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**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 24 February 2009**

**Mardi 24 février 2009**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
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Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Tuesday 24 February 2009

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mardi 24 février 2009

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the nondenominational prayer.

*Prayers.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS  
AMENDMENT ACT  
(TEMPORARY HELP AGENCIES), 2009

LOI DE 2009 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LES NORMES D'EMPLOI  
(AGENCES DE PLACEMENT  
TEMPORAIRE)

Resuming the debate adjourned on February 18, 2009, on the motion for second reading of Bill 139, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in relation to temporary help agencies and certain other matters / Projet de loi 139, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne les agences de placement temporaire et certaines autres questions.

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

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'm pleased to join the debate on Bill 139, the Employment Standards Amendment Act, 2008, that was introduced on December 9 of last year.

Since this bill was introduced, we have done some consultations on it and found that not everyone is happy with the direction that the government is going with this bill. The minister's rhetoric doesn't seem consistent with what this bill will actually do or not do.

My party will be looking forward to this bill going to committee so that it can be studied and we can hear from some in the industry who would like to see positive changes that will still allow temporary hiring agencies to operate in Ontario.

While I appreciate the rhetoric that the government members have used when it comes to this bill, I find it hard to believe that with the economy in the situation that it is, with all of the issues facing this government, they would choose at this time to bring forward a bill like this.

I have been an MPP and a member of this House for approximately a year and a half, and I haven't had one single call or conversation with a constituent who is concerned with this issue. Certainly this isn't a huge crisis in the world of labour that should take up valuable legislative time when there are far more pressing matters that we could be dealing with. I don't get the sense that On-

tarians are seized with cracking down on temporary agencies. I think they would much prefer if we were debating a budget or some kind of effort so that the citizens of Ontario think that we care and wish to act on their issues.

However, more to the point of this particular bill, one of the concerns we have had with this bill is that we believe that the government has taken the position that all temporary agencies are bad and that they all need to be improved. What we believe is that you shouldn't treat the good agencies the same as the bad agencies; you cannot paint the industry with a broad brush. If this bill is not amended, it will cause considerable problems, not just with temporary agencies but with companies that use them. Right now, with the economy going as badly as it is, government actions that are going to put more people out of work and make it harder for others to find work need to be stopped.

The government may have the right intention on this bill, but we don't believe they did the homework necessary to completely understand its implications. To give you some examples of why we need changes, many in our caucus have heard from the Association of Canadian Search, Employment and Staffing Services, or ACSESS, who represent many temporary agencies. They presented us with three technical changes to the bill that need to be made in order for their industry to remain viable and thrive. Now, remember, when their industry is viable, people go to work, so I believe we need to listen to them and act on some of their suggestions. One of the stats that I did learn in some of the background is that approximately 11% of employment in Ontario is through temporary agencies.

One of their biggest concerns is around termination and severance. What the government is proposing is that after 35 weeks of not being sent on an assignment, an employee is terminated and severance needs to be paid. ACSESS pointed out to us that this clause will cause significant harm to term employees in Ontario. Short-term workers who are unemployed or underemployed are the ones who are most in need of work. Staffing companies will be forced to make a decision as to whether they can place that person consistently, and if not, they won't hire them for term work or will terminate them prior to the three months. The severance issue alone will erect new barriers to job creation. On our side of the House, we want to make sure that barriers are taken down. We also think that this clause can be fixed in committee, and I hope that the government will give consideration to our and the third party's amendments that we will be bringing forward.

One of the other issues we have heard a lot about is the idea that the government is going to crack down and restrict the fees that staffing services charge when a placement gets hired full-time. Generally speaking, many in the industry will charge a fee in the first six months but not after that. I'm not sure how big an issue this actually is; a company in my riding said that they support a number of these changes because they think it will help drive out the unscrupulous operators.

First, the client of a staffing service is a company. The person who is placed is not the client. ACSESS raised some serious concerns with using the Employment Standards Act as a tool to regulate how two businesses deal with each other. The Employment Standards Act governs how employees and employers relate to each other, not how two businesses relate to each other. Temporary agencies incur significant costs when it comes to advertising, recruiting, screening and so forth. There's something to be said for allowing them to function without the arbitrary limitations and regulations put on them by government. This particular clause does not benefit a worker in any way at all. What it does do is put up another barrier to job creation; our party believes in taking down barriers to job growth.

The current government of Mr. McGuinty is doing its best to stifle entrepreneurship and ingenuity. With bills like this—this is the best they can do? I would be surprised if any of your constituency offices have had any calls complaining about temporary agencies, yet here we are, dealing with it. What we should be dealing with today is a budget. The government had to have pre-budget hearings completed so that we could have an early budget. Now they tell us that the budget will be as late in the fiscal year as it could possibly be. Mr. McGuinty and his government should be showing the people of Ontario what their plan is to get people back to work, to keep the economy moving and to get jobs created in this province. They won't do that. I believe it's because they have no idea how to deal with this crisis. But why would we expect them to act any differently? It was on this government's watch that we went from a have to a have-not province. The government barely blinked its eyes at that.

Governments around the world have been moving quickly to do what they can to deal with the worldwide recession. The United States government has moved quickly. The Canadian government has moved. Quebec and BC have started moving as well. Dealing with this economic crisis is what governments do, except here in this province. The McGuinty government is frozen like a deer in the headlights. They know there's a problem—he said so just a few weeks ago—but seem afraid to do anything. We don't think that is acceptable. That's why we have presented our economic plan and we have stuck with it. We thought—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** You're supposed to stick to speaking to the bill too.

0910

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Yes. I'm going to get right back to that. I think that it's time for this government to come to the table with a meaningful package of reforms that

will show that they understand the people are concerned about jobs. That's why we think the debate on Bill 139 should move ahead and go to committee as soon as possible. Don't waste this Legislature's valuable time on issues that Ontarians don't care about.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It will be my pleasure and privilege to speak about the dignity of work and how this bill falls into that in a few minutes at great length, but suffice it to say, I couldn't disagree more than with the previous speaker from Sarnia-Lambton.

In fact, what we need is this bill and a whole lot more. We need a complete revamp of the Employment Standards Act, we need a living wage of at least \$10.25 an hour, we need equal pay for equal work, we need limits on the time that people spend in temp work before they become full-time, we need card-check certification, we need anti-scab legislation, we need sectoral bargaining, and finally, we need enforcement of the employment standards we already have, which we don't have.

So I'll certainly be privileged to speak at length about all of those topics and about how this bill is really kind of like the icing without the cake. We in Ontario, particularly at a time of recession, need a lot more than just this kind of photo-op bill. We need something with substance; we need something that's going to address the fact that we now have in Ontario 37% of the workforce working in precarious employment—most of those, women; most of those, people of colour; most of those, people who are immigrants to this province and deserve better. Their rights have not been considered in the past, and their dignity of work has not been considered.

I'm in a unique position to speak to this bill, in fact, because unlike anyone else in this House, I owned an agency, and I'm also the employment standards critic. I worked through an agency, owned an agency, am standing here as an employment standards critic and the small business critic. So I look forward to speaking to all aspects of this bill as it relates to agency work, as it relates to the employees that they employ and as it relates, as I said, to the bigger, fuller picture of employment standards in Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Ottawa Centre.

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to respond to my colleague from Sarnia-Lambton, to talk about Bill 139, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in relation to temporary help agencies and certain other matters.

This piece of legislation is extremely important because it really brings the temporary jobs, those individuals who are employed through temporary agencies, into the scope of the Employment Standards Act. We know that the act exists to protect the rights of employees when they are working in employment situations. Thus far, this legislation has precluded people who work on a temporary basis, who are employed through temporary agencies.

It's an important step; it's a step in the right direction. Most importantly, it's a step to ensure that as this govern-

ment moves forward with its poverty reduction strategy, we put safeguards in place that will ensure that the rights of those individuals, those working families within our communities who are working very hard through temporary agencies, are protected in their employment, that they are not taken advantage of, that they are able to take as much of their pay as they make home so they can spend that money on themselves and on their families within our economy.

This legislation I also see going hand in hand with the payday loan legislation which the McGuinty government just passed here, another very important piece of legislation to ensure that we provide the safeguards necessary for our working families, not to mention the minimum wage increases which this government has put in place, which will be seeing the minimum wage rise to \$10.25 by next year. All these steps go hand in hand in ensuring that our working families have the tools necessary to succeed in the community.

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

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I want to congratulate my colleague from Sarnia–Lambton for putting together a good presentation on Bill 139.

I think we ought to look a little bit deeper into this bill as well, and really look at what are going to be the consequences and the effects. I know it's well-intended and offering up more protection, but is it going to reduce temporary employment? Is it going to restrict employers from hiring temporary workers? The people in that industry suggest that it will.

We also have to look at this Liberal government, what they're saying about removing barriers and restrictions and having too much red tape in this province. Then another red tape bill comes in.

We know that they're going to hire another 100 employment standards officers into the bureaucracy at the Ministry of Labour. Right now, over 50% of the employees in that ministry are enforcement and compliance officers, and now we're going to add another 100 and add another \$10 million to the cost.

I'd like to comment on the member from the opposite side who mentioned that the Liberals want people to take home as much money as possible from their paycheques. Well, they can't take a lot of money home if you keep taxing and spending and hiring more and more bureaucracy. That should be evident; that doesn't need anybody else to go to a committee. We can't keep increasing the costs of doing business and then suggest at the same time that you want to have people taking more money home.

Let's reduce some of these barriers and expenses.

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, my, my, my. They're still calling for more deregulation in the face of everything we're seeing in the world economy today. The market went down by how much yesterday—300 points? And we've still got Conservatives who are standing there with the old mantra that you need more deregulation, you've

got to get government out of the way of business? These guys just don't learn. At least George Bush started to get it at the end. He had a policy with which he wanted to nationalize banks. He was more progressive than the Conservative Party of Ontario. I just say, my, my, my. Sometimes a lesson is hard-learned.

I want to say to the member from Sarnia–Lambton that I was interested to see that he said nobody's interested in this issue and hardly anybody is getting any phone calls. Nothing could be further from the truth. Listen, I've been travelling around this province along with my fellow colleagues who are running for the leadership of the Ontario New Democratic Party. At almost every public event we go to, this issue is raised, and it is because it is an issue out in Ontario.

People are seeing that more and more jobs that used to be full-time jobs, that were directly created by the employers themselves, are now being farmed out through temporary agencies. Why? Because you can get around many of the provisions of the Employment Standards Act, everything from holidays to the amount of pay that you get and the number of benefits that you may get as a result of working for the employer directly. So people get it. The average worker out there understands that temporary work placement agencies are not necessarily a good thing for the province of Ontario.

I would say this as well: There's something to be said about allowing temporary agencies to function in the first place. I was talking to an individual about three, four months ago who had himself set up a temporary work agency. He used to work for one of the Ontario government ministries when the Tories were in power. He was on a particular project, and when that project was going to be ramped up, he went out and started his own temporary work agency. He was making oodles of money sitting at home and sending people there because he was keeping 30% back for himself. Is that fair to workers?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes the time for questions and comments. I will return to the member for Sarnia–Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to thank the members from Parkdale–High Park, Ottawa Centre, Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, and Timmins–James Bay. I thank the different people who tried to paint me as a rabid capitalist just for wanting to see free enterprise and people prosper in some jobs in this province.

I don't have a problem with the overall intent of the bill. I just tried to point out that at this time there are other, just as important items that we should be debating in this House.

I've spoken with people at a number of these temporary agencies, and they don't have a problem with the overall thrust of the bill. They said it will force out the unscrupulous people anyway. What we would like to do, on our side of the House, is see it go to committee; make those improvements that people point out to us when we have committee. We can have the labour community come in. Also, the temporary agencies, like ACSESS and others, can come in and present their side of the story to

all the members of the committee. At that time I'm sure everyone would agree that there's no legislation that's perfect when it's first drafted and that we would like to work with all three parties: the opposition—I mean the government party—the third party and ourselves—

**0920**

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'm getting there ahead of ourselves, eh, Mike? Anyway, we'd like to work together to try to make this bill better for the workers of Ontario and for the province.

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

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** As I said before, it is a pleasure and a privilege to rise and to speak about what I hope is the dignity of work in the province of Ontario, which is certainly not the state we find ourselves in now.

Right now, about 37% of our workforce, as I said earlier, mainly women, people of colour and new immigrants, are working in precarious jobs. That is to say they don't know when their job will end. Many of them don't have anything but the most basic mandated benefits. They don't have any pension plan and, quite frankly, they don't have much recourse to the halls of power either. What we're talking about is a very large group of people. In the United States, just to the south of us, you're looking at the largest employer being Manpower, a temporary agency. The largest employer in the United States is a temporary agency. The question to my mind is, how ethical is that?

We're a society that deals with lots of stuff, and the stuff is made by people. It's produced by people from offices to factories. We often think, or perhaps we should think more, about the labour that goes into the pens, the glasses, the paper that we use.

We know that in this province we've lost almost 300,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs. The government across the aisle professes to have created more jobs than they've lost, but what kind of jobs are those? These are low-paying jobs, many of them precarious jobs, temporary jobs, jobs without anything but the most basic of benefits, with no security and with no pensions, of course. That's what we're replacing good work with. We're replacing good work with poor work. We're doing that not just in Ontario but around the world. I mean, when we think about how much is produced in China and under what conditions, we should be ashamed as consumers, never mind as producers. When we think about huge towns that have been given over to sweatshops in the global economy, is that what we want as our future in this province? I'd say no, absolutely not.

When it comes to Bill 139, what are we dealing with here? Are we dealing with something that will substantially change what labour looks like in this province? I would say, and the New Democratic Party would say with me, absolutely not. Is it, again, a step in the right direction? As I've said, it's kind of like the icing with no cake. It's tinkering around the edges of the problem.

The problem is the difference in the way we see the dignity of work. That's the larger ethical problem. We, for some reason, as a community in Ontario no longer see it as a problem that someone works 40 hours a week and can't pay the rent or feed their children. I have many people in south Parkdale, in my riding, who work 40 hours a week at minimum wage and have to use a food bank. Now somehow collectively, we've said that's okay.

I would submit to this group and to you, Mr. Speaker, that that's not okay, that that's absolutely unfair. I grew up in an Ontario, quite frankly, where that wasn't considered fair, where it wasn't considered *de rigueur* to see people lining up at community soup kitchens, sleeping on the grates at night and working hard all week with no expectation of ever getting ahead, of ever getting their children ahead, of even paying for the basics out of their pocketbook.

In fact, we know, because we've been told by over 60 economists across the country, that the real minimum wage has significantly gone down since the 1970s, that if we were to pay the minimum wage today based on the consumer price index that we were paying in the 1970s, we'd be paying about \$10 an hour right now. What is that really? Even if we were paying \$10.25 right now, we'd only be paying just over the poverty line. So the ethical question, which to me is always the major question in these debates: Is it ethically and morally right to pay someone below the poverty line in a city like Toronto, in a province like Ontario, for their work? Is that dignity of work? I would submit that it is not.

What we in the New Democratic Party see is a real need for a complete overhaul of the Employment Standards Act to reflect the new reality in which we find ourselves. Quite frankly, there is some global imperative to this as well and there are some global responses. We don't need to reinvent the wheel here in terms of employment standards or Bill 139, we just need to look to other jurisdictions.

Other countries—New Zealand, Finland—have expanded the scope of their employment standards to address exactly what we are facing here: atypical or non-standard work. Germany has expanded its definition of "employee" to reduce the opportunity to disguise the employment relationship: in other words, an employee working for a client company of a temporary agency, but seen as an employee of the agency. The International Labour Organization has developed conventions on home work, part-time work and employment agencies. The economic union in Europe has established directives on part-time and fixed-term contracts to bring equity between atypical or non-standard work and permanent employees.

The European Union, in fact, has brought in what we think should be brought in immediately, and what OPSEU happens to agree with, and that is equal pay for equal work. What is the concept that the European Union has brought in that would really suffice to address most of our problems with precarious labour right here? That concept is a simple one, a very ethical one. It simply

says: equal pay for equal work. That would be dignity of work.

What does that mean? That means if you are the full-time employee doing bookkeeping in an office or you are a part-time temporary agency employee doing bookkeeping in the same office, the same job in the same office should get the same pay. That is not the case in Ontario. In Ontario, the agency employee will get substantially less for doing the same work as the full-time employee. That's our reality. I would submit that reality is absolutely unfair and unethical.

So instead of really attacking temporary agencies, the icing, we should be attacking the cake, the problem. The problem is we do not have equality of pay for work. We don't have it in Ontario; we simply don't have it. I would also submit that if temporary agencies marked up their third, or whatever they do, over that basic salary, that it would become real money to a company instead of cheaper to go through an agency. It wouldn't affect their profit margin at all and it certainly would be better for the employees. Of course, all the other things included in Bill 139 should be part and parcel of an overarching employment standards response to the issue of undignified, precarious work.

Also, just to go on to other jurisdictions, the UK government has finally recognized the need for regulating temp agency work and providing for equal treatment. This is notable, since the UK has one of the largest temp industries in the EU. Here is a country that has a large temporary industry and that is addressing this problem in a real way. The UK government agreed to a deal on May 20, 2008, between unions and employers that will see agency workers in the UK receive equal treatment. Again, it's equal pay for equal work.

It's interesting that also in the UK—looking back not too long ago when this House was brought back to look at the CUPE 3903 strike at York University, where you have this huge pool of contract labourers, belying the fact that temporary and precarious work is the domain only of the disenfranchised, only of those without enough education, only of those in the poor or marginalized aspects of our community. No. Temporary, contract, precarious work is also the domain of those with PhDs, contract faculty. Our universities are built on the backs of temporary, precarious workers—educated workers—which quite frankly also sort of puts the finger in the face of Richard Florida and those who would say we should become a creative class of Ontarians. Well, here we have not only educated but many of them very educated people who've done all the right things, according to Richard Florida and his ilk. They have their PhDs, many of them, in areas that he cited in his report, and yet what are they doing? As NOW Magazine once said in its famous headline, "Did You Know that Your Professor Makes Less than You Do?" They're working for less, many of them, than what we would consider a living wage. There's a pool of 900 workers at York University, out of which very few have any remote hope of being hired on full time or for tenure-track situations.

### 0930

In the UK, what have they done with that? They have addressed that, not by tinkering around the surface of it but by addressing the problem of post-secondary institutions exploiting contract labour. They have said that you can teach for four years on a contract basis, but after that you must be hired full-time.

I remember one CUPE 3903 worker who said to me that she had been teaching on a contract basis at York University for 16 years. Every year she has to reapply for her job. Every year she may or may not get that job. She has a PhD, but every year no job security, minimum benefits, working for half, probably, of what the tenure-track professor was making. This is unconscionable. This is unethical. This is not dignity of work in the province of Ontario.

So we know that other jurisdictions do it better. My husband and I had the great good fortune—and I know many of you have heard about our trip to Sweden, but, hey, it's eye-opening for a social democrat to see social democracy in action. There you have a country where 85% of the workforce is unionized. Let's contrast it with ours in the low 30-something. To really have dignity of work, you need to be unionized. We know this because of the sweep of history, and we so quickly forget history. We forget that there was, at one point, child labour. We forget that there was, at one point in my lifetime, "Help Wanted: Male" and "Female." We forget that every advance, from the 40-hour week to overtime to statutory holidays, to the end of child labour, to equal rights for women in the labour force, all of these rights have been fought for by the union movement and won. Certainly what we need is more organized labour.

What does it mean in Sweden to have the difference, 85% unionized labour? To be fair, some of those unions are "company" unions, so-described, but still, it's a certain advance over what we've got here. It means that when you go into a McDonald's in Stockholm you are served by somebody who is a unionized employee—in McDonald's, of all places. Guess what that means to that unionized employee? It means that they've got bargaining rights and better benefits, that they earn about \$12 an hour in comparison to our employees here. The equivalent of an MPP we sat down and had lunch with over there, who, by the way, was a Liberal, said that if they weren't unionized, nobody would eat there. That's the consciousness of a community that sees dignity of work and that believes in the ethicality of the dignity of work and believes that you need that to have a just society.

Sweden is no bigger than Ontario. It's nine million people; we're 13 million, more or less, here. It's smaller than we are. It's as multicultural as we are, too. I've heard that rather racist argument, "Well, they're a monoculture." No they're not. They're one of the most multicultural communities in Europe. This is a community that also has free post-secondary education. Imagine that revolutionary concept. It also has a dental care program and medicare. And yet, guess what? It still has Sony Ericsson, H&M, Ikea, Volvo; capitalism is alive and well in

Sweden and yet somehow they manage to extend dignity to their workforce, even those at the lower echelon, in the service sector jobs, like McDonald's. They manage to extend some dignity to them. That's what we're speaking about in the New Democratic Party. We're just speaking about dignity.

I was on the radio yesterday talking about the push-back over the government's increase in the minimum wage. Well, not only do I disagree with the person who was against me on that radio debate that the minimum rate should go up—of course it should—I think it should go up more. It should go up to at least above the poverty line and then be indexed to inflation. We all remember that wonderful campaign, the \$10 minimum wage campaign, where, really, town halls were full across this province and this government was swamped with at least 10,000 e-mails demanding a living wage, but we don't have a living wage by that definition yet.

Again, this is a global movement: In Mexico they're having demonstrations for a dignified living wage. It's everywhere, this demand, and the demand at its basis is about ethics. At its basis it's about dignity to labour. It's about knowing that you're valued, and—let's face it—we value people in proportion to what we pay them. We know we do. We pretend we don't. But if we don't, then why is it so necessary that our CEOs in Canada make more than they ever have in history? The average CEO right now makes between \$9 million and \$10 million a year, yet nobody is objecting to their pay raises. No, people object to the pay raises at the lower echelon.

Well, I ask you: If we pay people their value, if we recognize people's labour with what we pay them, if this is a reflection of the dignity we accord their labour, then is a CEO worth a thousand times more than a woman working in a factory at minimum wage? How on earth is this possible? How on earth do we tell that person working at minimum wage that their life and their labour—because let's face it, our labour is a lot of our lives. Most of what we spend our day doing is working, whoever we are, if we're in the workforce. Do we tell those people that they don't deserve the dignity of living above the poverty line, but the CEO, yes, they're worth a thousand times more even, quite frankly, if they run their company into the ground?

On my Facebook page, I challenged some of my friends to come up with some innovative, witty responses to changing or assisting our economy. One of the wittier of them was a young man who wrote in and said: "Why don't we all start car companies and just run them into the ground?" I thought that was good. Is that what it takes to get the government's attention, to get assistance? Is that what it takes to get help from the government, that we are the CEOs of large corporations, run them into the ground and then expect the government to bail us out? Why do we not afford dignity to those at the lower echelon of the earning spectrum, to bail them out when the recession hits? Where's the bailout for them? Where are the millions for them? Certainly, the very least we could do—and Bill 139 is, trust me, the least we could do

when it comes to temporary agencies and their clients—is to raise the minimum wage above the poverty limit.

The other thing that we need to do, as I said, is equal pay for equal work. This is a much more elegant solution than what we see in Bill 139. In any employment standards rewrite, we need to enshrine that.

Now, I want to talk from the small business side of my portfolio for a minute and also my experience as an agency owner. I started working, when I was a young woman after university, for Drake Personnel. Now Drake owns Office Overload, a Canadian company privately owned. It was a really eye-opening experience to work for a corporation like that, which was multinational in those days.

Quite frankly, it was one of the few places that a woman—then, as probably now—with a B.A. and nothing much else under her belt could get a job that would pay a living wage. We were paid reasonably well for what we did, with bonuses to boot. It was an also an interesting insight into corporate structure, the corporate structure that, unfortunately, is still the case in most corporations, which is to say that at Drake and at Office Overload, you had a lot of women working the phones. As you got up the corporate ladder, there were fewer and fewer women, until you got to the executive suite, where it was all men. Beyond the phones and the women working them were their temporary clients, who were mainly and mostly women too. So here you had a women-driven agency business dealing with women applicants mainly, servicing companies run by men. I can tell you, if you wanted to look at racism in that mix, that would hold too. You had mainly women, many of them of colour, working the phones and dealing with temporary applicants, many of them of colour, who were working in the offices for executive-suite-held companies made up of an incredible majority of white men. Quite frankly, unfortunately, that's still the case.

#### 0940

For some plucky women working the phones in a sales environment who decided, "Enough of this. If there's money to be made, I'd like to keep it in my own pocket, thank you very much"—which is, after all, the entrepreneurial instinct that we pride ourselves on in this country and in this province. You decide at some point that you're going to go out and do it yourself and for yourself, which is exactly what I did and many women like me did. In fact, I think if you were to look at temporary agencies and permanent placement agencies across this province, you would see that the majority of them are still owned by women and still staffed by women. The difference for the smaller ones is that women own them, instead of the larger corporations owned by men.

So for those plucky women entrepreneurs who went forward, as I did, running a company—and it was a phenomenal success, I might say. I started that company with a \$5,000 loan and billed half a million in my first year, and billed it not by exploiting those who came through our doors but by enriching them, in fact. We're talking about back in the early 1980s. That was a quarter of a

century ago. We were mainly a permanent placement agency, I have to say, and I'll talk more about the difference between permanent and temporary in a minute. We paid our temporary employees \$10 an hour. That was 25 years ago. If you came through our agency and got a job filing, you got paid \$10 an hour, and I didn't know, quite frankly, many agencies that paid less. We marked up over that.

I also paid the women who worked with me as if they worked with me and not for me. So all of us made six figures back in those days. We did well. We were an all-women company, and we placed women not only in secretarial positions, but, for a change, moving them up the ladder in communications and PR and advertising, which were the major clients that we serviced.

What I found as an agency owner—and certainly, it was interesting to meet with those representatives from ACSESS because of my background—was that if there was racism, if there was an attempt to beat down wages, if there was an attempt to pay employees less than they were worth, not equal pay for equal work, it came more from our client companies, the big corporations that really, quite frankly, are shielded. They're invisible, they're anonymous, behind the agencies that service them. When Bill 139 comes into effect, which I assume it will, it will not touch those companies that hide behind the agencies that service them, when it comes to exploiting employees.

So, first of all, hats off to all of those, mainly women, who see an opportunity in the market to actually make a decent living and start their own companies. Certainly, hats off to those who run scrupulous, ethical businesses that recognize the value of an employee—and I'm not talking about those many that don't and those many that this bill attacks. Should they be out of business? Absolutely. Nobody in the agency business would argue that they shouldn't.

It's interesting that back in the early 1980s when I was in the business, it was illegal to charge a fee to an applicant. Here we are, in 2009—great progress, indeed—bringing in another bill that says it should be illegal to charge a fee to an applicant. I guess that's what passes as progress in the province of Ontario. What happened in the interim? What happened in the interim were the Harris years, which undid that law. So now here we are, bringing back what should have been all along. I don't see that, really, as progress; that's simply a rescinding of something onerous. There should never be a fee charged to an applicant from an agency.

Interestingly enough, though, there are huge loopholes in Bill 139 when it comes to charging fees for applicants, and that's something the New Democratic Party will be addressing at committee, because the way that temporary agencies are defined in this bill leaves a lot of unscrupulous agencies and middlemen and women out there who will not be covered by this bill. What do I mean by that? I will go into the incredible and wonderful work done by Workers' Action in some detail on this bill.

Suffice it to say that one of the most egregious abuses of the dignity of labour in this province is the way that

many cleaners in corporate buildings are treated. What agencies will do—although they don't call themselves agencies, so they won't be covered by Bill 139—what many of these cleaning contracting companies do is claim that their employees are independent contractors, not employees. In fact, some of them charge their independent contractors money to get them jobs cleaning the buildings that are their client companies. Not only do these poor, mainly immigrant—many of them not with English as a first language—individuals have to pay to get their work; they have to pay for their equipment and their cleaning products. Many of them get into a bidding situation, which should be highly illegal, just for the opportunity to work at all. And what do they make, when all is said and done and all of the fees and charges are paid? Many of them make below minimum wage. That goes on everywhere in the province of Ontario. It does not happen in Quebec, by the way, which has more forward-thinking legislation. It happens here. Unfortunately, that situation of cleaners in buildings will not be touched by Bill 139 because they don't bill themselves as temporary agencies. They don't call themselves that; they call themselves cleaning contracting firms.

Another group that Bill 139 doesn't touch at all because of its definition and because, in this case, they're actually excluded, is health care agency workers. Health care workers employed by agencies under contract with community care access centres can now get public holiday pay like other workers, but they are not considered covered until 2012. One might ask: Why is that? Why single out health care workers in an act like this? Why not everybody? There's a simple answer to that. Guess who their employer is: the Ontario government. Guess who would be liable for the extra costs of health care workers: the Ontario government, the Ministry of Health. So that's why they're excluded until 2012. It's easy to pass legislation when it affects somebody else, but when it gets a little too close to home and affects your own wallet, it's more problematic. That's what we see here. That is absolutely unacceptable, and we, the New Democratic Party, will fight tooth and nail that change in this bill.

Information about work assignments and employment standards rights: This is good. Yes, people should have information, but quite frankly, a member here mentioned the Payday Loans Act—another bit of “icing” legislation that doesn't affect the cake; another piece of legislation that doesn't really affect the rates charged to people who go to a payday lending place for a payday loan, but in some ways very similar to Bill 139 because one of the things that that Payday Loans Act does is demand that payday lenders post information about the real interest rates, the cost of rollover loans etc. Remember: We're dealing with basically a usurious industry here. They're loan sharks; let's call them what they are. They charge between 300% and 1,000% interest, and they still do—even after this bill will be passed. Imagine, if you're going to them—you're not going there because you have options; you're going there because you've run out of

any other options. You go to a payday lender because the bank won't give you credit. You go to a payday lender because a bank or a credit union won't give you an advance on your paycheque. That's why you'd go to them: because you're desperate, you're starving and you don't have any money, and they're the last place in town that will give you any money. Posting the rates for a person like that and all the downsides of going to them is not going to deter someone who is desperate; it's not going to. We have to protect them; payday lenders won't.

**0950**

The same thing happens here: Information about work assignments, information on employment standards rights is all well and good. All the information will probably be pretty negative, but the person who's going to the temporary agency for work is the one who can't get a permanent job, who can't get any other work. That's why they're there. Telling them, "Guess what? Unfortunately, you won't get this and that if you work through us, and this is your legal right and this is not your legal right"—you know, it's like reading contracts. We've all signed contracts with all that fine print. Who reads them? Nobody reads them. We trust. Maybe we're far too trusting as Ontarians; I think we are. But in this case, certainly people would trust and sign. It's not going to make any difference to the reality of their lives. It certainly isn't going to make any ethical, moral difference to the dignity in which they find themselves in the workplace.

The idea in Bill 139 that after six months the temporary agency cannot charge a fee, or can charge a fee up until that point—in other words, removing a barrier to permanent employment for the temporary employee working through that agency—is a step in the right direction. But—here is the big "but"—first of all, quite frankly, I think that there's something afoul of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in charging a fee for a temporary employee to go permanent. I quite frankly think that if these poor individuals who find themselves in that situation had good lawyers and could band together as a group, they could have a charter challenge on their hands, because I don't think you can prevent somebody from hiring somebody and I don't think, legally, you really can get away with preventing somebody from being hired. I think that's a charter challenge waiting to happen, and I certainly would advise those who are employees to think about it if the issue comes up in their own lives. It's very much like non-competition clauses. Many corporations ask you to sign a non-competition clause knowing full well that it really doesn't have a lot of legal weight behind it, that you can't prevent someone from earning a living. That's the reality. Much as this is a good thing, I wonder, in terms of the true reality of the lives of the individuals it affects, how effective it will be.

The other bizarre side effect of this little point, by the way—remember my background as somebody who owned a permanent agency. I think most of us in this chamber would agree that it's better to have a permanent job than to have a temporary one, and quite frankly, at no

time soon are executive recruitment firms going to disappear from our landscape. They are part of our landscape and, they would argue, for good reason, because if you're a company and you don't have a huge personnel department, or even if you do, sometimes you need an executive recruitment and outplacement firm. The government uses them; we all use them; everybody uses them. They're a fact of life in business, in capitalism. Unless we want to revamp capitalism—some of us might want to do that—they're always going to be here. That's essentially what I had when I was in the business.

What this funny little part of Bill 139 will do will be to encourage people to hire temporary employees rather than permanent ones. I just throw that out to the government because I wonder if they've considered the side effect of this aspect of the bill. In other words, if I can hire somebody through a temporary agency, be they an IT person, an engineer—remember, this is not just people doing bookkeeping and in the steno pool; these are agencies, many of them that place fairly high-paid individuals. If I were to hire them for six months and then get them for no extra cost, why would I ever place an order with an executive recruitment firm for the same person and pay a percentage of their salary, which would be way in excess of that six-month fee?

I really suggest that the government simply look at that angle of it. We haven't heard very much from permanent agencies and executive recruitment firms yet, but we might, because once they read the fine print of this bill, they may have an issue with it. Suffice it to say, though, that I don't think that under the charter you can prevent someone from hiring somebody without paying any fee at all. I would really be surprised to see a temporary agency challenge that if somebody held that up as a right, either as an employee or as an employer. Still, in all, it's good to remind people that we can't and should not restrain anybody from being hired by anybody at any time. So there is that. It could be strengthened; it might have problems.

Again, you see the kind of bill we're dealing with here, the kind of bill that plays at the periphery of the problem of precarious, undignified, unstable, unrewarded labour in the province by tinkering around the edges of one of the industries that services that problematic labour force instead of dealing with the problematic labour force and the problematic labour relations that it implies.

What else? If we are to have a dignified labour force and less precarious employment, we need something—and this is where the rewrite of the Employment Standards Act is so imperative. We need something that demands of a company—not the agencies that service the company, but the company that has full-time employees—that there be a limit to the number of hours worked on a temporary basis within the framework of that company, because we know that companies these days are using huge pools of temporary labour to replace dignified full-time jobs. We know that's what's going on; we can see it everywhere.

How do you attack that? You attack it by saying, "You know, there's a reason"—and there is a reason for temp-

orary help—“for temporary agencies.” If somebody leaves on maternity leave, you need somebody to take over. You know it’s not going to be full-time; you know it’s going to be maybe nine months to a year that you need somebody. If somebody’s sick or on leave, you need somebody for that week or two.

The European Union, I think, and very rightly, has looked at the limit of time that somebody works on a temporary basis. Now, of course, this has to be well done, because nobody would want to produce a scenario where people are simply firing and hiring to get around the spirit of the law by the letter of the law. You have to make sure it’s that person who’s hired on full-time.

We should not have the situation, as I described earlier, that I witnessed—CUPE 3903; a woman working 16 years on a contract basis. That should not be allowable in the province of Ontario. If you’re working on a temporary assignment, it should be a temporary assignment and have clear, clear parameters. I would suggest that the clear parameter be a time frame and that the time frame be about a year, because, quite frankly, I can’t foresee—prove me wrong—a situation where you would need a temporary—remember, in the true sense of the word “temporary”—employee for more than a year. So we need, in the Employment Standards Act, something that embeds the principle that temporary labour is exactly that—temporary—and that it doesn’t go on forever. We need that.

So limits on temp work, minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, and then—this is so critical—we need to do everything in our power, in this government, to enable organized labour to organize. There’s no other way of saying it than that. We need to do everything, from getting the votes counted at York University and others by OPSEU, to having card-check certification, not just for those in the construction trades but for everyone, so that that process can be democratic, so that it can’t be marked by intimidation by employers; and, certainly, sectoral organizing, so that the same battle doesn’t have to be fought over and over and over again.

This is something else that’s very interesting that they do in Sweden—I call it the “Swedish way”—and, again, it’s favourable to employers as well as employees, otherwise they wouldn’t be doing so well—and that’s sectoral organizing. That means that when a union comes up for renegotiation for their workforce, they do it together—all steelworkers, not company by company. They do this in Sweden; they do it with great good results both for companies and for the unions concerned. So that’s what we need as well—sectoral organizing.

#### 1000

Finally, and this is a huge topic that I’ll spend some time on, no matter what we do when we look at the Employment Standards Act and we revamp it—and remember, the ethical, moral imperative is the dignity of human labour, the dignity of work. Essentially the philosophic and ethical undergirding of everything I’ve said is that whether you work on an assembly line or you work in the executive suite, your work should be dignified, you

should be rewarded above the poverty line for what it’s worth, you should be able to hold your head up high when you go to work, and you should have rights, including the right to strike. That is then a dignified workplace. We want to make that available, as much as we can, to everyone. That undergirds everything.

But even if we were to rewrite the Employment Standards Act, including everything I have described in the last 40 minutes, we would still not be there unless we enforced it. Here is another problem. It’s a very large problem with Bill 139 and all the bills, quite frankly, that this government has brought forward around the issue of employment standards, and that is that there’s no law if it’s not enforced. Many times I’ve spoken in many communities, particularly around the \$10 minimum wage campaign that we wage, and I’ve stood there and I’ve said, “We don’t have employment standards in the province of Ontario.” People say, “What do you mean, we don’t have them? There’s an act, isn’t there? I mean, there’s inspection”—because we don’t enforce the act we have.

Now, I know the government has hired more inspectors. That’s a good thing, but it’s not enough, not nearly enough. A motion that I have on the order paper demands, because it’s been so long coming and so long ignored, that 25% of all workplaces be inspected by employment standards, by the Ministry of Labour—25%. Why such a high figure? Because it’s about 1% now—1%. That means if you’re an employer, you have about a 1 in 100 chance of anybody from employment standards ever walking through your door.

What does that mean in terms of the ethicality and the dignity of labour? This is what it means for my constituents, and I’m sure we’ve all heard the stories: I have heard stories of people who have worked without getting paid at all, pure and simple, not at all. They worked for a week, and then the person said, “I didn’t like what you did. Sorry, I’m not paying you.” Now, who are these people? A lot of them, of course, don’t know their rights. They’re recent immigrants, some of them illegal immigrants. They have no recourse. Where do they take them? Are they going to fight through the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Labour to collect a couple of hundred dollars? No, they let it go and they move on. This happens all the time to immigrant communities, unfortunately. We know that the Ministry of Labour and employment standards has a huge, huge waiting list of cases, and it has a huge backlog of unpaid wages. We know that, because it’s so difficult to collect, and really, the impetus to collect on your unpaid wages falls on the employee. Remember, we’re not talking about CEOs with lawyers in their back pocket here. We’re talking about people who work in the lower echelons of the pay scale, on the margins of our communities, in the minimum-wage or less-than-minimum-wage jobs. That’s who we’re talking about. That’s who desperately needs an inspection from employment standards, not the corporate suite, and they don’t come. Anybody who’s ever spoken to a group of new immigrants in their riding will

have heard these stories. I've heard them. Certainly they're not often paid overtime when it's due. Holiday pay, which this bill enshrines for temporary workers—I know a lot of permanent workers don't get holiday pay. They don't get the benefits they're due because they don't know they're due, and their workplace has never been inspected and, quite frankly, probably never will be, at the current rate of the rollout of labour inspections. That's the situation in which we live.

I remember when I was first married, my husband was eventually in advertising, but in the graphic arts business, and he was working for somebody else, and the hours were outrageously long. He was paid on a salary; he was not paid hourly. But when you figured out his hourly rate, it was actually less than minimum wage. The laws around overtime, which were in place at the time, would have helped him, but it would have required him, then as now, to file a grievance, to come forward to talk about what was going on in the design shop. Now, unless you're in a huge company where you're one of 1,000 employees, your employer is going to know who filed a grievance, who complained about them. Do you think there aren't going to be reprisals for that? Even if you did it anonymously, do you think they won't figure out who filed a grievance anonymously?

Employment standards enforcement cannot fall upon the shoulders of employees, ever—ever—because there are too many checks and balances in the workplace to make it unlikely that they'll ever step forward, number one among which is that they'll lose their job, and they don't have the lawyers to fight in civil court to try to get the employer to pay them for what they lost. Only people with money, cultural capital, are able to do that. These folk won't. No, they'll just disappear into the crowd and go to work for another unscrupulous employer. The Ministry of Labour and employment standards needs to inspect at least 25% of all workplaces now and do one sweep of them. I can tell you that you would already uncover huge, huge abuses of the Employment Standards Act without even adding to it. So when we add to it, like Bill 139—in this case dealing with agencies alone and not the big picture, the problem—who's going to enforce it? Who's going to enforce this? Unless we hire more enforcement officers, unless we make it mandatory that a percentage of places of employment be inspected, this is just going to be another piece of legislation that only those who know it exists will enforce and find recourse to. Those who are working through temporary agencies are usually the least able to challenge this.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My friend over here says, "It's a good Liberal bill." Exactly. That's what a Liberal bill looks like: icing, no cake. It's fascinating too that even the agency advocates who say they support this bill because it will drive those fringe agencies—this is the same way that the payday lending association said, "We like the payday lending bill"—that that should be a red flag in and of itself—"because it drives the fringe elements out of business." Well, come on. Do we exist, as legislators,

to help one company fight against another? In a sense, this bill will do the same. It will help to weed out some of the competition for some others that can afford to raise their rates, etc. But really, will it? Will it even do that? That's a question. The fly-by-night temporary agency people that my friend Gilles Bisson was talking about, who operate out of apartments and don't even have offices, who place their friends from immigrant communities for a mark-up, who basically break everything that Bill 139 is trying to address and every employment standards part of the Employment Standards Act is trying to address—will it really touch those people? This is the quintessential Liberal bill, in that sense.

This is like the bill that our friend Mike Colle brought in which said that people driving with illegal guns in cars should be illegal. Yes, sure, they should be illegal. They're already illegal. Let's make them more illegal. Let's make them illegal and they'll lose their driver's licence. Do you really think that somebody driving in a car with a loaded gun cares about losing their driver's licence? Come on. Do you really think that a person operating out of their apartment, placing friends and neighbours or friends of friends completely under the radar of the law, breaking every employment standard regulation, going against Bill 139, is going to stop their activities because we passed this bill? I wish they would. I wish it could effect that change. Quite frankly, it might even effect that change if there was enforcement, but there isn't. There simply isn't enforcement. We don't have enforcement of what we've already got, and so Bill 139, like so much other paper that's produced by this place, will sit on a shelf somewhere, drive a couple of smaller business people out of business, leave most of the abusers beyond the reach of the law and still not—and this is really what we need here in this province—add to the dignity of labour, the dignity of someone working.

**1010**

Now, I've spoken for almost 50 minutes without telling a story about someone who is actually affected by all this, so I will. There are a myriad of them. I've told in passing one such story about an immigrant who wasn't paid for the work she did. But what about the ones who are paid? I can think of cases in my own family. Certainly, if you go back in my family one generation, you're talking about first-generation immigrants. Some of them from England, some of them from Italy—cold, Mr. Speaker—some of them from Portugal. Sorry, flu is going around.

My mother-in-law from Portugal came over, worked in houses cleaning, like so many people, then worked as a health care worker—one of the ones excluded from this bill until 2012—needed to retire for health reasons just recently—thank you very much; honour among thieves—and retired without any pension or benefits even though she had worked her entire life in this industry. Essentially, the industry acted as a temporary agency, sending her out here and there to client companies. This is happening to our own, ladies and gentlemen. For those who are watching at home, you know somebody who is being touched by this industry. When 37% of the labour

force is working in precarious employment, you know it touches everyone. This bill will not help my mother-in-law. This bill will not help other workers like her until 2012. This is another classic government move, isn't it? "We'll do it after the next election." MPAC overhaul: "We'll do it after the next election; we'll freeze property taxes now." "We'll do it after the next election," closing the coal-fired plants. Here's another instance of that. "We'll do it after the next election," cover health care workers, community care access workers under this bill.

I know a woman in my riding who worked many years, always on temporary assignments, made minimum wage at all of them. She would come home, feed her children, get them doing their homework, put them to bed and then go out and work for another temporary industry, and that is the cleaning company contractors. She would go out and work at night cleaning buildings as an independent contractor, so-called—of course she wasn't; she was a temporary applicant, not covered by Bill 139—to clean companies and then work through another temporary agency during the day. At the end of all this outrageous labour, at the end of a week, she was also one of the ones who I handed a free turkey to at the food bank just before Christmas because she didn't have enough money, even with those two jobs, as a single parent to really make ends meet. She said to me, "You know, really, at the end of the day, after deductions, I would have more time with my children and they would have a better quality of life if I were on social assistance." Quite frankly, I couldn't argue with her. She was right. She might clear a little less on social assistance, but then she wouldn't have to do back-breaking labour for 10, 12 hours a day, and she would have more time with her children and she wouldn't have to find neighbours to look after them, pay other people etc. and the cost associated with getting to work, transportation etc. I mean, she's not alone. Even middle-class women find themselves in this position because of the lack of dignity of work. Even middle-class women find themselves unable to really work with any sense of fair play because of the expenses associated with working.

I see that the hour is drawing nigh. I know I still have about five minutes left and I will save my five minutes for tomorrow to continue on speaking about this bill and to summarize exactly what I've been saying. Suffice it to say, we need to keep in mind, when dealing with Bill 139, what it doesn't do. It doesn't give equal pay for equal work. It doesn't give a living minimum wage. It doesn't extend the right to organize in labour for a vast majority of Ontarians. It doesn't put a limit on the length of time that people work temporarily before they must be hired full-time. It doesn't do that. Most importantly, it doesn't affect the client companies that the temporary agencies deal with, that are the source of the problem. Thank you.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. This House stands in recess until 10:30, later on this morning.

*The House recessed from 1016 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** I'd like to introduce some family and friends of page Patrick Mott. This morning in the gallery are his mother, Ruth Anne Mott; his father, Robert Mott; an aunt, Jeananne Ralph; an uncle, Dave Mott; a cousin, Roberta Jagoe; his great-aunt, Alice O'Neill; a cousin, Shelagh O'Neill; and a friend, Kathleen Maley. They're here this morning, and we'd like to welcome them.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ENERGY RATES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. The proposed Green Energy Act raises an alarming number of questions. During these times of economic downturn, when everyone is counting their pennies, Ontarians want to know how much more they're going to have to pay to heat their homes and keep the lights on under this new legislation. Can you tell us that, Premier?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I'm very pleased to take this question and I'm very much looking forward to having the opportunity to hear debates in this Legislature and to create opportunities for the public to speak to this as well.

We are very pleased and proud to be able to introduce the bill, as we did yesterday. It is going to enable us to create new, clean, green jobs, it's going to enable us to generate clean, green electricity and it's going to enable more of us to do our part in the fight against climate change. So I really think it is the sweet spot of sweet spots.

The price of electricity from wind is higher than it is from dirty coal. The price of electricity from the sun, harnessing that power, is more expensive than dirty, fired coal. Those are true. But on the other side, there's also a very important aspect to our new legislation, which is going to ensure that we have more energy conservation to keep our bills down.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I didn't get the answer there. Yesterday, the Minister of Energy indicated that there would essentially be no increase as a result of this bill. He said, "One per cent per year for the next three years." If the minister thinks he can fool Ontarians with this sleight of hand, he's dead wrong. Yesterday he said there would be an initial increased investment of \$5 billion. When that amount is paid—and that's just for the transmission upgrades they're talking about—by 4.2 million electricity consumers, that calculates out to an extra \$1,200 per customer. Spread out over three years, that's a 30% increase, Minister, not a 1% increase.

Premier, explain to this House how you can promise a 1% increase by your own figures when the increase to consumers will be at least 30%.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My honourable colleague is engaging in all kinds of speculation. I'll tell you where

he's on to something. My honourable colleague has said that he and his wife, along with their children, embarked on a program to conserve energy in their own home. They reduced the usage in their home by 40%. I want to commend him for that.

What we need to do and what we will continue to do is find more ways for more Ontarians, whether inside our schools, our hospitals, our industries or our homes, to use less electricity. At the end of the day, what is really important to Ontarians is their bill. We're going to do everything we can to create more opportunities for more Ontarians to keep that bill down and, ideally, like my honourable colleague, get it even lower.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I accept your unsolicited compliments. What I'd really like are some clear answers.

Ontarians were not fooled when Stéphane Dion tried to tell them that his Green Shift plan wasn't going to cost them a thing, and they're not going to be fooled by your plan. Yesterday, the minister held up Germany as a model. Well, the price of electricity in Germany is north of 22 cents a kilowatt hour. That's at least three times, three and a half times, the rate of electricity here, Mr. Premier. How can you stand there and tell Ontarians that their energy bills are not going to go up by more than a single percentage point per year? In fact, they're going through the roof. That's what's going to happen. It's time that you came clean.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I gather from this line of questioning—I hope this is not true, but notwithstanding the international praise that this bill has already garnered, and the fact that it's going to create some 50,000 jobs and is going to ensure that we can have energy conservation proceed in a very aggressive way, it would appear that the regressive Conservative Party is not standing ready to support this bill. That is unfortunate.

The point I want to make is that there's a difference between our electricity rates and our electricity bills. It's interesting that my honourable colleague talked about electricity rates in Germany, but he didn't talk about their home electricity bills. I think if he checks their home electricity bills and the way they practise energy conservation, then we'll have something that we can honestly compare between their bills and our bills.

#### ENERGY RATES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I don't think everybody's packing up and leaving for Germany, Mr. Premier.

Nobody is buying your argument about the balance and the costs. After Ontarians are done paying for skyrocketing energy costs they won't have the money to pay for anything else, especially that refrigerator you've been telling them to buy. Just like your federal Liberal colleague Stéphane Dion, you're not being straight with Ontarians who are worried about paying their mortgages and hanging on to their jobs. Will you have the decency to lay out the real facts and tell Ontarians that, when they can least afford it, this bill is going to mean significantly

higher energy costs for homeowners and consumers in this province? Will you come straight, Mr. Premier?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I do want to thank the honourable member for his question and I do want to thank him as well for his comments in the Legislature yesterday, when he gave very strong evidence for the opportunity that individuals have in their own homes to impact the amount of energy that they use. I think that's what the Green Energy Act is all about: the opportunity for us to engage individually in activities that help to lessen our impact on the climate and to have the opportunity to create a green economy at the same time.

I think it is very important to note that when you make an investment, a necessary investment, as an example, in transmission capability—I spoke yesterday of a \$5-billion incremental investment—this is about an investment in a piece of infrastructure that doesn't last for just one year or two years. It's about investing in our fundamental infrastructure, which of course is paid off over a period of time. This is why we predict that the incremental costs associated with the Green Energy Act—

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We're going to hear that talking around the issue over and over and over again. But I'm going to make that point again, Mr. Premier: When people in this province are done paying for the things that they have no choice in paying—their mortgages, their food, their housing, their clothing and the electricity under this government—they're not going to have much left for anything else. They do need to know, going forward, what electricity is going to cost, not some vague thoughts about how we're going to do this or that. They need to know what the cost of electricity is going to be in the province of Ontario for consumers, for families, seniors, low-income people; people like that who can hardly afford the electricity bills they're paying now. What is it going to mean to them going forward?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** Ontarians aren't going to get very much value from the conversation if the honourable member is not able to understand that investments in infrastructure, where the infrastructure lasts 40, 50, 60 or 70 years—if he tries to pretend that it's all about paying for those in the first and second year, if he doesn't understand the fundamental investment in infrastructure, then we're going to have a challenge. The investments in Ontario's infrastructure, to build more renewable capacity by investing in transmission and distributed generation, are going to cost 1% a year incremental on Ontario's hydro bills, but what they will provide is the opportunity for 50,000 new jobs in the green economy, and it will provide for Ontarians to use less electricity as individuals. The honourable member has given strong testimony to that ability by saying that he and his family reduced their own energy use by 40%.

1040

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Minister, it appears that the government doesn't really want people to take a good look at this bill. They want to move it ahead. That's surprising. We're looking for a better opportunity for people in the province of Ontario. That's exactly what the former Minister of Energy, currently the Minister of Finance, did with Bill 100. He sent it to committee after first reading. This bill is more complicated, more complex and broader-reaching than Bill 100.

We're asking you to follow the precedent set by your own government. Allow this bill to go out to committee after first reading so that stakeholders, consumers and, indeed, ordinary citizens across this province have a chance to comment on this bill before it goes further.

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I do apologize to the honourable member if the matter at hand has caught him off guard and it's too complex for him to be able to participate in the legislative debate, but we do think that it sends an important signal to the people in the province of Ontario—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. George Smitherman:** Mr. Speaker—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member for Niagara West will withdraw his comment.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Withdrawn.

**Hon. George Smitherman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

We will be very happy this afternoon to see the opportunity for members of the Legislature to debate one of the most important matters of public policy and to debate a matter that promises 50,000 additional jobs. That will begin this afternoon. Of course, the bill will go to committee, and we look forward to all opportunities to improve upon the legislation as we've brought it forward today through the debating offers from the honourable members opposite.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What you've promised in a bill and what you've delivered in the past for many of your promises—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No, it's a new question.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** How many questions do you have?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Leader of the third party.

#### CHILD PROTECTION

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** My question is for the Premier. Just a few years ago, the Premier made the following appeal for children in care in Ontario. I want to quote the Premier: "I'm asking you today on behalf of those 23,000 children—they're our kids. Their parents have either abandoned them or they're disabled or they're troubled. They might be hard to handle, but they're ours nonetheless. I'm asking you to stand up for those kids. Your minister is not doing that."

Premier, there are now almost 26,000 children in care in Ontario, and the child and youth advocate tells us that a startling 90 of these children are dying each year under the McGuinty government's watch.

My question is this: In view of the Premier's eloquence just a few years ago, how does the Premier justify his government's record when it comes to looking after some of Ontario's most vulnerable children, when 90 of them are dying each year?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I want to thank the leader of the NDP for the question, and I want to say—first of all, I want to thank the child advocate for the report. I'm glad that we created the office, and we welcome the report. Of course, we do not welcome its findings because they are troubling.

We have made some progress. There have been considerable new investments. Some 1,300 new children's aid society staff have been hired. We have put in place a new crown ward strategy, for example. But this number is troubling. We have been at about that level now since 1991. So obviously there is more to be done, and I have every confidence that our minister is on the job and will be doing everything she possibly can to help address this.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** The Premier says the government is doing everything it can. I want to quote from the child and youth advocate. This is what he had to say just a few months ago:

"In September of this year"—2008—"I met with two assistant deputy ministers and requested, among other things, a list of all the licensed group homes in the province. I still have not received that list, nor have I been able to obtain child fatality death reports or investigation reports or serious occurrence reports."

The child and youth advocate then goes on to point out that basic information he needs to do his job—your government seems to do everything it can to avoid allowing him to have access to that information. He's simply trying to protect the most vulnerable children in this province. Why is the McGuinty government stonewalling him?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, I think the honourable member and the child advocate make a pretty good point here. My understanding is that we have, subsequent to the release of this report, landed on a good information exchange arrangement. If that is still not satisfactory to the child advocate, I would like to learn of that. But I gather there was some to and fro as the child advocate, in a newly created office, began to assert himself, and there are some obligations on the part of government with respect to the release of information. I think we have an arrangement which satisfies the child advocate. Again, if we're not there, then I would ask the child advocate to speak to that.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** That's not all that the child advocate had to say because the reports that I've just listed are not issues of confidentiality; they're not issues

of letting out all kinds of details about an individual. Knowing where the group homes are, knowing what the licensed group homes are, having access to investigation reports are not privacy issues, yet your government repeatedly tries to stonewall.

I want to quote something else the child advocate said: "I would say to the minister, because I know the minister and the ministry are afraid to let bad things out, that unless you let bad things out, you can't allow the good things in." That is his assessment of the McGuinty government. You would try to prevent information getting out there to the public because you're afraid it's bad information, but the child advocate says we can't improve our measures to protect these children unless this information gets out.

I ask again, why has the McGuinty government engaged in a concerted effort to stonewall the child and youth advocate?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Just so we have the full picture here, the reason that we have an independent child advocate in Ontario is because we created that office. Previous governments refused to do that. We thought that was an important thing to do, so we have done it. We have encountered, I think it's fair to say, a few bumps along the way in terms of ensuring that we are working in concert with the child advocate. We have now in place a new information-providing arrangement. If the child advocate believes we are coming up short in that regard, and if we in government are going to err, I'd rather err on the side of providing the child advocate with more information rather than less information because I'm counting on the child advocate to bring these kinds of issues to light so that governments of all political stripes on a go-forward basis can properly respond to them.

#### GREEN POWER GENERATION

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I would say to the Premier, once again, your government says one thing and then does something completely different in the backroom.

My question concerns energy. New Democrats know that a strong buy-Ontario component is absolutely necessary if we are to see green energy manufacturing jobs created here in Ontario rather than in Europe or the United States, but when we look at the government's bill that was presented yesterday, we don't see a strong buy-Ontario component. In contrast, Quebec, for some time, has required 60% domestic content in all of its renewable energy projects, and it's resulted in Quebec having the only large-scale wind turbine manufacturing facility in Canada.

Can the Premier explain why the government's bill doesn't require 60% Ontario content—

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

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I want to thank the honourable member for taking the opportunity to ask such an

important question about the bill, and to further raise the issue of domestic content.

As I had the opportunity to say yesterday in response to his colleague, indeed, the piece of legislation does carve out the capacity to establish domestic content rules and we have every intention of doing so. As I had the opportunity to say yesterday, as we see more wind turbines coming to life in the province of Ontario, moving toward 50,000 new jobs over the next three years, it's our full and complete expectation that the steel milled by the good people of Sault Ste. Marie and Hamilton, Ontario, will be what is holding aloft the opportunity to take advantage of what Mother Nature has to offer in forms of moving toward a cleaner, greener supply of electricity in the province of Ontario. I do look forward very much to working with the honourable member further on making sure that our domestic rules produce more opportunities for jobs in the province of Ontario.

**1050**

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I think, in all that wordage, what really we heard is that there is no domestic content requirement in the legislation, that the McGuinty government promises there might be some in regulation.

I remember just a few years ago when the then Minister of Northern Development was promising there was going to be a wind turbine facility manufactured in Sault Ste. Marie. He got up in this Legislature every second day and said, "Oh, it's only a matter of time." Go to Sault Ste. Marie and see if there's a wind turbine manufacturing facility there.

I ask again: If you're really serious about establishing the full fledge of renewable energy manufacturing in Ontario, where is the 60% domestic content rule that we see in Quebec and that we see working in Quebec?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** If only the honourable member was using the same policy advisers that the United Steelworkers are, we'd be able to have a more effective conversation in this Legislature.

Here's a quote from Ken Neumann, the national director of the United Steelworkers union. This is from yesterday: "The Steelworkers have been vocal in our call for domestic procurement policies. So including domestic content guidelines in the Green Energy Act is a decision in the right direction."

The United Steelworkers understand that the piece of legislation introduced yesterday provides the opportunity for us to establish domestic content rules. These will be forthcoming, and they will be established on a case-by-case basis to take advantage of more opportunities for an Ontario supply chain to emerge so that, as we transform our economy towards the green economy with new jobs—50,000 over the next three years—more opportunities for Ontario workers will be found.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I want to advise the minister that it was Ken Neumann who asked me to ask this question, because he said he looked for the 60% content

rule in the legislation. It's very clear in the Quebec legislation, but it's not in the McGuinty government's legislation.

But on the other side of the coin, the McGuinty government has no problem setting a very clear target for, say, its nuclear megascheme. The McGuinty government says, "Oh, 50% of electricity will come from nuclear sources, even if it costs \$50 billion to build it." Why is it so easy for the McGuinty government to say 50% will be nuclear, but you can't even find the gumption to put a clause in the legislation requiring 60% Ontario manufacturing?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** First off, I do want to say that we look forward to the opportunity for the honourable member to stand in his place and to put on the record whether his party will be supporting a piece of legislation that substantially addresses things that they have been calling for for a long period of time. We have the opportunity, in the context of the debate here in the Legislature which begins today, to talk about these matters, and we appreciate very much that they're bringing this issue forward.

In the province of Ontario, the Green Energy Act represents an opportunity to create 50,000 new jobs over the next three years, in substantial measure because of domestic procurement opportunities, to transform the Ontario economy, and to see a more robust supply chain so that the steelworkers of Hamilton and Sault Ste. Marie have the opportunity to celebrate renewable energy by making sure that the steel that holds aloft those wind turbines has been milled in those very communities.

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** To the Minister of Energy: Minister, this bill is not only unclear about what it's going to do, but you've been unclear in your explanation of it.

When the former Minister of Energy introduced Bill 100, he recognized its complexity and the broad reach with which it covered the province of Ontario and all stakeholders and consumers. I'm asking you again: Will you give the most important people in the province, the people who are going to be affected by this bill—not the members of this Legislature, but the people of this province and the manufacturers and the stakeholders in this province—the opportunity to speak to this bill before second reading, like your predecessor did with Bill 100?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** Now, the honourable member, because the bill is big and the bill is complex, throws up his hands and he says, "I, from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, a representative of the people am not ready to participate in a debate about an important matter at hand." We have brought this forward for this debate in the Legislature of Ontario, where the peoples' representatives reside, and as part of that process, of course, the bill will go to committee. But this afternoon,

here, representing an important piece of legislation, we'll come forward for discussion, and we see—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Ten seconds.

**Hon. George Smitherman:** We see the official opposition unable to muster a coherent policy, throwing up their hands and saying, "We don't want to participate in the debate."

The debate begins this afternoon.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Perhaps the minister needed to take a breath.

Minister, you said yourself yesterday that generation isn't going to roll out of this bill for some time. We have some time to get it right. Your predecessor did his best to get it right by giving the people of this province the opportunity to speak to the legislation. Before it gets rammed through the House on second reading within the next few days—as you've said yourself, this is the most important piece of energy legislation, perhaps, in this province's history. Does that not imply that the people who are most affected by it should have a good opportunity, a fulsome opportunity, to bring their views to bear to committee on this bill?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** In the election of October 2007, I stood before the people of Toronto Centre and said, "Elect me as your representative for the important debates that take place in the Legislature of Ontario." I was lucky enough that they did, and I joined other colleagues.

Today, we fulfill our responsibilities with a piece of legislation, and the official opposition does not stand and say, "We have issues on this point of content or that"; they stand and say, "On matters of process, we throw up our hands, and we are not ready to participate in the debate."

The debate begins this afternoon with second reading. The bill will be improved through a legislative process that will include committee hearings. We look forward to hearing on this important subject from all members, and we especially look forward to a coherent position from the official opposition.

#### EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Minister of Economic Development. It appears it's another grim day in Ontario. Today we heard about Russel Metals laying off 500 workers, 16% of its workforce. Now we've even hit the media: the Hamilton Spectator, 30; the Waterloo region Record and the Guelph Mercury, 33. Abitibi-Bowater announced another shutdown of its Fort Frances mill, affecting 650 workers and their families.

Why doesn't the government have an aggressive plan to sustain jobs in our province?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I am looking forward to speaking with the CEO for Russel Metals. I've put a couple of calls in to him to determine exactly the facts with respect to the impact of the announcement on

Ontario. The media reports seem to suggest that there are not going to be significant job cuts in Ontario for that company at this time, which is good news, but obviously more details are needed.

I can tell you that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has already dispatched people to assist those workers.

I, obviously, say to the member we want to do everything we can. In representing the members of your community, I know that you'll want to work with our government to try to provide assistance where need be.

I know that that company was hit with layoffs previously in the year, and I understand as well that as a result of the contraction within that particular sector, it is a very tough time. The news out of Russel Metals, though, is—

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Unfortunately, that's a bit of a sad response. Ontarians are worried about their jobs, and with all due respect, I don't believe the minister has a clue or a plan.

We've been putting ideas forward aggressively to preempt job losses, which have gone unheard: a manufacturing investment tax credit, an industrial hydro rate, a jobs protection commissioner to step in before layoffs are announced.

Why doesn't the minister have a bold plan to stop jobs from leaving our province?

1100

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** I appreciate the member's frustration here, but the government of Ontario has, over the past few years, been making literally hundreds of millions of dollars in investments, including investments in that member's community with respect to the investment to Dofasco, which leveraged very, very significant jobs in that area. Along the way, as those investments have been made—literally over \$2 billion worth of investments that have leveraged significantly larger amounts—at every step of the way, at every point where this government brought forward the funds that in fact would create more growth in the communities such as the member's, the member voted against it. We bring forward the plans, we bring forward the subsidies and the loans, the purpose of which is to generate more economic growth, the purpose of which is to create more jobs, and the member votes against them. Then he stands up and asks, "Where's the plan?" It's the plan you voted against. It's the plan that makes investments in your—

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

#### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** My question is for the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. Minister, energy conservation is a priority for this government. As we move the province away from dirty, coal-fired generation, Ontario's plan depends heavily on conservation and re-

newable energy to fill the gap. This is especially important in my community of Mississauga South where, as you know, we celebrated the demolition of the Lakeview coal plant. But our community is growing, which means demand for power will grow. In order to mitigate the need for peak power generation, it is vitally important that every Ontarian do their part to conserve energy.

Yesterday, in response to your ministerial statement, the MPP from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke mentioned that his family was able to reduce their electricity use by 40% over a span of two years. My family has worked to reduce our energy consumption by using efficient light bulbs, cold water for laundry, and installing glass screens in our windows and doors. Minister, how would you encourage our members of this House to embrace a culture of conservation?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I do think that each of us as members of the Legislature has a powerful opportunity in the speeches that we make to help to create the culture of conservation, which would be advantageous, of course, to our pocketbooks and very advantageous to the productivity overall of our society, not to mention the positive impacts on the climate. We look at jurisdictions like California, which for 30 or 40 years have shown no per capita growth in electricity use, whereas most other jurisdictions have seen more growth.

I want to encourage members to take the opportunity, in speaking to school groups, as an example, to talk about the reductions in energy use that are possible, and I think that it's been great to see champions in this Legislature: the member from Ottawa–Orléans, and yesterday the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke indicating that a 40% reduction through behavioural change in the family is a strong, strong proponent for conservation. We need to promote it by talking about it more.

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

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** Ontarians will be looking to our government for help in making the transition to use less energy. Yesterday you introduced the Green Energy Act, which if passed would foster a culture of conservation by assisting homeowners, governments, schools, individuals and employers in using less energy and using it more efficiently. It's clear that members from both sides of the House understand the importance of conserving energy. During the debate on MPP Phil McNeely's bill on home energy audits, both sides spoke about the importance of conservation. We know it's the right thing to do.

Aside from lowering energy costs, conservation will also reduce Ontario's carbon footprint. In my riding, Jocelyn and Neil Lovell have gone above and beyond when it comes to conservation. They installed a number of energy conservation devices in their home, including solar panels on their roof. They are now off the grid. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them again.

Minister, how would the Green Energy Act encourage Ontarians to conserve electricity?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I think it's important that everybody have their own piece. We saw One Million

Acts of Green, which the CBC promoted, demonstrating that most people are in on the action. On the issue of the home energy audits that was mentioned, I think it's noteworthy that the Conservative election platform from 2007 said that they would call for requiring home energy audits before the sale of every house. That built on the work our colleague from Ottawa–Orléans was involved in and reflected unanimity in the Legislature of Ontario.

For my own part as Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, about 95% or 96% of the times that I've gone to the fourth-floor office, I've taken the stairs. That's reduced the use of electricity and has been helpful to my health. Tomorrow I take the message on the road over to Church Street public school, where I'm going to be talking more about the opportunities to promote energy reductions and conservation amongst grade one to six students. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to invite my colleague so he can tell his personal—

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

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, you've just heard the exchange between your Minister of Energy and Infrastructure and our critic for energy and infrastructure. I think you also know that you in government have had months and months to prepare for the introduction of this bill yesterday, whereas we in opposition only saw the bill for the first time yesterday. We haven't even had an opportunity to caucus it.

I would say to you: The question that was asked by my colleague is based on a precedent that was set by your own government, where a bill went to committee after first reading. We are asking for an opportunity for MPPs and the public to familiarize themselves with the bill. I ask you, Premier, do you think the response of your minister of the crown was—

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

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I'll tell you why I can't agree with my honourable colleagues opposite. I think we've done about as much as we can possibly do to ensure that people had a good heads-up in terms of where we're going to go on this. The bill is being posted to the Environmental Bill of Rights website for public comment. There will be committee hearings. We will fully respect the process. There will be ample opportunity for debate here and for debate during the course of committee, and we would welcome input from Ontarians.

I would be surprised—and I've already chatted with the minister about this—if there weren't one or more amendments we need to make in order to further improve the quality of the bill itself.

I must also say, time is of the essence. This economy is struggling. We want to create 50,000 new, clean, green jobs. We want to get our hands on clean electricity. We

want to do more to fight climate change. So we're moving ahead, but we'll respect the process.

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Premier, what we're saying to you is, we recognize too that this is a very important bill for the public. We want to make sure that the public and the stakeholders, who obviously have a keen interest in this legislation, have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the bill, an opportunity that you and your members have had for months and months and months. If we are to have a substantive debate on second reading, we are asking you to allow time to send it out and get the feedback from the public in order to ensure that this bill, when it is finally passed, will indeed address the concerns and be the best it possibly can be. Will you agree to send it out after first reading?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I want to say again that we intend to respect the process. There will be debate in this House. There will be committee hearings. We're going beyond that; we're posting this on the website of the Environmental Bill of Rights.

I want to remind my colleagues that many of the important elements found in our new Green Energy Act were found in their own platform in the 2007 campaign.

This is a very important piece of public policy; we agree on that. We think that time is of the essence. We need to get going with this. We need to do more to get clean electricity. We need to do more in the fight against climate change. We need to do more to create jobs for Ontario families.

We will respect the process and we'll move forward at the same time.

#### CHILD PROTECTION

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, almost a quarter of the 90 deaths of children who died in care were in northern Ontario, although northern Ontario only represents about 7% of the population.

Commissioner Goudge reports that families who have lost children in First Nations communities never heard from the coroners about the cause of the children's deaths or the location of their children's remains, an issue that the Coroner's Act is trying to address.

Will your government commit to further changes to the legislation to ensure that the advocate for children and youth has access to the information he needs on the deaths of children in northern Ontario and in First Nations communities?

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

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** A very, very important question was asked. I want to assure everyone in this House and I want to assure the people of Ontario that there is very, very good dialogue taking place between the Office of the Chief Coroner and the child advocate. They have met and they are certainly establishing that protocol that is very important to establish. Both have very important

tasks to perform. I have assurances that there will be that constant dialogue necessary with regard to the Goudge report and the Goudge legislation. I look forward to that process taking place and I look forward to suggestions from the office of the child advocate with regard to recommendations he may have.

1110

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** In northern Ontario there are 15 child welfare agencies and about a dozen youth justice facilities, some working in First Nations, where there is a significant shortage of children's services. The advocate for children and youth office has only had the capacity to hire one staff person to deal with all the calls for a region as vast as northern Ontario. Will the Premier commit today to additional funding so that the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth can adequately fulfill its mandate to northern communities?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** With regard to the question as it pertains to my ministry, let me reassure the people of the province of Ontario that that dialogue between the office of the child advocate and the Office of the Chief Coroner is a healthy dialogue. It is a respectful dialogue. It will be an ongoing dialogue. We will ensure that the necessary protocols are in place so that, respecting the limitations we all have with regard to privacy regulations, that exchange of information will take place. I want to assure the people of Ontario, with regard to the Office of the Chief Coroner and the office of the child advocate, that there has been and there will continue to be excellent dialogue between the two.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Sophia Aggelonitis:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Nearly two years ago, the Toronto Star reported that this government was unable to provide Ontarians with an adequate number of bariatric surgeries, also known as gastric bypass surgeries. The paper reported that the lack of services was forcing many patients to go to the United States to receive the needed procedure. At the time the article was written, the Minister of Health's predecessor acknowledged that Ontarians had limited access to bariatric surgeries. He said, "That's not ideal and that's why we're ramping programs up."

I ask the new Minister of Health to tell this House what is being done to increase access to bariatric surgeries in Ontario. Has this government made good on its pledge to add more capacity to current bariatric programs?

**Hon. David Caplan:** I want to thank the member for Hamilton Mountain for the question. I'm very pleased to inform the House that over the next three years our government will be increasing bariatric surgery capacity in the province of Ontario by 500%. We're making it possible with a \$75-million investment that will help us to increase the number of bariatric surgeries at four centres of excellence across the province. Combined,

these centres currently provide 244 surgeries per year. By 2011-12 they should be performing 1,470 surgeries annually. Both St. Joseph's Healthcare and Hamilton Health Sciences in my honourable colleague's riding will form the hub of these centres of excellence. By increasing access to bariatric surgery, we're ensuring that more Ontarians can get this needed procedure without having to cross the border to the United States of America.

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

**Ms. Sophia Aggelonitis:** This is good news for my constituents and all Ontarians. There is a significant demand for bariatric surgery across the province, so I am so glad to hear that more Ontarians have access, especially at St. Joe's in Hamilton.

Though bariatric surgery will no doubt help some Ontarians avoid the prolonged effects of some diseases, it is probably not the most appropriate medical treatment for all. I ask the Minister of Health, other than increasing access to bariatric surgery, what initiatives has this government put in place to help Ontarians fight and prevent chronic illnesses?

**Hon. David Caplan:** A very insightful question from the member opposite. As health minister, preventing and managing the spread of chronic diseases is one of the top priorities that I've identified. That's why, back in July, I launched the diabetes strategy for the province of Ontario. Our effort to expand access to bariatric surgery is just one part of a \$741-million strategy which is comprehensive in nature. The strategy includes public education—that's really key—expanded services, a registry, expansion of the insulin pump program and the expansion of chronic kidney disease services.

Every year, for example, we're giving over 1,300 adults with type 1 diabetes free insulin pumps and supplies under the new Ontario program. We're paying 100% of the price of that pump—that's \$6,300—and providing an annual grant of \$2,400 to help Ontarians with diabetes pay for supplies. We've nearly tripled diabetes funding since—

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

#### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** My question is for the Premier. In November 2008, Ontario slipped into have-not status. Since then, we have lost a further 135,000 jobs. As it stands, Ontario has the lowest private sector job creation in all of Canada, but we have created more public sector jobs than all other provinces combined. This is clearly an unsustainable relationship.

Premier, you set us up for economic trouble. Do you now realize how you've squandered the good times?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We're getting a little glimmer of the position that has secretly, and perhaps of late not so secretly, been adopted by the Conservative Party when it comes to how best to address the recession. We know they don't support our massive investments in infrastructure: our new schools, new hospitals, new roads

and new bridges, public transit and the thousands and thousands of jobs. We know they don't support the massive investments we've made in education and all those young people getting more opportunities to pursue higher skills and education. We know they don't support those things.

What they really support is cuts. That's what they support. They want fewer nurses. They want fewer teachers. They want fewer water inspectors. They want fewer protections for the people of Ontario. They want fewer reliable public services for Ontario families. I'm glad to see they're now taking it out from under the table and putting it on top of the table. Their response to the recession: cut services to families.

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

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Same old same old. In 2003, you inherited a strong, vibrant economy, like a baseball pitcher coming into a baseball game with a big lead, but you've blown the lead with stifling taxes and burdensome red tape. In the five years of a booming economy, your government has created as many private sector jobs as our PC government did in one year. The PC government created more than one million new jobs. We averaged 135,000 new private sector jobs per year, the same number that you've lost in the last three months. On top of all that, we in Ontario have to bear the blame of being a have-not province. Premier, how can you boast about your accomplishments when all the figures point to failure?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, just so we're clear, they don't support our investments in infrastructure and the thousands of jobs that creates. They don't support our investments in skills and education and the new opportunities that creates for our young people. They don't support our \$1 billion invested so far into over 1,000 research and commercialization projects to create the jobs of the future. I'm surprised that they don't support our cuts to business taxes, growing to \$3 billion, and they don't support our partnerships with businesses, which have landed over \$8 billion in investments and 9,000 jobs.

With respect to our public servants, we have the fewest civil servants per capita in the country. Notwithstanding that, their answer—once again, for Ontarians to hear loudly and clearly—to the recession: cut public services; cut public services. We're not going to go there. If you want to talk about a one-trick pony, you'll see it; it's that side of the House.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Last night at a rally in Hamilton, more than 700 health care workers and their supporters raised serious concerns about the state of the health care cuts. Underfunding by this government has caused health care cuts in Hamilton, resulting in the loss of 400 nursing and hospital jobs, speech and language services, the Baby's Best Start program, rehab beds and \$21 million from Hamilton Health Sciences.

**1120**

In Hamilton yesterday, the minister was quoted as saying that the government has increased hospital funding by 32% since 2003. If that's the case, why are these cuts happening? And why are Hamilton hospitals carrying million-dollar deficits? You're sending mixed messages, Minister.

**Hon. David Caplan:** The only mixed message is coming from the member opposite. Hospital funding has increased 32% over the course of five years. That's in stark contrast from what we've seen under both previous governments. In fact, we've seen under the NDP government 3,000 nurses fired in the province of Ontario, and over 6,000 fired by Conservatives. Over 10,000 nurses have been hired by the province of Ontario since 2003, and I'm very proud of that fact.

We've seen other wonderful advances: the innovation of family health teams, nurse-practitioner-led clinics. We've seen a \$1.1-billion aging-at-home strategy. I think this member needs to get his facts correct. Health care spending has increased and that's only going to continue in the province. I know that health care now accounts for 46 cents out of every program dollar spent in Ontario, and that is only going to increase.

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** That's an amazing comment. We've already lost our emergency room. In addition to that loss and these devastating cuts, funding for 70 transitional beds is running out. Housekeeping and food services are threatened with contracting out. Our fertility clinic is being privatized, and we all know that privatization of any health care costs means more money. When will this minister and the government wake up to the health care funding crisis and properly fund Hamilton hospitals and the health care system in this province and stop quoting numbers that don't apply to areas?

**Hon. David Caplan:** A little truth in advertising: It was the NDP government that delisted fertility services in the province of Ontario. So if you have any problems, I say to the member opposite, talk to Hampton, Kormos and Marchese, who were all a part of that government which did so.

But based upon data from Statistics Canada's labour force survey, employment in Ontario's hospitals increased from 177,300 people in 2003, to 208,400 in 2008, producing a gain of 31,100 jobs. That represents an increase of approximately 7%.

I would encourage the member to get in touch with the reality as opposed to his ideological rhetoric and look at the true facts and the true state of health care in the province of Ontario. Unfortunately, my friend opposite is oblivious and out of touch with—

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

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. David Oraziotti:** My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines regarding the growth plan for northern Ontario. As a representative

from northern Ontario, I understand the importance of creating a long-term strategic plan that will strengthen and enhance our government's commitment to improving the northern economy. While our government continues to make unprecedented investments in green energy projects and the traditional resource sector, as well as in health care, education and infrastructure renewal, we recognize there's more to be done. That's why we're working on a plan to be developed by northerners for northerners.

Last spring, residents from the region were invited to provide input on the discussion paper released by your ministry. In May, I had the privilege of hosting the consultation session focused on the discussion paper in Sault Ste. Marie, which included community leaders and representatives from business, industry, research and the academic sectors. Minister, could you please elaborate on the consultation process for the northern Ontario growth plan that is taking place across the province?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm very grateful for the question from the hard-working member from Sault Ste. Marie. Certainly, the growth plan process has been going very well, and I'm pleased to tell members of the Legislature more about it. From November 2008 until even this month, February, my ministry and the Ontario Growth Secretariat held 13 technical sessions all across the north. The focus of these sessions has included health, transportation, alternative energy, mining, education and training, value-added forestry, bioeconomy, agriculture, tourism, aboriginal economic development and business. In addition, from some of the feedback we've received, we've added two sessions on the rural economy, very important ones, one plan for the northeast and one for the northwest. The fact is, these one-day facilitated workshops have been a very positive experience. They've provided an opportunity for participants to discuss the key policy directives with growth planning. And I want to talk about the Think North Summit, but I will perhaps talk about that in my supplementary.

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

**Mr. David Oraziatti:** I think all northerners would agree a growth plan for this region is very important. Northern Ontario faces many unique opportunities and challenges during both favourable and difficult economic times, and it's good to see that during this current period of uncertainty, our government is working with northerners to create a more prosperous future for the region.

Minister, the technical sessions will provide the government with valuable ideas for the growth plan, while the Think North Summit is also proving to be a valuable tool for the region in drafting this plan. I understand from those who attended, including Sault Ste. Marie's mayor, John Rowswell, that feedback was very positive, but could you provide further information for the House on this important conference?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thank you again to the member from Sault Ste. Marie. Indeed, the Think North Summit, which was held in Thunder Bay earlier in the month, was an extremely positive experience and very

much a real success. In fact, people were describing it as inspiring, and I found it that way myself.

The purpose of Think North was to broaden our thinking and to inspire the way that we approach issues by bringing together participants with national and international leaders, who were remarkable, along with myself and my co-chair of the northern growth plan, Minister Smitherman. We also had Minister Cansfield and Minister Duguid, who were there attending the summit, so it was wonderful to have that support. As well, there were over 400 northerners participating, which included large urban mayors, rural mayors, First Nations leadership, industry and business representatives, representation from all major educational institutions, research networks and NGOs. We believe the summit will build on input received through these regional sessions and the technical tables to shape the draft growth plan. We look forward to—

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

#### CHILD PROTECTION

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Yesterday, you told this House that the number of deaths of children in care has remained constant since 1991. Minister, you also told us that you have increased the number of children's aid staff by 20% since you took office. Will you tell us how it is that the number of staff can increase, yet the number of deaths does not decline at all?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I welcome the opportunity to actually clarify some of the misinformation that is out there surrounding the number of 90. I think it's important that the members of this Legislature take their leadership roles seriously and actually refer to the facts. The fact of the matter is that only 14 of the 90 children—and I stress that every death is a tragedy—were actually in the care of children's aid societies at the time of their deaths.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Minister, that was the information you gave us yesterday that I've used in my question to you, and I think that the important thing here is the fact that there should be no more important goal for you and your ministry than the lives and the health of our children. Clearly, regardless of the comment that you make today about the description of the category of these deaths, you are not meeting this goal. So I'm asking you today to commit to studying why the number of children dying in care is what it is, and report back to this House with your findings.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I can assure the member opposite that there is nothing more important than the protection of children in this province, especially the children who are under the protection of the children's aid societies. Those are our children and it is our responsibility to keep them safe. That is why we review the reports from the coroner every time there is a death. We follow up with recommendations every time. Again, I would refer you to the coroner's report to see the details

of what we have done. The coroner himself does acknowledge the work that we have done to reduce the number of deaths.

I think it's important to take this opportunity to talk about the deaths due to unsafe sleeping arrangements of infants. It is a big problem, not just among kids who are—

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

## HOSPITAL SECURITY

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. CBC broke a story about an assault occurring at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. A husband and wife claim to have been assaulted by security guards at the hospital. The man received three broken ribs and a punctured lung from the beating and had to spend three days in a different hospital. A nurse working with Toronto homeless people came forward claiming another brutal assault on a homeless man by hospital staff at St. Michael's. These are troubling allegations.

The minister was at St. Michael's Hospital last week. Can the minister share with this House how he addressed the beatings while at St. Michael's last week?

**Hon. David Caplan:** In fact, I was at St. Michael's Hospital last week to talk about setting standards for emergency department wait times and rolling out the next phase in our strategy.

I am familiar, at least cursorily, with the issue the member raises. The member should know that it is the subject of a police investigation. The member well knows that I am not in a position to be able to comment on matters that are the subject of a police investigation.

I can tell you that the hospital is fully co-operating with the police and has dealt with the security officials who were involved in the particular incident.

These are incredibly regrettable events. I do trust that our police have the proper ability, the skill, the knowledge and the tools at their disposal to properly address the issues that are in front of them. I know that—

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Well, it feels like this issue is not on the minister's radar. If the minister took those beatings of aboriginal people in a hospital seriously, he would have raised those issues while he was at St. Michael's last week. The minister had a chance to tell the administration that these actions are unacceptable. By ignoring those troubling incidents when he had a chance to raise them, the minister sends a loud message. His silence is sending a loud message.

Will the minister guarantee in this House today that these kinds of incidents will stop at St. Michael's and in all other hospitals in Ontario?

**Hon. David Caplan:** I completely reject the premise of the member's question. She knows that I'm unable to comment on a matter subject to a police investigation;

her suggestion otherwise is perhaps some of the lowest political commentary we've seen in this House in a great long time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The time for question period has ended.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1132 to 1500.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I am rising today in absolute disappointment about the disgrace called the MRI wait times in the city of Ottawa at the Ottawa Hospital. I want to know from the Premier and the health minister: Why does the Ottawa Hospital have the longest wait list for MRIs in this province? Ninety per cent of the people on that wait list are waiting for 360 days. That is almost a year. It is 12 times more than the provincial target, which is only 28 days. It is a disgrace.

Dr. Cushman, the chair of our local LHIN, told the Ottawa Sun and other media outlets that we need more MRIs in the city of Ottawa and we need to streamline hospital waiting lists. I want to know again: What is the Minister of Health going to do about this province-wide, nationwide embarrassment, and how is the minister going to ensure that those suffering are not going to have to wait one full year for an MRI because of this government's failure?

Yesterday the MPP from Ottawa Centre brought up concerns about ER wait times, and he said that his "constituents are no doubt concerned." I can tell you something: In response to that question, the Minister of Health did not respond to what I would call a near-crisis level on waiting for an MRI. I'm not the only person in this chamber who has seen a loved one suffer from a terminal illness. Sometimes people do not have 360 days to wait for an MRI.

### RIDING OF PETERBOROUGH

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I rise today to talk about something that is very near and dear to my heart: my riding of Peterborough. I was born and raised in Peterborough and have witnessed first-hand what a great community it is and what it has to offer.

With the Trent-Severn waterway running through its core, we boast one of the most picturesque landscapes in this province. Our new state-of-the-art hospital, funded through this government, is a pride and a welcomed addition to our community and the surrounding area it serves. Our schools offer youth in Peterborough every opportunity to be educated through modern technology and skilled teachers. We have a strong arts and cultural community and, of course, the world-famous Peterborough Petes hockey team. The businesses of Peterborough are owned and operated by award-winning men

and women. They promote local products within our area and around the world.

I invite all of my esteemed colleagues and their staff to join MPP Lou Rinaldi and me at our Peterborough-Northumberland-Quinte West Day at Queen's Park this Wednesday, February 25, from 2:30 to 6:30 pm. You'll be given the opportunity to speak to members of our business community and environmental organizations and our health care professionals and sample their excellent products.

I look forward to seeing all of you on Wednesday in committee rooms 228 and 230 for Peterborough-Northumberland-Quinte West Day.

### TOURISM

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Yesterday was Tourism Day here in the Legislature. I want to thank all the representatives of Ontario's tourism industry who came to share their ideas and concerns, and I hope the government is listening.

Two hundred thousand Ontario jobs are dependent on a strong and vibrant tourism industry. This is a \$22-billion industry. Its importance must be acknowledged and never underestimated. I wish the Minister of Tourism had announced something of substance yesterday, for, despite our many strengths, tourism has been affected in this time of extreme economic challenge. That's why it's so important that the government actually follow through on the advice it has received from the industry. Surely, the time for study is over and the time for action is now.

The government has been told repeatedly about the industry's immediate need for access to capital. Many operators need a line of credit in order to meet their payroll and invest in their properties and attractions. The government cannot ignore this need.

But through our hard work and ingenuity, I believe Ontario's future remains bright. I think of my riding of Wellington-Halton Hills. Through our popular festivals, our arts and culture, our scenic beauty, and our many restaurants, shops, hotels and B&Bs, we have so much to offer visitors and travellers.

The Ontario tourism industry is making great strides forward. They are planning, they are innovating, they are creating and sustaining jobs and they are showcasing the very best that our great province has to offer.

### HILLSIDE FESTIVAL

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** This is a wonderful follow-up to the member from Wellington-Halton Hills because I'm pleased to rise today to discuss tourism in my riding of Guelph.

The Hillside Festival, held outside every July at Guelph Lake, is one of Canada's great summer music experiences and has been a part of the Guelph community for over 20 years. Last year, with assistance from the Ministry of Tourism's Celebrate Ontario program, Hillside built on the great success of the annual July event by expanding their Hillside programming and

launched a winter version of the festival called Hillside Inside.

On February 7, I had the pleasure of attending the second annual Hillside Inside at the Sleeman Centre in downtown Guelph. The full-day, 10-hour music marathon event saw 11 performers, including local talent, as well as food and local craft vendors. The summer Hillside event attracts about 6,000 people to Guelph. The ability to build on that success with Hillside Inside during the winter is a brilliant opportunity to boost tourism all year round.

In addition to the Hillside events, the internationally renowned Guelph Jazz Festival has also benefited from the Ontario government's tourism grants in support of various festivals, events and attractions.

I'm delighted to invite everyone here to Hillside, Hillside Inside and the Guelph Jazz Festival.

### SUDBURY JAIL

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** On January 20 I toured the 80-year-old Sudbury jail, and I want to share with this House what I saw.

First off, the medical area: It was crammed with an old examination table and old medical instruments. It looked like a throwback in time; I couldn't believe it. The meds room had tiles missing; the rest of them were water-stained.

Then, the staff washroom. Picture this: three feet by five feet; the sink is rusted; the tap leaks; the vanity, or what's left of it, is completely rotten. The whole thing is disgusting.

The staff lunch room was no better. It has no ceiling because the roof has been leaking for the last seven years, and the counter was half missing.

The locker room had nothing but a bare light bulb on the ceiling. It was in need of a coat of paint and an air exchanger, let me tell you.

The whole place is old, musty, decrepit and demoralizing. I was shocked that the employees-only area is actually worse off than the cells area.

The job of a correctional officer is very stressful. If you're not at the top of your game, there is no way you can put in a full shift there. We need to give the staff at the jail opportunities to lessen their stress, take a break, use the washroom or make a cup of coffee in a clean, normal, non-stressful environment.

The minister in charge has been invited to tour the Sudbury jail; it is in his own riding. I urge him to do so. He treats his employees with respect and dignity? Well, the jail staff are his employees. They deserve respect and dignity also.

### WASTE DISPOSAL

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I rise today to inform you about an exciting accomplishment. Ontario's largest PCB storage site, which contains 78,000 tonnes of contaminated soil, is being cleaned up in my riding of London-

Fanshawe. PCBs are chemicals used as electronics lubricant; they were banned in 1977.

In the mid-1980s, PCB contamination found on several industrial properties and in Pottersburg Creek was cleaned up. Since then, the contamination waste has been safely and securely stored in the Pottersburg storage site. We now have the technology to safely destroy PCBs, and we are doing so in Quebec.

When I attended a public forum last Thursday at Fanshawe College, the company selected for the safe removal of the contamination waste informed local residents of the details of the project and how it will ensure the safety of the community. This storage site in London–Fanshawe will finally be rid of PCB waste in December.

I would like to recognize the Minister of the Environment for committing the \$63.5 million for this project and for effectively engaging and informing our community as it ensures that the project is completed.

1510

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise to bring up the issue of the Green Energy Act, Bill 150, which is scheduled to be debated this afternoon.

I ask the government—they have their last opportunity to do the right thing, which is to send the bill out after first reading to committee hearings to get public input. I say that because this is a complicated bill. It's making changes to many different acts.

The bill was just given to the opposition yesterday. Today is the first scheduled day of debate, and it's scheduled for pretty much every day this week. It's obvious from the e-mails we're receiving already that there are many concerns out there. I think the quality of the debate in second reading could be very much improved if the government took the time to let those interested stakeholders come before a committee and make their concerns known.

We already know that they're talking about a cost of some \$5 billion, and there are 4.2 million electricity customers, so that works out to about \$1,200 per customer. Certainly, we have questions to do with costs. We have questions about the mandatory energy audit, some \$300 per customer. Why not make it voluntary? That would seem to me to make more sense.

So I just say to the government, use your opportunity coming up in just a few minutes and send this bill to committee. The quality of the debate and the quality of the bill will be greatly improved if you do that.

HAZEL McCALLION

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** On Saturday, February 14, Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion celebrated her 88th birthday.

*Applause.*

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Thank you.

Mayor McCallion has served the city of Mississauga for almost a third of her life. During this time, the residents of Mississauga have seen their city grow into a booming metropolitan—Canada's sixth-largest—debt-free city. Even more impressive is that she has an approval rating of over 90%, which any member of this House can envy.

Serving in her 11th term, Mayor McCallion is a great role model and is an example to women all over Canada. She's a living example that with a positive attitude, drive and a strong will, one can accomplish anything at any age.

On behalf of the constituents of Mississauga–Brampton South, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mayor McCallion for her many years of service and wish her a very happy birthday.

#### HUMBER VALLEY SHARKS

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** We all know the important role that sport plays, not only in a healthier lifestyle but also in building a stronger community. The lessons taught through sport mean our youth learn the importance of good sportsmanship, as well as being active.

It is for this reason that I'm so happy to rise today to congratulate the Humber Valley Sharks minor peewee A team in my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore for having been selected as a Future Team Canada. This prestigious honour, bestowed on 13 teams from across Canada by Hockey Canada and the Wayne Gretzky Foundation, is awarded to the teams that show the best spirit of the game.

This year's selection of the Humber Valley Sharks was due in no small part to their efforts in supporting a local inner-city school. Indeed, while other teams were raising money to ensure that they could have better equipment and more ice time, the Humber Valley Sharks were organizing a used-equipment drive, where the players collected lightly used equipment to help others enjoy the game that they love.

My riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore is a vibrant, close-knit community, and it's actions like those of the Humber Valley Sharks that make it such an honour to represent.

The Future Team Canada program recognizes teams that realize the true value of sport, and there is no team more deserving of that recognition than Etobicoke–Lakeshore's own Humber Valley Sharks. Congratulations to the Sharks.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### ZERO TOLERANCE TO VIOLENCE ON PUBLIC TRANSIT ACT, 2009

##### LOI DE 2009 SUR LA TOLÉRANCE ZÉRO À L'ÉGARD DE LA VIOLENCE DANS LES TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 151, An Act to enhance public safety on public transit systems in Ontario / Projet de loi 151, Loi visant à améliorer la sécurité publique au sein des réseaux de transport en commun en Ontario.

**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. Mike Colle:** The short title of the bill is the Zero Tolerance to Violence on Public Transit Act. The bill makes it an offence to threaten, endanger, assault or otherwise harm any person, including passengers and transit system operators and other employees, on property that is part of a public transit system in Ontario. A maximum fine of \$50,000 or a term of imprisonment of two years less a day, or both, is provided where there is a conviction.

I hope that this bill will receive good consideration. We need a safe public transit system in Toronto and all across Ontario.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot items 68, 70, 71 and 72.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

### SELECT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice to appoint a committee and to report its observations and recommendations to the House.

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

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** This is rather lengthy, so if members would indulge me.

I move that a Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions be appointed to consider and report to the House its observations and recommendations with respect to a comprehensive Ontario mental health and addictions strategy. In developing such recommendations, the committee will:

—work with consumers/survivors, providers, experts and other interested parties to determine the needs that currently exist in the province

—consider the mental health and addiction needs of children and young adults

—consider the mental health and addiction needs of First Nations (on- and off-reserve), Inuit and Metis peoples

—consider the mental health needs and addiction needs of seniors

—identify ways to leverage existing opportunities and initiatives within the current mental health and addictions system

—explore innovative approaches to service delivery in the community

—identify opportunities to improve coordination and integration across the sectors for all people including those with concurrent mental health and addiction problems

—recognize the importance of early intervention and health promotion with respect to diagnosing and treating mental health and addictions issues

—consider the mental health and addiction needs of francophone and ethnic minorities facing linguistic and cultural gaps

—examine access to care issues for persons with mental health and addictions issues including primary and emergency care

—examine the existing continuum of social services and support for those with mental health and addictions issues. This would include justice, supportive housing, education and vocational support.

That the committee may present or, if the House is not sitting, may release by depositing with the Clerk of the House, interim reports; and

That the committee shall present or, if the House is not sitting, shall release by depositing with the Clerk of the House, its final report to the assembly by the end of the spring 2010 sitting period as prescribed in standing order 6(a)(i), except that if the committee determines more time is required it may, by motion, extend this deadline by no more than three months.

**1520**

That the committee have authority to meet at the call of the Chair, to call for persons, papers and things, to employ counsel and staff and, as the committee deems relevant to its terms of reference, to commission reports and adjourn from place to place, subject to the normal budget approval from the Board of Internal Economy; and

That in the event of and notwithstanding any prorogation of the House before the presentation of the committee's final report, the committee shall be deemed to be continued to the subsequent session or sessions and may continue to meet during any such prorogation; and

That the committee may examine any other matter it deems relevant to its terms of reference; and

That the committee be composed of the following members, representing six from the government, two from the official opposition and one from the third party:

Mr. Flynn (Chair), Mrs. Elliott (Vice-Chair), Mr. Balkissoon, Mrs. Van Bommel, Mr. Leal, Mrs. Sandals, Ms. Jaczek, Ms. Jones and M<sup>me</sup>. Gélinas.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Phillips has moved that a Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions be appointed to consider and report to the House its observations and recommendations with respect to a comprehensive Ontario mental health and addictions strategy. In developing such recommendations, the committee will:

—work with consumers/survivors—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

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

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

*Motion agreed to.*

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot item 74.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

#### PETITIONS

##### MULTIPLE MYELOMA

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Health Canada has approved the use of Revlimid for patients with multiple myeloma, an incurable form of cancer; and

“Whereas Revlimid is a vital new treatment that must be accessible to all patients in Ontario for this life-threatening cancer of the blood cells; and

“Whereas multiple myeloma is treatable with the proper therapies, thereby giving hope to the 2,000 Canadians diagnosed annually;

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

“Immediately provide Revlimid as a choice for patients with multiple myeloma and their health care providers in Ontario through public funding.”

I want to give it to page Alexander.

##### WORKPLACE INSURANCE

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a petition to do with Bill 119. It reads:

“Whereas the McGuinty government has introduced Bill 119, Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act, 2008, which makes WSIB mandatory for independ-

ent operators, partners and executive officers in construction; and

“Whereas this bill will cost the average business owner about \$11,000 while doing nothing to catch cheaters in the underground economy; and

“Whereas this bill will do nothing to make workers safer in the workplace; and

“Whereas there has been insufficient consultation with construction companies and stakeholders to discuss the impact of this bill or other alternatives; and

“Whereas the McGuinty government refuses to allow discussion of this bill with the affected parties through the committee process;

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

“To revoke Bill 119 or to require the Standing Committee on Social Policy to travel across the province of Ontario in order to provide an opportunity for consultation with affected businesses.”

I support this petition.

##### MULTIPLE MYELOMA

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Health Canada has approved the use of Revlimid for patients with multiple myeloma, an incurable form of cancer; and

“Whereas Revlimid is a vital new treatment that must be accessible to all patients in Ontario for this life-threatening cancer of the blood cells; and

“Whereas multiple myeloma is treatable with the proper therapies, thereby giving hope to the 2,000 Canadians diagnosed annually;

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

“Immediately provide Revlimid as a choice for patients with multiple myeloma and their health care providers in Ontario through public funding.”

As I support this petition I will be signing it and sending it with page Xiao.

##### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I have a petition entitled Stop the Violence on Public Transit.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas too many innocent people are being victimized by acts of violence while using public transit;

“Whereas too many public transit employees are being victimized by acts of violence while working to serve the public;

“Whereas we need to send a strong message of zero tolerance for violence on public transit;

“Whereas anyone harming or carrying a weapon on public transit should be dealt with by the full force of the law;

“Whereas public transit riders and workers have the right to ride and work on public transit free of violence, intimidation and harm;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to put an end to violence on public transit and totally support MPP Mike Colle’s private member’s bill to crack down on violence on public transit.”

I fully support that petition and affix my name to it.

#### CHILD CUSTODY

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** I have a petition from a number of residents in my riding and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“We, the people of Ontario, deserve and have the right to request an amendment to the Children’s Law Reform Act to emphasize the importance of children’s relationships with their parents and grandparents.

“Whereas subsection 20(2.1) requires parents and others with custody of children to refrain from unreasonably placing obstacles to personal relations between the children and their grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 24(2) contains a list of matters that a court must consider when determining the best interests of a child. The bill amends that subsection to include a specific reference to the importance of maintaining emotional ties between children and grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 24(2.1) requires a court that is considering custody of or access to a child to give effect to the principle that a child should have as much contact with each parent and grandparent as is consistent with the best interests of the child; and

“Whereas subsection 24(2.2) requires a court that is considering custody of a child to take into consideration each applicant’s willingness to facilitate as much contact between the child and each parent and grandparent as is consistent with the best interests of the child;

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the Children’s Law Reform Act as above to emphasize the importance of children’s relationships with their parents and grandparents.”

As I support this, I shall sign it and send it to the Clerk’s table.

#### BATHURST HEIGHTS ADULT LEARNING CENTRE

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I’ve got a petition from the students at the Bathurst Heights Adult Learning Centre.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there are over 2,000 adult ESL students being served by the Bathurst Heights Adult Learning Centre, operated by the Toronto District School Board...;

“Whereas this is the only ... ESL learning centre in this area ... located directly on the ... subway...;

“Whereas newcomers in Toronto, and in the Lawrence Heights area, need the Bathurst Heights Adult Learning Centre...;

“Whereas the proposed revitalization of Lawrence Heights threatens the existence of the centre;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, demand that any revitalization of Lawrence Heights include a newcomer centre and ensure that the Bathurst Heights centre continues to exist in the present location.”

I support the petition and affix my name to it.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### GREEN ENERGY AND GREEN ECONOMY ACT, 2009

##### LOI DE 2009 SUR L’ÉNERGIE VERTE ET L’ÉCONOMIE VERTE

Mr. Smitherman moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 150, An Act to enact the Green Energy Act, 2009 and to build a green economy, to repeal the Energy Conservation Leadership Act, 2006 and the Energy Efficiency Act and to amend other statutes / Projet de loi 150, Loi édictant la Loi de 2009 sur l’énergie verte et visant à développer une économie verte, abrogeant la Loi de 2006 sur le leadership en matière de conservation de l’énergie et la Loi sur le rendement énergétique et modifiant d’autres lois.

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

**Hon. George Smitherman:** It is for me a great privilege to stand in this House and to have an opportunity to move forward this debate and, more importantly, to move forward this issue on behalf of the good people of the province of Ontario. We have an opportunity here, motivated by our desire to help the climate and to get more jobs for Ontarians, to move forward with a comprehensive, bold and ambitious package of reforms that will at once create an environment here in our province that allows more renewable energy to come to life, and to create a culture of conservation in our province.

**1530**

On the renewable side, we will: adopt an attractive feed-in tariff regime, a pricing system for renewable energy that will guarantee rates and help spark new investment in renewable energy and generation, and increase investor confidence and provide them with certainty; establish the right to connect to the electricity grid for renewable projects and establish a streamlined approvals process, including providing service guarantees for renewable energy projects; and, in my own ministry, to make sure this comes to life, a renewable energy facilitator who will assist in making all of this happen.

We’ve seen great opportunities, even in the short number of hours since this bill was first introduced, to

see a culture of conservation and a discussion about conservation emerging. We want to be a North American leader on energy efficiency standards for household appliances, including the efficient use of energy.

At the beginning, I was to say that I'll be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistants, the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore and the member for Ottawa–Orléans. My apologies.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Not a problem.

**Hon. George Smitherman:** Thank you.

The issue of conservation is an issue that has already been hotly debated, and which is an amazingly powerful debate unto itself about mandatory home energy audits prior to the sale of homes, making energy efficiency a central tenet of the Ontario building code. In greening the Ontario government buildings and broader public sector buildings, we have opportunities to demonstrate our own leadership, and this is what this act is all about. I'm very excited to have the privilege of doing so, especially for the promise that it offers at a time when "economic crisis" are the watchwords of the day. This is about an opportunity to harness the capacity that Mother Nature provides to us and, at the same time, to offer new job opportunities for 50,000 people in Ontario over the next three years.

Over the course of this debate, we will have an opportunity to demonstrate more how people ranging from architects to truck drivers, manufacturers and engineers, will have the opportunity for additional employment. But I want to talk a little bit about some of the regional focus associated with economic opportunities.

Economic opportunities for northern Ontario: As one example in northeastern Ontario, indeed in northwestern Ontario as well, there is a tremendous array of renewable energy and of opportunities for economic benefits for folks, including aboriginals and First Nations communities. But at the moment, transmission limitations mean that we can't get any additional power south of Sudbury. We'll seek to address that by making important early investments in additional transmission. This opens the door for investment in renewable energy.

We see opportunities in our rural communities for farmers, not just to lease their land for big companies that are the proponents of wind farms, but indeed for clusters of farmers to see themselves as investors in projects.

When I travelled to Denmark, I had the opportunity to witness a mindset of co-operatives. In one municipality, 8,000 people lived in the municipality and more than 800 of them were investors in one renewable energy project. When more people in local communities have the opportunity to make investments and to derive benefits, they are much more likely to want to support and embrace the opportunities that this bill is going to offer.

We see opportunities, people knocking on the door in urban areas and saying, "How can we participate in the emergence of more green energy in our jurisdictions, in our local neighbourhoods?" As a representative of an urban area, I want to see the rooftops of my riding come to life in a fashion that, instead of reflecting the sun,

which is unhelpful, sees them used to harness the sun. I want to see our mindset with respect to our energy system in the province of Ontario emerge from the one-way street, where our mindset is that we have big plants that develop energy and the energy flows down through wires to homes and to businesses. Instead, we want those very homes and businesses and the roofs of schools, too, to emerge as new parts of microgeneration. All across the landscape, we have the opportunity to unlock thousands and thousands of new investors, people who are motivated by the twin desires, on the one hand, to make a difference for the climate, and on the other, to make a difference in the economic texture of their communities, to put bread on the table for their families. That is the opportunity that is presented in this piece of legislation, which I think has been described today as a bold piece of legislation.

Earlier today, instead of discussions about content, we've seen one party in this Legislature resort to discussions about process. Let me just detail the way the process is going to unfold.

Over the course of the coming weeks, the detailed provisions of the Green Energy Act will be subjected to, I'm sure, a great debate here and a review by a committee of the Legislature. We look forward to hearing from colleagues. As I have said, and as the Premier has said, we look forward to the opportunity to gain insights that will allow us to strengthen our bill.

The bill, as of today, will be posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights for 30 days for public comment, and we encourage people to look for such opportunities to do so.

I really did find some of the opposition critiques to be a little bit inconsistent.

On February 17, as we returned to this Legislature, the member for Niagara West–Glanbrook said, "I say to the minister, it is time for action." Later on, he said, "Minister, at this time of economic crisis, Ontario needs a strong leader in the Premier's office. Enough of his musings: It's time for action." On February 23, the same member from Niagara West–Glanbrook said, "When are we going to see some action to revive our economy?"

And today, in response to the introduction of a piece of legislation by our government, we had cries of protest from the opposition, with people saying that they weren't ready for the debate, that the comprehensive nature of the bill, its boldness, was so challenging.

I really want to say to the opposition party, when you stand and lead questions day after day and you say, "We demand action," and then, when a government stands up with a set of initiatives that are bold, you say, "Oh, we're not ready for such action"—we are elected members of the Legislature, sent here by our constituents to participate in the most timely matters of public discussion. What more timely matter of public discussion could we find than the desire, on the one hand, to impact the climate positively and, on the other, to impact the economic circumstances for our families?

We had the official opposition in the province of Ontario today throwing up their arms and saying, "No,

we're not ready for such a discussion. Let's put it out to the people, because we're elected representatives of the people, but we cannot get our heads wrapped around it."

Instead, we say, as a government, this is an important initiative, reflected by the fact that it's called today for second reading, and we will be working to have a good debate in this place and to seek to learn things about how we can improve our bill through the legislative process.

One of the initiatives that has been addressed in this Legislature, even in the short time since the bill was introduced, is the issue of domestic content.

I want to refer people to schedule B, subsection 25.35(2) of the proposed legislation, under "Minister's Directives." It says:

"The minister may issue, and the OPA shall follow in preparing its feed-in tariff program, directives that set out the goals to be achieved during the period to be covered by the program, including goals relating to,

"(a) the participation by aboriginal peoples in the development and establishment of renewable energy projects."

We see an opportunity for First Nations communities to be in on the ground floor of projects, to have resources contributed to the development of such projects and to find opportunities for First Nations to reap some of the financial rewards.

The directives also say, "(b) the involvement of members of the local community in the development and establishment of renewable energy projects."

We see opportunities all across the landscape for local communities, not just to be host to such projects, but, as I spoke of regarding Denmark, we see opportunities for people to be investors in such projects.

And under minister's directive (c), including goals relating to domestic content, I've been clear in this House to say that Ontario will be moving forward to establish domestic content rules that will ensure that as new wind turbines come to life in the province of Ontario, the steelmakers of Sault Ste. Marie and Hamilton will have the opportunity to feel a sense of pride that the work they have done through their hands and through their efforts is holding aloft wind turbines that are harnessing what Mother Nature has to offer. These are the opportunities that are presented in this bill.

We heard the member from Burlington today comparing this piece of legislation to the War Measures Act. This is what the opposition has resorted to: the images of the War Measures Act. Language contained in the bill, that has been adopted from a Conservative bill introduced in 2002, is there to ensure compliance on mandatory matters. I say to the member from Burlington, take a good, hard look at the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002. She will see the origins of the language that she, today, compared to the War Measures Act.

We've seen an extraordinary capitulation in the last 24 hours on the part of the opposition critic on the matter of his commitment and his party's commitment to renewable energy. Yesterday in the Legislature, the honourable member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke stood up

and said in response to my minister's statement, "There's no question that conservation is important. No watt, no kilowatt, no megawatt, should ever be wasted. I can tell the minister, and I've told his predecessor, that several years ago my wife and I, along with our children, embarked on a program to conserve energy in our own home. We reduced our usage in our home by 40%.... I think that is an important thing, and I think there are some gains to be made out there today in that part of this act."

**1540**

That was yesterday, and that's a long time ago in the history of policy-making on the part of the official opposition, because earlier today the same member, the opposition critic for energy from the riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, had capitulated entirely, not only on the statement he made yesterday but on the very campaign platform upon which he ran and was elected.

The 2007 Conservative election platform: "Requiring home energy audits before every sale of a house so that the market will reward homes which are energy efficient. This will be a signal to homeowners that they will get a return on energy investments in their homes." And by today, in a media scrum not 50 feet from where I stand right now, the honourable member, the energy critic for the official opposition, said no longer does the Conservative Party stand in favour of something that was unanimously endorsed in private members' debate on the floor of this very Legislature.

We have a fascinating opportunity over the course of the next weeks and months to send a message to the world that Ontario seeks to be North America's leading jurisdiction for the development of renewable energy and to do a much better job of taking advantage of the innate desire on the part of individuals to use less electricity. We know that One Million Acts of Green have been registered with the CBC. We know that something more than 80% of people have indicated that in their homes they've at least gone to the point of changing light bulbs. We know that people participated by the hundreds of thousands and took pride in their actions associated with Earth Hour. We know that the Green Energy Act introduced by our government yesterday offers a bold opportunity for Ontario to take a leap forward, to harness the resources that Mother Nature offers to us for free, to harness those in a fashion that takes advantage of the opportunities to give Ontarians, at a time when they desperately need them, more economic opportunities and more jobs.

I encourage all members through the course of this debate to bring the values of the people they represent to this discussion. I'm quite certain, if they do so, we'll be able to gain unanimous support for the Green Energy Act, moving Ontario forward as a leader in North America for the generation of renewable energy and helping to create a culture of conservation which will allow us all to do the right thing and take it easier on Mother Nature.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Ottawa-Orléans.

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I rise today to speak in my capacity as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. I want to begin my remarks about the proposed Green Energy and Green Economy Act by taking a moment to speak about the role of government, about the obligations we bear to meet the challenges of today while helping prepare for a better tomorrow. That is a fundamental test of good government, of wise government, of forward-looking government, and that is the test we have attempted to meet in drafting this act.

It is a plan for today, one that, if passed, would help create badly needed jobs and boost economic activity, one that would immediately encourage the expansion of renewable energy, one that would further encourage a culture of conservation and focus on energy efficiency. Yet it is also a plan for tomorrow, one that, if passed, would position Ontario as North America's green economy leader, one that would help to create well-paying, sustainable jobs for years to come, one that would help us create a future that is both more prosperous and more environmentally responsible.

We have heard already from the Premier and Deputy Premier. They have spoken about the broad benefits of this approach and, as well, the risks of failing to act. Accordingly, I want to focus my remarks on the specifics of the proposed legislation. In particular, I want to talk about the steps we propose to foster a new culture of conservation across the province of Ontario, to create incentives in the place of disincentives, to equip individual Ontarians rather than burden them, to encourage energy efficiency rather than waste. These proposed measures can be divided into two categories: what we would do to help at the local level and what we would do within the provincial public sector.

Let me start with the local.

First, we would establish mandatory electricity conservation targets for local distribution companies, those that act as local electricity providers, otherwise known as LDCs. If passed, the act would grant the minister the authority to issue directives to require targets be set, financial incentives be provided and accountability be required to encourage LDCs to design and deliver electricity conservation programs. Given the direct relationship between LDCs and individual users, this would ensure the creation and delivery of better programs and tools to households and businesses, with the assistance of the Ontario Power Authority.

Second, a priority near and dear to my heart is the need to bring an emphasis on energy efficiency at the local and even individual household level. One of the greatest obstacles is understanding. Talk to Ontarians about conservation and energy efficiency and you get a crystal clear response: "We're in. Now what do we do?" To that end, we would enshrine energy efficiency as a defining principle of the Ontario building code. This would help ensure that current best practices incorporated by most of our province's best builders become formalized. This provision would be subject to a five-year

review to ensure that we keep current with emerging sector trends. In addition, an advisory council would be established to give the government expert advice and counsel on an ongoing basis.

Next, we would work to designate Energy Star levels as the standard for the major common household appliances and, by doing so, continue to take a leadership position in North American standards for energy efficiency. Ontario's families are keen for clear direction when it comes to making an individual contribution to energy efficiency. This will do just that.

Finally, we would move to make home energy audits mandatory prior to home sales. This is an issue that I have personally championed for some time—introducing a private member's bill last fall entitled the Home Energy Rating Act. It is a provision that I have great confidence would encourage important investments in energy efficiency, among both homeowners and prospective sellers. This initiative has been endorsed widely—by the Green Energy Act Alliance, the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors, and many others. It would ensure that owners, realtors, sellers and buyers have detailed and accurate information on the energy efficiency of their homes. Armed with such understanding, it would be natural for many Ontarians to then take the next step and invest in retrofits and improvements. The result would be a win-win: homes that make better use of energy, and a helpful boost to economic activity in the home building and renovation sector.

These measures at the individual and local level would be complemented by leadership at the provincial level. Let me highlight three specific ways we will do this.

First, we would green all Ontario government and public sector buildings. We would invest in retrofits and energy efficiency. We would conserve more, waste less, and set an example through action. Under the proposed act, those with responsibility across the provincial government and the broader public sector would be required to prepare detailed conservation targets and plans for improvement. We would start with the government's directly held building stock and then, over time, expand to include our hospitals, schools and universities.

Second, we have consulted widely and have been told clearly that government programs and agencies require better alignment. Over the years, initiatives have been undertaken on an iterative and sometimes ad hoc basis. We have lacked the sort of integrated discipline that the proposed act would guarantee, if passed. Accordingly, we would reduce the maze that discourages green energy producers, users and individual Ontarians by better structuring our own operations and agencies.

Under the proposed act, all activities in this respect would be coordinated and conducted within the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, through the renewable energy facilitator, who will help proponents developing renewable projects better understand the approvals process. This may sound like housekeeping, but don't for a moment mistake it as unimportant. These changes would produce a sharper focus, more responsive programming and increased accountability.

I realize my time is short, and I'm anxious to hear from others on all sides of the House about this signature legislative initiative, so permit me to conclude on two points.

First, I want to emphasize the confidence I feel that Ontario can seize this moment and foster a true culture of conservation. In truth, we believe that Ontarians are anxious to embrace this change: to adopt energy efficiency as the rule, rather than the exception. Our challenge is to put in place policies that would encourage this impulse and allow it to grow and expand. With this proposed act, we believe we have done so.

**1550**

Secondly, we know that this change would require some sacrifice. We are taking part in the global race for green jobs and investment; it would be foolish to think that something so coveted could be accomplished with ease. For that reason, we have taken pains to include provisions that would protect the most vulnerable in our society. Low-income Ontarians would benefit from targeted measures within the GEA to ease the cost of compliance and smooth the transition to a more energy-efficient future. This too is part of the role of government that I mentioned at the outset of my remarks, and it is a task that we take seriously.

This proposed legislation is a cornerstone of our plan for tomorrow. If passed, it would help Ontario become the preferred destination for green jobs, green investment and green energy. It would create immediate benefits and pave the way for a lasting culture of conservation. That is why I would urge all members to join me in expressing their support for the Green Energy Act.

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm very pleased to stand in the House today as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, George Smitherman, and to speak in support of the Green Energy and Green Economy Act.

Le projet de loi, Loi de 2009 sur l'énergie verte et l'économie verte, poursuit la transformation du réseau de production d'électricité entreprise en Ontario pour en faire l'un des plus propres et plus respectueux de l'environnement au monde.

The Green Energy and Green Economy Act, if passed, will establish Ontario as the North American leader in green energy. This landmark legislation will benefit our people and our province in many ways. It will help to increase the development and use of renewable energy in Ontario. It will position this province at the leading edge of the green economy, spurring innovation and attracting jobs and investment. It will help us better protect the environment, boosting our fight against climate change and creating a healthier future for our children.

I am very proud of our government's efforts to significantly reduce our province's environmental footprint with the establishment of stringent targets to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change. This proposed Green Energy and Green Economy Act is a significant step: It is progressive yet practical. It builds upon all the work this government has already done to

build a reliable electricity system, to increase Ontario's supply of renewable energy and to get off dirty coal.

Si la loi est adoptée, l'Ontario deviendrait le leader nord-américain de l'énergie écologique. La loi aurait pour but de renforcer les initiatives concernant la production d'électricité déjà entreprises par la province, dont l'élimination d'ici 2014 des centrales à charbon, la plus importante source de pollution atmosphérique.

To accomplish its goals, this act contains a number of key measures. If passed, this bill would create a feed-in tariff. What does that mean? Essentially, a feed-in tariff is an incentive structure. Through it, Ontario would offer attractive rates for energy generated from renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, water and biomass. These rates would be guaranteed for the life of the contract. They would be applicable to both small community-based and large commercial renewable energy projects, and this would create the certainty that investors need in order to build the projects, create the jobs and increase the supply of renewable energy in Ontario.

Feed-in tariffs are not a new idea—they have been pivotal to the growth of green energy in several European countries—but our new system would be unique to Ontario. Alongside fixed rates, we would set program goals. These would include establishing domestic content requirements for renewable energy technologies; ensuring domestic products and services would be used in new generation facilities; promoting regional development; and encouraging municipal involvement, as well as the participation of First Nations and Métis communities, in building our renewable energy sector.

With all these diverse elements in place and working together, Ontario would become a powerhouse of innovation and knowhow, the destination of choice for green power developers and a leading jurisdiction in green economy.

To boost Ontario's attraction to developers even more, the proposed legislation would ensure a streamlined approval process. Over the past five and a half years, our ministry has been made aware that the process of successfully launching a renewable energy project or an associated transmission project is much more complex and time-consuming than it need be. If passed, this proposed act would eliminate the red tape and duplication.

Most significantly, green energy projects would no longer be subject to the requirements under the Planning Act or, in most cases, the Environmental Assessment Act. Instead, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources would collaborate and coordinate their requirements in a streamlined process within a service guarantee. This would include a coordinated environmental registry posting process. This friendly approach would include the establishment of a renewable energy facilitator located within the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure. This office would be the first point of contact for proponents, guiding them through the approvals process, raising awareness of federal requirements and helping to make green energy projects move forward faster.

If passed, the Green Energy Act would also streamline the approvals process in ways that continue to protect public health and safety. For instance, many municipalities have struggled with the difficulty of balancing the proposals of wind project proponents and the desires of their residents. As a result, there is a patchwork of municipal bylaws concerning how close wind turbines can be to residential properties. Our proposed legislation would for the first time establish province-wide setback requirements for renewable projects adjacent to homes and sensitive areas. Provincial standards would also relieve municipalities of the burden of the extensive work that is required to build the capacity and scientific understanding of each technology for each individual municipality.

As a result of this act, if passed, the Ministry of the Environment will be responsible for proposing siting standards for renewable energy projects that ensure continued and consistent protection for the natural environment and the public interest. The Ministry of the Environment will also continue to monitor and consider ongoing research to make sure health and safety standards reflect the most current information.

Our government's goal of building more green energy projects faster and in a timely way will always be balanced with an equally important objective of preserving and protecting our air, land and water, our ecosystems and wildlife. Just as our government has implemented so successfully with birth certificates, another practical improvement in the approval process, as proposed by this bill, would allow our government to offer a service guarantee when it comes to renewable energy approvals. This is how it would work: In short, a renewable energy provider, having completed all the necessary documentation, would be assured of getting a decision on their application within a six-month time frame. This would give providers more certainty with respect to their planning and again make Ontario a more attractive and easier place for them to invest.

Si la loi est adoptée avec d'importantes modifications à 15 autres lois, dont la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité, la Loi sur la protection de l'environnement et la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire, elle mettra l'Ontario sur la voie d'un avenir plus vert.

Après son adoption, d'autres règlements et politiques devraient aussi être mis en place au fur et à mesure que le gouvernement concrétisera son objectif d'une économie plus verte et d'un futur de conservation.

Voici quelques-unes des mesures importantes qui contribueront à élargir les projets d'énergie renouvelable qui devraient se créer après l'adoption de la loi proposée : créer un système plus attrayant de prix préférentiels garantis qui contribuera à stimuler l'investissement dans la production d'énergie renouvelable, à accroître la confiance des investisseurs et à améliorer l'accès au financement pour les projets d'énergie renouvelable; établir un processus d'approbation et simplifier et offrir des garanties de service pour les projets d'énergie renouvelable; établir le droit de se connecter au

réseau de distribution d'électricité pour les projets d'énergie renouvelable; nommer un agent de facilitation d'énergie renouvelable chargé d'offrir de l'aide et du soutien aux créateurs de projets afin de faciliter l'approbation des projets; et simplifier le processus d'approbation pour les grands projets de transmission, entre autres.

#### 1600

I want to switch gears now and talk about how we propose to get all this new green energy that we will be generating as a result of this act into the marketplace. First, our government understands that increased generation must be balanced with new transmission capacity, and we intend to work proactively with our energy agencies to initiate investment in new transmission projects. This legislation, if passed, would also take additional steps. As I said a moment ago, it would ensure as-of-right access to Ontario's power grid for all renewable energy projects provided they meet technical and economic requirements. Once again, this is a sensible move. Providers must have assurances that they can connect to the grid when their project is complete in order to move ahead in the first place. Businesses, institutions and households have an equal right to expect that the green energy they're consuming is being provided in a reliable, safe and cost-effective way.

Another key provision that would bring Ontario's entire energy system into the 21st century: We would modernize our electricity network through a smart grid. This would involve a major greening of our electricity infrastructure, bringing in the latest information systems and upgrades and simultaneously creating thousands of jobs. A smart grid would allow us to effectively manage all the energy from both new and existing sources across the province. It would allow us to meet the changing nature of power consumption in Ontario, positioning us to take advantage of conservation technology such as smart meters as well as paving the way for innovations such as plug-in hybrid cars. It would also let us coordinate the production of power from large numbers of small power producers, thereby enabling plenty more small-power, green energy projects to be built.

I have to say, as a former Minister of the Environment, that I'm very thrilled by this prospect. I've had the opportunity to meet with people from across Ontario who are highly committed to a clean and healthy environment, and I've been struck by their shared desire to do what is right: to make responsible choices and to make a difference to the health of the planet. These new proposed provisions would give these determined individuals the chance to develop their own projects for their own use.

If passed, our legislation would eliminate the local barriers that many municipalities have in place that restrict benign technologies. So, if an environmentally conscious family wanted to install rooftop solar panels or ground source heat pumps in their homes, our act would support and encourage their efforts. Even more, it would enable these homeowners to access direct grants and low-interest-rate loans to bring their green dreams to fruition.

Other policies stemming from this act would support citizen-led renewable energy co-operatives. As the minister said, energy co-ops have been very successful in Denmark. They're typically comprised of local investors, farmers, homeowners or businesses that work together to create and operate a small green energy project. The Ontario model would establish a community power fund to help co-ops with softer costs such as engineering and legal fees so they could get up and running faster. It would also allow the groups to sell their renewable energy to the grid and distribute surplus funds back to the members.

Finally, if passed, the act would clear the way for municipalities and local distribution companies to invest in renewable generating facilities below 10 megawatts in capacity.

The proposed Green Energy and Green Economy Act is a bold plan. It would modernize and strengthen Ontario's energy system and bring more renewable energy projects, both large and small, to reality. It would ensure that our energy supply mix is one of the cleanest in North America and help our province continue to be a leader in the fight against climate change.

D'ici 2012, les investissements rendus possibles par la loi proposée soutiendront vraisemblablement plus de 50 000 emplois directs et indirects dans les domaines suivants : la conservation, l'énergie renouvelable, le réseau intelligent, ainsi que la modernisation du réseau de transport et de distribution. La teneur ontarienne des projets d'énergie renouvelable stimulera la création d'emplois en Ontario.

The proposed Green Energy Act, as I've said, is a bold plan. It would propel innovation, boost the economy, and create good jobs all across Ontario, in urban and rural communities, in the north, and in areas hard hit by the shrinking manufacturing sector.

The proposed Green Energy and Green Economy Act, if passed, would position Ontario to become a North American green energy leader, creating over 50,000 jobs in the next three years as well as generating billions of dollars in green economic investment.

This is a necessary piece of legislation: practical legislation, landmark legislation. If passed, this act will help ensure Ontario's future by building a stronger, greener economy and by better protecting our environment, combatting climate change and creating a healthier planet for generations to come.

I urge all members to offer their support for the bold and transformational initiatives contained in this act, and I look forward to further debate.

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

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to add some comments to the speeches from the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, the member from Ottawa-Orléans and the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

Certainly, there are some positive elements of this legislation in terms of promoting and facilitating the

development of renewable energy projects. However, I would say the opposition has many, many questions.

As you know, this bill was introduced yesterday, and it's scheduled for debate today, tomorrow and Thursday. It appears that the government is just trying to rush it through. When we really want to have constructive debate, you'd think they would allow some time for the opposition to look into it a little more.

We've asked for a detailed briefing on the bill so we can go through it with the ministry clause by clause and understand all the various parts. On the surface, we do have questions, like cost. The minister says there's going to be a 1% increase for the people of this province for their energy bills. I would say to anybody out there: Do you really believe them? This is the government that also said we wouldn't be burning coal after 2007. You know what? We're still burning coal, and it doesn't look like there's any time in the foreseeable future that we won't be burning coal.

There are questions about the powers that go to the minister. It seems like the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure is making himself into some kind of super-minister. I think there need to be some questions asked about that.

And the whole required energy audit: I wonder about the value of requiring everyone, when they're buying a new home, to spend the \$300 to have an energy audit. I think that's something that should be voluntary, as it was in our election platform—I know the minister mentioned that in his speech. It was voluntary in our election platform. Certainly, some people may decide that it makes sense, but I don't think we should require all people buying a home to have an energy audit.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It was a pleasure to listen to the Minister of Energy speak to this bill, as well as the members from Etobicoke-Lakeshore and Ottawa-Orléans.

But I'm most impressed with the Minister of Energy, because if you listened to him, you would think there is going to be a revolution in green energy, just by the mere fact of how he speaks about it with great enthusiasm. He talks about this as a leap forward, as a tremendous opportunity, and you think, "We're waiting for the details."

There is indeed going to be a revolution in green energies. The revolution happens in places like Germany. Witness the fact that there, they have 25,000 megawatts of wind power—25,000 megawatts of wind power. You're never going to get there, and the reason why you're not going to get there is because you're putting a cap on green energies.

The other cap you've got is that 75% of your energy is coming from hydroelectricity and from nuclear; you are committed to that. You don't want to talk about it, but that's your commitment. If you did not make a commitment to nuclear, then the language that Minister Smitherman uses would be encouraging. Then you would think, "We're going to move the limits. We're going to

move the goalpost here.” But, you see, the goalposts are there; you’re only going to produce so much. And it’s nice and it’s okay, and we’ve got to do it, but please don’t make it seem like you’re creating a revolution.

**1610**

The minister also talks about the issue of domestic content rules, but the language he uses is “reasonable domestic content” rules, which means we don’t have a sense of what those domestic content rules are going to be. We don’t have a clue, and he doesn’t say. In response to our leader today, he didn’t say what those rules are going to be, and he doesn’t state it. But we’ll have more opportunities to speak about this as we go.

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

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** I just want to add to or comment on the speeches today of three of my colleagues, actually. They all added to the second reading debate of this bill.

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** Very thoughtful.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** Very thoughtful comments as well, as my colleague adds.

But I think the important thing is that we are, at a time when it’s most needed, actually taking a giant step. I think it’s a little bit bigger step than my colleague across the way would acknowledge. And I expect that; I don’t expect you to jump up and support it the first day, but I do hope that over the next few days of debate that, as well as the government, the opposition parties will look at those sections of the bill that will be most helpful to our environment and to our economy.

I think, for example, of the patchwork that there is across this province when it comes to different municipalities applying different restrictions and regulations to the development of green power. Those will now be more common across the province. I think it’s even been compared by the minister to when we had a patchwork of smoking bylaws in various municipalities across the province. Now, these regulations that we are going to establish through consultation with the municipalities, with the public, will be established to be regulations that are common across the province. I think that will go a long way to making people better understand the need and appreciate green power, as well as helping communities to establish various sizes of green power projects. I look forward to that debate over the next few days.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I too enjoyed the presentation that was done by Minister Smitherman and the two members. Very few would debate the objectives put forward by this bill. Certainly, we in Ontario urgently need to reduce our greenhouse gases in order to minimize the already damaging effects of climate change on this province and on this planet. We urgently need to increase the proportion of Ontario electricity that is provided by safe, clean, renewable energy. We urgently need to expand and maximize energy conservation in this province by every single household, by every single business, and

we urgently need to support the development of a green economy in Ontario that provides decent jobs for the future, what the NDP calls the green jobs of the future.

Bill 150 calls for government investment to upgrade the electricity transmission and distribution grid to support a greater proportion of renewable energy. Minister Smitherman made a point of saying that this grid especially needs to be expanded in northern Ontario, the riding I represent, and few would argue with this.

It talks about a culture of conservation by greening public buildings and improving energy efficiency standards for appliances and making energy efficiency a priority for the building code. All of this sounds good. Bill 150 seeks to ensure that renewable energy projects are environmentally sound and don’t take years to get off the ground. There could be a little bit of controversy if they’re putting the wind turbine in your backyard, like what may be happening in my riding, but all of this has no data to back it up. We have to do the leap of faith. I hope that in the coming days of debates, we get more facts to support this wish.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our time for questions and comments. I’ll return to the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, who has two minutes to reply on behalf of the government.

**Ms. Laurel C. Broten:** I’m pleased to reply to the members from Parry Sound–Muskoka, Nickel Belt, Trinity–Spadina and Essex.

I want to start by saying we’re happy to be here today debating, and we look forward to undertaking that debate over the next days and weeks. Yes, this legislation, the Green Energy and Green Economy Act, is extensive. It amends more than 15 statutes and will be the linchpin of many other additional changes to transform our electricity system, to transform the way we approach green energy in the province. We would expect nothing less could put in place transformational change than an extensive and complicated piece of legislation, and we appreciate being here in the House over the next days and weeks, and on to committee after that, to have that discussion with Ontarians.

The Green Energy Act, as we’ve said, is bold. It’s a series of coordinated actions which would, at the same time, enhance economic activity and reduce our impact on the climate. In my community in Etobicoke–Lakeshore, across the province and with the individuals I’ve had the privilege to talk to, Ontarians are clamouring for this change. They want to see this economy stimulated. They want to make it easier to bring renewable energy projects to life. They want to foster, as my colleague from Ottawa–Orléans has said, a culture of conservation, whereby we assist homeowners, government, schools and individual employers to transition to lower, more efficient energy use.

If passed, this legislation would create a projected 50,000 jobs over the next three years. We need these jobs in communities across the province. We need to take this bold step and action now. We need to be debating this in

the Ontario Legislature, and we need to move forward for this generation and future generations of Ontarians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? I recognize the minister without portfolio and chairman of cabinet.

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I move adjournment of the debate.

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

*Second reading debate adjourned.*

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

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I move adjournment of the House.

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

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

*The House adjourned at 1618.*

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

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Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development / Ministre du Développement économique
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Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
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Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	

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<b>Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
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Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
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Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
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Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
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Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
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Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	

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<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
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Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Runciman, Robert W. (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
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Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
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Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
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Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
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Helena Jaczek, Sylvia Jones  
Jeff Leal, Liz Sandals  
Maria Van Bommel  
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**Private members' public business**

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