



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

First Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Première session, 39^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 3 June 2009

Mercredi 3 juin 2009

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 3 June 2009

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 3 juin 2009

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

MEMBERS' EXPENDITURES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the individual members' expenditures for the fiscal year 2008-09.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**TOXICS REDUCTION ACT, 2009
LOI DE 2009 SUR LA RÉDUCTION
DES TOXIQUES**

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 2, 2009, on the motion for third reading of Bill 167, An Act to promote reductions in the use and creation of toxic substances and to amend other Acts / Projet de loi 167, Loi visant à promouvoir une réduction de l'utilisation et de la création de substances toxiques et à modifier d'autres lois.

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

Mr. John O'Toole: It's a real pleasure this morning, although a little earlier than expected, to have the privilege to speak on Bill 167. I have listened carefully to the debates thus far, and I've come to a couple of conclusions that would lead me to think that this bill, in some persons' minds, goes too far, and in others' does not go far enough. So I'm going to dwell on some of the things that are more practical in nature—as soon as I find my notes.

Just a couple of things at the outset: It's a fairly intensive bill, a red tape bill, if you will. There have been hearings. In fact, I'm kind of curious. The longer and shorter story here is that I'm curious as to how the government can live with this. They've kind of rushed it. It was introduced on April 7 and had second reading on May 5. Then it had hearings. Now, even to the extent of the hearings, I was in contact with some of my constituents—Detox Environmental, a very large and very successful but, I will say, very environmentally conscious business that deals with spills and other kinds of things, and many of these people work directly with the MOE, the Ministry of the Environment. I wanted them to have

an opportunity—either them directly, or through their stakeholder organization—to present to the committee, but the committee was rushed as well. There were a couple of days in committee when the House was down—and it all gets down to the same old, what's the rush here?

This is an important thing. I want to make it very clear. Our position as a party is very clear. You might say that this bill—the government members often say that we're not in support of this. In fact, it is our idea. Let's be clear on this: We said back in 2007—and now it's 2009; that's two years ago our policy was out there—“Tory Announces Made-in-Ontario Plan to Reduce Toxins.” I have the details here. It's a public statement. It's a press release. It's a plan with real action and real strategy to reduce and/or eliminate, and create more public awareness of, toxic substances. The goal of course was to eliminate and, at the least, reduce.

Now, it was modeled after a plan called the TURA plan, the Toxics Use Reduction Act that was executed in Massachusetts some years ago, I think it was in 1989. So we're quite aware and quite supportive of doing the right thing. We didn't do polls. We said that this is just good public policy. I'm surprised that somehow the characterization by the member from Oakville especially, pointing fingers at us when he should be pointing the finger at himself. They had the public hearings; even the Canadian Cancer Society responded unhappily.

Now, I see the member from Cambridge coming in. He often gets upset that I use part of his desk, so I'll put that aside. He is quite fussy at times. But he is a good friend at that.

Here is an e-mail I got from Kathleen Perchaluk—recommendations from them to strengthen the Toxics Reduction Act. It says:

“Mr. O'Toole, as you know, the Toxics Reduction Act will be debated during second reading in the Legislature.” Now, this was back in April, and as I said, they rushed the hearings; our member from Haldimand-Norfolk can tell you that. I think he said it in his hour leadoff yesterday. It says, “As you may be aware, the Canadian Cancer Society, along with other health, environmental and labour groups, has been calling for specific measures to be included in the Ontario toxics use reduction legislation. Our recommendations are based on best practices in other jurisdictions and are echoed by the Ministry of the Environment's toxics reduction scientific expert panel.” The final memo was released on April 7. So there was some consultation here, but they just didn't get it right.

Now, how many amendments were there?

Mr. Toby Barrett: Sixty-two altogether.

Mr. John O'Toole: Sixty-two, and none of them were passed. That's completely unconscionable. What is the rush here? We're in support of the concept; we initiated the concept. We know that imitation is the finest form of flattery. We're fine with that. We're fine with supporting it. But when I hear agencies like the Canadian Cancer Society—here's what they say: "To ensure that the Toxics Reduction Act will integrate the best practices in health protection with the concern for a sustainable economy, a clean environment and good jobs, the following five Rs need to be included in Bill 167." Here are the five Rs, and they're quite simple and straightforward. Why didn't the government, why didn't Minister Gerretsen act on this advice? What is the plan here? It's to be seen to be doing the right thing, but in fact there's another game afoot.

There's some strong language in the legislation, but it's strong on hiring enforcement and inspectors and stuff like that—warrantless entry—that's the kind of stuff they've got going on here, but I'm going to stick to the Cancer Society's statement. Here are the five Rs:

"Reduce the release of toxic chemicals in places where people live, work...." Bill 167 does not include numeric goals or targets.

"Replace toxic chemicals where safe alternatives exist." This is the Canadian Cancer Society: "Bill 167 should make substitution a requirement...."

"Restrict the use of toxic chemicals that are still in use through guidance from the Ontario Toxic Use Reduction Institute (OTURI).

"An institute was an important component to the success of Massachusetts's TUR legislation...." It is currently not part of the proposed legislation. The weaknesses here are evident: independent, non-partisan experts as opposed to the political interventions that I see in this legislation.

0910

"Report annually on progress and monitor emissions, holding industry accountable to reduce their use of toxic substances through the development and enforcement of new regulations." These are their comments: "Setting targets and the development of an institute will help hold industry accountable by the government and the public."

"Reveal to all Ontarians the toxic chemicals in their workplace, community and homes through an identifiable product label or symbol and access to a public database.

"Bill 167 should include a component for product labelling."

There's the five Rs. They have failed completely on each and every one of those requests. In fact, they ignored—to their peril, I believe—the advice given by the cancer society. I appreciate the letter here and the other communications from Rowena Pinto, senior director of policy at the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division. The society strongly feels that all Ontarians have the right to know if they are being exposed to carcinogens in the products that they use every day. The society believes there should be a strong focus on community right to

know, because with more information about toxic substances we are being exposed to, Ontarians can make a better decision about their health and the health of their families. A strong community right-to-know component would fulfill one of the government's key objectives of Bill 167, which is to inform Ontario.

Look, I want to repeat, at the risk of sounding redundant or rhetorical here, that we believe in this goal. It's clear the government does not. I don't know what their agenda is; I wouldn't impute motives. I have no clue on why they're doing it the way they're doing it. All of the deputants—it's my understanding from the member from Haldimand-Norfolk, who sat through the days—was it one day of hearing?

Mr. Toby Barrett: Two days.

Mr. John O'Toole: Two days and then they had clause-by-clause.

Let's put context around this. Ontario is a large province that represents probably a third of the population of Canada, probably about—well, it used to be 50% of the economy of Canada. It's now dead last; it's probably a smaller component. It's tragic. The whole thing seems to be going in the wrong direction. But here's the issue: We really believe that we've got to work in partnership, and here are the partnerships, Mr. Speaker. You would know this, because you spoke yesterday about not wanting a wind turbine in your riding.

Here's the issue: The federal government has, as we know, CEPA, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, and they have the CMP, the chemical management plan. In this, there are federal standards. Why is it so important that we have national standards? Well, it's very simple: You can't work in isolation in the economy of North America, let alone the economy of Ontario. Whether you are importing or exporting products, trading or transporting products—and the product labelling, with the trucks that go down the road that have these hazardous labels on them—there need to be national standards and there needs to be conformance with those standards; that's the first and primary role of Ontario.

I can't understand why—it's sort of like the Cosmetic Pesticides Ban Act. There's another case where they want to appear to be doing the right thing but in fact there are federal standards. It's called the pesticide management act, and it's the same thing. Federally, we do have these standards, and Ontario is sort of going it alone. It would be different if they were making it stronger. They're not. They're actually not making it stronger, they're making it weaker or more—how would you say? They call it transparency, but it really is making it more confusing, because for the—let's work this down to the small business person, a small shop. We're dealing with another bill—I don't like to mix them up—the apprenticeship bill, which is a tragedy in itself—another thing they've screwed up. But here's the issue there: A small shop; they're going to have all these manuals, big piles of manuals. What are they doing today? I looked at it. In fact, I worked in industry for about 30 years. I worked in the components of training, safety and personnel, but I

actually worked as a plant manager—not the manager of a plant but of a section in a plant, a very successful company at the time. The point is that I clearly recall in my 30 years there that we had rules at the time, and they were called OHSA, the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

I have another one of my peers—they must have come this morning to hear me speak, I guess. They're normally not here all the time.

Paramount under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, there were clear rules of worker safety, the workplace hazardous materials information system—they were called WHMIS rules. Many members here—probably Mr. Leal from Peterborough—would remember WHMIS rules. WHMIS rules were an information system where you could access materials that could expose you to risk. These rules were how to handle, contain, control, safety precautions, cleanup precautions and what the constituent parts were, outlined on sheets called MSD sheets. These sheets were unique to each product and what treatment action would be required if your skin or other parts of your body came in contact with it.

So it's not like there were no rules on this. They're acting like they're inventing something. They're not; they're interfering with something, with a system. The principle here is, what are they trying to do? First of all, they're rushing it through. They're not listening to the stakeholders—they never adopted one amendment—and they want this thing done this week. They're probably going to have to time-allocate it. What's the rush?

Let's get it right. We want to do the right thing; I think you don't want to do the right thing. But they're the government, and at the end of the day they will force—their members will have to vote, otherwise they'll be kicked out of their caucus. Those members will dutifully vote yes, like little sheep walking into the slaughterhouse. It's tragic. What have they got to hide? I keep raising this issue of the uncertainty of their motive.

In my riding this is so important—I have to get down to a more serious tone in the conversation with the people of Ontario. First of all, we have the challenges facing the auto sector, and of course my riding of Durham and that of my colleague Christine Elliott—who is probably going to be the new leader of the party, according to the paper this morning—and also Jerry Ouellette's riding of Oshawa.

There was a presentation to the committee by the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association; it was made by Mark Nantais. I've got the submission here and, as the member from Haldimand-Norfolk said, I think some members on the government side didn't even listen to the input. I don't want to impute motive; I think they ignored them. Why? Because they didn't pass one of the suggestions, not even part of one. I don't think they even asked any questions that were respectful to the issue.

I had sent out a memo to my constituents, because of the rush—I had to send this out, as I said, to Detox and other constituency businesses. I advised: "There are opportunities for input at public hearings ... in Toronto,

May 13 and May 25. Interested people ... should contact the committee clerk," and I gave the clerk—I also sent it to David Oraziotti, who is the Chair of the committee, to advise them of my concern that they had to make space and time for these constituents: real people, real jobs and wanting to do the right thing.

Mr. Nantais appeared on behalf of the auto sector. Here's really what he wanted, in summary—unfortunately, I'm running out of time. Could I have more time, I wonder, maybe up to an hour? I could probably get it done in an hour. I'm sure some people would change their minds.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Unanimous consent.

Mr. John O'Toole: Unanimous consent.

Anyway, "providing a clear definition of 'toxic' in the act"—there's no definition of "toxic" in the bill. Under section 2, the definitions section, they don't define it. Here it is. I'm looking at it. Here's the bill: 44 pages, 22 in English and 22 in French. Here is section 2, "Definitions." They've got "justice," and "minister" is well described, because he has run the whole thing from his office, and "provincial officer." "Toxic substance"—here it is—"means a substance prescribed by the regulations as a toxic substance for the purposes of this act." That's sort of like saying, "Yes," and, "Look up in the dictionary what 'yes' means." Anyway, I'm concerned about what they're hiding here, because almost everything in the bill is in regulation.

0920

I'm going back to the bill, because when I looked through it, I was trying to make sense of some of it. Here's another good one, section 46 of the bill, "Protection from personal liability." Guess who's protected? Mr. Speaker, you'd be interested in this, as kind of a policeman here today. "No action or other proceeding may be instituted against the following persons for any act done in good faith in the execution or intended execution of any duty or authority under this act..." It says a member of the tribunal can't be called to court and held liable or accountable. An employee of the ministry, the inspector who shows up and gives you a hard time—and provincial officers. You can't take any action; they're immune from prosecution.

The regulations section starts in section 49. It's four columns. It goes right from (a) to (z), and each one of them has two or three subsections. The whole bill is defined in regulation.

So we're passing a bill, but we really don't know what the toxic substances are, what the reporting mechanisms are and what the inspections are.

I do know that the provision here—it says "crown"; it's warrantless entry. They can enter your property day or night, if they suspect something is happening, and start fooling around with your patent information.

As I said, Mr. Nantais had another one:

"Allow for one plant facility plan to address multiple toxic substances and the substances of concern" and provide for more flexibility in methodology of use.

"Provide equivalency with other certified environmental management systems"—EMS—"such as ISO

14001, without any changes to the EMS, and actually provide, again, powers to the ministry directors to recognize such plans under the act....” There are plans. Most companies aren’t out there to be sued for some liability for some substance.

“Providing for some of the same exemptions as those afforded in the NPRI”—the national pollutant release inventory.

“Exemption of vehicles from the consumer products provisions in the act, as they are already covered under federal legislation”—in my riding, there’s a cement industry.

My concern is, what’s the rush? We want to do the right thing.

I don’t see anything in this bill that’s supportable. It’s not transparent; it’s not clear. At a time when there are so many other concerns, with the economy going down the drain, the people of Ontario without income, the new HST tax—they are going completely in the wrong direction.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the remarks of the member from Durham.

Having been through the hearings and the second reading debate and having gone through clause-by-clause, generally I don’t agree with what the opposition has to say about this bill, but I have to say that there are a number of things where they’re exactly on the money.

This is a bill in which, overwhelmingly, what we have is a series of clauses that give the Lieutenant Governor in Council power to set regulation. So for us, we’re voting on a bill whose substance is limited at best.

We are voting on a bill that, as the member from Durham talked about, has not gotten a ringing endorsement from one of the most significant stakeholders in all of this, the Canadian Cancer Society. I will be quoting them when I make my commentary, but he’s entirely correct. If in fact this bill has come forward, doesn’t have teeth, really amounts to a blank cheque for the government, which, from the perspective of the opposition, can be written for draconian legislation, and from the perspective of the NDP, simply allows the government to cut a deal with whatever industry it wants and do extraordinarily little to deal with the problem we have—that’s all that’s on the table.

I’m not going to hold up this bill. I’m going to speak to it today. I’ve recommended to my caucus that we vote for it—not out of any enthusiasm, as has probably been gathered. But, frankly, the question does arise, what is the rush for something that has so little in it? If in fact this bill was making things move forward substantially in Ontario, I could see the need for speed, but other than being able to put out a headline that we have this act—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It’s a pleasure to rise today and join the debate. This is a bill that has come forward that I think has struck the right balance that Ontarians

want. There’s tremendous public support for this type of initiative. What I haven’t heard described today by any of the speakers so far this morning is the fact that Ontario is a leading jurisdiction in this regard. No other province in this country has this type of legislation nor, as I understand it, at this point in time, is proposing to pass this sort of legislation that the public is crying out for. As community members, workers and consumers, we all have the right to know about the environmental and occupational risks that we are being exposed to so that we can make informed decisions about our health.

“The Canadian Cancer Society applauds the government of Ontario for taking action to reduce toxic substances where we live, work and play. We look forward to working with government to ensure the supporting regulations have a strong community right-to-know component.” I think that is a very reasonable statement. I think that’s a statement that’s based on knowledge. That statement comes from the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division, chief executive officer Peter Goodhand, who’s also chair of the Take Charge on Toxics campaign.

I believe that this bill is supportable. The third party, as I understand it, is supporting it. The official opposition I think has yet to make their mind up, but I would hope that, at the end of the day, they would see this is a reasonable bill that should be moved forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments?

Mr. Toby Barrett: I appreciate the comments from the minister—well, not yet, but I’ve always expected this guy would be a cabinet minister—the member for Durham. He knows of what he speaks. As he indicated, he has a 30-year background in manufacturing. He continues to be concerned about Ontario’s dwindling economy, not only in automotive but also the cement industry and other major players within the riding of Durham. The member for Durham laments the fact that this legislation is not transparent and there is no clarity. Right off the top, there’s no definition of what a toxic substance is. We have people in this Legislature debating toxics. We have no idea what this government is talking about with respect to toxics.

If you want to find out what the parliamentarians and scientists are dealing with, go to the federal legislation, go to the federal program. They have a definition for toxics. They have a program. The province of Ontario is probably the only subjurisdiction in any country that has decided to go off on its own and to duplicate, or attempt to duplicate, what the national level has accomplished. We saw this with the pesticide legislation that was introduced a year ago.

Within this legislation, there’s no definition of “substance of concern.” We don’t know whether that’s a cup of coffee, a can of pop or chlorine. We’re really wandering in the wilderness on this legislation. It’s way too vague.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments? Further debate?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: No, he has two minutes to respond.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I guess we should do that this morning, shouldn't we?

Mr. John O'Toole: Unless I could have 10 minutes to respond—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I thought the member from Durham had said everything he could say, but he does have the opportunity for two more minutes.

Mr. John O'Toole: There's simply not enough time in the day.

However, I want to thank the member from Toronto–Danforth, and I compliment him as well, because I look forward to his one-hour speech. I may be in the cafeteria. But anyway, here is the issue: He said I was exactly right. I appreciate that.

0930

The member from Oakville admitted here today that this bill is entirely in regulation. It is; the whole thing. There's nothing in this, outside of a mechanism of enforcement; it's very detailed in that. The member from Haldimand–Norfolk—I refer the listeners today to read Hansard online; his one-hour speech was kind of a thesis on what's the right thing to do.

I will bring up, in the few seconds I have left, that I put a question on the order paper about a week ago, and I'd encourage members to look at it; it's about a very important issue in my riding. This issue deals with nuclear waste. Here's one of the reports that I am in the midst of reviewing and providing input. This is the report; this is the draft copy of a pretty well secret document. This is a public information notice on the environmental assessment for Port Granby long-term low-level radioactive waste management. This is from Joanne Smith, Natural Resources Canada.

Canada takes a very responsible, mature, thorough lead. Dalton McGuinty has this obscure piece of work on Bill 167 that has no clarity in it. In my riding, this issue is a public health issue of the highest order. I don't want Premier McGuinty and John Gerretsen monkeying around with this stuff. They have no expertise, and they're confusing the public about one thing about toxic waste when in this case here, they would probably say, "Oh, that belongs to the federal government."

So let's be clear about this: We should have one set of rules; they should be tough and they should be enforced, and Ontario's interfering with the system that's already in place.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I want to talk about Bill 167. During discussion of the bill, we've heard repeatedly about the urgent need to take on the problem of toxic chemicals in this society, the need to reduce their use and reduce the release of those toxic chemicals. We've heard that in North America, Ontario is second only to Texas in tonnes of toxic chemicals being released into the air and water and going to our landfill sites. Ontario is the fourth-

highest emitter of carcinogenic chemicals in North America; Ontario is the second-highest emitter of reproductive toxins in North America. Ontario's industries account for 36% of the total Canadian discharges of reportable chemicals into the air and 15% of the discharges into the water. That's a lot of toxic chemicals. That's a lot of cancer-causing material that becomes part of the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe.

In Ontario, 23,000 chemicals and substances are used in manufacturing products that we use every single day of our lives, products such as building materials, toys, cars, food, medicine and entertainment products. Ontarians depend on these products to be safe.

I have to say that the safety of these products is often discovered quite directly by their impact on the people who work with them, and that has been the case for decades. Too often we've learned the consequences of the chemicals when we've seen the impact directly on the lives of the people who work with those chemicals. Vinyl chloride was only found to be a potent carcinogen after a physician diagnosed two cases of a very rare cancer, angiosarcoma of the liver, in workers from a single plant. If this had been a more common cancer, if this had been a cancer that could have been related to another factor, then the reality of that chemical would not have been understood for much longer.

I should note before I go further that I'm referring to testimony given by Mike Wright, director of health, safety and environment for the United Steelworkers. He spoke in February of 2009, this year, before a congressional committee looking at the Toxic Substances Control Act. He noted in his testimony, "It took the lung cancer deaths of 54 workers in a plant making ion-exchange resins to identify bis-chloromethyl ether as a carcinogen."

The reality is that far too often, we find out that chemicals are toxic because the people who work with them suffer direct health effects. One he cited that was interesting—they're all interesting, but particularly interesting—was something called diacetyl, which is the main component in artificial butter flavouring: "When inhaled, diacetyl causes a rare lung disease called bronchiolitis obliterans—and," as Mike Wright said, "it's as bad as it sounds.... In May 2000, eight workers in a microwave popcorn plant were diagnosed with the condition," and it took some time before the chemical itself was recognized as the cause of the problem.

Mike Wright, in his testimony, said, "We have no idea how many more untested chemicals are causing unrecognized illness amongst workers and consumers." That is the reason why anyone who is interested in reducing the burden of cancer and reducing the burden of occupational disease and injury is concerned about the presence of, the use of toxic chemicals and substances in everyday life in this province. He was right when he said, "We have no idea how many more untested chemicals are causing unrecognized illness amongst workers and consumers."

In the United States, there's been a calculation done on the health burden and the cost of occupational dis-

eases. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in the States in 2005 reviewed 38 studies, and they conservatively put the toll at 50,000 deaths a year, at a cost of between \$128 billion and \$155 billion—very substantial. So when we deal with toxic chemicals and when we deal with an act that is extraordinarily weak, which the Canadian Cancer Society says doesn't have the teeth to actually bring about the reduction in toxic chemicals and the protection of the public that is needed, then we need to pay attention. We need to look at the act before us and recognize that although the act will likely be passed, although there will be a headline somewhere or a story written about, "Toxics Reduction Act introduced and passed and put into law," the protection of the public is something that is, at this point, unknown.

Who knows if in fact this government will put in place regulations that will make a difference or not make a difference? My betting is that they won't. However, sometimes there are political currents beyond one's knowledge that move things in a particular direction. We'll see if those currents exist. At this point, I'd say, given the approach this government has taken to this piece of legislation—and the Conservatives would say from the opposite direction, but also accurately—essentially waiting for a blank cheque to be put before the cabinet; will they write a tough cheque or a weak cheque? It remains to be seen.

Prior to the last election, Premier McGuinty called for tough new toxic reduction law and a carcinogen reduction strategy. Well, be clear: That's not on the table today. He called for a plan that puts Ontario at the forefront in North America on tackling this issue: That is not before us today. Although the parliamentary assistant talked about Ontario being a leader, certainly it comes nowhere near where Massachusetts is headed, and frankly, when it comes to the European Union and their program—the acronym is REACH—we come nowhere near that.

During committee hearings, numerous respected health and environmental organizations spoke of the need to strengthen Bill 167. They stressed, before we went through the amendments, before we went through the process, to improve the bill, make something substantial of it. They stressed that the bill failed to incorporate a number of key recommendations from the government-appointed expert panel. The cancer society, the registered nurses' association, the public health association, key environmental groups such as the Canadian Environmental Law Association, Environmental Defence and unions like the United Steelworkers spoke in unison about the need for several amendments. Those amendments were moved by the NDP and were voted down by the government.

0940

First, the groups presented a demand outlining the need to modify the bill so it would address a wider range of toxic substances and facilities. As it stands, the bill will only cover 14% of the 320 substances on the National Pollutant Release Inventory by 2012. It will only cover 1.5% of the total annual tonnage of emissions of National

Pollutant Release Inventory reportable chemicals for manufacturing and mineral processes. That leaves too many important chemicals off this list. Indeed, the expert panel called for inclusion of all chemicals on the National Pollutant Release Inventory, plus cancer-causing chemicals listed by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer and the US national toxicology program, and the reproductive and developmental toxins from California's proposition 65 and Health Canada's domestic substances list—very substantial calls for expansion of the range of chemicals to be considered to provide protection against, because frankly, there is a very large chemical soup that we are all swimming in right now. It is fairly apparent that the federal government is not moving with anywhere near the speed that's needed to reduce risk to our population. This level of government needs to take action. What it has done with this act is far less than is needed to actually protect the health of the population.

Secondly, groups recommended reducing the thresholds of both facility size and volume of toxics released at which the bill would kick in. The current threshold of 10 employees and 10,000 kilograms of pollution exempts small and medium-sized businesses, which are responsible for emitting the majority of toxics in urban areas. Note that the city of Toronto with its own sewer use bylaw, its own right-to-know bylaw, sets a standard that maintains no employee threshold and reporting thresholds of 100 kilograms for most substances. So the city of Toronto is actually recognizing the burden of toxic chemical release on the population that exists in the city and is acting within the legislative framework that it has. This government could do far more, far more extensively, and has not risen to that challenge.

Thirdly, health groups called for the expansion of the number of sectors covered by the bill. The government's expert panel called for the act to apply to all sectors that meet the thresholds, including energy and waste management. At a minimum, it was deemed crucial to include sewage treatment plants. Sewage treatment plants receive effluent from 12,000 industrial and commercial facilities. Sewage treatment plants are responsible for 87% of mercury, 37% of arsenic, and 71% of lead releases into the environment. Including sewage treatment plants would ensure upstream toxic use reduction, and it would also pressure sewage treatment plants to work with municipal governments on stronger sewage control bylaws. In fact, only 260 of 446 Ontario municipalities had sewer use bylaws in 2000 at all. So a failure on the part of this government to include sewage treatment plants in their legislation meant that a very significant source of toxic chemicals coming into our environment have been set aside, given a pass. It's not a defensible approach. This is a level of government that has responsibility for protecting the population of the province as a whole, has responsibility for reducing our exposure to toxic chemicals, and had the opportunity in this act to put in place legislation that would in fact do that. It passed on that responsibility.

Environmental, labour and health groups called for a toxic substance use reduction institute. The bill is silent

on the establishment of a toxics reduction institute. The Toxics Use Reduction Institute at the University of Massachusetts has been an integral part of the Massachusetts law's success. An institute is needed to educate and train professionals such as toxics reduction planners, to educate the public, and to sponsor and conduct research. The institute would work side by side with facilities on pollution prevention plans unique to their needs. The government's expert panel called for an institute, saying it would serve as a "neutral forum for constructive dialogue among the public, industry and government."

If you actually look at what they had to say, this expert panel that was appointed by this government called for the establishment of "a well-resourced, collaborative, arm's-length agency and/or academic-affiliated institute to lead innovation and knowledge dissemination, as described above."

Frankly, if you don't have that institute—and the Canadian Cancer Society noted it as well—then you can't—sorry; I shouldn't say "you can't." It is highly unlikely that you will assemble the intellectual capacity to take on this issue and provide industry and small businesses the support they need to make the transition that we're going to have to have if we actually want to reduce people's exposure to toxic chemicals. The government's refusal to incorporate the setting up of that institution in the legislation was a substantial error. It leaves this bill weakened, undermines its ability to deliver on what it's supposed to deliver on and leaves this province in a situation where other jurisdictions in Europe and the United States will move forward on green chemistry while our people flounder around, occasionally dealing with enforcement efforts by the Ministry of the Environment—heavily underresourced. We will miss out on the opportunity to make that leap into green chemistry, which has the potential to develop new industry here in Ontario, the potential to move us away from dependence on fossil fuels for our chemical stocks.

We need effective legislation. Failure to put in that institute says to the world that we're not serious about what we're doing; that in fact this act is being passed so that the government can say that it passed an act, not so that we can actually reduce toxic chemicals, not so that we can actually make a transition to a whole other range of industrial activity.

The expert panel and health, environmental and labour groups that presented at the hearings spoke in unison about the need to include targets and goals for toxic use reduction in the bill itself. The expert panel recommended that the act include "clear, viable and progressive goals" and "a mechanism for monitoring and public reporting on achievement of those targets."

This is actually something that the Premier seemed to promise. In 2007, the Premier pledged that a re-elected government would "tackle the environmental causes of illness by ... introducing a tough new toxic reduction law that requires polluting companies to reduce their emissions." A tough new law, I'll tell you right now, isn't what's before us.

Requiring companies to reduce emissions—requiring someone to do something includes, as I read it, a mandatory reduction in emissions. Yet there is actually no requirement in this bill for companies to reduce their use or their emissions. They're simply required to make a reduction plan; they're not required to implement it. There is no goal or target for how much actual reduction in toxics in our environment will be achieved. So right now, we don't know how this government will be held to account five years or 10 years from now, or the government of the day, when it's pointed out that the reductions were virtually negligible.

Everyone can say, "We did our best. That's life. Stuff happens." If you don't have those targets, no government can be held to account for its failures. No government can be realistically praised for its achievements. There are no targets; there's no mandatory substitution. There is an ignoring of the work that was done by the expert panel that brought forward the recommendations. When we talk about goals, what they had to say was that in particular Ontario's pollution prevention legislation should include "clear, viable and progressive goals (i.e., a percentage reduction in toxics use and release in the province within a specified period of time); the statute should include renewable toxics reduction targets, and a mechanism for monitoring and public reporting on achievement of those targets. The panel notes that goals are not set in the current discussion paper and therefore strongly encourages the addition of goals to the discussion paper and program."

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So the panel itself brought in expert advice. As far as I can tell from reading their commentary, they had debates amongst themselves. They came, within their framework of directions, to positions that they felt were reasonable, and at the same time actually delivered on the goals that the government said that it had, which was to reduce the exposure of the population to toxic chemicals.

So I don't see their representations, their recommendations, as the highest ceiling to which one could aspire but a reasonable bar to determine whether or not the action set out in legislation is going to be effective or not. Frankly, I have to say, having seen this legislation ignore the recommendations of the expert panel, ignore the recommendations of the Canadian Cancer Society, ignore the recommendations of environmental groups and health groups who came before us, particularly by not setting any goals—again, that gives a hollow sound to the pledge of the Premier in 2007 that a re-elected Liberal government would "tackle the environmental causes of illness by ... introducing a tough new toxic reduction law that requires polluting companies to reduce their emissions." That is not before us.

Massachusetts, the state that actually is a leading jurisdiction, in whose trail we follow, weakly—their Toxics Use Reduction Act requires a statewide 50% reduction of toxic by-products within 10 years. I don't know if 50% is enough. I do know that at least in that state, those who are concerned about these issues can determine whether

or not the government has acted on the principles it said it was acting on and on the goals that it set out, and hold that government to account. That's the kind of clear and ambitious goal that we needed here in Ontario if we were actually going to come back to the population and say, "You know what? We've looked out at the issues. We've looked out at the problems. We understand the steps that have to be taken, and we've taken them."

Sixth point: We heard several deputations at the standing committee calling for amendments to ensure that the bill established a fund to finance research, training and technical assistance for toxics use reduction. Without funding for the kinds of support that companies need to actually move forward, they're far less likely to implement their now-voluntary toxics reduction strategies.

Not just a fund is needed: Experts indicated that revenue for the fund should come from a small levy on users of toxics—not a large levy, not a levy that changes the economics, but a small levy that allows consistent funding of an institute that would go in and provide the technical support for companies to make the transition that's needed.

The Massachusetts toxics reduction fund—the actual leading jurisdiction; this is not a leading jurisdiction—is the most effective of all US programs because it established a dedicated revenue stream based on those modest annual fees paid by toxic chemical users. Firms paying a modest annual fee are more likely to engage in the program and use the services. Cost savings from reduced chemical use more than offset the cost of the fees themselves. And without these funds, there's a grave danger that the program will have to compete—not just a grave danger, a certainty that the program will have to compete within government with other priorities for allocation of funds.

The McGuinty government—and we will hear this, I'm sure, if not in comment, then in other statements that are released to the public—plans to invest \$24 million to help industry find green chemistry alternatives and reduce the use of toxics. Health groups like the Canadian Cancer Society are concerned that that won't be enough to provide technical assistance and won't be enough to help businesses make the transition from toxic substance use to less-toxic substance use. What's needed are programs to provide grants and loans to businesses to offset costs, money to support research and development of safer alternatives and, where it actually happens, provide re-employment assistance, vocational retraining and other benefits to ensure that any displaced employees are given that support to move on to their next careers.

The reality is that companies in Massachusetts have actually reduced their operating costs by reducing their use of toxic chemicals. This is not something that is novel. This is not something that is unheard of. This is something that in fact is old but minimized, marginalized.

In 1991, the American Environmental Protection Agency published a small paper, *Achievements in Source Reduction and Recycling for Ten Industries in the United*

States. When we talk about these issues, so often people say, "Well you really can't get rid of these toxic chemicals. They're critical to the functioning of our society." There well may be instances for which that is true, but even in 1991 the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States published a study of industries that had done things that we should be doing on a large-scale basis here.

Trichloroethylene, a toxic chemical, was replaced in metal plating in some operations with a solvent extracted from orange rind, terpenes. Trichloroethylene was used to degrease metals before electroplating. Orange rinds, the non-toxic terpenes, were able to replace trichloroethylene, a very toxic chemical, at a substantial savings to the company that engaged in that activity.

Mercury and cadmium used to be substantial components of dry cell batteries that we use on a regular basis. In fact, their use was dramatically reduced and then phased out because dry cell batteries, the batteries that you use every day, were a significant source of mercury coming into our environment. That was done without battery companies going belly up or not being able to produce a battery that gave us power. That's entirely technically feasible.

Perchloroethylene, another substantial toxic chemical, is used to clean printed circuits so that you wouldn't have short-circuiting in your electronic products. The companies that dealt with that problem revamped their production process to dramatically reduce the amount of chemicals they used—period.

In fact, if you're going to reduce the amount of chemicals that we use in society and reduce the risk that both workers and the general public are exposed to, you know that there's a big body of knowledge out there already on how to do that, how to move forward. If you're going to apply it in a detailed way in industry here in Ontario, then you need people with the technical ability to develop the processes and get the information out to the industry and work with industry as a partner to make that happen.

The seventh point I want to make: Many of the groups articulated the importance of including measures in the bill to identify and encourage firms to substitute safer alternatives in place of toxic substances. I just set that out. The reality, though, again, is that having that toxics reduction institute would be a substantial part of making that happen.

We need to have a legislative framework—we don't have it—that ensures that the substitution takes place. We need to have identified the priority substances for replacement. We need to assess safer alternatives, develop alternative plans and put them in place with industry.

In fact, it was interesting to me to have people like the auto parts manufacturers and others come and say, "We're interested in moving this stuff forward. We would like your assistance in doing it. We don't disagree with the need to reduce toxic chemicals." There was an opportunity here for this government to develop a partnership with industry to move this agenda forward, a partnership that they seemed to have turned their back

on. I don't know why. I guess I can speculate. I don't know why, in fact, they have not acted on this, but I can say that it is irresponsible not to have moved as far and as fast as they could on this legislation.

Groups called for amendments to include stronger provisions to ensure the public has full information about toxics in their environment and the products they use—something the cancer society makes reference to. The public has a right to know when they buy products that have toxic chemicals in them; they need to be informed of that. This government had an opportunity before the last election to pass a piece of private members' legislation that I brought forward, modeled on a very workable bill in place in California. They backed off on that. In the course of debating this bill and in the course of going through clause-by-clause, they backed off on making sure that they had the power to actually inform the public. That was a mistake.

We heard from groups who talked about the need to incorporate the precautionary principle into this bill. Quite simply, it would mean that where there wasn't full scientific certainty, we wouldn't take a risk with people's health. For what it's worth, the Krever Commission, when it looked at the contaminated blood issue from the 1980s, said that in fact if those agencies which had been dealing with blood had used a precautionary principle, many, many people would have been spared illness and death that resulted from contaminated blood. We need that kind of approach when you're dealing with chemicals that can cause cancer, sterility, neurotoxic effects—a broad range of health effects. We're not getting that from this government.

This bill, as it's presented to us today, is not a step forward. It's not necessarily a step backward. It depends on what happens in the writing of regulation. It depends on whether or not, in the writing of regulations, this government, in its dealings with those interests that want to make sure that toxic chemicals are used, comes to a deal that actually strengthens protection. It could come to a deal that undermines protection. That remains to be seen. That chapter has not been written.

I think it's unfortunate that the government didn't take this opportunity, in the course of introducing this bill and in going through the bill on a clause-by-clause basis, to make it the kind of bill that we could be proud of in Ontario, the kind of bill that would meet the standards set in Massachusetts and hopefully go beyond that. It's a huge missed opportunity, and frankly, an opportunity that people will pay for with their health, and in some instances, tragically, with their lives.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments? Further debate? Does any other member wish to speak?

Mr. Gerretsen has moved third reading of Bill 167. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be named as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Orders of the day. The Minister of the Environment.

Hon. John Gerretsen: There's no further business this morning until question period.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): There being no further business, this House will recess until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 1004 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'd ask all members to help me welcome the students of Mr. David Weir of Deer Park Public School, who are here today to celebrate as they graduate from grade 8. They will be joining us at any moment.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's my pleasure to introduce two reverends, Rev. Ken Gallinger and Rev. Matthew Gallinger, and their beautiful little girl and granddaughter, Daria.

Mr. Charles Sousa: I'd like to recognize here today in the members' gallery the 2009 Mississauga Man of the Year, Jim Tovey. Jim was recognized for his outstanding efforts with the Lakeview Legacy project. Joining him today is also Professor John Danahy from the University of Toronto, who was also awarded with the merit of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects in regard to the Lakeview project.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'd like to recognize a young nine-year-old from my riding, Kyle Roberts from Bowmanville. He is here as part of the 21st annual fire safety awards. He's one of the award recipients today. Congratulations, Kyle, to you and your family.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Visiting today and seated in the members' east gallery is page Rebecca's beloved father, Edward John Penner. Welcome to the Legislature.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I would like to welcome the students and staff from Beardmore Public School, who travelled 18 hours by bus to get here. They're up in the public gallery today. Welcome.

Mr. David Zimmer: I'd like to introduce Ms. Ghazal Momen, a recent graduate of York University, a resident in my riding of Willowdale and a volunteer in my constituency office, doing great work.

Hon. John Milloy: I'd like to introduce the family of page Stephen Rickert, who are here with us today: mother, Jennifer Rickert, who was a few years behind me in high school; and brother Brian Rickert, who I believe is celebrating his birthday today.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: In the gallery today is Elizabeth Seldon, the mother of Pam Hrick, who works in my office. I'd like to welcome her.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I'd like to welcome Keith Pacey, a retired teacher from my riding, and Alain Peron, the chair of our North Bay General Hospital board and a lawyer in town, who are both visiting today, down for a hospital conference. We're happy to have them here.

Mr. Jim Brownell: I'd like to welcome today John Earle, Cornwall's renowned cinematographer; a former student of mine, Michael Blodgett, graduating this Friday from St. Lawrence College, and my constituency assistant, Jeremy Gowsell.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to introduce my summer co-op student, Jason White, who's sitting in the west gallery with my assistant, Todd White.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: Today is Glengarry–Prescott–Russell day at Queen's Park. I would like to recognize the mayors of the nine municipalities: the mayor of Hawkesbury, Jeanne Charlebois; our county warden, Robert Kirby; the mayor of Champlain, Gary Barton; the mayor of Nation municipality, Denis Pommerville; the mayor of Clarence-Rockland, Richard Lalonde; the mayor of Russell, Ken Hill; the deputy mayor of Alfred and Plantagenet, André Boudreault; and the mayor of north Glengarry, Grant Crack; also, on the other side, the members of municipal councils. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MEMBERS' ANNIVERSARIES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would like to recognize and congratulate the following members who, like me, are today celebrating 10 years serving as members of provincial Parliament: Michael Bryant, the member for St. Paul's; Leona Dombrowsky, the member for Prince Edward–Hastings; Garfield Dunlop, the member for Simcoe North; Dave Levac, the member for Brant; and George Smitherman, the member for Toronto Centre. Happy anniversary.

There being no further introductions, it is now time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: A question to the Minister of Health: Every day, more details are leaking out about the rapidly growing scandal at eHealth Ontario. You claimed last week that the reason why untendered contracts were handed out to consultants was because of "unforeseen emergencies." Minister, do you still maintain that to be the case?

Hon. David Caplan: In fact, last week and this week, I have shared the concern, as has the Premier, of taxpayers to make sure that we are delivering value for the dollars that they are sending us, and also ensuring that we finally deliver on an eHealth system for the province of Ontario.

I can tell the member that yesterday I had the great pleasure to speak with Mr. McCarter, the Auditor General of Ontario.

Interjection.

Hon. David Caplan: In fact, it was, I say to the member from Renfrew, because Mr. McCarter shared

with me the scope of the work that he has been doing, on behalf of taxpayers in the province of Ontario, looking into not only the legacy agency and the transition but the work of eHealth itself.

I have written to Mr. McCarter and, under section 17 of the act, have asked him to table his report so that I can, on behalf of taxpayers in Ontario, turn the recommendations around into action as quickly as possible.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I listened very closely, and I didn't hear a yes or a no. I think the minister is backing away from his earlier claim of untendered contracts for "unforeseen emergencies."

Minister, you know that Accenture received numerous untendered contracts totalling \$1.3 million. The CBC reported last night that William Falk, a partner at Accenture, was listed on Sarah Kramer's job application as a reference. The CBC also reports that they are close family friends.

Could the minister explain exactly what the nature of the so-called unforeseen emergency was around the \$1.3 million in Accenture contracts? Or is the reality as it appears: more evidence of the incestuous relationships, the quid pro quo, the "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" mentality that you allowed to fester at your rogue eHealth agency?

Hon. David Caplan: First of all, I disagree with the premise of the member's question, because whenever possible, it's my expectation that contracts are tendered in an open and fair manner. The eHealth board made a decision during the transition period to get eHealth moving quickly on the goals that we have established, which are to get a diabetes registry into place, an ePrescribing regime into place, moving toward electronic health records as quickly as possible.

It's important not just for eHealth, but for all of us who have the privilege of serving Ontarians, including, I would say to the member, every member of this Legislature. That's why I directed the board to undertake a third party review, and in fact, the board has engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers, along with a representative of the Ministry of Health, to oversee that review. There will be internal government auditors managing that review.

As I have mentioned, I have spoken with Mr. McCarter related to the work that he is doing in ensuring that both of those—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Let me give you another example: Michael Guerriere is the head of the Liberal-connected Courtyard Group. The contacts and close ties between Mr. Guerriere and eHealth's Alan Hudson and Sarah Kramer run very deep. Courtyard got contracts for the wait times strategy that was headed by Alan Hudson, where they worked with Kramer. Liberal-connected Courtyard also got contracts at Cancer Care Ontario, headed by Alan Hudson, where they worked with Sarah Kramer. Now, Liberal-friendly Courtyard received over a million dollars in untendered contracts at eHealth, which

is, no coincidence, headed by Alan Hudson and Sarah Kramer.

There has been, for some time, a growing stench at eHealth, all happening under the minister's nose. Minister, you have no choice: Will you do the right thing and resign and let someone else—

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

Hon. David Caplan: Again, the premise of the member's question is just incorrect. I can tell you that these types of allegations reinforce the measures that we have already taken.

We have an internal government auditor managing the review. I've asked the Provincial Auditor to speed up, under section 17 of the act; to table with us the work that he has undertaken on behalf of the province of Ontario and the people of Ontario. I know, and I say to the my friend opposite, that the auditor has done thorough and excellent work on behalf of taxpayers. I will, in fact, receive his advice and turn it into action as soon as it is in hand. Rather than wait until his normal report comes out to release the findings, including eHealth procurement practices, I want to get as much good information as I can as soon as I can get it, so that this important initiative can continue to work, delivering—

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

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ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Minister of Health: Let's look at some of the other contracts at eHealth. Anzen Consulting got a contract from eHealth. The head of Anzen Consulting, Miyo Yamashita, is married to the head of Liberal-connected Courtyard, your friend Michael Guerriere. Ms. Yamashita was hired for \$268,000 on a four-month contract to produce a communications plan and branding strategy. At the same time, eHealth hired another consultant named Donna Kline on a sole-source contract for \$192,000. Her statement of work says that she was to provide, once again, a communications plan and branding strategy, the exact same contract Ms. Yamashita received. Minister, why is the government paying two different consultants to do the exact same work?

Hon. David Caplan: I can tell the member, as I have said in this House, that I have discussed these concerns with some of the expenses that have come to light with both the chair and the CEO of eHealth. It's important not just for eHealth, but for all of us who have the privilege to serve Ontarians, including this Legislature. The Premier and I both agree: While things are allowable, just because you can do it doesn't necessarily mean that it should be done. We expect that private sector consultants abide by not only the letter of the law but the spirit of the law as well. That's why I took the action to instruct the board to take on a third party. In this case they have taken on PricewaterhouseCoopers to be able to undertake this

work to get to the bottom of financial controls and management practices at eHealth. I look forward to the results of their review—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: There are so many consultants involved here that we have to pay extra to keep track of them all. On December 1, Ms. Yamashita billed taxpayers for talking to her husband, the infamous Michael Guerriere, at Courtyard Group, a consulting firm on the end of literally millions of dollars in untendered contracts from eHealth. That phone call cost taxpayers \$3,800. On December 5, Yamashita had yet another meeting with yet another consultant to discuss Donna Kline's role. For the privilege of one consultant talking to a consultant about another consultant, taxpayers had to fork out an additional \$3,000.

Minister, PricewaterhouseCoopers has already conducted its review on your rogue agency. They violated those recommendations under your nose. Minister, this is out of control. Will you do the right thing? Will you step aside and let somebody else clean up—

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

Hon. David Caplan: You know, it is unfortunate that when the legacy agency, Smart Systems for Health, was set up in 2002, they were not provided with the proper mandate or the proper leadership in order to deliver on the modernization of Ontario's health care system. We are driving forward on a very ambitious and important agenda to improve patient safety and improve health care, as Ontarians would expect that they would.

The accomplishments in a few short months have been very good, and I would share them with the member. We have unveiled—or eHealth Ontario, rather, has—Ontario's first comprehensive, published eHealth strategy. They've launched an ePrescribing program, the first of its kind in Canada, piloted in Collingwood and in Sault Ste. Marie, connecting pharmacy with primary care. They have also partnered with OntarioMD, the Ontario Medical Association, to—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: I assume these contracts aren't news to the minister. Here is another one that you should be aware of: On December 7, Anzen Consulting charged \$900 to send e-mails to a consultant at the Liberal-connected Courtyard Group, Karli Farrow. Karli Farrow used to be chief of staff to the Deputy Premier and a policy adviser to the Premier himself. This was the first of several bills between the two.

On January 5, Yamashita phoned Donna Kline, a call that lasted an hour and a half, for which Anzen charged \$450 and Donna Kline's timesheet shows that she billed \$300 for the exact same phone call; 750 bucks for a single phone call. On January 14, Ms. Yamashita billed \$1,200 for four hours' work with her husband's consulting firm.

Interjection: Out of control.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Minister, this agency's out of control. It's under your watch and you've done nothing. Will you do the right thing and resign and let someone else—

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

Hon. David Caplan: That is precisely why I have the concerns that I have. I've met with the board and with board chair Dr. Hudson. I sought reassurance for some of the information which has come to light and did not receive it, and that is why I've ordered the board to take on a third-party review. That's why in fact PricewaterhouseCoopers has been retained to look at the expenditures to ensure that management practice and financial controls are in place that Ontarians expect would be there.

In addition to that, the Auditor General, an independent officer of this Legislature, has undertaken work previously and has done wonderful work on behalf of Ontario taxpayers historically. I had an opportunity to speak with Mr. McCarter yesterday and through that conversation directed him, under section 17 of the act, to accelerate the work—

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

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Today a group of seniors has made the trek to Queen's Park to voice their concerns about the McGuinty government's harmonized sales tax. They're worried about the impact of having to pay 8% more—8% more to heat their homes in the winter, to take their daily vitamins, to go to the barber, to read the morning newspaper or to enjoy an evening at the theatre. As many Ontario seniors see the savings that they've built over a lifetime of hard work vanish, why is the Premier forcing them to pay 8% more?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: First of all I want to take the opportunity to welcome all of our visitors to Queen's Park, but in particular seniors to whom we owe so much. I want to tell seniors and all Ontarians that the decision we have taken together as a government to move forward with a single sales tax is not one that we have taken lightly. But we feel it's absolutely essential if we're going to build a stronger, more competitive economy that will ensure that our businesses can compete with other businesses around the world and that they will continue to have the capacity to hire our children and our grandchildren. That's very important to all of us.

At the same time, we've put in place a package that cuts Ontarians' taxes; 93% of Ontarians will have their taxes cut. That's an important piece of information that doesn't seem to be reaching Ontarians. I know that my honourable colleague is going to want to talk about that a bit more at some point in time, but 93% of Ontarians are going to receive tax cuts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Seniors from across the province are flooding MPPs' offices with letters of dire concern. These are very difficult times for all Ontarians, but

especially for seniors living on incomes tied to markets that have seen far better days. The McGuinty government's response to our seniors? "Get ready to pay 8% more to fill up the tank, to drive to see your grandchildren, to keep fit at a local pool or exercise club, to go for a coffee in the morning with your friends." Why is the Premier making seniors pay 8% more?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, I recognize that what we are asking of Ontarians is not easy. But I do know that the very best advice we have received from the most thoughtful people on these kinds of issues is that we need to catch up to 130 other countries, we need to catch up to four other provinces which already offer their businesses a significant competitive advantage. We've got to find a way to ensure that Ontario businesses can compete with the best in the world and win. We've got to make sure they're strong enough to continue to hire our children and our grandchildren.

I've had the opportunity to speak to many seniors about this issue. Their single greatest concern is, "Are we going to leave a strong Ontario for our children and grandchildren? Will we be able to give jobs to our children and our grandchildren?" That's what this is all about. It's about building a bright future for all of us.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The McGuinty Liberals know that this tax is going to hurt Ontarians and they're doing everything in their power to hide it. First they proposed hiding the tax in the final price. Today we learned the McGuinty Liberals are lobbying the Auditor General to skirt their own advertising rules. They want to go on a multi-million dollar advertising blitz on the public's purse. Ontarians will not be fooled. Will this Premier listen to them, forget the mass marketing campaign and pull the plug on this blatant 8% tax grab?

1050

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, just to make it clear, we've put this together in such a way that 93% of Ontarians will get a permanent income tax cut. I think it's important for us to recognize that. At the same time, we're also putting in place some supports for our families at the lowest income levels. In fact, the Ontario sales tax credit is something new. It's \$260 each for adults and children. That'll benefit some 2.9 million Ontarians.

What is happening to the province of Ontario is very, very significant, dramatic, and it has the potential to be permanently traumatic. We have to rise to the occasion. We have to do what is necessary to build a stronger economy, not just for us today, but for our children and for our grandchildren. I believe Ontarians are prepared to do what is necessary to build that stronger economy, not just for our generation, but for the next—

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

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Back to the Premier: The news out of eHealth Ontario is becoming more disturbing by

the day. Instead of modernizing our health care system, we're seeing an elaborate network of rewards for friends and insiders. Executives and their consultant friends are living the high life as taxpayers are being left high and dry. We know that millions of dollars in untendered contracts went to consultant firms with personal connections to the CEO. My question is a simple one: What does someone have to do to get fired?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: During the past few days, the members of the opposition have put forward a number of facts which raise some real concerns, and I've said that in the past. There have also been some allegations and then some not-so-subtle insinuations.

I think the best thing for us to do on behalf of Ontarians is to introduce into this debate an objective, dispassionate, thorough investigator, in the person of the Auditor General. The Minister of Health has contacted the Auditor General, has asked him to conduct an inquiry, to be as thorough as he believes is necessary, and to produce that report, together with those recommendations, at the earliest possible opportunity. I can't for the life of me understand why the opposition would object to us calling upon the Auditor General and waiting for his recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, what the rest of us can't comprehend is why there's a litany of failure here and the Premier continues to stand by it. His Minister of Health has failed to do his job in overseeing eHealth Ontario. The same minister defended the outrageous billing practices and expense claims. Then he decided to hire a high-priced consultant to look into eHealth's high-priced consultants. It would be laughable if it wasn't so sad. The minister is incapable of doing his job. The Premier needs to fire him. Why won't he?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Just so I can provide some reassurance to Ontarians and my honourable colleagues as well, I have a copy of the letter written to the Auditor General, sent by the Minister of Health. This is what it says, in part:

"I am formally requesting that as per section 17 of the Auditor General Act, you consider tabling your report on eHealth Ontario in the Legislature as a special report as soon as it is complete, and then making it publicly available online on your website ... as well as in hard copy. I welcome your recommendations and if there are significant changes to be made at the agency, I believe that we should move to implement them as soon as possible.

"I can assure you of my full co-operation with your review."

Again, I think we should allow the Auditor General to do his work.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It seems obvious that the Premier is willing to defend his minister at any cost. It's a similar approach, in fact, to the way that friends and insiders are treated by eHealth's CEO. Ontarians want to

see health care innovation, not \$3,000-a-day consultants and contracts being awarded to friends.

It's plain and simple: The Minister of Health failed to do his job. When will the Premier clean house and replace him with someone who can?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I need to take issue with something my honourable colleague has raised, as well as the spokesperson for the official opposition a moment ago. I want to make it clear that some things have been done which are in fact factual but which we cannot possibly condone in government. I said that before, and we will not defend those. But in addition, I think there had been some unfounded allegations and some not-so-subtle, as I said, insinuations.

I think the single most important thing we can do is to turn the heat down a little bit, introduce a bit of light in the person of the Auditor General, have him come in and be as thorough as he can. He's objective. He is impartial. He is nothing, as I said before, if not thorough. Allow him to do his work—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Answer.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: —bring forward those recommendations and make all the results of his inquiries public so that we can then consider those together and act on those together.

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. On June 1 in this Legislature, the Minister of Health, to justify the bonus to Kramer and the untendered contracts, stated, "The current leadership at eHealth Ontario is yielding good results...." The minister cites the diabetes registry as a deliverable of Ms. Kramer and Dr. Hudson, and he states, "We now have in place Ontario's first-ever eHealth strategy. That is directing the kind of investment" like a diabetes registry. It has been brought to our attention that Ontario does not have a diabetes registry. There is no registry up and running or even populated. In fact, I have in my hand here the RFP for the registry, which was posted on May 20, revised May 28 and closes on June 8. How can you justify the leadership of eHealth when no action has been undertaken?

Hon. David Caplan: The member is simply wrong in her assertion. What I said in this House was that a request for expression of interest did go out on the diabetes registry, that we will be moving to a request for qualifications and then a request for proposal. That is entirely what I said.

I did say as well that, regrettably, the Smart Systems for Health Agency set up by the former member and her colleagues when they had the privilege to serve on this side of the House was given the wrong mandate, was given the wrong leadership, was given no direction. That is why my predecessor ordered an operational review of that agency. In fact, we took the move to quickly be able to change and bring in new leadership and, for the first time, have developed a real plan for eHealth infrastructure in this province.

We are already seeing good results, as I have mentioned here in this House. We've seen, for example, the launch of the baseline diabetes dataset initiative—

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

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: It's obvious that this Minister of Health doesn't have any idea what's going on. Six years—Smart Systems, now eHealth and no progress whatsoever on eHealth, which we desperately need.

Furthermore, in October 2008, a document from the ministry stated, "By the spring of 2009, Ontario will have a diabetes registry actively used by patients and physicians to manage diabetic care." Well, guess what? It hasn't happened. And you continue to defend Ms. Kramer and Dr. Hudson, saying they're on track, they're on target, that there's an "electronic health record for all diabetic patients...." The truth is, there isn't one. Will you, today, recognize that you're not up to the job? Will you resign and give the job to somebody else who can clean up the mess?

Hon. David Caplan: I recognize that we lost a lot of time because this member, as I've said, unfortunately, didn't understand the importance and the necessity to move quickly and in a focused way when on this side of the House. We did have to bring in people who are getting the job done and driving forward.

The member says that nothing was accomplished under Smart Systems for Health. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. They built and connected 7,000 secure network sites—all hospitals, public health units and satellite sites, family health teams and other physicians, continuing care agencies, pharmacies, Cancer Care Ontario, Cardiac Care Network, Trillium Gift of Life and air ambulance operations. Among its successes I would say is the wait times information system to give all Ontarians access to timely surgical procedures. We have seen the benefits of these eHealth initiatives as we are driving—

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

1100

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. The fiasco at eHealth Ontario keeps growing. Contracts are being tendered according to personal connections rather than performance and evaluation. Personal connections supersede checks and balances, with the taxpayer holding the bag on outrageous excesses. To top it all off, Ontario still does not have a functioning electronic health record. I ask this Minister, how much more do we need to see before heads finally roll?

Hon. David Caplan: As I have stated in this House, one day from the New Democrats we hear to pull the plug and get out of eHealth initiatives; another day it's a crucial investment that we need to make.

I do agree with the member that it is long overdue and it is time for us to be able to get on with this, which is

why we began eHealth Ontario back in the fall, earlier in 2008. That was the result of work that was commissioned by my predecessor to order an operational review. I do believe we are already starting to see good results and yielding good results from the current leadership.

I have mentioned earlier that we have the first comprehensive eHealth strategy in this province's history. We are launching the ePrescribing program. We've established the diagnostic imaging network, where we will be filmless in this province in very short order. We have developed an electronic system to store images from hospital CT scanners for neurosurgical and neurological care to improve patient access—

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: This minister has clearly dropped the ball. His answer demonstrates he is not up to the job of protecting the interests of Ontarians as the health minister. He defends people that are beyond defence. He shields high-flying executives and high-priced consultants who are getting rich off the public purse. He is out of touch and, frankly, over his head. He has lost the confidence of those that he is supposed to serve. How much longer before he does the only honourable thing left to do and resigns?

Hon. David Caplan: Listen, I acknowledge that the investments that we are making in eHealth are substantial and important. It is long overdue for this province to be able to have the eHealth infrastructure that will drive and improve patient care and patient safety in the province. We are already seeing the beginnings of good results on behalf of the patients of the province of Ontario.

Now, I have expressed my concern about the revelations related to the expenses, as has the Premier. That's why I have taken the action to call in the chair of the board and to order a third party review of management function and financial controls. That's why I took the step to contact and have a conversation with Mr. McCarter—a non-partisan, independent officer of this Legislature. I understand the partisan nature of the member opposite, and that is her right. But I can tell you that Mr. McCarter will provide good advice—

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

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: My question is for the Minister of Government Services. Recently there was a suggestion from the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook that the McGuinty government should rip open our negotiated collective agreements with the unions. This member's blatant disregard for our public servants is a Common Sense Revolution déjà vu all over again.

We've heard from doctors, nurses, water, meat inspectors, and we are incredibly worried about this. Even the member from Whitby disagrees with this idea, so I'm not sure that the party opposite has a coherent position on this issue.

We should all be worried about this because we all depend on the work of public servants.

Minister, can you inform the House if tearing up collective agreements with our public sector is a direction that he wants this government to take?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: I want to thank the member for her question. I too have heard the reckless suggestion from the member from Niagara West–Glanbrook. I want to say to this Legislative Assembly that this is certainly not the direction our government is going to take. We value the work of our public servants. We all remember the Walkerton tragedy, and we sure as heck don't want to revisit that.

The negotiations this year with our labour partners were all done in good faith, and the agreements reached were fair and reasonable.

The mere idea expressed by the member from Niagara West–Glanbrook has the potential to bring profound labour unrest in Ontario. This province has already been through that with both opposing parties. This is not what Ontarians want. It's in times like these that we depend on public services the most. I can assure the members present that creating unrest—

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

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: I thank the minister for his answer, and I'm very pleased to hear that this government will continue to respect the work of our public servants, contrary to the party opposite. However, I'm also concerned about the impact of the commitment, in the 2009 budget, that would see a reduction of employees in the Ontario public service by 5% over the next three years. I understand that this measure would save \$300 million annually, but I would not want to see these savings at the detriment of our public services.

Can the minister assure this House that this reduction will not negatively affect the important services that our Ontario public service provides?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Yes, I can. Just for the record, I want to confirm that our budget did lay out a plan to reduce our OPS by 5%, or 3,400 full-time employees, over a three-year period, primarily through attrition and other measures. But I want to assure the member that the quality of service delivered to the public will not be compromised by these changes.

We have no intention of taking advice from a party that fired food and water inspectors and thousands of teachers and nurses. Our view on this issue could not be more different than theirs. The McGuinty government is committed to reinvesting in our public services, services that were completely decimated when the party opposite was in power. With the help of our employees, we have rebuilt the public service, and we're proud—proud—to be one of Ontario's 100 best employers—

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

MINISTRY CONTRACTS

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question again is to the Minister of Health. It has come to our attention that the shady procurement practices or lack thereof exhibited by

eHealth Ontario are also occurring within the Ministry of Health. I have, on my desk here, an untendered contract worth three and a half million tax dollars for an institution which happens to be the former employer of Michael Guerriere, Matt Anderson and Dr. Hudson. I have been informed that the ministry approached this institution and offered it \$3.5 million to develop fact sheets for the Ontario diabetes registry. It is our understanding that this institution did not submit a proposal to the Ministry of Health for this cash.

Could you confirm, Minister, if this contract was indeed sole-sourced, and, if not, would you produce the proposal submitted by the institution which received the money?

Hon. David Caplan: It's a little bit hard to comment on something that the member is very sketchy in providing the details on: "Some public institution is doing something related to"—if the member wants to share details with me I would be very happy to respond.

I can tell the member that Dr. Hudson has done outstanding work lowering wait times in the province of Ontario. We have already seen the benefits of that work as wait times are lower for hips and knees, for cancer, for cardiac and for diagnostic services. This is the kind of work, this is the kind of agenda that this government has moved forward on. I'm always happy to be held accountable here in this Legislature or in its committees for questions of the like, and if the member has details and would like to share them with me—

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

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: In the Legislature yesterday, the Premier stated, "We've got to ensure that we are rigorous and careful with public dollars, whether they're being spent by the private sector through consultants or internally through government in our ministries." I understand that this is just one of many contracts sole-sourced by the Ministry of Health, whether to the public or the private sector.

Minister, does the Ministry of Health not have the expertise itself to develop these protocols? Why did you outsource this contract to an outside institution connected to three eHealth Ontario employees for three and a half million tax dollars? We understand that there's a big joke about that there is another Ministry of Health operating outside of the Ministry of Health.

1110

Hon. David Caplan: I'm not sure what the member is referring to. In fact, this government prides itself and has been extremely transparent in its dealings—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It's not helpful, member for Durham. Minister?

Hon. David Caplan: Members on this side are very transparent in their dealings when it comes to, as the Premier has said, ensuring that we deliver value for the taxpayer dollar.

The ministry, in fact, has partners at local health integration networks, community care access centres and

many others in helping us deliver fundamental services to the province of Ontario when it comes to their health care.

This would not be unusual—well, perhaps it would be unusual for the member opposite, because when they were in government they cut hospitals, they fired nurses, they partnered with no one and unfortunately the result that Ontarians received was a degraded state of health care in the province.

I can tell you that this government works with a variety of partners—

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

SERVICES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Reverend Matt Gallinger is here from the Premier's hometown of Ottawa. He is seeking support for his 10-month-old daughter Daria, who has severe complex disabilities which warrant resources from the special services at home program. The family urgently requires access to this fund so that Daria can receive the nursing care she needs at home in a loving environment. Why is Reverend Gallinger finding it impossible to obtain funding through the government's special services at home program?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: First of all, let me welcome the parents in the House today. We thank you for all the advocating you do on behalf of those parents who need special services at home for their children.

I'm very pleased to say in this House today that this government, since we came into power, has increased the money in this program by 45%. This year alone we will be spending almost \$100 million for this very good program, a program that parents need to be able to continue to keep their son or daughter at home and to care for them.

This program provides money to the parents to get service for their disabled child.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: A shameful political decision was made by the McGuinty Liberals to stop funding additional families and children with disabilities in this province. That's the reality.

Daria was born with cerebral palsy. She must be fed through a tube and has a host of exacting care requirements that qualify her family to receive support through this very program. The child advocate, the Ombudsman and New Democrats, as well as the community at large have all been pushing to have the McGuinty government meet its obligation to fund the needs of children like Daria.

Will the McGuinty government agree today to lift the cap they've imposed on care allowances for children with complex disabilities? Will you ensure that Daria and her

family receive the support they need from the special services at home program?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: My ministry provided special services at home to more than 27,000 families this year. We know that we need to do more. We will continue to work with the parents and to work with our partners in the community.

Last Friday I was very pleased to be with the Premier to open the Rotary Home in Ottawa. The Rotary Home is a respite home to give a break to parents when they need to go away. Of course, they cannot leave these children to anyone, so we have this respite service in Ottawa and across the province.

We will continue to invest in special services at home. I'm very pleased to say that we are helping 27,000—

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

MEDICAL ISOTOPES

Mr. Jeff Leal: My question today is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I know all members of this House are hearing from their respective communities about the reduction in supply of medical isotopes. As you know, the Chalk River reactor, which produces the majority of Ontario's isotopes, is down due to a leak. This is the second time in 18 months that Canada has faced such a shortage.

Medical isotopes are used to diagnose different kinds of cancer and cardiac care health issues. My constituents and the staff at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre are concerned about getting access to the diagnostic test if they need it. So I ask the Minister of Health, what is the ministry doing to ensure that access to these tests is not disrupted?

Hon. David Caplan: As the member from Peterborough rightly points out, the shutdown of the Chalk River nuclear reactor is a pressing and important issue. The reduction in the amount of available medical isotopes creates a challenge not just for the health care system in Ontario but for the health care system worldwide. It's a global disruption, and we are not immune. That's why we've taken proactive steps to address this challenge.

My ministry has implemented the Ontario medical isotope disruption plan. It has distributed two important notices to health care workers, informing them about what steps should be taken to conserve the current supply of isotopes. I have written to the federal Minister of Natural Resources. I've asked her about the federal government's plans to get Chalk River back up and running as soon as possible. I've offered her assistance from the province, if needed. We're working with our health care partners and with all levels of government to ensure our health system can respond directly to this challenge—

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

Mr. Jeff Leal: Minister, it's reassuring to know that the province is doing all it can to manage this very

difficult situation. However, there's another aspect to this shortage that worries me and my constituents. In today's *Globe and Mail* there is a report that distributors of medical isotopes have increased prices due to this shortage. I'm concerned about the additional financial pressures this could put on the government's budget and our health care system. In these tough economic times, it becomes ever more challenging to manage these additional costs.

I know the province is in a difficult situation and resolving these issues depends in part on the actions of and much-needed leadership by the federal government. As such, I would ask what the Minister of Health is doing to engage the federal government on this very important and serious issue.

Hon. David Caplan: Again, my colleague from Peterborough raises a very important point. It's very concerning that distributors might be using their unfortunate situation as an opportunity to increase prices and to increase their profits. I'm going to continue to work with our federal government to resolve the situation. I've written to the federal minister and I will write to her again to ensure that the federal government addresses this issue. I have spoken with the federal Minister of Health.

I also want to ensure that our federal partners are providing us with timely information because we depend on the estimates to manage our supply of isotopes, as the diagnostic imaging and treatment needs of Ontario residents are extremely important. I want to encourage our federal government to be a leader among Canada's international partners.

As a province, we're going to continue to manage the disruption in supply. I know Ontarians will depend on these diagnostic tests—

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

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: To the Minister of Health, and it's regarding his so-called third party review, which is essentially a farce. Reviews have already been done. Policies are already in place. The problem is, they've been ignored by the board of directors, they've been ignored by Sarah Kramer, the CEO, and management. One of the individuals involved, a Dr. Penny Ballem, got thousands in taxpayer money even though she had no contract in place. This is clear proof that the rules are being broken; not that they don't exist, which you're suggesting with respect to this review. This review is clearly a sham designed to bury this scandalous misuse of taxpayers' dollars. The minister should resign and let someone else clean up his mess.

Hon. David Caplan: I know that the member opposite has had his run-ins with the Auditor General in the province before, but to call his review a sham I think is a new tone in this House. This is a non-partisan—unlike the member opposite—independent officer of this Legislature, and I think he has done outstanding work on behalf of Ontarians and on behalf of this Legislature over

the years. For this member to suggest that the auditor is not capable or that his review is a sham I think really speaks to other issues that this member has had in the past with the auditor and with his office.

I want you to know that I have full confidence in the auditor to perform his duties and to provide us with advice and guidance. I will act on the recommendations that he provides for me when it comes to—

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

1120

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: This is a disgusting display. I was talking about the PricewaterhouseCoopers review, which he's been boasting about for the past couple of days and weeks.

We have e-mails with respect to this Dr. Ballem, which are saying things like, "We do not have a signed agreement," "I can't make payment"—a back and forth—and "A signed agreement is not necessary." The e-mails clearly show how eHealth contemplated having the Liberal-connected Courtyard Group pay Dr. Ballem and then get reimbursed from eHealth, in an attempt to break the rules already in place. And who approved the payment, despite the lack of a contract? Well, the fat cat from Alberta, the guy who's charging taxpayers \$15 for a nightcap.

It's not a lack of rules; it's that Hudson and Kramer have ignored the rules, breaking the rules already in place. They need to be fired. You need to resign. Put somebody in there who can do the job and clean up your mess.

Hon. David Caplan: The member again makes allegations that I don't believe he can support. PricewaterhouseCoopers is a very reputable firm, one of the top international firms when it comes to audits, management consulting and financial controls in the world. I should suggest to the member that if he's trying to undermine their reputation, I think he is way off base.

I should note for the member that my direction to the board is that there is an additional layer of oversight appointed by my ministry. PricewaterhouseCoopers is not a consultant. They're the agency's external auditor of record, and every corporation or agency of its size has an external auditor. The previous PWC review was largely focused on administrative policies. The new review will be much broader in scope.

The member said that I've been talking about this for weeks; it was only just—

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

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, I have a letter here from 21 of the organizations from your own education partnership table opposing your school information finder website. It says:

"At the Education Partnership Table meeting on April 6, 2009, Minister Wynne heard from virtually every rep-

representative that the site has had a negative impact for the many reasons we have stated in previous letters to you.

“We are united in our disappointment that our request on April 6, 2009 that the site be removed pending full consultation with all education stakeholders was denied.”

The education partnership table is asking you to take down this offensive site. Will you do it?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It won't surprise the member opposite that I was at that meeting and that the partnership table members spoke to me. I'm very clear what their position is, I have received the letter, and at that meeting we agreed that the shopping bag that was on the website would be taken down—that has been done—that the rest of the information would stay up and that we would have a discussion.

I just have to note that there are approximately 600 visits to the school information finder every day, to the website—28,000 visitors between April 15 and June 1, 2009. We hear from people who say things like, “Finally! A place to get all the information on a school in one convenient place. What a great resource for parents. Really transparent look at school system! Well done!”

What we will do is have the conversation with the partnership table, who are the education stakeholders. They are very aware that we're going to be having that conversation, and we will make some decisions—

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

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Minister, the partnership table wants to consult, but they're very clear: They want the site “removed while a meaningful and inclusive consultation with all stakeholders takes place.”

The letter questions the content of the site, the lack of consultation, and it challenges your claim that there is widespread support for the information on the site. Further, your own partnership table is telling you that the social demographic data on this site is incongruous with the ministry's new equity and inclusive education strategy.

When is this site coming down?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I have said, we are going to be having this conversation with the education stakeholders to talk about what more information should be on the site in order to flesh out the profiles of the schools. I don't need the member opposite to tell me the opinion of the education stakeholders. I know exactly what their position is, and as I have said before, we are very aware that they are not happy and that we need to have this conversation. But there are other people who are happy. There's more than one school of thought. I quote another person who visited the website: “I think this is great information to have. I don't think we should fear how this information will be used since it is only part of the picture.”

It is very clear that the best way to get to know what's going on at a school is to visit that school. But there are people who want information about schools. We are providing a transparent, consistent and coherent way of getting it.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. David Oraziatti: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, affordable housing is an important priority for our government, and we are all well aware that the previous government had ignored this issue for years. As a result, the system was over capacity and underfunded. Vulnerable Ontarians were asking us for help. Municipalities were forced to administer social housing and were requesting support to handle the backlog. Through investments and programs like the rent bank and agreements with the federal government and our municipalities to create more affordable housing, we have made significant inroads in addressing the housing situation in Ontario.

Part of our platform in 2007 committed our government to launch a long-term affordable housing strategy. Minister, could you please tell us what progress to date has been made on developing this strategy and when we should hope to see the strategy?

Hon. Jim Watson: I want to thank the honourable member, who has been a great advocate for affordable and social housing programs in his riding in Sault Ste. Marie, both as a very successful city councillor and now as an MPP

I'm pleased to report that today we're launching our affordable housing strategy and consultation process. I'm very pleased to report that my very first stop on our province-wide tour of listening to individuals will take place on June 16 in the honourable member's riding, in Sault Ste. Marie. My parliamentary assistants—Mario Sergio and Carol Mitchell—and I will be visiting 12 communities across the province, listening and learning so that we can help develop and build a long-term affordable housing strategy. We'd ask all Ontarians to go visit our website, Ontario.ca/housingstrategy, and encourage MPPs to hold consultations in their ridings as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. David Oraziatti: Certainly, I appreciate your support on initiatives in our community. Affordable housing is essential to our success as a province, and together we need to work on ways to increase access to affordable housing in Ontario. Stable and secure housing provides a foundation for people to escape poverty and homelessness. It reduces the need for more costly government services and it attracts and keeps skilled workers needed to improve our economic competitiveness.

I understand that of the 1.3 million people who rent housing in Ontario, 20% are living in social housing. As well, approximately 6,000 Ontarians use shelters on a daily basis. These Ontarians want to succeed. They want to provide the best for their families but they need our help, and it's no secret that more needs to be done for affordable housing in Ontario.

With the launch of the consultations this month and the long-term affordable housing strategy, Minister, could you please outline some of the key principles, visions and goals of the consultation process?

Hon. Jim Watson: Our vision for a long-term affordable housing strategy is very simple: It's to improve

access to suitable and affordable housing that provides a solid foundation on which to secure employment, raise families and build strong communities.

We're not waiting for the consultation. This government has been very active when it comes to providing needed dollars to our municipal partners and to the not-for-profit sector. For instance, last year the Premier announced \$100 million that is already in progress of repairing and rehabilitating affordable housing units. Minister Duncan, in his budget, matched the federal contribution, to bring a total of \$1.2 billion in new money to build 4,500 affordable housing units across the province and to refurbish and rehabilitate 50,000 units. This is in addition to the work that we've done to provide over 20,000 rent supplements for those people who need help.

We're in the housing business, and we look forward to listening to the people that—

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

1130

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: Back to the Minister of Health. The minister's responses today, regrettably, reinforce the need for him to step down. eHealth is a mess. It's run by people who don't give a damn about the use of taxpayers' dollars. They have no reservations about billing taxpayers for \$15 cocktails or \$1.95 muffins while they're being paid thousands a day or doling out millions in untendered contracts to friends and Liberal supporters. The minister says, "Wait for the Auditor General," when the abuse is there for everyone to see. It's there, right in front of your face. Minister, will you step down and let someone else clean up your mess?

Hon. David Caplan: The member does raise legitimate concerns, and I've acknowledged those, as has the Premier, in this House. The Premier and I both agree that, while things are allowable, just because you can do it doesn't necessarily mean that you should do it. It's important not just for eHealth, but for all of us who have the privilege of serving the public, including every member of this Legislature.

We expect, I expect, that consultants will abide not only by the letter of the law but by the spirit of it as well. That's why I have taken the action to direct the board to undertake a third party review which is going to have the government auditor as a part of that review. That's why I've taken the steps, and I know the member disagrees—but having the Auditor General engaged and looking at his recommendations. The Auditor General is an independent officer of this Legislature.

I understand the partisan nature of the member opposite—

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

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: The minister keeps saying, "Wait for the Auditor General," but the real motive here is to bury this story. There's clearly no need to wait

for the minister to do his job and take action. What he's doing day after day here is endorsing offensive misuse of taxpayers' dollars. He's protecting people like Sarah Kramer, who gets \$380,000 a year and gave herself a \$114,000 bonus after three months on the job; Allaudin Merali, \$60,000 a month, \$10,000 to \$15,000 in expenses, billing taxpayers for \$15 cocktails; Donna Stratling, \$2,700 a day, billing taxpayers for a Tim Hortons tea, a dessert square at Second Cup and a barbecue sub; \$2 million to Courtyard Group; Miyo Yamashita, \$268,000 for reading the New York Times and listening to voice mail, \$300 for talking to people on the subway.

Clearly, there is justification to get rid of these people, to clean this place up. You're obviously not up to the job. Step down and let somebody else clean up the—

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

Hon. David Caplan: This side of the House hasn't endorsed or condoned any of the expenses which have come to light. In fact, as the member, I hope, would acknowledge, it was he and his colleagues who set up the legacy agency which did not have the proper mandate, which did not have a plan, which did not deliver the results that Ontarians would expect. It didn't take the opposition or an auditor to bring those to light. It took my colleague, my predecessor, to order an operational review of the Smart Systems for Health Agency, and it took the action that I did to in fact replace that agency with one that would get the job done, which would develop for the first time a comprehensive eHealth strategy.

We are already starting to see good results yielded: an ePrescribing project linking pharmacy with primary care; the beginnings of a diabetes registry, through an expression of interest which has been fulfilled—

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

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier. Premier, 13 environmental groups are urging you to hold off buying new nuclear reactors. Electricity demand is down. There's a surplus of nuclear baseload capacity. Will you listen to those environmental groups and delay the decision to buy new nuclear for several years? Will you do that?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the question.

I had the really good fortune to meet with a legend: Dr. Lovelock, a British scientist. He's 90 years of age; he remains as active as ever. He developed the so-called Gaia theory, which I have known about for quite some time. The point is this: He's an acclaimed environmentalist, and he thinks that we need to build nuclear. He thinks that we've got to make some difficult choices.

I appreciate the position that my colleague has taken on this, but the fact is that there's a division among environmentalists as to what we need to do in the face of climate change, arguably the single greatest challenge confronting humanity. One of the things that we have

decided to do is to shut down coal-fired generation in the province of Ontario.

We need to maintain baseload. The wind doesn't always blow and the sun doesn't always shine. We've got to find a way to ensure we have baseload capacity. That's why we're looking at new nuclear.

USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Speaker: I'm referring to standing order 37, in particular 37(a). What prompts this point of order was the question put earlier during question period by the member from Huron-Bruce to the Minister of Government Services.

Now, I know that the tradition and convention here has been for the Speaker to allow a fair amount of leeway in terms of the type of question that's posed, but I would ask the Speaker to refer to the power of the Speaker to disqualify a question—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Standing order—

Hon. Jim Watson: It's not a point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Municipal Affairs should be prepared to listen to this.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Standing order 37(a) gives the Speaker the power to disqualify a question that the Speaker "does not consider urgent or of public importance."

The question put by the member for Huron-Bruce to the minister was a not-very-veiled or concealed ad hominem attack on the member for Niagara West-Glanbrook. It clearly was made or put in the context of his being a candidate for the Conservative leadership.

I respect the right and the need for government members to ask questions during the course of question period. But I would also, Speaker, ask you to reflect upon the fact that increasingly the trend by government backbenchers during the course of their questions has been to ask questions about anything but matters that are urgent or of public importance.

So I'm asking you, Speaker—especially when you consider the power that is given to the individual member in standing order 38(a), because 37(a), which gives you the power to disqualify a question, also gives the right to the person whose question is disqualified to seek a late show with respect to that question.

Speaker, what I'm asking you to do is to please consider whether in this chamber we're going to be more effective during this very valuable one-hour period if the Chair—you—applies 37(a) more strictly than may have been the trend in the past.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The government House leader on the same point of order.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I know people are anxious to move on, so I will be brief. We believe that it is of public importance to talk about public services and contracts. We believe the question from the member from Huron-Bruce was completely legitimate and within the

standing orders, particularly standing order 37(a). We don't believe that standing order 38(a) has any relevance in this discussion as there was no question of a late show being called for.

We appreciate the Speaker's consideration.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I thank the member from Welland and the government House leader for the point of order that was raised. I will take the opportunity to review the situation, take the matter under advisement and report to the House as quickly as possible.

The time for question period having ended, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1139 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Frank Klees: I am honoured to introduce family members of James Albert Rice, who are in the House with me today. I will have the honour of paying tribute to Jim Rice later on in the proceedings.

Present with us are Mary Rice, his widow, Doris MacDonald, Douglas MacDonald, Bobby MacDonald, Barb Collins, Aaron Collins, Patty Rice, Joe Pfaff, Jimmy Rice, Susan McGovern, John McGovern, Euston McGovern, Conrad McGovern, Parker McGovern, Michael Rice, Martha Rice, Theresa Davis and Matthew Rice. I would ask that we welcome them warmly to the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Welcome to Queen's Park.

Member from Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you, Speaker. I want to welcome Mr. Michael Hackenberger, who is president of the Bowmanville Zoo; his wife, Wendy Korver, who is a veterinary doctor; Kurt Hackenberger, his son; Birk Hackenberger, his son; Anita Hackenberger, his mother; Peter, his father; Darlene Christianson, a staff person; and Rob Clements and Stephanie McEwan, who are all members of the family around the Bowmanville Zoo.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: This could be a speculative introduction, because I'm going to be saying a few words about the late Gordon Dean, a former member of the Legislature. I'm not sure if members of the Dean family are present; I wasn't advised. But if they are—I'm getting a wave—welcome; it's good to have you here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Welcome to Queen's Park.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome to the Ontario Legislature today the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians, who are today celebrating their annual meeting: George Ashe, Bill Barlow, Robert Callahan, Gordon Carton, former Speaker Hugh Edgihoffer, Herb Epp, Steve Gilchrist, Karen Haslam, John Hastings, Don Knight, Mac Makarchuk, Margaret Marland, Judy Marsales, Gord Miller, Lily Munro, David Neumann, Hugh O'Neil, Yvonne O'Neill, John Parker, Tim Peterson, Jack Riddell, Derwyn Shea, Yuri Shymko,

David Smith, John Smith, Joe Spina, Gary Stewart, Anne Swarbrick, George Taylor, former Speaker John Turner, Murad Velshi, former Speaker David Warner, John Williams, Doug Wiseman and Jim Wiseman. Welcome, former members, to Queen's Park today.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

JAMES RICE

Mr. Frank Klees: I rise to pay tribute to the life of James Albert Rice, whose family is here with us today.

Jim was born on July 14, 1932, and was raised in Richmond Hill, Ontario. He and his wife, Mary Decantis, married in 1952 and raised seven children. They were blessed with 18 grandchildren.

As the great entrepreneur that he was, Jim embarked on a career as a general contractor, founding the James A. Rice Ltd. construction company in York region. Among his numerous and notable municipal, provincial and national project contracts was that of prime civil contractor for the military aeronautical communications system for the Department of National Defence in five provinces across Canada.

Over the years, Jim employed hundreds of skilled workers who remember him as an employer who encouraged them to constantly enhance their skills in the pursuit of excellence.

Throughout his life, Jim Rice made many contributions to his community and his industry. He served as a York region Catholic school trustee, worked with numerous charities and was a valued member of the Toronto Construction Association executive. In his later years, Jim also served as a member of the sovereign council of the Knights of Malta.

I am honoured, as a member of this Legislature and as a friend of James Albert Rice and his family, to invoke the recognition of all members of the Legislature of this great Canadian for his spirit of giving to his family, to his employees and to his community. May that spirit inspire us all.

BATTLE OF STONEY CREEK

Mr. Paul Miller: As this month begins, our thoughts become consumed by barbecues, the beach and all the other elements of summer. But June represents more than just this; it represents a pivotal moment in Canadian history, a moment which occurred in Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. June 6 will mark the 196th anniversary of the battle of Stoney Creek, a turning point in the War of 1812 and a defining moment for Canada.

The battle saw over 700 greatly outnumbered British troops regain land previously taken by American forces. It was a starting point for a major push by the British. Following its conclusion, the American advance in the Niagara region ceased. It was a decisive victory for our

troops, and it successfully interrupted the entire American invasion plan for Upper Canada.

As a former battle re-enactor, this anniversary is of great significance to me, as well as to many of my constituents. The re-enactment not only permits people of all ages to experience a better understanding of their heritage, but to also remember one of the greatest triumphs in Canadian history.

The events of that night have recently been recounted by local author James E. Elliott in his new book, *Strange Fatality*. I had the privilege of attending the release of this novel about the battle of Stoney Creek. Elliott tells stories of the courageous individuals who made this victory possible, individuals who should be recognized as Canadian heroes.

The battle of Stoney Creek was a defining moment for Canada, and a triumph both in the war and in Canadian pride.

The clash of June 6, 1813, has not been given the respect it deserves, and I am pleased to take this moment to have it recognized here today.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SCARBOROUGH

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: I rise today regarding an exciting development that was announced last week for the University of Toronto Scarborough, which is located in my riding of Pickering–Scarborough East.

The University of Toronto Scarborough was founded in 1964, and the first students began classes there in 1966.

I had the privilege to join Professor Franco Vaccarino, principal of UTSC, in announcing that through the knowledge infrastructure program, the University of Toronto Scarborough has received \$70 million to fund the development of a new instructional centre. This funding was jointly provided by the government of Canada and the government of Ontario. This development will result in the single largest expansion at UTSC since 1966 and will increase teaching and research space at the school by 25%.

Principal Vaccarino stated, "This is a major announcement for UTSC and for the region. Recent unprecedented growth at the campus has created a critical mass of programs and scholarship and this infrastructure project allows us to build on this exciting momentum. With few universities in the eastern GTA, this new facility, paired with our scope and breadth across the arts and sciences, positions UTSC to lead the burgeoning innovation economy of our region."

Adding to the growing influence that UTSC will have on Scarborough and Durham region is the recent announcement that UTSC has been picked to house the largest new facility for the Pan Am Games if Toronto and Ontario win their bid to host the 2015 games. The proposal for the Scarborough campus is for a \$170-million world-class athletic complex.

The University of Toronto Scarborough is undergoing a fundamental transformation and without a doubt will be

recognized not only in Toronto and Ontario, but throughout the whole of Canada.

Congratulations, UTSC.

TAY CANAL

Mr. Randy Hillier: This summer, an important part of our heritage and history will celebrate a landmark event. This summer, the Tay Canal in Perth will celebrate its 175th anniversary.

As we all know, UNESCO designated the Rideau Canal a World Heritage site in 2007.

These canals have been tourism and economic draws for eastern Ontario and my riding.

In 2008, National Geographic magazine recognized this region and the Tay Canal as one of the most attractive world tourist destinations.

Having been completed in 1834, the Tay Canal steering committee will host a week-long celebration of 175 years of heritage and contribution to the town of Perth. In February, 2009, Mayor John Fenik and council for the town of Perth officially declared the week of July 4 as Tay Canal Week.

Take a moment and check out tayriver.org for events, activities and some wonderful Lanark county charm. I encourage my colleagues and all tourists to drop by my hometown and join me in celebrating our heritage, our history and our culture in Perth. I hope to see you there.

1510

EVENTS IN AJAX-PICKERING

Mr. Joe Dickson: The Pickering and Ajax Rotary Clubs will host over 35,000 residents at the ribfest at the Pickering civic centre this weekend. Come on out for the ribs, music, hospitality and carnival, all chaired by Lon Harnish, which is this Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The profits from this all go back into our two Ajax communities.

Also, the 39th annual Ajax Home Week kicks off the following weekend, Friday, June 12, featuring a new Ajax Home Week Mardi Gras night-time parade, DuPont antique car show, Ajax Lions pasta night, Rotary pancake breakfast on Father's Day, Ajax Kinsmen giant arena dance at \$10 a head, and the town's This is Our Ajax! day.

Sunday is waterfront day. From the pancake breakfast between 8 and 11, the waterfront festival, under Wilma Graham, will feature over a dozen venues for people and kids of all ages, all day and all evening long.

This year's Community Services Day includes a police helicopter landing and special police vehicles. The grand finale is Durham's largest annual fireworks at 10 p.m. on Sunday, which is chaired by firefighter Patrick Hayes.

Our sincere thanks to the hundreds of volunteers, like Ken Brown and Wilma Graham, and other key members like Angela Burke, Mike Fitzpatrick, Tom McBride,

Vickie Camara—the list goes on—but primarily our Ajax Kinsmen, Legion, Lions and Rotary clubs.

BOWMANVILLE ZOOLOGICAL PARK

Mr. John O'Toole: I rise today to pay tribute to the Bowmanville Zoological Park. It's celebrating its 90th anniversary. This is the oldest private zoo in North America and also the largest stable of trained animals in North America, and I'm proud to say that it is in my riding of Durham in Bowmanville.

It is home to many of the animals we see every day in movies, advertisements and television productions. Popular stars such as the elephant Angus and the lion Bongo were household names for many of us. In addition, the park has established itself as an important voice in education, conservation and animal protection. It is a popular destination for tourists and local families alike, with daily presentations at its 400-seat animal theatre.

The property was originally known as the Cream of Barley Park when it opened in 1919 as a small tourist resort and petting zoo on Highway 2. The Connell family acquired the Cream of Barley Park in the 1950s, changing the name to the Bowmanville Zoo in 1964. It came under new ownership in 1988 as the Bowmanville Zoological Park.

Ontario is in the midst of celebrating National Tourism Week, from June 1 to 7. Ontario's tourism slogan could also be used to describe the Bowmanville Zoological Park: There's no place like it. Congratulations to its director, who is joining us here today, Michael Hackenberger, who is joining us here today, and his wife Wendy and their family, on celebrating their 90th anniversary in a successful tourist business.

SHERIDAN COLLEGE

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: On Monday, May 25, I had the opportunity of announcing that \$31.2 million in funding will be given to the Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning to open a new institute in Mississauga. This new Sheridan campus will accommodate an additional 9,000 students and deliver a wide range of programs, including business programs and programs in animation and digital media, and will help newcomers to upgrade their skills and training to better integrate into Canadian society.

By investing in Sheridan, the government of Ontario is not only helping to create the competitive workforce of tomorrow in this ever-shrinking world with ever-growing diversity, but also helping to boost the economy. These projects together will create more than 300 jobs in Mississauga. This is great news for Mississauga and for the entire region.

I want to congratulate Sheridan and each and every resident of Mississauga. Moreover, I'm proud to be part of a government, under the leadership of our Premier, that is committed to deliver essential services such as

education, despite the challenging economic times we are going through.

MEDICAL SCHOOL

Mr. David Oraziotti: I rise in the House to congratulate the first doctors ever to be trained in northern Ontario. Four years ago, our government took a significant step toward increasing access to primary care for northern Ontarians by opening the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, the first medical school built in Canada in 30 years.

In 2005, the school opened its doors to 56 new undergraduate medical students, and today I applaud the first graduating class of new physicians in northern Ontario. Four of those graduating students are from my riding of Sault Ste. Marie. I'd like to congratulate Mark Bennett, Philip Berardi, Jonathan DellaVedova and Jennifer Patterson. Our government is making the investments needed to ensure that we have greater access to primary care.

In our 2009 budget, we announced that we will also be adding 100 new medical school spaces, eight of those at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. In total, Ontario's six medical schools will welcome 952 first-year medical students in September 2011—a remarkable 38% increase since 2004.

By training more medical students, we're helping to ensure that Ontarians will have increased access to primary care for years to come. This is in stark contrast to the NDP, who cut medical school spaces by 13%, and the Conservatives, who did very little to increase medical school supply for eight years.

Increasing medical school spaces is just one more way we're helping Ontarians. In my riding of Sault Ste. Marie, we're building a new \$408-million hospital and creating a nurse practitioner clinic.

LEGISLATIVE INTERNS

Mrs. Laura Albanese: It is with great pleasure that I rise today on behalf of the MPPs who were chosen to participate in the Ontario Legislature internship program this year. The program has a long tradition of attracting the best and the brightest individuals of our province. It is a highly competitive program with an equally highly regarded reputation that catches the attention of applicants from a range of backgrounds, both academic and cultural.

Once accepted to the program, all interns split their time at Queen's Park between two members, spending half of their time working for a government MPP and the other for an opposition MPP, in what is truly a unique experience. As part of their responsibilities, interns are asked to write an academic paper, learn the ins and outs of the legislative process and assist the member in a number of ways.

This year, I had the great fortune of being selected by one of our interns. Igor Delov, certainly a very bright

young man with a keen sense of humour, joined our team for about three months, helping with correspondence, speeches, member's statements and research. He also had the opportunity to join me at a number of exciting announcements and spent time in my constituency office in the riding of York South–Weston. An outgoing, intelligent individual, Igor has a lifetime of opportunity and exciting prospects ahead of him, and I look forward to following his professional growth. He has been an excellent intern and an outstanding ambassador for the program.

Over the years, all the interns have gone on to great things, and I would expect no less from this year's group.

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I know a couple of members have asked—the fact that the former parliamentarians are here. There is a tree planting, if anyone is interested, taking place at 4:45 on the east lawn, just outside of my office. You can accept my permission to attend their reception from 5 until 6:30 in room 230.

1520

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mrs. Julia Munro: I beg leave to present A Report on Agencies, Boards and Commissions: Ontario Trillium Foundation from the Standing Committee on Government Agencies and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs. Julia Munro: At the Chair of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies, it is a privilege to table the third in a series of reports on our review of agencies, boards and commissions of the province.

The report of the committee commends the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the important work the agency undertakes and also makes some recommendations for improvements.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the chair and staff of the Trillium Foundation for their assistance at all stages of the committee review and to express our appreciation to those people who made presentations both in person and in writing. I also thank the committee members for their contributions to the review process. Thanks as well to our research officer, Andrew McNaught, and the clerk of the committee, Douglas Arnott.

I move adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Michael Prue: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr16, An Act to revive Deep River Management Services Inc.;

Bill Pr24, An Act to revive a corporation named New Hermes Limited in English and New Hermes Limitée in French;

Bill Pr26, An Act respecting The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London, in Ontario.

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

Report adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ALLAURA INVESTMENTS LIMITED
ACT, 2009

Mr. Klees moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr15, An Act to revive Allaura Investments Limited.

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): Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

CITY OF OTTAWA
AMENDMENT ACT, 2009
LOI DE 2009 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA VILLE D'OTTAWA

Mr. Naqvi moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 194, An Act to amend the City of Ottawa Act, 1999 / Projet de loi 194, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1999 sur la ville d'Ottawa.

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. Yasir Naqvi: This bill amends the City of Ottawa Act, 1999, to establish an independent board of health in the city of Ottawa. The act outlines the composition, functions and duties of the new board of health. This particular bill is in conformity with the city of Ottawa council motion dated October 22, 2008.

1312510 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2009

Mr. Dickson moved first reading of the following bill: Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 1312510 Ontario Ltd.

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): Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 191

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that pursuant to standing order 74(a), the order for second reading of Bill 191, An Act with respect to land use planning and protection in the Far North, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

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

Motion agreed to.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion regarding government business and committee business.

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

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that, notwithstanding prorogation, the following business remaining on the Orders and Notices paper be continued and placed on the Orders and Notices paper of the second sessional day of the second session of the 39th Parliament at the same stage of business for the House and its committees as at prorogation:

(1) All government bills except Bill 1, An Act to perpetuate an ancient parliamentary right, and Bill 24, An Act to amend the Assessment Act, Community Small Business Investment Funds Act, Corporations Tax Act, Education Act, Income Tax Act, Land Transfer Tax Act and Taxation Act, 2007; and

(2) The following private members' public bills:

Bill 14, An Act to deem that the Building Code and the Fire Code require fire detectors, interconnected fire alarms and non-combustible fire escapes;

Bill 96, An Act respecting protection for registered retirement savings;

Bill 106, An Act to provide for safer communities and neighbourhoods;

Bill 132, An Act to amend the Liquor Licence Act;

Bill 164, An Act to amend the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act, 2002; and

That the following committees be authorized to meet during the adjournment and/or, in the event of the prorogation of the first session of the 39th Parliament and

notwithstanding such prorogation, during the interval between the first and second sessions of the 39th Parliament, as follows:

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts may meet up to two days by agreement of the subcommittee members with respect to dates, and may sit additional days by agreement of the House leaders of the recognized parties conveyed in writing to the Clerk of the Assembly;

The Standing Committee on Estimates may meet on July 29 and 30, 2009;

The Standing Committee on General Government may meet to consider Bill 173, An Act to amend the Mining Act, and Bill 191, An Act with respect to land use planning and protection in the Far North, in Toronto on August 6, 2009, and to adjourn from place to place on August 10, 11, 12, and 13, 2009;

The Standing Committee on Government Agencies may meet for up to three days by agreement of the subcommittee members with respect to dates;

That, notwithstanding the order of the House dated June 11, 2008, the Select Committee on Elections be authorized to present its final report to the Legislature no later than June 30, 2009; and

That the committees be authorized to release reports by depositing a copy of any report with the Clerk of the Assembly during the summer adjournment, and that upon resumption of the meetings of the House, the Chairs of such committees shall bring any such reports before the House in accordance with the standing orders.

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

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

MOIS DES PERSONNES ÂGÉES SENIORS' MONTH

L'hon. M. Aileen Carroll: Aujourd'hui, l'Ontario souligne le 25^e anniversaire du Mois des personnes âgées, qui est célébré dans les collectivités de l'ensemble de la province.

Today Ontario marks 25 years of celebrating Seniors' Month in communities right across the province—25 years of celebrating our seniors, their contributions to their communities and their exceptional and unique stories.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the members of the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat liaison committee. Thank you for joining us today in the Legislature.

Le thème pour ce 25^e anniversaire du Mois des personnes âgées est : « Créer un environnement accueillant dans nos communautés pour les aînés ». Il traduit la volonté de façonner des milieux qui contribuent à

améliorer la qualité de vie des aînés et qui assurent leur pleine participation à la vie de leur communauté.

1530

This year's silver anniversary theme for Seniors' Month is creating age-friendly communities. It reflects a movement to create environments that enhance the quality of life for seniors and ensure their full participation in civic life.

Earlier this week, I officially launched Seniors' Month at Ryerson University at their second annual Silver Screens Arts Festival. The festival does a superb job of showcasing visual art and live performances by seniors enrolled in the university's LIFE Institute. It is a continuing-education program designed for mature students aged 50 and up. Seniors enrolled in the theatre courses are taught by talented and energetic instructors.

The LIFE Institute is an excellent example of how schools like Ryerson and other learning centres are helping to create age-friendly communities by providing opportunities for seniors to stay active and engaged.

And the timing could not be better. According to the World Health Organization, by the year 2050, seniors will make up 22% of the global population. For the first time in human history, there will be more older people than children 14 and younger. Here in Ontario, the number of seniors will more than double to 3.5 million over the next 20 years.

Nous sommes conscients que l'expérience, les connaissances et les contributions de nos personnes âgées seront essentielles pour édifier des collectivités dynamiques et vibrantes en vue d'y attirer des penseurs novateurs et des investisseurs.

We know that the experience, skills and contributions of our seniors will be vital in building more dynamic, vibrant communities that attract innovative thinkers and investors. But in order for those dynamic, vibrant communities to really thrive, they need to provide the services and supports that improve the quality of life for residents of all ages and make it easier for them to participate. That is why libraries, seniors' centres and educational institutions like Ryerson are vital. As community institutions, they promote lifelong learning and develop programs that help seniors stay healthy and active.

And more important, or equally important, the Ontario government also supports seniors in many, many ways. The government is committed to making sure that in Ontario, seniors live safely, they live with dignity and they live as independently as possible.

As more people reach their senior years, the face of our province will change, and it is our job to ensure that the province is prepared. The Ontario Seniors' Secretariat works with seniors' organizations and other community partners to deliver a range of programs and services, including seminars on such topics as safe medication use.

Over the next several months, the secretariat will be working with the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations and la Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario in order to host six regional forums on age-friendly communities. These forums will

help local leaders recognize the benefits of developing an age-friendly strategy.

One of the biggest abuses—one of the biggest threats to an age-friendly community is elder abuse, and Ontario has taken action to remove that threat through a comprehensive elder abuse strategy, the very first of its kind in Canada. The strategy's top priorities are to coordinate community services, train front-line staff and raise awareness of this very serious and unacceptable problem. We are putting that strategy into action thanks to a history of strong partnerships with the Ontario Victim Services Secretariat, the Ministry of the Attorney General, and the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

We have invested \$2.77 million over the past three years to combat elder abuse, and last month I joined ONPEA in announcing a \$415,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation investment in a new, province-wide hotline to assist abused and at-risk seniors. The Seniors Safety Line provides information, referrals and support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and it does so in over 150 languages, because those languages represent the faces of Ontario; those languages are the languages that we, as a multicultural and incredibly diverse society here in Ontario, speak. Elder abuse is frequently something that people are ashamed of and frightened by, and it's obviously something that occurs on occasion, sometimes when seniors are isolated, so it is imperative that we have a lifeline into their homes in the language which they speak and understand.

On June 15, Ontario will be joining the rest of Canada and indeed the rest of the world in marking World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Ontario has invested, as well, more than \$1 billion in an aging at home strategy. This strategy supports independent seniors in their own homes by matching them with appropriate health care support services available in their communities.

The recent budget contained measures that benefit seniors, including doubling the senior homeowners' property tax grant to \$500. This, of course, will provide some real relief to low- and middle-income seniors who are trying to stay in their own homes. That increase will come into effect at the beginning of 2010.

These are some of the initiatives we have already taken to improve the quality of life of our seniors, and we will continue to work hard to develop others.

Finally, this month also marks an important milestone for our veterans. Saturday June 6—that's this coming Saturday—marks the 65th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. A commemorative event will take place on the front lawn of this Legislature to pay tribute to the tremendous sacrifice and bravery of our veterans who risked everything to ensure victory for the Allied forces. The average age of a Second World War veteran right now is 85 years old. This ceremony is an opportunity to recognize their achievements and remember those who died for their country in the struggle for peace and freedom.

There are many other events during these next few weeks that we should take note of. For those who are interested, for a comprehensive list of Seniors' Month events, I'd encourage you to visit the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat website.

J'espère que vous prendrez le temps de participer aux activités organisées dans votre collectivité et que vous vous joindrez aux célébrations du 25^e anniversaire du Mois des personnes âgées en Ontario.

I hope that you will take the time to attend activities in your communities and help celebrate the 25th anniversary of Seniors' Month in this fair province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: It is with much pride that I rise today to pay tribute to the senior citizens of Ontario during Seniors' Month. Allow me to begin by stating that our seniors deserve and have the right to live with dignity, honour and respect and we must all work together to ensure that they receive no less.

The seniors of today, whether they're our mothers and fathers, our grandmothers or grandfathers, our uncles, aunts and neighbours, deserve much of the credit for the freedoms we enjoy today. They helped build this great country for us and future generations, and many defended the honour of our country in the armed forces.

1540

Sadly, our seniors are neglected by the McGuinty Liberals. Instead of acknowledging the needs of senior citizens, this government has abandoned them. The latest hit levelled at our seniors by this government is the McGuinty new sales tax. Ontario seniors will be among the hardest-hit people in Ontario by this tax grab. According to a report by Wernham Wealth Management, a retired couple earning an after-tax income of \$41,000 will face a tax increase of \$1,500 a year when purchasing items such as heating oil, Internet services, haircuts and coffee. Mr. McGuinty should be making life easier for our seniors, not bullying his way into their pocketbooks and diminishing their golden years. Shame on you, Dalton McGuinty.

This government also continues to keep a tight rein on the pensions of our seniors who worked for many long, hard years to earn that income. How can this government justify holding back money these seniors have access to in order to improve their quality of life? Last month, this government voted against a private member's bill by MPP Ted Chudleigh that would have given Ontario retirees access to 100% of their locked-in pension money. After all, it is their money.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I just would ask the members that—this is ministerial statements. The minister gave her statement and there was some noise but very little heckling taking place. I would just ask that the honourable member has the opportunity to respond to that statement and you allow him to respond. I would appreciate those members to be sitting in their seats as well.

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: Senior citizens deserve better, and Dalton McGuinty is not meeting their needs. More than 25,000 Ontario residents are waiting for a long-term bed and this government continues to ignore this growing problem.

Ontario is currently home to 1.6 million seniors. What's going to happen in 2028, when the number of seniors in Ontario doubles? What is the plan to assist those who need to move to a long-term-care facility? Senior citizens deserve better and Dalton McGuinty is not meeting their needs. This government continues to ignore our seniors' right to a secure and comfortable home by refusing to build new long-term-care beds. Instead, seniors end up in acute care beds in our hospitals that are in short supply. How would you like to live out your days, months and years in a hospital? Shame on you, Dalton McGuinty.

Those seniors who are fortunate enough to get a bed in a long-term-care facility are not receiving the amount of personal care they require. Despite repeated pleas from long-term-care homes, this government has refused to provide residents with the three hours of daily personal care they need. I have heard many horror stories about residents lying in their own waste for hours or not eating for hours after the usual mealtime. Shame on you, Dalton McGuinty.

And many of our seniors must shake their heads in disbelief when they see the unfairness of Dalton McGuinty and his \$4-billion bailout of the GM pension plan. He plays a reverse Robin Hood, taking from the needy and giving to the prosperous. The \$4 billion will be used for a small, select group in our province, without similar assistance being given to thousands of other pension holders whose pensions are also underfunded and failing, and absolutely no thought to helping the 70% of seniors without private pension plans whose small savings have been ravaged by the recession and must struggle every day to pay the bills. Yes, it soaks the middle class and gives to the rich, and it gets worse. Each and every senior in Ontario, without regard to their needs, will be called upon by the McGuinty government to pay an amount of \$700, being their share of the \$4-billion bailout. And please remember, the \$4 billion does not save one job. It is a gift to former employees.

Seniors' Month is an important annual event in our province, and it's an ideal time for us all to thank seniors for their contribution to our communities, province and country. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Miller: As the NDP critic for seniors' issues, I am proud to celebrate Seniors' Month. Throughout the month of June, we have a chance to thank seniors for all they do for our society. They share with us their wisdom, which they have accumulated over many years; they tell us their stories; they contribute to our province through the hard work they continue after retirement. The impressive number of hours that seniors put into volunteering is one reason we should thank them this month.

One specific group of seniors I want to mention is veterans. The Legion branches in Hamilton and Stoney

Creek are very active in my community, like they are across this province. Veterans served our country bravely, and they deserve our respect and thanks each and every day for the sacrifices they have made.

Senior citizens helped to forge this province. They worked their whole lives to make it the wonderful place it is today, and we should show our appreciation for this all year long, not just in the month of June.

Yet I am concerned that the government is not doing enough to protect their right to live in dignity and with respect. It is alarming that this government is no longer committed to fulfilling its obligation to properly backstop the pension guarantee fund. Seniors, like all of us, deserve to retire with security and dignity, and they should not have to worry about their pensions because the government will not fulfill its responsibilities to them.

Another troubling issue is the way the government has treated grandparents raising grandchildren. Many grandparents care for their grandchildren when the parents are unable to do so. Recently, grandparents had to take action to ensure that funding to care for their grandchildren was reinstated after they were cut off by this government. I was proud to work with them on this issue, to have funding reinstated in the greater Hamilton area, but they should never have been cut off in the first place.

In closing, Seniors' Month gives us all a chance to reflect on the contribution seniors make to our province—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock, please.

I just remind the government side again: The government statement was dealing with Seniors' Month; the opposition, whether the government likes it or not, is speaking to seniors' issues. I ask that you be respectful of the opposition members in their responses.

Mr. Paul Miller: Thank you, Speaker. They really have a problem with that.

In closing, Seniors' Month gives us all a chance to reflect on the contribution seniors make to our province, and also on the things that government should be doing to protect their rights. I encourage everyone to take the time this month to reflect on the many ways that seniors have contributed to our lives, to thank them and to remind them of how much we appreciate all they have done for us and all they will continue to do. Seniors are a critical part of our society, and they deserve great treatment.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I too would like to add my voice to Seniors' Month. June is always a special month for me because of all of the different activities that take place to celebrate Seniors' Month in my riding—we go all out.

But what I want to talk about is how important it is to keep seniors in our community so we can learn from them and share our lives with them. In order to do this, seniors often need a little bit of support as they grow frail. That support will often come through home care through our community care access centres. But again, in

our society right now, the Liberal government has put back into effect the competitive bidding system for home care.

The competitive bidding system has decimated our home care system, which means that a lot of seniors who want to age and stay in their homes are not able to do so. It makes the agencies that offer home support and home care programs unable to recruit and retain a stable workforce, which is so important for quality of care for seniors who wish to age in their own homes. They often end up in trouble and in hospital, and then they are labelled alternate level of care, which means they don't want to be in hospital, they do not need to be in hospital, but the home care system is not there to support them in their own homes and there are no beds for them to go into a nursing home.

This is poor-quality care for those seniors at the worst time of their lives, when they need us to support them a little bit so we can continue to gain from them. If they end up transferring to a long-term-care home, then the care levels are often abysmal.

We have been asking in legislation, first in legislation under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, and the government refused, then in regulation, to have 3.5 hours of hands-on care mandated so that everybody who is in a long-term-care home receives the care they need to live with dignity. But here again we are failing our seniors. So, the month of June could be whole lot happier with those two little changes.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

1550

Hon. Monique M. Smith: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe we have unanimous consent that the member for St. Paul's speak for up to five minutes, and that following the statement by the member from St. Paul's, five minutes be allotted to each party to speak in tribute to the late Gordon Dean.

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

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER FOR ST. PAUL'S

Mr. Michael Bryant: Ten years ago today was one of the most exciting days of my life, unquestionably my most exhilarating moment in politics: I got elected as the member of provincial Parliament for St. Paul's. It was the night of June 3, 1999. The Honourable Isabel Bassett, then a cabinet minister, could not hide her disappointment in honourable defeat, but she could not have been more honourable and gracious that night and throughout the campaign.

Neither I nor my parents, who were there—they came in from Victoria—nor Susan Abramovitch, my better half—hello—will ever forget that night. It was a night of honour, celebration and hope.

Political entrances, after all, are affairs of unbridled hope—nothing but the promise of the joyful unknown; political exits, on the other hand, can be a little brutal, whether the deep cut of electoral defeat or the voluntary

resignation, inevitably shrouded in intrigue, real or imagined.

'Twas ever thus. The best we can hope for, when our political exit comes, is to trumpet the good memories, to find forgiveness amongst the chagrined, to muster maximum grace amid the unanswered and the unfulfilled.

Being an MPP is the best job I'll ever have. Sometime in my first term, coming down those stairs in this beautiful building, I literally pinched myself, hard. It was a feeling of the fulfillment of a dream and of living that dream.

As a rookie MPP, I came to realize the power of the bully pulpit, exercised through the sacred elected office through this Parliament's platform: a blow horn for democracy. You stand on that front lawn of Queen's Park and you have a chance to speak; you stand in this chamber, at these desks, and you have a chance to be heard, to officially advocate on behalf of the people for, and sometimes even effect, change through this empire of good that we call our parliamentary system, our primary tool of democracy in Canada outside of the ballot box. It's awesome. It is an awesome place, and for those contemplating a life in Queen's Park, I highly recommend it.

So thank you to everybody who gave me this opportunity, to Susan, my family and my very best friends, who entertained the fantasy that a 33-year-old kid from Victoria, BC, could get elected in the majestic midtown riding of St. Paul's. Thanks to the slow trickle of volunteers—at the beginning that was basically my political campaign—the slow trickle of volunteers at the beginning of a political journey of, obviously, a complete unknown.

To those who were there at the beginning, I say thanks:

—to the lovely ladies at the Bradgate Arms who rolled out in their wheelchairs to come to a nomination meeting on a sunny September day and who rolled back into the ballot box to vote for—who knows?

—to the tenants in the riding—68% of the riding are renters—who defied the conventional wisdom that tenants don't vote. They got out and voted in 1999, and then again in 2003 and 2007.

—to those who opened their doors for me and our team of volunteers; those who engaged and participated; those who went out and voted, sometimes standing in line for more time than I could have imagined anyone would tolerate.

It's a marvel that anyone votes—when your name's on the ballot, you are amazed that 10 people show up, let alone tens of thousands. It's a miracle, really, to actually win.

I know that people who support politicians support the office and support the democracy more than the person—certainly that was the case in St. Paul's—but I was the beneficiary of that support. And to all of those supporters, especially the surprise arrivals who stuck around the campaigns day and night and laboured the tedious and inspiring work of running a riding association and campaign, I'm obviously very beholden for that support.

To my staff, who make me look good sometimes and save my bacon often; overworked and underpaid and underappreciated: You do the hard work of public service and political support. It is humbling and it is awe-inspiring. I've watched many of you grow into genius form, even as you patiently held my political hand, warts and all. I'm gobsmacked by your sacrifice, dedication and professionalism. Thank you.

To all of you who share this chamber, on all sides of the House: I have learned much. I have listened much. I have spoken much—much too much sometimes; sometimes a little too loud and brazen for some Upper Canadians. The best we can do here, I suppose, is to be ourselves and hope for the best. That's what I did, and I have no regrets.

Special thanks to my Liberal colleagues. This is a great family I get to be a part of, and I hope always to be useful, and good friends. You have supported me and hopefully we have supported each other in good deeds. I've earned a few wincos for my overexuberance, I understand, but I do pray that never did I harm our collective cause or the good deeds done.

To the Premier, my Liberal leader throughout my years here: I am unspeakably grateful for the opportunities that he gave me. Nothing with which I am associated would have happened without his support. We did a lot together. Without exception, my relationship with Dalton McGuinty was genteel and affable, and nothing if not productive.

Credit is due to many others, but I leave with the satisfaction of a few things done. Special thanks to Deputy Ministers Segal, Sterling, Amin and Howell, and especially Deputy Attorney General Segal.

My final words are to my family: to my mom, a multiple sclerosis conqueror extraordinaire, who taught me I could do anything that I wanted to do; and my dad, who taught me exactly how to do it; and to Susan for putting up with all this, for supporting me in all this, for sharing me with a lot of people and a lot of priorities. Thanks for letting me live this dream.

Finally, I want to wish all of you here the best. You'll be the best, I know. I'll soon enough enshroud myself with the excitement of the next chapter, but I will miss all of you terribly and always. Godspeed to all of you who work in this place and support the people in this place, in this noble chamber of best intentions. Thank you.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I just want to take this opportunity to thank the member from St. Paul's for his service to the Legislature, and we wish him and his family all the best in the future.

GORDON DEAN

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We will now turn to the leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition for a tribute to former member Gordon Dean.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: It's wonderful to see Gordon's wife, Mary, and his daughter, Charlotte, in the

members' gallery to join us on this special day in memory of Gordon and his service to the province of Ontario, to the country and to his community for so many years.

Gordon was a member of the infamous Gang of 22 in 1981—22 new members of the Progressive Conservative caucus who were elected in that Bill Davis majority government. I was one of them. It was quite a crew, when you look back and reflect on those times: people like Mike Harris, Ernie Eves, Andy Brandt, Susan Fish, Don Cousens, Gord Dean, Morley Kells—we could go on and on. It was a colourful, interesting and varied group of folks who made, I think, significant contributions to this place and the province over the years, and certainly Gordon was a prominent member of that gang.

1600

When you think back about the fact that Gordon has not been a member since 1987—22 years—it's really a little bit scary, when you think about the way time flies. I know that only Norm Sterling, Jim Bradley and myself, who are in the chamber today, served with Gordon.

I remember him as a distinguished gentleman, and "gentleman" is the right word to describe Gordon: a tall, distinguished fellow. I don't think, Mary, even when he was first elected that he had a great deal of hair, but correct me if I'm wrong. But he was a gentleman and a scholarly guy as well, an intelligent guy, and respected in our caucus.

I have to say, reading some of the stories about Gordon written over the years—and I think it happens to many people who are elected to public office. Gordon was by nature a shy man, a shy person. There's an expectation on people who are elected to this office that you're going to be a backslapper and a hale fellow well met. I don't think that that would describe Gordon, but he was a hard worker, someone who represented the people he served extremely well. If you look at his career in municipal office, it's 20 years of service to the people of his area as the mayor of Stoney Creek.

I didn't realize, even when you're serving with colleagues, some of their background and experiences. I didn't realize that Gordon was a former president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Perhaps a lot don't know, John, that you were as well. Some of our colleagues, in their backgrounds and experiences, have given significant and extensive service to people in this province. That was certainly the case with Gordon.

He was, as I said, first elected in 1981. I vividly recall the day I sat in the backbench with Ernie Eves on one side and René Piché and Don Cousens. I recall, two years into the Davis government, four members, four of the class of 1981, were promoted into cabinet. That was a pretty big thing. Four of the 22 had an opportunity to sit around the cabinet table: Susan Fish, Andy Brandt, Phil Andrewes and Gordon Dean, who were all promoted. Gordon went in as a minister without portfolio. Of course we were all envious, the rest of us who remained in the back row.

Interjections.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: Some of you know how that feels. In any event, we were happy for our colleagues, and Gordon continued to serve the province well and had the opportunity to move up to the role of Provincial Secretary when another great guy, Bruce McCaffrey, left cabinet, and then with the Miller government had the opportunity for a full cabinet portfolio as Minister of Revenue.

Of course, as Jim and Norm recall—and a few others, I think, who were elected in 1985 will recall—the Miller government didn't last too long. It was my opportunity to go into cabinet as well back then. I think we were in office for five and a half months. I recall it was during the throne speech where, following the Liberal-NDP accord, we all knew that we were going to lose government because the throne speech was going to be defeated by the accord of the two parties. I read a story where Gordon had to come in, and what a difficult day that was, because we knew we were going to lose government, and he wanted Mary to come into the House to witness the vote, and she simply refused. This was not a happy day and she was not going to attend the Legislature for it, and I said to her earlier, "I don't blame you. If I couldn't have been there, I wouldn't have been there either." In any event, Gordon stayed with us until 1987.

He passed away at the age of 85, April 19 of last year. I've read a lot of the commentary with respect to Gordon's contributions to the province and the country. So many kind contributions, so many kind words about Gordon being an ardent Christian, someone said, who perhaps—and I don't know if this is accurate today, but at the time—"was the only MPP I ever met"—this gentleman who was commenting on it—"who used the Lord's name in some of his speeches."

The other thing we should mention about Gordon, of course, is that he was a farmer at heart. He always said his wife was more comfortable on the farm. He was probably more comfortable on the farm as well in terms of the responsibilities he had publicly, but he always went back to the farm. I also found out that he was a graduate of McMaster and had a Master of Science degree—a very accomplished individual indeed.

Upon his passing, I read one comment that really touched me, and I'd like to put it on the record in closing my comments. It was from Mary. Quoting you, Mary: "If I had a chance to say one more thing to him, I would say, 'I love you very much' I guess I would say, we've had a wonderful 58 years together and three wonderful girls ... I'll miss you for the rest of my life." Nothing can be more heartfelt than what you said that day, Mary. You have every right to be proud of Gordon, you and your family, and we thank you very much for his contribution to this place, to the province and to the country.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's a privilege and an honour to rise on behalf of the Ontario New Democrats today to pay tribute to Gordon Dean and to welcome the members of his family who are on both sides of the House today, here with us to celebrate the contributions of a man who believed in this community and this province.

I have to say that I did not know Gordon Dean personally, but through Charlotte Dean, his daughter, who told many warm stories about Gordon, I have a sense of the man, and I very much like the sense that I have. We may have had different political perspectives, but the central thing for anyone who is in this chamber is that when you come out and do what you can for the people of Ontario, you make personal sacrifices. It's as simple as that. My guess is that although a gentleman, as Bob Runciman said, Gordon was not a man who was retiring and who was shy in taking part in what happens in this chamber.

It's fitting that his family is here today as we pay tribute to his legacy. They're owed a debt of gratitude for the willingness to give of their family to this province in the years that Gordon served here in this Legislature. The sacrifices that families make are often unnoticed, but they are substantial, and we know that the foundation that our families give—that Gordon's family gave to his life—are critical to actually doing the things that we need to do here. So to Mary and all of the rest of the Dean family, a thank you for the role that you played in building a stronger Ontario. We're aware that Gordon's successes would have been diminished by the absence of your support. In fact I have to say, based on the stories that you, Charlotte, have told me, that his electoral successes would have been diminished without the support of the family. You were a campaign worker very early in your life, I gather, as was my son. It runs in our families, right?

As a proud resident and former mayor of Stoney Creek, Gordon's career was characterized by a commitment to his community. He understood the importance of public service. He knew it was an immense privilege and an even greater responsibility. He believed in the people and the potential of the communities he had the honour of serving. He demonstrated his commitment to them in this House and at the cabinet table.

For Gordon, retirement from political life did not mean retirement from public life. He spent time on the boards of St. Joseph's Healthcare and the Royal Botanical Gardens. He was a devoted family man and committed servant of the community. He never lost sight of the community and the people whom he came here to represent.

We celebrate his contributions to the people of Stoney Creek and to Ontario.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Whenever one of our former colleagues passes away, as Gordon Dean has, probably for those of us who have at least had the opportunity to serve with them, we try to conjure up the memories that we might have of those individuals. I know when I pick up a newspaper and see an obituary, or perhaps read an extended story about that person, I try to recall in my own mind what that person has contributed to the House. There are so many who have contributed immensely to this province, and Gordon Dean was one of them.

1610

Bob Runciman—I guess we can use our first names today—characterized Gordon very well. He was not one

of those hail-fellow-well-met, back-slapping type of politicians—not that there's anything wrong with those individuals, but he wasn't one of them. He was certainly a person who was very reserved in his way. But you could spot a brightness there, an intelligence there, a commitment in Gordon Dean, not only to his own constituents but to the province as a whole. I think Premiers recognized that. Premier Davis recognized that and Premier Miller recognized that as well. Remember that Gordon actually supported Mr. Timbrell in the leadership for the party, but that didn't mean anything to Mr. Miller, who was the Premier at the time. What was important was that Gordon Dean could contribute to the province of Ontario and would be an asset to the cabinet, and therefore he was selected by Premier Miller to serve in that cabinet.

I recall him as well as not being an ardent partisan. There's a lot of partisanship in this House, and some are more partisan than others, I am informed. But Gordon Dean, I would say, was not one of those who wore his political stripes, though he was loyal to the Progressive Conservative Party and maintained his activities within the party even after he decided not to run for the Legislature in 1987. He was nevertheless a person who could reach out to people in other political parties and was more interested in the issues than in scoring partisan points. I think that made him a person who was popular amongst his colleagues and, I'm sure, amongst his constituents.

Mention was made of his science degree from McMaster University, and I see as well—I wasn't aware of this at the time—that he had been involved with Atomic Energy of Canada, working at Chalk River. That has an interesting history along the way, as we see it in the news today, but all along it's had an interesting history. It's a clear indication that, again, Gordon could have done other things if he wanted to. He chose, instead, public service from the year 1981 to 1987.

What was interesting as well was that in 1985—I remember we used to kid him a bit as being “Landslide Gordon” because he won by just a few hundred votes when he was there, just as we used to talk about “Landslide Ernie”—Ernie Eves, who won by six votes in his riding.

But what happened in 1985, and this is probably a good judgment of a person with his constituents, when the tide was going the opposite way, because in 1981 it was going toward the Conservative Party: They went from minority status to majority status on March 19, 1981. But in 1985, when things weren't going quite so well for the governing party at that time, Gordon Dean actually increased his plurality amongst his constituents. That's a clear indication that they were very pleased with what he had done for them and the contribution he was making to the province.

Many people, as, again, Bob Runciman made reference to, start out at the municipal level of government, or as we now call it, order of government. Gordon was very committed to that order of government as well. I think he

reflected that in the Legislature, having been a mayor and having held other positions in municipal government; as well, assuming—as mention has been made, my colleague John Gerretsen was the president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. You don't rise to that position easily, and Gordon obviously had the support and respect of many municipal politicians in the province of Ontario to place him in that position. So he made that contribution at that time as well.

He also had the opportunity to be a critic in opposition. That's not always an easy job to be a critic, but he certainly indicated that he was prepared to take that on after his government was no longer in power.

One as well is that he returned to the land, back to being a farmer. So often the trend is in the opposite direction, isn't it? People go from the rural area, from farming, to something else. Sometimes people say, “Well, they've advanced to something else.” I think he advanced when he went back to the farm. Farming and agriculture are very important to this province. When you have a person of Gordon's quality prepared to go back to it, that's important as well.

The member for Toronto–Danforth made reference to the fact, as is the case with so many former members of the Legislature, that when he stopped being a member of the Legislature, he didn't stop serving publicly, and that the two institutions to which reference was made, St. Joseph's and the—

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Botanical gardens.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Yes, the lovely gardens in Hamilton and the surrounding district—very, very important to the people of that area. The Royal Botanical Gardens are something to behold, and Gordon's interest in that was great as well.

I noted as well, in one of the little comments I saw about him, that he was a great fan of poetry. It's interesting: Some members of the Legislature have recited poetry. There used to be a member of the NDP, a Toronto member, Mr. Brewin, who used to get up and recite some poetry that was very good. There was also Dalton McGuinty's father, Dalton Sr., who used to recite poetry. Ogden Nash, a famous poet, was a favourite of Gordon Dean's.

A straight and fair approach—people would say that was exactly what he had; a devoted family person, a family man.

A couple of things he did here—if you look at the Legislature today and some of the issues, some members came ahead of the rest of us on these issues. I'm just going to mention a couple. He was paying tribute to a women's hockey team. At one time, that was just a side-show. A women's hockey game was not something that people looked at very seriously. They were wrong then, and today we see that. Women's hockey is extremely important. I remember Gordon making a tribute to them.

He had a question to the Premier about the Red Hill Creek Expressway and when it was going to get built. That was, it says here, in January 1987, and the Premier gave one of those answers that Premier Robarts was per-

haps known for, something like “in the fullness of time,” or some vague answer that I’m told government members give from time to time to very succinct questions by opposition members. He would have been delighted when he saw the progress being made and now the number of people who use the Red Hill Valley Parkway, as they call it now, as a way to get around Hamilton. He was one who was for that.

The other was dealing with impaired driving—the RIDE program. He was even in favour of raising the minimum drinking age to 21. Well, that didn’t happen, but the rule has come into effect, or will be coming into effect, that a person 21 and under will not be able to have any blood alcohol when driving.

So Gordon Dean was ahead on many issues. He was a decent man. We thank his family for sharing him with the province of Ontario and specifically with the constituents in Wentworth—I think the riding was called Wentworth East at that time. Ontario is a better place because of Gordon Dean, and we’re all deeply grateful to him, as he has passed on, and to his family for sharing him with us.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I’d ask all members and our guests to please rise as we observe a moment of silence in tribute to the contributions made to this province and to this Legislature by Gordon Dean.

The House observed a moment’s silence.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I will see that a copy of the Hansard and the DVD of the proceedings from today are sent to you, Mrs. Dean.

PETITIONS

TAXATION

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly, which I included last week. I mentioned I had about 3,700—now it’s up to 5,000 signatures.

“Whereas the residents of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound do not want a provincial harmonized sales tax that will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to house sales over \$400,000; and

“Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the blended sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario consumers.”

I’ve signed this and will give it to Kathleen.

CEMETERIES

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas protecting and preserving Ontario’s cemeteries is a shared responsibility and the foundation of a civilized society; and

“Whereas failure to safeguard one of our last remaining authentic original heritage resources, Ontario’s inactive cemeteries, would be disastrous for the continuity of the historical record and our collective culture in this province;

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

“The government must pass Bill 149, the Inactive Cemeteries Protection Act, 2009, to prohibit the relocation of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

As I agree with this, I shall sign it and send it to the clerks’ table.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. John O’Toole: It’s a pleasure to present a petition on behalf of Edward Judd, Michel Lesway, Ron Grisbrook, Wayne Dunbar, Dr. Bill Cohoon, Julie Hutcheon, Glenda Hutcheon, Albert Hutcheon and Donna Herold. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the village of Seagrave is a quiet residential community of retirees and people still in the workforce, but preferring a country lifestyle; and

“Whereas much of the village of Seagrave lies within a half-mile distance of a proposed wind farm site; and

“Whereas we consider the plans to place a wind farm adjacent to a quiet rural community to be appalling, and we are absolutely opposed to the planning and construction of this development at the corner of Saintfield Road and Simcoe Street in Seagrave; and

“Whereas the adverse impacts of wind farms are well documented;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to place a moratorium on the building of this wind farm in the village of Seagrave until there has been a thorough investigation into the impacts of wind farms on residential and urban communities.”

I am pleased to sign and support this because it’s the right thing to do.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition from a group of people here in western Mississauga, and I specifically want to thank Elaine Grochot and Tammy Ramnarace for having collected the signatures and sending the petition in. It reads as follows:

“Whereas wait times for access to surgical procedures in the western GTA served by the Mississauga Halton LHIN are growing despite the ongoing capital project

activity at the hospitals within the Mississauga Halton LHIN boundaries; and

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

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

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care allocate funds in its 2009-10 capital budget to begin planning and construction of an ambulatory surgery centre located in western Mississauga to serve the Mississauga-Halton area and enable greater access to ‘day surgery’ procedures that comprise about four fifths of all surgical procedures performed.”

I’m pleased to sign and support this petition and ask page Carlyn to carry it for me.

TAXATION

Mr. John Yakabuski: I would like to thank the good folks at Kohlsmith Crane Rental for sending me this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas residents in Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke do not want the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax, which will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline, for their hydro, cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to home sales over \$400,000; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario families.”

I am pleased to sign this in support of this petition and send it down with Kevin.

PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

Mr. Paul Miller: To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas all health care aides and personal support workers should be regulated, organized and accountable;

“That there be stricter screening of personal support workers before enrolment in courses;

“That all schools are providing proper education and training of personal support workers; we need more quality, not just quantity;

“That the practice of handing out personal support worker certificates to keep Canada’s unemployment rate down cease;

“That a much-needed support group, to help health care aides and personal support workers deal with the many issues that face them every day, be established;

“That a stronger network be built with employers, registered staff and the public so we can enhance the lives of our seniors, eliminate senior abuse and improve working conditions for front-line workers;

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

“PSW Canada (2007) and Friends call on the government to bring forth changes in the lives of the residents of nursing homes, retirement homes and home care. The government must recognize personal support workers are a very important part of the nursing team; only then can government truly say they care for our most vulnerable in our society.”

I agree with this and attach my name to it.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

“Whereas the federal government’s employment insurance surplus now stands” at over \$50 billion; and

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

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

“Whereas the average Ontario unemployed worker gets \$4,000 less in EI benefits than unemployed workers in other provinces, thus not qualifying for many” of the federal retraining programs because they’re not eligible for EI;

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

I’m in solidarity with the unemployed workers, and I affix my name to the petition.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Ted Arnott: This petition is in opposition to the RFP process in the school transportation industry, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the RFP process is causing hardship to small school bus operators and their employees throughout Ontario;

“Whereas the RFP process has awarded school bus runs throughout Ontario to multinational school bus operators;

“Whereas the Ministry of Education is using local property taxes to aid in the growth of multinational-owned school transportation companies which in turn affects small local family-owned school transportation companies;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to discontinue the RFP process in the school transportation industry.”

It’s signed by hundreds of my constituents in Wellington–Halton Hills as well as many constituents in the riding of Perth–Wellington. I’ve affixed my signature to it, and I support it as well.

CEMETERIES

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s cemeteries are an important part of our cultural heritage, and Ontario’s inactive cemeteries are constantly at risk of closure and removal; and

“Ontario’s cemeteries are an irreplaceable part of the province’s cultural heritage;

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

“The government must pass Bill 149, the Inactive Cemeteries Protection Act, 2009, to prohibit the relocation of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

As I agree with this petition, I shall sign it and send it to the clerks’ table.

1630

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mrs. Julia Munro: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“I, the undersigned, wish to voice my concern with the approach taken by the city of Barrie, as supported by MPP Aileen Carroll, to encourage the government of Ontario to move forward with imposing a unilateral imposition of a boundary change on the town of Innisfil. This move would allow unprecedented expansion of the population of the city of Barrie to the detriment of every other taxpayer in the county of Simcoe.

“A locally negotiated solution that fairly distributes population and employment growth ensures everyone wins.”

SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition that’s been sent to me from two people affiliated with Catholic Family Services of Peel–Dufferin and Brampton. I’d like to thank Lyne Eaves and Rosemarie Rebelo for having collected these signatures. It’s addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the population in Peel has tripled from 400,000 residents to 1.2 million between 1980 to present. Human services funding has not kept pace with that growth. Peel receives only one third the per capita social service funding of other Ontario communities; and

“Whereas residents of Peel cannot obtain social services in a timely fashion. Long waiting lists exist for many Peel region service providers. The child poverty level in Peel has grown from 14% to 20% between 2001 and 2006, and youth violence is rising; and

“Whereas Ontario’s Places to Grow legislation predicts substantial future growth, further challenging our already stretched service providers to respond to population growth;

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

“That the province of Ontario allocate social services funding on the basis of population size, population growth, relevant social indicators and special geographic conditions;

“That the province provide adequate growth funding for social services in Peel region; and

“That Ontario develop, in consultation with high-growth stakeholders, a human services strategy for high-growth regions to complement Ontario’s award-winning Places to Grow strategy.”

I agree with this petition, I am pleased to affix my signature and to ask page Jacob to carry it—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: I have a petition.

“Whereas Cambridge Memorial Hospital and other hospitals in the Waterloo region are experiencing substantial increased demands due to population growth; and

“Whereas the McGuinty government’s freeze on new long-term-care facilities has resulted in additional long-term-care patients in our hospitals; and

“Whereas the McGuinty government’s cuts to hospital funding have resulted in a dangerous environment for patients and staff in Cambridge and across Ontario; and

“Whereas the approved new expansion of the hospital has been delayed by the McGuinty government and this has contributed to the funding shortfall;

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

“(1) That the McGuinty government meet its obligations to introduce a population-needs-based funding formula for hospitals as has been done in other Canadian provinces;

“(2) That the McGuinty government proceed immediately with the approved new expansion of Cambridge Memorial Hospital.”

I agree.

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

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

“Whereas a number of caregiver recruitment agencies have been exploiting vulnerable foreign workers; and

“Whereas caregivers are subject to illegal fees and abuse at the hands of some of these unscrupulous recruiters; and

“Whereas the federal government in Ottawa has failed to protect these caregivers from these abuses; and...

“Whereas a great number of foreign caregivers and caregiver workers perform outstanding duties on a daily basis in their work, with limited protection;

“We, the undersigned, support the Caregiver and Foreign Worker Recruitment and Protection Act, 2009, and urge its speedy passage into law.”

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

TAXATION

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas residents in Burlington do not want the McGuinty 13% sales tax, which will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the McGuinty 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to home sales over \$400,000; and

“Whereas the McGuinty 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the blended sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario families.”

I agree and support this petition, and I will sign it and give it to page Ajoy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The time provided for petitions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES AND APPRENTICESHIP ACT, 2009

LOI DE 2009 SUR L'ORDRE DES MÉTIERS DE L'ONTARIO ET L'APPRENTISSAGE

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 2, 2009, on the motion for second reading of Bill 183, An Act to revise and modernize the law related to apprenticeship training and trades qualifications and to establish the Ontario College of Trades / Projet de loi 183, Loi visant à réviser et à moderniser le droit relatif à la formation en

apprentissage et aux qualifications professionnelles et à créer l'Ordre des métiers de l'Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities concerning the introduction of the college of trades.

Self-regulation is a plan that has demonstrated itself to be a useful way of standardizing rules in many fields, from architects to accountants, chiropractors to dietitians, and lawyers to midwives. But there is a backstory to this new government scheme that we all should be cautious of, because the introduction of the college of trades raises some very serious questions about the intent of this government.

I don't need to tell anyone in this House, save for the Liberals, maybe, about the potential dangers of a self-regulating organization, like the college of trades, that has been stacked with special interests.

Self-regulation in the public interest is meant to define qualifications as well as the ongoing obligations to ensure continuing competence, high quality and public protection. But red flags should go up when you look at what this government did with the college of teachers after they were first elected. They took the proven idea of self-regulation, which has been used successfully in many fields, and perverted it for their political ends. The college of teachers is now a union-led tool for promoting union interests, regardless of the impact on teachers, students or taxpayers.

I think that we can all look at the McGuinty record and confidently predict that he will do the exact same thing with the college of trades, and there's evidence to suggest this. The college of trades will be tasked with setting Ontario's apprenticeship ratios. In an effort to maintain Ontario's artificially high apprentice-to-journeyman ratios, the minister used provincial advisory committees, groups that he appointed under the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act, to justify his unreasonably high ratios.

As has been said in this House before by my colleague from Simcoe-Grey, the minister stacked those committees with his buddies, who have a vested interest in keeping those ratios high without consideration for the broader public interest. Take the boilermakers' PAC: It is heavily stacked with representatives from the boilermakers' union, Local 128, with only token business interests. The same with the drywallers, and the acoustic and lathing applicator PAC. This is stacked with members of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, another union which does not want to change the apprenticeship ratios.

So we can only assume that the government will use the college of trades just like they used their PACs and the way they have used the college of teachers, and pervert this for their own political ends by handing control over to the industry, to special interests, instead of the government protecting the public interest.

Let there be no mistake about it: The driving force behind this legislation comes from people like Pat Dillon

and the members of the Working Families Coalition, who are intimate friends of this government and who have worked with the Liberals to carefully craft rules and programs to exclude anyone who is not part of their club, because to them, it's not about fairness and it's not about safety for working people; it's about whether or not you play ball with the government and their friends. If you do, the sky's the limit; if you don't, welcome to the brick wall.

1640

And that's not all. Today, some groups are even challenging the legitimacy of the introduction of this legislation. The Open Shop Contractors Association of Ontario has been calling for months now for the resignation of Kevin Whitaker, the minister's implementation advisor for this legislation, because as their president, Dave McDonald, says, "In the view of the layman," Mr. Whitaker is "a virtual employee of the (building) trades." I understand that they have filed a complaint with the conflict of interest commissioner, and I note that the Ontario Electrical League backs them up on this matter.

In an article from the Daily Commercial News, Mr. McDonald even questions the need for this new body. He says, "It was pointless to create a new bureaucracy paid for by the industry, through fees, to look into increasing compulsory trades when there is no rational need." The article goes on to say, "Some industry stakeholders, including" the Open Shop Contractors, "have said they think the college is a way for the" government "to 'reward its political allies in the building trades.'"

The legitimacy of this process is definitely being questioned, and for all of these reasons, we will review this legislation cautiously.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments?

Mr. Reza Moridi: It's a pleasure to rise in this House and contribute to the discussion and conversation on Bill 183. I thank the member from Burlington for her remarks on this bill.

The member pointed out a couple of points. One of them is about the board of governors of this proposed college of trades. The members of the board of governors are drawn from employees and employers in equal numbers; plus, five members are coming from the lay community. So it's a balanced board. It is appointed by an independent council, so I would like to bring the member's attention to the very fact that this board is going to be an independent board. It's not a union board, it's not an employer board; it's an independent board. The employees and the employers are equally represented on this board, plus five members are going to be drawn from the lay community.

On the question of ratios, there have been quite a number of discussions in this House about that. We know that there are maybe some concerns about these ratios, but it says in the proposed act that technical people, the review panels, are going to look into this notion of ratios, and they are the people who should decide. It's not for us, for politicians, to decide on these ratios or the number

of journeypersons to apprentices. This is a technical matter, and the proposed bill leaves this to technical people to tackle this issue.

Currently, for example, in one particular trade, the number of ratios—for example, the electrical profession or trade. For smaller firms, actually, the number is one to one, and when the firm becomes larger, of course, the ratio goes up. But this is, again, something which is under review in this proposed bill—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank the member for Burlington for her speech regarding this bill. As usual, it was well thought out and I thank her for that.

I wanted to speak at length, for 20 minutes. However, by unanimous consent of the whip and the assistant whip, they have stifled me and censored me for the day, so having said all that, I will sit down.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments? Questions and comments—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): No, only one time.

The member from Burlington, you have two minutes to respond.

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: I want to thank the member from Richmond Hill and the member from Cambridge for their comments.

I just want to do a little bit of math here. Given that an average fee for these types of colleges is about \$100 and that the potential membership in this college would be about 600,000 tradespeople across this province, that's about a \$60-million annual budget. With that budget comes absolutely no guarantee that this will improve opportunities for our young folks who have an interest in a trade. We need to have some clarity on this, and there isn't any.

From what we see in this bill, nothing will change with the apprenticeship ratios. Certainly, you can change apprenticeship ratios without a college; you don't need a college to do that. So why are we structuring this college and another layer of bureaucracy, and on we go? We need to assure the Ontario public that there's going to be some accountability and some transparency in what happens here, and right now we have absolutely no assurance of that.

Who exactly is going to be on the board? There's no clarity about that either, and absolutely no clarity on how all of this is going to play out. It's very vague. I don't want us to get into the position we now find ourselves in in question period with eHealth, where there's lack of transparency, no accountability, nobody seems to be in charge, and yet there's millions of dollars rolling around and no one has anything to show for it. I hope this isn't another one of those scenarios.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate? Does any other member wish to speak?

Mr. Milloy has moved second reading of Bill 183. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'd ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): So ordered.

Orders of the day.

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Brad Duguid: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the House schedule.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is there consent? Agreed.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 8(a), when the House adjourns on Wednesday, June 3, 2009, it shall be adjourned until 9:45 a.m. on Thursday, June 4, 2009, at which time the Speaker shall read the prayers and call orders of the day.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Does everyone understand the motion? Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm pleased to move adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House, then, is adjourned until 9:45 a.m. Thursday, June 4, 2009.

The House adjourned at 1648.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

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

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Broten, Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Bryant, Michael (LIB)	St. Paul's	
Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. M. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	Minister of Culture / Ministre de la Culture Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	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	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
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	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Economic Development / Ministre du Développement économique Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of International Trade and Investment / Ministre du Commerce international et de l'Investissement
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
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
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Tourism / Ministre du Tourisme Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Small Business and Consumer Services / Ministre des Petites Entreprises et des Services aux consommateurs
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Tim Hudak
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Gilles Bisson, Bob Delaney
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Tim Hudak, Amrit Mangat
Phil McNeely, Yasir Naqvi
John O'Toole
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Michael A. Brown, Howard Hampton
Rick Johnson, Lisa MacLeod
Gerry Martiniuk, Julia Munro
David Ramsay, Lou Rinaldi
Liz Sandals
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeff Leal
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Christine Elliott
Peter Kormos, Jeff Leal
Dave Levac, Reza Moridi
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jerry J. Ouellette
Laura Albanese, France Gélinas
Ernie Hardeman, Phil McNeely
Jerry J. Ouellette, Liz Sandals
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller
Bas Balkissoon, Mike Colle
Rick Johnson, Gerry Martiniuk
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch
Michael Prue, Tony Ruprecht
Mario Sergio
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon
Laurel C. Broten, Kim Craitor
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo
Helena Jaczek, Shafiq Qaadri
Khalil Ramal, Peter Shurman
Elizabeth Witmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

Select Committee on Elections / Comité spécial des élections

Chair / Président: Greg Sorbara
Howard Hampton, Greg Sorbara
Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions / Comité
spécial de la santé mentale et des dépendances**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Elliott
Bas Balkissoon, Christine Elliott
Kevin Daniel Flynn, France Gélinas
Helena Jaczek, Sylvia Jones
Jeff Leal, Liz Sandals
Maria Van Bommel
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

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