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**Journal  
des débats  
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**Monday 29 September 2008**

**Lundi 29 septembre 2008**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 29 September 2008

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 29 septembre 2008

*The House met at 0900.  
Prayers.*

JACK WILSON

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would just ask the members to remain standing for a moment of silence in recognition of Jack Wilson, father of one of our presiding officers, Jim Wilson.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL POLICIES

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 25, 2008, on the amendment to the motion relating to calling upon all federal party leaders and Ontario candidates in the upcoming federal election to outline their plan to ensure fair treatment for Ontario.

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

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't sure I was going to be speaking so soon on this. I thought we had completed with Mr. Klees and we were going on to the complete rotation here. So I apologize for my tardiness in not getting up in time.

I want to just read the motion and the amendment as well. The Premier moved the motion last week. He said:

"I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario calls upon all federal party leaders and Ontario candidates in the upcoming federal election to outline their plan to ensure Ontario is treated fairly so that our province has the same opportunities to succeed as the rest of Canada, including:

"—fairness for unemployed workers who currently receive \$4,630 less in benefits and supports than Canadians in other provinces;

"—fairness for Ontario's public health care system which is receiving \$773 million less in per capita funding this year than the rest of Canada;

"—fairness for our economy in southern Ontario, the only region in Canada with no federal economic development programs;

"—fairness in Ontario's infrastructure funding that is being shortchanged by \$970 million in per capita funding compared to the rest of Canada;

"—fairness in equalization payments with a commitment that if Ontario qualifies for payments under the

equalization program, we will receive our full share of funding as the program exists today; and

"—a commitment to reduce the drain on Ontario that is now caused by annual transfers of more than \$20 billion from this province for programs and services in the rest of Canada."

Our colleague Mr. Shurman had also made an amendment to this, which apparently we will be voting on this morning. He adds that the government motion "be amended by adding the following point at the end: '—fairness in Ontario's taxation policies so that people already overburdened by taxes in this province are not subjected to the proposed carbon tax.'" I believe it's Mr. Dion who is planning that with his green shift movement in the federal platform.

One of the things I wanted to bring up is that I find it quite disturbing—maybe more ironic than disturbing—that we have a motion like this on the floor. I think that, generally speaking, most of the people in this Legislature would support reaching out to the federal government to see if we can receive what we would call better treatment for our taxpayers. I think that's our responsibility and I think in the end we will probably be supporting this. However, the reason I feel a little disturbed about this is that we tried this before in the House with resolutions, back when it was the Harris government and the Chrétien government was in Ottawa.

Health care funding at that time was around 13%. On every dollar put into health care spending in the province of Ontario, 86 or 87 cents was paid for by the province of Ontario, and the federal government was putting in 13 or 14 cents. You may recall we ran some ads on TV and that type of thing. And in this House we put through a motion that all three party leaders write to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance at that time, in a non-partisan manner, asking the federal government to up the funding to health care in Ontario. I recall that letter was sent out. The letter was under the signature of, at that time, Premier Harris; the third party leader, Mr. Hampton; and the Leader of the Opposition, who at that time was, of course, Premier McGuinty.

Premier Harris and the third party leader, Mr. Hampton, agreed to sign that letter—and you may recall that letter was all over. But the Premier, at that time the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. McGuinty, refused to sign it. Now he's here today asking everyone in this House to support his motion when he wouldn't sign a letter that was sent to the Prime Minister on behalf of health care.

I see today they're asking for "fairness for Ontario's public health care system which is receiving \$773 million

less in per capita funding this year than the rest of Canada.” I can’t understand why he would ask for this today, yet five, six or seven years ago, when he was the Leader of the Opposition, he refused to sign the letter of support for that. I find that very disturbing, because it’s playing politics with a very, very important issue. I hope that if there’s even one cent that can be gained for the province of Ontario through this resolution today that we will—I will support it for that reason alone. But at that time, the Liberal Party would not sign that particular motion. It’s disturbing that today we come back and hear it’s a whole new day and we’re supposed to forget about the past.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** He’s doing what Harris tried to do.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** But the reality is that Prime Minister Chrétien originally balanced the books of the country by—

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** He’s following Harris. That’s what he’s doing.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Would you quit?

What I’m saying is that the Prime Minister in fact did balance the books of the country by cutting health care payments; that’s what happened. And here we are today still \$773 million behind. I will give complete credit to the current federal government. I believe very strongly that they’ve done a fairly good job in trying to up payments in a lot of different areas. I know that they’ve settled the outstanding labour market agreement plan that had been in place. I know that just this year alone, the Ontario government received another \$311 million, effective April 1, for training purposes. Now, that being said, I believe about \$2 billion in additional training money has flowed this year from the federal government to the Ontario government for the sole purpose of re-training individuals, and I don’t think they’ve ever received one bit of credit for any of that. We try to bring this up in the House, but when these fancy program announcements are made, we never hear that that was actually federal money.

**0910**

I know that just a week ago, we had some issues around additional funding for the Midland Area Reading Council—the most vulnerable people in our society are the people who can’t read and write—and they were having to lay off people at their offices in Midland. Basically, the government was humiliated into coming up with some of the labour market agreement money to help the Midland Area Reading Council balance their books for this year, because they’re teaching the most vulnerable people in our society. If anybody needs to be retrained, surely it’s the people who need to learn how to read and write so they can get some kind of a job.

We talk about fairness, and I am very, very concerned about the agriculture community. I took a short trip down to Quebec this year. I’ve got to tell you—something better in agriculture is happening in the province of Quebec than is happening here. I travelled through a lot of rural Quebec, and the one thing I noticed was a lot of additions going on to barns. I saw a lot of modern equip-

ment in the fields. It seemed that every farm was alive and viable. What we’ve seen in the province of Ontario, is that one by one, large operations—whether it’s in dairy, beef or hog production, we’ve seen them dropping off. Right now, in the county of Simcoe, which I believe is the largest county in the province, I believe there are only two hog farmers left—two people who are actually raising hogs. That’s a far cry from 10 or 12 years ago, when we had probably 150 hog operations in the county of Simcoe.

Fairness is also something I want to talk about. I don’t see these sorts of things in the motion, but if we’re going to talk about fairness, I think we have to start talking about fairness to our small business operators. One of the things that is really disturbing is that these small business operators, under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, have to place, I guess they are called power windows—over their ads to display any kind of cigarettes. I’m not really entirely opposed to that. However, what I am opposed to is the fact that in almost all of the First Nations, we have huge sales in these smoke shops. I understand that in some areas 30% to 35% of the cigarettes that are being used in specific areas are coming from these smoke shops. There are no power windows there. They advertise freely on the side of the road. There’s no one controlling this whatsoever, and I think it’s very unfair that we ask one group of people to cover up the cigarettes and make sure that nothing can possibly be exposed—unless you want to buy cigarettes, and then the government would get the tax on that. However, in these smoke shops that we see through some of our First Nations, I just cannot believe that we have no authority and that the government is not taking any steps to combat that.

So, when we talk about fairness, we have to go all the way with this. It’s one thing to have the federal government doing one thing. We can talk about all the federal party leaders, and in a way, I guess that’s what this motion is all about: It’s trying to get the federal candidates, the federal leaders, to all come out in their campaigns and say what they’re going to do for the province of Ontario. So far, I think it’s been unsuccessful. I think Mr. McGuinty thought he had a lot more power than he actually does. The reality is that I’ve heard almost nothing said that would indicate that any of the party leaders, including Mr. Dion, are interested in satisfying the needs of Mr. McGuinty at this point, because he was obviously playing politics and trying to divert attention from very, very serious problems, those being the economy right here in the province of Ontario and the loss of manufacturing jobs.

I also wanted to say that we had an interesting debate on apprenticeships here in the House the other day. We talk about fairness—fairness to our young people. I can’t believe that this House voted down Laurie Scott’s motion, which would create a ratio system equal to the rest of Canada. If we want the federal government to be fair to the province of Ontario, shouldn’t we at least be fair to our own apprentices and allow them to be the way they are in the rest of Canada?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Yes, I can handle heckling, but not when I can't hear myself think.

I found very, very disturbing, in this House, that here's the government saying, "Well, let's treat Ontario like the rest of Canada." Then let's treat Ontario's apprentices like the rest of Canada's. That was an area I wanted to just mention very briefly.

I want to also zero in on, I thought, a really outstanding article the other day, and I want to put it on the record. It's by Linda Leatherdale, the money editor from the Toronto Sun. I want to read her article into the record—I think I've got enough time to do that. The article is called, "Wake Up, McGuinty; Premier Seems to have No Plan to Pull Us Out of our Tailspin.

"US bailout or not, a fierce financial tsunami is building and sooner or later will hit Ontario—a province already struggling and this week hit with more blows.

"News that PPG Canada is closing two of its plants—one in Mississauga, the other in Owen Sound—shocked 320 workers who will lose their jobs and sparked howls of complaints that Premier Dalton McGuinty isn't doing enough to keep business here.

"His policies are scaring jobs away. He's the head of the biggest province in the country, and if he doesn't get off his butt, there won't be any manufacturing left," complained Jean-Paul Tombu, who's worked at the 880 Avonhead Rd. plant in Mississauga for 19 years.

"Tombu, who turns 55 this year and fears he won't be able to find another good-paying job, was particularly critical about McGuinty's energy policies. 'If he doesn't do something about these high electricity prices, he might as well kiss the province goodbye. He's killing manufacturing, and service sector jobs are not going keep this province afloat.'

"What Tombu doesn't understand is how US President George Bush can bail out Wall Street with a \$700-billion US rescue package—yet McGuinty won't reinstate a cap on electricity prices, after breaking an election promise that caps would stay.

"Jeremy Neuhart, a spokesman for US parent firm PPG Industries, confirmed the two plants are closing, effective early 2009, with the work being moved to plants in the US. The Owen Sound plant, which employs 170, produces glass for both the automotive and residential real estate markets; and the Mississauga plant employs 150 and produces automotive paint coatings. PPG operates eight other plants in Canada.

"Neuhart blamed the closures on a slump in the automotive and housing sectors, plus restructuring as the firm put more focus on specialty products. A production line at an Illinois plant that produces glass will also be idled, he said.

"Meanwhile, Ottawa-based Allen-Vanguard Corp. also announced job cuts. The manufacturer of hi-tech security equipment will lay off 102 or 15% of its staff.

"Bottom line is Ontario job casualties are piling sky high, with 228,000 lost manufacturing jobs since 2004 and 16,300 agricultural jobs. But while the private sector sheds jobs, Queen's Park has been on a hiring spree, with

42,100 new public sector jobs since the October 2007 election." That's 42,100.

"And while Ontario bleeds, other provinces are poaching out our workers.

"Next week, Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall will be in town with 50 employers in tow, seeking to fill positions"—likely apprenticeship positions. "Wall will speak at the National Job Fair and Training Expo at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre on Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. And at a barbecue on Monday night at ET Seaton Park in Thornhill, his Employment and Labour Minister Rob Norris will be luring high-skilled immigrants who can't find jobs in Ontario to Saskatchewan.

"What a sad statement when provinces like BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan chase our workers for jobs," said Conservative leader John Tory. Last week, Tory staged an economic summit where business, labour and academic leaders urged a business-better climate and an overhaul of the Liberals' flawed skilled labour program.

"This government is a wrecking crew using excessive taxation, excessive regulation and a bad attitude," said Tory.

"On Tuesday, I'll also be speaking at the Job Fair. My time slot is 3 to 4 p.m. See you there." That's when Ms. Leatherdale will be speaking.

**0920**

All I'm really trying to say here is that we have people from the media and from other provinces—leaders of other provinces—all identifying the problems happening here in Ontario, and our Premier seems to be zeroing in on one thing; that is, trying to blame the federal government once again, this time trying to drag all the political parties into the argument to see what they'll do for Ontario. But I think what we really have to do is make people feel welcome in Ontario—get rid of the red tape, get rid of the bureaucracy that surrounds people wanting to start jobs and start to create investment in Ontario—and I don't think that's happening.

I talked to a firm in my riding just a couple of weeks ago, and they told me that they just don't feel welcome in Ontario anymore. It's a sad experience when people who have 500 or 600 employees feel they're not welcome in this province. Of course, it's not only Saskatchewan and Alberta that are luring our workers and employers away; it's also, now, a number of the states: Tennessee, for example, and North Carolina. And do you know what? I think the one thing I'm hearing more than anything is that they don't feel welcome here anymore. Someone goes in to do some inspection in their building and shuts the plant down for a few days or charges them huge fines for something that seems kind of frivolous, and they wonder, "Why am I even here? Why am I trying to invest? Why am I trying to create an economy here in Ontario when other people in other countries and other jurisdictions would welcome me?"

Although this is a bit of a fluff resolution, and I don't for one second expect the government members to support the amendment, the reality is that we've got a government here that really doesn't care a lot about who is

hired here. They've been riding a strong economy created by the previous government—that's plain and simple; we all know that—and we're sadly watching our economy deteriorate. Mr. McGuinty is looking for anyone to blame, and of course it's a good opportunity, with a federal election coming on, to try to get some publicity for himself and blame the federal government. I don't think the people of Ontario are buying that; I don't think the people of Canada will buy that either, because you have to realize that the rest of Canada is doing very well.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak this morning, and I look forward to the vote.

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's a privilege and a pleasure to rise in the debate today and speak about this fairness for Ontario motion that was filed by the Premier and the government opposite. In doing a little bit of research on this matter, one has to go back to Hansard to see, I guess, the strange set of circumstances over the last couple of years when the Liberal government was very much in favour of what the Conservative government in Ottawa was doing. I need look no further, for the first quote, than the then finance minister, Mr. Sorbara, who rose in this House in his budget speech of 2007 and said the following: "It was the Premier who took on this issue, and it was the Premier who negotiated the greatest improvement to fiscal fairness since the era of Lester Pearson and John Robarts. In recent weeks, we have reached agreement on federal funding for the environment and for public transit. That agreement is evidence ... that when governments work together, we ... make real progress"—again, Greg Sorbara, budget speech of 2007.

I remember standing in this House as finance critic for the New Democratic Party and referring to Mr. Sorbara and Mr. Flaherty, his federal counterpart, as the Tweedledum and Tweedledee of Canadian politics, because they were both speaking from the same songbook and saying the very same thing. They were both full of self-congratulation on how one side was listening to the other and in turn being listened to. The reality is, if Mr. Sorbara was correct at that time—and I'm not going to ever say he was not—that an accord was reached. The government in Ottawa did listen. Mr. Sorbara and Mr. McGuinty were both very proud of the accomplishments of that day.

Then we have a motion here today which completely belies the statement of only 18 months ago.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** His hypocrisy is coming to light.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I would not use that word.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** It may not be parliamentary.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It is not.

Then I did some more research, and here's another really good quote. This time it's from Mr. McGuinty—March 7, 2007—which was also around the time of the same budget: "Since we like to lay claim to the fact that Ontario is both the heart of Canada and the economic engine of Canada, this is certainly ... a great day for Canada. It's a great day for our environment and our

economy. It's a great day, as well, for Ontario's fight for fairness."

Premier McGuinty, 18 months ago, stood in this very House, talked in glowing terms about the federal government and how the federal government was being fair to Ontario, and took kudos all around, especially from his Liberal colleagues, for the magnificent job he had done in promoting fairness. And here we have again a motion before this House saying quite the opposite.

I don't know what has transpired in that time frame, other than the economy has worsened, other than this government has failed to do, I think, what has been necessary to protect jobs and to protect the economic prospects of ordinary Ontarians.

The final quote, again from the Premier: "Absolutely nothing can cool the warm enthusiasm we all share today." He was talking, again, about his negotiations with the Harper government and particularly his negotiations with federal Finance Minister Flaherty.

We have, then, a motion before us where the Premier is saying to ignore what he has said before, to ignore the negotiations that took place before, to ignore the détente that was agreed to and the financial remuneration that flowed to Ontario, and instead, he has a list of some six requirements that he believes are necessary for Ontario to lay claim to monies that he believes are owing to us.

I would like to talk, first, about the employment insurance. It is absolutely true that workers in Ontario receive less employment insurance than workers in other provinces. No one could deny that. It is true that in provinces like Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where the employment rates are much lower than in Ontario, people generally are able to qualify and to get more monies than they are in Ontario when they find themselves unemployed. One has to question how this has happened. Is Ottawa asleep at the switch or did Ottawa plan to do this all along? I have to suggest that this was planned a long time ago and it is not the Harper government that did it. It was Paul Martin, when he was finance minister, who accomplished all of this. I didn't hear any Liberals in those days standing up and saying, "Paul Martin is wrong." I didn't hear any Liberals saying, "We have to debate this in the House, and we have to seek fairness for Ontario workers."

What has happened has been a travesty to the people of Ontario. What has happened, because of Paul Martin and the federal Liberals and the government before this one, is that people who are on employment insurance in Ontario used to qualify in great numbers. When you found yourself unemployed, you used to be able to apply, and about 80% of the people who found themselves unemployed qualified for the benefits into which they had paid over the course, sometimes, of a lifetime. When a factory shut down or when one got laid off or when work was no longer available, then there was this social safety net available, and 80% of the people qualified.

Today in Ontario, only 40% of the people qualify and one has to ask how this happened. Did this happen because the Conservative government in Ottawa did some

horrible thing? No, they haven't changed the rule at all. What has happened is that Paul Martin's legacy has finally kicked in and people today in Ontario are hugely disadvantaged.

**0930**

I haven't heard the Premier talk about this. I haven't heard him say why all of a sudden it's important when it wasn't important before, save and except there are a lot more unemployed Ontarians today; save and except there are a lot more factories shutting down today; save and except there are a lot more jobs being transferred south of the border, and even south of that one, to Mexico. That's the reality of what happened.

We have to look at the reduced benefits. Benefits have actually been reduced, and again that is the legacy of Paul Martin and what he did when he was finance minister.

Look at who is being hurt the most. Who is being hurt the most? It is primarily women and new immigrants. They are the ones who are suffering the most under this employment insurance scheme. One only has to look at the statistics for Ontario and one will see exactly who is suffering. If one was fortunate enough to have been born here, then you will see that 31% of people who were born in Canada qualify for employment insurance, versus 23% of those who have recently come to Canada. So only 23% of the population who have recently come to Canada can qualify. And it's even harder upon women, and, I presume, because of the two statistics, immigrant women: 30% of women qualify for employment insurance but only 19% of immigrant women do. So they are being hugely hurt by this, and this needs to be redressed.

The motion should read not only that Ontarians should be getting more money but that we should seek to look at the imbalance whereby people who have recently arrived in this country are paying employment insurance but are not receiving it.

The Premier went on to talk about fairness in transfers, and I agree with fairness in transfers. I have agreed, as an Ontarian, my entire life and I agree today that we need to transfer funds to those areas of the country that are not as well off as Ontario once was.

We have a whole fiscal policy in effect where money would flow to places like the Maritimes, where money would flow to rural Saskatchewan or to areas where employment was not as high and where the economy was not as good. It's an important thing about being a Canadian. I am proud to be a Canadian, and I am proud of the fact that money went from this province to other provinces which were not as well off.

The whole question comes down to this: Are we as well off today? We are certainly not as well off as Alberta, with the giant oil sands and the booming economy. We are not as well off as Saskatchewan. We are probably not as well off as British Columbia. The question has to be asked: Can those transfers continue, or should those transfers be continuing? That is a question, I think, for another day. The Premier is right to make the point that the transfers need to be looked at, and in fact they will be

looked at. The question comes down to when, and it's probably 2010, by which time it will be clear whether the Ontario economy has improved or not improved, whether we are a have or a have-not province. I'm not sure that there's much sense in debating it today. The reality of the situation will become abundantly clear as this economy changes.

It is up to this government to ensure that we remain a have province. It is up to this government to put in the fiscal framework and the financial incentives to lure businesses to this province, to keep businesses in this province and to keep people working. I hear precious little from the government on this, even though I come here every day. I hear precious little about everything except their five-point plan, which does not appear to be working.

I look at economic development. They're talking about Ontario as the only place that doesn't have economic development. I would state categorically: Whose fault is that? Is it the federal government's fault that we don't have a good economic development plan in southern Ontario, or is it the government of Ontario's fault? The McGuinty government has been here for five years, and I have yet to see an economic plan. When any discussion or talk takes place about a jobs commissioner, about industrial hydro rates, about manufacturing tax credits or any other plan that is brought forward in this House, it is all pooh-poohed.

The government says, "We're not going to do that." But I haven't seen any economic plan whatsoever coming from their lips that is producing any jobs, that is keeping any jobs, that is helping the people of this province. And yes, it's very easy to blame the federal government, but I think the government should look at itself very long and hard in the mirror to try to determine whether or not it is doing everything that is necessary for jobs.

I also want to talk about fairness, because this whole thing presupposes fairness. Ontario is not being treated fairly, and I would think that that's a pretty reasonable argument given the circumstances. But how is Ontario treating cities and towns? With absolutely anything but fairness. Let's criticize the federal government because they're not flowing money to us, but let's not talk about the fact that we're not flowing money to cities and towns across this province in a way that will make a long and substantial and sustaining difference.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** One point one billion, Michael.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My friend here likes to mouth off a little bit about \$1.1 billion, one-time-only funding, which every single person at the AMO conference, every single mayor and reeve and councillor has said—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Well, of course they'll take the money, but they were also told by the Premier there won't be any money next year. You forget that, my friend from Northumberland, who likes to talk of things he doesn't know anything about. He likes to mouth off about things of which he knows nothing. He likes to say

I'm wrong when he doesn't even have the courage himself to stand up and speak on this issue.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Madam Speaker, I can see the peanut gallery is going full-rung here.

They talk about a big plan, but they're very paternalistic to towns and cities. They talk about uploading the download, but do they do it? Of course they don't do it.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Michael, ambulance, child care—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Member for Quinte West, please come to order.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was wondering when you would intervene on the rudeness of this member.

They talk about uploading the download but the reality is they haven't done it. This member talks about ambulance services, but the reality is that five years ago the cities did an in-depth study and said that there was a \$3.2-billion download. Today, they've done the self-same study and it's a \$3.8-billion download because this Liberal government hasn't done anything except tinker around the edges. All they're ever good at is tinkering around the edges. Cities and towns across this province are starting to implode. They are starting not to be able to do things they need to do, like safe water. They are starting not to be able to fill the potholes, fix the infrastructure. It is simply not happening.

I know they're all going to be thankful for \$1.1-billion one-time funding this year. They're all going to stand up and say it's a good thing, but if we're talking about fairness for towns and cities, it can't be a one-time-only. I'm sure the Liberals would not be happy if it was one-time-only from the federal government for one year and next year you're not going to get anything. That's not the kind of fairness you're looking for from the federal government, nor is it the kind of fairness that we should be giving to the cities and towns.

This government needs to make a commitment, if it is to be taken seriously in Ottawa, to upload that download, because when I hear the finance ministers and the Conservatives in Ottawa talking about Ontario, they say the reason that our property taxes are so high, and rightly so, is because we are the only jurisdiction in this country that remains with downloaded services on the backs of property taxpayers—things like daycare, things like Ontario Works, things like social housing and, yes, even to this day, 50% for ambulance services and public health. These are all provincial matters, and the cities are also seeking tax fairness.

The result, of course, in the end, is the besieged taxpayers and the reality that they must endure. Property taxpayers in Ontario pay the highest rates of property taxes in the entire world. Is that fair? I don't think that's fair. Is this government doing anything about it? Not a whit. If this government is to really want us to believe that they are seeking fairness, then they have to seek fairness for others over whom they have some control. Part of that is to upload the download, and part of that is to give the cities the necessary tools to find alternative

sources of funding to the property tax. This government has chosen not to do it; this government has run and hidden away from that; this government, before the last election, refused to even let the property taxes debate come before this House and simply froze the MPAC statements until after the election.

**0940**

This week and next week, people across this entire province are going to get their house assessments. People across the province are going to find out how much the value of their house enhanced the likelihood of how much taxes are going to increase—taxes that are too, too high, taxes that are impossible and taxes without which cities and towns will not be able to function. It all comes back to this government. They talk about the fairness that they expect from Ottawa, but they don't deliver the fairness that ordinary Ontarians need in their cities and towns.

I believe in fairness, and I believe that we have to ask that Ottawa do the right thing by Ontario. We need to do what is necessary to get economic development in this province. We need to do what is necessary to put people back to work in this province. We need to do what is necessary to change the laws for employment insurance, health and other things so that Ontarians are treated the same as others. But I am also a very proud Canadian who wants to share. I want to share, as Ontario has done throughout my entire life, with those provinces that do not have enough. As a proud Ontarian, I want to do the right things by our cities and towns, to share with them, because they are in far worse financial shape than the government of Ontario. They are struggling to make ends meet. One need go to almost any place in this province and see that there is a malaise out there, that it is difficult for the mayors and councillors and reeves to deliver the kinds of services that the people expect. It is impossible for them to build the infrastructure, to maintain the infrastructure, to fill the potholes, to have clean drinking water, to staff the libraries and to do the thousand things that municipalities need to do.

If it comes down to fairness, I will support this motion for Ontario. I expect the government of Ontario to do the right thing by giving fairness to the people in our cities and towns.

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I must say I'm intrigued that the Premier's brought forward this motion, fairness for Ontario. Believe it or not, the Premier doesn't speak on a lot of bills and motions that we bring forward in the House. So it intrigues me that no member of his caucus has chosen to speak on this. For an issue that is so important that the Premier of Ontario has brought it forward in the form of a resolution, the members of the Liberal Party who are listening to the debate today have chosen not to participate.

I want to continue on the theme that the member from Beaches—East York raised about the fairness to, what I would call in the provincial Legislature, our stakeholders,

and that would be the hospitals, the municipalities, the school boards—the people whom we directly serve in our role as members of provincial Parliament—because if we're going to go with hat in hand to the federal government and demand that they treat us fairly, I think it is only reasonable to assume that the people whom we serve directly, through our legislation, would be afforded the same courtesy.

As a member who is representing primarily a rural and small urban centre riding, I'm going to start with the gas tax revenue, because we are, for lack of a better word, getting shafted on the current breakdown. Essentially, the gas tax that the Ontario government is collecting is going only to municipalities that have public transit. And while public transit is an important part of our transportation infrastructure, it is not the only part. I am speaking, of course, from a rural view of our roads and bridges, which are in need of repair and are also a very important part of the infrastructure that Ontario taxpayers quite frankly deserve and expect to have their provincial and municipal governments maintain.

The federal government, in its most recent budget, implemented the gas tax fund, which helps to build communities by providing predictable funding. I would like to underline the word “predictable,” because while one-off announcements are welcome and appreciated, they make it very difficult for our municipal partners to plan how they're going to replace and repair infrastructure and how they're going to build new infrastructure that they need as new populations come in. The federal gas tax fund helps to build communities by providing predictable funding in support of municipal infrastructure that enhances the environment and quality of life. Furthermore, it benefits communities by providing funding to increase the capacity of communities to undertake long-term planning.

The refrain I often hear from taxpayers, particularly ones who are managing homes and businesses is: “Why doesn't government do a better job of planning? Government has to know that we are going to have an increase in population. It has to know we're going to have children in an area who need to be educated or that a community that is expanding is going to need hospital beds. Why doesn't the government do a better job of planning?”

I can tell you that one of the reasons municipal governments struggle with it is because of these one-off announcements we like to do—let's call it the AMO Gimme—where the Premier stands up once a year at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario annual conference at the end of August and announces the next great treat he is providing to the municipal partners. I think that if we truly respect what our municipal partners are trying to do when they are planning our communities and building our communities, we would give them some continuity and some ability to know what to expect from the provincial government.

I was actually quite pleased that our colleague in the PC caucus John Yakabuski, the member from Renfrew–

Nipissing–Pembroke, raised this in a resolution in the spring. You may remember that the resolution was, why can't we use provincial gas tax dollars in all municipalities across Ontario? Do it as a per capita assessment, but essentially say, “We trust you, municipal partners, to know what your priorities should be in terms of infrastructure, and we will give you the gas taxes in order to do that.”

Because there isn't a member among us who knows how much the price of gas is hurting us, both in our pocketbooks and in our communities as we decide what jobs to take and where we can go—yet, as municipal governments, they don't have the ability. Let's face it: The vast majority of people assume that if it's called a gas tax, it's going to go toward transportation infrastructure. It's not. Some \$2.3 billion dollars is being collected, and the government is using it for whatever they deem to be the issue of the day. I think the municipalities would appreciate, and taxpayers would assume, that taxes collected under the guise of a gas tax would actually be used for transportation infrastructure and not picking and choosing—cherry-picking—which municipalities get to have it.

#### 0950

The other thing I'd like to speak on is fairness when it comes to our health care sector. Again, I'm looking at it from the lens of Dufferin–Caledon. We happen to be in the Central West LHIN. The local health integration network prepared a study, and basically, the study talked about all of the different health care services people would expect to receive within their community. They rated us and the services that we get in Dufferin–Caledon compared to the other LHINs across the province. Unfortunately, it was not a pretty picture. For mental health, we rate 14 out of 14: 14<sup>th</sup> in the province because we are given less money from the provincial government than any other LHIN across Ontario.

Again, the average Ontario taxpayer would assume that their provincial government would say, “If you live in Oakville, if you live in Orangeville, if you live in Sudbury, you deserve the same level of care.” It's not happening. I see it every day; I hear about it every week in my community, as people are either asked to go to other parts of the province to get the care, or worse, told, “You have to be on a waiting list because in the Central West LHIN, we don't have enough services, we don't have enough beds, and we don't have enough practitioners to assist you at this point.” In mental health, most dramatically, you are talking about people who are in crisis. You are talking about family members who are being asked to travel two and three hours to assist in the treatment. It's unreasonable and unfair that that unfairness is continuing under the provincial Liberals.

Community care access: Again, that's where we like to say, “You're going to be healthier, and you're going to get healthier faster, if you can recover in your own home. And we, the government, are going to assist you by bringing in health care professionals to assist in your recovery.” Community care access centre serving Duf-

ferin and Caledon—I'm getting calls every week, "My services are being cut." It's not because the professionals are not there to service them; it's because the provincial government has said that community care access centres across Ontario are not equally funded based on per capita. I don't understand it. I don't know how you can justify it when, again, we say we're supposed to have the ability, no matter where we live in Ontario, to expect a level of service. We're not getting it. We're not getting it with mental health, and we're not getting it with community care access centres.

I guess what I'd like to follow up on is the fairness for Ontario motion and how it relates to what's happening on the street now. When I talk and when I have meetings in Dufferin–Caledon, the number one issue that people raise with me is, "What is the provincial government doing to ensure that our economy bounces back? What is the provincial government doing to assist our economy in moving forward in the years to come?" Because anybody who reads a newspaper, anybody who turns on a television understands that there are many, many factors coming from either across the border or internationally that we cannot influence. However, there are many that the provincial government can assist with.

There's an excellent article, which I hope the members take some time to read, in the *Globe and Mail* today, from Don Drummond. He talks about how we have to move to a new Ontario and look at the economy in a different way, take some of our blinders off on how we've been dealing with things in the last 50 years and move forward. He raises some excellent suggestions on what the provincial government can actually do. Because I think we all acknowledge that the provincial government isn't the panacea and cannot solve the world's crises; we can't put a wall up around the borders of Ontario and assume that we're going to live in a magical land. However, there are things, in terms of the education rate and high school dropouts, in terms of the capital tax, in terms of the taxation system generally, that we could proactively be debating and proactively be bringing forward and discussing in the legislative forums, instead of simply pointing to the federal government and saying, "We'd like more money, sir."

I think that when I was elected and when all of the members of the House were elected, they assumed that we were going to do more than simply point fingers and hold out our hands for money. They assumed that we were going to use our collective intelligence and our collective experiences that we bring to this chamber and actually come forward with some solutions. If we can listen to the Don Drummonds of the world and the experts who are in the field and actually dealing with these issues on a daily basis, then so be it.

I don't understand why the only thing that the Premier has deemed valuable enough to speak of on this motion is to say, "The federal government has to treat us better." Maybe next week the Premier could come back into this chamber and say, "Here are the five or 10 points that we're going to bring forward in the next legislative

session that deal with shoring up our economy, that deal with encouraging manufacturing in Ontario, that deal with actually speaking to the people who are generating jobs in Ontario," and say, "This is how we're going to ensure Ontario's success for the next five or 10 years." I don't see that, and it disturbs me that we haven't moved beyond the finger-pointing and we are instead going to talk about, "Well, they didn't do the right thing, so we're just going to yell and cry in our soup," I guess. I don't know.

The people of Ontario, the taxpayers of Ontario, deserve more than an exercise in and a motion on finger-pointing. I would hope that next week and the week after, we will start to see some of those proactive, engaged, interested initiatives coming forward from the government benches that will actually bring some hope to the economy, to the taxpayers and to the families of Ontario.

I appreciate your time.

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

Seeing no further debate, Mr. Shurman has moved that the government motion be amended by adding the following point at the end: "fairness in Ontario's taxation policies so that people already overburdened by taxes in this province are not subjected to the proposed carbon tax."

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

Pursuant to standing order 9(d), the vote on the amendment to the main motion is deferred—and the main motion, in fact, itself; they are both deferred to deferred votes taking place this afternoon.

*Vote deferred.*

INCREASING ACCESS TO QUALIFIED  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR  
ONTARIANS ACT, 2008

LOI DE 2008 VISANT À ACCROÎTRE  
L'ACCÈS DES ONTARIENNES ET DES  
ONTARIENS AUX PROFESSIONNELS DE  
LA SANTÉ QUALIFIÉS

Resuming the debate adjourned on September, 23, 2008, on the motion for second reading of Bill 97, An Act to increase access to qualified health professionals for all Ontarians by amending the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 / Projet de loi 97, Loi visant à accroître l'accès des Ontariennes et des Ontariens aux professionnels de la santé qualifiés en modifiant la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées.

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

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I'm pleased to rise in the House today to continue the debate on international medical graduates, Bill 97. I rise today to address this very

serious issue that I, myself, have been concerned with since being elected as the MPP for Thornhill, particularly because Thornhill is a riding where we speak, at last count, something like 145 languages. It is arguably the riding that is most diverse in this province, and therefore I'm very much concerned with the issue of what to do with international medical graduates, many of whom have come to see me personally, many of whom live in my riding and many of whom are engaged in work other than the work that they should be doing—this in the face of the vast shortage of physicians and medical personnel that we experience.

#### 1000

I also rise as a resident of Ontario, concerned—and who wouldn't be—with the fact that something in the vicinity of one million Ontarians or more at this point do not have access to a family physician. Of those million-plus, over 100,000 are children. This is a situation that we cannot allow to persist.

At first blush, I was pleased to hear that the government was concerning itself with the question of international medical graduates, because where, if not within our midst, could we find a better place to look for doctors willing, ready and able to be doctors? Barriers that prevent international medical graduates, or what we call IMGs, from practising medicine in Ontario are a very serious and dangerous challenge that puts lives at risk every single day. If you don't have access to a doctor, what can you say other than that there are lives at risk? People are not being treated when they require it. This is very much an ongoing concern, as I've mentioned, to me in my riding since being elected.

I might say a word about Thornhill. Thornhill, just north of the 416, is a riding that people in this chamber and outside know to be a wealthy riding. The average household income exceeds \$100,000. Where, if not Thornhill, would you find a riding more capable, from at least a monetary perspective, to protect itself? Can you buy insurance? Can you buy your way into a medical situation that you need? The answer is no. And I might cite at this point a statistic that I carry around in my head, and that is with approximately 7% of our citizenry in Ontario lacking a personal physician or lacking access to a family doctor, Thornhill is no different. Our statistics at last count were the same as anywhere else in Ontario; approximately 7% of Thornhill residents, of my constituents, don't have access to a family doctor. So we are as affected in Thornhill as we are in any other part of Ontario.

The lack of opportunity for international medical graduates to practise medicine in Ontario means that the people of Ontario will be forced to continue to endure doctor shortages in the future unless and until the government takes serious and effective action immediately. Sadly, I don't believe that Bill 97 addresses that.

I guess that Bill 97 was the government's attempt to address this challenge, but it falls short. Bill 97 is simply a shift of responsibility or, if I may use an oft-repeated word in this chamber, a download of responsibility from

itself, from health and long-term care, to the College of Physicians and Surgeons. In fact, this bill is proof that the McGuinty Liberals either underestimate the problems facing Ontarians trying desperately to find a doctor and/or they do not take the issues raised by international medical graduates, IMGs, seriously.

Now, in my initial phase as a member of this chamber—and I'm talking about back last year, not too much away from a year ago—I made it my business to have private meetings with HealthForceOntario, with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, with the Ontario Medical Association and notably with the local health integration network, the LHIN, that serves my area. The problem is not international medical graduate certification; the problem is residency spaces, places to put people who are international medical graduates so that they can be integrated into the system. It's barely above 200. We simply can't accommodate.

I, like my colleagues, can provide examples from my riding of Thornhill of how the McGuinty government has failed the people of Ontario and failed to ensure access to physicians, and I'd like to share two particular stories because I think they're poignant. One was being approached by a pediatric specialist late of Russia—actually, late of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—a fully trained doctor, a pediatrician who graduated and practised in eastern Europe, now living in Thornhill. And what is she doing? She's writing for a foreign-language newspaper because she still can't practise medicine. She has all of the appropriate qualifications, but she can't find a residency spot. This woman has said directly to me, "I would be happy to move to Thunder Bay. I'll move anywhere you want. I'll practise as a family practitioner. I don't need to be a pediatrician, I just want to do what I was trained to do, which is to serve people." She can't do it, and it is not going to be changed as a result of Bill 97, and that grieves me.

Here's one that's even more poignant: a surgeon from Russia, shut out of the system because of unnecessary barriers. This man's qualifications: He's a spinal surgical expert, so he has that experience. He has worked in frigid climate conditions up in Siberia. He has worked with the Russian military, so he has done in-theatre surgical work. This is a valuable individual in his 50s. How many years does he have left where he could contribute to what we need in Ontario? He went so far as to contact the Canadian military and say, "I want to practise medicine so badly, I want to practise my specialty so badly, that I am perfectly happy to be assigned to Afghanistan to do what it is I do: work in-theatre, help our soldiers." "No. Unless you're a Canadian medical graduate, we don't want you," was the answer that he was given. So what's he doing? Writing software. There's nothing wrong with writing software, but in a situation where we need physicians, how can we allow him to write software, when we're so desperate?

Madam Speaker, this is not a prop. I know props are not permitted in this chamber, but what I'm holding in my hand is the text of Bill 97. This is simply a cut-out

from the bill, the Liberal government's proposed solution to the tremendous challenge facing our residents, our health care system and our international medical graduates. This is it; that's the whole bill. I know that many IMGs, as well as members of this Legislature and Ontarians looking for a doctor, have been breathlessly awaiting government action on this issue, and we are supposed to believe that this has now happened. We're supposed to believe that this has made things change. Alas, the long-awaited moment arrives and what we all got was this little piece of paper; it means nothing. I'll read it because it's only going to take 30 seconds of my time: "It is the duty of the college to work in consultation with the minister to ensure, as a matter of public interest, that the people of Ontario have access to adequate numbers of qualified, skilled and competent regulated health professionals." That's the whole piece of legislation that we're debating here today. That's not going to solve a problem; that downloads a problem. Are Premier McGuinty and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care really suggesting that when skilled, experienced, talented foreign-trained physicians come to me to ask what the government is doing to help them meet Ontario's health care needs and share their expertise, I'm supposed to show them that piece of paper?

Do you know what these people go through? They go through their boards and their certifications, they go through a two-stream placement system, trying to find residency. If they really want to practise medicine, they go and they find their residency, and where do they go? To another province or to the United States, and they never come back. That's why thousands of people who could be practising in Ontario and serving the million people, of whom, once again, I say over 100,000 are children, are not here; they're somewhere else. This is what the McGuinty Liberals have to show after \$12 billion collected in health care premiums, dare I say, taxes: just over five lines in five years. According to my simple math, that works out to one line of legislation per year in office. Five lines that do nothing except shift the blame and shift the responsibility for solving the problem onto the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons—that's what you've done. Five lines, which, to the Liberal member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, who spoke to the bill last Monday, apparently constitute a comprehensive strategy.

**1010**

We in the opposition have learned not to expect much from the McGuinty Liberals, but we have been trying to figure out just how they could fail the people of Ontario on so many different fronts.

Health care: Just look at the fact that in the 905, per capita expenditure on health care is just above the \$700 mark, and anywhere else you go in the province—the 416, by way of example, is in the order of \$950. What a disparity that is. When is that going to be addressed?

The economy: The world is crashing around us, and Ontario, through its finance minister, will issue just a statement on our affairs in, oh, three weeks or so—maybe four weeks—at the end of October.

Safety and security: Shootings going on almost daily, and what do we hear from the other side? A ban on handguns. As far as I'm concerned, a ban on handguns exists.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Order.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** So why are we talking about that? We're talking about illegal handguns that you don't want to go and get.

The mystery has been solved. The key to Liberal failure, to the piles of pointless legislation they've introduced and the ineffective, meaningless proposals they've bored us with for the past five years is the Liberal government's understanding, or lack of understanding, of the word "comprehensive."

I may not know a lot, but I know that any comprehensive strategy to solve even the most insignificant of problems requires more than five and a half lines of minuscule print, and what we are talking about today is much, much more than a minor difficulty. This is about health and about life, and if I take those two words and put them together, what I'm talking about is the personal security of the individual here in our Ontario. We're not addressing it adequately, and this bill does nothing to change that. This so-called strategy is nothing more than the government telling the college to seal a leak with chewing gum, only it doesn't even offer to provide the gum.

Perhaps the entire McGuinty cabinet should take a walk through the press galley here at Queen's Park and ask one of the journalists for the definition of the word "comprehensive." What does "comprehensive" mean? It's top to bottom and bottom to top, and they don't understand it. As the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore admitted last Monday, the problem of opening access to our health care system for international medical graduates is one we've been hearing about for a while. There are ways to do this, and Bill 97's download is a very minuscule aspect of this.

For example, we have been talking in this province about another college, another university, that could educate that many more medical students. We've been talking in Vaughan—in my riding of Thornhill, of which Vaughan is part—about a hospital that can't even get the \$3 million to \$5 million that is necessary for master planning. We've been talking about that since it was recommended by the LHIN last spring.

Also last Monday, the new Minister of Health and Long-Term Care—may he serve Ontario better than his predecessor—was thrilled to inform this Legislature that last week the college voted to allow doctors trained in other Canadian provinces and in the US to practise in Ontario without being subject to additional registration requirements—whoop-de-do. What a stretch. We're going to let them into Ontario. This government is proof that if you aim low, you will achieve little. That's what you do: You aim low, and you achieve little.

Creating expectations—I know all about selling. If I say I'm going to get it for you for a dollar and I get it for 90 cents, you'll love me, and if I get it for \$1.10, you'll

hate me. The other side constantly creates expectations that it can achieve. That's called low-balling. Apparently, after years of talking and debating and studying this problem, the Liberals have managed to convince the College of Physicians and Surgeons that it's okay to let doctors trained in Canada practise in Ontario without additional registration requirements. Well, can you believe that? This is a big achievement? This is the success of the so-called partnership? Maybe—by Liberal standards. So I hope you will forgive the lack of enthusiasm you're hearing from me and from my colleagues.

This is not a reason or a cause for the government to pat itself on the back but to reflect on its failure. This proves that we are years—decades—behind in what we ought to be achieving right now, and it's not the only example. I myself recently underwent surgery at Toronto Western Hospital. I know first-hand how capable our doctors, nurses and medical staff are. The quality of care they provide to patients—if you are lucky enough to be able to get to them, you get it. But how overloaded do you want our medical people to be?

Doctor shortage is not the only difficulty that Ontarians have to contend with when it comes to accessing our health care system. To illustrate, allow me to read a letter I recently received from a constituent. This letter came in last week, and there's not a word of a lie, not a joke in it:

"Hi, Peter:

"I received in the mail, about a month ago, a notice telling me I have to renew my health card with a photo version. The form advised me to call a specific" toll-free "number ... to book an appointment to get the new card....

"I have tried to book an appointment at least three times a day since I received the notice and I always get a busy signal. Of interest, the form suggests I phone between 10 and 4 Tuesday to Friday to obtain the best service. As I have been doing that, all to no avail, this leads me to wonder, if this is their best service, what is their worse service like? And, by the way, what happens on Mondays or before 10 a.m.?"

"I have now received a reminder notice which suggests that 'my health coverage may be affected if I don't obtain a new card.' Well, frankly I don't know what to do. I'm busy running a small business that, you know, creates jobs; therefore, I simply cannot spend my whole day phoning to get an appointment. Yet I'm told my coverage is in danger of some unspecified type.

"Perhaps you could convince Mr. McGuinty and his merry band of 'spend it like drunken sailors' ministers to use some of that massive increase in health premiums that he imposed to hire another operator or two. It would serve two purposes:

"(a) It would help re-employ some of the unfortunate folks from the manufacturing sector who have lost their jobs due to his unwillingness to actually do anything about the tax structure for business;

"(b) It would get me a health card.

"I appreciate you're busy being a voice of reason in the Liberal wilderness in Queen's Park, but any advice you could give would be appreciated.

"Sincerely

"Peter Symons."

Thank you, Mr. Symons. I think you about summed it up.

I can predict that the Liberal response to this inquiry will start with something like, "We have a comprehensive strategy to streamline" whatever. Calling Bill 97 a solution to the barriers faced by international medical graduates is comparable to telling my constituent to just keep calling. Bill 97 is an insult. It's a slap in the face to the people of Ontario who are suffering doctor shortages, and it's a slap in the face to the trained physicians forced to work in unrelated jobs rather than utilizing their full potential in a country that was supposed to be their land of opportunity.

I want to ask, is this really the legacy of this government? Is it really what it wants to leave behind: five lines on a scrap of paper? That, and a series of bans that also claim to be comprehensive strategies. Let's see. There was a ban on carrying illegal guns in cars, which I presume was the government's version of a comprehensive strategy to ensure safety and security. There was the trans fat ban that the government probably considered as a comprehensive plan—they said so at the time—to ensure the health and safety of students in Ontario schools.

In the short period of time that I have left to speak, I'd like to leave the McGuinty government with some recommendations that would go a long way to resolving some of the challenges in the health care system and in the province in general:

(a) Put together a plan to create new medical schools;

(b) Use some of that \$12 billion in health care tax that you grabbed from people and fund a new medical school at York University;

(c) Fund the new Vaughan hospital;

(d) Follow the example of our government and increase medical spaces by at least 30%.

And finally, do yourselves and this province a big favour and stop using words you don't understand. Call a spade a spade; otherwise, the only comprehensive plan you'll be left with is an exit strategy right out of office.

**1020**

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Quite a colourful and comprehensive strategy by my colleague from Thornhill. I might give him a helpful hint. In Hamilton, we have a central area where we go to get our health cards. You take a number, you sit there and you probably, within an hour, have your new health card. They also do that for your passports and other things, so I don't know why that individual is waiting for an appointment. That confuses me.

But talking about the content of the member's presentation, I agree totally. We have physicians in this province from foreign countries who are actually driving cabs. There are some problems. There could be a language barrier; they would have to take English as a second language, which is helpful, and they are working

at that. But I think the skills of these individuals are not being utilized to the fullest potential. For example, we were talking with Hamilton Health Sciences; if you recall, Madam Speaker, you were there too. We suggested that some of these physicians could be used in back-up situations in operating rooms and their expertise—learning the language as well as practising their skills in a smaller capacity. Then over a period of one or two years, they would be in full swing and practising like they did in the countries of their origin. That would be utilizing people with medical background, rather than driving a cab or working in a factory.

The Health Sciences were very interested in that and they're moving in that direction to possibly help people with that situation. That would be a positive move, and I'd like to see that implemented and pushed by the College of Physicians. But the problem is, as we all know, in the past some of these organizations have been an old boys' club and they're not open to introducing new people to the field; it's kind of protectionism. Plus we would like to see the bill cover more areas that would be beneficial to the people of this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** I want to keep my comments to specifics about Bill 97. I want to congratulate the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore for the hard work.

I do have to make this comment to the member for Thornhill: What a blast from the past. It's too bad that you weren't in government when your party was in government. Maybe the cuts that we experienced throughout Ontario might not have happened. But don't take my word for it. Vote to support Bill 97.

My municipality, the municipality of Kincardine, was so impressed with this bill that they decided to talk to other municipalities to find out how much support there was, and I want to tell you that they received 115 letters of support for that. So it's not only the member for Huron–Bruce talking in support; 115 municipalities agreed with the municipality of Kincardine. Why did they agree with them? They understand that it's a comprehensive strategy. They understand that we must go to our international market to fill up the gaps that the previous governments left. We've doubled the residency spots.

I have to say I'm just absolutely taken aback. The member for Thornhill, when he was out campaigning, did he not remember what his party said? They were going to cut \$2.6 billion out of health care. And then he brings forward his asks today, and I have to say—

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We never said that. We've made that point in this House before.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** — point of order. Thank you. The member for Huron–Bruce.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** Thank you. We hear that, but where did they think the money would come from? So here we go again.

It's with pleasure that I support Bill 97. We know it's a comprehensive plan. Not only that, over 160 municipalities get it. It's just too bad the other side didn't get it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Bill 97, Increasing Access to Qualified Health Professionals for Ontarians Act: another Monty Pythonesque bill from this government. Contrary to what the member for Huron–Bruce said, there's no comprehensive plan here to increase health care professionals. It's just another hollow promise and all it ends up doing is downloading, as the member for Thornhill said, responsibility for dealing with physician shortages onto the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the 23 other regulatory colleges that are involved with regulating health care professionals. A million Ontarians in 2003 did not have access to a family physician; a million Ontarians still don't have access to a family physician, and this bill is going to do absolutely nothing to change that. There's nothing substantive in this bill whatsoever.

There are lots of creative suggestions that this government could have come up with, but instead it's just a big announcement. That's what it's all about. What could they have done? They could have taken up the possibility of creating a new school of medicine—it's been talked about, but of course it's not allowed for in this bill—expanding medical school spaces, and been creative, as they are in a number of universities right now, talking about having satellite campuses, trying to create medical spaces more inexpensively, but still increasing the number of medical graduates in the province of Ontario. But they didn't do that with this bill.

What about implementing a long-term physician recruitment strategy? They could have done that. Again, they decided not to. What about establishing an independent human resource planning facility for health care professionals? They could have chosen to do that, but they chose not to do that. There are so many opportunities that could have been taken up with respect to this bill to really do something to ease the physician shortage in Ontario, which, I would have to say, is particularly acute in my riding of Whitby–Oshawa, another underserved area, another area with a great university. Why can't we be creative about creating new medical care spaces? Not addressed in Bill 97—what a shame.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** To comment on the remarks by the member from Thornhill, I always listen intently to what he has to say. He does it with some panache, he does it in colourful language and, I dare say, he attempted to be quite comprehensive in his comments given the limitations at the time, the 20 minutes available to him.

He made a good point in terms of the underutilizing in our province of foreign-trained professionals, particularly physicians, and the need for us to do something about it. I believe that this bill will go part way, and I will have an opportunity myself in just a couple of minutes to comment on the bill. He made the very good point that we

need to utilize, in the best possible way, the talent of those people who choose to come to live in the province of Ontario and in Canada. It seems to me that when you uproot someone, or if you allow someone to come from his or her country with skills that are much in demand there, the least that we should be prepared to do as a society is to utilize in the same way the skills that they were using before. It seems to me passing strange that we take physicians and nurses and health care professionals out of countries, particularly in the Third World, where the demand is even much higher than it is here, and the ratio much higher between doctors and patients, and we bring them to this country and then not utilize that skill. I think the member has made some very good points.

I don't know how my colleagues in the Progressive Conservative caucus are going to vote on this bill. Obviously, it may be in need of some tweaking, and perhaps the five-point action plan which my colleague from Etobicoke–Lakeshore put together needs to be included and we need to get specific strategies incorporated into the body of the bill.

Having said that, I await my turn.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The member from Thornhill for a response.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Thank you to all of my colleagues for responding, including people from the government side.

There's just one wish that I would like to express, and that is that in responding to the comments that I've made—because I'm as passionate as anyone in this House on any side about having to integrate international medical graduates into our system—please don't treat us and please don't treat Ontarians as being somehow or other naive. That's what some of the comments, for example, from the member from Huron–Bruce, suggest. I thank her, but to say that this is a “blast from the past”—maybe you don't have as many international medical graduates who want to be integrated into the system in your riding as I do in mine. You don't get comprehensive when you put in five lines without a strategy that surrounds it, and you don't do anybody any good when you continually accuse our party of wanting to cut \$3 billion out of health care. That's not something we ever promulgated.

As far as other members are concerned, my colleague from Whitby–Oshawa brought positive suggestions, which I included in my discourse as well, that have to do with the HR aspect of this, the issue of bringing a new college on stream, the issue of creating trading facilities that can integrate some of these newer Canadians into our society and help some of the Canadians who have been long-suffering souls, not capable of having a doctor of their own.

As far as member for Beaches–East York is concerned, he believes along with me that we have much to do and that we do have to integrate newer Canadians into the system. That's what IMGs are. Thank you to all members for the response, and let's hope we can move forward with something that is comprehensive.

**1030**

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I stand to speak to this bill with perhaps a little bit of a mixed message, although I think ultimately I will support the bill as it is currently written.

There is an outstanding need for us to utilize the talents of the people who come to this country, an outstanding need for us to use their talents for the benefit of all Ontarians and to make sure that people who are struggling to try to find a family physician are given the opportunity to do so. I believe that this bill will in part answer some of that dilemma.

I want to speak about a couple of areas first, in terms of what I see as an ongoing problem. I had an opportunity on the weekend to go to the Beach Citizen of the Year award, and a new citizen was inducted. The outgoing citizen of the year, a wonderful woman by the name of Mary Christie, came up and talked to me. She talked about the difficulty her own mother is having in a long-term-care facility that is just outside the border of Beaches–East York; in fact, it's in the former municipality of Scarborough. Her mother lives in a long-term-care facility and requires some ongoing care in oncology. Her mother and the family were told that they had to go to the local LHIN. The local LHIN was supposed to come up with a way of getting her mother the services that she needed.

You can imagine the frustration that Mary Christie and the family had when the LHIN reported back that there really weren't any services that could be made available because her mother is now a resident in the former city of Scarborough, and the former city of Scarborough is part of a LHIN that extends from the border of Beaches–East York—Victoria Park—all the way out past Clarington. I don't know how far east it goes, but I do know it goes north all the way to Algonquin Park and that certainly it is the same LHIN in which my parents live, in Cardiff, Ontario, which is about a two-and-a-half-hour to three-hour drive on a good day from my own home in Beaches–East York. So it's a huge LHIN. That LHIN is not able to look after the needs of the family, my constituents in Beaches–East York, because the mother is in a long-term-care facility in the former city of Scarborough.

It is part of the overall plan that this government has in instituting only a limited number of LHINs and that the availability of some of the services—it seems bizarre to people like Mary Christie that her mother, who has lived her entire life in the Beaches–East York area, cannot now gain access to services which are readily available in the downtown Toronto LHIN; that she is not eligible and the only alternative would be to take her mother out of the long-term-care facility, where she is receiving excellent care, and to transfer her to one in the Toronto area so that those services might be made available. This is symptomatic, in my view, of what is happening in terms of health care.

This bill does a number of things—and I would like to commend the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore. That

doesn't happen very often in the Legislature, that a member of the opposition will stand up and commend a government member, but I think she has attempted to do a good job. The report is short, it is small, but she has made some key recommendations. The first one of those is the fast-tracked and simplified registration process for physicians already practising in Canada, the US or other countries with comparable health care systems. I am in agreement with that. I am in agreement that they should be fast-tracked, but I have to pose the same question, and I think it needs to be part of the record and part of the overall discussion, about the recruitment of people who come from countries where those physicians, medical practitioners, nurses or other health care professionals are in huge demand.

Madam Speaker, as you and others in this chamber will know, I spent more than 20 years working in the immigration department of Canada, at which time some five million people came forward as immigrants to this country. In those 20 years, five million people came forward with skills and abilities that they wanted to contribute.

I understand the magnet that this country is. I understand that the standard of living is very high. I understand that our social policies over many years have been such that we have wonderful things like medicare, that we have a social safety net—albeit as fragile as it is these days—that we have an opportunity for good jobs and good places in which to educate our children and ourselves, and that people want to come here. But we have recruited people, in some instances—and I think the government needs to look at this—to come when we knew full well that their skills and abilities would not be recognized when they first stepped off the plane. People would come from countries like Afghanistan or countries in the Third World or in much of sub-Saharan Africa who had skills and abilities which were hugely in demand in their own country, and they would come here not being able to use those.

You might wonder why I am posing the whole question of immigration when many people think that it is a matter of federal jurisdiction. In fact, it is not simply a matter of federal jurisdiction. Section 93 of the British North America Act and the Constitution of Canada have two joint jurisdictions: One is agriculture, which we all know very well because we have an agricultural minister here in Ontario and a federal agricultural minister as well; and the second one is immigration, and we have a Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and as well there is one in Ottawa. But the bringing to Canada of immigrants has been left largely in this province to the federal government.

Other provinces have stepped in much more aggressively than we have been willing to do. Perhaps the most aggressive province has been Quebec. The province of Quebec, many years ago, I believe 30 or 35 years ago, developed their own grid system. They developed their own norms of assessment so that they could look at people in terms of what kind of immigrants Quebec

needed. They looked at that system in order to help to recruit and to bring people to that province that were in need and in demand, and so that the jobs were available for them to do upon arrival.

Ontario has not done that, and Ontario continues not to do that. I think that this is something where we are lagging behind. If we are clear that we want people to come to this country, if we are clear that we want people with foreign credentials to be recognized when they arrive here, if we are clear that they are going to be of benefit to this province, then I think we have to get into the immigration game. We have to do more like what the province of Quebec does and set up our own grid and/or set up visa officers in the field who will help to recruit and to explain to potential new Canadians and new Ontarians the way that the system works in Ontario.

It is not fair, and it continues not to be fair, to take people from the Third World, to take them from doing good work for people who desperately need their services, and to bring them here and not utilize those same services. It's important for those who are here already, for those who have made the choice, to fast-track them and to simplify the registration process. But it is also equally as important for new recruits that may be coming forward in the weeks and months and years in advance of now that they are given every opportunity to understand the circumstances before they are removed from one country and brought to another.

I think the whole ethics, the whole morality, of what we're doing needs to be looked at. I believe that the province of Ontario has the economic weight and the fiscal muscle to be able to accomplish this.

I know that when we were talking about fairness just a while ago, one of the issues of fairness that was raised in the past was the whole issue of immigration, immigration settlement and Ontario getting the same money as other provinces. The reality is that Quebec gets the most money not simply because the federal government wants to give money to the province of Quebec, but because they have established their own grid system and visa officers, and this is an attempt by the federal government to pay those monies in order to allow Quebec to do what it needs to do.

#### 1040

I believe Ontario should go down the same road. I believe that Ontario should be out there recruiting the kinds of professionals we need. It need not be confined to medical practitioners. It can be a whole broad range of things: everything from nuclear scientists, if that's what we need, to engineers. It can be recruiting people in less glamorous jobs. If Ontario needs janitors, then let's recruit janitors. If Ontario needs teachers, let's recruit teachers. If Ontario needs people who work in factories, let's recruit those people who can work in the factories. But Ontario has not done that.

I would simply suggest that in line with this bill—and I think this bill is fine—we need to look at the ethics and the morality, and Ontario also needs to get into the immigration game if we are ultimately going to be successful.

To let some other jurisdiction, such as the federal government, choose our immigrants does not do justice to the people of Ontario, and ultimately we will be scrambling, as we are scrambling here, to do the right thing.

I also want to talk about the other aspects of this bill: creating a transitional licence to allow internationally trained physicians to practise under supervision while they complete their education. This is akin to an apprenticeship, and I have to agree that this is a good idea. I have always thought that this was the ultimate way in which internationally trained physicians and nurses and other medical practitioners should be brought into the field. They have education, sometimes comparable, sometimes better, sometimes not as good as our own.

I am reminded of a case which to this day I still find bizarre. I had a gentleman approach me who lived in my neighbourhood. He was and is a Canadian citizen. He was and is fluent in English, French and German. He was a medical practitioner in Germany, you see, because he made the mistake after he finished his pre-meds at the University of Toronto—he decided to specialize in a form of medicine which was best taught in the University of Stuttgart, I believe. He went to Germany because he was fluent in German. His parents were originally from that country. He studied until he became a doctor. He practised in Germany for a couple of years in his field, and he was internationally accredited. But when he wanted to come back to Canada, when he wanted to come back to his wife and his children who, at that point, lived in Parkview Hills in my own neighbourhood, he was not allowed to become a doctor in Canada. It seemed kind of bizarre because his father had been recruited from Germany many years before to be a doctor in Canada and ran across no problems at all. I remember him wanting to come. The first thing they made him do was take an English test. This was a person who was born in Canada, who lived his entire life in Toronto, who was educated through the public school system of the city of Toronto and of East York, who went to the University of Toronto, who was multilingual in at least three languages, and he had to wait for six months or a year in order to write the English proficiency exam. I know that's been done away with now, and thank goodness for that, but that was just one of the examples. I've lost touch with him. I don't know, because his family doesn't live there anymore, what has happened. I don't know whether he's still in Germany and frustrated that he can't come back to the land of his birth and practise medicine, and I don't know whether his family may have gone back to Germany in that same frustration, or whether he has moved on to some other place. I remember this acutely.

I think that this is symptomatic of what has happened in our province, so we need to have a transitional licence to allow people like him with all those skills and abilities to do anything from a couple of months to a year and transition into the Canadian experience. The same that holds true of that man, I'm sure, would hold true of dozens or hundreds of other people who come from far-flung jurisdictions across the world. A simple oppor-

tunity to work alongside a Canadian licensed doctor or team of doctors, either in a hospital or in general practice, and then to write the exam or to show that they have gained the necessary skills and abilities is all that should be required. I agree with this point as well.

I have about five minutes left, but I'm mindful of the time. It's about time for me to stop so I will do that and resume on the next occasion.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. The time for debate has ended.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I take this opportunity on behalf of the member from Ottawa Centre to welcome a group of visitors from the Canada Meets Germany organization who are going to be visiting Queen's Park today. It's a pleasure to have them with us.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### PUBLIC HEALTH

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** My first question is to the Premier. Premier, my question to you is quite simple: I'd like to ask you how many full-time public health units in the province of Ontario are still without a full-time medical officer of health?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. David Caplan:** Public health and the capacity of the system has been something that we've been working very hard to address. I understand there are approximately one third that still have acting medical officers of health, and it's a situation that we're working quickly to resolve.

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** It is absolutely disgraceful that five years since this government came to office, one third of communities still don't have medical officers of health. You have failed to address this particular problem. As you know, this was one of the key recommendations coming out of the Walkerton report, and that is that you were supposed to hire full-time officers of health for every community in the province of Ontario. You have failed. The Ontario Medical Association twice last year reprimanded you and indicated how urgent this was in the case of a medical crisis. As of Friday, you give them more responsibility. We don't have people in place—one third vacant. How can we have confidence in your government to improve local infection control and track C. difficile—

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

**Hon. David Caplan:** The member is incorrect. In fact, every unit has a full-time medical officer of health: Two thirds are permanent, one third are acting. We do believe

that public health units are fully equipped and able to do the very important work on mandatory reporting. The member presents incorrect information and traffics in this fiction. Unfortunately, it would be helpful to the public if the member would present correct information and the correct characterization of the situation with our public health units.

This member, in particular, is a former Minister of Health. This member was responsible, in the words of the chief medical officer of health for the province of Ontario, for turning her back on public health in the province of Ontario. The report that the member refers to refers to the tragic consequences that we see in this province when a member does not take their responsibility seriously. I can assure this member, in particular, that we have learned—

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** It's obvious that this Minister of Health is not prepared to assume any responsibility for the public health and safety of people in the province of Ontario. There is an outstanding recommendation, number one, coming out of the Walkerton report. You've been there now five years. If you can't do the job and hire the medical officers of health that are needed in this province, then you better move over and give it to a third person. I can tell you there are serious gaps in the system. You've also said that you've created infection control practitioner positions, but you haven't told us how many you've actually filled. I ask you again, how can this situation give any confidence to people in the province of Ontario when it comes to C. difficile when you haven't been able to hire the people needed to track the infections and make sure people don't die?

**Hon. David Caplan:** I'm happy to share the information with members of the House. On Friday, in fact, we had wonderful steps that were taken that had begun under my predecessor, Minister Smitherman, under which we were able to take the next steps to protect Ontarians. We offered both opposition critics briefings by the chief medical officer of health, and I can tell you that both critics refused to take us up on those opportunities.

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I want to have a chance to share with the Legislature today that we've established the Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee, or PIDAC, staffed by some of the leading experts in our province, to be able to provide the kind of guidelines and supports that are going to be required. We are in fact the second jurisdiction now in Ontario to have public reporting, clear accountability guidelines and transparency to provide that information for Ontarians. If Ontarians go to [www.Ontario.ca/patient-safety](http://www.Ontario.ca/patient-safety)—

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

### C. DIFFICILE

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** He mentions the briefings. Yes, if you want a last-minute briefing and you want to

make sure it's not at the convenience of the health critics, make sure you give them a time that they can't be accommodated. What a big excuse.

I would say to you, Minister, that it's becoming apparent that you're not going to assume responsibility for the health and safety of people in this province. You and your Premier should have followed the recommendations of the Peterborough Regional Health Centre report in 2004, which said you should track C. difficile deaths. Why has it taken you four and a half years to begin mandatory reporting, and why have you not followed through and aren't tracking the deaths on a monthly basis?

**Hon. David Caplan:** In fact, this was addressed by Dr. Michael Gardam and Dr. Michael Baker, two infectious disease and patient safety experts in the province of Ontario. Unfortunately, the member is engaging in this political gamesmanship when medical experts are saying that these are complicated and difficult matters that oftentimes people in the medical field have some debate around, that there is no consistent methodology, nor is there an ability to do so.

In fact, as the member well knows, or would have known if she had taken us up on the offer to have a briefing on this, as Dr. Baker has said, he's asked for the very best advice by Dr. Vivek Goel and many others to put this into place. In fact, what is in place are 14 regional infection control networks, 166 new infection control practitioners, and we've added to those, in fact, with more—

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I think there's only one person who might be a little ignorant of the facts, and that might be the minister himself. Last week, he said to reporters—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just ask the member to withdraw that. Personal attacks on one another are not appropriate for the chamber.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I would withdraw that he lacks knowledge of the facts.

Last week, in responding to reporters, he indicated that his wife had told him that C. difficile had been around for a long time. The one, thing, then obviously the minister doesn't understand completely is that the strain of C. difficile in the province today, and raging throughout the world, is much more deadly than it was five, 10 and even two years ago.

So I ask you, Minister, are you prepared to acknowledge that there is a need for an investigation to find—

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

**Hon. David Caplan:** I do want to correct my record as well. I did indicate both opposition members—I should say that that is not correct. My colleague from Nickel Belt did take us up on the offer to have a briefing by medical experts. This member did not. She does not because she doesn't want the facts. She does not because, unfortunately, it was her failure as a former Minister of Health that she turned her back on public health.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: That is a personal attack.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock for a moment, please. I recognize that in the heat of debate in here that things can get said, but we do need—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I appreciate the member from Newmarket–Aurora’s comment both ways. I think we all just need to be diligent in the responses. We certainly can choose to poke fun at maybe some lack of knowledge or lack of understanding, but try and do it in a general way and not use it as a direct attack at a member. I say it from both sides. The more we can be conscious of that and maintain decorum, I think, helps this place function better.

Minister?

**Hon. David Caplan:** Speaker, thank you very much. I quote former chief medical officer of health Dr. Richard Schabas, who says, “This was a government”—referring to the member when she was the Minister of Health—“that really held public institutions in contempt ... [It] was contemptuous of people who worked for public institutions,” and in public health. That’s the record of this member when she was on this side of the House, guarding and protecting the health of the people of Ontario.

It’s a very different situation now, where we’ve put in place protections, internationally recognized and award-winning hand-washing protocols and a hand hygiene project—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Minister, thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Mr. Speaker, I can tell you one thing. If this minister is more interested in finger pointing than protecting the health and safety of people in the province of Ontario, then he should continue day after day to stand up and do some finger pointing.

The reality is this government has been in power now for five years. The first outbreak of C. difficile was in Peterborough in the fall of 2003. Since that time, they have chosen not to assume any responsibility or any accountability. They have been totally missing in action.

People have died in this province—thousands of people, by the way—and I’m going to ask the minister again: Is he prepared to assume accountability and launch an investigation into the cause of C. difficile in order that we have a complete picture of the situation?

**Hon. David Caplan:** I disagree completely with the member opposite. In fact, starting in 2004, shortly after the outbreak that the member mentioned, is when action ensued by my predecessor and by this government.

I would quote for the member a recent editorial from the Belleville Intelligencer: “But playing political ping-pong with this issue is not the right road to take. To suggest the government of Premier Dalton McGuinty is afraid of an investigation of the deaths from C. difficile is crass political opportunism ... All political parties should work to ensure infection control is as stringent as it can be, without trying to score political points out of a tragic situation.”

Sadly, my friend opposite doesn’t take the wise advice from the good folks in Belleville. Unfortunately, she doesn’t take the wise advice from right across the province of Ontario. If she were to be honest with the people of Ontario, that this government has taken the appropriate action—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I’d just ask the member to withdraw the comment.

**Hon. David Caplan:** I withdraw, Speaker. In fact—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** New question. The leader of the third party.

## FEDERAL LIBERAL ELECTION PROMISES

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** My question is to the Premier. Now that the federal Liberals, under Stéphane Dion, and the NDP have released their election platforms, can the Premier tell Ontario voters which platform will reverse the unfair and disastrous employment insurance cuts that have for years resulted in lower per capita employment insurance benefits for laid-off Ontario workers?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I welcome the question. I welcome the support of the leader of the NDP in our shared quest for fairness from the federal government, and I look forward to having that resolution passed—ideally unanimously—in this Legislature very soon.

We’ve sent letters to all the federal party leaders as well as to every single candidate presenting themselves, seeking a seat in the House of Commons, and we’ve said we’d like to have answers by 3 October. We’ll make those answers public, but until we receive those answers, we won’t know exactly where the parties stand.

I understand that many of the platforms, if not all the platforms, are now out, but we’re looking for some very specific responses to some very specific questions. We have yet to receive those, and as I say, as soon as we do, we’ll make them all public.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** Mr. Dion has released his election platform. It states what he’s prepared to do, but the Premier somehow doesn’t want to refer to it. Let me help the Premier out.

The Liberal platform of Mr. Dion only offers help for seasonal workers, a proposal that will create more inequalities and unfairness between laid-off Ontario workers and workers in the rest of the country.

The NDP is committed to making 80% of unemployed Ontario workers eligible for employment insurance, the situation that existed before employment insurance was cut by the former federal Liberal government. That’s good news for Ontario workers.

My question: When will the Premier acknowledge that his federal Liberal cousins have rejected his fairness for Ontario workers campaign and won’t get the job done for laid-off Ontario workers?

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**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** —we're also understanding that the Conservatives are putting forward the position held by the federal Conservative party. I understand that as well.

What I'm trying to do is what I believe to be the responsible thing. We're trying to advocate on behalf of all Ontarians, independent of how they vote in the upcoming federal election. We're looking to see what federal parties are offering by way of addressing recurring unfairness. It is true that the NDP have spoken to this issue; it is true that the Liberals, through their platform, have spoken to this issue. But the leader of the NDP also knows that during the course of a political campaign, not only do we put out a platform, but from time to time our position is sought in response to a specific letter coming from a stakeholder group. We've done this here on behalf of 13 million Ontarians and we look forward to a specific response to issues that we have raised.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** But, Premier, Mr. Dion has spoken. He has released the Liberal platform, and it will do nothing for those hundreds of thousands of laid-off workers in Ontario. But one of your other so-called fairness demands has been that the federal government address manufacturing job losses in southern Ontario by establishing an economic development agency. Hard-hit southern Ontario has been completely ignored in the 76-page Dion Liberal election platform. New Democrats are committed to creating an economic development agency for hard-hit southern Ontario.

I ask the Premier: When is the Premier going to endorse Jack Layton and the NDP as the right choice for laid-off Ontario workers?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I understand where the leader of the Ontario NDP is coming from on this score. He's very open and honest about this, and very partisan. I think what is better for us to do, certainly on this side of the House as the government, is to awaken all Ontarians, independent of how they vote in the upcoming election, to the notion of unfairness. I want to add this to the conversation that has taken place during this period of the election.

I want all Ontarians, again, independent of how they vote, to push all their candidates and ask them if they're prepared to stand up for fairness when they get to Ottawa. Are they prepared to understand that here in Ontario we're coming up short when it comes to employment insurance, infrastructure, health care and other areas? That's what this is about. It's not about—

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

#### FEDERAL LIBERAL ELECTION PROMISES

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** My question is to the Premier again. The cards have been put on the table. Your

federal Liberal cousins—I think your seat mate is your brother. He's the federal MP for Ottawa South. Nowhere do they respond to those two critical things for all of these jobless Ontarians: No economic development strategy for southern Ontario and no real addressing of the employment insurance inequality. Premier, I'm asking you: Are you now going to point out these failings in Mr. Dion's federal Liberal platform and how badly they let down laid-off Ontario workers?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I really not sure what more I can add to this, except to say that again, I appreciate that the leader of the NDP is very open and honest about this. He wants all Ontario voters to vote for the NDP: open, closed, shut. I understand that.

I think we have a bit of a higher responsibility to encourage all Ontario voters to be thoughtful. The additional consideration I'd like them to weigh when it comes time to vote is, who's going to stand up for Ontario? Who's going to address employment insurance issues and infrastructure issues? Who's going to address the unfairness when it comes to health care? Who's going to give us a regional economic development plan for southern Ontario? Those are the kinds of questions that we want all Ontario voters to consider, independent of how they vote in the end.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I'm simply seeking a little honesty from the McGuinty Liberal government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just ask the member to withdraw the comment. We just spoke to the members about this very issue.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I withdraw that.

I'm simply asking the McGuinty government to now pay attention to the test that the McGuinty government issued.

I note that other Premiers from other provinces—for example, the Premier of Saskatchewan is here in Ontario today. He says that Ontario has a job shortage, while Saskatchewan has a worker shortage. They're looking for people to fill 10,000 jobs in Saskatchewan, while their economy is booming. He says, "Hey, I recognize there's a problem in Ontario."

I'm asking the Premier of Ontario: Do you recognize there's a problem of lost jobs in Ontario, and do you recognize that the Dion Liberal platform won't do a thing to address it?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I'm really pleased about the developments that have been taking place of late in the province of Saskatchewan. The commodities market there is booming; they're really bringing in tremendous resources on the basis of potash, oil and uranium. That's great news for the folks of Saskatchewan. I think it's a bit of a tribute to the quality of our workforce that they're coming here.

One of the things that I would remind Ontarians to do is to keep in mind that we've got 100,000 jobs in Ontario that we can't fill. That's why we've been putting such a strong emphasis on retraining opportunities for Ontarians who have lost their jobs. I'm not about to say to On-

tarians that they can't travel elsewhere to find employment, just as I wouldn't say to the folks of Saskatchewan that they can't travel elsewhere to find employment in this great country that we share and love. But what I am saying to the people of Ontario is that we're going to continue to work as hard as we possibly can on a number of fronts, including ensuring that we receive fairness from Ottawa.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I want to bring the issue back to jobs: the loss of jobs, the fact that the Dion Liberals propose to do nothing in terms of employment insurance fairness and nothing in terms of addressing that job loss in terms of manufacturing in southern Ontario. It's happening almost daily. In Niagara this week, AbitibiBowater is temporarily shutting down its paper mill, laying off almost 500 workers.

I ask the Premier again: Since the Dion Liberals, federally, propose nothing to address this disastrous loss of manufacturing jobs in southern Ontario, when is the McGuinty government going to take some action to address this disastrous loss of manufacturing jobs in Ontario?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I want to remind my colleague that 60% of all new jobs created in Canada since January of this year were created here in the province of Ontario. The unemployment rate today in Ontario is lower than it was five years ago. We continue to work hard and well with folks in the manufacturing sector. My friend knows that we have eliminated capital taxes for manufacturers and those in the resources sector.

He may know that I had the opportunity to visit the very plant that he referenced a moment ago when I was in Thunder Bay. I had a good opportunity to chat with some of the folks there, and there are some challenges associated with just getting access to fibre and making sure you have enough wood to do the kinds of things that they want to do there to operate their energy-efficient apparatus.

But the fact of the matter is, we continue to generate 40% of all the wealth in the country, and we continue to generate jobs more quickly than anybody else.

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Regarding the comments made by the Minister of Health in the briefing, I have the proof on my BlackBerry that, yes, I was offered a briefing at 1 o'clock Thursday and then the ministry called to cancel it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. I will trust that the minister and the member will clear the air on this issue of the briefing.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Tell the truth, David.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Kitchener-Waterloo, would you please withdraw your comment?

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I withdraw.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** On a point of order, Speaker: I appreciate that there is obviously a time for a debate back

and forth in between question and supplementary, but I wonder about the use of points of order to provide, in essence, a rebuttal 10 minutes after the fact.

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**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'm letting the clock run because the point of order was initiated on the opposition side. I think the general consensus around this place has been that we try not to have points of order during question period, but I do, under parliamentary procedure, have to honour them.

New question.

#### EASTERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** My question is for the new Minister of Economic Development. I want to congratulate him on winning his new responsibilities. I think "winning" is the right word.

Minister, in the run-up to the last provincial election, Premier McGuinty, with great fanfare, announced the eastern Ontario development fund. The Premier's press release states that applicants will know if their proposals are successful within 45 days of applying.

Minister, can you tell us how many firms or individuals have applied and how many have been successful?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I know the member will want me to provide the most up-to-date numbers, so I will certainly undertake to provide those numbers to the member.

I want to thank the member for his good wishes, so to speak, and say as well that the establishment of the fund and the strategy was very much for the purpose of recognizing the particular regional opportunities that exist in eastern Ontario, ones the member is certainly aware of. As a result of that and as a result of significant hard work by our member of provincial Parliament Jean-Marc Lalonde, we were able to use this to leverage opportunities and jobs for the purposes of making eastern Ontario an even stronger region in this province and this country.

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

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** Nice words, but I didn't hear any substance.

It's been two months now since the glitzy launch of this program. We cannot find any evidence that one business—not one business—has seen money flow. There doesn't seem to be a sense of urgency—almost lethargy, some might say—while families and communities are suffering in eastern Ontario. We have almost weekly announcements of job losses. Breadwinners have to move out of their homes and their hometowns, even their provinces, to find work. So I ask the minister to explain to us and the people of eastern Ontario why the money isn't flowing, and why isn't eastern Ontario a priority for your government?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** Obviously, the eastern Ontario development fund and the \$80-million investment is just a sign of the enormous support of this government for eastern Ontario.

If the member has a particular project that he wants to work with the government on or wants to bring to the

government's attention, I appreciate that, and we'll certainly work with the member on that front.

This is the government that in fact established an eastern Ontario development fund; his was the government that cancelled the eastern Ontario development fund. In the last election, they offered to open up some kind of an office or something. So I think, from the Premier's actions, our commitment to eastern Ontario is very clear, and I think it's very clear from the member's previous government's actions—

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

### C. DIFFICILE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Under the new reporting system, hospitals will post the number and the rate of C. difficile infections at the end of the month following the event. That could be up to 60 days after an outbreak has been declared. You made it mandatory for hospitals to immediately report clusters or outbreaks of C. difficile to their health units, but you made it totally voluntary to report the same to their staff, their patients and their communities. Why doesn't your plan include any requirements or guidelines for immediate local public communication of C. difficile outbreaks?

**Hon. David Caplan:** In fact, there is a requirement through the public health unit that if there is an outbreak, it immediately be publicly reported. The member is quite incorrect in the facts that she has presented, and I hope this presents a chance for her to correct her record; she has unfortunately muddied these waters.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I did take the briefing, and this is a question I asked Dr. Williams directly. He said that it is up to the health unit or to the hospital to decide if they are going to advise the public of an outbreak. This is a question I asked directly, and I asked him, "Why don't we have guidelines? The hospital has to report to the health unit so we know that there is a cluster or an outbreak. How come there's no communication mechanism?" I was clear in this question, and he was clear in his answer to me: There is no such requirement.

Your plan for dealing with C. difficile outbreaks emphasized the importance of best practices for handwashing—you talked about that—room cleaning and proper isolation of patients. But in many Ontario hospitals, which are overcrowded and understaffed, hospital personnel do not have the time or the facilities to implement these best practices. Have you, Mr. Minister, assessed the resource implications of implementing C. difficile best practices in all 228 hospital sites that have to report?

**Hon. David Caplan:** In fact, when we asked Dr. Baker and Dr. Gardam to provide us with the very best advice, we also asked Dr. Vivek Goel, who is the president and CEO of the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion. He says, "In jurisdictions where

they launched into it without taking a more systemic approach," as we have done in Ontario, "they found that the estimates ... varied widely from one hospital to another." He goes on, "We're going to look at the tools which have been developed for classifying the causes of death and assemble expert panels," as Dr. Baker has, "identify and take a sample of cases from across the province, and evaluate what proportion of those cases can be attributed to C. diff."

In fact, we've taken a comprehensive approach. Quite shortly, we'll be releasing the generic output specifications which will go to the capital guidelines for hospitals on infection control practices and a whole range of other elements—

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

### DRAPEAU FRANCO-ONTARIEN FRANCO-ONTARIAN FLAG

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** My question is to the minister responsible for francophone affairs.

Jeudi dernier, j'ai participé à l'inauguration de deux monuments francophones de l'est ontarien, soit à Rockland et à Casselman. Laissez-moi vous dire que c'était la journée du drapeau francophone, emblème de la communauté francophone, drapeau illustrant le courage, la solidarité et la persévérance de la communauté franco-ontarienne. Laissez-moi vous dire que plus de 2500 personnes ont assisté à ces deux inaugurations.

Je dois dire que le 21 avril 2001, les trois partis de cette Chambre, de cette Assemblée législative, ont accepté à l'unanimité la reconnaissance du drapeau franco-ontarien.

Madame la ministre, qu'a fait le gouvernement pour assurer l'épanouissement et le développement—

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

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je voudrais remercier mon collègue de Prescott-Russell pour son engagement envers la communauté francophone. Je vais être très claire ici aujourd'hui : les membres de ce gouvernement appuient la communauté franco-ontarienne.

J'étais très déçue la semaine dernière, lorsqu'on fêtait le 33<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du drapeau franco-ontarien, que le député de Thornhill s'est levé pour insulter les Franco-Ontariens, pour dire—il parlait du drapeau franco-ontarien—« to divide our great Ontarian community. »

Alors, je voudrais lui rafraîchir la mémoire : C'est son parti, lorsqu'il était au gouvernement, qui a divisé cette communauté-là. C'est son parti qui a voulu fermer l'Hôpital Montfort. C'est son parti qui a réduit le nombre de personnel et le financement de l'Office des affaires francophones. C'est son parti qui divise la communauté de l'Ontario. Nous, les—

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

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** Il n'y a pas de doute que les commentaires faits par l'opposition conservatrice la

semaine dernière étaient insultants à l'égard des membres de la communauté francophone, qui croit au respect et à l'égalité.

Lorsque j'ai lu dans le journal *Le Droit* d'Ottawa les commentaires de mon collègue de l'opposition, je ne pouvais pas y croire de mes yeux. Un commentaire comme celui qu'a fait le député de Thornhill est irrespectueux, inutile, et met la population mal à l'aise.

Je m'interroge : « Où est la direction du Parti conservateur? » Le français est devenu la langue de la justice et de l'éducation, et il occupe une place importante dans certaines municipalités et dans différents domaines.

Madame la ministre, que diriez-vous aux francophones pour corriger les dommages causés par les propos insultants de l'opposition, et je—

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**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Merci. Minister?

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Oui, je dirais à la communauté franco-ontarienne que ce gouvernement ici a toujours été en arrière d'eux pour les appuyer. C'est ce gouvernement qui a donné 185 \$ millions pour reconstruire l'Hôpital Montfort. C'est ce gouvernement qui investit dans l'éducation franco-ontarienne. C'est ce gouvernement qui est toujours en arrière d'eux dans leurs luttes et dans leur succès.

Ce n'est pas le drapeau franco-ontarien qui divise; ce sont des commentaires comme ceux du député de Thornhill.

Again, I'm asking John Tory and the member from Thornhill, would you stand up today and apologize and admit that your comments were disrespectful and divisive? I ask for an apology today.

Le drapeau franco-ontarien, comme le dirait ce grand poète, renferme dans ses plis l'espoir de tout un peuple.

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

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#### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** My question is for the Premier. "Go west, young man, go west." That is the message today being heard at Toronto's national job fair. Saskatchewan's Premier, Brad Wall, is visiting to poach Ontario's coveted workforce. I don't blame him. Ontario workers are some of the best in the world. The Premier loves to boast about his retraining programs, but what is the point of retraining workers when there are no jobs? We need it both ways, Premier.

The Premier will probably say that he has a five-point plan. Well, that plan is not working, Premier; it's clearly unbalanced. Before anything else, we need to retain and attract investment. In order to save and create jobs, we need a competitive business environment.

Premier, will you adjust your so-called plan, or are you simply going to stand on the platform and wave goodbye to Ontario's workers as they fade into the sunset?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Premier:** To the Minister of Economic Development.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** Well, on the contrary, it is in fact the case that it is Ontario that the government of Saskatchewan is coming to, to try and attract jobs, and that is thanks to the investments and interventions and the climate that has been created by the government through its investments in education and post-secondary education and skills, and with respect to advanced manufacturing and second-generation jobs.

Certainly, there are also great opportunities that exist between Ontario and Saskatchewan, such that Ontario would become part of a supply chain, and potentially, Saskatchewan companies would become part of a supply chain, as Ontario workers and businesses meet the needs of Saskatchewan. As far as I'm concerned, that kind of partnership would simply be a win-win for the people of Ontario and the people of Canada.

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

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I've never thought of Ontario as being a supply chain for employment for Saskatchewan.

Premier, the United States had a crisis last week, a crisis in their financial markets. They knuckled down, they worked the entire weekend and they came up with a solution. Within four or five days they came up with a solution, with a program that they are implementing and that has a good opportunity of working. What has Ontario done? We have a crisis of equal proportion, and yet this province, this government, has done nothing to help solve the crisis that Ontario finds itself in. Ontario is bleeding. We are bleeding jobs and we're bleeding our best citizens west. What is this government going to do to solve that issue?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Minister of Municipal Affairs, withdraw the comment, please.

**Hon. Jim Watson:** I withdraw.

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

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** With all due respect, I'm not sure the member is willing to accept the fact that Ontario companies are part of a global supply chain. Surely the member would not want us to reach out internationally to be a part of the supply chain through high knowledge and high-quality manufacturing and services jobs internationally, and not also reach out nationally.

I know that Minister Papatello, the Minister of International Trade, will be doing that work internationally, and just as we will build on the success of our agreement with Alberta, we want to in fact create even more linkages between Saskatchewan businesses and Ontario businesses, because that will mean more Ontario jobs, more Ontario products and more Ontario prosperity.

If that party is against that, that's fine, but this government is in favour of that.

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. The minister has repeatedly refused to order a separate inquest into the March 2006 killing of eight-year-old Jared

Osidacz. Instead, he has backed the coroner's joint inquest that considers Jared's killing as part of a mandatory inquest into the police shooting death of his murderous father, who had a history of domestic violence. That joint inquest was supposed to begin on October 6 but has collapsed in disarray. Isn't now a good time for this minister to order the coroner to hold a stand-alone inquest into Jared's death and ensure that all the relevant facts in this case come to light?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** I want to thank the member for the question. There isn't anyone in this House who can only imagine the pain that this mother and this grandfather must be experiencing.

Obviously, the presiding coroner decides when the inquest is going to move forward. For a variety of reasons, he has decided to postpone the inquest. I know that he and the chief coroner understand the importance of this inquest to the family, and I'm sure they will be moving expeditiously to ensure that this inquest gets under way as quickly as possible.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The minister has previously assured this House that the long-awaited joint inquest would be comprehensive and thorough, and would probe all the facts that led to Jared being murdered, would answer all the questions his grieving mother and grandparents want answered. But the coroner won't allow crucial evidence from 2002 to be heard about the perpetration of domestic violence and the warnings that said Jared's life was likely at risk. Now that the joint inquest is on hold, the minister knows very well that he has powers under section 22 and can order the coroner to hold a separate inquest for Jared with a focus on preventing innocent children from being murdered by perpetrators of domestic violence. Why won't he do that?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** Listen, I'm not going to presuppose, and I don't think that any member in this House should presuppose, the findings or the recommendations that the inquest will bring about. I am hopeful, as I think we all are hopeful, that the questions the mother and the grandfather have will be addressed and will be answered in the inquest. That's the wish of every member in this House; there is absolutely no question. I think it would be inappropriate to presuppose the findings. There is a system in place, that system has integrity attached to it, and I look forward to the recommendations. Hopefully, there will be some type of closure for that mother and that grandfather.

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

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Recently, PPG, a company that operates an auto paint plant in my riding of Mississauga South, announced that they will be closing their Clarkson facility in the second quarter of 2009. This means that 150 people in my riding will soon be facing

unemployment. This news came as a shock to the employees and their families. PPG has cited what has become a common challenge, the decline in the North American automotive market and a decrease in demand for their product, as the reason for the decision to close the plant.

While we understand that high fuel prices, a high Canadian dollar and a slumping US economy all play a role in the drop in automobile sales, at the end of the day families are left feeling the pinch. It's not an easy time. Minister, what is your ministry doing to encourage new investment in the Clarkson area in order to prevent job losses like these and to protect the livelihood of Mississauga South residents?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** The member has already listed the global factors that are at work, which have been acknowledged by the member. Will our government just leave those workers and this community on their own without any support? No, siree. We are there for those workers through, amongst other things, the advanced manufacturing investment strategy. One of the companies that benefited from this strategy is 2Source Manufacturing of Mississauga. The McGuinty government provides them with over \$5 million to help expand their successful aerospace business. This funding will help support 138 project-related jobs, including the creation of 70 new jobs.

**1130**

It is these investments in companies to partner with industry and businesses that in fact is the role that the government ought to play in creating jobs, sustaining jobs and incubating new jobs in the province of Ontario. I thank the member for fighting for his community in that regard.

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** Minister, as the day for closure of the PPG plant in Clarkson grows nearer, workers are apprehensive. They don't know how they're going to pay for their mortgages or support their families. Some may be asking if they will be able to afford retirement as they have planned and others may wonder if they will be able to save their children's education fund. When PPG closes its doors next year, it's not just 150 employees who will be affected; there are countless others who depend on them.

Minister, on behalf of those affected, what is this government doing to prepare workers at PPG to re-enter the workforce, and how will this government help them to find new jobs, meaningful jobs, where they can put their skills to work?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** To the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I know I speak on behalf of all members of this House when I say how concerned we are for the workers and families at PPG. I just want to assure the House that my ministry was in contact with PPG as soon as we learned of the layoff. On Friday, I spoke directly with the adjustment adviser, and I understand that she'll be meeting with representatives of PPG to ensure that all affected employees have access to Employment Ontario services and training.

I think many members of this House are aware of the \$1.5-billion skills-to-jobs action plan in the last election, which will allow PPG employees to access services like our second-career strategy, which aims at long-term planning. We also have our rapid re-employment and training service: Within one hour of learning of a layoff, my ministry is in touch with both the employer and the employees to provide information on employment services and, when necessary, to set up an action centre which will allow all laid-off employees to access Employment Ontario services.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier tabled a motion in this House, the fairness motion to which we are all speaking, and in that motion he calls on Ottawa to apply fairness to funding specifically one area: health care. I want to point out to the Premier that there really is only one member from Ottawa who has any control over how health care funds are distributed in Ontario to make it fair, and that's the member from Ottawa South, the Premier himself.

I would like to know from the Premier whether or not he is prepared to apply the fairness principle in health care funding to the province of Ontario to ensure that the one health care budget over which he has absolute control, namely the health care budget of Ontario, will be applied fairly to all communities in this province.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I'll be delighted to speak to the principle, and then if there are specifics flowing from the supplemental, I'll refer those. We're coming up short as a province nearly \$800 million, if you distribute health care funding to all communities on a per capita basis. What that would mean practically speaking is I think about 11,000 nurses, maybe 250 MRIs; so it's significant in terms of the level of underfunding and the difference we could make to improve the quality of services available for the people of Ontario and our families.

We work as hard as we can to take it to the next phase, where I think the honourable member is going next. We work as hard as we can to ensure that of the funds that we do receive, we distribute those equitably where need is called for—and that's never an easy call to make, because there could be needs in many communities which exceed resources. We work as hard as we can with communities to get that right.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** That same rationale, of course, can be used by the federal government. What I want to point out to the Premier is that in York region alone, our hospitals are underfunded to the tune of \$290 million a year compared to the other 14 regions. When compared to those 14 designated health care regions, we are fourth-lowest funded for home care, we're fourth-lowest funded for mental health, we are the lowest funded for addiction services and third-lowest funded for long-term-care residential services for our seniors.

If we stand up in this House and in all good conscience want to call on the federal government to

apply the fairness principle, I'm simply appealing to the Premier and I'm asking him: Of the billions of dollars of health care funding that he allocates through his Ministry of Health, will he stand up today and commit to distributing those funds on a fair and equitable basis in this province?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. David Caplan:** Thank you very much. In fact, that is very much what my colleague the Minister of Finance unveiled in our last budget. We have a growing communities fund, some \$120 million over the course of the next three years, targeted to high-growth communities.

But I think the member has a more fundamental question that he should have to answer. As a member of a party which has committed itself to cutting \$3 billion out of our health care system, how would he redress York region's health needs? How would he be able to meet the needs of seniors anywhere in this province of Ontario? This member and all of his colleagues have a lot of explaining to do, because \$3 billion cut out of health care is not something that is going to address the health care needs of children and seniors anywhere in the province of Ontario. And until such time—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you, Minister. The member from Hamilton—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock for a second. I'd just remind the minister—that's twice he's done that today—that when the Speaker rises, the minister is expected to take his seat. Start the clock.

The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

#### LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is also for the Health and Long-Term Care Minister.

This government established the LHINs to ensure that it could claim an arm's-length relationship from the Harris-era damage it's doing by closing the McMaster adult emergency room in Hamilton. The people of Flam- borough, Ancaster, Dundas, West Hamilton, the West Mountain and Hamilton East–Stoney Creek have not had sufficient opportunity for input on the impacts of this closure.

When will this minister direct the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN to stop this ill-conceived decision for at least 60 days, until a full, real public consultation has taken place? Please answer the question.

**Hon. David Caplan:** First of all, I disagree entirely with the rhetoric you hear coming from the member, because Hamilton Health Sciences is working to re-organize and realign health care services so that patients in Hamilton and the region will receive the best access to high-quality care. The plan that the member refers to has not even been finalized. I'm encouraged that Hamilton Health Sciences continues to engage the good people of Hamilton in the planning.

It's important to remember that the board of Hamilton Health Sciences has not even approved such a plan yet. According to their own website, the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN board of directors will consider the Hamilton Health Sciences access to best care plan at its board of directors meeting on September 29, which is today.

I am very supportive of local, transparent process aimed at improving our communities' access to health care services.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Actually, that's totally wrong again. The LHIN is failing to conduct a full and proper consultation. It is consulting its own hand-picked physicians instead of a full range of health care professionals, agencies and affected community members.

Worse, the LHIN is holding the decision-making meeting in Grimsby, at the LHIN's headquarters, where there's no public transit for people from Hamilton to go to it.

It took pressure in this House and by the public to get the minister's predecessor to direct the same LHIN to stop its ill-fated contracting out of nursing home care, and I salute the former minister for that.

When will this minister direct the LHIN to stop the emergency room closure process for at least 60 days, to actually consult with the affected people in the area and the professionals and to hold a decision-making meeting accessible by public transit to the community where the damage has been done?

**Hon. David Caplan:** Once again, the information the member presents is not factually correct. In fact, if members of the public wish to go to a website, more information on the plan is available, including some frequently asked questions on the LHIN's own website.

In fact, the member should make very clear to the people of Hamilton that it is the law, passed by this Legislature, the Local Health System Integration Act, that the local health integration networks must engage the community about the local health system on an ongoing basis.

That is taking place. That is happening in an effective way. Unfortunately, the member seeks, for his own political purpose, to try to distort that picture. These are local community members who are busy working to engage local—

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*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Member from Hamilton East, would you withdraw the comment you just made, please?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, if he is—

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

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** And the second comment you just made, please.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'll withdraw.

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

## ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. First of all, I want to acknowledge the new minister and to congratulate him on his new role.

We've already had a number of questions about the federal election today in question period. In my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, I have five First Nations communities. I notice that there's been a pronounced lack of information and focus on issues affecting our First Nations, Inuit and Metis people in this federal election, and I think all of my constituents, both aboriginal and non-aboriginal, deserve better than that.

Minister, my question to you: Is there anything I can relay to my constituents as to what they can do to draw more attention to the important issues of aboriginal affairs?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I want to thank the member for the work that she's done in her own community with the First Nations people in that particular riding and thank her for her observations with regard to her questions, because she's quite right, there has been a lack of substance when it comes to discussions about aboriginal issues in the federal election.

I'm pleased to share with this House the efforts being made by our Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine, who's calling for today, September 29, to be a national political day of action. This is part of a public awareness campaign to encourage voting among First Nations voters and increase the profile of aboriginal issues in this election.

As well, I commend Grand Council Chief John Beaucage and the Union of Ontario Indians in establishing [www.firstpeoplesvote.com](http://www.firstpeoplesvote.com). This is another effort being made to encourage those aboriginal people who wish to participate in the federal election to exercise their right to vote in an informed manner. I think it's very worthwhile and—

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

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** Thank you, Minister, for pointing out today's national political action day as well as your suggestions for all Ontarians. I hope that people will take you up on those things.

The minister and I have already had preliminary conversations about specific aboriginal affairs and issues in my riding, including the recommendations of Justice Linden on the Ipperwash report and how that impacts directly on Kettle and Stony Point First Nation in my riding. But I also realize that there are some people who may not be aware of the types of issues that impact our First Nations, Inuit and Metis people.

Minister, could you shed some light on what some of these issues are, and in particular what the Ontario government has been doing to help alleviate these issues?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** In the time that I have to respond to the question—I could probably use about triple or quadruple the amount of time to respond.

Let me begin by saying that I think our first priority is to build on the extremely strong foundations built by my predecessor when it comes to building a strong, trusting and respectful relationship with our first people, Metis and Inuit populations. I want to recognize the efforts made by my predecessor, Michael Bryant. I think that my first goal will be to build on that very strong foundation, because I think that by building a stronger relationship, we can tackle some of the very complex social issues, whether it be housing, education or health, and work together with our First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples in driving the federal government to work harder to settle some of those land claims that I think are at the root of many of the issues—

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

#### CHILD PROTECTION

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is to the Attorney General.

Minister, over the summer, Ontarians were devastated to learn of the untimely death of little Katelynn Sampson while in the custody of her legal guardian. The legal guardian, of course, had a long list of convictions, including assault with a weapon. Clearly, there's something wrong with our child protection system for this to have happened.

Last month, you committed to making any changes necessary to ensure the protection of our children, but nothing seems to have happened to date. Minister, when are you going to bring forward legislation which is going to require third party criminal record checks in any child custody cases involving third party applicants and also enable the Children's Lawyer to act independently for those children?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** The member is quite right: We are absolutely determined as a government to ensure that we have the right legal protections and procedures in place to provide the types of protections all Ontarians expect and demand. That is why this past summer both and I my colleague Minister Matthews, Minister of Children and Youth Services, have both committed to work very hard not only within ministry but with the members of the judiciary, the legal community and the child protection community to make sure that we have the best possible approach to these very challenging issues. We want to get it right. We don't want to move precipitously and do something that looks good but would in fact create more harm than good. We're working hard, and we're determined to come forward as quickly as we can with the appropriate package of protections. I look forward to speaking with my colleague further on this matter.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The time for question period has ended. I should have made this introduction earlier, and I do apologize. On behalf of the

member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, welcome to the students from A.M. Cunningham public school in Hamilton, who are enjoying a visit to Queen's Park today.

### PETITIONS

#### SEXUAL REASSIGNMENT SURGERY

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition here, along with many. This one is from St. Gregory's Catholic Church.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the previous Progressive Conservative government determined sex change operations were not a medical spending priority and instead chose to invest in essential health care services; and

“Whereas Premier McGuinty said in 2004 that funding for sex change operations was not a priority of his government; and

“Whereas the current Liberal government has eliminated and reduced OHIP coverage for chiropractic, optometry and physiotherapy services; and

“Whereas the present shortage of doctors and nurses, troubling waiting times for emergency services and other treatment, operational challenges at many hospitals, as well as a crisis in our long-term-care homes signify the current government has not met their health care commitments;

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

“That the government of Ontario does not fund sex change operations under OHIP and instead concentrates its priorities on essential health services and directs our health care resources to improve patient care for Ontarians.”

I affix my name and full support.

#### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL POLICIES

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I have a petition entitled “Fairness for the People of Ontario,” addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas the federal government gives more support for economic development, health care and infrastructure to other parts of Canada, and unemployed workers in Ontario get less employment insurance support than in other parts of Canada;

“Whereas the federal system of taxes and equalization extracts over \$20 billion from the people of Ontario every year above and beyond what Ottawa invests in Ontario;

“Whereas laid-off workers in Ontario get \$4,630 less in employment insurance than they would get if they lived in another part of Canada;

“Whereas federal health care money is supposed to be divided equally among all Canadians, but right now Ontario residents are shortchanged by \$773 million per year;

“Whereas the federal government provides economic development support for people living in the north, Atlantic Canada, Quebec and the west, but provides no development economic support for southern Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to demand that the federal government stop gouging the people of Ontario and treat them fairly.”

I support this petition and will sign my name to it.

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** “Whereas the current Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital is fully utilized; and

“Whereas Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital was sized to serve a town of Oakville population of 130,000, and the current population is now ... over 170,000; and

“Whereas the population of Oakville continues to grow as mandated by ‘Places to Grow,’ an act of the Ontario Legislature, and is projected to be 187,500 in 2012, the completion date for a new facility in the original time frame; and

**1150**

“Whereas residents of the town of Oakville are entitled to the same quality of health care as all Ontarians; and

“Whereas hospital facilities in the surrounding area do not have capacity to absorb Oakville’s overflow needs;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure take the necessary steps to ensure the new Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital be completed under its original timelines without further delay.”

I’m pleased to pass the petition to the page Tamika. I’ve signed the petition myself because I agree with it totally.

#### GRAFFITI

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** A petition to the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas graffiti creates a nuisance that can adversely affect property values, business opportunities and the enjoyment of community life;

“Whereas graffiti promotes a sense of disrespect for private property, and a perception that laws protecting public and private property can be disregarded with impunity;

“Whereas it is important that everyone do their part in keeping both public and private properties free of graffiti in order to maintain community pride and confidence;

“Whereas the quick removal of graffiti from walls, fences and other structures is critical to maintaining community cleanliness and beauty; it is always true that the prevention is the best policy;

“Accordingly we, the undersigned, petition the Legislature:

“To impose certain conditions on the sale of spray paint, broad-tipped marker pens, paint pens, glass-cutting tools and glass-etching tools or instruments of graffiti, and to make it be unlawful for any person, other than a parent, legal guardian, school teacher or law enforcement officer in the performance of duty, to sell, exchange, give, deliver, loan, or otherwise furnish or permit to be sold, exchanged, given, delivered or loaned any prohibited graffiti material to any minor unless the minor is accompanied by their parent or legal guardian.”

I agree with this petition and sign my name to it.

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** “Whereas Milton District Hospital was designed to serve a population of 30,000 and the town of Milton is now home to more than 69,000 people and is still growing rapidly; and

“Whereas the town of Milton is the fastest-growing town in Canada and was forced into that rate of growth by an act of the Ontario Legislature called ‘Places to Grow’; and

“Whereas the town of Milton is projected to have a population of 101,600 people in 2014, which is the earliest date an expansion could be completed; and

“Whereas the current Milton facility is too small to accommodate Milton’s explosive growth and parts of the hospital prohibit the integration of new outpatient clinics and diagnostic technologies;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure take the necessary steps to ensure timely approval and construction of the expansion to Milton District Hospital.”

I’ve signed this petition and I give it to page Michael.

#### GRAFFITI

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** A petition to the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas graffiti creates a nuisance that can adversely affect property values, business opportunities and the enjoyment of community life;

“Whereas graffiti promotes a sense of disrespect for private property, and a perception that laws protecting public and private property can be disregarded with impunity;

“Whereas it is important that everyone do their part in keeping both public and private properties free of graffiti in order to maintain community pride and confidence;

“Whereas the quick removal of graffiti from walls, fences and other structures is critical to maintaining community cleanliness and beauty; it is always true that the prevention is the best policy;

“Accordingly we, the undersigned, petition the Legislature:

"To impose certain conditions on the sale of spray paint, broad-tipped marker pens, paint pens, glass-cutting tools and glass-etching tools or instruments of graffiti and to make it be unlawful for any person, other than a parent, legal guardian, school teacher or law enforcement officer in the performance of duty, to sell, exchange, give, deliver, loan, or otherwise furnish or permit to be sold, exchanged, given, delivered or loaned any prohibited graffiti material to any minor unless the minor is accompanied by their parent or legal guardian."

I agree with the petition and have signed my name to it.

#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I have a petition here entitled "Fairness for Ontario Workers":

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

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

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

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

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to press the federal government to reform the employment insurance program and to end the" gouging of Ontarians by the federal government.

I support this petition and affix my name to it.

#### FIREARMS CONTROL

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I have a petition to stop unlawful firearms in the province of Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the growing number of unlawful firearms in motor vehicles is threatening innocent citizens and our police officers;

"Whereas police officers, military personnel and lawfully licensed persons are the only people allowed to possess firearms; and

"Whereas a growing number of unlawful firearms are transported, smuggled and found in motor vehicles; and

"Whereas impounding motor vehicles and suspending driver's licences of persons possessing unlawful firearms in motor vehicles would aid the police in their efforts to make our streets safer;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 56, entitled the Unlawful Firearms in Vehicles Act, 2008, into law, so that we can reduce the number of crimes involving firearms in our communities."

I support this petition and I affix my name to it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** There appearing to be no further petitions today, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1156 to 1300.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### DAVE TEETZEL

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I rise today to pay tribute to David Blair Teetzel, who went to be with his Lord and Saviour on September 22, 2008. Dave was supported throughout his seven-month fight with cancer by his wife, Sharon, his parents, Donna and Carol Teetzel, brother Gord and sister Ruth. The memorial service, held at Crosslands Church in Newmarket, was an uplifting celebration of Dave's life and an inspirational tribute to his courage and faith in his final days.

Dave was an award-winning columnist and gifted writer. After graduating from Ryerson University, he began his career as a reporter, and was editor of the York Region Media Group's Economist and Sun until his illness. Editor-in-chief Debora Kelly said this about her colleague Dave: "I know few men who are so truly kind and decent as Dave was. I respected his great intelligence, deep compassion and incredible work ethic, not to mention his quick wit and self-deprecating sense of humour. He had us laughing many times a day."

I want to leave honourable members with Dave's own words as a source of encouragement and testimony to the life and character of the man we honour today:

"Much as I hate having cancer, it puts me alongside people who are facing what I'm facing but aren't armed with the saving knowledge of Jesus. If God put me here to give them hope, I'll do that.

"I've heard it said that you see God working when you come to the end of yourself. That's where I am. But praise God, I'm not alone. Thank you all so much for standing beside Sharon and me through this time. God bless."

#### EVENTS IN ETOBICOKE-LAKESHORE

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** My community of Etobicoke-Lakeshore understands the important role residents play in supporting local business to ensure a strong and vibrant community. That's why I was so pleased to Shop the Shore in Etobicoke-Lakeshore on Saturday, September 20. Along with more 1,000 lakeshore residents, we came out to support our diverse retail sector in south Etobicoke. With the ongoing work to revitalize Toronto's waterfront, it is so critical that we continue to sustain the businesses that make our lakeshore community so unique. Shop the Shore is a grassroots initiative made up of proactive area residents. The Our Lakeshore group believes in making our community even better. So they're working with local business owners to build awareness and encourage the community to continue to shop

locally, reduce their carbon footprint and meet their local retailers.

On the same day, the Lakeshorelicious initiative was launched as a month-long festival of culinary excellence, featuring 15 participating lakeshore restaurants from Lake Promenade to Marie Curtis Park. We look forward to being able to welcome each and every one of you to our community for lunch or dinner very soon—and guides are available.

I want to recognize Scott Waddell and Denise Dickin; the Our Lakeshore team, local residents and volunteers; John Scheffer and the Lakeshore Village BIA; Lisa Laudenbach, of West Studio Cuisine; the joint BIA; and the many individuals and organizations who continue to work to make our Etobicoke–Lakeshore community a great place to live, shop, eat and represent.

### ROSH HASHANAH

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I am honoured to rise today on behalf of my Jewish constituents of Thornhill who are celebrating Rosh Hashanah.

Today marks the first day of Rosh Hashanah, the Head of the Year, otherwise known as the Jewish New Year. Rosh Hashanah is the first of the High Holy Days, which are days specifically set aside to focus on repentance and planning for the new year ahead. Rosh Hashanah begins tonight at dusk and will continue until Wednesday night. The High Holy Days end with Yom Kippur, which occurs next week.

Unlike secular New Year's celebrations, Rosh Hashanah is a very serious holiday where religious observances come first. Many of my constituents will be celebrating the holiday with family and friends at synagogue. Some of the Rosh Hashanah observances include sounding of the shofar, the ram's horn, which represents the trumpet blast of a people's coronation of their king; eating a piece of apple dipped in honey, to symbolize our desire for a sweet year, and other special foods symbolic of the new year's blessings; and blessing one another with the words "Leshanah tovah tikatevu," "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year."

I wish the people of Thornhill and Jewish Ontarians everywhere Shanah Tovah, a good year.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** I rise today to speak of more good news in the health care sector in Huron–Bruce as it pertains to long-term care. As part of our government's \$23.3-million investment to support the creation of 873 personal support workers, the riding of Huron–Bruce will receive just over a quarter of a million dollars for over 17,000 hours of care for area long-term-care homes. This funding will help increase the average paid hours of direct daily care per resident to 3.26 hours of nursing, personal care programming and support services for this year.

This is the first round of funding the McGuinty government has proposed in order to add the 2,500 new

personal support worker positions and 2,000 more nurses in long-term-care homes over the next four years, as announced in the 2008 budget. These additional front-line staff will increase the average paid hours of direct daily care per resident in long-term-care homes to 3.5 hours by 2011. As a result, long-term-care-home residents will benefit from more hands-on care such as personal hygiene care, help with transferring patients into chairs, vehicles or beds as well as dressing and undressing. This is just another manner in which the McGuinty government is providing strong health care to all Ontarians.

### CLASS SIZE

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** I want to speak today about the cap on primary class sizes and the inflexible legislation that governs it. Regrettably, this inflexible legislation is creating tremendous disruption and hardship in many school communities. One segment of the school population is the disabled child, who doesn't do well with disruption and who doesn't do well in a split grade. When trying to discuss the issue with officials from the school, the board and the trustees, the parents face a blame game. The educators and parents alike are looking to the minister for a solution. An inflexible policy should not override looking after the best interests of our students.

How can children reach their full potential when they are confronted with rules they don't understand and rules in which their parents have no confidence? I believe the intent may have been a good one, but good policies take into account the worst-case scenarios and they should plan for those eventualities. This is not a well-thought-out policy. More planning should have taken place to avoid the reorganization and disruption of students, parents and teachers, teachers who had to start from scratch preparing for split grades. It is the government, not the teachers, who should be starting from scratch in their planning process.

### PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS WEEK

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Speaker, I rise today in recognition that September 15 through 21 was Prostate Cancer Awareness Week. As you and my colleagues are aware, I've risen in this House many times to speak about this cancer because it is a very prominent issue among men. In fact, prostate cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in Canadian males and is the third most common cause of death due to cancer in men.

One of the ways to help protect against this cancer is by having a PSA test, which is a blood test that can help detect the cancer. I'm very pleased to highlight that in response to two private members' bills I introduced on this topic, the McGuinty government has announced that PSA testing will now be covered through OHIP starting January 1, 2009.

For my constituents at home in Thunder Bay–Atikokan, there are a handful of great community groups

they can contact to learn more about this issue. These groups include: the Atikokan Prostate Cancer Support Group, including Ron Speck; the Thunder Bay Area Prostate Support and Awareness Group, including Stan Cano, Steve Dychko, Barrie Midgley, Brian Scott and Bill Vantour; Keith Nymark with the Thunder Bay Seniors; and Thunder Bay Us Too, including Glen Duguid.

If you want more information about this cancer or the PSA test, I recommend and ask that you contact your doctor or the Canadian Cancer Society toll free. Alternatively, you can find information online at the Canadian Cancer Society's website.

I'd like to recognize all of my colleagues in this assembly for supporting my push to make this PSA test insurable for Ontarians, and I encourage all men, especially over the age of 50, to learn more about the ways they can protect themselves against cancer.

#### DRAPEAU FRANCO-ONTARIEN

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Le jeudi 25 septembre—jeudi dernier—j'ai eu le plaisir et l'honneur d'assister à l'inauguration du monument de la francophonie sur le terrain du Collège du Sacré-Cœur à Sudbury. Le monument consiste en un arrangement paysager composé d'arbres et de rochers. On y retrouve de l'information au sujet de la communauté francophone de Sudbury, ainsi qu'un immense drapeau de 30 pieds sur 60 pieds, monté à un mât de 80 pieds.

Gaétan Gervais, le créateur du drapeau, était là. Il tenait précieusement le drapeau original cousu à la main il y a 33 ans, et dévoilé pour la première fois sur le campus de l'Université Laurentienne à Sudbury.

#### 1310

Le drapeau franco-ontarien est un objet de fierté, un magnifique emblème de la francophonie ontarienne, ainsi qu'un important symbole patrimonial pour les générations futures. Nous, les Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes, voyons dans ce drapeau notre contribution, nos richesses, notre culture et nos valeurs. Par ce drapeau vert et blanc, nous faisons connaître à toute la population de l'Ontario la valeur ajoutée de la francophonie dans nos communautés et notre province.

Le monument a été rendu possible grâce au Club Richelieu Les Patriotes, des bénévoles dynamiques et engagés au sein de la communauté francophone de la région.

Jeudi dernier, il n'y avait pas de vent, le soleil brillait et il faisait chaud à cuire. Lorsqu'ils ont hissé le drapeau, une légère brise s'est levée qui a déployé le drapeau dans toute sa splendeur et toute sa grandeur; c'était un moment émouvant et magique dont je vais me souvenir longtemps.

Longue vie au drapeau franco-ontarien.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I rise today to underscore the McGuinty Liberals' commitment to patient safety in

hospitals. Last May, our government announced that hospitals will be required to publicly report eight patient safety indicators as part of a comprehensive plan to create an unprecedented level of transparency in Ontario's hospitals.

As part of this comprehensive initiative, Dr. Michael Baker, physician-in-chief at University Health Network, is being appointed executive lead, patient safety, to oversee the government's patient safety agenda. He will build upon initiatives already taken, such as the hospital hand hygiene program.

The government is establishing clear accountability and ensuring strong leadership in our health system to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases by mandating public reporting of eight patient safety indicators; by making C. difficile outbreaks reportable to our public health units; by establishing clear expectations for hospitals and medical offices of health in the response to, and management of, infectious diseases; and by creating 14 regional infection control networks to share best practices and pool resources.

Tom Closson, president and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association, stated his support for the government's action in saying that he believed "it will inspire improved performance, enhance patient safety and strengthen the public's confidence in Ontario hospitals."

The new reporting framework reflects our commitments to uphold the highest standards of care for Ontario patients.

#### ROSH HASHANAH

**Mr. Monte Kwinter:** Tonight at sundown, in the year 5769 in the Jewish calendar, the 10 days of repentance begin with Rosh Hashanah and end with Yom Kippur.

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, ends at nightfall on Wednesday, October 1. The origin of Rosh Hashanah is Biblical. In Leviticus, chapter 23, verses 23 to 25, it states: "A sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts of the shofar, the ram's horn."

In Talmudic times, Rosh Hashanah became a celebration of the world's creation and a day of self-examination, repentance and judgment. While the day was called Yom Hazikaron, the day of remembrance, and Yom Hadin, the judgment day, the name Rosh Hashanah, "Head of the Year," has become the most prevalent.

On Rosh Hashanah, Jews listen to the blowing of the shofar, or ram's horn, during lengthy prayer services, and are reminded that the Lord is King. They eat a festive meal with symbolic foods, such as apples and honey, and do no work. After repenting for bad deeds through prayers, they symbolically cast off sins through a solemn ceremony.

Rosh Hashanah is both a solemn and a happy day. Rosh Hashanah is a day of judgment, and is a time for Jews to review the mistakes they made in the past and resolve to make improvement in the coming year. It is a time for introspection, asking for forgiveness and praying for a healthy and happy year to come.

Those observing the Jewish New Year are solemn in their repentance but happy in their confidence that God is merciful and good. The traditional greeting on Rosh Hashanah is to wish everyone a good year, and to all, I say Shana Tova.

#### SPECIAL REPORT, AUDITOR GENERAL

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I beg to inform the House that pursuant to section 12(1) of the Auditor General Act, I've today laid upon the table the special report on the prevention and control of hospital-acquired infections.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2008

##### LOI DE 2008 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES SERVICES À L'ENFANCE ET À LA FAMILLE

Ms. Matthews moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act and to make amendments to other Acts /  
Projet de loi 103, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille et apportant des modifications à d'autres lois.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I will make a statement during ministerial statements.

##### REPRESENTATION AMENDMENT ACT, 2008

##### LOI DE 2008 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA REPRÉSENTATION ÉLECTORALE

Mr. Hoy moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 104, An Act to amend the Representation Act, 2005 /  
Projet de loi 104, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2005 sur la représentation électorale.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Pat Hoy:** The purpose of the bill is to change the name of the electoral district of Chatham–Kent–Essex to Chatham–Kent–Leamington.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### YOUNG OFFENDERS

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Over the past four years, our government has worked to deliver a system that keeps our communities safe and gives youth every chance for success.

The legislative amendments being proposed today, if passed, will complete our government's transformation of Ontario's youth justice correctional system to a stand-alone system designed specifically with the needs of youth in mind.

I would like to take a moment to recognize in the gallery the ADM—and he is addressed as Gilbert Tayles—and thank him for the leadership he has shown in the transformation of our youth justice system. Thank you for being with us today.

A key goal of this transformation is reducing the number of youth who reoffend because every time we prevent a reoffence, we prevent a crime, and every time we turn a young person from a path that leads to a life of crime to a path that leads to productive employment, we have strengthened our economy and we have strengthened our society. We are doing this by maximizing opportunities for their rehabilitation while addressing, not only their unlawful behaviour, but also the factors that may have influenced the behaviour in the first place.

Currently, in Ontario, those youths 12 to 15 years of age at the time of an offence are governed by the Child and Family Services Act, CFSA, while those 16 and 17 years of age at the time of the offence are governed by the Ministry of Correctional Services Act.

Our proposed bill, the Child and Family Services Statute Law Amendment Act, 2008, harmonizes these two pieces of legislation to create a single, youth-focused, provincial legislative framework governing custody, detention and community programs for youth in conflict with the law aged 12 to 17 at the time of an offence. This will create a system that is completely separate from the adult justice system in facilities that were designed with youth in mind, a system that offers a broad continuum of community-based alternatives consistent with the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

Placing older youth with younger youth under one act does not mean we are holding these kids any less accountable for their actions and the poor choices they have made. Our proposed legislation provides decision-makers with greater discretion in determining the level of detention for youth awaiting sentencing. This is consistent with the federal proposal to broaden the possibility of detention for a young person who represents a danger to the public.

**1320**

A dedicated, fully integrated youth justice system for youth aged 12 to 17 at the time of the offence reflects the reality that young people in custody have different needs

than adults in custody. In line with the new legislation, our government is modernizing and building new youth justice facilities in a number of communities across the province. These new and expanded facilities will accommodate young people who are currently held in youth units located in adult secure correctional institutions. Most of the youth in secure custody units have now been moved out of facilities shared with adults. A new secure youth-only facility, the Donald Doucet centre, opened recently in Sault Ste. Marie, and new or expanded secure youth-only facilities will be up and running by next April in Brampton, Thunder Bay, Fort Frances and Ottawa.

These facilities, while holding youth responsible for their behaviour, will provide young people with the supports and services they need to help them make better choices and become contributing members of society. They will feature on-site education and rehabilitation programs to help reduce the number of youths in conflict with the law who reoffend, an important goal of our government. The new facilities will also bring youth in conflict with the law closer to their families, which will ease their reintegration into the community.

Our transformation strategy is based on evidence, not on ideology, and the evidence clearly shows that a broad range of community-based and custodial programs and services can reduce reoffending. That's why we're committed to improving outcomes for youth by providing a wide range of programs and services that respond to their needs and their strengths, moving away from a predominantly custody-based system. I'm proud of our government's investments in new programs that are now offered in many communities across Ontario. These programs and community supports contribute to community safety and address the needs not only of youth, but their families and the communities in which they live.

We're also focusing on prevention. We want to help young people before they make the poor choices that will get them into conflict with the law. The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence, co-chaired by Roy McMurtry and Alvin Curling, will help identify the root causes of violence involving youth and provide recommendations to continue building safer, stronger communities and schools. The consultation phase attracted more than 5,000 submissions in its online survey, and the review's report and recommendations are expected to be released soon.

Through our youth opportunities strategy, we're supporting youth in underserved communities by providing expanded employment and training programs, introducing new student success programs, and making it easier for young people to access services through the hiring of outreach workers and a youth-focused website.

We all want to give young people, including young people in the justice system, the support and opportunities they need so they can have a bright and successful future. By recognizing the unique needs of youth in conflict with the law, we can help keep our communities safe and strong and we can help these young people make the right choices and be the best they can

be. Our proposed bill, the Child and Family Services Statute Law Amendment Act, 2008, is an important step in that direction.

## HEALTHY SCHOOLS

### ÉCOLES SAINES

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Our health is our most precious asset.

Ce matin, nous avons annoncé un investissement qui pourrait sauver des vies.

When someone experiences sudden cardiac arrest, minutes can count. Evidence shows that early intervention by trained personnel using automated heart defibrillators can help save that person. If used along with early CPR, survival rates can improve by as much as 50% or more.

Demonstrating an understanding of CPR is already part of the Ontario curriculum, and now more students will have the opportunity to learn how to use a defibrillator because we are providing \$1.4 million to the Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation, the ACT Foundation. The funding will help support training for teachers so they can teach students how to use a defibrillator as part of their health and physical education class. The funding will also help provide defibrillators, mannequins and other training tools for the schools. Equipping students with this skill and knowledge means they will be able to offer help when it's needed.

Ils seront prêts à réagir rapidement en cas d'urgence à la maison pour aider un membre de leur famille ou un ami, ou à l'école pour aider un enseignant ou un camarade.

This learning can help students protect their families and friends, and make a real difference in their communities.

I want to applaud the ACT Foundation for its work in this area. I'd like to recognize Executive Director Sandra Clarke and Rachel Cameron, who have joined us today from the ACT Foundation. Thank you very much for your work.

In 2004, our government invested \$650,000 to support the foundation's vital work, et c'est avec grand plaisir que j'ai annoncé aujourd'hui que nous continuerons à appuyer la fondation.

This is just one of the ways we're helping Ontario students learn more about protecting their health and the health of others.

Starting this September, for example, schools were required to drop trans fats from food and beverages sold in schools.

Nous sommes aussi en train d'élaborer des normes sur la nutrition à l'intention des écoles. As well, the healthy schools recognition program applauds schools that have taken the initiative to make their schools healthier; par exemple, en créant un club de course à pied, un jardin potager ou un programme de prévention des blessures.

Over the last two years, more than 1,700 schools have been recognized for taking on more than 4,500 new

healthy activities. We introduced 20 minutes of daily physical activity during instructional times in elementary schools, and thanks to Sabrina's Law, every school board is required to have an anaphylaxis policy. Through the health and physical education curriculum, students also learn the value of taking care of their own health through healthy eating and active living.

Earlier this month, we introduced a number of healthy recipes to four pilot secondary schools in Ontario. In these four schools, students in the specialist high skills major in hospitality and tourism had the chance to meet with celebrity chef David Rocco as part of a pilot project called Eating Well Looks Good on You. Ils ont préparé un repas sain et délicieux avec lui, ils ont parlé avec lui de ses expériences et ils en ont appris davantage sur l'importance d'acheter des produits locaux.

These recipes are available online for all schools to use now.

The reasons for taking all of these steps are clear: When students are healthy, they have more energy and are better able to focus on learning; a healthy body depends on a healthy mind, and vice versa—a healthy mind depends on a healthy body; and healthy students are more likely to become healthy adults. That's good for us, it's good for school communities and it's good for Ontario.

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

#### YOUNG OFFENDERS

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased on behalf of the official opposition to make a few comments on the legislation that has been introduced today. I guess the first thing that comes to my mind is the fact that it's referred to as a transformation of youth justice services. In my mind, a transformation is quite a marked departure from what has been the case. Actually, when you look at the information that was provided to us, this bill is in fact described as one which will bring the proposed amendments and will harmonize two pieces of legislation to create a single provincial legislative framework. I hardly regard that as a transformation.

I thought it was interesting that, in the minister's own words, she used the fact that the purpose of the bill was to harmonize. Certainly, I don't see harmony as equal to transformation. What I do say is that in this particular instance, we're looking at something that is already current policy. It is essentially an administrative piece of legislation, as described, to bring together existing pieces.

It's interesting to note that already many of the buildings are either complete or under construction. So this is simply a point in time when the minister then can decree a transformation has taken place.

I would suggest that as the Minister of Children and Youth, there is a greater responsibility in showing leadership on this particular file. As all of us are aware of the increased number of youth involved in serious criminal acts as they escalate around the province, we need to be

seeing demonstrated leadership on dealing with causes of criminal behaviour. We need to see the minister using the opportunity to take leadership on the poverty file, which is hers, to address the systemic issues leading to youth criminal activity.

**1330**

So while there is obviously some administrative gain to be made through this piece of legislation, to see action on the actual issues, around systemic issues, around causes, would actually be true transformation.

#### HEALTHY SCHOOLS

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** I'm pleased to stand and congratulate the minister on the partnership with the Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation. Too often, we hear of young people struck down in the prime of their lives and in front of their classmates, and it's tragic.

Automated external defibrillators have made a significant impact in the mortality rates of people who suffer sudden cardiac arrest. Survival rates, it's proven, can be improved by 50%.

It is also important to see ministries working together to achieve a common goal. The Minister of Education and the Minister of Health Promotion have identified an issue where, together, they can have an immediate impact. Students may not only have the opportunity of saving lives of high school students who may suffer from a cardiac arrest, but a future life skill that they can carry into their lives.

I'm on record in this Legislature advocating for life skills training for our young people. Skilled use of an automated external defibrillator is a life-and-death skill that I sincerely hope they never have to use—but are properly prepared to step into the gap if they have to save a friend or a family member. I see this as a P3 partnership. The PC caucus has long supported P3 partnerships. So if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, I guess—I'm thrilled that the government has embraced public-private partnership and I hope that it will continue to do so because there are many great things that we can accomplish to help Ontarians, together with their community organizations. This principle also goes to the core of belief that runs deep in our PC Party, that government is about facilitating the efforts of the private sector and organizations to maximize their potential.

I look forward to the opportunity of visiting one of these classrooms when the opportunity presents itself.

I want to thank the minister for this initiative and also for reminding us about all the most recent photo ops.

#### YOUNG OFFENDERS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'm pleased to respond to the statement regarding the bill introduced by the Minister of Children and Youth Services. I want to start by saying that I am a little bit concerned about the minister's lack of commitment to consulting with youth when she brings

legislation forward that affects them. We know that in the summertime, the youth advocate of the day, Agnes Samler, had sent a letter indicating she was concerned and offering to help with that consultation process. My understanding from the briefing we had this afternoon is that there was no real consultation with youth in the province in terms of the drafting of this legislation—very disappointing. I thought she would have learned from the last piece of legislation that we dealt with that youth have a voice and they want that voice to be heard.

Having said that, the bill basically takes kids who are 16 and 17 who are currently incarcerated in the adult system and migrates them over to a single system, 12 to 17. The concern is that the kids who are coming into the same system as the 12-year-old kids—I would be worried that we wouldn't have rules and regulations that are specific to older kids being foisted upon younger kids, where it's really inappropriate. So we'll be watching for that to make sure, for example, that some 12-year-old's letter to mom isn't going to be intercepted for fear that there's some dangerous material in there that's going to be problematic for this 12-year-old to send to their mom.

The reality is that the government is not really paying attention to some of the causes of crime in our communities and I think particularly to the numbers of young people in Toronto and other communities, large and small, who simply do not have any hope left. Their families have been living in poverty for generation upon generation. They live in affordable housing that's crumbling at the seams. They don't have any hope of a job, let alone higher education. These are the problems that we need to start solving, if we're going to get to the situation where desperate people do desperate things. We know that that's a problem particularly highlighted in racialized communities.

I know the deputy minister mentioned their excitement around staffing up the new facilities that are being developed in Ontario with staff who reflect the community, because we know that the look of the community has changed, the inference being that the youth in these facilities are largely from racialized communities. If we're admitting that through our staffing process, then what the heck is this government doing to try to mitigate some of the issues that are faced by racialized communities in this province?

The minister talks about providing opportunities for young people when they go back to their communities when they have completed their sentences. Back to what? Back to no jobs, back to low incomes, back to jobs that are marginal at best, if they have one at all, and back to no opportunity for higher education. The work that needs to be done, I would submit, is far beyond what is in this bill. But I look forward to making sure that what is in this bill does properly serve the youth of Ontario.

#### HEALTHY SCHOOLS

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm happy to respond to the Minister of Education's \$1.4-million initiative. "The

funding will help support training for teachers so they can teach students how to use a defibrillator as part of their health and physical education class." This is a useful tool. It will allow students to help when help is required.

In the school system, only 2% of people are affected by this, but perhaps more would be outside the school system. Again, this is a response to the problem rather than how we, as a government, help to prevent the problem in the first place.

We know that 80% of Canadians have at least one risk factor for heart disease—smoking, alcohol, physical inactivity, obesity, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol or diabetes—and this is what we've got to deal with. Unless we deal with that, all the little efforts we make will not be that helpful in terms of addressing the problems we've got in the first place.

We want to get physical education teachers able to teach this program, but we know that only 34% or 35% of schools have physical education teachers. That means that 65% of schools will not have somebody to teach how to use defibrillators because we don't have the physical education teachers. So if we want to be able to deal with this, let's hire some physical education teachers.

We also have the problem that we are closing schools, and that means that fewer people are going to be walking to school; they will have to use a bus to get there. That's not very helpful.

I introduced a bill that says, "Let's ban advertising to kids under the age of 18; ban ads for calorie-rich and nutrient-poor foods." If we want to get to the cause of the problem, let's deal with these fundamentals rather than these little efforts which, of course, we support.

#### DEFERRED VOTES

##### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL POLICIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** On September 25, Mr. Shurman moved that Mr. McGuinty's motion respecting fiscal fairness for Ontario be amended by adding the following:

"Fairness in Ontario's taxation policies so that people already overburdened by taxes in this province are not subjected to the proposed carbon tax."

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

*The division bells rang from 1338 to 1343.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I remind the members that they will be voting on the amendment moved by Mr. Shurman that the motion respecting fiscal fairness for Ontario be amended by adding the following: "Fairness in Ontario's taxation policies so that people already overburdened by taxes in this province are not subjected to the proposed carbon tax."

All those in favour will rise one at a time to be recognized by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Bailey, Robert  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Elliott, Christine  
Gélinas, France  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Horwath, Andrea

Jones, Sylvia  
Klees, Frank  
Kormos, Peter  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Marchese, Rosario  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia

Murdoch, Bill  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Prue, Michael  
Savoline, Joyce  
Shurman, Peter

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Those opposed, rise.

**Nays**

Aggelonitis, Sophia  
Albanese, Laura  
Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bentley, Christopher  
Brotten, Laurel C.  
Brown, Michael A.  
Bryant, Michael  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Carroll, Aileen  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duncan, Dwight

Gerretsen, John  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoy, Pat  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kular, Kuldip  
Kwintar, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Mangat, Amrit  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McGuinty, Dalton  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Mitchell, Carol

Moridi, Reza  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Sousa, Charles  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wynne, Kathleen O.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 19; the nays are 49.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I declare the amendment lost.

*Amendment negatived.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is the House ready for the question on the main motion by Mr. McGuinty? I heard a no. The debate will continue on government motion number 10.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to perhaps give the Legislature another opportunity to speak to this matter. I know the House leaders had an agreement on this, and it's up to the member to express his views on the vote itself. So I seek unanimous consent that the previous address to the Legislature be redone so that the House may consider whether or not to collapse debate at this time and put the matter to a vote—not to use technical language, Speaker.

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: With respect, that's not a valid point of order.

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** Unanimous consent?

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** The Speaker put a question to the House, and the House responded. There is a way for the debate to not proceed should people not wish it to proceed, and that means nobody stands up to speak to it. But you don't frustrate the intention of the House or try to direct the hand of what you might see as ill-disciplined colleagues. It's an entirely inappropriate point of order. If it's the will of the House that the debate in fact collapse, the debate will collapse.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The government House leader seeks unanimous consent for me to—

**Mr. Bill Murdoch:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: This is unanimous consent, and I haven't been informed

about this. So I think I would have to vote against it if it comes up for a vote, because no one has informed me about any unanimous consent.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The government House leader seeks unanimous consent for the Speaker to once again ask for the question. Agreed? I heard a no. The debate will continue on motion number 10.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL  
FISCAL POLICIES**

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 29, 2008, on the motion relating to calling upon all federal party leaders and Ontario candidates in the upcoming federal election to outline their plan to ensure fair treatment for Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Further debate on government order 10. Further debate?

Once again, I will pose the question: Is the House ready for the question on the main motion by Mr. McGuinty? Agreed.

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

1350

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****COLLEGES COLLECTIVE  
BARGAINING ACT, 2008****LOI DE 2008 SUR LA NÉGOCIATION  
COLLECTIVE DANS LES COLLÈGES**

Mr. Moridi, on behalf of Mr. Milloy, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 90, An Act to enact the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008, to repeal the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act and to make related amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 90, Loi édictant la Loi de 2008 sur la négociation collective dans les collèges, abrogeant la Loi sur la négociation collective dans les collèges et apportant des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Further debate. The member from Richmond Hill.

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** For Ontario to succeed in today's highly competitive global economy, we need every Ontarian to be at their best. That's why our government is so committed to investing in the skills and the knowledge of our people. It's our highly skilled workforce that gives Ontario the competitive edge we need to succeed. This is true in normal times, and it is especially true in today's challenging economic environment. High fuel prices, a

higher Canadian dollar, an American financial sector in unprecedented crisis and other factors are all contributing to uncertain times here in Ontario and around the world. These are not times to be complacent.

Our government has stepped forward with our five-point plan for Ontario's economy.

(1) We are reducing the cost of doing business by cutting taxes and keeping Ontario among the most competitive tax jurisdictions in North America.

(2) We are making a \$60-billion commitment over 10 years to infrastructure, including our colleges and universities that are experiencing unprecedented growth.

(3) We are partnering with businesses in key sectors to help keep them competitive and growing into the future. This includes partnering with the vital auto industry, the cornerstone of our manufacturing sector, to build new automotive centres of excellence in Windsor and Oshawa, helping to ensure that new investments come to Ontario.

(4) We are focusing on innovation, recognizing that it is the ingenuity of our people that will ensure our future success. We know if we can provide the innovative goods and services that the world needs, then the world will beat a path to our door. Our colleges play an increasingly important role in fostering innovation among our young people, exposing them to the latest technologies and preparing them for today's workforce and tomorrow's. To spur innovation on, we announced this past spring, in the 2008 budget, that Ontario will be a tax-free jurisdiction for any new start-ups' commercializing of Canadian research. So if you take an idea coming out of any Canadian college, university or research institution and turn it into a business during the course of the next 10 years, whether your profit is \$1 or \$1 billion, you will pay zero by way of corporate income taxes.

(5) Finally, we are investing in our people. More young people are now graduating from high school than ever before. We have 50,000 more young people in our apprenticeship programs and 100,000 more in our colleges and universities than we did just five years ago. We have the highest rate of post-secondary education in the western world. That is a competitive edge worth honing and worth owning.

Despite all the troubling economic news lately, Ontario currently has 100,000 jobs that we can't fill, and many of those require high skills. That's where our new second-career strategy comes in. It is the most ambitious plan of its kind in Canada. We are investing \$355 million to help people who have been laid off to train for new careers. We'll help with tuition, books, living expenses and other costs toward retraining for anywhere from six months to two years, or even longer in some cases. We will cover up to \$28,000 of each person's education costs.

We need Ontarians to get the skills they need to fill the jobs that are out there, like in the skilled services sector, advanced manufacturing, financial services, pharmaceuticals, digital media, information and communication technology or, in the not-too-distant future, once again in our auto sector.

By helping each and every Ontarian reach full potential, we can help them secure well-paying jobs so they can support their families and we can continue to attract the kinds of jobs and investments that will keep our province and our people moving forward.

Ontario's colleges have an absolutely critical role to play in helping to develop the highly skilled workforce we need now and in the future. Our 24 colleges of applied arts and technology have helped our province build an international reputation for excellence in education. College leaders, faculty and staff work hard, day in and day out, to help students develop the skills they need to work in the high-demand sectors of our economy.

Ontario's colleges have also done a tremendous job of partnering with employers to identify local economic needs and help develop talented, skilled graduates who can meet those needs.

We want to help Ontario's colleges build on that success. We need them to play an even more pivotal role, including a central role in the second-career strategy.

The proposed legislation before us today, Bill 90, would help us do just that. If it is approved, it would contribute to the modernization of our college system and ensure that students continue to get the high-quality education they deserve and our economy needs.

This proposed legislation would mark the first significant overhaul of collective bargaining in the college sector since the process currently in place was established in 1975.

When Ontario's college system was first established, in the 1960s, it was envisioned as adding an important new aspect to post-secondary education for the province, offering an alternative to university to many students who might not otherwise have pursued their education following high school.

It also offered a new form of post-secondary education that could respond to the province's job training and education needs in light of challenging economic and social demands.

This obviously rings just as true today as it did then. Reflecting the unique characteristics and needs of the sector, a single, unique labour relations regime was established for the colleges, with separate bargaining units representing full-time academic and full-time support staff. For various reasons, part-time staff, representing a smaller portion of overall college workers at that time, were excluded from collective bargaining.

#### 1400

But times have changed since the 1960s and so have our colleges. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the many academic and support staff who have worked in the college system over the years, Ontario's 24 colleges of applied arts and technology have evolved into an essential part of our post-secondary education system. Some of the leading animators, business administrators, health care professionals and computer technicians, as well as leaders in many other sectors, come from Ontario's colleges. Increasingly, our colleges are partnering with universities to provide even more education options for Ontarians.

In the current economic climate, our colleges are a cornerstone of our government's response to the challenges our province faces. Rising fuel prices and an American economy facing recession are challenging Ontario's manufacturing sector, the lungs and heart of our economy. Education programs and training and apprenticeship opportunities being offered by our colleges are helping workers faced with layoffs from manufacturing and other jobs retrain for new careers.

Our colleges are helping industries such as construction, which face shortages of skilled workers, ensure that enough new workers are being trained to fill vacancies. This will be a crucial task if we are to keep Ontario's economy moving forward and growing. Our government has been investing heavily in colleges, recognizing the important role they play in our society, our economy and our economy's future. This summer we announced \$190 million in new capital funding to expand training facilities at 12 colleges across Ontario. These investments will help our colleges offer some of the best programs possible in some of the best facilities possible with modern and effective equipment to learn on, in the careers that Ontario needs. We're also providing \$60 million over three years for the college equipment and renewal fund, helping colleges purchase the most modern equipment to train students on, so that when they graduate, they can enter the workforce already fully trained on the machines and technology currently used in the workplace.

Each college also recently benefited from \$65 million for the sector, provided through the 2007-08 campus renewal fund. This funding is helping improve energy efficiency on campuses, pay for new campus safety and security projects, improve the safety of students, make repairs and improvements to existing campus facilities and improve the learning environment for students and faculty.

As we focus more on ensuring that Ontarians have the skills they need to succeed and that our economy has the workers needed to keep our province moving forward, our college system is taking on an even more vital role. Colleges are the cornerstone of our new second-career strategy, part of our \$1.5-billion, three-year skills-to-jobs action plan from the 2008 budget. Second career will help 20,000 recently laid-off workers retrain for new careers, and our colleges are playing a central role. Through second career, students at Cambrian College in Sudbury are training in electrical engineering and business administration. Centennial College students, in Toronto's east end, are training in computer engineering and early childhood education. St. Clair College students in Windsor are training in construction engineering and power engineering technology.

Our colleges are once again evolving, rising to meet the new challenges we face and ensuring that Ontarians have access to the education and training programs they need for today's economy and tomorrow's jobs. It is our role as a government to ensure that they have the resources they need to meet these challenges and help keep our economy strong and moving forward.

We have been doing our part through the most significant reinvestment in post-secondary education in Ontario in 40 years, but we recognize that we must go beyond simply providing more funding. We must ensure that our colleges are able to fulfill their evolving and expanding role in our society and provide them with a strong foundation to do so. That is what Bill 90 will help do. By proposing a more modern, more effective labour relations regime, Bill 90 would, if passed, help establish more effective and more stable processes for labour and management to negotiate new contracts. This would help workplace parties build a stronger relationship, address workplace issues in a more effective way and help our colleges be able to focus more on providing the best education possible for our students.

Our discussions with stakeholders during our review of the current collective bargaining processes in colleges demonstrated that this is exactly what all workplace parties in our college system want as well. But what also became clear was that there were varying visions among stakeholders as to what a new collective bargaining regime in the college sector should look like. Some wanted to simply include part-timers under current legislation and within current bargaining units; others wanted to scrap the separate collective bargaining processes that currently exist for colleges and simply include the sector under Ontario's Labour Relations Act, which governs most other workplaces in the province.

Our government wanted to make sure that whatever changes were to be ultimately proposed, they be the right ones. For this reason, we decided to conduct the first major review of the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act since 1988, when the Gandz report was submitted to the government of the day. We appointed the highly respected chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, Mr. Kevin Whitaker, as adviser to conduct the review.

Mr. Whitaker spent last fall conducting extensive consultations with college sector stakeholders, listening to the concerns and recommendations of all key players. Key aspects of the review included keeping the needs of students front and centre and focusing recommendations on establishing a healthy and a fair collective bargaining environment for our colleges. On February 1 this year, Mr. Whitaker delivered a thorough report on the current regime and a series of comprehensive recommendations on how collective bargaining processes in our colleges could be revised.

The review made one thing clear: All parties in the college system support the inclusion of part-time workers in collective bargaining. But there was a range of options as to how this could be best accomplished. Our government appreciates these differences of opinion and we appreciate the work Mr. Whitaker has done in making the recommendations to balance the needs of all parties in a fair and equitable way.

Mr. Whitaker's review focused on three main areas:

—How should collective bargaining rights be extended to part-time workers?

—What are the likely consequences of the extension of collective bargaining to part-time workers in terms of

college mandate, collective bargaining and student interests?

—What, if anything, needs to be done to ensure that the colleges can continue to meet their mandate, safeguard the interests of students and employees, and foster and maintain a healthy set of collective bargaining relationships?

**1410**

The review resulted in 17 specific recommendations from Mr. Whitaker to the government with regard to amending the current collective bargaining legislation for colleges. Some of his key recommendations include:

—extending the legislation to cover part-time workers under two new bargaining units, one for part-time academic staff and one for part-time support staff;

—creating a new employee bargaining unit representing all colleges under the exclusive control and direction of colleges to replace the current government-appointed body that represents colleges in negotiations;

—continuing current exclusions from collective bargaining for managers and students in co-operative or certification programs;

—removing fixed expiry dates for contracts, currently August 31, and allow the parties to negotiate when collective agreements end;

—removing the deemed strike or lockout provisions and the requirements for colleges to seek the approval of the council to close in the event of a strike or lockout; and

—making other changes to collective bargaining processes in colleges to bring them more in line with the Ontario Labour Relations Act.

Our government was very impressed with the thought and the reasoning behind the comprehensive recommendations made by Mr. Whitaker in his final report. We have thoroughly reviewed all of his recommendations and we have since followed up with key stakeholders and meetings to once again go over the issues and concerns put forward. The result is the current bill being considered by this Legislature.

The proposed new Colleges Collective Bargaining Act would, if passed, broadly implement the recommendations made by Mr. Whitaker and, we believe, provide increased modernity, fairness and stability to collective bargaining in our college system. If this bill is passed, it would give part-time and sessional college workers the right to bargain collectively for the first time in Ontario. This is a commitment our government made last year, and I am proud to see it included in this proposed legislation.

We believe that this bill, if passed, would establish a more stable, effective process for negotiations, covering both full-time and part-time college workers. It would make a new era where college employers and college workers would have greater ownership of the collective bargaining process. It would, our government believes, lead to a strengthened and more stable college system, better able to focus on the needs of our students and

better able to deliver the high-quality education Ontarians need and deserve.

Based on Mr. Whitaker's recommendations, we are proposing to replace the current legislation governing collective bargaining in colleges and replace it with our proposed new Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008, Bill 90, which is before us today.

The following are key highlights being proposed in this important legislation.

Two new bargaining units are being proposed for part-time and sessional workers in colleges, one for academic staff and one for support staff.

We propose that existing worker exclusions continue, such as those for managerial and confidential exclusions from collective bargaining, as well as exclusions for students in co-op work programs.

We propose that the current provisions for certification of bargaining agents be revised and made more in line with the Labour Relations Act. At the same time, certain modifications are being proposed to recognize the unique nature of the college sector.

The threshold to trigger a vote would be maintained at 35%, rather than 40%, as under the Labour Relations Act.

The existing two bargaining units for full-time academic and support staff would remain.

There would be a certification process, should this legislation be approved, to allow a union to seek to represent these workers.

We are proposing that the collective bargaining responsibilities of the College Compensation and Appointments Council, a government-appointed agency that currently negotiates on behalf of the employer, be transferred to a new body called the College Employer Council, composed of the chair of the board of governors and the president of each college.

We propose removing the current fixed date for the expiry of collective agreements of August 31.

We are proposing that the current seven-month notice period to begin negotiations be amended to 90 days before the end of a college bargaining agreement.

As with the Labour Relations Act, the employer would be prevented from altering work conditions unless the parties were in a legal strike or lockout position, unless agreed to by the union.

We believe that this would be fair and reasonable and in line with existing practices in most Ontario workplaces.

We are proposing eliminating the current fact-finding exercise, allowing the Minister of Labour to appoint a conciliation officer and mediators, as under the Labour Relations Act.

We are proposing that the current deemed strike or lockout provisions be eliminated.

Finally, we are proposing changes that would allow the employer's last offer to be put to a vote within 15 days of the expiry of the collective agreement.

We believe that these proposed changes would bring collective bargaining in colleges more in line with other

Ontario workplaces, while still recognizing the unique aspects of our college system.

We believe these proposed changes would introduce a more fair and productive labour relations environment in our college system and help result in negotiated agreements that better reflect the reality of today's college workplaces.

Overall, the government believes that our proposed new Colleges Collective Bargaining Act would, if passed, provide a fair, reasonable and effective college collective bargaining regime for our vital college system.

This proposed bill is the product of the hard work, ideas and insight of many people. I want to thank everyone in the college sector who provided our government with such valuable input into this important bill. I want to give special thanks to the Ontario Labour Relations Board chair, Mr. Kevin Whitaker.

This legislation would not only extend collective bargaining rights to part-time workers, it would also make other important changes to how collective bargaining takes place in our college system, changes that our government believes would make collective bargaining in colleges more effective. These changes would also bring collective bargaining at colleges more in line with Ontario's Labour Relations Act.

By improving the collective bargaining process, we can strengthen our college system to the benefit of all parties, especially students. We can encourage more stable, predictable labour relations so that all parties can continue to focus on providing the best education possible for students in a productive learning environment. This is what we must focus on when considering this legislation: our students. We must ensure that there's a proper balance between ensuring an effective collective bargaining process for college workers and ensuring the best possible learning experience for our students. Our government believes that this proposed legislation offers this balance.

As you know, our government has made post-secondary education one of the five pillars of our government's plan for our economy.

We will continue to ensure that our colleges have the resources they need to provide students with the best education possible.

**1420**

Our \$1.5-billion skills-to-jobs action plan invests in the skills and knowledge of Ontarians and helps train today's worker for tomorrow's jobs. We will invest \$560 million over three years to expand and improve training and apprenticeship programs across the province; we will invest \$465 million over three years to provide more financial support and mentoring for students; and we will invest \$970 million over three years to build and improve places where students learn and to update college equipment. After all, it is today's students who will build tomorrow's knowledge-based economy. They need to learn in modern labs and classrooms equipped with the best resources so they can emerge into the workforce prepared to hit the ground running on day one, because in

today's highly competitive global economy, we can't afford to stand still, not even for a second. We need to constantly look for ways to innovate, and, most importantly, to work together so that we can compete and win.

That's why this proposed legislation is so important. It brings our colleges' collective bargaining process into the 21st century, streamlining it and making it effective for all parties involved so that we can focus on developing the most highly skilled workforce in the world and build prosperity for all Ontario families.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):**  
Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I appreciate the opportunity to speak. The member spoke on a number of areas and, of course, the second-career strategy is a big concern for a lot of the individuals who work in the auto sector and who are looking at where they can go now and what's taking place in the manufacturing sector as a whole. With the changing world economy, I certainly hope—well, I'm not sure how it's going to unfold, but we certainly need to strengthen that system to make sure we can retain the jobs as much as possible in our communities.

One of the areas that concerns me or that I'd like more information on, and I may be able to obtain some today, would be regarding the part-time workers and the impact on this, the pension and benefits issue: how that would play out, that whole role. Would they be contributing to a full-time pool or would it be a separate pool? How would it be managed and how would it unfold? Individuals, for example, doing work one night a week, teaching an evening school course: How would that be impacted and what would take place there, and where would it fall into?

As we know, pensions are a big issue with a lot of sectors now, as they are becoming slightly underfunded. Would this shore that up, or at a later date, or are they looking for other problems in the pension sector to try and determine how it's going to play out for the part-time individuals working in that? As well, of course, there are the benefits and how that would play out and who would manage it. As we know, individuals who retire and move into those sectors—who controls, and how many seats do they have in the decision-making process as pertains to their sector? If you're going to include the part-time individuals in the collective sector with the full-time individuals, would that impact, or in what direction, and how much say are they going to have when they make the decisions regarding their pensions? I would certainly hope the pensions and benefits would be key.

Most importantly, though, coming from Oshawa, the member mentioned the auto sector and the impact there. We need to ensure that we can maintain a strong manufacturing sector going into the future, whether that's production and quality. The changes will keep Oshawa and the current plant stable for a number of years, but we have many jobs that we have to make up for.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):**  
Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I am the critic for this portfolio, so within half an hour I'll be able to respond to the member from Richmond Hill, who is the parliamentary assistant, and offer a different point of view in terms of what he heard and what I heard.

I was in committee, of course, and there were the colleges who came and everybody else, and there were two different points of view: one from the colleges and one from the rest of the community supporting part-time and sessional workers and part-time academics. I want to be able to speak to that and see whether our ideas coalesce in some way, based on what I heard. Within half an hour, I'll be able to do that.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** It is a pleasure for me to provide a couple comments on what I thought was an excellent speech by the member from Richmond Hill. The member from Richmond Hill is a highly qualified engineer in Canada's nuclear industry, and he is a gentleman when he talks to his constituents in Richmond Hill about the need for a continuous education as we all meet new challenges in Ontario's and Canada's economy.

In my own riding of Peterborough, we have Fleming College, which was founded in the mid-1960's. Over the five years that I've had the great privilege of representing the riding of Peterborough, I spent a lot of time at Fleming College, under the very able leadership of Dr. Tony Tilley—an opportunity to talk to those part-time lecturers, many of whom had had very distinguished careers in business and in other professions in Peterborough. After they retired, they moved into the community college to provide expertise to those young, ambitious students who want to soak up the great knowledge these people have.

So it came to the conclusion, when they chatted with me, about the need to organize these part-time lecturers under OPSEU. Just a couple of weeks ago, I met with a representative from OPSEU in Peterborough to talk about the need for Bill 90 and the great foundation that was led by Kevin Whitaker—he will take on another assignment in the near future setting up the college of trades in Ontario. We feel that Bill 90 will certainly meet a number of the objectives that have been outlined by those part-time lecturers. I think that Ontario is perhaps one of the last provinces to organize this particular group of professionals, who certainly look forward to being organized and having the benefits of getting their first collective agreement. We feel that this is a very positive piece of legislation, and the member from Richmond Hill has done a great job of articulating the positive nature of this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The member for Nepean—Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** One of the wonderful things that we, in the Conservative Party, are proud of is the vision of the honourable Bill Davis, who brought in the community college system in this province. Bill Davis was a visionary, and he created many things in this province

that many successive governments, including this particular Liberal government, are benefiting from.

I wanted to touch on a comment that my colleague made with respect to the second-career strategy, which is employed by this Liberal government, because it is a bone of contention with me. As I mentioned during the budget in 2008—and I will continue to remind people about this—that money, the centrepiece of your budget, that \$353 million you are investing, is actually federal money. It came from the community heritage trust—\$355 million—that Prime Minister Harper invested through \$1 billion into communities right across Canada. The allotment that came to Ontario was \$355 million. It came from that source, and I think that is a very important point to make. The centrepiece of this Liberal budget in 2008 actually came from federal Conservative coffers. I just want to make that point.

The final point that I want to make is that we, in the Conservative Party, are disappointed that the government chose not to address the concerns raised by the colleges in committee. We are generally supportive of this bill and—

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** The Liberal Party.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** You said the Conservative—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The Conservative Party is disappointed in the Liberal government. We're always disappointed in this Liberal government, though we are generally supportive of the bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The member for Richmond Hill for a response.

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank my colleagues from all parties who made remarks about this bill. Bill 90 is based on the commitment the Premier made almost a year ago. It will provide bargaining rights and the ability to unionize for part-time workers, both academic and support staff, in our college system. I'm proud that this bill is in the House for discussion today. Hopefully it will pass, and 17,000 employees, on both the staff side and the academic side, will benefit from the outcome of this bill.

**1430**

The bill will provide stability to our college system. Our students are the focus of attention in every educational institution—and I'm saying this as a former academic, as a former educator myself. The students are the focus of attention in every college, university and school. This bill, if passed, will bring more stability and peace of mind to educators and students in our college system.

With regard to the question that was raised by the member opposite, there will be four bargaining units, two for part-time workers and two for full-time workers. Each of them will be separate for academic staff and support staff. Therefore, there will be no contradiction in terms of their interests. Each group will obviously have their own specific interests. For that reason, Kevin Whitaker recommended in his report that we have four bargaining units: two for academic staff, part-time and full-time; and two for support staff, part-time and full-time.

With regard to a pension question which came up, this was excluded from this act. It will be covered by other regulations and acts.

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

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm wondering if I could have unanimous consent to defer the leadoff on this. It's Mr. Wilson's.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The member for Simcoe North has asked for unanimous consent to defer the lead. Is that agreeable? Okay, it's deferred.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I know that my colleague from Simcoe-Grey would very much appreciate that. He's going through a very difficult time with the passing of his father. It was nice to see the House acknowledge that this morning in a moment of silence.

I'm pleased to say a few words today on Bill 90, An Act to enact the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008, to repeal the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act and to make related amendments to other Acts. The short title of this bill is the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008. I'm not sure how many people have not been lobbied on this, but over the last couple of years, this has been legislation about which we've had a local lobby from a group of instructors from across the province who have come to most of our offices in our constituencies. Generally speaking, I think most people agree with the contents of this bill and will agree that as we move forward, we should do it.

Before I get into that, I know that we normally ask for permission to introduce people, but I do have with me today someone I didn't get an opportunity to introduce earlier. In the members' west gallery are Don Willis; his wife, Tracy Cain; and their son MacKenzie Willis, and I'd like to introduce them. They've been with me today, and they're enjoying Queen's Park. They're actually from North Bay, but they have a lot of connections to the Simcoe county area.

I am really happy to take part in this debate. I know that as we look at the bill, it's really, again, about fairness. We have so many instructors across our province. I know what Kevin Whitaker faced was clearly a challenge. The recommendations he's brought forward are fair and reasonable, and I believe that most people will be accepting them, with all the bargaining units, the colleges etc.

No question at all, the biggest area will be whatever additional costs are borne by the impact of this legislation. That additional money will have to come from the Ontario provincial government, because if it's going to cost a college—say for example, Georgian College, Canadore or whatever it may be—another half a million dollars a year or \$300,000, whatever it may be to make sure that this legislation is implemented properly, it doesn't come out of the other operating costs; this is additional money that will be required on top of the funding they now get. Although the government brags

about putting this additional money into the college system, I can tell you most of the college systems are in near-deficit positions or in deficit positions, so as they move forward they are having some challenges, but at the same time I think the college system has done a remarkable job here in the province of Ontario.

The member from Nepean-Carleton mentioned earlier the Honourable William Davis.

I can remember, being quite young at the time that the community college system started, how a lot of people knew nothing about it. Originally, when they used to call them colleges of applied arts and technology, I felt that a lot of them were there strictly for a technical type of programming, sort of a continuation of the apprenticeships or the trades classes you would see at the secondary school level. However, they have developed into great organizations throughout the province, and most of the colleges have had some fairly major expansions since their incorporation. I believe most of them are around 40 years old. I think they were established in 1966, 1967 or 1968, in that period there. Most of them have done remarkably well.

One of the things I wanted to point out was just how important they are, because we have so many community colleges across the province, and most of them have satellite campuses. For Georgian College, the one in Simcoe county, we have the main campus in Barrie, but we also have campuses in Orillia and Midland. On top of that, they have expanded and have campuses in Owen Sound, I believe in Alliston, Collingwood and Bracebridge. They've been very positive in their communities.

One thing that's remarkable is that a lot of the students at the colleges, along with the instructors, take part in many different community events. I think of the Santa Claus parades, for example, or fundraising events for different gala evenings etc. that we see in support of the Relay for Life, the Terry Fox run, these types of things. This past weekend we had the dragon boat race in the city of Orillia. It was put on by the Orillia and area community foundations, and Georgian College had a team in that. It was a day-long experience. A lot of part-time staff, administrators, full-time staff and some of the students took part in it. It was a day out of their lives, but in the end they probably raised \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$4,000 for the community's foundation, and that money is distributed to different organizations in need in the community.

I see that on a continuing basis, and I think that's what is important. We talk about the value of colleges for education, but quite often we forget to think about how important they are to the communities they represent. In a lot of our communities, the only form of post-secondary education we get is with our community college system.

I want to mention quite a few things today around Georgian College. I agree with the legislation. I agree with most of the comments made by the parliamentary assistant. I think they were positive. In the end, we're all going to support this legislation as long as there's money there to implement it.

I look at the Georgian College campus in Barrie. Over the last 10 years, Georgian College in Barrie has had something like an average of approximately 94% of its students getting full-time work within six months of graduation, and that's remarkable. You can understand how many young people, not only at Georgian but at all the other community colleges we have, are working across this province, because of the fine work they do and the real on-the-job training they get at the community college level.

In my first term after I was elected, I was proud that we were able to fund something along the lines of \$24 million to an expansion of a library-type facility—a sort of futuristic library, I would call it, more than anything—at Georgian College. It was funded by the provincial and federal governments of the time. It has been put to good use, and to this day I continue to thank Minister Dianne Cunningham for her input into that.

I did want to say a few things about the Orillia and Midland campuses, because I work very closely with those two campuses as well, and I'm very proud of the relationship I've had with them.

When I came to the area in 1999 as a new MPP, I looked at the Orillia campus. At that time, I believe 600 spaces were available for additional students but they weren't being utilized. The Midland campus was simply a couple of classrooms behind the local radio station in Midland. You couldn't call them really full-time campuses or anything like that. They were certainly campuses that needed a lot of upgrading. Very early in my first term I talked to the president, Brian Tamblyn, who is still the president and CEO today, and asked him what we could do. He could have my full support of the college as long as we could also see the satellite campuses like Orillia, Midland, Bracebridge and Collingwood moved ahead into the future as well.

**1440**

The Orillia campus today is completely full. It has, I believe, over 3,000 students today. They just had a major expansion to the veterinary technician course, and they've opened up some new classrooms by moving the marine technology programs from Orillia to Midland; it's created all this additional space. So right now the building is at capacity. I think, under the leadership of Dean Dubois of the Orillia campus, they should be very proud of what they have accomplished and what they've got to look forward to in the future.

I'm just thinking of the local federal election that's on right now. I recently read in the paper that the community college, Georgian College, is having an all-candidates meeting. That's the type of thing they do at the Orillia campus. That's for the provincial, federal and municipal elections. They usually try to hold an all-candidate's meeting and get the students out to take part, which I think it is very important to our community.

I want to move over for a second. More of a success story than even Orillia is the new campus we have in the town of Midland. We call it the Robbert Hartog building, named just recently in memory of Robbert Hartog, a

philanthropist and businessman from our community who passed away just a year ago, who donated many, many dollars to different organizations basically throughout the town of Midland and indeed around the world. Originally, Robbert Hartog and Reinhart Weber from Weber tool and die had established an industrial research and development institute that was set up by the federal government. It's a beautiful facility, but it never really took off to its full potential because many of the automotive manufacturers did their own research and development, and they never got into a lot of the full programming that they could have gone with. However, with this building in the community, arrangements were made to purchase it through Georgian College, and it's now an Ontario skilled trades centre. I had a tour the other day. I know Minister Bentley is in the House today and he's actually been there in the past. We're talking about the Georgian College Skilled Trades Centre in Midland. We're very, very proud of that.

I was up there the other day. I'm not going to tell you what the trade is in the House, but we took a potential trades course up to Midland and had a long visit last Wednesday morning. I can tell you that we witnessed a number of young electrician apprentices, people both male and female who are taking their apprenticeship courses. I believe that something like 400 electrical apprentices will go through that trade centre this year. They've now established the plumbing course; they've got a whole section in the facility for people taking their plumbing apprenticeships to rough in sort of a model home. This is just so they can get the experience of doing it.

They've got one of the only courses I believe in the province on recreational vehicles. There are so many recreational vehicles, RVs, that we have in our province today with our tourism industry etc. People can actually take courses there to be fully qualified to repair the propane lines, the electrical lines, the plumbing lines etc. in these recreational vehicles. It's hard to get people with those qualifications and the know-how.

I ran into a gentleman the other day who was running a welding program there. Of course, one of the things we got when we moved the marine technology program from Orillia to Midland was a new partnership with the Ontario Marine Operators Association, which is an organization that believes very strongly in green technology around marinas. They've done a phenomenal job and they are a major partner in this program.

It was really something to see, when you look at the equipment they have to work with, sort of a shop where they can work on all kinds of outboard motors and inboard motors. They've all got pipes hooked up to them so that the fumes are pumped to the outside and it won't hurt any of the students working inside.

They have the same thing in a motorcycle shop where they were repairing small engines on all types of motorcycles. Someone made an amazing deal with Harley-Davidson, because in the building, on loan from Harley-Davidson, there are probably 30 Harleys sitting there.

Any of us would like any one of them, especially in this nice weather we've had where you can tour around.

I just wanted to put all these things on the record for the Midland campus because it's something that Ontario should be proud of. The work they've done there is starting to equal what they've done at colleges like George Brown that have been in that sort of programming for years and years.

I think that almost anybody in this room could stand up and say how proud they are of the colleges in their specific communities. I can tell you that I think this is one of the key things about this debate time—I think we're going to support this legislation, but I think that this is a good opportunity for anybody who wants to talk about their community college system and about the staff they have, about the kind of workers they have, about their success stories. This is the time to come and do it, when we're in debate like this. That's why I've said today and I continue to say today that not only are they there for the education and for the helping of all of the different programs they have to offer, but they also are key parts of the community. It's always great to see them at chamber events, fundraising events. The leadership shown by the administration and by the instructors rubs off on the students, and I think overall it makes for a better community and for a better province as well.

In summary, I just wanted to say that I'll be supporting this legislation. I think it's a step in the right direction.

I do want to re-emphasize once again the importance of the foresight of Bill Davis. It is important that we've had people in our province like that in the past who have had a vision for a specific need in our community, in our province, and they've come forward. Now, 40 years later, we've got what is probably one of the better post-secondary education systems in the world, partly because of our community college system.

That's all I'm going to say today. I appreciate this opportunity and look forward to debate from other members here as we move forward with this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'll be speaking in about eight minutes or so, and I don't want to tire myself out, but I want to congratulate the students from Charles G. Fraser, along with the four teachers and the two or three parents, for coming just to listen to the kinds of debates that we have, because I'm convinced they're learning as we speak.

We've heard from the member from Simcoe North about how proud he is of the college system, and they all have a story to tell about the colleges and what they do. That's what the member from Simcoe North did, which is good.

I'll offer a different perspective to be helpful to the diversity of debate, and I hope that the teachers, students and parents are going to stick around to be able to hear that diverse point of view.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** I would like to begin by thanking our Premier, who, a year ago, made the commitment that this government is going to provide the right to part-time workers in the college system to bargain collectively.

I also want to thank Minister Milloy, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, and his staff at the ministry and the minister's office for bringing forward this bill.

I would also like to thank the committee members from all three parties who have—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Reza Moridi:**—and yourself too—and all parties who contributed to the refinement of this bill, and also the stakeholders, who worked very hard and guided us through the process of preparing this bill.

**1450**

I want to echo the statements by the member from Simcoe North about our college system, and I commend him for talking about the excellent work our college system has been doing. Since I became a member of Parliament and parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, and being a former academic, as I said earlier, I've had the opportunity to visit three colleges: George Brown College, Seneca College, and, by the way, the Bill Davis campus of Sheridan college. I was very much impressed by the work our college system and our students, our academics, have been doing. They are doing an excellent job, and our colleges have gained an international reputation. I've heard this from many, many people in my previous career, that our colleges, in one or several areas, have really gained an international reputation. We are proud of these colleges and their administration, profs and academics, students and support workers who work together to train the best workforce and knowledgeable students and a well-trained workforce for our economy.

The bill before us today modernizes the current collective bargaining act. This bill will basically take us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That's what we needed to have in our college system. Our—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Thank you. Questions and comments? The member for Sarnia-Lambton.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Go get 'em, Bob.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Thank you.

I'd like to commend the member from Simcoe-Grey for his remarks about the college system. We also in Sarnia-Lambton are the proud recipients of a college system, Lambton College. It was established—one of the earliest systems—by the Honourable William Davis when he was Minister of Education. It also provides many benefits to the people in Sarnia-Lambton. We've got many ongoing relationships with local industry and with the labour community. There are a number of training centres that we've established there, a number of apprentices who are moving through that and continuing their education in the education system.

I was on the committee from our side of the House with the honourable Mr. Wilson, Jim Wilson, and we did

put forward a number of amendments. The government, in their wisdom, chose not to accept those, but we still, in spirit, support the principle of the bill. I think it's long overdue that the part-time instructors are recognized, that they are able to bargain with the full-time people, and this will probably lead to more congenial relations between the staff. We have, as I say, many important relationships with the local community in Sarnia-Lambton and I want to see those fostered and continued.

As the member from Simcoe North expressed, there will be additional costs. We hope that the government will be able to help those colleges, especially in Sarnia-Lambton—and the rest of the province—meet those costs, because there will be additional burdens on them. They told us in the hearings that they are at the wire now; they're having a problem meeting their budget.

So at that, I will adjourn and listen to the rest of the speeches.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

To the member for Simcoe North for a response.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'd like to thank the members from Trinity-Spadina—I look forward to some of his comments coming up in a minute and a half now—from Richmond Hill and also from Sarnia-Lambton.

I think what I really want to say is that I meant everything I said in my debate. I think that if you're an elected member here and you are not working closely with your community colleges, you are probably not doing a very thorough job. I'm in my 10th year now, but I've found that one of the areas that I enjoy most about the job is going to the community colleges. I'm probably also asked three or four times a year at least to go and speak to classes on a specific topic. I spent a couple of hours here at Georgian College in Orillia a couple of weeks ago talking to a social sciences class, a bunch of young people who would be social workers in the future. They had a lot of comments and a lot of questions and a lot of positive feedback as well, giving me constructive criticism on our system.

So as we watch this college system grow and we appreciate the instructors and the administration we have—I think it's very positive for the province of Ontario and for our communities. I just want to stress again that I think one of the best things that has happened is that these small community colleges have been able to provide a level of post-secondary education that didn't exist in a lot of small communities prior to the vision that was set forth by our former Premier, William Davis, and his team.

Thank you, and I look forward to the next speaker.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm happy to have the lead-off to debate Bill 90, An Act to enact the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act. I want to begin by commenting on the preamble that the member from Richmond Hill gave, prior to speaking about Bill 90. I want to do the same: talk about that, and then talk about the background

of Bill 90 in terms of what we had, the bill and what we think should have been added to make this bill much more effective from a union perspective, obviously.

I want to begin by saying that the Richmond Hill member is very proud of the fact that the Liberals have committed \$6.2 billion over a four-year period that will end in 2009-10. It's not really \$6.2 billion, but in terms of how they add it up, mathematically it's \$6.2 billion. One need not try to explain that and confuse people even more, but let's just say, for the sake of it, that they're giving \$6.2 billion. What I want to say, as Liberals are cozy and proud of themselves with that figure, is that in spite of the \$6.2 billion they are giving, we are number 10, numéro dix, numero dieci on the scale of per capita funding in Canada. That means that of all the provinces in Canada, we are last in per capita funding.

Government can be very happy with itself, being number 10—i.e., last. But I don't think you should be proud of that, and you keep doing this over and over again. I'm so happy that we have a parliamentary channel that people can watch on channel 105 in many parts of Ontario, because they get to see and hear the different points of view from the different political parties.

Being number 10 in per capita funding means that you don't give enough resources to the college and university system to allow them to do what they need to do to be competitive in Canada, to be competitive with the US and to be competitive with the world. So even though Liberals use the language “funding to be competitive,” how can you be competitive if you are last? Remember that Ontario is still, in spite of its economic difficulties of late, one of the most powerful provinces in Canada, not just numerically but economically. While we are close to being in a recession, and while we will recover in time, we in this province are still strong as an economic power.

To hear the Liberals talk about funding for our colleges and universities, you would think we are number one in per capita funding to our university and college system. But I remind Liberals and others watching that you have a record you cannot be proud of, and you ought to be embarrassed about your record. Your record means that you are in government. That's what counts. What counts is your record in government. What counts is what you say versus what you actually do, and what you say is always better than what actually gets delivered to the system.

I've got to tell you this, because you need to coil; you need to creep under the carpet when I say these things. You need to skulk; you need to hide from yourselves and from the public. I say this with all due respect, of course. Clearly, you are all doing your best. But it would be nice, as you do your best, if you were able to admit publicly what you are actually doing, rather than manufacturing something that isn't entirely the case. So we have a college system that's incredibly underfunded, I dare say more underfunded than the university system. I dare say they're both underfunded, but colleges more so. And in the last 12, 13 or 14 years we've had an increasing number of students attend our college system, but the funding

from both the previous government—i.e., the Conservative one—and the funding from the current government—i.e., the Liberals—is not keeping pace with the actual enrolment. What does it mean? It means that they are underfunded. What does that mean? It means they cannot provide the programs they desperately need to be competitive in Canada vis-à-vis other provinces, the US, Europe and others. Do you understand that, member from Richmond Hill? You know that because you've taught, right?

1500

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** I am listening.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** But you also taught, as I understand it.

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** If the member from Richmond Hill taught, then he would know that his system was underfunded by a couple of previous governments. You can't state the party line and forget your experience in terms of what actually happened to you when you were teaching there. So for you to pretend that that doesn't exist is not helpful to the argument.

We've had colleges for years coming to make deputations at Queen's Park, pleading with the previous government, pleading with this current government for extra money. The member from Richmond Hill says, "Yes, we're helping. We've got a Reaching Higher plan, and it's \$6.2 billion." Okay. That money was intended to bring us to the average, it was intended to lift Ontario into the middle of the pack, and it hasn't done any of that. We are still number 10. That worries me, and it ought to worry people who worry about colleges, many of the Conservative members who were talking about how great the colleges are and all the great things they're doing. They cannot do a great job if they're underfunded. They cannot provide the program they want to provide if they're underfunded.

I say that when you look at the quality indicators such as class size and student-faculty ratio, they are deteriorating in this province in a very troubling way. In fact, our student-faculty ratio is the worst in the country. Yes, the student-faculty ratio is the worst in the country. Is that something to be proud of? No. So those who teach in colleges and universities cannot be saying it. I know they're not saying it. I know because, when they talk to me, they say, "We're worried about the quality indicators." And the government should worry that when you look at the quality indicators, you're not doing very well.

Further, how can you be proud of those things? I say that during this period of global economic challenge, your government is failing our universities and colleges just when we need them. Just when we have to compete in a global economy, just when we need skilled and knowledge workers so we can prevail in that competition, just when our manufacturing sector, long the stay of Ontario's prosperity, is disappearing, that's when we need governments most. To hear the member from Richmond Hill say it, he's dealing with all the questions I'm

raising. I'm saying that he and you, Liberal members and ministers and Premier, are not. We have one of the highest tuition rates in the country. We have deregulated law and medicine, engineering and many other professions, and deregulation—it was started by the Conservatives when Mike Harris was here—means that universities and colleges can charge whatever fee they believe they can charge to students as a tuition fee. It means it's not capped. It means they're able to charge as much as they want.

For law at U of T, they're now spending \$19,000 just to get in—excluding books, excluding the extra fee if you have to move from one city and come and live in Toronto. You understand, it gets to be a very expensive problemo. If you're paying close to \$20,000 in tuition fees a year, excluding books—and books are expensive in engineering, law and medicine, aren't they? Sure they are—and if you've got to move from one city to the other because you need to stay in some flat, you've got to pay. I dare say that it's got to be anywhere from \$5,000 to \$8,000, depending on where you're living. So at the end of it, you're paying \$30,000 or so every year, and to be a lawyer takes a whole lot of years: two years, at least, undergraduate and four years in law school—six long years. It gets to be pretty expensive. This is law at U of T. In medicine, it's anywhere from \$14,000 to \$16,000 to \$17,000, and the books in medicine are probably even more expensive than they are for law school. The books for engineering are just as expensive. To be in a dentistry program, you're paying \$12,000 to \$15,000 a year in tuition fees, depending on what university you're going to. Do you get the picture?

You have placed an incredible debt burden on students that we have never, ever seen before. The serious deregulation and the serious burden happened under the Conservative government, under Mike Harris. Mercifully he's no longer here. John Tory is a nicer man. I think he's a nicer guy. I think his policies are a little nicer than Mike Harris's, but thank God Mike Harris is gone. Bye-bye, I say, and amen to Mike.

But then you've got the Liberals coming into power, and the Liberals froze tuition fees for two years. They said, "Yes, we've done it. We kept our promise." And then what do they do after the two years? Tuition fees more than double, because at least Mike Harris, with all due respect, froze tuition fees just before the election, because he was a bit nervous and worried. So he capped tuition fees. If we had capped tuition fees, i.e., the Liberals, when they got into power, we would have been paying less in tuition fees had we not frozen tuition fees for two years. Why? Because after the two-year lifting of the tuition freeze, we are now in a regime where students get whacked by close to 5% in tuition fee increases when they go to university—whacked, I say. And you understand what that means: "Whacked" means they're paying a whole lot of money in tuition fees every year since the Liberals came into power—close to 5% a year, you understand. It's more than what the Tories did in their final dying days when they capped tuition fees at inflationary rates.

We are in an economy where we, as consumers, have incredible debt as parents, as individuals. Students now have and are amassing incredible, huge debts from which there is no relief and from which they will never escape, because when you leave university in a general program—forget about lawyers, engineers, dentists and doctors—your average debt is about \$23,000, \$24,000, \$25,000. If you marry someone else who was a university student—let's say in a general program, four years; I don't know, French, English, philosophy, geography, let's say—you have a combined debt of \$50,000, just to be modest, unless you've got a rich mom and pop who are able to pay for you, a rich member of provincial Parliament who doesn't have to worry about whether their investment savings have just slipped though the crash, because today the TSX went down 600 points.

Some of you are probably okay because you own two homes, some of you have different professions, some of your spouses have extra money, and some of you have pensions from previous employment. God bless those of you who've got the extra bucks. But the majority of people—honest working people—cannot afford to help their kids. That means they are on their own. So when you start working at very low wages, because unless you are into a high-level profession which pays well, and your average salary is anywhere from \$35,000 to \$50,000—in fact, one of my children is a teacher and the other two are working in an insurance company. One of them is making close to \$33,000 and the other one about \$37,000, just out of university. Who knows where their salaries might end up? If they're lucky they might be, I don't know, eventually in the \$60,000 range?

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**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Eighty thousand.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Oh, you think \$80,000? God bless. I hope that becomes a reality. Keep praying, because I'm worried.

If these young people have debts of 25,000 bucks, and their salary as they come out of university is \$30,000, \$32,000, \$33,000, \$35,000—what do you do with \$32,000 or \$35,000? Can you pay your rent if you're alone? Can you pay for the purchase of a car? Can you afford a car? Let's say a second-hand car might cost you \$12,000, unless you're buying a real jalopy—and then you're into big costs because that old jalopy requires more maintenance and so on—but anywhere from 10,000, let's say, to 20,000 bucks. You're paying some money on that car, you're paying some of your income on your rent, and then you're paying some of that money to maybe clothe yourself, which might not be such a bad thing, and maybe to feed yourself, because I think that's helpful to stay healthy. You need a couple of bucks to stay healthy. So at the end of that, where does \$35,000 take you? I know that most members who earn over \$100,000 here say, "I don't earn enough; I can't make ends meet." Well, if you can't make ends meet with \$100,000 or more, how can a person making \$34,000 or \$35,000 make ends meet? Do you understand? You are burdening our young people with incredible debts that

they will never be able to repay. I often use my example of someone who had a debt of \$1,700, and I thought I could never pay it back, and it took me a long time to pay it back. How are young people with debts of \$25,000 to \$100,000 ever going to pay off their debts? You are free of interest rate taxation until six months of leaving as a student, and then you've got to start paying the higher rates. How can students afford to pay these things, and how can governments feel good about themselves, saying, "Oh, we have a greater participation rate of students than ever, and that's all that matters. Students are coming in; therefore we, as a government, are doing well"? How can you use that as an indicator of how well you are doing as a government? Students are entering universities and colleges because they feel they need to, and if they don't, they will be left out of our changing economy. That's why they go, not because of your policies. They go because they're desperate and they know that unless they have one or two or three degrees and are constantly learning through continuing education, they may be left out of this economy. That's why they go, not because of anything you're doing as a government.

So I can't help but do this little attack on the Liberals when they pat themselves on the back. I know how hard it is for you to hear it, but I've got to tell you. I feel like I have a duty to tell you.

I'll talk about the colleges in a moment, because I want to talk about the background to Bill 90 briefly before I make references to the colleges. The colleges, in committee, for those of you who were there, were saying, "We're worried about this bill." They all stated that they support the principles of the bill, but then they talked about what worries they have about the bill and potential changes that could have been made. But I want to speak briefly to Bill 90, because Bill 90 is a typical Liberal bill. How is that typical? Is there a typical way the Liberals behave? Yes, there is. I want to explain that and expound a little bit.

What the Liberals have done through Bill 90 is to give a little to, in this case, let's say, the unions, but not too much, and give a little to the colleges who are unhappy, but not hurt them too much. So it's a bill that never goes too far to the left and never goes too far to the right and just saddles itself on that nice little fence, a not too pointy fence, and feels comfortable sitting there, saying, "Yeah, we got it right."

So the unions are able to say to us—meaning you, Liberals—"That was good that you did this, by the way, to give us collective bargaining rights," and you're able to go to the colleges and say, "We didn't hurt you too much, did we?" And they say, "Well, it's hurtful but it could have been worse."

So Liberals find this neat little niche, this neat little way of trying not to hurt themselves politically too much, and Bill 90 is typical of that approach. Bill 90 gives collective rights to part-time academics in the college system and to non-faculty workers, i.e. the support staff. This is good.

It took a while. It took a long while, in fact. I introduced a bill that would give collective bargaining rights to college teachers and part-time support staff, and each time I presented the bill, there was not a peep from any Liberal. Not a word. No Liberal spoke. No Liberal said, "We should take Marchese's bill and make it law." No Liberal said, "We should support it so it gets to second reading so that we can deal with it." Not one Liberal.

For two and a half years, I did that with my bill. I did that with the support of OPSECAAT, the Organization of Part-time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. And I say they did the dirty work of working and trying to organize the college professors. They did that work, not me. All I did was say, "You're right. Here's my bill to help you initiate a debate here at Queen's Park."

It was hard, minister of la francophonie. It was hard. I have to tell you why: because there were so many part-time college teachers who were afraid to speak up. You understand, 40%, 45%, 50% of college teachers and 20% of university faculty members are part-time. Why are they part-time? Because colleges haven't been getting the money they need to be able to hire full-time staff. So what do they do? Inevitably, inexorably, they hire part-time workers because they don't have any money to hire full-time staff.

So the part-time college teacher is afraid to say boo, because they have no rights. They had no bargaining rights for a long time, and if they were to speak up and should they have spoken up in a way that people would know about, that the colleges would know about, they would have put themselves at risk. You understand? You've got no collective bargaining rights, you're part-time, you're doing work sometimes that is full load even though you are part-time, and you cannot complain. Why? Because there are always plenty of part-time college professors who are willing to step in and do the work. So it was hard for the Organization of Part-time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology to organize in that context, in a culture of fear.

I used to think the culture of fear existed only under Mike Harris. Ah, not true. Ce n'est pas vrai. It's equally true under the Liberals. The image held by the public is that it cannot be; it cannot be that under a Liberal administration people are afraid to speak up. And yet it's true. And why is it true? Because people like Marchese were talking to the college teachers. As we met, we talked to them. We even talked to people who said, "We are afraid." I even talked to college teachers who said they talked to part-timers who were afraid to speak up.

How many Liberal members were doing that kind of chit-chat with part-time college professors?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** The member from Ottawa—

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Ottawa—Vanier.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Voilà. Voilà. And my friend from Peterborough, yes? And you too?

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** I'm here.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I know you're here, but I was asking whether you were speaking to some of the college teachers.

I expect the minister of les francophones, of whom I'm a big supporter, to do a two-minute response to me telling me the kinds of discussions you had with part-time teachers vis-à-vis what I was saying, that they weren't afraid to speak up, that in fact the people you spoke to were doing that very openly with you and others. And you, the member from Peterborough, said you pretty well had the same experience. Is that correct?

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**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I talk to them all the time.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You talk to them all the time. So I expect a two-minute rebuttal, saying, "Marchese, you're wrong. They were not afraid. In fact, in my area they spoke up." That's what I want to hear, because then I'll match your comments to OPSECAAT experience—that is, the Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology—to see whether the experience in Peterborough and Ottawa and so on was the same as theirs. I suggest to you that you are not giving us the complete rundown of your talks with the teachers.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** That's a little strong.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That was so polite; I don't even know how to be more polite than that.

So the problem is that it was hard to be able to organize the part-time teachers. It was shameful—I have to admit it's shameful—that in 2008 we had to wait so long to allow part-time college teachers and part-time support staff to organize, one of the few groups in Canada without the right to do so, the only province where part-time college employees have been excluded from collective bargaining. It took a long while to push Liberals because, once they do it, they say, "It was always all part of the plans." But they have been stalling for so long. They have been stalling for two and a half years.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Remember, what matters is what you are doing in government. We have to match your words to your actions. I think that's important. So for two and a half years they have been stalling. Why? Because they are saying to themselves: "Hmm, this is going to cost a fair bit, this Bill 90. It's going to cost a lot." How do we know this? Because when we talk to the colleges, they tell us, "Hmm, this is going to cost a lot." So what is their reaction, a typical Liberal reaction? "Let's stall as long as we possibly can"—which they did. Then they had Mr. Whitaker do a report. You understand that when you ask somebody to do a report, it's another six months to a year. It's beautiful, right? You know what he's going to tell you; that's why you appointed him. But in appointing him, it takes close to a year and then another half a year to stall, because you have got to consider it, right? Even Mr. Whitaker said, "There is no justification for excluding these employees from collective bargaining. Part-time employees should immediately be granted the right to unionize." He said, "immediately

be granted the right to unionize.” From “immediately,” it took yet another six to eight months to introduce their bill by the pushing of the Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees, pushing of OPSEU, the union, and pushing by people like me to persuade the Liberal government to move with a bill.

They eventually do, and Liberals are cozy and happy about that. Because it doesn't matter about the stalling and waiting for two and a half years; it's not about that. It's about the government eventually giving a bill that gives collective bargaining rights to part-time teachers and to part-time support staff, and now they're happy: “We've done the job. We can go home now.” That's the attitude of the Liberal government.

What did the various colleges say when they came to the committee? I say this because I want to give you the context of serious underfunding of the college sector, which they speak to. I'll try to be as precise as I possibly can. I'm not going to name the colleges, because it's unfair to the colleges I name, because I don't name them all.

One college says the following—they all support the bill, by the way. They all support collective bargaining rights. Each and every college says that. They say that at the outset. They don't waste any time saying it. But as you get into the body of their reports—just to remind the member from Richmond Hill, there were two kinds of deputants: the college teachers, the colleges, and the others who supported the bill and wanted to make it stronger. There were no in-betweens. The member from Richmond Hill made the suggestion that there were all different kinds of deputants and that they all had different views. No. I have the list here. We had colleges and then we had the others who wanted to strengthen the bill. One college says the following: “Several colleges, including our own, are experiencing severe fiscal pressures and may even be facing deficits, in spite of all efforts....”

“This bill will add more pressure.” Colleges do not have the fiscal room necessary to implement this legislation. “In addition to the important issues I have raised in this brief, I am calling on the government to fund the implementation of the bill,” as the entire college board of governors agrees “that the cost implications across our system are unsustainable.”

In keeping with other sectors of the economy, compensation costs, including salaries, wages and benefits, are the largest expense item for colleges. There is no question that the government, in implementing this legislation, will need to recognize and respond to its financial implications. There is no room in college budgets to absorb more costs.

I recognize that how we do this in the economy we are facing today will be a tremendous challenge, but colleges are completely unable to shoulder new costs. The government must be aware of this in adding new costs to the system. As a result, I must again caution the government about the financial implications attached to OPSEU's proposed changes—changes that were not proposed during the consultation process that led to the creation of

this bill and therefore could not be given appropriate consideration or weight. This is one college system saying, “The funding you give us is inadequate at the moment. Even to implement Bill 90 as it is requires additional funding. To even contemplate other changes would make it worse.” Thus, most colleges objected to any of the changes that I will have time to speak to, at least a couple of major ones.

What does it mean? It means that the colleges and the government had an understanding that there would be no other changes to the bill and that what they produced in Bill 90 would not only suffice but would have to do, because there would be no other changes from the Liberals. That was already set in stone.

Here's another college that says, “Although we are grateful ... for the government's investments in its 2005 Reaching Higher plan, there are significant funding challenges that we are facing across the system. Funding for colleges is not sufficient to enable us to sustain and build upon the programs and services students and employers demand. Several colleges, including our own, are experiencing severe fiscal pressures and may even be facing deficits, in spite of all efforts.”

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I think the member from Richmond Hill, hopefully, is getting a sense of a pattern in terms of what colleges were saying. You heard it and I heard it—that's why I'm reading it again, for your benefit. Colleges are saying, “We are under severe financial strain,” and they're also saying, “We may not be able to avoid deficits.” The way colleges have avoided deficits in the past is to continue slashing as much as they possibly can in order to comply with the laws that do not permit deficits in the college system.

Another college says: “I would like to reiterate the point from the perspective of our board. I am certain that many of you in this committee have spoken with your local college president and board chair”—he assumes we're doing that, and he assumes that many Liberal members are doing that—“and are aware of the financial challenges we face.” He assumes that many Liberal members are aware of the financial challenges, but I'm not sure they are. Then the person says, “I cannot overstate the seriousness of this challenge for all of us or the consequences to our local communities and businesses if colleges are asked to shoulder additional costs without additional funds. We've made tough decisions in an attempt to balance our books, but the reality is that there are no funds left, particularly to implement this legislation.”

“I would be irresponsible as a board chair if I did not tell you today that the government must commit to funding the changes this new legislation will bring about, because in the absence of that funding we will be required to make financial decisions across the college system that will have a profound impact on our communities, our students, and your ability to deliver on your commitment to a highly skilled workforce. Financial challenges in the Ontario college system already exist,

and this bill, if underfunded, will only make a serious situation that much more severe.”

Why do I do this? I do this to tell you that there is a pattern. The colleges came to that committee committed, to a person, to not supporting any other change that OPSEU was recommending because to do so would, in their minds, incur more financial costs to the college system and they simply could not deal with it. My personal view, as I indicated to a few colleges, is that they would probably have supported some of the changes that unions were recommending, but in view of the fiscal realities of underfunding by this current government, they simply could not support even amendments they could live with individually as colleges.

I know that. I talked to a few of them. They can't say this publicly, because even in a Liberal regime colleges are afraid to speak up. Even under a Liberal administration, university presidents are equally afraid to speak up. It's amazing to me, because my experience in this Legislature over the 18 years I have been here is to say to them, “When you're silent, you will not get what you need, you will be listened to less, you will always have the same financial pressures to deal with. Rather than being bold and daring, telling the public your experience as college or university presidents, as you see it, for which many of you would have a lot of credibility—by refusing to do so, you're undermining yourselves; your boards, who are desperately trying to balance budgets; your professors, who are trying to do the best under those conditions; those part-time professors, who often work full-time on part-time wages; and you're undermining students, who are not getting the quality attention they deserve because so many are being taught by so many part-time professors running from one place to the other that they do not have the time to offer the quality of attention the students deserve. We are undermining ourselves; we are undermining our ability to compete in these desperate times. And that's what these colleges are speaking to. So I give you only three of so many of the colleges that came to speak to the issues. I think that three is enough to be able to give you a good sense of the problems that they face in the college system.

What were some of the amendments that OPSEU wanted to make? I'll speak to a few of them. OPSECAAT—and I'll spell out the acronym again: Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, represented by Roger Couvrette, who's the president, and Candy Lindsay, who's the vice-president—and those who were involved in these negotiations were supportive of having two bargaining units and not four for college workers. Bill 90's proposal to create the academic and two support bargaining units doubles the potential number of strikes or lockouts in the colleges.

“In the existing CCBA, our bargaining unit contains”—OPSECAAT here or OPSEU argues that their bargaining unit “contains both full-time and partial load workers. Partial loads are teachers who teach more than a third and up to two thirds of a full-time job and who are paid on an hourly rate—just as part-time workers are.

“Bill 90,” they say, “is not just about having a full-time faculty bargaining unit and a part-time faculty bargaining unit for each group: It is about creating a new unit with part-time and sessional teachers that would mirror the existing unit which has full-time faculty and partial load faculty. In other words,” it actually proposes “to have one group of part-timers in one bargaining unit and another group of part-timers in another.”

This government proposed to have four bargaining units instead of two. And they all said—to a person, man and woman—“We don't understand why you're doing that.” And those who worked as part-time support staff and part-time academic professors all said, “We want two units, one for academics and one for support staff.” They all said that it's the right thing to do. They all argued that it's an issue of fairness.

A basic goal of collective bargaining is the creation of common terms and conditions of employment for workers doing the same work without any discrimination. Having two bargaining units, not four, they argued, facilitates achievement of this goal. And at the level of cost, they said, “Two sets of negotiations are less expensive for the taxpayer and the workers, and accomplish the same work as four sets of negotiations.” Why go through four sets of negotiations when you can do it in two? The reason they're doing this, in my humble estimation, is that they want to make it harder for workers to organize and they want to make it very difficult for there not to be two bargaining units, but insist on having four.

The member from Richmond Hill said in committee, “Oh, but there's section 26 which explains how they could do it if they want to.” Let me read what Bill 90, as it was written, said:

“The union(s) and the council must come to the Ontario Labour Relations Board with a joint proposal to modify the makeup of one or more bargaining units.

“If different bargaining units are represented by different unions, the proposal must be supported by all unions representing any bargaining unit that is changed or modified by the proposal;

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“Both of the new part-time bargaining units must be unionized and have a collective agreement in place; and

“At least one year must have passed after Bill 90 receives royal assent.”

For those of you listening, including Liberal MPPs, when you hear that, do you understand how difficult it is to be able to comply with all of these conditions? How utterly difficult it would be to have two bargaining units rather than the four, because the conditions that they have put into place in the bill make it virtually impossible to do. Out of the four changes they proposed in committee, one of them was a technical correction because the language was just erroneous and so they had to change a word. The other three are minor, in my view. One of them deals with this. So instead of having four bargaining units, all they need now is two bargaining units to agree to a change, but you still have all of the other conditions in place and they still have to wait one full year, no matter what.

Why is it one full year and not sooner? Why not five days or 10 days or 14 days after there is agreement to proceed? Because the government doesn't want to dish out the money to have collective agreements in place for the new bargaining agents. They are stalling. They are delaying as long as they possibly can. There is no other argument. There is no logical, consistent, reasonable argument that says that once they have their vote they couldn't be able to get out there and organize right away and get the benefits they deserve. No, they have to wait a full year and then apply the other conditions that are in place, except the little, minor change that they made. Do you understand? This government is putting up barrier after barrier in order to make it impossible for unions to organize and for there to be two unions rather than the four. It's typical of what Liberal governments do. They give a little bit and then they change the rules to make it harder. They have changed the rules in many different places, and this was one of them.

Where the college workers hoped that the changes to the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act would happen, and happen quickly, where they thought that you would just have one bill that would allow people to join a union—and two, not four—it became complicated and the rules changed. That was one major change to this act that was being proposed by OPSEU in order to make it easier for themselves, to make it easier for colleges, because colleges would only have to bargain with two unions, not four. It was time-saving, it was money-saving, less labour-intensive, and yet the government decided that it would make it harder for itself, for the colleges and the new bargaining units to get what they are entitled to. That was a biggie.

I, quite frankly, never believed for a moment that the government would make that change. I knew they wouldn't do it—just too risky for them. I think it would facilitate union organizing, collective bargaining. It would probably get to an agreement real fast and it would mean that the government would be put under pressure much earlier to free up the money to be able to help the college systems. I am worried that the money is not there, not only for the changes that might have happened, if we had supported those changes, but that the money is not there even for this modest bill that this government is going to pass in this Legislature.

There's another change that the OPSEU workers wanted to make, and that has to do with collective bargaining. Here's where OPSEU says, "Bill 90 omits two key elements of the OLRA:

"S. 40 of the OLRA allows the parties to agree to go to arbitration to settle a collective agreement when both parties agree to do so. Bill 90 does not permit this.

"S. 43 of the OLRA"—the Ontario Labour Relations Act—"allows either party to apply to the board to have a bargaining unit's first contract decided at arbitration. Bill 90 contains no similar provision.

"In collective bargaining, situations do occur in which the parties are unable to compromise with each other—for any number of reasons—but not unwilling to have an

arbitrator make the final decisions on a collective agreement. Bill 90," OPSEU argues, "must include the arbitration option.

"Nowhere is the arbitration option more important than in first contract situations. First contract arbitration first appeared in Ontario with the passage of Bill 65 in May 1986"—when Mr. Peterson was here as the former Liberal Premier. "Introducing the legislation in November 1985, Liberal Labour Minister Bill Wrye made the following comments"—and I'll read them for the record because I think they're helpful:

"Employees who join a union do so with the expectation that collective action will produce monetary rewards and enhance the quality and security of their employment. Certification has no inherent value unless the procedures that follow the acquisition of bargaining rights ensure both parties a fair opportunity to conclude a first collective agreement.

"I am not suggesting a risk-free alternative to the present system. By its nature, bargaining is an adversarial process, and participants must be prepared for the sacrifices that may be necessary to advance their interests at the bargaining table. In the normal course of events, however, certification should lead to a collective agreement.

"The failure of the bargaining process is not only a cause for disappointment within the workforce; it may actually contribute to a deterioration in labour-management relations. Emotions often run high during an organizing campaign as individuals on both sides declare their support for or opposition to change. If certification is followed by a collective agreement, the foundation is laid for a longer-term, stable relationship with a mechanism to address outstanding problems. Where, on the other hand, the momentum of an organizing campaign and the desired expression of the majority for a collective agreement are frustrated at the bargaining table, there is a natural tendency for the employer to regard the union's defeat as vindication of its own position, and there is a risk that legitimate concerns of the workforce may be ignored.

"For these compelling reasons, the government believes that first-contract arbitration is essential."

"Twenty years after Bill 65, first contract arbitration is now one of the basic collective bargaining tools unions rely on to facilitate the advent of collective bargaining in the face of employer hostility to it. In keeping with the Liberal Party's historic concern for the legitimate concerns of working people and its desire for balance in collective bargaining law, Bill 90 should include the OLRA language on first-contract arbitration."

The government didn't listen to that. I didn't believe the government had any interest in listening to that, and they didn't. The colleges who came in front of our committee were very clear: Any one of these changes that OPSEU was recommending would make colleges hostile to the government. They would make them hostile because they would imply clearly, from the way I read these things, that there would be more costs, and as such, the government simply could not make these changes.

We made the arguments in committee; OPSEU and others, college workers and support staff, made these arguments—to no avail. The government members didn't listen, and I have to tell you, I didn't believe that they would.

There is another issue that the OPSEU members presented, and that was the issue of jeopardy.

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"The original CCBA,"—the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act—"contains a provision known as the 'jeopardy' provision, which requires the College Relations Commission to determine the point at which the students' year is irreversibly jeopardized by a strike or lockout. Under the current CCBA, the commission has an obligation to notify the minister so that he or she can take action to prevent the loss of students' academic year.

"You might ask, 'What is so special about colleges that this kind of protection is necessary?'" OPSEU says, "The answer is simple. Our mandate is to make our students job-ready. For most of our programs, this involves a considerable amount of hands-on learning. We have simulation labs and workshops where the students learn by doing under supervision. We put students in a mentoring environment in hospitals, social agencies or private industry. We guide our students to work in the real world with real clients."

They also say that "the jeopardy provision protects the government from being seen as interfering with collective bargaining because an independent party gives an independent assessment. It encourages teachers to re-focus on recovering our students' academic year." This is the argument that OPSEU made and that was disregarded by the Liberals in committee and by the minister and this government.

There is also an important feature that members who came to committee spoke to, and that was the deemed strike or lockout provision. They said, "The current CCBA contains provisions that require that when a bargaining unit is on strike or locked out, the entire bargaining unit is on strike or locked out.

"The union cannot strike at just one college, and the employer cannot lock out workers at just one college. Further, the colleges cannot pay workers to work during a strike or lockout, with the result that there are no scabs.

"Bill 90 removes these 'deemed strike or lockout' provisions. By doing so, it opens the door to rotating strikes or lockouts, which are antithetical to the principle of province-wide bargaining and province-wide collective agreements. Also, the complexity of bringing all students up to speed following a 'scattergun' work stoppage should not be underestimated," they warn.

"System-wide strikes or lockouts create system-wide pressures to resolve differences. These pressures reduce both the likelihood and the duration of work stoppages.

"There is another and perhaps most important problem with eliminating the deemed strike or lockout provisions. This involves the safety of workers and students.

"Under the current legislation, the union uses picket lines as a way to communicate with co-workers, students,

the employer and the general public. Under Bill 90, however, picket lines would take on a new role: to prevent the entry of scabs into the workplace. This would change the character of the picket lines entirely, and entirely for the worse.

"Right now, thousands of students work for colleges, mostly in support staff jobs, through various student assistance programs. When these workers are unionized, it is inevitable that some of those attempting to work during a strike or lockout will be students.

"Picket captains will not be able to differentiate between students who are going to class and students who are going to work. Conflict—up to and including accidental or intentional violence—is inevitable in such circumstances. We oppose the use of scab labour in all work stoppages, but the banning of scabs is doubly important on any picket line where young people may be crossing."

It is sad to have seen the Liberals remove the deemed strike or lockout provisions—something not even Tories under Mike Harris did. It is interesting that Mike Harris left that provision in place and Liberals removed that very provision which, in our view, is good for teachers and good for students. It was even good for Tories—unbelievable. It is hard to understand it sometimes, but these are the marvels of this place and the marvels of how our Liberals operate in this chamber. I've got to tell you, we made all these amendments and more. We had over 15 or 16 amendments that we introduced, and not one was supported, except one in a very small part. Only three amendments were introduced by the Liberals, and in my view all three were very minor. They didn't listen to anyone except the college teachers, who and with whom they had a deal, with whom they agreed that changes could not be made, and that any additional changes would find disfavour with the colleges. So they listened to the colleges, and I have to say I understand why the colleges did what they did. They are afraid, I understand that, and they are afraid because they're not getting the adequate funding they need. The issue of adequate funding is critical. We are supportive of this initiative that gives collective bargaining rights to college teachers and part-time staff. This is an initiative that will support these workers, and we are happy with that. The government could have done more, and they could have taken away fewer rights in providing these collective bargaining rights to the teachers and support staff.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member for Trinity-Spadina for his remarks and comments. He touched on a few points. One was about funding to the college and university system in Ontario. I would just like to remind the honourable member that during the period when he and his party were in government, they cut student aid by 40%. They promised to eliminate tuition. Instead, they increased it by 50%. They eliminated operating grants and we reinstated them. They also cut funding to our medical schools. Today we all know

we are facing a shortage of doctors. That is as a result of cutting our medical school students during the NDP government in the early 1990s.

In relation to funding of universities and colleges, particularly colleges under this government, I'd just like to remind the member that our government has increased by almost 54% the operating grants to colleges, and per capita funding to students in our college system has been increased by almost 45% since we came to office in 2003. These are significant increases in terms of funding to our college system. In relation to the quality of universities and colleges, which the honourable member mentioned, I would like to bring to the attention of this House that our universities and colleges are some of the best in the world. The amount and quality of research, innovation, creation of science and creation of knowledge which has been done in our universities is among number one in the world. Take University of Toronto's researchers, take the University of Waterloo, take York University, Ryerson, Queen's, Ottawa; take our college system—Sheridan College, our Centennial College, George Brown College, Seneca College—all of them are doing tremendously well, and we thank them for—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** It is my pleasure to add some comments to the speech from the member for Trinity–Spadina on Bill 90. He mentioned in his talk that he feels the colleges are underfunded. He pointed out that the funding is not keeping pace with enrolment at colleges. I would agree with him on that point. Certainly in past years I've met with the president of Georgian College, Brian Tamblin. There is a brand new Georgian College campus that just opened recently in the town of Bracebridge in Muskoka and it's doing a great job there. In my meeting with the president of Georgian College, he pointed out how it is getting more and more difficult for them to make their budgets balance and to deliver the programs they are delivering so well. As you drive by Georgian College, I think the sign on the highway says that something like 98% of the graduates get jobs. Certainly we have a great skills shortage in the province of Ontario. Just reading my local paper, there is a headline: "Wanted: Skilled Workers." That's the finding of the Labour Market Group's annual study, "Trends, Opportunities, Priorities."

We had in the Legislature last Thursday a private member's resolution on the floor that would have increased opportunity for our youth in this province: We could have changed the rules to do with the apprenticeship ratio. This province has a 3-to-1 ratio for trades like electricians and plumbers, so you need three journeymen for one apprentice, which is very different from most of this country, where most provinces have a 1-to-1 ratio, thereby providing much greater opportunity for our youth to have places to apprentice with businesses. So that's an easy change that this government could make but is unwilling to do.

I can see I'm out of time. Thank you.

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**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes just to respond to the speech and make some comments in respect to our college system. I just want to reiterate: In our second year of our first mandate the Reaching Higher plan was the centrepiece of the budget, in which we committed to millions of dollars in investments in our post-secondary school system, particularly our college system. We've been doing that year in and year out since then.

Part of our commitment to the part-time and casual staff of the colleges was an opportunity for collective bargaining, an opportunity to have the kind of stability in the workplace that we've had such great success with in both the elementary and secondary school panels, providing that level of stability in the workforce so they can do the job they need to do in a way that best benefits their students.

I have the pleasure of having primarily students from my riding attend one of two colleges in my proximity of area, whether it's Durham College to the east, either in Oshawa or Whitby, or Centennial College just to the west of me in the Scarborough part of my riding. They have those choices. But the interesting part about our college system to me over the years is the way it's evolved. Virtually every college has multiple campuses. They have campuses in communities, in neighbourhoods with which the community can identify, and where students have an opportunity to come together, particularly in areas of speciality, and learn from their peers and experience the college life either in their neighbourhoods or with others who want to share the same type of experience.

The colleges have been a great success because of that, not because they've grown these massive single campuses, but often because they've grown these smaller, community-based campuses. The opportunity to collectively bargain in the context of that staffing envelope is an important part we wanted to achieve and it builds upon the Reaching Higher plan that we committed to early in our first mandate.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's a pleasure to respond to my colleague from Trinity–Spadina. As always, he's provided us with a very spirited presentation here today, which we often appreciate. As the education critic for the New Democratic Party, I'm sure that he has encountered many times, as I did, in fact, during my first election, the fact that our colleagues opposite suggest that there has always been peace in the classroom since they took office. However, in March 2006, when I was elected to this Legislature, Algonquin College in my community of Nepean was actually on strike.

I know that this bill is important and we are generally supportive of this bill in the official opposition, but it's clear that we don't think that there is a question that part-

time instructors have become an important part of the college system, but this bill will undoubtedly come with additional costs. Part-time workers wouldn't want to form collective bargaining units unless they wanted to increase their compensation from the college system. So I would encourage the minister and his parliamentary assistant to ensure that they're speaking with the colleges with this piece of legislation.

At committee, many members of the Legislature spoke with the colleges, and it wasn't clear to them that their issues were being addressed. I think this piece of legislation needs further scrutiny. I think that we need to understand what exactly the cost will be to the system before we proceed. That's why I look forward to seeing this bill, once again, go to committee as we move forward so we can entirely scrutinize this piece of legislation.

Again, I would suggest that the government's record on this has been dismal.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Trinity–Spadina for a response.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you, everyone, for commenting. I'm particularly interested in the parliamentary assistant, who is, again, proud of his record, and says, "We have increased our per capita funding by 45%." Forty-five per cent of what? Where are you? Where were you? What does 45% mean? You're number 10 in per capita funding in Canada. You're last. New Democrats in a recession were giving more money to our universities and colleges than you are today. Just think about this. We were giving more money per capita to colleges and universities in a recession from 1990 to 1995 than you are today. You are number 10. You're last in funding. You have nothing to be proud of. So in taking refuge in the past by somehow attacking us to make yourself look good, you have nothing to look good with, because we gave more money than you did. We were above the median average in our time, in a recession, and you, with a good economy for the last six years that you've been in government, have given less than everybody. You are last. Please, it's nothing to be proud of.

Colleges are suffering and universities are suffering. This bill is a step in the right direction, but the elements you have removed from this bill, like the provision of jeopardy, were a mistake. Not providing the binding arbitration option is a mistake, we argue; eliminating the dean strike or lockout position that not even Tories dared to remove is a mistake; and creating four bargaining units instead of two is a mistake. So while you've made one step forward, you have taken so many steps back. I plead with you, fund the college system adequately. Merci.

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

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** I hardly know how to follow that. Anyway, I rise in the House today to support Bill 90. I know the members who have had the opportunity to speak to this bill have had a chance to talk about all the wonderful colleges that they have in their ridings.

Unfortunately, I don't have any colleges in my riding, and I did want to draw everyone's attention to that.

What I do have are colleges that are providing services within the riding of Huron–Bruce, and they're doing that for skilled trades. We think about how many skilled tradespeople are going to be required in order to move forward, and I'll talk specifically, as the member from Huron–Bruce, about the energy sector. I think of the services that are available today, and this is to deal specifically with trades that have not had the numbers that are needed in order to continue moving manufacturing forward, as well as the energy sector. Specifically, we have a millwright program where we work in partnership with Bruce Power, and we have on-site training.

Talking to the students who are successful—last year was the first year that we had students who graduated—how much they appreciated the opportunity to not go so far away from home. As you know, because of the fact that we don't have colleges and universities in my riding, we have to travel great distances in order to receive post-secondary education. The McGuinty government came forward not only with training centres within the riding of Huron–Bruce to meet our economic challenges and opportunities—to deal with all of our opportunities—but one of the things that I can tell you from my young people is the long-distance grants will help our children receive an education.

I hear the member from Trinity–Spadina's concerns about it, the colleges and universities as well, but from a rural perspective, I really want to lend my voice to that. When you think about our children—they're not children, they're young adults; at 17 they graduate—they travel very long distances in order to receive the education that they're going to require to get ahead in today's world. So having the ability to draw on a grant is an absolutely tremendous opportunity for them. When we think about the hundreds of people that the energy sector will be hiring, be it a wind turbine technician or a millwright, to deal with energy or manufacturing—we simply had to travel such distances, and then, with apprenticeship programs, it became such a hurdle for young adults to achieve.

So having programs in our riding has made a tremendous difference. There are a number of colleges that have been part of that: Georgian provides programs in the riding of Huron–Bruce; Fanshawe, Conestoga, Lambton.

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We also have a number of universities that provide courses for the people of Huron–Bruce, and I can tell you that it's very much appreciated. There are women who want to be able to go back to school, but because they have many obligations at home—they don't have the opportunities, the time, to overcome that. They're going back to school. We have PSW courses.

These are the changes that the McGuinty government has brought forward, giving people from my riding of Huron–Bruce, rural people, the opportunity to go forward with their education and being very respectful of the distances they have to travel.

We're talking about Bill 90 today. This has not changed in 30 years, but our rural communities haven't had opportunities in post-secondary for 100 years.

The members of the opposition rise and make their points, but where were they? Where were you? Where were you when it hasn't changed in my area? The only changes happened when we took over government. There were not the post-secondary opportunities.

I hear some members of the opposition groaning, but where were they? They can stand up and then they can tell me where people could have gone.

There are so many people in the province of Ontario, from north to south, from east to west, who all have different perspectives, different opportunities, different challenges, and I see that there has been a recognition of that, and Bill 90 coming forward with it.

It's been 30 years. They were in government. We've heard about Bill Davis, what he brought forward on the colleges, and, yes, we have acknowledged that. That was acknowledged.

And then we hear members from the third party: "Well, we..." "You should..." "You should..." Well, they were there, and they should have, and in fact they did—they did recognize it, but unfortunately they never saw it to its conclusion, because it did not receive royal assent. It got through first reading and second reading, and that was that. Unfortunately, they just weren't able to follow through and complete that task.

But the McGuinty government recognizes that this is an important part for the colleges in order that all of the employees within the colleges have opportunities. That's why I will be supporting Bill 90.

I also had the opportunity, as did a number of other members, to listen to the hearings. We heard from the student body as well. A young lady and a young gentleman spoke on behalf of the students. They did speak about Bill 90, which they were supportive of. We recognize that this is something that, quite frankly, needs to happen.

Certainly from my perspective, when all parties agreed and it moved on quickly, obviously there was a recognition from all parties that this is an important piece of legislation that has come, that the time is now and that we need to move forward.

I do want to talk about the economy. As all of you know, I'm sure, if you've been looking at your Black-Berries, with the \$700-billion bailout for the US being defeated and a drop of 1,000 points in a few scant hours, we know that the economy is facing extreme challenges today. We know that what we will require of our workforce, going forward, is going to change significantly. Anything that we can do as a government—and clearly, the McGuinty government sees that our skilled trades are part of the economic turnaround. We know that it will require a different skill set, and that's why pieces of legislation like Bill 90 are so important.

We have had the member from—and I'm going to get it right—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Richmond Hill.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** Richmond Hill. The member from Richmond Hill did an excellent job of going through point by point, so I'm not going to do that. But I did want to put special emphasis on the fact that this will establish a certification process and it will allow part-time employees to unionize and to bargain collectively. That will be for the two units: one for part-time and sessional academic staff, and the other unit will be for part-time support staff.

I know that there were concerns raised during the hearings when they spoke about the ability to have two units in total, not four units. Part of the discussion was the maturity of the process and giving the ability to move in that direction, if it so desired. We also heard concerns raised about establishing a new employer bargaining council representing all colleges; so we also heard about a condensed number for that. Within the process, it also will allow them, through negotiations, to condense if that's the direction they so desire. Quite frankly, one of the constants that we heard was the maturity of the process.

I do want to congratulate the member for Trinity-Spadina for being consistent.

This is a building block; it's a platform that they can move forward on. It's legislation that needs to be passed quickly so that they can get on with the process. They have a mature relationship, and the sides can come together and move the units or move the employer bargaining council as they see fit. Quite frankly, that's what I felt the Whitaker report did: It recognized the maturity of the two sides and gave them the ability in the future to move the units to what they wish the units to look like.

With those words, I'd like to close. I do want to thank the four or five colleges that do provide the knowledge to all of the young people who travel for so many miles to come into the big cities all throughout Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** The member for Huron-Bruce raised some interesting points, but the fact of the matter is that Ontario stands last in the nurses that we have per capita, Ontario stands last in Canada with the police officers that we have per capita, and Ontario stands last in the funding for community colleges in Canada. As disgusting as the first two are, the last one is the one that really concerns me. If you look at the world economy, if you look at the countries in the world that are doing well, those that are doing well have the best-educated population, and Ontario is amongst those populations today. If we continue to underfund colleges, that will not be the case for the future. Ontario has one of the most highly educated populations on the face of the earth today.

Interesting reading is *The World Is Flat*. It talks about this phenomenon and how countries that have free university education or free engineering and science degrees offered do extremely well in building their economy in a relatively short period of time after they implement these kinds of progressive programs.

When we look at the events of today, with the American Congress turning down the bailout, the markets dropping 600 or 800 points, it's a different world that we're moving into. This is very much of a sea-leap situation that we're in, and it's a different world that we'll face in 2009 by the time this thing settles down.

It's a well-educated entrepreneurial population that will create the environment which Ontario will live in in the future, so I would encourage this government and governments in the future to fund community colleges to the very best of their ability.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

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**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I have no disagreement with the member from Huron–Bruce. She speaks proudly of the college system, as indeed even the Tories do and we all do. We think we have a good college system; there's no disagreement. The fact that you are giving collective bargaining rights to part-time college teachers, including support staff, is a good thing. We're not in disagreement with that.

Of course, you stalled and would have stalled forever if you could have, and eventually you couldn't. I understand that. But you have to admit that you guys were stalling for a long time. Even with Whitaker saying, "You've got to do it immediately," it still took you forever to introduce a bill. I understand that. But please, on the issue of funding, your government is last.

When we were en *pouvoir* in 1990, we were still giving more money on a per capita basis than you are today. Please look it up. Don't trust me. Member from Richmond Hill, do me a favour: Don't trust me. You shouldn't. Just look it up. Call legislative research—they work for us—and just ask them how much the NDP was giving from 1990 to 1995 and what you're giving today. You might be surprised. Don't trust me, but I am telling you that you are giving less today than we were in a recessionary period from 1990 to 1995. When you look that up, you're going to blush and say, "Gee, I didn't know that. It's embarrassing." It is embarrassing, because we have had 13 long, good, healthy economic years and we didn't invest. We're number 10—last. Please don't be proud of that. It doesn't make you look good.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'm pleased to comment on the member from Huron–Bruce's issues related to Bill 90. I'm glad that we're finally moving forward on Bill 90. Five years, second mandate—I guess with Liberals governing Ontario things take a little while to move forward, even when they're as important as the member from Huron–Bruce espouses that they are.

I am also pleased that they agreed to have committee hearings on Bill 90. It's always valuable for all members of the House to have the input of experts in the field, and I don't think there is anyone who would disagree with the statement that the experts in the fields related to Bill 90 happened to be the colleges and the boards of governors

who operate the colleges. It's unfortunate that they haven't taken the information they received in the public hearings and actually transferred it into substantive amendments to Bill 90. But I suppose that's how we operate in a majority situation.

We allow the boards of governors and the colleges to choose the courses they offer to their students and to highlight the areas of expertise they want to promote in their various community college systems. Yet, when we seek out their input, as we did with Bill 90, the government has chosen to ignore many of the recommendations brought forward by the colleges, which is an unfortunate way to say, "Come, we want to hear from you; we want your input," and then ignoring it at the end of the day. But as we say, perhaps that's what we're led to in a Liberal majority.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

The member for Huron–Bruce for a response.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** I do want to thank the members from Halton, Trinity–Spadina and Dufferin–Caledon for their responses.

I do want to remind the members that we not only held public hearings on Bill 90; I would also remind them that Mr. Whitaker did extensive research into his report, and this is how it began. It was a comprehensive report. He did not do it in isolation of speaking to those who were affected. He went and met with them. So the report came forward, and we believe Mr. Whitaker has covered off the needs in order to ensure that the college system remains strong while being respectful of the labour force that keeps the colleges strong. This is a balance about ensuring that both needs are met. But overall, and we must always be respectful of this, it is our children who are receiving the education they will need for the future. It is not only for their future, it is also for the province of Ontario, and we must always ensure that both of those are in balance as well. I feel that Bill 90 strikes that balance, and that is why I have stood to support Bill 90. We will debate this further in the House. I look forward to that. We are listening: We are listening through the hearings and we have also listened through the report and the recommendation included within that report.

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

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I appreciate the opportunity to add my comments with respect to Bill 90, An Act to enact the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008. As many of my colleagues have already indicated, we in the Progressive Conservative caucus are generally supportive of this bill, but there are a few comments I would like to add before I get to some of the substantive issues that I think are salient.

First of all I would like to reiterate that the entire community college system, and this has been pointed out and acknowledged by the members opposite, was the realization of the vision of Premier William Davis and the Progressive Conservative Party a number of years ago. It has grown and developed amazingly well over the

years and has adapted its programs to change with changing needs in our community, with changing technology and with life, generally, in the 21st century. We're very proud of that leadership that developed under Premier Davis that has created a system of 24 colleges in the province of Ontario, all of which offer some remarkable programs, and there is a very diverse range of programs offered at the number of community colleges that we have.

Secondly, as I prepared for debate on this bill this afternoon I did notice, and I think some of the other members have commented on it, that members have used the opportunity in part to highlight some of the achievements of the community colleges that are located in their riding. I'm certainly extremely fortunate and very proud of Durham College, which is located primarily in my riding of Whitby–Oshawa. The main campus is in the north part of Oshawa and is co-located with UOIT, and the skills training centre is located in Whitby. In addition to that, there is a campus in Uxbridge, Ontario, continuing education courses are offered at St. Mary Catholic Secondary School in Pickering, and employment resource centres are located in Beaverton, Port Hope and Port Perry. So there is a very far-reaching effect. The tentacles, I guess, of Durham College do spread wide into the community and they offer some excellent programs.

This college was established in 1967 and has grown over the years from that initial location in north Oshawa. The presidents of the colleges over the years all have been visionaries, culminating most recently with the retirement of Dr. Gary Polonsky, who was the third president of Durham College, who became the third president in 1988. It was not only the work that he did with Durham College that was inspired, but it was under his leadership that UOIT—the University of Ontario Institute of Technology—became a university and was mandated and authorized by the previous Progressive Conservative government under Premier Mike Harris. This is a tremendous partnership that has grown and, again, came through the Progressive Conservative government, that brought about this new university. It is a fantastic location because it is co-located with Durham College, on the same footprint, and it allows for tremendous innovative partnerships to develop because they offer programs that complement each other. We've heard not just from students about how this works so well and so seamlessly, the fact that the college and the university work together to bring about these programs, but we've also heard from business leaders in our community who say that this works so well, it should be considered by other community colleges and universities in the future.

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This partnership has, of course, resulted in 6,100 full-time students at Durham College, and we are now proud to say we have over 4,000 university students at the university, which is pretty amazing for a university which has only been in operation for the last five years.

With respect to the bill itself, this of course would change the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act to allow

part-time and sessional workers at Ontario's 24 colleges to bargain collectively for the first time. Since the college's inception in 1967, part-time and sessional workers, of course, have not been involved in the bargaining agreement. I would say that this is quite a significant bill when you actually look at the numbers of people who will be involved with this. Currently, there are 17,600 part-time staff working in Ontario's colleges, so there's a large number of people who are going to be affected. About 8,900 of these people are part-time faculty and about 8,700 are part-time support staff. There are also 19,000 full-time staff, which includes over 9,200 full-time faculty. So we're talking about large numbers of people here, and Bill 90 does have the opportunity to affect the lives of many people.

In Durham College in my riding, I can report that there are 753 full-time staff, 177 part-time or contract faculty and 109 part-time or contract staff. Speaking specifically, again, of my riding, as you probably know, there have been many manufacturing job losses in the Durham region ridings and the area has been hit quite hard. I can only say thank goodness that we have Durham College and UOIT in the area because, to me, that is going to be the key to the turnaround in our local economy, and the programs and services that are being offered through the college and the university are going to be most helpful.

Certainly, it's not going to be easy and there's not going to be any quick fix for this, but I do believe that under the capable leadership of Mr. Don Lovisa, who is the acting president of the college, and Dr. Ron Bordessa, who is president of the university—they have some excellent full-time programs and retraining programs that are up and running that are going to be most helpful to those in our community who have been hit by the manufacturing job losses.

Of course, the funds that are available for those retraining programs are largely due to the \$355-million community heritage trust that was announced in the federal 2008 budget, which was repackaged by the provincial government as the second-career training strategy. As my colleague the member from Nepean–Carleton has indicated, the centerpiece of the 2008 provincial budget was actually the repackaging of federal money. I think it's important for the people of Ontario to know that, because certainly it's not talked about very much on the other side of the House. But, in fact, a large part of that retraining money is actually federal money.

Be that as it may, Durham College does have a number of excellent programs, and I would like to just indicate some of the programs that Durham College does offer. They offer more than 80 programs and courses through the schools of applied sciences, apprenticeship, skilled trades and technology, business, career development and continuing education, communication arts, design, emergency services, health and community services, information technology, integrated studies and justice. In addition, the school of career development and continuing education, a part-time study, offers 1,750

courses, 46 certificate programs, 12 diploma programs and two post-graduate programs in a wide variety of career and personal-interest subject areas. The college also provides training to businesses and individuals through business and industry development services.

But one of the jewels of Durham College is the one that is located in Whitby, which is the skills training centre. That is something that we in Durham region generally are quite proud of because it is offering great practical skills and services that actually can translate into well-paying jobs in our community. They offer an elevating devices mechanic apprenticeship program, which utilizes two state-of-the-art elevators and an escalator in the delivery of in-school training. It's the only college in Ontario to offer that. They also use—these are technical terms I'm not quite familiar with—boom and crawler cranes used in the delivery of simulated and practical crane training to apprentices as a part of hoisting engineer and mobile crane operator; again, the only college program of its kind in Ontario. Additionally, there are 17 apprenticeship programs, including 11 that are red seal, and numerous trade-related certificate and diploma programs, and all of the classrooms utilize state-of-the-art smart-board technology.

There again, you have the colleges leading the way in providing this jobs training and skills training that is going to help Durham region and the surrounding areas, not just Durham region, move into the 21st century and get the kinds of well-paying jobs that they deserve.

The hope is that, of course, we're going to be able to regroup quickly in Whitby–Oshawa and replace those jobs, but it's due to the efforts, I should say, of the previous member from my riding, the previous Progressive Conservative government, and of course the visionary leadership of Dr. Gary Polonsky, who inspired it all and was the one who created the university in the first place and the one responsible for bringing about the meshing of the college and the university.

Moving on to my next point, I think it's important to talk about the bottom line, being money or funding for the community colleges generally, and more specifically for the changes that are going to be brought about as a result of Bill 90. As with many bills being brought forward by this government, and we have seen this time and time again, they have lofty dreams, they have lots of things they want to talk about and great ideas, but no money to put those ideas into action. We've seen that with programs for people with special needs, with the human rights programs, and in many other bills that have been brought before this Legislature. There's a lot of talk but no money for the bottom line.

As has been pointed out by many of the members here, including most recently the member from Trinity–Spadina, the member from Nepean–Carleton and the member from Halton, currently Ontario has the lowest-funded college system in Canada—imagine that—and we're supposed to be the economic hub of Canada; we're 10 out of 10. We've heard a number of members speak quite eloquently on that point because, after all, if we are

going to move into the 21st century and we do want to compete on a world-class basis, we need to put the money into our colleges and universities. That in itself—but add that to the fact that there are going to be costs associated with the implementation of Bill 90. The part-time faculty and part-time staff who wish to be included in the bargaining units and to be able to have some clout obviously want to be able to use that to get a better financial arrangement for themselves. So there are going to be financial repercussions of some considerable significance as a result of this.

Again, we haven't heard anything about the money, so it's going to be incumbent on the government to make sure that they allocate sufficient funds in order to implement Bill 90. I'm not sure that's going to happen, but I guess we have to hope so.

The one other thing I would like to just mention a bit is with respect to some of the comments that were made by the member from Huron–Bruce when she was speaking about how much this Liberal government has done to bring opportunities forward for all Ontarians with the expansion, so called, of the community college system and giving so many opportunities to people who would otherwise not be able to attend the programs and get into the workforce. To that, I would say maybe they are creating some spaces, and I don't even know about that, but even to give them the benefit of the doubt if they are creating some spaces, what they certainly have not done is made it easier for, particularly, women with children to get back into the workforce. First of all, there are the many impediments that they face if they do have small children, in the first place, to be able to go to school on a full-time basis, to have the daycare spaces that they need to be able to go back to work. That's something that hasn't been addressed as part of this, and it's part and parcel of the whole education and retraining package. You can't speak of that in a vacuum, without giving particularly women those supports to be able to do that.

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The other part that happens, of course, is that even if women do get to the point where they are able to go back and retrain or attend college or university, and then they try to strike out on their own to make a better life for themselves and their children, the moment they do that, the moment they get a full-time job, they are often summarily either cut off of rent subsidies or they're found in a place where their rent triples or quadruples. So there's no incentive for them to do any better, because once they try to crawl out of the situation that they're in, they immediately get clawed back by this government. I think that's something that really needs to be addressed.

I've spoken to many women in my riding who have come to speak to me about it. They all have a very sincere desire to get back into the workplace. They want to create a better life for themselves and for their children. One woman actually had that happen, where she got to the point that her rent, as soon as she got a part-time job—and it was only a six-month contract job, I should point out as well—was immediately increased to triple

the amount she was previously paying. She told me that she was just getting to the point where she was looking forward to being able to get back on her feet, being able to feed her children fresh fruit and vegetables, and she found that she had to scramble once again for rent money.

I think that it's incumbent on this government to take a look not just at the educational opportunities, but to look at the supports that they need to put in place for families that do have special needs to be able to get them back into the workforce, and to look at lengthening some of these programs to give people a chance to really solidify their situation, to get back on their feet before the supports that they have in place while they are perhaps receiving some rent subsidies or some assistance from Ontario Works—that they're put into place to allow them to continue so they can thrive and support their families.

I did think that that was important to speak of just with respect to the issue of Bill 90 and the context in which it needs to be framed. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to that. As I said before, we are generally supportive of the bill in the Progressive Conservative caucus. We hope that the Liberal government will take these comments into consideration and will do the necessary in order to make sure that this bill has a chance in practice. So I thank you for that opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I congratulate the member from Whitby–Oshawa for her comments. She too, like all the other members, speaks highly of Durham College, and so she should. Everyone has had a good experience of our colleges. Nobody is attacking the college system that I'm aware of. We all defend colleges, for a good reason: Because they're the ones who train most of our students and get them ready to get into the working world. Why would you attack the colleges? So no beef with that.

The only problemo, as the member from Trinity–Spadina says, is that they're unfunded. That's what the member from Whitby–Oshawa speaks to. She has obviously learned from the experience of Mike Harris. It was a mistake; she acknowledges that. I think that's good, because only by acknowledging that can you move on. So now that we're able to acknowledge that Mike Harris did some things and did some things badly, we're able to move on, and we're able to say, "We need to fund our college system in a way that allows us to become more competitive in today's economic uncertainties." That's what they're asking us for. They came into the committee and they said, "We are close to running deficits. We support this bill, but if you don't give us money, we can't even comply with your bill because we'll be in a deficit situation." And you know what? If the Liberals were in opposition and Mike Harris was on the other side, they would all be saying what Marchese is saying: Colleges need more. Colleges hate to be last in Canada. Universities hate to be last. It's an embarrassment, nothing to be proud of. Of course Liberals would

say, "We need more funding," if they were over here, but when they're in government they say, "Oh, no. We're giving 40% more today than we did I don't know when. But we're still number 10." Forty percent of what? Please. How can you be proud of that?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm very pleased to join in the debate with respect to Bill 90, the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, and to share a few moments with my colleagues in this House about my local college, Humber College, Lakeshore Campus.

Lakeshore Campus of Humber College, I think, highlights the excellent work being done in our college system across the province. First of all, it's a wonderful space. If you haven't had the opportunity to visit us in Etobicoke–Lakeshore and see the old historic psychiatric hospital, which has now been turned into very innovative and modern buildings on that campus—last year, I was very pleased to be able to announce significant investments our province was making with respect to being able to finish the construction of the last historic heritage building and to make sure that campus would continue to grow and prosper as it has, on the shores of Lake Ontario.

The issue with respect to college collective bargaining is one that was brought to me by many of the college teachers who taught in my community at Humber College, so I'm pleased that we've been able to respond to this issue and come forward with this act.

As has been said on the floor of this Legislature, colleges are an avenue for so many Ontario students to gain the experience, practical experience, and the knowledge that they need to be able to enter into careers which will allow them to be able to raise and look after their families, improve their circumstances of life and do something they really enjoy doing.

Humber College's Lakeshore campus has many incredible, innovative programs, from comedy school to acting to art to music. It is a real gem in our community, and it's one that I'm very proud to be able to visit very regularly.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's a real pleasure to be able to address this piece of legislation for the third or fourth time today. I think my colleague from Whitby–Oshawa, as always, has provided us with a very detailed précis of what the legislation is about but also what its impacts will be. She has brought to the floor some very serious concerns with respect to funding of our local community colleges; the importance of these community colleges; and of course, the roots of the community colleges, which we know as of today, thanks to Bill Davis and his vision.

In Nepean, we're very fortunate to have one of the great community colleges of this province, Algonquin College, which I visit often. I work with the president there, as well as their director of government relations and public affairs. I'm always amazed by the work they

do in our community and by the students who attend there and also participate in the community.

We're very fortunate in Ottawa, in Nepean, to be receiving a new trades school, which will be affiliated with Algonquin College, which will be part of Algonquin College. I think it speaks to the need in this province for skilled labourers and skilled tradespeople, something we consistently hear about. In fact, less than a year ago I was at Algonquin College, where Statistics Canada did a presentation for us on the needs of this trades school and the need for more trades.

This brings me to a point about the hospital which my colleague Ted Chudleigh from Halton has been fighting for: a hospital in Oakville. He has been working so hard to get that hospital, and he's consistently told the hospital will not go forward because there are not enough skilled labourers. Yet when I spoke with the Ottawa Construction Association and its counterparts throughout Ontario, do you know what they told me? There are enough people who can build that hospital, and they're wondering why the Liberal government won't build the hospital for Ted Chudleigh—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Thank you. Further questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I, too, support the colleges in Ontario and, more particularly, two colleges that serve the people of my riding. The first one is Cambrian College. Cambrian College has very innovative programs to meet the needs of the local community, and certainly they have a very active selection of trade programs to meet the needs of the booming mining industry in northern Ontario. Not only do they offer core mining, to prepare people to go work in the mines, but also all of the trades that work in the mining industry and used-to-be forestry industry—but that industry does not need new workers because of some of the decisions made by this government that led to the collapse of the forestry industry in northern Ontario.

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Dans mon comté, on a également le Collège Boréal. Le Collège Boréal offre une formation en français à tous les étudiants du nord-est de l'Ontario. Ils ont également plusieurs dizaines de collèges satellites qui offrent des services en français à tous les étudiants de l'Ontario qui y sont intéressés. Eux aussi ont mis beaucoup d'emphasis à développer les métiers pour être sûrs que la main-d'œuvre de demain rencontre les besoins des industries. Certainement, au premier plan on regarde tous les métiers que l'on retrouve dans les mines, parce qu'en ce moment, le domaine minier est en pleine expansion à Sudbury. Avant, ils mettaient beaucoup d'emphasis sur les travailleurs forestiers. Malheureusement, les emplois dans la foresterie en ce moment n'existent quasiment plus parce que tous les moulins à papier, les moulins à pâte et les travailleurs du bois sont présentement en chômage.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The member from Whitby–Oshawa for a response.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I've listened very carefully to the members from Trinity–Spadina, Etobicoke–Lake-

shore, Nepean–Carleton and Nickel Belt, and I thank them for their comments.

The member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore spoke glowingly of the programs offered at Humber College, and the member from Nickel Belt about Cambrian College and Collège Boréal. It sounds like they offer amazing programs, and I think we are rightfully proud of the community colleges that are located in our ridings. No one would take any quarrel with that.

But the fact of the matter is that Ontario is still 10th out of 10 in terms of monies allocated to fund community colleges across Canada. The colleges, of course, need to have money to develop the kinds of programs and services that we in Ontario need for our young people to be able to compete in a global economy. We need to have visionary leadership that is going to be able to look five or 10 years ahead to see the kinds of programs that we'll need, because with the world changing as quickly as it is, the marketing skills and the jobs that we're going to need in the next 10 or 20 years are going to change rapidly as well. Technology is also changing. So we need someone to have that kind of visionary leadership, and you have to be able to pay the people who are going to be working in the colleges properly.

I think that in Ontario, when we have a difficult economic situation and uncertain times at the moment, the best thing we can do—the best thing we always could do for our young people—is to put money into education. Speaking as a parent of three children who are about to embark on post-secondary education in the next year, I can certainly speak to the importance of that for our young people, to be able to have a chance as future leaders of our community and our country and our businesses. We need to put the money into that. That should be our top priority, and I hope that's something the government is going to be addressing as we work forward in this session in the months and weeks to come.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I'm glad to rise today to talk about Bill 90, An Act to enact the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, 2008, to repeal the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act and to make related amendments to other Acts.

First, I'd like to commend and congratulate OPSECAAT, the Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. Those people worked really hard to organize those workers and they certainly deserve our praise for the hard work that they have done.

It's hard to listen to everybody in the Legislative Assembly talk about how important college education is to the future of this province but at the same time realize the fact that we are number 10 in per capita funding for college education. We're not in the middle of the pack; we're not leading the pack. We are 10th. Then I hear the government taking praise for increases in budgets, but we are still 10th; we are still at the bottom of the pack. This is not the Ontario we want and this is not the Ontario we deserve.

We've all agreed: A college education is a cornerstone for our province to keep forging ahead, to be ready for what tomorrow will bring. Yet we are 10th in per capita funding. We've seen a little bit of increase, but that made no difference. We're still at the bottom of the pack. That's hard to comprehend.

My party, the NDP, has always sported collective bargaining rights, and my colleague from Trinity–Spadina presented two private member's bills to that effect. None of them was ever put into law. But with Bill 90, we will have an opportunity to change a few things.

I want to talk a little bit about OPSEU, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. They represent 120,000 Ontarians working in a wide variety of occupations across the public sector. OPSEU membership may be grouped as follows: 35% of the Ontario public service are direct government employees—some of them work with us—50% work in the broader public service in health care, social services, property assessment, at the LCBO and in other important areas to the residents of Ontario, and 15% of their membership works in two full-time bargaining units—that is, academic and support—in the Ontario community college system. Bill 90 will have an effect on those OPSEU members working in full-time bargaining units in academics and support.

OPSEU's predecessor, the Civil Service Association of Ontario, first organized community college support staff in 1966, the same year the college system was created—we're talking 42 years ago. In 1972, the Ontario government passed the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act—which I think everybody here has been referring to as the CCBA—which supplanted the Public Service Act as the legislative framework for colleges' bargaining.

The CCBA sets out the structure of bargaining units at the colleges. There are currently two province-wide bargaining units: one for full-time and partial-load faculty members and one for full-time support staff. Both units cover all 24 colleges—that's French-language or English-language colleges.

OPSEU currently represents some 9,000 college faculty—that includes professors, counsellors, librarians and instructors—and more than 7,000 support staff. Under the current CCBA, Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, certain workers are excluded from the bargaining units and hence from collective bargaining. I'll give you a list of the workers who are excluded. We talk about part-time faculty—those are people teaching six hours or fewer per week—working as counsellors and librarians; sessional faculty teaching more than 12 hours per week on a temporary contract for no more than 12 months in any 24-month period; part-time support staff working 24 hours or fewer per week; part-time support staff working on non-recurring projects; and students employed on a co-operative educational training program. That means a lot of people have no rights to bargain, no rights to be represented—basically very few rights.

Ontario is the only province where part-time college employees have been excluded from collective bargaining. Within Ontario, no comparable workers—for ex-

ample, those working at universities or school boards—are excluded from collective bargaining either. But for some weird reason, we did that to the college workers. So in February 2008, this year, the chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board told the minister responsible for colleges, "There is no justification for excluding these employees from collective bargaining. Part-time employees should be immediately granted the right to unionize."

Why they had to go through that much trouble to have their right recognized is beyond me. It sure was a long road that cost a lot of effort, money and energy. Here again I want to mention the great work that OPSECAAT has done to bring the part-time college worker to this point.

#### 1700

Members of OPSEU have been calling for recognition of collective bargaining rights for college part-timers for 25 years. It took 25 years to recognize that what works for the school board and what works for the university should work for college workers as well, but it took 25 years for that reality to come to fruition.

The introduction of Bill 90 is the result of two main drivers. In April 2005, the annual convention of OPSEU launched a public relations and political lobby campaign aimed at winning collective bargaining rights for part-timers and sessional workers. This campaign resulted in, among other things, the creation of the Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. This organization, known as OPSECAAT, gives a voice to part-time and sessional workers and the means to make that voice heard, because for all of those 42 years, those people did not have a voice, did not have rights and did not have a chance to be represented.

Members of OPSECAAT played a lead role in the 2007-08 organizing drive which saw thousands of part-time and sessional workers sign OPSEU union cards. I remember this campaign. I remember them coming to Collège Boréal and Cambrian College, and the support from those people was just tremendous. In some colleges they would achieve 95% signatures—in the possible memberships.

"In June 2007, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled for the first time that collective bargaining is a protected right under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in a majority decision related to British Columbia health care workers. Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin and Justice Louis LeBel wrote: 'We conclude that section 2(d) of the charter protects the capacity of members of labour unions to engage, in association, in collective bargaining on fundamental workplace issues.'

"These two drivers resulted in the major announcement on August 30 last year. In a news release entitled 'McGuinty Government Announces Intention to Recognize Bargaining Rights for Part-Time College Workers,' then-college Minister Chris Bentley announced that Kevin Whitaker, Chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, had been appointed to conduct a review of the

Colleges Collective Bargaining Act and propose amendments. Whitaker presented his report to new minister John Milloy on Feb. 1, 2008. Whitaker's recommendations are the foundation stones of Bill 90, introduced for first reading in the Legislature on June 10, 2008."

My colleague from Trinity-Spadina talked to you about what went on in committee and what went on through clause-by-clause. Our party had made 16 recommendations to improve Bill 90 and zero, not one of them, was retained by the government. This bill could have done way better than the way it is presently written, but the government was not willing to listen.

One of the first pieces that really puzzle the mind is, why is it that, when we already have a unit for professional staff and we already have a unit for support staff, we are creating two new ones? Why aren't part-time workers included with the professional unit and the part-time support staff included with full-time, like we see in every hospital I've worked at, like we see in lots of universities and like we see in most of the school boards? For reasons that are unclear, there will be four units right now. There will be one for full-time professionals, one for part-time, one for full-time support and one for part-time support. The judge mandated, gave them the right to unionize, but it seems like the government is going into this kicking and screaming a bit.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** A little bit.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Just a little bit. They know that they have to give them unionization because they won this with their hard work, perseverance and a lot of resources. But then, rather than giving them the chance to organize in a way that would make sense—they've kind of agreed to it because they have no choice, but they will set them up to divide and conquer, I like to call it; not a good scenario.

We certainly had put out a recommendation to permit either the council or the bargaining agent or trade union that is applying for certification as the bargaining agent for a group of college employees to apply to the OLRB to change, establish or eliminate bargaining units so that if everybody agrees, if the part-time and the full-time professionals want to be together in one unit—well, Bill 90 won't allow them to do this. If the support staff, the part-time support staff and the full-time support staff, want to be together in one bargaining unit, well, Bill 90 won't allow them to do this. I have yet to hear a convincing argument as to why this has to be that way.

Another change that we would have liked to see, as soon as I find my notes, is that we set six time frames as to when the collective agreement starts and when it ends—very much like in public schools, where the collective agreement starts on September 1 and ends on August 31 of their final year. This way, it is a fixed time. It exists in the educational system in Ontario already and has served the people of Ontario well. But here again, Bill 90—we are asking to retain the provision contained in section 45 of the current CCBA that stipulates that collective agreements must begin on September 1 and expire on August 31. The existing bargaining units—the

professional full-time, the support full-time—already have that. But with Bill 90, we will take that away from them while taking it away from the new bargaining units as well.

Why do we have to take that away? Here again, I haven't heard anybody bring forward a convincing argument that this is a wise move that will serve the people of Ontario well. It just appeared. We are taking rights away from existing units, and taking them away from units that are being created, for no apparent reason. I can't see how the people of Ontario will be better served by taking that away through Bill 90.

Another one that is very important is the deemed strike or lockout provision. Presently, the college workers, the professional and support workers, the full-timers, have this recommendation, that the deemed strike or lockout provisions are included in subsection 59(2) and subsection 63(3) of the current CCBA. If Bill 90 becomes law, this deemed strike provision will be taken away.

What does that mean? It means that when a unit goes on strike, every member of that unit is on strike. That's what "deemed strike" means. Once you take that away, then a unit may be on strike but some people may decide to cross. A college may be on strike but another one in another part of Ontario won't be.

**1710**

The idea of forming one unit for all the college workers of Ontario is precisely so that they bargain as a provincial body. The deemed strike could be a very important issue in my riding, either at Collège Boréal or Cambrian. But then maybe Ottawa would cross—I can tell you that I was management when OPSEU was on strike, and we had some workers cross the line. It is so difficult for those workers to ever regain the trust to work together again afterward. It surely is not worth it.

I don't know why Bill 90 is taking away that clause. This is a clause that is already there, that is already in effect for the full-time professionals and full-time support workers, but Bill 90 will take that right away. Here again, why take this away? I would like to hear an argument that would convince me that it is for the good of Ontarians to take it away.

If this happens, it will make it really hard when students go back to school after a strike or a lockout. It will bring a lot of hardship for no reason I can see, and yet this new legislation would do this. It would open the door to rotating strikes and lockouts, which flies in the face of the principle of province-wide bargaining and province-wide collective agreements.

When you have a deemed strike or lockout system-wide, there is pressure on the system to resolve the difference. No offence to anybody, but when you live in northern Ontario, it is really hard to have your voice heard in Toronto and at Queen's Park. So if there is an issue that is important enough for the people of the north to go on strike, they want the support of the people in southern Ontario. The same thing is true in reverse: If there is an issue that is important enough to the members

in southern Ontario, I can guarantee you that northern Ontario would support them. But we need that deemed strike or lockout provision to stay in, and the way Bill 90 reads right now, it would take away the rights of those workers.

I see that my time is almost up. As I said before, the New Democrats have always supported the right of collective bargaining, and we will continue to do this. There are opportunities to change Bill 90 to make it better so that it serves the people who will be unionized but also serves the students and ultimately the people of Ontario.

I hope the government will listen and make those changes. Thank you. Merci.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the members from all parties who spoke highly about our college system and the good work our colleges are doing.

I want to echo the statement made by the member for Whitby–Oshawa about Durham College. I was visiting the University of Ontario Institute of Technology recently and witnessed first-hand the good work they have been doing in training and educating students, particularly in the areas of engineering and energy engineering.

This is a university that basically came out of Durham College. Durham College itself has been doing a great job. I must tell the House that my son-in-law is a graduate of Durham College. Both my daughter and my son-in-law went to colleges after finishing their university education. One went to George Brown College and the other went to Durham College, to get further education, to get more skills and find better jobs. That's what our colleges are doing in this province.

I want to comment quickly about the comment made by the member from Trinity–Spadina about the delay in bringing this bill forward. I must remind the honourable member that when the NDP was in government, they brought a similar bill to the House but never took it to third reading.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** They should have done that at the time. They didn't.

By the time the Premier made the policy decision, we recruited Mr. Whitaker to review the issue in the college system. Mr. Whitaker delivered his report on February 1, and by June 10 our bill was ready and submitted to the House, and now we are debating that bill. So we were quite proactive and we were quite fast and active in presenting the bill to the House—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I thank the member for Nickel Belt. Is Blezard Valley in Nickel Belt?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Nickel Belt. That's it.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** They'll be harvesting potatoes up there at this time of year. It's a great potato-growing area. They used to grow virus-free seed potatoes up there.

I don't think they do any more, but they produced some excellent potatoes in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s.

The interesting part about this bill is, of course, the effect that it may have on the part-time teachers. There are two possible effects that it can have. One, if the government were to fund any extra money that this bargaining process would create, then the effect would be, of course, quite positive on the community colleges, something that I think we all hope for. However, the events of not only today but the last couple of months may indicate that the funds that are flowing to government revenues, which the minister didn't talk about in his press release today when he talked about the second quarter results, may slow down a great deal. If the funds aren't there for the government to fund part-time teachers, the other alternative might happen, and that would be a cutback in the services from part-time teachers. Of course, if that were to happen, we would find community colleges cutting back their programs or focusing more directly on programs that were important to them; in any case, shaving back their programs somewhat, which would be, I think, a negative thing for Ontario. They would be left with no alternative, particularly if this government, being short of revenue, was scrambling to try to solve the financial difficulties that it's found itself in.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Before I ask for further questions and comments, can I ask the members to please keep it down to a slight dull roar? It's getting quite loud on the other side of the House. Thank you very much.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I congratulate my colleague from Nickel Belt. She raised a few different points in terms of the efforts that were made in committee to make the bill a little more effective. We were not successful. None of our amendments were supported. I had no doubt about that; I knew they wouldn't support any of our amendments, so it wasn't a surprise to me.

She reminds us about the underfunding of the college system that has led successive governments to hire more and more part-time staff because colleges could not afford full-time, because they weren't getting the money. They were hiring more and more part-time staff—academics and support staff—because it was cheaper.

Regrettably, we did not proclaim that bill that had been introduced under our term. It's regrettable; I acknowledge that. We were in a perfect position, as New Democrats, to have proclaimed that bill. We didn't do it. As a result, Mike Harris was able to give colleges the power to hire more and more college assistants. By not giving the money, it allowed colleges to do that, because they couldn't do otherwise, and it allowed the Liberals, for four long years, to do the same. By not funding them adequately, colleges had no choice but to hire more and more part-time academic and support staff. So I regret that we weren't able to do that, and I attack the Liberals for not being able to do that in the four years of their last term.

Yes, they've stalled, but finally we have it before us, and it's better than what we had, absolutely. But to eliminate some of the provisions, such as the deemed strike or lockout provisions, is regrettable and sad. Not even the Tories did that. It's regrettable that they didn't have binding arbitration that their own minister supported in 1985, and the same with a few other changes the member recommended.

I support all of the things that she said, and I look forward to her final two minutes.

1720

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on Bill 90. I'm very proud to be standing here today as to our government's commitment to colleges, and let's take the example of Algonquin College in the city of Ottawa. Most recently, just this past summer, Premier McGuinty announced a \$30-million investment for a skills trade building in Algonquin College—\$30 million, one of the largest capital project investments in any college—so that we can meet the needs of the skills shortages and ensure that we train skilled people at Algonquin College to make sure they can take part in the rejuvenation and growth of our economy here in Ontario. What is unfortunate is that the federal government has not given a single penny to that project. Repeated promises have been made by the local member, who happens to be John Baird, a former member of this Legislature, but not a single penny.

But this government is not stopping. This government would love to have that partnership to ensure what our colleges foster, but we will not just wait; we will continue investing in our colleges. We will continue to ensure, through legislation like Bill 90, that part-time teachers and support staff have the rights necessary to ensure that we have an effective college system. Algonquin College, in the city of Ottawa, is a great example, where investment is being made by the provincial government, by the McGuinty government, to ensure that we continue to provide skilled tradespeople in our economy so that Ontario can continue going further. I hope that the federal government will become a partner in that and deliver on the promise they made for Algonquin College.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The member for Nickel Belt for a response.

**M<sup>me</sup> France G elinas:** I would like to thank the members from Richmond Hill, Halton, Trinity-Spadina and Ottawa Centre. I can see that we kind of disagree as to what should be in Bill 90 and what shouldn't be.

Certainly another omission in the legislation, the way I see it, relates to the organizing drive. Bill 90 makes no mention of what happens to existing applications for certification made under the current CCBA. The repeal of the previous legislation may give rise to the argument that the certification proceeding that OPSEU commenced under the current act would be extinguished with the passage of the new legislation. These workers' intense

desire to become OPSEU members and take part in collective bargaining must not be frustrated by legislative technicalities and employer stalling tactics whose main purpose and effect is to delay certification for as long as possible. For this reason, Bill 90 must include a mechanism to provide OPSEU—I say OPSEU because they are the only union that has applied to be certified as the bargaining agent for college part-timers and sessional—with a one-time opportunity to trigger a certification vote for the two groups of workers, academic and support, who are currently excluded from the collective bargaining. With those suggestions, Bill 90 would be way stronger.

But at last we will have bargaining rights for our college workers, and this is something that this party will support. The academic and support staff, the part-timers and the sessional workers will have an opportunity to bargain through Bill 90. There would have been opportunity to make this bill way stronger. It's not going to happen, but I guess, as my colleague mentioned, we shouldn't expect more than that.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** Further debate? The member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I'm happy to rise today to the thunderous applause from my colleagues here in the Legislature and speak for a short time on Bill 90, the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act. As has been mentioned earlier, this is the first time, as I understand it, since 1975 that this bill will be changed or altered in any substantive way.

As most people will know, in August 2007, our government under Premier McGuinty made a very clear and public commitment towards extending collective bargaining rights to part-time college workers, and subsequent to that announcement, Kevin Whitaker was enlisted—

**Interjection:** A promise made, a promise kept.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** As my colleague says, "A promise made, a promise kept."

Mr. Whitaker went out and consulted, and so before us today we have Bill 90 for debate here in this Legislature.

If there is one thing that I think is important for anyone who happens to be watching on TV and who is paying attention to this debate, it would be that for the first time in the history of the province of Ontario, part-time teachers and sessional workers and part-time faculty in the college system will have extended to them the opportunity to collectively bargain. There's been a lot of discussion today, but I think it's important that we ensure that anybody who is listening and interested in this issue, if they are going to take one thing away today from all of the discussion and dialogue that has gone on over the course of today's third reading and back to second reading, it would be that one little bit.

Before I get into the main body of my comments, I do want to offer a few thoughts on some of the commentary that was put forward by the members of the third party. If I could even go back a little further in time before commenting on today's remarks, I would like to go back to

the spring session when I was sitting here, and the member from the third party was sitting over there. When he was speaking on second reading, he was pleading and beseeching the people watching on television not to leave their chairs, to ensure that they stayed and listened to him. He had 10 or 20 minutes that particular day to speak, and he implied that there was something of consequence that he was going to say to them that day, in June of this year, 2008, and I listened intently. I stayed in my chair, I tell the member from the third party, because I, like them, was enthralled with what the member was saying. I believed that you were going to send a message, that you were going to say something of consequence on Bill 90. That was in the spring session. Unfortunately, he used about 50% of his time on that particular day asking them to stay in their chairs, and then he spent the last 50% of his time talking about things other than the bill, I would suggest.

Today, again, the member of the third party had an hour leadoff, and the same kind of theme was there. It was consistent; he was implying that there was this wonderful bit of information that was coming forward, something of consequence that was going to come to us that he was going to tell us about Bill 90.

I can only imagine, as I sit and try and figure this out, the spring session and the fall session, that the member from the third party is perhaps attempting to fog the collective consciousness of the people who are watching this particular debate. What does he not want them to know? What is this misdirection? If you play football, you know about misdirection. What is it that the member of the third party is trying to get them not to remember? I'm more than happy to speak about the bill, and I will do that, and what we are doing for the first time in history of the province of Ontario.

But perhaps what the member of the third party did not want people who are watching and interested in this debate to know was that in 1992 the government of the day introduced Bill 23.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** What was that bill?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I think that was a bill that had the same intention as the one that's before us today.

It's important to note that this is the party that likes to pretend and remind us of how they are there for working families, the labour-friendly party. I suppose part-time college workers are not working families. I'm not sure.

So in 1992 there was the introduction of Bill 23. In 1992 I guess they were busy, and 1992 went.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** What about 1993?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Then 1993 came and Bill 23 was not called for third reading in 1993; it came and it went.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** What about 1994?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Then 1994 came, and Bill 23 was not called for third reading. It came and it went.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** What about 1995?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Then, as my colleague from Peterborough has reminded me, 1995 came, Bill 23 was not called, and 1995 went. So through that period of time, the labour-friendly, working-family party apparently did not

have the time or the ability to accommodate this legislation—three and a half years, and apparently no time to get it done. I can only imagine, when the member speaks to this bill, that that is the part he doesn't want people to know.

I want to offer one brief comment as well on the member's introduction of his two private member's—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Please take your time; you've got 20 minutes.

**1730**

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I have lots of time; I've got a good 15 left.

The member opposite introduced a private member's bill on two occasions, I believe; the bill was the same both times. It would not even have given choice to the part-time faculty in the college system on whether or not they wanted to unionize. His private member's bill would have made it automatic. Not only that, he would not have provided them choice, through his private member's bill, on who their bargaining agent would be. That's what his private member's bill would have done. It seems to be a bit contradictory, when he had three and a half years as the member of an NDP government in the early 1990s in which he could have brought forward this legislation, and then he brings forward a private member's bill that won't even allow them to have the choice on (a) whether they want to unionize or not, or (b) if they so choose to unionize, on who their bargaining agent would be. It seems to me to be a little bit odd that he would put it forward that way, one could almost say even anti-democratic.

One of the other themes in the member's speech was that this particular sector had some fear about speaking to the McGuinty government about this particular issue. I can only imagine the people chuckling, the OPSEU members—they must have been laughing out loud, I would expect, to hear the member suggest that OPSEU was afraid of speaking to a Liberal member or the Liberal government on this particular issue. In fact, I think he even mentioned that the teachers themselves were afraid to speak to government members on this particular legislation. I can tell you, in my riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan, I met with both of those groups on at least one occasion, and the suggestion by the member of the third party that they were afraid to advocate on behalf of their core constituency is a bit of an odd theme, I would expect, for him to run with during the course of his comments today. I look forward to seeing the third reading vote on this particular legislation, and I'm curious to watch as to how that particular member, as well as the entire third party, are going to vote on this particular legislation.

I can tell you that I am one of the fortunate members in the Legislature in that I have a community college in my riding. Other members who have stood and spoken today on Bill 90 have spoken to the benefits of having a community college in their riding, and we have heard from others who do not have one in their riding and what they feel they are missing. We're fortunate in Thunder

Bay–Atikokan to have Confederation College and a wonderful president, Pat Lang, who does a tremendous job, a fantastic job of leading that college. Colleges, as we all know, are incredibly large pieces of the economic pie in our communities, but more than that, the college sector is flexible and adaptable to the labour needs of the communities in which they exist and the regions of the province in which they exist. I can tell you, in north-western Ontario, speaking for my own community college, that they have an incredibly high employment rate for the graduates that come out of the college system. They are a wonderful thing.

We have spent a fair bit of time—and I'll talk a bit more about that in a little while—talking about the operating side of the equation. I hear the members opposite talking about where we rank across the province. We haven't talked at all about the commitments that we have made on the infrastructure side. I can tell you that in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan, at Confederation College, there is probably somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$20 million in infrastructure and additional programming in one college, which has gone a long way to renovating, retrofitting space, so that my particular college can accommodate a significantly increased number of people in the building trades program. We have ramped up a fantastic media program in Thunder Bay. They now have the best technology that exists in their field, the CAMP project, the Centre for Applied Media Production, as well as other significant infrastructure investments. It is another piece of this that has been going into the post-secondary system that has not received any discussion today. I would imagine that other members who are here today who are fortunate enough to have one of the 24 community colleges in their riding would have a similar story to tell on the infrastructure, on the capital side of the equation when it comes to the college program.

There's one wonderful program I'll highlight before I move on that we just developed in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan under our government, something that you won't hear of through all of the criticism that is constant from the other side of the floor: a nursing program that was rolled out through Confederation College in Thunder Bay to communities through satellite campuses—Fort Frances, Kenora, Dryden, Sioux Lookout—small communities where the people who live in those communities would not have had an opportunity, many of them single mothers who wanted to be a nurse, who could not have left their home communities and travelled to Thunder Bay to take this course. The program has been running for three or four years and has been a huge success, and it's a great example of what community colleges can do in terms of establishing a workforce in small, remote communities in the province of Ontario.

I talked a bit here about the capital side. I think it bears repeating even though others have said this. On the operating side, from 2002-03 to 2007-08, operating funds have increased in the college sector by almost 54%. College per student funding in the province of Ontario

has gone up to \$6,645 per full-time equivalent in 2007-08, up from \$4,594 in 2002-03. That's a 44% increase. What it speaks to is, what a large gap existed in the college system in Ontario relative to the college systems in other provinces when we came to government, that we could make that much of a capital infusion, of an operating fund infusion, and still have that much more work to do, as has been explained by many other people. And yet, that kind of financial resource which has been committed to this particular sector is still dismissed as being insignificant.

I was surprised by the comments from the member for Whitby–Oshawa. It sounded like she was lobbying for more investment in the sector, although I'm never sure. We're talking about tax cuts, often, from that particular party; we're talking about cancelling a health premium from that particular party. I don't know where all the resources come from to do all of these things. I appreciate the comment, but I would hope that at some point you'd be able to tell us how we're going to fund these things, given the tax cuts that you're proposing and given the reduction in the health premium that your party has—and then, of course, on the third party side of things, this is just dismissed. There are never enough resources put into anything, when it comes to the third party side. I've talked about this a few times before. I don't particularly care to stand up here and throw stones, but occasionally I guess we have to. We know that from 1990 to 1995 we accumulated \$55 billion of debt in this particular province. I haven't calculated, perhaps somebody has—if somebody knows the number, shout it out to me—the impact of interest expense that we have accrued from 1995 to 2008 as a result of those five years of third party rule in the province of Ontario and what that interest expense, had it not been there, would have allowed us to do in terms of enhanced public services in the province of Ontario.

When we came in, in 2003, the interest expense on the provincial debt was around \$11 billion, roughly speaking, if I remember correctly. Of that \$11 billion, I would have to say the majority of it accrued to the province of Ontario's books from those five years from 1990 to 1995, I would assume. So I can say that if—

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** No, it was Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I don't think it was.

So I can suggest that if we did not have—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Well, I think that Mr. Davis ran deficit budgets for about 14 consecutive years, if I remember correctly—not that everybody is completely clean on this issue.

In five years, \$55 billion of debt, the interest expense that is applied to that—had that not been there or had it even been reduced, how much more could we have been doing to provide enhanced public services in the province of Ontario?

Eleven billion dollars, if I remember correctly, was about the amount of money that we were spending on the

entire hospital system when we came into government in 2003. That number has gone up significantly since then.

I've said a bit of this before. I talked about nothing happening on this type of issue from the third party in 1992. The fact that a particular private member's bill offered no choice to the people who might want to unionize and who might want to have a choice in their bargaining agent—even though I think that most people here, should this legislation pass, would anticipate that it's likely that OPSEU will end up being the bargaining agent. It speaks to the continued theme from this particular party about wanting to pretend that they represent working families. But I guess teachers were not working families—this coming from a party, of course, that brought in the social contract. How can we spend some time talking about a piece of what is a labour bill and not remind people about the social contract that came in in the early 1990s, perhaps the most egregious piece of labour legislation ever brought in in the province of Ontario's history. This, from a party that likes to pretend they are labour friendly and that they are there for the working families. Nothing could have been done more strongly, I would suggest, by the third party to what they like to say is their core constituency than the social contract.

**1740**

I want to read a little bit here about what it is exactly that Bill 90 is going to do for the people, as I wrap up my remarks.

Bill 90, if passed, would establish two new bargaining units for colleges: one for part-time and sessional academic staff, and one for part-time support staff.

It would establish a certification process to allow part-time employees to unionize and bargain collectively.

It would establish a new employer bargaining council representing all colleges. This responsibility is currently held by a government agency whose members are OIC appointees.

It would modernize the general bargaining process for the college sector, giving the parties more ownership over the process and making it more in line with the Labour Relations Act.

I think it was the member from Nickel Belt who talked, and I think she was the only one, a little bit about the deemed strike provision. When I met with the members of OPSEU and the teachers in my constituency office last year—I can't remember when the meetings were—and in committee there were a couple of presentations on this proposed legislation as well. I want to read what it is that Whitaker will do and has suggested on this item.

The Whitaker report specifically recommended removing the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act's deemed strike and lockout provisions. This is a recommendation of Whitaker. I don't know him personally, but from what I understand, Mr. Whitaker is somebody who is well respected in the labour field, has a long history of activity in this particular field in the province of Ontario. It is Mr.

Whitaker who is making the recommendation. It was not a Liberal idea. It is he who's making the recommendation that it be removed. He talks about removing the CCBA's deemed strike and lockout provisions to modernize college collective bargaining to better serve the needs of students and the college system.

Mr. Whitaker says these provisions don't exist anywhere else. Removing them would bring colleges in line with the rules covering all other unionized workplaces in Ontario, including universities and schools.

We assume that during a strike, union members would conduct themselves in a way that respects students' rights to safety and that OPSEU would do all that is necessary to ensure this.

That's what Mr. Whitaker recommended when he drafted his report. His report was based on, as I understand it, extensive consultations before he in fact made his report known. It was debated here at second reading and also at committee, and we are here now for third reading.

So I think what we are here today finding before us is legislation that most people agree is long past due, a piece of legislation that since 1975 has not been amended in any significant manner and that will accommodate and allow part-time workers to bargain collectively for the first time in the history of the province.

The reason, it's important to remember, that part-time workers in this particular sector were somewhat left behind was that in 1975, at the time this particular legislation was brought through this House, that was almost the norm when it came to part-time workers in the province. It was not something that just applied to teachers and support staff in the college sector. A non-accommodation on bargaining rights for teachers and support staff in other sectors of the province was similarly not accommodated through legislation, as I understand it, through the Labour Relations Act.

So what we're seeing here today is our government addressing it for the first time, bringing it forward into the 21st century, and recognizing that there's a significantly large group of workers who have been left behind by a series of governments for a long, long time. There was a shortage of resource. The colleges found themselves unable to accommodate them. Part-time workers had a role. The colleges need the adaptability; they need the flexibility to be able to get people on a moment's notice.

We're very proud to be the first government in the history of this province that will be extending college collective bargaining rights in the province of Ontario.

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

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Andrea Horwath):** The time being 5:45, I declare this House adjourned. The House will begin again tomorrow morning, Tuesday, September 30, at 9 o'clock.

*The House adjourned at 1745.*

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Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Nipissing	Minister of Tourism / Ministre du Tourisme
		Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre
		Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Small Business and Consumer Services / Ministre des Petites Entreprises et des Services aux consommateurs
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	Simcoe–Grey	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
		Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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

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la justice**

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

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jerry J. Ouellette  
Laura Albanese, Ernie Hardeman  
Andrea Horwath, Phil McNeely  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Liz Sandals  
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller  
Bas Balkissoon, Mike Colle  
Kim Craitor, Gerry Martiniuk  
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch  
Michael Prue, Tony Ruprecht  
Mario Sergio  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la 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  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Select Committee on Elections / Comité spécial des élections**

Chair / Président: Greg Sorbara  
Howard Hampton, Greg Sorbara  
Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch





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