaceful fashion.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services, and it goes like this: Why has the McGuinty government driven a desperate parent to stage a hunger strike over the lack of publicly funded treatment for children with autism? And why has her government taken so long to clear the waiting list of over 1,500 children in this province? The question is very basic: When is this waiting list going to be cleared?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me start by saying that I have met with Mr. Marinoiu twice in the last several days. I met with him on the front lawn of Queen's Park and then I met him in my office. I can assure you that my ministry staff are working hard with him and his family to make sure that that he is getting all of the supports that his family is entitled to.

I can tell you that I understand how important it is to him and to all parents who have children with autism that we continue to improve services for children with autism. I am absolutely committed to improving services for children with autism. The work that has been done by parents from all parts of the province on this issue continues to encourage us in our work to improve services for children with autism in this province.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This minister knows that the reality is that the wait list in Ontario keeps on growing. Parents don't feel that their services are being improved at all. Stefan Marinoiu's hunger strike is a drastic action directly related to the fact that these parents don't think that services are improving in Ontario. Parents came from all over the province today to send this government a message that this life-and-death action that Stefan is taking is something they're here to support, because they need some action on this file and they need it now. Their children are languishing on waiting lists in Ontario. They're not getting the IBI, the intervention and the treatment that they need and deserve in this province. The government is indifferent to their needs.

After half a decade, why is nothing happening? Why is the McGuinty government not providing treatment for all of the children and all of the adequate supports that are required for their families?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To suggest that nothing has been done is simply not accurate. Let's take a look at what we have done. Since we were elected, we have more than tripled the funding for IBI. We have almost tripled the number of children receiving IBI services. Ten

years ago, the budget for autism services in this province was half a million dollars; today it's over \$150 million. Ten years ago, no children in this province received IBI therapy; today over 1,400 children are receiving IBI therapy.

Do we still have work to do? Absolutely. Is our next step making schools a welcoming place for children with autism? Absolutely.

I will tell you what I told Mr. Marinoiu, and that is this: We are working as hard as we can. I urge him to stop his hunger strike, go back to his family—

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

GRASSY NARROWS FIRST NATION

Mr. David Oraziatti: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. While our government has always been committed to forging a positive relationship with the First Nations people of Ontario, it sometimes comes with challenges. There are ongoing discussions with First Nations leaders in different areas of the province that have brought forth diverging views based on differences in culture, values and history.

This week, a group of young people on a peaceful march from the Grassy Narrows First Nation came through my riding of Sault Ste. Marie as they journeyed to Toronto on foot to bring attention to environmental issues and forestry issues.

Grassy Narrows First Nation has been operating a long-standing blockade over concern that their traditional territory is being adversely affected by logging. Minister, can you tell us what steps you're taking to address the concerns of the Grassy Narrows First Nations community?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield: I'd like to thank the member for the question. I did travel to Grassy Narrows First Nations yesterday to meet with Chief Fobister, his council and the elders, to talk about how we can move on. I was pleased to sign a memorandum of understanding on how we can continue to further our discussions.

There was a difference of perspective and views dealing with logging and land development and economic development in the Whiskey Jack Forest, so we were able to hire the Honourable Mr. Iacobucci, who came in and worked with the Ministry of Natural Resources staff, worked with the First Nations' elders and community, and came up with this understanding on how we could finally move forward to the benefit of everyone, recognizing that we both have views that need to be presented and dealt with on the table.

An absolutely wonderful opportunity: I was thrilled with the template and pleased with the elders and the chief for their active engagement on this front, knowing that it will make a significant difference as we move forward on the Whiskey Jack Forest.

Mr. David Oraziatti: Minister, we certainly appreciate the work that you've been doing in regard. It's a positive step in the right direction. However, I'd be inter-

ested in hearing, as I'm sure all members of the House would, more details on the specifics of this agreement.

Through the blockade of forestry access roads in the Whiskey Jack Forest, Grassy Narrows First Nation has been demanding an end to all logging in their traditional territory. While we all understand the cultural differences behind these demands, it cannot be denied that the forestry industry is also facing some challenging times.

Minister, can you outline for us what this agreement will mean for the local economy and for the forestry companies in the area?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield: The discussions with Grassy Narrows First Nation were based on achieving a better relationship on both sides and a better understanding. So it's important for us to acknowledge the traditions and where they come from. It is equally important for them to try and understand our values and goals in sustainable development.

Our aim through this process is to assist in better communication. To this end, the two main components of the agreement involved economic opportunities to increase the participation of First Nations in the forest economy. We're going to launch a pilot project to develop ways we can integrate Grassy Narrows' traditional uses with forest management activities.

This is important because it sets the template for how we can work with other First Nations as we're dealing with those challenges, ensuring that there is active participation and economic benefit, ensuring we understand their cultural differences and traditions and that, in fact, they understand ours. It's only by sitting down and talking to each other that we can truly make a difference.

C. DIFFICILE

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is for the Minister of Health. He's not here right now.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): He's here. Please proceed.

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: He's here; great.

I would say to the minister, you have been missing in action. As a result, Ontario's Ombudsman, André Marin, has been forced to step into the void. He says that the deaths of 62 patients from a deadly superbug is a "human tragedy" crying out for investigation, which you didn't undertake. He also says that your attitude, that of the government, has been cavalier and lax.

I say to you today, Minister, will you immediately launch a province-wide investigation into C. difficile outbreaks in our hospitals and require the hospitals to begin immediate reporting?

Hon. George Smitherman: I'd have to give my honourable friend credit for a good line. I do apologize that I wasn't in the House as she began her question.

Over the last several years, we've been working to enhance the capacity of our hospitals, and health care overall, to deal with the challenges related to infectious disease. We've put infectious disease practitioners into environments, including two at the hospital in question, and initiated a hand-hygiene regime sponsored by the

World Health Organization. We formed a provincial infectious disease advisory committee to give us high-level advice, created 14 infection control networks across the breadth of the province, and we more than doubled provincial public health funding. Given that public health units play an important role in leadership on infectious disease, we've really sought to enhance capacities.

1120

The honourable member talks about the reporting of C. difficile numbers. As I've indicated in this House, it's certainly our intention to move forward with reporting on that and on a broad range of health care indicators.

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: Unfortunately, the minister has been missing in action. Do you realize, Minister, that more people have died from C. difficile than ever died from SARS? You seem unable to grasp the seriousness of this infection and also to recognize that it is preventable. So I say to you again: Will you take action and not put further lives at risk, such as 62 at Joseph Brant, 18 at the Sault Ste. Marie hospital, 18 in Barrie and 18 at Trillium Health Centre, and will you—I ask you again—immediately launch a province-wide investigation into these outbreaks in our hospitals and, secondly, begin immediate monthly reporting?

Hon. George Smitherman: I understand that it would be the opinion of the honourable member to do those things now. As I mentioned, we've taken very substantive initiatives, but nobody should pretend that the challenges associated with C. difficile aren't very serious challenges. It's not like this is the first time that these issues have become known. That's why vigilance in our hospital environment and on the part of those people working there and those people visiting there is absolutely necessary.

With respect to the mandatory reporting of C. difficile, I've already said to this House that it is our intention to move forward with reporting on that and on a broader array of indicators. We'll be depending on the work that has already been done, including a coroner's investigation into circumstances in Sault Ste. Marie. This gives us the go-forward and all the information we need to enhance our capacity to address these things. That's why we're moving forward and taking action on these matters, not subjecting ourselves to further review.

AGENCY SPENDING

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Minister of Labour. While the chair of the WSIB spends the board's budget lavishly wining and dining his friends at expensive receptions, his board is on a path to ruin the lives of injured workers across Ontario—workers who would be glad to have that money to buy a decent week's worth of groceries for their families. When will this minister rein in his WSIB chair and direct him to get down to work to fix serious problems such as the experience rating program?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I thank the member for asking the question because it gives me a chance to report back

to the Legislature that I have had an opportunity to speak with the chair. The chair has provided me with a letter outlining the details of the reception that was held in Ottawa. I can clarify that the chair did follow the enhanced accountability mechanisms that this government brought in, which apply right throughout the organization and in particular to the chair and the board of directors. But I can also say that I advised the chair that while he did follow the rules and had good intent with regard to this reception and good reason to be there to speak to the MPs, it's important that all civil servants in our government take direction from this government in being very careful with what they do, to ensure that the perception of others is taken into consideration.

Mr. Paul Miller: The WSIB hands out millions of dollars in experience ratings to employers who have harassed their injured workers not to make claims, to abandon their claims or to come back to work before they're ready. The same board hounds injured workers, threatens to cut them off from their meagre benefits and drives many to the point of extreme stress-related illnesses.

It's time that the minister stood up for Ontario's injured workers. He can do that by demanding Steve Mahoney's resignation or by firing him. Which will it be and when will it be?

Hon. Brad Duguid: As I said earlier, I received a letter yesterday from Mr. Mahoney regarding this particular reception that was raised yesterday here in this Legislature. Mr. Mahoney was in Ottawa to speak to MPs with a request that federal institutions lower the flag on the day of mourning. I think that was a good reason for him to be there. Secondly, he was there to talk to the federal government about amending the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act to ensure that our WSIB and workers' compensation boards across the provinces get better priority when it comes to bankruptcies. Again, he had a good reason to be there. He outlined in his letter that there were MPs there from all parties. The total cost of the reception was \$831. Any alcohol was paid for by himself. A dinner held afterwards was paid for by himself. He fulfilled all the duties that a chair needs to fulfill in terms of the expenses for this particular reception.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

Mr. Jim Brownell: My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. My riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry is a place where communities are taking positive action to better the lives of our local youth and young people. You had an excellent opportunity to see this first-hand during your recent visit to the city of Cornwall. Through visits to facilities like the Early Years centre, Laurencrest youth residence, and the Boys and Girls Club of Cornwall/SDG, you were able to experience the good work being done by area organizations. The men and women who dedicate their lives to our children are deserving of the support of the provincial government. What is our government doing to assist these organizations in their important work?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I was very pleased to be able to visit Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry late last month to see their terrific programs for children and youth in action. I was also able to see their terrific MPP in action, which was a tremendous experience as well. The Ontario Early Years Centres of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry is a terrific facility that offers services for children aged zero to six, in both English and French. Services include early learning, literacy programs for parents and their kids, training for new parents, toy and resource lending libraries for parents and caregivers, and information about other Early Years programs in the community. We're happy to support this program with \$714,000 in annual funding.

Laurencrest Youth Services was another facility I was able to visit, a great example of how we're providing youth in conflict with the law the opportunity to achieve their full—

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

Mr. Jim Brownell: As MPP, I have always encouraged ministers of this government to come and experience the triumphs and challenges we face in Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry first-hand. This serves to keep them informed of the projects going on in the community, and it also provides important opportunities for those ministers to share useful knowledge with my constituents.

Minister, during our visit to the community of Akwesasne, you informed the director of their community and social services about a program called Kanawayhitowin. Could the minister elaborate on this program and how we can benefit the women in the community of Akwesasne?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: While I was in Cornwall, I did meet with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, which was a very interesting morning for me. Interestingly, only a few days earlier, I was joined by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs at the launch of Kanawayhitowin, which is the aboriginal version of the neighbours, friends and families program. It is aimed at reducing domestic violence and was created in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. This campaign is made possible through a grant of \$476,000 from our government. I was very happy to inform Maggie Terrace, who is the director of community and social services at Akwesasne, about the program, but even happier to read just a few days later that they're moving forward with implementing Kanawayhitowin in the community of Akwesasne. The program provides training for 100 community workers, television and radio advertising, a tool kit website—

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

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is for the Minister of Energy. During last Thursday's question period, the

minister carefully avoided answering the question with regard to his party's increasing the use of coal at Dofasco and financing the increased use of coal, perhaps he didn't understand the issue. What he did do, though, was make the claim that his government was continuing to reduce the use of coal for electricity generation. That is in fact completely wrong.

OPG's annual report states that generation from coal increased by 16% in 2007. Not knowing what's going on at Dofasco is one thing, but giving wrong information about what's going on at OPG is quite another. Would the minister now wish to correct the discrepancy between his statements and the facts?

1130

Hon. Gerry Phillips: What I indicated last Thursday was that we, this government, are determined and committed to eliminating the use of coal for the production of electricity by 2014. I indicated to the Legislature that in 2011 we will cut it by an additional one third. I indicated to the Legislature that the way we will be able to do that is we are bringing on stream increased capacity, which is true. We're going to, in the next 18 months, bring on more capacity than in any other 18-month period in the history of Ontario.

We are reducing the use of coal. I think the first four months of this year were down dramatically. It is true; last year, 2007, the use of coal did go up; 2006, down dramatically, 2007, temporarily up because we had to bring on additional capacity. But I repeat to the people of Ontario: We are committed, in 2011—

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: More promises. The minister can spin the coal business any way he wants, but the facts speak for themselves. OPG's own numbers show that they're up 16%—not temporarily, not a little bit—in 2007. In fact, Nanticoke's output reached its highest level since their party read their now-discredited and completely false coal promise to power in 2003. The use of coal accounted for almost 27% of OPG's total output in 2007; that's up from just over 23% in 2006. The numbers don't lie. Under his government, Ontarians are getting more power from coal.

I'd ask the minister to stop pretending that the use of coal is down in this province. It is up, way up. Admit that your coal promise is a sham and apologize for misinforming this House.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I just ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment, please—the final comment that you made.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please withdraw the comment.

Mr. John Yakabuski: What can you say? I withdraw. I don't apologize.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I repeat what I said earlier. The government is committed to reducing the production of electricity through coal. In the first four months of this year, it's down dramatically. We are committed: 2011,

two years from now, a further one-third reduction. We cut the use of coal by one third over 2003 to 2006. We're going to cut an additional one third in 2011 and completely eliminate it in 2014. We will do that. It is absolutely no secret. Those numbers have been public for some time—2007, temporarily up; down dramatically in 2003. In 2011, we will cut it another third, and completely out by 2014. That is good news for the health of the people of Ontario. We are able to do that because we are making dramatic progress on increasing the production of electricity through things like renewables and conservation. So: one-third reduction in 2011, and completely out by 2014.

PUBLIC HEALTH

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Now that four days have passed, can the minister tell this assembly who ordered the VIA train to be quarantined in Foley last Friday?

Hon. George Smitherman: I thank the honourable member for the question. I had a chance to speak to her yesterday afternoon. I can pass the supplementary to my colleague the Minister of Community Safety.

There was no official quarantine of the train, but the OPP, in the investigation of a death that had occurred on the train, secured the train. That put in place the measures which contained all individuals until such time as a wide array of experts—medical and otherwise—had the chance to assess the circumstances and determine—with the bias at all times being on the safety of the people of Ontario. Accordingly, as I had a chance to say yesterday, we're very encouraged by the capacity for response across a wide array of players, and we think that they acted at all times with prudence towards the safety and protection with the people of Ontario.

M^{me} France Gélinas: If a quarantine order was never issued in the first place, why is the minister only revealing this information now? The minister should have clarified way before now what had happened in Foley last Friday.

Seven hours after the fact, there was a press conference at Queen's Park, where the chief medical officer of health should have clarified what had happened. But none of that happened. Why did the minister pretend for four days that a train had been quarantined, when in fact that was never the case?

Hon. George Smitherman: I do think the honourable member is splitting hairs about a circumstance. I think very strongly that that's what she's doing.

The media attached the word "quarantine," because they saw an action which had the effect of securing individuals in a contained environment so as to make sure that they did not spread an infectious disease. Instead of acknowledging the superiority of action on the part of front-line health care workers and front-line people like EMS and police, the honourable member seeks to find these points of distinction.

Indeed, it would have been preferable if, on Friday afternoon, in a news conference that was designed to provide good-quality information, the chief medical officer of health had provided that information. I agree with the honourable member. I thanked her yesterday for raising the question. I spoke to her personally about the matter. I sent her an e-mail. But at the heart of the matter, the handling of this by front-line workers—EMS, police service and front-line health care workers—was superior and sought at all times to protect the people of the province—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Member from Huron—Bruce.

NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. The opposition has made a very serious allegation about directing the OPP. Can you please state clearly for this House whether this government ever directed the OPP? What has Commissioner Fantino said about this allegation?

Hon. Michael Bryant: In a published letter to the editor, OPP Commissioner Fantino wrote: "At no time during this event"—referring to the blocking of Highway 6—"or in relation to any police operation did anyone in government or elsewhere tell the OPP to stand down or direct the actions of the OPP."

"The decisions that resulted in the peaceful resolution of the road closure in Caledonia were based on ongoing dialogue between the OPP and Six Nations leaderships...."

Obviously, we're very supportive of the OPP actions. It is, I think, very helpful for the chief commissioner to have clarified that in a letter to the editor, which is obviously consistent with the information that I and others have provided to this House. I hope this resolves the matter.

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: There will be no supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I feel that the minister has answered my question quite clearly.

ONTARIO SECURITIES COMMISSION

Mr. Michael Prue: My question is to the Minister of Finance. In 2004, the finance committee reviewed the Securities Act and unanimously made 15 recommendations. One of those was to separate the adjudicative and investigative functions of the Ontario Securities Commission. This would address the commission's inherent conflict of interest, which has continued to exist for the last four years in spite of hundreds and hundreds of cases being turned over to it. Why has this minister not acted on this very important recommendation, given four years and the hundreds of cases that have been referred to it?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I believe you said that you were referring to the Ontario Securities Commission. I apologize; I couldn't hear your question clearly because Mr. Bisson was here speaking to my colleagues.

Both myself and the Attorney General in our various capacities have been involved in this issue. As you know, the attorneys general of Canada have been meeting to discuss these issues.

An important part, too, of enforcement on the security side would be a single common regulator in Canada, which is our government's principal objective. While there are challenges in the enforcement of securities, I'm pleased with the progress to date that the Attorney General's been involved in, as have other attorneys general in Canada, while for our part at the Ministry of Finance we continue to press the case for a single common securities regulator. I believe both those actions, taken together, will afford capital markets and investors here in Ontario greater confidence in the enforceability of securities legislation.

1140

Mr. Michael Prue: Nobody denies the role of a single regulator, nobody denies that, but in the meantime, for four years thousands upon thousands of people have lost investment and hundreds upon hundreds of actions have been requested of the Ontario Securities Commission.

Another recommendation that the finance committee also made was to establish a task force to review self-regulating organizations. Self-regulating organizations advocate on behalf of members as trade associations and take enforcement action against members if they break the rules. This too is a conflict of interest which the all-party committee said should be resolved four years ago.

Minister, four years have passed. Why has this minister not acted on these recommendations?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: First of all, let's review some of the things that have happened. Investors now have the right to sue for misleading secondary market disclosures. There are clear Securities Act offences for market manipulation and fraud and misrepresentation, stronger deterrents to wrongdoing through increased maximum court fines and prison terms. The OSC itself has new powers to enforce. The Attorney General has been working with his colleagues.

I'll say this to investors in Ontario. Ontario remains a great place to invest. We have an open and transparent securities market. We are working to make it better all the time. We will continue to co-operate with other enforcing jurisdictions throughout Canada. But let me reinforce, this government remains committed to a single, common securities regulator in Canada. No step will provide for greater investor security than that. No step will provide for greater stability of capital markets than that.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Michael A. Brown: I have a question to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services. With summer quickly approaching and the school year almost over, families across Ontario are planning their summer vacations. Whether it's a quick sound bite on the radio, pop-ups on the Internet or full-page ads in local

newspapers, my constituents and Ontarians alike are bombarded at this time of year with information about vacation clubs. Unfortunately, I and other members have heard stories of Ontarians losing money with some vacation clubs out there. I'm also aware that some vacation clubs also engage in false advertising in order to lure consumers.

Springtime is also the time that some consumers succumb to the high-pressure sales tactics often associated with the sale of time-shares. I'm concerned with the lack of protection for Ontario's travellers.

Minister, what is the government doing to protect Ontario's consumers?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: I'm pleased to answer the question from my honourable friend, who I know has had a concern in this area for some time, and I answer it as the owner of a vacation club membership and also the owner of three different time-shares. I, like many of you, have been subject to some of that kind of pressure out there where you get \$55 and dinner if you attend the high-pressure sales pitch.

In response to that, I say to the honourable member, our government has put provisions in place under the Consumer Protection Act that allow consumers the right to cancel an agreement within one year if goods or services have been misrepresented, and to cancel a time-share or vacation club contract without any reason up to 10 days after receiving a copy of the agreement and a right to that refund when—

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

Mr. Michael A. Brown: Thanks to the McGuinty government's \$10-million investment into the "There's no place like this" campaign, which encouraged Ontarians to vacation in our own backyard, and our \$4-million investment into the Celebrate Ontario 2008 initiative, millions of Ontarians will be spending their vacation right here in Ontario.

Unfortunately, Ontario travellers are not immune to the threat of identity theft when they travel. We've heard stories about individuals losing credit cards when they are travelling and the surprising charges that sometimes accumulate on those cards if they fall into the wrong hands. We've also heard stories about individuals losing key pieces of government identification while on vacation and, unfortunately, these documents are sometimes used fraudulently.

The minister, in his previous answer, talked about the Consumer Protection Act and how it protects Ontarians from unscrupulous time-share and vacation clubs—

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

Hon. Ted McMeekin: I want to provide assurance to the House that the McGuinty government is certainly working hard to make sure Ontarians are protected from the threat of identity theft. It's an important issue.

We've taken a number of steps to better protect Ontarians from this situation. We're supporting academic research that identifies identity theft through the Ontario

Research Network for Electronic Commerce. We're also working hard with other provinces to develop educational approaches and common legislative reform, not only to combat identity theft but also to help consumers who have had their identities stolen. We distribute the Smart Consumer calendars every year. I always order several hundred for my riding because they're so popular, particularly with seniors who seem so often to be the victims of these kinds—

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

SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: Time and time again, this government says that education is its key priority. My question is to the Minister of Education. You were unavailable the day after the trustee issue broke, and the response from your staff to questions asked about questionable expenses has been, "If the trustees say it's an expense, then it is an expense." This is unacceptable to me and it's unacceptable to taxpayers in Ontario.

Minister, why have the trustees' expenses ballooned unchecked under your watch?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I was in the House the day that the report was released and I answered questions accurately. Actually, the day after the report was released I was in Sault Ste. Marie visiting schools, which is part of my job as the Minister of Education.

What I have said is that the behaviours that have taken place at the Toronto Catholic District School Board are inappropriate; they're unacceptable. I have asked that the trustees at the Toronto Catholic District School Board bring a plan to me by May 21 to implement the recommendations that Mr. Hartmann has put in place. There has been an auditor sent in to look at any other questionable expenses. I look forward to seeing that plan by May 21.

The behaviours are intolerable. We have said that our government will not tolerate the use of public money for private advantage.

PETITIONS

LORD'S PRAYER

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I have a petition 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 been an integral part of our spiritual and parliamentary tradition since it was first established in 1793 under Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe; and

"Whereas the Lord's Prayer's message is one of forgiveness, of providing for those in need of their 'daily

bread' and of preserving us from the evils that we may fall into; it is a valuable guide and lesson for a chamber that is too often an arena for conflict; and"

Whereas the Speaker has received thousands of phone calls on this very issue; and

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

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

I affix my name in full support.

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

Mr. Howard Hampton: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) chief Donny Morris, deputy chief Jack McKay, councillors Cecilia Begg, Samuel McKay, Darryl Sainnawap, and band member Bruce Sakakeep are imprisoned for merely protecting their land;

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberal government failed to consult KI before giving Platinex a mining permit on KI's traditional land that is currently under a land claim;

"Whereas the jailing of aboriginal leaders who disagree with the government is something you might see in a Third World dictatorship and not in Canada;

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

"To immediately release the KI Six, remove the mining permit from KI lands and engage in proper consultation and accommodation with Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation."

This has been signed by many residents of the riding of Kenora-Rainy River and I have affixed my signature as well.

1150

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition sent to me by Dr. Tom Short and his patients of Mississauga. It reads as follows:

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

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

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

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

I am pleased to support and sign this petition, and to ask page Naomi to carry it for me.

ANTI-TOBACCO LEGISLATION

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I have a petition from the Rockford service centre in my riding:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

Whereas the Liberal government recently passed the Smoke-Free Ontario Act; and

“Whereas the act prohibits sale and supply of tobacco to a person who is less than 19 years old; and

“Whereas the Tobacco Tax Act requires that a tobacco tax rate of 11.1 cents applies to every cigarette and on every gram or part gram of tobacco sold in Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that the two acts be enforced on all retailers in Ontario who sell, offer for sale or store tobacco.”

I have signed this.

SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’ai une pétition pour l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario.

« Attendu que la pénurie du personnel des foyers de soins en Ontario est un grave problème donnant lieu à des soins inadéquats pour les résidents et des conditions peu sécuritaires pour le personnel; et

« Attendu que le gouvernement Harris a éliminé le règlement du niveau minimum en 1995 et que, par la suite, le nombre d’heures de soins a baissé en-dessous du minimum précédent de 2,25 heures par jour; et

« Attendu que, malgré les améliorations récentes, le nombre moyen d’heures de soins est toujours insuffisant, qu’il varie d’un foyer à l’autre et qu’il n’est pas précisé selon des normes bien établies; et

« Attendu que, présentement il n’existe aucune disposition de la loi pour protéger ni les résidents, ni le personnel contre les coupures budgétaires que le gouvernement pourrait entamer dans l’avenir; et

« Attendu que la nécessité de soins s’accroît sans cesse, étant donné la population vieillissante et le passage augmenté des personnes âgées ou malades des hôpitaux aux foyers de soins de longue durée;

« Nous, soussignés, présentons la pétition suivante à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« Nous faisons appel au gouvernement de l’Ontario d’ajouter immédiatement des normes minimales de 3,5 heures de soins personnels par résident par jour aux dispositions de la nouvelle Loi sur les foyers de soins de

longue durée, et d’assurer le financement de ces soins personnels dans les foyers de soins de longue durée. »

Je suis en accord avec cette pétition. Je vais la signer et la remettre à la page Joanna.

ALMA COLLEGE

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I have a petition:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas historic Alma College, designed in the High Victorian Gothic style, chartered by an act of Ontario passed March 2, 1877, opened in October 1881, located in the city of St. Thomas, county of Elgin, province of Ontario, has fallen into a dire state of disrepair; and

“Whereas Alma College continues to be threatened with demolition by its current owners despite the efforts of many concerned citizens, alumni and various officials; and

“Whereas a historical plaque commemorating Alma College was unveiled at the college on Thursday, October 28, 1976, by the Ontario Heritage Trust, an agency within the Ministry of Culture and Recreation; and

“Whereas the city of St. Thomas designated Alma College under part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (bylaw 167-94), in 1994; and

“Whereas recent amendments (2005) to the Ontario Heritage Act allow the Minister of Culture to designate property as being provincially significant;

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

“The Minister of Culture immediately designate Alma College as a building of provincial significance and, in the event of a demolition order being issued for Alma, to immediately intervene by issue of a stop order, and to further identify provincial partnerships and possible funding to protect the existing buildings from further deterioration while financial resources are generated to restore the property to its former glory.”

I attach my signature to this one as well.

ALMA COLLEGE

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

“Whereas historic Alma College, designed in the High Victorian Gothic style, chartered by an act of Ontario passed March 2, 1877, opened in October 1881, located in the city of St. Thomas, county of Elgin, province of Ontario, has fallen into a dire state of disrepair; and

“Whereas Alma College continues to be threatened with demolition by its current owners despite the efforts of many concerned citizens, alumni and various officials; and

“Whereas a historical plaque commemorating Alma College was unveiled at the college on Thursday, October 28, 1976, by the Ontario Heritage Trust, an agency within the Ministry of Culture and Recreation; and

“Whereas the city of St. Thomas designated Alma College under part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (bylaw 167-94), in 1994; and

“Whereas recent amendments (2005) to the Ontario Heritage Act allow the Minister of Culture to designate property as being provincially significant;

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

“The Minister of Culture immediately designate Alma College as a building of provincial significance and, in the event of a demolition order being issued for Alma, to immediately intervene by issue of a stop order, and to further identify provincial partnerships and possible funding to protect the existing buildings from further deterioration while financial resources are generated to restore the property to its former glory.”

I've affixed my signature since I'm in favour of this.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Mr. Rosario Marchese: To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas part-time college workers in Ontario have been waiting for 30 years for bargaining rights; and

“Whereas thousands of part-time college workers have signed OPSEU cards, and the Ontario Labour Relations Board failed to order a timely representation vote; and

“Whereas the Ontario government must immediately make good on its promise to extend bargaining rights to college part-timers;

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

“The McGuinty government must immediately pass legislation legalizing the rights of college part-timers to organize, and direct the colleges to immediately recognize OPSEU as the bargaining agent for part-time college workers.”

I support this petition and I'm signing it.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: I have a petition here to the Ontario Legislative Assembly of Ontario on the western Mississauga ambulatory surgery centre.

“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 send this to you via page Adam.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr. John O'Toole: I have a petition from my riding of Durham. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Uxbridge hospital is struggling to keep its emergency room open past the October provincial election; and

“Whereas the community of Uxbridge fears losing its emergency and other health services at its local hospital as health services are rationalized and restructured across the province” under the LHINs;

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

“To ensure the provincial government creates a comprehensive and clear plan to make sure small hospitals remain vibrant providers of a range of services, including fully staffed emergency rooms; and

“To ensure that no other smaller or rural community faces the loss of local emergency services or any other services under this or any other provincial restructuring of health services.”

I'm pleased to sign and support this for my community of Uxbridge and present it to Hannah, one of the pages here at the Legislative Assembly.

1200

LONG-TERM CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have another 5,000 names for a petition about minimum standards of care in nursing homes.

“Whereas understaffing in Ontario's nursing homes is a serious problem resulting in inadequate care for residents and unsafe conditions for staff;

“Whereas after the Harris government removed the regulations providing minimum care levels in 1995, hours of care dropped below the previous 2.25 hour/day minimum;

“Whereas the recent improvements in hours of care are not adequate, vary widely and are not held to accountable standards;

“Whereas there is currently nothing in legislation to protect residents and staff from renewed cuts to care levels by future governments; and

“Whereas care needs have measurably increased with aging and the movement of people with more complex health needs from hospitals into long-term-care homes;

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

“Immediately enact and fund an average care standard of 3.5 hours per resident per day in the regulations under the new Long-Term Care Homes Act.”

I support this petition. I will affix my name to it and send it with page Naomi.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Charles Sousa: It’s a pleasure that I read a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

“Western Mississauga Ambulatory Surgery Centre

“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 affix my signature and provide it to Sheilagh.

LORD’S PRAYER

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: A petition to the Parliament 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 affix my name thereto.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The time for petitions has expired. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1203 to 1500.

MEMBERS’ STATEMENTS

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Mr. Ted Arnott: Ontario’s economic heartland, our manufacturing base in southern Ontario, is in very serious trouble, thanks in no small part to the McGuinty Liberal government’s economic negligence. The more than 100 people who were laid off yesterday at Skyjack, a Guelph-based subsidiary of Linamar Corp., know all too well that there is a problem. The people of Windsor know all too well that there is a problem: They are set to lose another 1,400 jobs, on top of the thousands that have already left the city, when the GM transmission plant closes in two years.

In the month of April alone, 15,000 manufacturing jobs—15,000—disappeared in Ontario. That brings the total to more than 207,000 manufacturing jobs lost since July 2004.

Everyone seems to know that we have a very serious economic problem—everyone, that is, except the high-taxing, over-regulating McGuinty government. For three years now I have persistently and repeatedly called on the finance committee to hold hearings on the economic competitiveness of our manufacturing sector. When will this Premier finally get involved and instruct the Liberal MPP who chairs this committee to commence hearings immediately? When will he take this basic and constructive step to stop the haemorrhaging of our manufacturing jobs?

This Premier must find it within himself to provide leadership on this issue. Too many families have already paid too high a price for his government’s economic negligence. I call upon the Premier to act immediately.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: This past Saturday, I had the opportunity to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Langs Bus Lines Limited, which is headquartered in my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex. Over 700 people from all over southwestern Ontario attended this event in Strathroy. Nothing was spared as Langs celebrated this milestone with their drivers, families and friends.

Like any family business, Langs started small, with a modest four buses running out of what is now their head office in Strathroy. Slowly but surely, the business grew larger and larger, until today, when Langs operates terminals in London, Nairn, Norwich, Sarnia, Watford and Forest.

School buses are especially vital in rural areas because of the long distances between rural homes and the local schools. A school bus operator is often the first person a child sees after leaving home in the morning on their way to school and the last person they see as they come home. I am sure that many of us in the Legislature, and those watching on television today, can remember our school bus drivers and understand the importance of safe transportation of our children from home to school and back home again.

I want to congratulate and say thank you to Langs Bus Lines Limited, to Doug Lang and his son Kevin, and to all the school bus lines and operators for all that they do for our rural students in Ontario.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Once again, the McGuinty government is sending out money without having a plan. They did it on the economy and now they're doing it in agriculture.

The Minister of Agriculture recently said to all the farmers in Ontario "that when there is immediate need, we are there for them." But her own program—the cattle, hog and horticulture payment—leaves out young, expanding farmers and others who need support, like the Veyhofs, who are struggling to feed their children and hold on to their farm while their neighbour, who sold his pigs two years ago, received \$80,000 to feed them; expanding farmers like the greenhouse in Leamington, who got only a fraction of what they were expecting because their expansion wasn't used in the calculations; people who didn't apply for assistance under the federal program but needed this program, like the beef farmer in northern Ontario; operations like the one in Durham region that fed 7,000 hogs in 2007 but didn't qualify. They were all missed by this program, and the minister designed the program so that there's no appeal. All decisions are final.

It seems that expediency is more important to this government than fairness. How do you explain to these farmers that the government doesn't think they deserve help?

The farmers told the minister that there was a problem with the program, our party told her there was a problem with the program before she sent out the cheques, and I've told her repeatedly in this Legislature that there was a problem. The minister owes the farmers an apology for her statement and she needs to do something now to ensure that the government is really there for all the farmers.

FIREFIGHTERS' MEMORIAL

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I had a prepared member's statement, but I've decided that I'm not going to read it today.

As you all know, I've just received some very disturbing information about something that occurred not too far from here, just down the road at the firefighters' memorial, which apparently was severely defaced by someone overnight and was laden with a bunch of graffiti and negative messages. People are very upset about it. I bumped into Brian George just a couple of minutes ago, and he's pretty upset and taken aback.

I think all of the members in this Legislature should be aware that this has happened. I think we would all, equally, condemn wholeheartedly any actions at all that would deface a monument to some of the heroes that come from every single community across this province.

It is highly inappropriate, it is highly disturbing, and it is absolutely disgraceful that the monument that is put up to acknowledge and recognize that firefighters give their lives—literally, on too many occasions—to help the people of our communities in times of need, when there are fires and other disasters occurring—that's what that memorial is supposed to be about. It's supposed to be a positive message: The province—all of us—are telling firefighters how much we value them. To deface it is a despicable act, and I'm sure we would all agree that we condemn it wholeheartedly.

CHILD CARE CENTRES

Mr. Khalil Ramal: Yesterday, I attended the official opening of London's new Salvation Army daycare centre in my riding of London-Fanshawe. This wonderful centre was made possible by our government's commitment to invest in children and increase the number of child care spaces for the hardworking families of London.

Last spring, the Salvation Army received funding from our government to build this wonderful child care centre, which our Premier came to announce and to break ground for, for construction. I think it was a very important commitment, because many people from the Salvation Army, many majors and two commissioners, came for this announcement. Also, many members from our community and city councillors from the city departments of social welfare came to celebrate this event, because it meant a lot to the whole community.

Before I finish my time, I want to also echo my colleague the member from Hamilton Centre and condemn, on behalf of my colleagues who don't have time to speak—because I think firefighters do an excellent job in our community. They deserve all of our respect and support. I support what the member said and all of us should condemn these actions. I am going to phone Mr. Brian George and express my regret about what happened. We should deal with this issue in a professional manner, and all of us should show support to the firefighters for the great job they do on behalf of all of us.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Mr. John O'Toole: Two weeks ago, we learned of the loss of 900 jobs at the General Motors plant in Oshawa, part of my community. Yesterday, we learned that the GM layoffs were, indeed, closing the Windsor transmission plant in two years.

Mr. Speaker, 200,000-plus jobs have been lost under the careful watch of the McGuinty government: 50,000 manufacturing jobs lost in the past 12 months alone, 15,000 jobs just in April, and 1,400 jobs yesterday. Where does it end? That's the question at the top of mind.

Ontario has the people, the skills, the energy and the innovation to compete with the very best in the world. What we lack is a government with a plan, a government that has any attempt at matching the innovation of the

people it serves and the energy of the people of Ontario. We lack a leader with a plan. We have a first-class work force and entrepreneurs—with a lower rating of government.

Even this morning, with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in the estimates committee, we brought forward reports from Roger Martin and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce encouraging them to bring forward a plan. In fact, the minister was unable to answer many of the questions; no plan to let working Ontarians keep part of their money; no plan to cut red tape, as requested by the Federation of Independent Business, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Judith Andrew and Len Crispino.

The government has added 102,000 people to the provincial payroll and brags about it. It ignores what's most important: the issues of jobs for the people of Ontario.

Where's the plan, Premier?

1510

POVERTY

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Last Friday, I was honoured to host a poverty reduction round table in my riding of Ottawa Centre with the Minister of Children and Youth Services, Deb Matthews. Also joining us at this round table was Minister Madeleine Meilleur.

We were pleased to have a broad representation of both social service agencies and community members who came together to share their experiences. The participants were frank with us about their frustrations in navigating our system of supports, and they told us how difficult it can be to get out of the poverty cycle when incremental increases in income result in drastic reductions in the benefits received. I want to thank Minister Matthews for taking the time to meet with members of our community to discuss these important issues.

I want to urge every member of this chamber to organize round tables with their constituents to talk about how we can address the issue of poverty in our communities. This is not an exercise in politics and should not be made into a partisan issue. Poverty is a serious issue that affects every one of our communities. The only way to address poverty is to transcend party lines, roll up our sleeves and work together. Each and every member of this honourable chamber was elected to make their community a better place. Let's forget about politics for a minute and do what we were elected to do: protect the vulnerable and improve our communities for everyone. People first, politics later.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS CARNATION CAMPAIGN

Mrs. Linda Jeffrey: I'm proud and honoured to rise today in support of the MS carnation campaign and to thank all members who have shown their support for people affected by multiple sclerosis by wearing a carnation today. Today, volunteers from the MS Society are

at Queen's Park meeting with MPPs from each political party to raise awareness of MS and the society.

Medical research has shown that women are diagnosed with MS three times more often than men. Many Canadians living with multiple sclerosis are mothers, and many more adults and children are being diagnosed every day. That's why, every year, the MS carnation campaign takes place over Mother's Day weekend.

For 60 years, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada has provided hope and help for people with MS from across Canada—hope through their extensive national research program, and help through their services and support, which make life better for people with MS and their families today.

Please join the MS Society in making every day better for people living with MS and in working toward the day when we finally eradicate multiple sclerosis.

FIREFIGHTERS' MEMORIAL

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: I want to add my voice today to those of the members from Hamilton Centre and London-Fanshawe about the terrible act of vandalism that took place overnight to the firefighters' memorial adjacent to Queen's Park.

I can't adequately express how seeing the graffiti and the paint scrawled across the front of the memorial actually made me feel. I was shocked and offended by what I saw, as I'm sure were the many people who stopped in their tracks, heading to work, when they saw what had happened there.

This government and, I'm sure, everyone in this House does not and will not tolerate such acts of vandalism and callous disregard for a memorial that is meant to honour fallen firefighters.

The memorial is meant to be one way each of us can show our respect and admiration for what firefighters do and for the sacrifices they make in order to keep all Ontarians safe. It's meant to serve as comfort to the families and friends of those fallen heroes that their loss is felt by everyone in the province and that their loved ones will not be forgotten.

I'd like to emphasize to all of our Ontario firefighters and their families that the terrible actions of these vandals bear no semblance to the utmost respect that we, all of us in this place, and Ontarians generally, have for their profession and for their commitment to our collective safety.

I can't begin to imagine what was going through the minds of those vandals as they committed this crime, but I do hope they are brought to justice for what they have done and express true remorse for their actions.

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 May 13, 2008, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 107(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (SPEED-LIMITING SYSTEMS), 2008

LOI DE 2008 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (SYSTÈMES LIMITEURS DE VITESSE)

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 17, 2008, on the motion for second reading of Bill 41, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act in relation to the use of speed-limiting systems in commercial motor vehicles / Projet de loi 41, Loi modifiant le Code de la route relativement à l'utilisation de systèmes limiteurs de vitesse dans les véhicules utilitaires.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: There is always a time to rise and bring to the attention of the people of Ontario, and indeed to the Legislature, issues with respect to legislation that we all have a responsibility to understand: both the positives and the challenges.

The speed limiter bill has a bit of history, and I'm reminded, almost by the very name of it, of the Laurie Scott act. Laurie Scott, the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, brought this forward in good faith, I believe, on behalf of the OTA, the Ontario Trucking Association. On the surface, it sounds like a bill that we could get along with. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would imagine that in your riding there would be similar observations—the news stories of trucks challenging our roadways, shall we say, and that somehow or other we will solve all these problems by having these speed limiters where the trucks won't be able to exceed 105 kilometres per hour.

Initially when I looked at it, I thought that the bill makes very good sense. The only problem with it is the 105—when I look at the speedometer and I look at the road sign, it says “100 kilometres,” and many provincial types of roadways are 90. What's this 105? Is it permission to break the law? The first ambiguous message is to say, “There's the sign, the Highway Traffic Act, and it's 100 kilometres per hour; and there's the bill saying you can go 105.” I understand that under certain conditions, when you're passing, it gives you this five-kilometres-per-hour leeway to overtake. On a single roadway, like a two-lane highway, one in each direction, there could be little caravans building up, trucks unable to pass one another because they've got this governor on the vehicle that won't allow them to get out of harm's way or to avoid these convoys of trucks which some

risky drivers may try to overtake. It may constitute a hazard.

In fact, passing on some hills in my riding of Durham, specifically on Highway 35/115 and 35 going to the city of Kawartha Lakes—there are portions of that where there are a lot of risky stretches, and these risky stretches are being exacerbated by this new bill.

I have the greatest respect for the current Minister of Transportation. That isn't the issue. He's a person whom I have the greatest respect for in the overall intent here to make our roads safer. We're all in favour of that. A more sophisticated debate would drive this up to a whole other level. The roadways were changed from miles per hour to kilometres—Mr. Speaker, you'd probably know this—and when you do the conversion from kilometres to miles per hour, I guess the roadways are actually designed for roughly 110 kilometres. Some of the people in MTO, when I was critic, told me—at least that's the impression I was left with—that that could be a decision made by persons who have the political courage to do just that, to do the right thing. That may help some of the challenges. If the roadways are so designed and it is strictly enforced, I believe that the 110 rule should prevail.

It has to be enforced. I don't mean this ambiguous message that we're only going to enforce—it's almost common knowledge. I shouldn't be saying this to the public as I am, but often, if you're in excess of 100 kilometres per hour on the 400-series highways, the general understanding is that they don't enforce this until it's 10 kilometres over. I hope I'm not surprising—maybe only members of the Legislature are of this understanding, or misunderstanding. My point is, “Post it, state it and enforce it.” That's the issue here. But we've got, “Post it, send some other message of 105, and question when it's actually going to be enforced.” I'd like the rules to apply equally across the board.

1520

Maybe I'm taking longer under the general rules of agreement here today than I should.

A secondary dimension of this bill: I'm quite familiar that Mr. David Bradley and the Ontario Trucking Association also have good intentions to regulate their driver education and driver training, which I agree with, and the ministry is following up. They have the direct ear of the minister on this. That's my impression.

Who is speaking up for the small independents, the small independent drover trying to hustle a few dollars, getting goods to market on time in off hours? What about truckers that are transcontinental, that are going in multi-jurisdictions, where they have a governor and they can't keep up with the traffic in other jurisdictions where this kind of legislation is not in place? Many of the truckers today are long-distance haulers. It's the only way many of the independents can make a living in this kind of society, under the current government. The way jobs are going and manufacturing itself is going south, it raises a very important question on the very economics of this issue. It's more red tape. Many of the independent truckers will now have to go in and perhaps get their

motor replaced; I don't know. But certainly having a governor installed is more expense—a tax, if you will.

Then there's the whole enforcement issue: the police. We've almost made the case now that maybe the general traffic flow—I commute pretty well every day, and the traffic flow is such that if you're not going 110 on the 400-series highways and you're in the inside lane, you'll get run over. If you're going less than 110 on the 401 going eastbound—or westbound, for that matter—you could be in serious trouble.

If we have all these trucks stacked up doing 105 and nobody can get by them, I don't know if this is going to work. It sounds good, but how are they going to enforce it? When the cars are going 110/120—and I don't see any police on the road to any great extent. We're coming up to a long weekend.

I think there are more important issues, quite honestly. I think that having a posted, enforceable speed on the 401 would be a good start. Having a system of licensing and testing would be a good start. Looking at my bill to ban the use of cell phones in certain areas on our highways would be a good start.

This bill is—by all accounts here, the base is going to collapse. Where's the substance?

Mr. Mike Colle: Yeah, where is the substance?

Mr. John O'Toole: Some might say, where's the substance of my remarks? However, I have an hour and 50 minutes left, for those viewing.

I say that what is needed is the allocation of more resources on the highways for stricter enforcement of the existing rules. That's the argument here. There's not a cent in this bill to make our roads safer. It's just that the minister, by decree, is going to make it safer for everyone in Ontario.

It's a troubling outcome when we're using up a whole day and all this legislative time when we have a bill that Laurie Scott introduced that would have got the job done, showing this democratic renewal at work by having an opposition member like Ms. Scott—

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: I would be supportive of that. If you're going to have a government bill, with all the resources and time that goes into it—I don't know; could we put something in here that's got some definite substance? We should have public hearings perhaps, to listen to the independent truckers. Public hearings would serve a useful purpose. I'm not sure. I'm looking at the minister to shake his head. Is it no? It's a yes. Well, we may have won some concessions already, it would seem. If we could just have some further concessions about looking at the cell phone bill, then we'd certainly be in support of this bill. We all work towards making our roads safer in the province of Ontario. That's the deal here.

I just want to put a voice there for the independent truckers I've spoken to when I was critic of that ministry. The independent truckers brought up some very salient and important questions, and I hope the minister during

the public hearings will listen to those and modify the bill in such a way that it's enforceable.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments? Further debate?

Mr. Bradley has moved second reading of Bill 41. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I recognize the Minister of Transportation.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I would ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): So ordered.

BUDGET MEASURES AND INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 2008

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 7, 2008, on the motion for third reading of Bill 44, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters / Projet de loi 44, Loi concernant les mesures budgétaires, l'affectation anticipée de crédits et d'autres questions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm surprised and privileged to have the opportunity this afternoon to respond to the omnibus bill of all time, Bill 44, the budget bill, which has several poison pills in it. The point that troubles me most is that there is a part of this which is the depreciation allowance. It's our idea. This is our territory, and we can support that. And there's a reduction in the capital tax. Who wouldn't support that? But there are things in here that would trouble my grandmother, who was the most loving, patient person.

I've learned here that when you get a budget bill where the only tax break in it—and I'm being light-hearted here this afternoon because they're going to time-allocate this bill, force it through and drive it in and we are going to have no say. They're not going to amend one thing in it. It's unbelievable, the thoughtlessness and the insensitivity, and yet there are things in this that we want to give voice to.

The tax credit for seniors is a good example of things that we agree with. On closer examination, what I noticed about that: This rebate for seniors on their property tax pretty well matches the money that the McGuinty government is taking out of their other pocket for the health tax that they whacked everybody who makes \$16,000 with—this gives their money back. It's one way of letting some of the seniors—the CARP group and others, who are very upset with the amount of municipal tax that's been levied. Their energy is going up. Their property taxes are going up. Their insurance is going up. Food is going up. Heating their home is going up—their travel. Everything's going up, and they're going to give them

back a stipend, a token amount back in this budget. We support that. This isn't all negative messaging.

What troubles us is that for a government that has been told by Roger Martin and Len Crispino of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, a big conference—they said, “The two things you could do immediately to help the economy of Ontario are to cut red tape and reduce the tax burden.”

1530

Now, why am I saying such things? Right now, we're in committee hearings. I should be down there now myself actually, and I hope that other people are going to take my place. There's a really important report, and I think some of the members might be happy to receive a copy. Call my office, any of the members on the government side, and I'll send you a copy. The government paid for this report. Here it is. The report is called Path to the 2020 Prosperity Agenda. It's actually a very good report, commissioned by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Ms. Papatello.

You'd be amazed at the list of attendees on this committee. They're leaders. These are people who understand both the economy and the people of Ontario. For instance, there's Roger Martin. He's the chair of this prosperity committee commissioned by Dalton McGuinty. They paid them for it, and I think it cost them over \$1 million for this report. But it appears—

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: The member is saying to me that they didn't read it. I can't attest to that, but it would appear to me they haven't read it. It's troubling.

Now who are some of the other members on this committee? There's Jim Balsillie, who is the founder, and I guess the largest shareholder, of Research In Motion, RIM, which is an innovation company associated with the University of Waterloo and is a favourite stock now if you see it—trading over \$100 and worldwide. And so, he is telling them. There's Jim Balsillie; there's Timothy Dattels from Newbridge Capital; Lisa de Wilde from TVO; David Folk from Jefferson Partners—Linda Jefferson might know who they are; Dr. Suzanne Fortier from Natural Science Engineering Research Council; Gordon Homer from Gordon J. Homer Advisory Services; David Johnston, president of the University of Waterloo; David Keddie from National Compressed Air; Mark Mullins from the Fraser Institute; Tim Penner, Proctor and Gamble president, PG Canada; and Daniel Treffer from the University of Toronto. These are a panel of experts convened for the purpose of giving Dalton McGuinty and Dwight Duncan—the Premier and the minister—advice.

Here's the report. It's online. If people want a copy, call, because it's good reading. I'm just going to read a couple of little paragraphs. I've read the whole report, and that's why it's falling apart. I just opened it up the other day.

Taking prosperity to the next level, tackling 2020 prosperity: “As the Ontario government begins its new mandate”—this is page 1—“it has a great opportunity” for starting to tackle the challenge ahead.

Now, this is on the second page. One of the charts here on the second page—you hardly get into this report, and it says right here, exhibit number 2, that Ontario has a significant prosperity gap with its North American peers. You look on the chart. Where's Ontario? Second from the bottom.

They got the advice from the expert panel. What do we get in the budget? Tax increases, not decreases.

Now, if you go through here and look, and I think this is most important if we listen—some of the pages might be interested in this, because other people aren't listening.

On page 53, it says, “Encouraging world-leading innovation and growth in Toronto's financial services cluster.” Now, we've all heard that the financial services cluster is the future. Some of you young people want to take commerce, economics, the integration of capital, raising capital and investing capital to secure our futures, because money has to be invested and managed properly. We need that sector and it's global today. It says right here that earlier this year, “the institute worked with the Toronto Financial Services Alliance (TFSA) to assess the key strengths and weaknesses of the financial services cluster versus its North American competitors. The report will inform the work of the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in the development of a provincial strategy to support continued growth in the sector.”

Now, overall, they are seeking this advice from these experts. What are they doing? Nothing. The outcome by any measure, by any headline I could read, whether it's General Motors or the other sectors that are in trouble—the member from Waterloo–Wellington today reported that a company that did get money from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade actually laid people off yesterday, just as we saw in Windsor. They were part of the Beacon project, and they're actually laying people off. But this report was basically avoided by the Minister of Economic Development—trying to grow the economy. This is about the budget bill. That's what we're talking about here.

I'm going to chart number 18 in this report. It says, “Taxation of new business investment is higher in Ontario than nearly all OECD countries.” It's not just Jim Flaherty saying it, it's not just the Ontario Chamber of Commerce saying it. Here is another group, the competitiveness panel of experts, saying it. There it is, right at the top of this chart. It's one of these scatter charts.

I get troubled. I have five children. You probably know that, because every time I speak I mention it. It is worth remembering, because I think we're here to make the future and opportunities better for all. Regardless of political stripe, doing the right thing will always get you the results you want.

Page 45, “Motivations: Pursue Smarter Taxation”—that's the title in the report—says, “The incoming government”—this is the current McGuinty government. When Greg Sorbara was Minister of Finance, I had a little more confidence. Currently, I'm not as confident.

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: No, Greg was fairly knowledgeable and I could talk to him. But I don't think anyone is listening any more—not just today, but in terms of these reports I'm referring to.

It says, "The incoming government needs to pursue tax reform as a high priority to raise Ontario's competitiveness and prosperity."

Do I see any of this translated in the bill? The only one I see in Bill 44 is the provision of the tax holiday—I'm going without notes on this—for 10 years, in what we call innovation companies. These are companies that take commercialized, academic research.

Hon. John Gerretsen: You like that idea?

Mr. John O'Toole: That is a good idea.

I'm getting a response from the Minister of the Environment, which is always good; first, it shows that he's here, and second, that he's awake.

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: It is late in the afternoon. There was nothing—

Hon. John Gerretsen: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: As this member well knows, I'm always awake when I'm in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I can confirm that as well. The Minister of the Environment is indeed always awake.

I would ask the member for Durham to return to his comments and be polite.

Mr. John O'Toole: It's good to get a response, because at least it proves someone was listening.

What I'm trying to say is, it was a very positive comment on that section—the tax holiday on innovative businesses, mostly to do with technology and transferring of technology into commercial products. These could be software-type solutions or like Jim Balsillie of Research in Motion.

That's an important recognition. The truth is that for almost all new businesses that venture into the commercial world, there's a very high failure rate and often there's no profitability.

In fact, I can tell you a personal story—and this is something I'd like to put in Hansard because it happens to be true. I happened to be at an event, I think it was in 1996, and there were people there who knew what they were talking about, certainly, and I was listening. They did mention it. They said, "Have you heard of RIM?" I had no clue what they were talking about. As soon as I left that particular venue, I did phone someone—because I took the Canadian securities course some time ago—who was at TD Waterhouse at the time, now CIBC, and I said, "Have you heard—?" He said, "No, it's not traded. It's an over-the-counter stock." I'm telling you a fact here. He said, "They're another R&D company that is all R&D but has no revenue. It's all government kinds of investments"—and indeed it was.

There's another similar company, in ethanol, which I have looked into. It has a very good prospect, but there's no revenue. It has never made a cent in eight years, and it's gotten millions of federal dollars in the making of

ethanol from fibrous material, primarily straw. It's located in Ottawa. It will be commercial some day when they get the right enzyme to make the straw into ethanol, to make it into a sugar, I suppose. My point is that many of these companies take more than five years to make any money. The amount of money committed in the budget would be miniscule. What they are missing here is a strategy and a backup plan.

1540

I talked a lot about the Roger Martin report, and I just want to move to some real initiatives that came up this morning at the committee hearings. The hearings this morning were revealing because the minister was responding to Murray Campbell's story in the paper today about how little control Ontario, or indeed Canada, has over American-based companies, saying that it wasn't much of a plan at all to try and rescue the manufacturing sector.

I think there was a report tabled this morning which was quite interesting, and I'm just going to go through it, because it does talk about some of the work being done by the ministry that would be charged with stimulating the economy. This report talks about several programs and amounts of money. I'm going to have to correlate these programs that I have here. For instance, it talks about a program that Minister Papatello talked about, the AMIS program, which is the advanced manufacturing investment strategy. These are sums of money invested on behalf of the McGuinty government in sectors to create jobs or secure the permanency of jobs. The question to the minister was, "How much of the commitment is spent and how many jobs have been secured?"

I heard this morning the statement by—I have to look up his riding, actually—the member from Wellington-Halton Hills, Ted Arnott. He was saying that a company in his riding, which I believe is Skyjack Inc., during this program, the advanced manufacturing investment strategy, had just laid off a number of people. It committed to retaining 358 jobs, provided the government gave them \$2.48 million, and here he is saying that there were 107 jobs lost. The question then becomes, are we getting value for taxpayers' money?

We saw the same questions being asked of General Motors yesterday and General Motors a week ago. As part of the Beacon project, they got some amount of money, and that amount of money was apparently—I'm reading it here—\$175 million. Of that \$175 million, part of it was to commit in the contract for the creation of 900 jobs.

If the minister who is making the promise, as the government—I'm not opposed to these kinds of transactions. What is missing here is the accountability. Did in fact those jobs get created or not? That's what the taxpayers want in transparency and accountability. I can tell you, without being insulting or critical, that the minister was stymied. She had no answers. I'm saying that on the record here to be used at a later date, probably during an election.

There were other parts of accountability that are worth mentioning, not just the Beacon project that I mentioned.

There was Linamar in Guelph, which the member was talking about. They created a technology centre, plus investments in research and development and skills training, and the provincial support was \$44.5 million. The list goes on. It's rather a long list. I think that's what the viewers should be aware of: It's a long list and it comes up to millions, indeed, hundreds of millions of dollars.

In the budget, what you're asking for is to recognize the state of the economy. In a sort of summation here, the best way to look at it is, when you see jobs in the private sector or the public sector, what are the implications for the economy? Well, jobs in the private sector generate, if you will, the added value, the creation of wealth; that is, harvesting resources, be it trees or metals, applying technology in R&D to them, and making those resources into products. Some of that can be pure information which is sold globally, a transfer of knowledge globally. Those are important resources that come out of innovation centres like the University of Waterloo or the Rotman school of business or any of the great schools and educating centres we have in Canada.

When you grow the GDP, the gross domestic product, and your exports, your GDP goes up, the revenue of the province of Ontario and indeed the country goes up. If you need any better proof, look at Alberta. They're exporting a lot of their natural resources, the crude and that, which is another debate in itself. The federal government is flush with cash. Why? Because Alberta's economy is pumping stuff out of the ground, applying something to it, and selling it on the market and making lots of money, and the royalties go to the governments. That's how governments make money. What they do with that money is the important thing, how they redistribute it through health care and through education, making our communities better and safer—great things. But those functions don't create wealth. They consume wealth, which is not questionable. They make our consumers and indeed our quality of life better.

What I see going away now are the jobs in those sectors, like resources, pulp and paper, auto, manufacturing. They're going away. The tax revenue is going down. So to make up for it, the tax revenue is going up in other ways: in penalties, fines and other levies. So, in conclusion, be aware of this budget.

The message I would leave for the viewer is this: Taxes are up, spending is up, jobs are down. Stay tuned.

Energy prices are doubling. They call it a smart meter. It's anything but a smart meter. It is a time-of-use meter. What that means is, if you do your dishes at the wrong time of the day, the cost of energy is going to go up 100%. That's a tax—because energy is a non-discretionary consumption tax. You've got to wash your clothes and heat your food.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the budget.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you for the opportunity to get up and speak briefly to Bill 44, but primarily to the

presentation made by my colleague from Durham in pointing out the challenges within the budget document and speaking of the government spending \$1 million to get a report to get some advice on where they should put their resources and where they should get those resources from. I think he made a good case for trying to balance the two. Obviously, they commissioned the report, with very qualified people to prepare the report, and then when they got the results, for whatever reason that would only be known to the treasurer and the Premier, they decided not to utilize any of the report. As was mentioned during his presentation, it would appear that they neglected to read the report. It seems a shame that they would spend so much to prepare it and then not use it.

I would have much preferred that they had not spent that money giving it to the report, and given that money to the Minister of Agriculture so the Minister of Agriculture could have fully funded the program that the treasurer asked her to put in place to help the beef, the hog and the horticulture commodity groups who were hard hit by the declining price in the marketplace and the high dollar; in fact, they no longer could pay for the feed it took to raise the hogs. If she had had the extra \$1 million or slightly more than that, she may have been able to look at the program and look after all the farmers, not just some of the farmers. The minister will tell us on a regular basis that in fact she put the money towards the majority of the farmers, and it would seem that we have to accept that there was collateral damage to that, because it needed to go out quickly. So, obviously, we'll have some losers and some winners.

We have a lot of young and expanding farmers who get absolutely nothing because they weren't in business in the years when the ministry used to evaluate the program, and I'll speak more on that in my—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments? I'll return to the member for Durham, in reply.

1550

Mr. John O'Toole: The member from Oxford has such a passion for the agriculture sector. From his time when he was a minister, I can tell you, he knows of what he speaks.

We were talking about the best signal for the viewer and the people of Ontario to watch, and it is to see: Are we getting value for money? The acid test is the hard-earned money that people are putting out for what it is, and I guess to the government it's taxes: Are we getting value for the money? That's the best practical interpretation.

We've got the \$100,000 list. Whether or not we're getting value for money—I think the highest person there was—was it the WSIB, the person who was just on the spending spree? Or was it the head of the Ontario Public Service pension fund? I think they made over \$2 million a year. I think that was the highest. I question that anyone is worth that much, including Wayne Gretzky. I just question that.

This ministry that I am looking at—I'll just read this, because it's worth putting on the record: "Spending in the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade is up \$341 million since 2002-03." That's a \$328% increase. Is it any better? Are we any better off? We're shedding jobs faster than they're spending the money. It's frightening.

Spending is up 400% since 2003. Look: The evidence is in, and it's clear to the people of Ontario. Spending is up, services down. Health tax—they're taxing you more on health. There are waiting rooms in emergency; there are not enough doctors; there are hospitals closing. Brampton's in chaos. Every hospital in Ontario has a deficit. Spending is up; service is down. The budget's a problem.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: I rise in the House today to share my concerns with the intended implementation and disbursement of the funds around Bill 44, entitled the Budget Measures and Interim Appropriations Act, 2008.

Bill 44 is about the taxpayers of Ontario and the plan that the McGuinty government has to spend our money. One of the reasons I chose the Ontario PC Party is my very strong belief that the government has an obligation, an inherent responsibility, to treat tax dollars with respect. Unfortunately, at no point in this McGuinty administration have I felt that the public purse is in good hands, so the duty falls to my caucus colleagues and me as the official opposition to defend the taxpayers' hard-earned contributions and to hold this government to account for the direction they are taking the province of Ontario.

Time and time again, the McGuinty government has abused our trust by breaking promises, be it slush fund scandals or tax after tax disguised as user fees and premiums. As a taxpayer, I'm disappointed, but as a citizen of Burlington, quite frankly, I am disgusted by the blatant partisanship at play in this administration.

It became crystal clear last week as I sat in my place and watched the Minister of Health pass blame on nurses and front-line health care workers for the *C. difficile* outbreak at our hospital, Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital. The truth of the matter is that the funds requested for infection control upgrades at Joseph Brant never materialized, but payouts to Liberal-friendly organizations seemed endless.

Three point one billion dollars yearly of our hard-earned health tax money have been collected under the McGuinty health tax. Let me put this in perspective: This is a total of almost \$16 billion since this health tax was initiated, and yet the Minister of Health continues to be unable to find the funds necessary to modernize the aging infrastructure at Joseph Brant and upgrade the infection control protocol. This is bad politics in the name of good government. The minister isn't just playing partisan politics; he is playing with people's lives.

It is about the life of a grandmother who walked into a hospital somewhere in this province with a minor ailment and died as a result of complications attributed to an

infectious disease. Can the minister look a family in the eye who has lost their loved one to *C. difficile* and truthfully say he has funded hospitals adequately and done everything possible to prevent the loss of life?

This is not just the story of Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital. This is the story of all aging hospitals and long-term-care facilities across this province that are not receiving adequate capital and operating funds from this government. Despite this influx of nearly \$16 billion of new health tax money, and budget bills like this one that trumpet the increases this government is making in health care, the Minister of Health still refuses to allocate the funds required by aging hospitals across this province to increase their capital expenditure for infectious disease control and has not updated the procedures to minimize the risk to patients, health care workers and their families. So in reference to the line items in Bill 44 that refer to health care spending initiatives, I say: Who can believe what is really going to happen?

Let me state for the record what the people of Burlington need the money to do. They need the money to go to Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital, as it continues to require millions of dollars in renewal funding from the Ministry of Health to upgrade their facility to include modern infectious disease control and updated standards for procedures—in a nutshell, bringing their aging infrastructure into this century.

St. Catharines is the home of our transportation minister, Jim Bradley, and it is getting a brand new hospital and a cancer centre. Mr. Bradley didn't ask for upgrades; he went for the whole pie. Meanwhile, in Burlington, you can't turn sideways in an operating theatre without bumping into a bedpan.

Hospitals and long-term-care facilities across the province need the financial support and resources of the Minister of Health in controlling and managing the spread of this bacteria. Our elderly citizens with compromised immune systems are at the greatest risk. The average age of patients who died as a result of *C. difficile* was 80 years old; the youngest, 58. Clearly, we need to address this issue.

I'm calling on the Minister of Health to ensure that a portion of the funds allocated to health care in Bill 44 is directed to Joseph Brant hospital. It is the right thing to do.

While we are on the subject of non-Liberal-held ridings mucking long with table scraps, I feel it is important to raise another funding issue. The Burlington Performing Arts Centre has been fundraising in the community for several years now for a new facility. Together with their municipal and federal partners, they have mapped out a very detailed and strategic plan. They have identified and purchased land for the proposed building and they continue to build community support and excitement about this wonderful project. In other words, their i's were dotted and their t's were crossed when their funding request was submitted to the province.

They were disheartened when they did not make the cut for the first round of financing under the public

infrastructure renewal grants—the only municipality in the Halton family of municipalities not to receive funds for their identified project for the MIII funding. However, they remain committed to seeing this project through and have asked to be included in the next round of funding.

How was the first round of funding allocated? Once again, let me tell you that Minister Bradley's riding made out in aces. The Liberal member from St. Catharines received \$4 million for a new swimming pool. I'm not opposed to swimming pools; I think that they're a very healthy thing to have in a community. In fact, community pools are important in St. Catharines especially. It has an aging population and it will significantly benefit.

The project concept is not the issue, but the preparations and the state of readiness for this project are. St. Catharines city council simply passed a motion. They do not have a site selected, nor do they have community funding in place, or a clear, formalized plan. The performing arts centre in Burlington asked for that same amount of money. They have a plan and they have raised substantial funds to date, including significant support from the federal government. There is only one piece of this puzzle missing before they put a shovel in the ground, and that is their provincial partner anteing in.

1600

Meanwhile in St. Catharines, the money is sitting in a bank somewhere while the city council decides what they want to do to put the pool in process and begin to create plans. This is a clear example of how the McGuinty government cannot be trusted to manage our money. Instead of allocating funding to a project that has community support, a site and municipal and federal funding, they choose instead to send money to the riding of a cabinet minister whose pool project is still yet a dream.

The citizens of Burlington pay taxes just like the citizens of St. Catharines. The taxpayers of Ontario are trusting this government to make decisions based on project readiness and fiscal accountability. How is a city council motion more accountable than a strategic plan with \$9 million in community funds raised to date? How is this even comparable?

The McGuinty government loves to tell people that they support arts and culture, yet when asked to put their money where their mouth is, they prefer to play partisan politics than really support arts and culture across this province.

I'm elected to defend the interests of Burlington constituents, and I will do so strongly. I have spoken with the ministers, both Caplan and Carroll, and recently wrote to both ministers regarding this project. In the letter, I clearly state my willingness to discuss the grant application for the performing arts centre and encourage them to approve funding for this facility in the near future, when more dollars are released for projects cited as a priority in communities across this province. I look forward to both ministers taking me up on that offer in the near future. In the meantime, I will continue to watch

with bated breath the evolution of the St. Catharines pool and how long it takes for that dream to become a reality.

Bill 44, to me, is full of empty promises, and plans that are quickly dismissed in favour of partisan initiatives.

Today I raised the issue of the Minister of Education's lax accountability for the budget of her trustees. Under the McGuinty government, trustees' expenses have ballooned, unchecked and out of control. The budgetary shortfalls of individual school boards are taken directly out of taxpayers' pockets. How many fundraising activities are parents being asked to pony up while trustees are not being reigned in on their expenses until the horse is out of the barn and the gate is closed?

There are fundamental principles of fairness that are absent from the McGuinty administration, and it's not confined to ballooning expenses. They simply refuse to envelope money, to make that money accountable. Enveloping money ensures that funds that a government allocates to a program go directly to the program they were intended and earmarked for. If funding was enveloped to ESL, to special education or textbooks, you may actually see a real improvement in the quality of our education system.

I chose to address the issues facing my constituents and my critic portfolio because at the end of the day, Bill 44 is meaningless, because the McGuinty government is unable to lay out a financial strategy and actually execute it. This is untrustworthy, it is incompetent and it is surely uncaring.

Well, Premier, for the talk that you provide, I know you feel that talk is not cheap, but neither is it cheap for the millions of Ontarians who send to you their hard-earned tax dollars. They have been waiting for a long time to see any positive effect of the money that they send to you. You have a dismal track record for a government putting forward its fifth budget.

Let me put the financial picture of Ontario's economy into perspective. Ontario has lost over 200,000 manufacturing jobs since 2004. Ontario's per capita fiscal capacity has fallen from roughly \$400 above the equalization standard four years ago to just \$84 over the average last year, making it very likely that Ontario will become a have-not province. Ontario had the second-lowest growth in the country in 2007—we were the leader. Business investment in Canada has expanded for the 12th consecutive year, but Ontario's economic growth has been below that national average. Why? Because the least competitive tax structure is here in Ontario, because uncompetitive electricity prices are here in Ontario, because red tape is here in Ontario and because the heavy burden of business regulations is here in Ontario.

You have a tax-and-spend record. Let's put the total spending of the Dalton McGuinty government into perspective. It took from Confederation and our first Premier, John Sandfield Macdonald, until 2003 and the then-Premier Ernie Eves to get spending from zero to \$68 billion annually. Dalton McGuinty's budget is projecting

program spending in 2008-09 at—get this—\$87.3 billion. This, folks, is up \$28.2 billion, or 48%, since this government took office in 2003. The budget's projected revenue of \$96.9 billion in 2008-09 is up \$28 billion, or 41%, since 2003. Revenue for 2007-08 is up \$5.1 billion from the 2007 budget and program spending is up nearly \$5 billion, or 10%.

This government claims that it is lowering the cost of doing business. What are you doing? Well, let me tell you: You're eliminating the capital tax, but only for manufacturing and resource sectors; all the others have to wait. In 2003, when the Liberals formed government, the corporate income tax was at 12.5%. Today, the Liberal government can boast a 14% corporate tax. You froze the small business income tax rate at 5.5% and cancelled the scheduled rate reduction to 4%. The Liberals significantly increased these taxes in one of the biggest tax hikes in Ontario's history.

So my question is, when can Ontarians expect good jobs, good health care, good education and a healthy environment? When do you intend on using Ontarians' hard-earned tax dollars to work for Ontarians rather than blaming previous governments and our federal partners?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to comment on the speech from the member from Burlington. She of course has been talking about Bill 44, the budget bill. The member from Burlington is a new member to the Legislature and she's doing a great job of looking out for the interests of the people of Burlington. She raised many health issues specifically from the riding of Burlington in her speech.

I have one budget-related issue from my riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka that I wanted to briefly mention, and that's the after-hours urgent-care coverage at the Burk's Falls and District Health Centre, which unfortunately ended March 31—and that's coverage from 6 to 9 on Monday to Friday and on weekends, which is very important to the Almaguin and Burk's Falls area. It would have required \$107,000 of funding from this government to keep the doctors there to provide the coverage. Unfortunately, even though this government had \$5 billion in extra revenue this year that they didn't plan on in their \$96-billion budget, they couldn't find \$107,000 to keep those important health services going.

The member mentioned red tape issues. I can tell you, as the critic for small business, that red tape is a huge issue for small business. It's a big impediment; it's a \$13-billion cost in the economy.

I met last Friday with a representative of the tow truck association. They were telling me how, if you have a big accident on the highway, even though they have a permit to take oversized loads, they end up having to go back to their office, paying an extra permit fee, and then they've got to take a faxed copy of it back to where the vehicle is blocking the highway, in many cases, to be able to clear the roads. That's just one small example of the thousands

and thousands of regulations that this government has that cause increased costs to business.

My congratulations to the member for Burlington on a fine speech.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Burlington has two minutes to reply, if she wishes.

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: Budgets come and budgets go, and the trust is put in government to make sure that those things that we send money to Queen's Park for are looked after. The problem is that when we have an account called general revenue, everything goes into a black sinkhole. We can't trace back how much of the \$16 billion that's been collected over the last four and a half years has actually gone into the health tax.

I think Ontarians should have the right to know where their money is being spent, how much of it is being spent, where and why. It's never clear, in the five budgets that have been brought forward—there have always been photo ops, a lot of clapping and rah-rah, but the clearness, accountability and transparency of where this money is being spent is not there.

We cannot continue to tax and spend. We cannot continue to be at a level of \$30 billion higher in four years of spending. What's going to happen in the next four years? Are we going to continue in this pattern? We're going to create families that can no longer afford to live in Ontario. Families are already moving out because the jobs are gone.

I think that the government has to sit up and listen. The government has to pay attention to what Ontarians are telling them, and the budgets being put forward from here on in need to have far more accountability and transparency, and far more emphasis on issues that Ontarians feel are important.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? Mr. Bryant has moved third reading of Bill 44. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell—no, a 10-minute bell.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): A 30-minute bell; I apologize.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I have received a deferral slip. Pursuant to standing order 28(h), this vote will be taken at the time of deferred votes tomorrow afternoon.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the day.

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1613.

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 | |
| Arnott, Ted (PC) | 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 | |
| Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L) | Sudbury | Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels |
| Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L) | London West / London-Ouest | Attorney General / procureur general |
| Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L) | Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest | |
| Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (L) | Scarborough–Guildwood | Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé |
| Bisson, Gilles (ND) | Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James | |
| Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L) | 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 | |
| Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L) | St. Paul's | Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires autochtones, leader parlementaire du gouvernement |
| Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L) | Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre | Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles |
| Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L) | Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est | Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique |
| Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. M. Aileen (L) | Barrie | Minister of Culture, minister responsible for seniors / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées |
| Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L) | 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 | |
| Crozier, Bruce (L) | 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 | |
| Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L) | Prince Edward–Hastings | Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales |
| Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (L) | Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre | Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail |
| Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L) | 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 | |

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

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
|--|---|---|
| Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC) | Oshawa | |
| Pendergast, Leeanna (L) | Kitchener–Conestoga | |
| Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L) | Elgin–Middlesex–London | Speaker / Président |
| Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L) | Scarborough–Agincourt | Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie |
| Prue, Michael (ND) | Beaches–East York | |
| Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L) | 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 / Chef de l'opposition officielle |
| 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 | |
| Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (L) | Nipissing | Minister of Revenue / ministre du Revenu |
| Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L) | 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 | |
| Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L) | Mississauga–Erindale | Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship / ministre des Petites Entreprises et de l'Entrepreneuriat |
| Van Bommel, Maria (L) | Lambton–Kent–Middlesex | |
| Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L) | Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean | Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement |
| Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (L) | Perth–Wellington | Minister of Research and Innovation / ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation |
| Wilson, Jim (PC) | 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 | Opposition House leader / leader parlementaire de l'opposition |
| Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (L) | 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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