



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)**

Tuesday 6 October 2009

Mardi 6 octobre 2009

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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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

Tuesday 6 October 2009

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 6 octobre 2009

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PUBLIC SECTOR EXPENSES REVIEW ACT, 2009

LOI DE 2009 SUR L'EXAMEN DES DÉPENSES DANS LE SECTEUR PUBLIC

Mr. Takhar moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 201, An Act to provide for review of expenses in the public sector / Projet de loi 201, Loi prévoyant l'examen des dépenses dans le secteur public.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate? Minister of Government Services.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: The Public Sector Expenses Review Act, 2009, which our government would like to enshrine in law as soon as possible, if the bill is passed in the Legislature, would empower the Integrity Commissioner of the Legislature to review the expense claims of senior officials at 22 of Ontario's largest public agencies, boards and commissions.

The new legislation, which builds upon the record of transparency of this government, would require senior officials in these 22 public agencies to abide by the same level of accountability that cabinet ministers and political staff currently must follow under the Cabinet Ministers' and Opposition Leaders' Expenses Review and Accountability Act. If the Integrity Commissioner determines that all or part of an expense is not proper, senior officials in these 22 agencies would be required to pay back that improper expense. In special cases, the Integrity Commissioner could also recommend other remedial actions if she determines that it is warranted.

This government has moved on Bill 201 quickly, and it would apply to expenses that were incurred on or after September 1 of this year. Because this government believes in transparency and has taken many steps in law to improve the public's ability to look into the workings of government in Ontario, an annual report would be prepared by the Integrity Commissioner as part of the new legislation. That report would be made public.

This government has taken steps earlier to make the workings of government in this province more open and

understandable to the public. In 2007, this government moved to require that all Ontario governments report on the province's finances before elections are held. So everybody—all the parties or anybody who is in the government—is expected to make the finances public before the elections are held. From 2004 to 2006, Ontario's freedom-of-information laws were amended to include a requirement that Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation and the province's public universities and public utilities are subject to FOI requests. This government passed the Audit Statute Law Amendment Act in 2004, which broadens the powers of the Auditor General to review public sector organizations. The Auditor General has a very important role to play as an auditor of government actions and policies, and his report strongly influences what measures the government takes to improve its functions.

The government is well aware that Ontario is facing many new economic challenges these days and that every tax dollar counts and should be spent and used wisely. I would like to point out that my background is in finance and that I had the privilege to work with large private and public corporations as chief financial officer and a senior executive. Based on my experience, I can tell you that it's a good business practice that anytime you find there's room to improve internal controls, you take action and improve the internal controls and their effectiveness.

We are proposing wide-ranging improvements in employee education about expenses and accountability with Bill 201. This government has always required its public servants, whether they are elected, hired or appointed, to act responsibly with the public money that is entrusted to them. New requirements will clarify the rules and help all public servants to better adhere to the rules. Expenses for senior management in the Ontario public service, cabinet ministers, political staff and senior executives at Ontario's 22 largest agencies will be posted on a website. Ontarians will be able to draw their own conclusions about these expenses.

Also, the number of random audits of expense claims that are currently conducted will be increased. The external and internal auditors who examine the books of Ontario's agencies, boards and commissions will be required to also determine whether or not good controls are in place at these agencies, boards and commissions. In addition, to further education in this important area, the government will develop online training for all Ontario public service employees and staff at the 22 agencies to show them how to file expense claims properly. This training will be mandatory.

The Integrity Commissioner has graciously and enthusiastically taken up the new duties that are explained in Bill 201. I had the chance to meet with the Integrity Commissioner, and I can tell you that she feels that she is fully equipped—might need a few more resources but is very willing and able to take on these duties. The Integrity Commissioner would review and approve expenses for senior executives at each of the government's 22 identified largest agencies. As I said, this may increase the workload of the Integrity Commissioner, but she has indicated that her office is up to the task. The Integrity Commissioner's office has been reviewing the expenses of cabinet ministers, opposition leaders and political staff since 2001, so they are well versed. They know how to deal with these expenses.

I would like to take a moment to point out that the majority of Ontarians who are employed in the public service act responsibly with regard to their own work-related expenses, and the Ontario public service is highly regarded and has won awards for excellence. But there's always room for improvement, and this act is actually a step in that direction.

The steps outlined in Bill 201 will help the agencies that act for the Ontario government to improve their control over expenses and increase the transparency of their operations.

0910

The steps the government is taking are designed to uncover any inappropriate expenses so that Ontarians will know who exactly is spending and what exactly they are spending on. The steps that we are taking will make it easier for anyone to know what the rules are for claiming expenses. It will also be harder for anyone to break these rules. Each person who works for the taxpayers of Ontario must take responsibility for knowing the rules and also must take responsibility for following the rules. This government will continue to take responsibility for improving and enforcing its rules and regulations. But we will also strive to increase our enforcement of internal controls as well. These are proven methods employed by large business organizations to improve their internal controls and their effectiveness.

I am very excited about this bill, and I encourage everyone on all sides to move ahead quickly with this bill so that we can enforce the rules and regulations.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: Just picking up on the last words that the minister in charge of this bill says—let's move along quickly—I'm wondering what the rush is? Is this some sort of deal where they're trying to sweep this out of the headlines? That's clearly what's happened here, because first they time-allocated this legislation. Why? What does that mean to the people of Ontario? Time allocation is really an anti-democratic move where they cease and halt and suppress debate on a bill that's really supposed to bring openness and accountability to the scandal. It's the summer of the scandal. It was all about the egregious spending of public money. We've heard

every day for the last two weeks of hundreds of millions of dollars literally being spent on the signature of the Premier of the province, without any oversight to any extent—\$30 million dollars to IBM yesterday seems to have been the question—and we're looking forward to the auditor's report.

That's what this is about. It's about the transparency that the McGuinty government promised during the election—accountable, transparent, open, blah, blah, and all that stuff. It's everything but that. What they're doing here is moving anyone who's spending money on wine and booze and high-priced consultants—they're going to sweep that over to the Integrity Commissioner's office, and the poor Integrity Commissioner has six people. It's going to be reviewing the expense accounts of all of these senior executives. And I read this morning that the Deputy Minister of Health is \$500,000 dollars, and you can't find his salary in the public salary disclosure thing until you find it in a labyrinth of caves and turns and twists into Hamilton Health Sciences. The reason it's there is because he has a better pension—it's just scandalous, Madam Speaker. I'm sure you feel as passionate as I do about it.

I'm even more concerned. A very good friend of mine, the member from Thornhill—last Thursday, when Bill 201 was forced into committee to rapidly make a couple of amendments, we in sincerity tried to support it. We submitted several amendments. Between our caucus and our leader, Mr. Hudak, we reviewed this bill with the intent of trying to improve it in the long run, outside of this treachery and rushing it into committee and then rushing it back here this morning. And as he said in his last remarks, the minister, the person who is responsible for this—well, he's not really responsible. Really, in fairness to him, the Premier is responsible. The buck stops with the Premier if there are misdoings here—and the article in the paper this morning let the Premier off again. What's going on here in this province? Nobody is holding anyone accountable anymore.

You know, it's tragic. Look at this. There are a couple articles this morning that would just blow you away, and this one here says, "McGuinty Maintains Teflon Image." That's exactly what the people of Ontario should be afraid of. Hold him accountable. It's not the politics; it's the accountability. This is public money. There is a recession on. There are 330,000 families who don't have a paycheque coming into their homes. They're going to raise the taxes on the HST. Start paying attention or you're going to get the government you deserve.

This bill is only one part of that treachery of moving all of this accountability into third party oversight. The Integrity Commissioner has about six employees to audit all these financial misdoings. I don't really know where to start. We moved a number of amendments, well intended, on Bill 201. What did they do? This was strictly a charade. They voted every single one of them down. What are they? I'm going to put a few of them on the record so we see that we weren't playing games. We were trying to make this bill at least palatable and better.

The member from Thornhill, on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, moved them. One of the amendments here was to list within the body of the legislation the agencies, 22 of them—in fact, 22 that the Premier himself had said he was going to specifically focus on. They wouldn't accept it. They voted down those amendments.

Why wouldn't they have at least acquiesced and given us one piece of ownership in that bill? No, they slammed the door on every single amendment. I think it was purely arrogance, because they were well-intended amendments. There was nothing spiteful or malicious at all about them.

The following one is another one. An Act to provide for review of expenses in the public sector—we're for accountability in the public sector. Each one of us is here at the will of the people of Ontario, regardless of the party. The opposition has the right to be heard. We are being shut out. In the media we're being shut out, in fairness.

This one here, this is the part about if they've been caught with their hand in the cookie jar; it could be the wine jar or the alcohol jar—misspending. Here's what it says:

"If the amount is not repaid or remedial action that the commissioner considers appropriate not taken on or before the specified date, the commissioner,

"(a) shall advise the minister responsible for the public entity in question and the Premier of Ontario"—what's wrong with that? Just let the Premier in on it; as if he didn't know anyway.

"(c) may advise such persons as the commissioner considers appropriate in the circumstances."

It was just to bring openness and disclosure, and that was voted down.

There's just no forgiveness on our side on this bill, and we will be seriously voting against it. They brought it in, they sloughed it off to a junior minister when it's a top priority; then they time-allocated it, rushed it through committee and voted down every possible amendment. Now, this morning, almost before most people are up, this bill is going to be history.

Are the people of Ontario paying attention? You're being hoodwinked. This isn't about politics; this is about accountability. It simply isn't here.

Even this morning they're trying to get this done, I think—if I may, tomorrow, we're anticipating the Auditor General's report. Some of it's been leaked. How can it be leaked? I trust the Auditor General. I think the Premier has this thing, and I think he has it under wraps. They're going to get this thing through today, jam it through, slam it down. Then the auditor's report will be released tomorrow, and they'll see even more red ink rolling down the staircases here at Queen's Park.

Mr. Peter Shurman: Yes, and the bill only starts in September.

Mr. John O'Toole: Exactly. Again, there's another amendment there. We tried to make this openness and transparency accountable for the whole fiscal year, because we know now that Sarah Kramer and others—Ms. McDougald from the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp.—got charged, and some of them were fired for

oversight. Maybe they didn't spend the money on alcohol and various things like that, public money on alcohol and misspending on high-priced consultants who did nothing. They were friends of friends of friends, mostly friends, by the way, of the current government. It's just in the papers. I'm not making this up.

But it's almost like, what's his name? Brown's books. What's the name of that book? There's a new one out now.

Mr. Peter Shurman: Dan Brown.

Mr. John O'Toole: Dan Brown's books, you have to follow them, this treacherous little—Hansel and Gretel following the beads in the forest.

Mr. Peter Shurman: Angels and Demons.

Mr. John O'Toole: Angels and Demons, whatever.

My point is this: Let's not trivialize this for a moment. All I'm saying is it's like solving a mystery. Why are we trying to solve a mystery? Those persons should be called right here into the Legislature, but we can't call them. We can call the Premier.

All of the answers are "We can't deal with it; it's before the courts. We can't do this. We can't do that." What can you do? The province is sliding down the hill like a toboggan in a snowstorm, as fast as a car can travel, downhill. The economy is going south. Of course, the people, the families, the individuals, the young people of this province are going to be paying for this debt that's being accumulated. It's \$200 billion, I think—isn't it?—the provincial debt, the accumulated debt and the interest on that. The pages here today should be paying attention. That debt—do you know what that is? That's future taxes on you.

0920

You have to ask yourself, "Are the senior citizens being well taken care of in this province?" No. Long-term care—serious problems in my riding. They're changing the case mix index in long-term care so that they are cutting out nurses. They're cutting out front-line personal support workers to vulnerable families. I have hundreds of e-mails and letters in my office from my riding in Durham. Our hospitals don't have enough money. We're short about \$10 million in our hospital, and they passed Bill 8 years ago, which forces hospitals to balance the budget. How do they balance the budget? They lay off nurses.

They can look back to six and seven years ago. That's fine. Do it. They're spending \$2.1 million an hour more than they're taking in as revenue, and that's debt against the young people in this province. That's future taxes. I'm telling you that this thing is out of control.

I remember back in 1994, when I was chair of budget in the municipality of Clarington in Durham region, I met with Floyd Laughren and Ed Philip. They had a program that was called the expenditure reduction plan. That was to encourage municipalities to reduce their spending by 10% to 15%, which meant they should—for municipalities, all government services, their budget is payroll. Basically, 85% of their budget is payroll. That means they had to lay people off. Well, no municipality would

agree with it. AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, disagreed with it. Eventually, AMO got together and had a meeting with Ed Philip, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and Floyd Laughren. At that time, it was Bob Rae. He's a Liberal now—he's going downhill, too. But the only thing there is that they disagreed.

So what happened? The government brought in the social contract. Some of you may have heard about that. When they brought in the social contract, what they really did is they opened up every public sector contract and took out 10 days' pay. Bingo. They just took it right out—10 days' pay. Say, \$200—that's \$2,000, roughly, from each person, or more. That's how they balanced their budget. But it was called the social contract, and it cost them the government.

I put to you today, if you're keeping an eye on this, if the economy does not recover, and I hope it does—and certainly what they're doing with the harmonized tax is they're increasing taxes. The health tax, WSIB is going up, employment insurance, payroll taxes are going up and red tape is going up. They're crippling the economy, and they're going to find out now—they started out with a \$6-billion deficit, and now I understand it's \$18 billion. By the time they get done—as I said, they're spending \$2 million an hour more than they're taking in in revenue. On what I don't know—on lunches for all these people in this bill. Yet hospitals are short of money. Schools are having problems—not just the pools in Toronto, but just regular schools in rural Ontario. School bus operators are having problems getting the kids to school safely. Long-term care is having a problem. These are the early signs of a catastrophe that's going to occur. We've got to remember to point directly at the one person you can get to: Premier McGuinty. Your time is coming to an end.

Let's decide. It's actually two years from today when the next provincial election is—two years from today, October 6, 2011. The people of Ontario—this is not threatening. You should hold every single member—your member in your riding—accountable. Phone them and ask whatever questions you have, and they owe you at least an explanation. We try that every day here to hold the cabinet accountable. They all hide behind the Premier, and where is he? He's not to be heard from. They don't answer the questions, and I am just shocked. Then, if I want to get down into the reality here, the real nuts and bolts of Bill 201—I want to just look at a couple of expenditures here.

First, and the most egregious one, was—this speech, by the way, my staff and myself prepared it, okay? It cost something, of course—the time. I'm passionate. I'm just trying to be straightforward and honest. I'm speaking mainly to the Speaker and to the pages here.

One of these organizations under the McGuinty government spent \$25,000 for a speech. I've never seen it or heard it. In fact, that person was fired. They didn't get what they paid for; \$25,000, that's unbelievable.

Mr. Paul Miller: That's a good speech.

Mr. John O'Toole: That is a high-priced speech, but that doesn't make it good. That's like buying a pair of

shoes that are too big for you. They may look good, but they don't fit you. That's the same with the speech.

It was a failed concept. The government was trying to hoodwink—this speech, I understand, was delivered to kind of legitimize her role. Where did she come from? Was she a doctor? Did she have a PhD? We have doctors here who aren't even practising medicine. There are capable people here; I'm not disparaging people. But I'm saying she's not a doctor. As far as I'm concerned, she worked for Cancer Care Ontario. The person who hired her was the head of Cancer Care Ontario, Dr. Hudson, and quite honestly, a highly regarded individual at that time. I think he just got on a bit of a breakaway. He thought Sarah Kramer worked for him, and he put her in charge of eHealth. The next thing you know, he had to legitimize her presence, so they wrote this spectacular speech, hand-picked every single word and crafted it in such a way that she would appear to be quite legitimate in this role as the head honcho making \$400,000 a year. Imagine that, \$400,000 a year.

Paying people the appropriate amount of money is not—I want the appropriate person and I want the appropriate deliverables. What are the deliverables? It's like if you pay Mats Sundin \$10 million a year, I want a goal in every hockey game. What did Sarah Kramer do? She spent a lot of money, and we got nothing for it. In fact, a Toronto Star article, I think, summed it up. What was that article? It was outlandish. It said \$1 billion for nothing. The Toronto Star is basically the briefing notes for the Liberal Party. Here it is here: "eHealth Operation Bled \$1 Billion." That's what we got. I'm reading the title from the Toronto Star, which is quite friendly to the Liberal Party, no question about that. "Auditor's report slams Ontario's bungled push for e-records and cash it threw at the problem." That's not me saying it.

I'm telling the people of Ontario, get with it. Start paying attention. Two years from today, if you repeat the errors of the past, you're bound to live with them for the future. You're learning here, not from me. Stay tuned. Pay attention. Watch question period. See what the answers—Mr. Caplan, I'm sure his mother, who used to be the Minister of Health, is ashamed of him. He should resign. Imagine. That's tragic. I'm sure she is home watching today.

Look, I remember meeting Minister Caplan one time when she was the Minister of Health, and she came out to Oshawa. I think she cut the ribbon for the expansion of the hospital in Oshawa when she was the minister. She went on to become a federal minister as well—two pensions.

My point is this: that they never built the hospital either. The hospital never got built. That was under the Peterson government. Bob Rae came in, made the same announcement, and it was Frances Lankin who was there cutting the ribbon. They never built it. I was there with Tony Clement.

I'm saying this thing about accountability and transparency, not to become individual—but I believe the buck has to stop. I think the Premier, if he really wanted

to solve this and have a cleansing—let's put it that way—either one of two people have to go. George could be let go easily because he's going to run for mayor—Smitherman. A clever guy, he's the most clever politician in this House; there's no question about that. But a politician needs to have integrity, and that's what is missing in this equation I'm talking about. The other one—who hasn't got near the ability of Smitherman, by the way—is Caplan. Caplan should go. He could be sacrificed, thrown under the bus.

Now, I don't mean to be malicious, but honestly, I think Bill 201 is being rammed through. What it's all about is integrity and accountability, and there's anything but integrity and accountability.

All of our amendments that attempted to improve this bill were voted down. I'm putting it on the record here today: This doesn't address the issue. The issue is systemic. We need to have some actions taken by the Premier, and this just doesn't cut it. Real integrity begins with the leader. He sets the pace and sets the examples. The article this morning said it all: He's Teflon.

0930

If Ontario has come to this low point under this leadership, the hope and the future are in question. Really, this bill is all about that. It's sweeping it under the carpet to the Integrity Commissioner with eight employees to audit when cabinet responsibility is what is required here. Ministerial responsibility, that's the tradition of this place, not trying to move it off to some out-of-camera-range audit oversight.

We cannot support this bill, we will not support this bill, and we should not support this bill because real accountability belongs to the Premier of this province, and he's not up to the job as far as this particular issue goes. I say to the minister, if you did the right thing yourself, you'd set the example and step aside in honour of your own integrity.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Paul Miller: I would like to start off by saying that my frustration begins at committee level. I remember when I first came to this House, the Premier stood up and said, "I welcome all members of this House, the opposition, the third party. We're going to work together to better Ontario and better the lives of Ontarians." Frankly, that's not true. Every suggestion, every amendment—at least in the committees I've sat on—in two years, every one from the third party and the official opposition was turned down. They steamrolled ahead like robots with their plan, their agenda.

The member from Thornhill and I sat in a committee the other day, and we brought forth really useful, constructive amendments to this bill. They were not only not dealt with, I doubt if they were even read. It's absolutely disgraceful.

Another member said, "Well, get used to it. That's the way it is." You know what? If that's the way it is, I don't want to be that way. I'd like to work together and actually accept other people's ideas. I can safely say I

walk the talk. You know what it is? I have voted, since I've been here, for 22 bills that the Liberals have brought forward. They haven't done one for us—not one—probably a couple of amendments for cigarillos or something, some insignificant little matter. It's absolutely disgraceful.

We don't work together in here. Don't let the Premier kid you out there in the public. If it isn't their idea, they don't run with it. And if it is a good idea, it'll appear about a year and a half later in one of their bills, which they've taken from us. Instead of dealing with it at the time, it'll appear a year and a half later and it will be softened. It won't be in its original form, but, "Gee, that looks familiar. Where did that come from? I think we might have thought of that." I don't care who thinks of it, as long as it gets brought forward and gets done, and that's not the case in here. That's why this government, in my humble opinion, is dysfunctional.

The bill gives the Integrity Commissioner the responsibility to review expense claims at government agencies designated by the cabinet. Designated by the cabinet, that could be kind of a conflict, that kind of control. Why only the cabinet? There are 182 agencies in this province that should be under scrutiny, accountable to the people and taxpayers of this province—182, and they've picked 22 of them.

You pick 22; that sure doesn't red flag the other 160. Why couldn't they have rotating investigations? I'm not saying that the resources are there, the people and the investigators are there, to do all 182 every year or two years, but you certainly could pick them. They could be random, and the agency wouldn't know who they're going to pick ahead of time so they can prepare. You catch them with what's going on. If they're doing the right thing, there's no problem. If there are accountability problems, you're going to nail them, and they should be exposed. The people of this province and their tax dollars deserve that treatment, not to have to dig it up or wait until they get caught with their whole arm in the cookie jar, not just their hands.

I'll take one, just one agency: the WSIB. I've sat here for two years and asked for Mahoney's resignation at least five, six times in this House for the unbelievable things that have gone on. Here's a guy working part-time, making \$140,000 a year; \$1,000 suits, eating in a steakhouse in Ottawa, 35 Liberal buddies. What's he done since I've been here? Nothing. Nothing. How about experience rating? How about deeming? How about all the things that are important to injured workers? Nothing.

They stand out here on University Avenue every year, the minister and all the injured workers in front of him, a couple hundred of them, looking for some kind of help, something—you know, dribbles. And they promise and say, "Oh, we're going to look into it. We're going to fix it." Well, they've been going there for 25 years. Every year, they're back with even the same requests that are just scarcely dealt with, to put it mildly.

When you look at the WSIB and some of the people—here's another example. Over the spring and summer, we

heard about the gross abuse of public money by the expensing of items such as tea at Tim Hortons, \$1.65, by a consultant who's being paid thousands of dollars a day; \$3.99 for Choco Bites; a \$30 car wash; child care expenses—he doesn't have enough money to pay for his own daycare; he's got to have us do it; a speech that cost, as they mentioned earlier, \$25,000. I think Bill Clinton might get that, \$25,000 or \$50,000 for a speech.

The worst part about this, the alarming fact is that these consultants were being paid \$3,000 a day. Do you know how many families could live in affordable housing for that money, how many children would go to school with breakfast in their tummies for that kind of money? Do you know how many grandparents raising their grandchildren would be able to provide the education, recreation and medical programs that those children desperately need for that amount of money? It's absolutely ridiculous. At the rate of \$3,000 per day, it would take 20 days to reach the average annual household income in Ontario. In 20 days, that guy made as much as—in fact, if you look at my riding, he probably made as much in 20 days as some of the people get in a whole year, because 20% of the people in my riding live below the poverty level. This guy made it in 20 days. What's going on? It's obscene. It's absolutely obscene what's going on.

Why don't they bring the work in-house? With that kind of money, you could probably hire a few full-time workers to govern these types of agencies and govern this. We've got a lot of bureaucrats now, but I sure as heck wouldn't want to pay one guy \$3,000 a day.

You know what, the funny part about it? Nothing really changed. eHealth was a scam, the OLG is a scam, the WSIB is in confusion—and these guys are getting \$3,000 a day? They should be shipped out. They're absolutely useless. This should have been corrected within months. Two years later, and they still don't have a system in Ontario for e-health scanning? Two years, and that woman got fired? So she should be fired, and there should be a lot more behind her.

I'll give you another example of the outrageous. How do you explain this outrageous spending to average Ontarians? A vice-president at OLG spent \$3,713.77 on one meal. Well, that's about four months' rent for an average family in Ontario. Another OLG executive was reimbursed for the \$1,000 he put towards renting a Florida condominium. He must have been stressed out. He needed a rest. Some people are lucky if they can put enough toys in front of their Christmas tree or food at Christmastime. This guy is stressed out; he needed a rest down in Florida in his condo—paid for by the taxpayers, or at least the rent put forward.

0940

How about grandparents raising grandkids? This government gives them \$251 for the first child and \$188 a month for grandparents raising grandkids—\$400 a month, \$600 a month.

Here's another one: Three executives charged \$250 for the gym fees to the crown corporation. You've got to

stay in shape when you're milking the system; you've got to be sharp; you've got to be in top fitness. That \$250 would pay for the recreation program for at-risk children. It's more than the full monthly income for grandchildren raised by their grandparents. That's more than they give to the grandparents raising their grandkids.

Valet parking: \$30. Wow, get a grip; \$30 to park my car and I'm making \$3,000 a day. I can park my own car. I can wash my own car.

Here's a classic: luggage replacement—\$615. The Ontario government is now acting as an insurance company for employees who lose their personal property. That's special; very special.

This just goes on and on. How about an account manager who claims \$7.70 for a pen refill and \$1.12 for a cloth grocery bag? This is obscene beyond words. These people are making six figures or more and he charges \$1.12 for a cloth bag for groceries. Wow. At least he's being environmental; it wasn't plastic.

At eHealth, a well-paid consultant charged \$5.64 for a cup of coffee and a chocolate chip cookie—you got to have a cookie with that—and charged the taxpayers. How do they have the nerve to make \$3,000 a day and then charge the taxpayers for a cookie and a coffee? I can't believe these people. They should have had milk, because they're milking the system, they're milking the taxpayers and they're certainly making a sham of this place with this kind of behaviour.

Here we go with the \$5 million of untendered contracts—conflicts of interest, anger over high-priced—and all the people involved in these situations are connected somehow. A consultant agency used to work with this person five years ago and all of a sudden they appear and are making six figures. A lot of them are Liberals; I don't know if all of them are, but a good chunk of them. They're all related: second cousins, uncle, nephew; it's amazing how this works.

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: It's like Tennessee.

Mr. Paul Miller: Yeah.

What about this predecessor: Smart Systems? Another boondoggle that has cost Ontarians hundreds of thousands of their hard-earned tax dollars. Inside friends of McGuinty Liberals must salivate when they get a call for an ABC appointment. They know that they won't have to open their chequebook for a long time and can live off the taxpayers of this province. Before there was eHealth there was the Smart Systems for Health Agency. It went to work in 2003 with a goal of making a "secure, integrated, province-wide information infrastructure" to allow electronic communication among health care providers. But three years into operations, Smart Systems had little to show—three years, and little to show. With any private company, you'd be fired in the first six months if you didn't show progress. Why aren't there any progress reports? Why aren't there people monitoring the situation to see what kind of results the taxpayers are getting for their money? That's absolutely ridiculous.

Privacy policies are "incomplete and not widely understood." This is an organization that is tasked with

ensuring the privacy of each and every person in Ontario is protected. That's a bit of a joke.

Now this government has decided, "We're going to put the hammer down on 22 agencies that we've hand-picked." And they'll all be—I'm sure—told beforehand that the hammer is coming down before the investigations starts. It will slip out; I don't know how that happens, but it does. They'll be well-prepared. Then they want to use their own financial people in each agency to deal with the Integrity Commissioner. That's like asking a fox to guard their henhouse. So if we made mistakes we can cover it up before we go see the Integrity Commissioner—straighten it all out. Why isn't there an independent body, an auditor, investigating it? Why are they told ahead of time? They should be told two weeks before, "Get your papers in here. We want to look at them. We want to look at the documents. We want to see where the agency is. We want to see what's going on. We want to see your consultants and how much you pay, where the money goes and what they're spending it on." Don't alert them; don't warn them before. It should cover 182 agencies, not 22 hand-picked ones, because it's very easy to make things disappear in big organizations, easier than it is in the smaller ones, as well.

Accountability: That's quite a word. The only way this will work is if every agency under this government is under the umbrella, that they know that at any given time their call could come: "You be in here next week with your papers for last year. We want to look at it." But, no, they'll just pick certain ones that they feel will be able to deal with this, because they have enough bureaucrats to handle the paperwork.

They're saying that it won't add to the Integrity Commissioner's workload? It's going to quadruple—but it should. If necessary, the Integrity Commissioner should hire people. If she hires more people, they're going to save us and the taxpayers millions and millions of dollars a year that will more than pay for the four or five people she has to hire to cover all these other new agencies that weren't covered before.

In late 2008, the Dalton McGuinty Liberals decided to scrap Smart Systems and start over this new agency. What did this disaster cost us? Will this legislation come even close to providing the answers to those costs? What kinds of nudge, nudge, wink, wink handshake payouts did those government appointees walk away with? Plenty. We probably could have hired five people full-time for some of these payouts.

Days after the creation of eHealth on September 29, 2008, Mr. McGuinty placed one of his key healthcare problem solvers, Dr. Alan Hudson, in one of the lead eHealth roles. When Dr. Hudson resigned less than a year later, he was publicly quoted as saying that he wished the agency had moved at a slower pace—slower pace—in its attempt to finish an enormous task. Slower pace. So would that have been that they were overlooking stuff, they weren't doing their job, or did he want to stretch it out so he could be there longer? I don't know. He suggested that they look at the diabetes registry, eHealth

portal and issuing prescriptions electronically. Well, we've heard that, and that hasn't been too successful. Somebody was after it for two years and didn't get it done.

And Sarah Kramer: She got let go, and she got a \$114,000 bonus for being a screw-up. That's great. Her salary was \$380,000 a year and she got \$114,000 going out the door. "Thank you for screwing up. Here's a little bonus on the way out the door. Have a nice trip to Europe." Ten months later—was it? Kramer was shown the door on June 7 amidst the battling of the scandal and she walked away with a severance package: Oh, here we go, extra severance, another \$317,000. That ought to buy her a nice house.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Not in Toronto.

Mr. Paul Miller: Sweetheart deal. That would buy a mansion down by our way. Sweetheart deal; I'd say so.

Courtyard Group: You should put a microscope on that baby, because I'm sure there's going to be more and more coming out as the months go on. Mismanagement, nepotism, favouritism, appointments, special Liberals—absolutely disgusting.

I could go on and on, but the bottom line here is that the people of Ontario deserve better, and the millions and hundreds of millions of dollars that are being wasted day in and day out need to be scrutinized and accountable. The only way to do it is to include every agency. Every government ministry involved should be taken under the microscope to show the problems and the insufficiencies. I don't think this bill goes anywhere near where it should. I think it's just to placate and keep the public happy: Rush another bill through. Time-allocate it, run it through, and then hopefully they'll go away. "We did something," they'll say. You did nothing, absolutely nothing. It's another box with a ribbon on it and with nothing in it. They should be ashamed of themselves.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further debate?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I want to thank the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek for his comments. I will touch on those a little later on, but I want to say to him that at the very start of his discussion he said he wants to work together. So I will really encourage him to vote in favour of this bill. That will be a good start.

The other member, from Durham, said that we really didn't take into account some of the suggestions that were put forward by the PC caucus.

Mr. Peter Shurman: You didn't even listen.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: Yes. If you listened for a while, it might be a good change. This junior critic of mine from the PC Party made a suggestion that we didn't listen to him. Let me talk about some of the suggestions that they put forward and how ridiculous they are.

One of the suggestions they put forward was a motion to make 22 named agencies subject to the act. Naming public entities subject to the act in regulation is a common approach. Putting them into the act, which means if ever a name changes, then you will have to amend the act, doesn't really make any sense at all. This suggestion actually makes no sense.

Then, the second suggestion was a motion to require the government to make draft—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The time has expired.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I actually had 12 minutes, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I was just working with the clock here. Further debate?

Pursuant to the order of the House dated September 30, 2009, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Takhar has moved third reading of Bill 201, An Act to provide for review of expenses in the public sector. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour?

All those against?

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This vote is deferred until following question period this morning.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move for recess until question period.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The House is recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 0952 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Dave Levac: It's my pleasure to rise this morning to recognize the members of the delegation from the Council of Ontario Construction Associations, COCA, here in the Legislature as part of their first-ever Construction Day at Queen's Park. COCA is an advocacy body for Ontario's institutional, commercial, industrial and heavy civil construction industry.

With us in the east gallery is Dan Lancia, the chair of Holaco; Jim Coates, the past chair of Cobrelco; Dave Kueneman, the CLA committee chair; Robert LeChien, the executive director; Ron Johnson, a former member of this place, the deputy director and former riding member for Brant; Martha George, the executive director; Derek Smith, executive director; Harold Lindstrom, the executive director; Don Gosen, the second vice-president; Jim Lyons; Dominic Mattina; Ian Cunningham; David Zura-wel; and Sue Ramsay.

They're all part of the delegation to talk to us today about their needs. Welcome, and thank you for being here with us.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I would like to take this opportunity to welcome His Holiness Swami Ramdevji Maharaj to the Legislature today. His Holiness has raised awareness worldwide about the importance of balanced and healthy living based on yoga and Ayurvedic principles. His program is watched all over the world.

I also would like to take the opportunity to introduce other guests as well: Mr. Rai Sahi, Mrs. Sudershan Sahi, Gagan Bhalla, Anil Bhasin, Bhagwan Gambhir, Sarwan

Poddar, Raj Pahuja, Sanjeev Sethi, Gary Singh and Mohinder Singh. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: It is my pleasure to welcome to the House a group of grade 10 students from George Harvey Collegiate Institute in my riding of York South-Weston. They are here for a tour with their teachers, so welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Dave Levac: Thank you very much, Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity. From the riding of Brant, our page Elizabeth—Beth—is here with some guests: her mom, Susan Stulen; and the French exchange student that I referenced previously, Joseph, in the public gallery. We welcome them and welcome especially our French exchange student, Joseph.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On behalf of the member from Guelph and page Kaitlin Wagner, we'd like to welcome her mother, Johanna Wagner, to Queen's Park today.

We have with us in the Speaker's gallery David Warner, former member from Scarborough—Ellesmere in the 30th, 31st, 33rd and 35th Parliaments, and the Speaker from the 35th Parliament, from 1990 to 1995—welcome back, Mr. Speaker—along with his daughter, Barbara Warner, and their guests visiting from Sydney, Australia: Tristan and Alexis Conn. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Seated as well in the Speaker's gallery, from my riding of Elgin—Middlesex—London, I'd like to welcome a former summer student in my constituency office, Kirk Perrin, and his friend Kyle MacDonald. Welcome to Queen's Park.

ANNUAL REPORT, ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER OF ONTARIO

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that today I've laid upon the table the 2008-09 annual report of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

ORAL QUESTIONS

JOB CREATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: A question to the Deputy Premier: Ontario families are struggling to get ahead because they can't find good jobs. Premier McGuinty has not created any of the 146,000 jobs he said he would in budget 2009. In fact, 74,000 people have lost full-time jobs across Ontario since he made that promise. But this hasn't stopped the Premier from making new promises, this time of 50,000 so-called green jobs. To the minister: Can you guarantee that all 50,000 so-called green jobs will be permanent, full-time, private sector jobs?

Hon. George Smitherman: I want to thank my honourable friend for the question and I want to correct one thing he has said and then do my best to answer his

question. The 146,000-job figure that was in our government's budget was directly related to the investments that we're making in infrastructure. All across the landscape is evidence of some of the largest levels of investment in infrastructure ever seen in the history of the province of Ontario, providing necessary investment in communities and very helpful job opportunities for people alongside that.

With respect to green energy, I think there's ample evidence in communities all across the province of Ontario that green energy is coming to life and enhancing employment for individuals. I'll be happy, by way of supplementary, to talk more about where those jobs are occurring and likely to occur.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: That's far from an answer on where those jobs are going to be. Sadly, a pattern is developing when Dalton McGuinty will say just about anything. Their so-called plan for green jobs simply is incredible.

London Economics International, a global economics strategy firm that specializes in energy and infrastructure, took a look at your numbers. They say, "Claims of potential job gains in excess of 50,000 are unsubstantiated; for comparison, the entire motor vehicle ... industry employed 38,000 people in Ontario in 2008."

To the minister: Why is Premier McGuinty making even more job promises that he knows he will not keep?

Hon. George Smitherman: Firstly, I think it would have been far more appropriate for the honourable member to acknowledge that the company that he quotes is usually the paid contractor to the PC caucus; I don't know about in this case, but certainly in very recent history on the issue of green energy. I think it's important that you should acknowledge when you hire a consultant to write a report that you're using your caucus resources to do that.

Secondly, with respect to the kind of jobs that are created, I urge the honourable member to take a look at a company called WindTronics. They've recently established in Essex county as a manufacturer of what is referred to as a turbine in a box. It's going to be a very popular product. They're employing 172 people. They weren't employing these people a month or two ago. This is a very tangible example of the emerging green economy in the province of Ontario.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier McGuinty is promising 50,000 theoretical, so-called green jobs, but theoretical jobs don't pay the bills. They don't put dinner on the table. Sadly, since Dalton McGuinty came to office, Ontario families have lost 330,000 real full-time jobs, and a third of those jobs were lost in the year prior to the global financial crisis hitting the province.

It's time the McGuinty Liberals stopped using the financial crisis as a crutch. Minister, why should unemployed workers in Ontario believe your rhetoric or your dismal record?

Hon. George Smitherman: I think that Ontarians looking in at this question period in its early moments

will want to know why it is that the Leader of the Opposition, with one full minute of opportunity, did not rebut in any way my suggestion that the report he was quoting earlier in question period was in fact a report commissioned and paid for by his caucus. It was a consulting firm. Why was he silent on that point? Why did he refuse to acknowledge that WindTronics is now employing 172 people in Essex county, which, until a few weeks ago, it was not?

A further example of the tangible opportunities related to green energy is to be found in the investments that we're making in additional transmission capacity in the province of Ontario that will employ many people in its development and will allow opportunities for more investment in green energy, creating even more opportunities in installation and manufacturing.

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: What is clear is that Ontario families may not be getting jobs but the Liberal family sure is.
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Back to the minister: Freedom-of-information requests have revealed that on the same day, Liberal-connected Anzen Consulting submitted two separate bids for an eHealth contract. Anzen's bids were identical in every way except that one was for \$3.1 million and the other was for \$738,000.

Minister, why is it that even when contracts are put to tender, the process is fixed to benefit Liberal friends?

Hon. George Smitherman: I want to say to the honourable member, first and foremost, it was passing strange that he used the word "family" in the question. Why didn't he stand in his place when he was a member of the government and protest that Gord Haugh was offered a contract at more than \$300,000 a year to provide consulting services in the Ministry of Health? Why, when he witnessed people—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Answer the question.

Hon. James J. Bradley: That's the most intelligent thing he's said.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I appreciate the armchair Speakers. Minister?

Hon. George Smitherman: Why, when we saw the high-ranking political staffers of that government being distributed to high-paying jobs in government agencies, was he silent? Where was his voice on those days, we wonder.

We look forward to the opportunities that the auditor's report will provide to do better moving forward. We have abandoned long-standing practices associated with outsourcing that had been in practice across governments here in the province of Ontario—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: I guess it's no surprise that a minister who is closely connected with Liberal-friendly Courtyard Group and Liberal-friendly Anzen group would not even try to answer my question. Without any

response from the minister, it certainly appears that Liberal-friendly Anzen got an inside tip. What happened? They lowered their bid and then the Liberal-friendly firm got the job. One would certainly expect that during an honest and competitive bidding process, a firm entering two simultaneous bids would be instantly disqualified.

To the minister: Why do you have special rules for Liberal friends and another set for everybody else?

Hon. George Smitherman: First I would say to the honourable member that it's interesting, isn't it, that for quite a while around here he has been talking about the issue of sole-sourcing of contracts. He never once acknowledged that it was the long-standing practice while their party was the government in the province of Ontario. Today, apparently, his complaint is that there were too many bidders. The honourable member is not offering consistency on this point. If he has specific questions and allegations to raise, those need to be examined.

At the heart of it, with respect to the work that the auditor has been doing, we look forward to tomorrow's presentation on that and we especially look forward to continuing to improve standards around this place. Sole-sourcing has been eliminated. That was the practice here across many decades. All parties in this Legislature who were the government used those practices. Those practices have been abandoned and if additional efforts are necessary, as the auditor may suggest, our government will undertake those with vigour.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: I think the minister is missing the point. It doesn't matter how many bidders there were, the Liberal-friendly firm always gets the job under Dalton McGuinty. Premier McGuinty is also paying hand-picked senior bureaucrats eye-popping salaries through hospital budgets. Hugh MacLeod, the Premier's hand-picked climate adviser, earned over \$320,000, while Ron Sapsford, the health DM, earns half a million dollars.

Steve Mahoney's \$140,000 part-time job makes sense. By McGuinty Liberal standards, \$140,000 is a part-time job. Salaries that high don't happen without ministerial sign-off.

To the minister: Why are Liberal-friendly consultants and hand-picked officials doing so well while Ontario families get left behind?

Hon. George Smitherman: I see a couple of former Ministers of Health in that party's government clapping at the honourable member's question. Apparently they haven't taken the time to inform him that the practices associated with the compensation for some of the senior bureaucrats at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care predate us by more than a decade. Look at Jeff Lozon as an example, who was the deputy minister under the watch of this party, and take a look at the salary disclosure associated with that.

I think it's important as well to note that some people use the word—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister?

Hon. George Smitherman: This has been a practice that the New Democratic Party used when Michael Decker was the Deputy Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. It's a practice that was in play under the watch of my predecessor Ministers of Health who are in the caucus today. It reflects the sophistication of the roles associated with giving leadership to a ministry that large, where the matters at hand are so important.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Acting Premier. Over the last several months, Ontarians have watched story after story that lays out the waste of scarce health care dollars in this province. Contracts worth millions were awarded without any bidding process at all, well-connected insiders were told how to place successful bids with a nudge-nudge and a wink-wink, and consultants billed \$3,000 a day while expensing everything from Choco Bites to nightcaps, yet the McGuinty government preaches spending restraint and belt-tightening.

My question is this: Does this minister honestly believe his government has any credibility left at all?

Hon. George Smitherman: I wonder where the honourable member thinks that her credibility comes from, when some of the practices that she stands to criticize today are practices that had been in place in this government no matter which political party was involved. Why don't we see some candour on the point and recognition that we have raised the bar and eliminated the potential for sole sourcing? Yet we hear no candour from opposition parties in the acknowledgment that these policies were long-standing, that these policies were in place and that these policies were utilized when they were the government in the province of Ontario.

On the issue of some of the expenses that the honourable member focused on, it is as if she does not know that we have moved forward with legislation that dramatically enhances the transparency and accountability associated with payments by individuals and agencies. We are making progress on matters where the bar has been raised in terms of conduct, and we will continue to pursue these opportunities with vigour on behalf of the people of this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Waits for long-term care have doubled in the past two years. Eye exams and other health services have been delisted from OHIP. Local emergency rooms are closing. People are told there is just not enough money for the health services that they need to rely on in this province. But then they see well-connected insiders being told how to bid on contracts worth more than these people will ever earn in their entire lifetimes. To an Ontarian waiting for care, how is that fair?

Hon. George Smitherman: The fact of the matter is that since our party came to office and formed government in 2003, the issue of people waiting for care has diminished in this province. It's not to pretend that there

are not areas where there is need for greater improvement, but the wait times reductions, which have been proven, and the fact that something close to 800,000 additional people now have access to family care in their communities, this is tangible evidence of progress for people with respect to health care.

There are many challenges. We will continue to confront those as our population ages, but we have been a government dedicated to providing resources to expand access to daycare and to reduce wait times. We have the facts and the evidence to back up the tangible progress that has occurred on our watch.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: When it comes to health care, the people of Ontario see two different worlds. They live in an Ontario of hospital cuts, delisted services and growing waits for long-term care, but every night on the news they learn about another Ontario, where well-connected insiders live in posh hotels and get three thousand precious health care dollars every day.

If this government truly believes that this is unacceptable, why has no minister been held accountable?

Hon. George Smitherman: It's as if the honourable member hasn't been a contestant in any recent election opportunities in Ontario, where the people were given the opportunity to vote in terms of how they were feeling about the way things were going. Their rhetoric never matched their vote totals, and the member's rhetoric today does not match reality: some 1.69 million new procedures; reduced wait times: 30% for cancer, 62% for angiography, 43% for angioplasty, 52% for hip replacement; 907,000 more Ontarians have access to family care; 14 more MRIs; 1,794 more practising doctors; a 23% increase in medical school spaces, 150 family health teams, 10,000 new nurses, increased hospital funding by \$3.5 billion, 100 infrastructure projects and nurse-practitioner-led clinics—all more access for people in Ontario.

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SALARY DISCLOSURE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Acting Premier. It's not just eHealth where Ontario families are seeing precious health care dollars go to waste. Today, we learned that in an effort to get around their own rules, the salaries of some senior health bureaucrats are being paid through hospital budgets.

The Acting Premier was the Minister of Health who hired Deputy Minister Sapsford. Was the Acting Premier aware of the elaborate scheme that involved Hamilton Health Sciences paying Mr. Sapsford a half-a-million-dollar salary?

Hon. George Smitherman: The smoking gun of the honourable member's allegation of this big scheme is to be found in Ontario's salary disclosure law. The honourable member wishes to give evidence of some scheme, yet the reality is, emanating from the 1991 to 1993 period when for Michael Decter, a very accom-

plished individual, a similar mechanism was used. It reflects the fact that in some certain circumstances, senior officials associated with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care are associated with the health care sector and with hospitals. But this is information that is publicly available online and accessible to people and that reflects the reality that in leadership roles in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, we need to have seasoned individuals who have the confidence of the health care sector.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Half a million dollars is a heck of a lot of money. It would pay for eight nurses or six physiotherapists or provide 3,000 Ontarians with primary care for a full year.

A hidden salary for a top bureaucrat or health care for Ontarians who really need it—where does this minister think the money should go?

Hon. George Smitherman: We stand accused by the leader of the party that instituted the practice in the first place of hiding said information. We are accused of hiding such information in the sunshine list. This is the accusation that they make.

We agree it is a substantial amount of money. It reflects the fact that this individual, as Deputy Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, is responsible for overseeing a sector which has about \$43 billion worth of expenditures and something in the neighbourhood of 400,000 employees who look to that ministry for leadership. I think it's incredibly important that the people who give guidance and leadership to the health care sector be demonstrated leaders with this kind of capacity.

That is the circumstance associated with this model first brought to bear by that honourable member's party.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This minister can deflect and dance and huff and puff all he wants, but this is a scandalous abuse of health care dollars, and Ontarians are being fleeced.

The Acting Premier let it happen on his watch. How can he possibly claim the McGuinty Liberals are accountable for precious health care dollars when all of the evidence we see suggests that the government is using clever accounting schemes to hide from and skirt their own salary guidelines?

Hon. George Smitherman: The honourable member is at it again. She's at it again. She continues to insist that in the salary disclosure law, which produces annually an event in this environment much considered and with excitement much covered, we have hidden this circumstance.

No. The information is plainly available. It reflects the fact that, in a very limited number of circumstances, those people who give leadership to the government's biggest ministry and the people's most precious area of public service, we hire good-quality people, and we compensate them on par with what their value is in the broader health care system. It is done in a transparent form at all times.

AGENCY SPENDING

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: My question is for the Minister of Tourism. Yesterday I was asking the tourism minister about the untendered 25-year contract deal the McGuinty Liberals are handing out to the Maid of the Mist, and the minister took special efforts to clarify that the contract with the Maid of the Mist was “a lease and not a contract.”

During the summer of scandal, the Premier made a rather large announcement where he said he was putting an end to untendered contracts. Does the McGuinty government have a special second set of rules for untendered leases?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Yesterday in the House I was just trying to clarify that it is in fact a lease renewal. In fact, the member opposite, outside of this House, indicated that he understood some sympathy for the company because they’ve been in place with the parks commission for many, many years. The Maid of the Mist has had a lease agreement with the Niagara Parks Commission for over 100 years and has been providing that service in that area for over 100 years. They have a lease that expires this year, they entered into negotiations on a lease renewal, and that was the clarification I was trying to make for the member.

I would also note that there is a part of the property that is on the American side, and that on the New York state side, the Maid of the Mist organization has entered into a lease of 40 years, which was signed in 2002 with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: Well, that sounded like an endorsement of a breach of the Premier’s edict.

Back to the minister: You also said, “No decision has been made; no proposal has been made to cabinet as of this date.” But the parks commission says that it has reviewed its original decision and is recommending this untendered 25-year deal. CTV reports that another potential bidder says that he is willing to offer \$100 million more than the \$650 million in the untendered deal.

Why hasn’t the minister complied with Premier McGuinty’s edict on untendered deals and put this to a competitive bidding process?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I would just remind the member in this House, as I did yesterday, that the Integrity Commissioner was asked to review the decision of the board, and found that no wrongdoing occurred in this case. She made two recommendations, the second of which was “to instill public confidence in the board and to dispel any notion that the decision to renew the lease was one made without full information or due process, it is my recommendation that in the course of the ministry review of the lease renewal, the ministry provide the board the opportunity to review its decision with the benefit of knowing the government’s expectations regarding revenue generating opportunities and sound agency governance and with full knowledge of all the

expressions of interest received in relation to the boat-related tourist attraction in Niagara Falls.” I would note that she footnoted that recommendation and said, “In making this recommendation I am not saying, and I do not wish to be interpreted as saying, that all expressions of interest, of any degree of sophistication must be passed on to a board or a crown”—

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Peter Tabuns: A question to the Deputy Premier: In his annual report released today, Ontario’s Environmental Commissioner says that the province’s planning system is “hugely weighted” in favour of the development industry, leading to decisions which harm communities and the environment. To rebalance the playing field, the commissioner calls on this government to prevent developers from threatening citizens groups with lawsuits—SLAPP suits. SLAPP suits deter democratic participation by threatening concerned citizens with bankruptcy. Our party has put forward a private member’s bill on this very issue.

Why is the government doing nothing to address this threat to public participation and our environment?

Hon. George Smitherman: To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Jim Watson: I thank the honourable member for the question. I’d like to publicly thank the Environmental Commissioner, Mr. Miller, for the good work that he continues to do on behalf of the people of Ontario, and specifically, for his comments with respect to the provincial policy statement. As you know, and certainly the honourable member knows, the PPS sets out the ground rules for planning in the province of Ontario.

With respect to anti-SLAPP legislation, the honourable member may be aware that no other province, in fact, in this country has anti-SLAPP legislation: BC revoked their legislation; Quebec is looking into it, but has not passed legislation. We have not taken a position that there is a need for anti-SLAPP legislation because the OMB has been very judicious in awarding costs for those things that would be considered frivolous and vexatious.

We’re quite confident that the OMB uses its powers and decision-making authority wisely, and we’re not planning—

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

1100

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Greater respect would be shown for the Environmental Commissioner if in fact his recommendations were acted on.

At the Big Bay Point hearings at the OMB, lawyers from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing stood silently while Geranium Corp. sought an unprecedented \$3.2 million in costs from Innisfil community members. Then it signed a secret land deal with Ger-

animum to allow a 1,000-slip marina on the Lake Simcoe shore.

The government is clearly on the side of these developers. The minister has said, last week and now, no plans to legislate an end to these intimidating lawsuits directed at citizens. The Environmental Commissioner has spoken. He has made a clear recommendation. Are you going to be acting on it?

Hon. Jim Watson: Again, the honourable member answered his own question when he indicated on the Big Bay Point case that costs were not awarded. The OMB looked at the situation and threw out the application by the developer to award costs from those individuals who were opposed to that particular site. That is once again another example of how the system is working. There are very few occasions when the OMB does in fact award costs, and it is for those things that would be considered frivolous by the OMB or with respect to the Planning Act.

We look forward to reviewing the Environmental Commissioner's report that was tabled today, but as I said, we have no intention of bringing forward anti-SLAPP legislation because we believe the OMB is in fact in this case doing the right thing and not awarding costs to scare people off from appearing before the OMB and bringing matters before the OMB.

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, over the summer the bankruptcy of the international adoption agency Imagine Adoption left hundreds of families devastated when they found out that their hopes for adoption were at risk due to financial failure at this company.

There were more than 300 families working with the agency to adopt. Many of these families are trying to recover the adoptions that were already under way.

Over the summer, two of my constituents, Alex and Meredith, contacted me with concerns that their brother and sister-in-law would no longer be able to adopt. Minister, my question to you is, what is our government doing to assist these families who were involved with Imagine Adoption before the company declared bankruptcy?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the member for Mississauga–Brampton South. The bankruptcy of Imagine Adoption has been a very difficult situation, especially for the families involved. However, I'm very happy to report that as of last Sunday, all of the children who were matched with Canadian families and living in the transition homes in Ethiopia have arrived home. In addition, the restructuring of Imagine Adoption is well under way so that other adoptions can proceed.

This would not have been possible without the dedication, commitment and passion of many, many people. I want to say thanks to my ministry for their extraordinary and compassionate work on this file, especially Sally McGowan and her team.

The success was also possible thanks to federal Immigration Minister Jason Kenney and Susan Taves, the trustee at BDO Dunwoody, who understood that this was not a regular bankruptcy process—

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

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you, Minister. I'm pleased to hear about the measures being taken by our government to aid the families affected by the collapse of Imagine Adoption. However, the collapse of Imagine Adoption has created uncertainty for prospective adopters.

Minister, I believe that the circumstances surrounding the bankruptcy of Imagine Adoption are unacceptable and should never happen again. What is the government doing to ensure that Ontario families and prospective children in Africa and other sending countries are better protected?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As you know, Ontario has some of the most comprehensive international adoption licensing requirements in Canada. The recent bankruptcy of Imagine Adoption, however, highlighted the need to strengthen the system. Of course, until various processes such as the police fraud investigation are complete, we cannot be certain about what would have prevented the bankruptcy of Imagine.

What we can do and we have done is listen to the families affected. That's why we're taking steps to ensure that prospective clients are better informed and better protected. Effective immediately, as part of the annual licence renewal process, we're requiring agencies to provide an audited financial statement and a report from the board of directors that outlines the agency's operations and activities to the ministry. They will also be required to make an annual report available to the public.

We know that adoption, including international adoption, is already a lengthy, uncertain and emotional process. With these changes—

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

JOB CREATION

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question is to the Deputy Premier. In budget 2009, Premier McGuinty promised 100,000 jobs for students this year. That was supposed to be in addition to the 146,000 full-time jobs he promised in the budget and the 50,000 green jobs he promised just last week. Both promises meant something to students in training and apprenticeship programs. But Stats Canada confirms that the unemployment rate for students in Ontario in fact shot up to 19.3% this summer, well above the national average. Students are leaving the province because of the McGuinty government's broken promises.

Why did the McGuinty Liberals fail students so terribly?

Hon. George Smitherman: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The member is right: We did provide the funding to create 100,000 student jobs, and

he voted against it. Those jobs are being created. The member is absolutely right: We have committed to creating 50,000 jobs in green energy, and that member and his party would rather keep coal-fired plants open and voted against it.

What we also said in the budget, if the member looks very carefully at the budget, he will see—I imagine they realize there has been an enormous downturn in the world economy, and our government's undertaking was to create these jobs recognizing the challenges in the economy. I regret that he and his party voted against jobs for kids, voted against green jobs, voted against jobs for Ontarians and now want to close casinos in Windsor and Niagara Falls. It is a shameful record on their part. We'll continue to invest—

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

Mr. Robert Bailey: I don't regret any votes that I've taken on this side of the House. On that litany of failure that he recited, I'll let the public make the decision.

Again to the Deputy Premier: It's reaching the point where budget 2009 can be found in the fiction aisle of the local libraries. The only jobs being created in Ontario today are jobs for Liberal fundraisers, friends and hand-picked officials. Ontario families and students in trades and training are struggling to make ends meet while the Liberal family is cashing in and taking its winnings to the bank. When can Ontario families expect their share of this pot?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I say the member opposite ought to be ashamed that he voted against funding for summer companies, hands-on business training and mentoring and up to \$3,000 in awards to help enterprising students aged 15 to 29 start up and run their own businesses. He ought to be ashamed that he voted against another program to create 600 summer companies, a record-setting year in 2009.

There's no doubt that far too many people in Canada and around the western world are unemployed. That challenge extends to this province. We've laid out a plan: 300,000 jobs over two years in infrastructure: You, sir, voted against it. Fifty thousand jobs in green energy: You, sir, voted against it. Jobs for students: You, sir, and your party voted against it.

The time is to take action. We're taking that action, knowing that the problem is great and knowing we can't fix every problem, but that party wants to put its head in the sand and pretend there's no problem. It has voted against every form of—

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

MANUFACTURING AND FORESTRY SECTOR JOBS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. You know last week, Minister Cansfield, the former minister responsible for forestry, said in the House that if there

was a proposal put in front of them for wood allocation from Smooth Rock Falls, wood allocation would not be a problem. Further, she said the regional director indicated at the time that if there was a proposal put in front of the ministry, wood allocation would not be a problem and denies that there has been any application put. I'm sending over to you right now two documents, along with the business plans that have been put together by the proponents in order to get wood allocation.

1110

My question, simply, is this: If these documents have been before the ministry for the past year, why are you not giving a wood allocation?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you to the member for the question. Indeed, last week I had an opportunity, with the member, to meet with Mayor Somer, and we are meeting this afternoon to have a further discussion about this issue. There has been a proposal that has been put forward; also, I think a request for expressions of interest on our staged wood supplies, as well as a request put forward under that stage one process. Certainly we want to continue to work with Mayor Somer. I'm looking forward to having an opportunity to speak with him this afternoon about the application that's done.

There's no question that there is an issue related to the challenge of wood supply, and there are other issues as well that make it challenging. But again, our staff are working with the mayor and with the community, and I'm looking forward to having an opportunity to speak with Mayor Somer this afternoon.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: You can rest assured that Mayor Somer and others who will be meeting with you are going to talk about their frustration, because they have put before your ministry, time after time, a demand for wood. They've put in front of you a business plan. They've been frustrated all the way through. We come here to the Legislature and my leader, Andrea Horwath, asks the question; she's told squarely by the minister, "We've never seen the application. We haven't worked with them." What is going on over there?

We have a community that has been severely affected by the closure of the only employer in town. They've done their homework. They've put in front of you the applications for fibre, they've put in front of you the financial plans, and they've also got the dollars in place in order to make this go forward. What I want from you now: Will you give a wood allocation to this community, yes or no?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you again to the member. I understand what an important issue this is for the community of Smooth Rock Falls. Unfortunately, the reality is that much of the wood supply is licensed and allocated to another company, which is also fighting to survive in Ontario, and there are some challenges related to that.

What I can tell you is that I am looking forward to having an opportunity to meet with Mayor Somer and other officials from Smooth Rock Falls this afternoon.

We want to find a way to move forward. There's no question that this is a project that requires some significant work.

Again, I'm glad I had the chance to see Mayor Somer last week, and I'm looking forward to having the opportunity to speak with him and others this afternoon. We'll continue to work the best we can with our staff to find the best way forward in terms of this project.

TAXATION

Mr. David Oraziatti: My question is to the Minister of Revenue. In the north we are fortunate to have a number of important natural resource industries, including mining, forestry and various types of agriculture. Companies in these sectors, such as St. Marys Paper, Essar Steel and Flakeboard, provide good jobs to residents in my community of Sault Ste. Marie. These jobs allow them to provide for their families and contribute to our community as well as to our local economy.

While our government has made numerous investments to support primary industries in northern Ontario, including creating the forest sector prosperity fund and the mining centre of excellence, industry representatives and those who rely on these jobs to provide for their families have come to me with concerns around HST. What will HST mean for these industries in northern Ontario?

Hon. John Wilkinson: I want to thank my colleague for the question. Ontario's a jurisdiction where some 80% of what we make in this province we export outside of this province, and we know that in the north, of course, it is particularly important that we have a vibrant export market for our goods and services, for the mining industry and the forestry industry. Under our tax reform, those industries will benefit.

For example, Ontario's mining, utilities, oil and gas extraction services sector will save roughly \$95 million net per year as a result of our tax reforms. That is money that is bankable, that will help that industry. I know that the forestry and agriculture sectors also will be saving some \$25 million net a year.

What we need in this province is more jobs. We need our exporters to be part of a vibrant economy. We are doing the single most important thing we can to give them a new competitive advantage as they compete around the world—

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

Mr. David Oraziatti: The people in my community and throughout northern Ontario face enough challenges as it is; now they're having to deal with fearmongering from those who are only telling half the story on HST. I recognize that we are taking steps to get people back to work—and it's true that prices on some items are going to increase—but the majority of items, 80%, will see no tax change at all, and TD Bank estimates that prices before taxes will fall by about 1%. Organizations like the Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Trucking Association support the HST.

Minister, will the HST create jobs? Who are we to believe on this—those who are fearmongering or those who are working to build Ontario's economy and support Ontarians?

Hon. John Wilkinson: It's important, when we have a public debate like that, that we look to third parties who have commented on that, and more and more are commenting on our tax reform package—the largest single tax reform in this province in over 40 years. Increasingly, what we see is that people are coming to the conclusion, as have competitive countries around the world, that this tax reform leads to more jobs. We look at the report from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce: very clear that this will create more jobs. We look at the TD Economics report: very clear that it will create jobs. But beyond that, there is a building coalition in this province: the Daily Bread Food Bank, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, TD—many are joining the movement to understand that this massive tax reform is going to be a benefit to our economy. That's exactly why we're doing it. We need to help people get back to work and we need to be competitive, and that is the thing that we are doing by doing our job here on—

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

ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is for the Deputy Premier. Over the last six months, the picture has become more clear. What started out in May as \$5 million in untendered contracts given by eHealth to Liberal-friendly firms has since ballooned to \$16 million in untendered deals. That doesn't even include the \$30-million untendered contract handed out by Management Board to IBM. It's time for the McGuinty Liberals to do the right thing. Will you save yourselves some embarrassment and show the Minister of Health the door today?

Hon. George Smitherman: I rather suspect that the question sends shivers down the spine of the two former health ministers in the front row of the honourable member's current caucus group, who also had opportunities and took advantage of such opportunities to sole-source technology contracts related to health informatics infrastructure.

We've raised the bar. We've set a new standard. We've eliminated the prospect for sole-sourcing. They did it. We've done it. It has been the pattern, but it has been changed. We've raised the bar on that activity. Tomorrow, the auditor will provide a report that will obviously further stimulate action on our part to pursue, with the greatest vigour possible, the necessary defence of the taxpayer's dollar. If lessons are learned, then they will be applied, and we look forward to the auditor's presentations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I'm sure the auditor's report is going to stimulate a lot of activity, but the Ontario Liberal Party's fingerprints are all over this. We've got companies involved—Courtyard, Anzen, IBM—and a

cast of characters, starting with Sarah Kramer, Will Falk, Alan Hudson, John Ronson, Jeff Smith, Karli Farrow, and the list goes on, all tied up in this mess. We've got millions of dollars in untendered contracts, even a tendered deal that's very suspicious. Sarah Kramer was shown the door, Alan Hudson resigned and your executive has vanished. But this all lands at the feet of Management Board. A full review of the ministers involved in this needs to be done. Will you start the ball rolling by showing Minister Caplan the door today?

Hon. George Smitherman: The honourable member has taken the task of just listing a bunch of people who, by coincidence of being in the same city and in the same work environment, also know each other. Then the honourable member went further. She turned IBM, which I think most people would agree is one of the great companies of the world, into some lackey, some toady, of government. In fact, I think it is the honourable member who reaches too far. Tomorrow the auditor will give advice, no doubt, about areas where improvements need to be made, and we will pursue those with vigour. But we do so knowing that we have eliminated sole-source contracting in the province of Ontario, a practice that was done regularly under that party when they were in government, and that party, too.

1120

AIR-RAIL LINK

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Here's a headline on a news release dated June 15, 2007: "McGuinty Liberals Sink Unpopular High-Speed Rail Project." The release says, "The McGuinty Liberals struck a fatal blow to the unpopular high-speed rail link through York South-Weston." The release was put out by the Liberal MPP of York South-Weston.

Yesterday, this minister announced the exact opposite. The air-rail link, Blue 22, has been given the green light to proceed. How does the minister explain this hypocrisy?

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I withdraw, Speaker.

How does the minister explain this discrepancy?

Hon. John Gerretsen: Well, first of all, let me say that this party and this government is in favour of transit. That's why we are investing billions of dollars in transit to get cars off the road, and that party voted against every transit initiative that this government has come up with over the last five years.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. Minister?

Hon. John Gerretsen: Thank you, Speaker. We took a tough decision yesterday and put 18 tough—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would just ask honourable members that—we had some silence, and the moment I sat down, I could hear some interjections across the floor. I really don't want to get to the point of naming members for interjections. I think that the interjections do play a role, but the constant interjections by certain individuals start to wear on the Speaker, so I just ask members to be cautious.

Minister?

Hon. John Gerretsen: We've imposed 18 tough conditions on Metrolinx in order to build this transit system. It will include a tier 4 diesel technology that is currently in development and will be available on the market in 2015. That will, in effect, reduce emissions with respect to particulate matter by 90%. It will reduce nitrogen oxides by 80%. It will be the most modern diesel technology available.

We think that transit is good for the people of Ontario. We want to get cars off the road so that the people of Ontario can breathe the best air quality possible.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: What the Liberal Party is in favour of is one thing before an election—one thing to get elected—and something else totally once they get into power. That's what that Liberal Party stands for.

Residents in York South-Weston and elsewhere along the Georgetown south rail corridor are feeling betrayed this morning, and rightly so. They do not want dirty, private diesel trains polluting their neighbourhoods. They support real public transit, transit that improves the community they call home.

Why were they told one thing before the last election but now are being forced to accept quite something else altogether?

Hon. John Gerretsen: Well, as the member well knows, the project has changed quite substantially since 2007. For example, there will be a number of stops along this transit system, which is what the people of that area wanted. There will also be the retaining connections of the neighbourhoods there that the people are very concerned about.

We are absolutely convinced that the 18 tough conditions that we have imposed upon this particular project will make for a better project, will deal with the air-quality standards that everyone is concerned about and will take more cars off the road so that transit will become a greater reality for the people of Ontario and for the people of the GTA.

IMMIGRANT SERVICES

Mr. Phil McNeely: My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and it's in relation to an article from the Ottawa Citizen over the weekend. Its title reads "Ottawa is Healthy and Vibrant—Unless You're a Have-Not." The article goes on to talk about the Vital Signs report for Ottawa that is out today. Although the article hails Ottawa for being a fundamentally secure and thriving community, it also highlights the dire circum-

stances new immigrants face. The article talks about folks not earning enough to take care of their families. It then goes on to say, "It is worse for new immigrants." Clearly, we all have a responsibility here to ensure that these families are receiving the necessary support from governments.

What does the minister intend to do to ensure immigrant families living in Ottawa are receiving the support they deserve and need?

Hon. Michael Chan: I want to thank the member from Ottawa–Orléans for the question.

We are proud of our record in supporting newcomers in the Ottawa area. Allow me to provide you with some numbers. We are proud of the investment of over \$8 million in bridge training programs so that individuals can utilize their skills and find employment. We are proud of our investment of over \$2 million in settlement services so that newcomers have the right tools to start a new beginning. We're also proud of our investment of over \$29 million in language training so that individuals are ready for life in Ontario—ready for the workforce and ready to support their families.

We can see this high level of commitment all across Ontario from our government and we know newcomers are benefiting from our actions.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

Mr. Phil McNeely: The numbers are startling. The article cites a 2006 figure. The unemployment rate for immigrants who have been in the country for five years or less is 13.5%, double that of non-immigrants. The numbers could have only become bleaker since that time.

I'm pleased to hear about the investments in Ottawa in a time of need. Such funding and services make a big difference in the lives of these families, but there must be more we can do. Supporting these families will help us build strong and prosperous communities across Ontario. The success of these families will ensure that children in these families also have a fair shot at reaching their highest potential.

Support has to go to the next level. There's a clear need for it. What will the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration do to ensure that the support is taken to the next level?

Hon. Michael Chan: As of March 31, 2009, the federal government has underspent by \$193 million from the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement signed in 2005. Four years have passed but less than half of the fund has been spent. We are taking this to the next level. We are asking the federal government for a new deal—namely, devolution of the COIA funding; a new deal where the federal government's portion of responsibility is transferred to the province; a new deal where Ontario will be treated the same as British Columbia, Manitoba and Quebec. A new deal for Ontario will mean that we will be able to provide a comprehensive set of services and programs. These steps will ensure that Ontario's newcomers are supported in a more viable and effective manner.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question today is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, the Children's Aid Society of Simcoe County finds itself in a terrible economic situation. They are projecting a \$5-million deficit this year. In fact, 36 of Ontario's 51 CASs have applied under section 14 for review, by far the most in our province's history.

In Simcoe county they are doing everything humanly possible to carry out the mandatory programs that your ministry oversees. While Liberal fat-cat consultants are at the trough with untendered contracts on a daily basis, the most marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged children in our province are being neglected by the McGuinty Liberals and are at risk of having their lives devastated even further.

When will you, Minister, provide leadership and stand up for the most vulnerable children in our society?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I appreciate having a question regarding the well-being of children from the party opposite. Thank you for the question. But I must say I find it a bit ironic that on one hand we're being encouraged not to spend and, in this particular case, we're being encouraged to spend.

There is nothing more important than the well-being of kids who are in the care of the children's aid society. We are not cutting funding across the sector; we are in fact spending \$30 million more this year than we budgeted last year.

What we are doing this year, though, is being very clear with children's aid societies that we will not be able to support them in the year-end funding that they have become used to receiving over the past many years. We are very committed to better outcomes for kids in care. We're working closely with children's aid societies so they can continue to provide the support these kids need.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Minister, you're going to have to do more. The costs to operate the Simcoe county CAS are similar to the costs to operate the other CASs in the GTA. The GTA average daycare rate is \$103.41, and the Simcoe county average daycare rate is \$73.54, a difference of \$30 per day, per child.

1130

Will you commit to this House today that you will help the most vulnerable children in Simcoe county and increase their funding to the GTA average?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We are moving forward with a commission to promote sustainable children's aid societies because we acknowledge that there are problems within the children's aid sector. We're moving forward working with children's aid societies. We're committed to a sustainable system. We are spending a billion dollars more now on CASs than we were 10 years ago. It's gone from about \$500 million to \$1.4 billion. That is unsustainable growth. We have hard work ahead of us, and we'll work in partnership with the CASs to get

to where we need to go to have the right services in place for the kids.

AFFAIRES FRANCOPHONES

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones. La semaine dernière, en lisant *Le Voyageur*, j'étais amèrement déçue, renversée, époustoufflée, étonnée, sidérée et en fin de compte, fâchée de lire que le Prix jeunesse de la francophonie de l'Ontario a été créé sans consulter l'organisme qui représente la jeunesse franco-ontarienne.

Ma question est simple : pourquoi la Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne a-t-elle été tenue à l'écart de ce projet?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Je suis très heureuse d'avoir une question au sujet de la francophonie. Ce gouvernement ici est très fier de la création de ce Prix jeunesse parce que les jeunes sont souvent laissés à part, et ils accomplissent des choses exceptionnelles en Ontario.

Pour parler juste de nos écoles françaises : nos jeunes francophones ont réduit le décrochage scolaire d'une façon exceptionnelle. Ils réussissent aux examens de l'OQRE, et on ne les reconnaît pas assez. Alors on a créé comme gouvernement ce Prix jeunesse-là et nous en sommes très fiers.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Je n'ai pas dit que ce n'est pas une bonne idée. Le Prix jeunesse de la francophonie est une bonne idée, mais quand tu l'organises dans une situation où tu garantis que ça ne va pas fonctionner, pourquoi est-ce que ça va qu'on fait ça? On dirait que le gouvernement multiplie ses efforts—ses bévues du côté des services en français. Dans le dernier mois, on a vu le dépliant pour la grippe H1N1, distribué en anglais seulement, à la grandeur de l'Ontario, même dans les régions désignées; le projet de loi 183, la Loi sur les services en français, brille par son absence. Puis, on vient de refuser de désigner le poste du directeur régional à la Division de l'emploi et de la formation pour le nord comme un poste bilingue.

Ma question : pourquoi les francophones comptent-ils si peu pour le gouvernement McGuinty?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: C'est très riche, une question de la sorte qui vient du gouvernement néo-démocratique, qui a coupé le nombre d'individus travaillant à l'Office des affaires francophones et qui a réduit son budget d'une façon exceptionnelle. Alors, je trouve ça très riche, venant de ce parti-là.

Ce gouvernement ici a fait beaucoup pour les francophones en Ontario. On a juste à parler de la nomination d'un commissaire aux services en français, du conseil d'administration indépendant de TFO—TFO est devenu un organisme indépendant—et de l'ajout incroyable d'argent pour nos écoles francophones. Alors, je trouve ça très riche, venant de votre parti. Ce gouvernement-ci va continuer à travailler très fort pour

les francophones en Ontario. Et nos jeunes : on vient de lancer la stratégie jeunesse, alors les jeunes sont très impliqués dans nos plans. Merci beaucoup pour la question et pour votre intérêt dans la francophonie.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Mr. Dave Levac: My question is to the Minister of Research and Innovation. As we know, the global chemical industry is one of the largest manufacturing industries in the world, with an annual revenue of over \$3 trillion and revenues in Canada of over \$47 billion. The global challenges of sustainability and climate change are driving the growing demand for green industry products and processes. Bio-based and green-chemistry-derived products represent a growing part of a worldwide chemical industry, and demand is rising rapidly. Ontario is in a unique position to capitalize on this new market while delivering high-value jobs, particularly in the riding of Brant, as we're seeking to be the green hub—and a healthier environment for all Ontarians.

Can the minister tell us what he's doing to get those supports for green jobs? We're in the race, and we want to know if we're going to come first. I ask the minister, what are we doing to get—

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

Hon. John Milloy: I'm very pleased to inform the House that this has been one of the great priorities of the Ministry of Research and Innovation, investing in green technologies. Since its inception, MRI has invested more than \$146 million towards almost 200 projects that focus on research projects and companies working on green technologies and initiatives.

If I can share with the House just one example: A couple of weeks ago, the Minister of the Environment announced a \$13.6-million investment in GreenCentre Canada, located at Queen's University in Kingston. The centre, which will be operated by Parteq Innovations, will connect green chemistry discoveries in Ontario universities with companies to develop alternatives to toxic chemicals and get them to the marketplace faster.

In its first five years, the centre expects to create several start-up companies and at least 250 jobs while strengthening the global competitiveness of Ontario's—

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

I'd just remind members of the Speaker's Taste of the Greenbelt reception in 228 and 230, this afternoon from 5 to 7. All members and staff are welcome.

MEMBER'S ANNIVERSARY

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd also just ask the members to join me in congratulating—today's the 40th anniversary of Minister Bradley entering into political life. Forty years ago today, October 6, 1969, Minister Bradley entered the world of politics.

Happy 40th anniversary.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion 139 on allocation of time on Bill 173, An Act to amend the Mining Act.

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

The division bells rang from 1137 to 1142.

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

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Fonseca, Peter	Pendergast, Leeanna
Albanese, Laura	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Arthurs, Wayne	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Ramal, Khalil
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Best, Margaret	Jeffrey, Linda	Ruprecht, Tony
Bradley, James J.	Johnson, Rick	Sandals, Liz
Broten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Smith, Monique
Brown, Michael A.	Levac, Dave	Smitherman, George
Brownell, Jim	Mangat, Amrit	Sorbara, Greg
Chan, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Sousa, Charles
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Craitor, Kim	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Crozier, Bruce	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Delaney, Bob	Milloy, John	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Mitchell, Carol	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duncan, Dwight	Moridi, Reza	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David	

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 56; the nays are 30.

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

Motion agreed to.

PUBLIC SECTOR EXPENSES
REVIEW ACT, 2009
LOI DE 2009
SUR L'EXAMEN DES DÉPENSES
DANS LE SECTEUR PUBLIC

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We now have a deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 201. Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1145 to 1146.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Takhar has moved third reading of Bill 201. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Pendergast, Leeanna
Albanese, Laura	Fonseca, Peter	Phillips, Gerry
Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Pupatello, Sandra
Balkissoon, Bas	Gravelle, Michael	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoskins, Eric	Ramal, Khalil
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoy, Pat	Rinaldi, Lou
Best, Margaret	Jaczek, Helena	Ruprecht, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Jeffrey, Linda	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	Johnson, Rick	Smith, Monique
Broten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Smitherman, George
Brown, Michael A.	Levac, Dave	Sorbara, Greg
Brownell, Jim	Mangat, Amrit	Sousa, Charles
Chan, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Van Bommel, Maria
Craitor, Kim	McNeely, Phil	Watson, Jim
Crozier, Bruce	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilkinson, John
Delaney, Bob	Milloy, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
DiNovo, Cheri	Mitchell, Carol	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Moridi, Reza	
Duncan, Dwight	Oraziotti, David	

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

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Runciman, Robert W.
Bailey, Robert	Klees, Frank	Savoline, Joyce
Chudleigh, Ted	Martiniuk, Gerry	Shurman, Peter
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Norm	Sterling, Norman W.
Elliott, Christine	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hillier, Randy	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 58; the nays are 21.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): There being no further votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1149 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Sophia Aggelonitis: It gives me great pleasure to introduce today Erin Boudreau from Children's Mental Health Ontario, as well as Chelsey Henderson, a grade 11 student from Waterdown District High School and her parents, Bruce and Sharlene Henderson. They're here today to witness the introduction of her bill.

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde: J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue aux membres du conseil de la ville de Hawkesbury: M^{me} la maire, Jeanne Charlebois; conseillers André Chamailard, Gilbert Cyr et Gilles Tessier; ainsi que la greffière, Christine Groulx. Welcome to Queen's Park this afternoon.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PENSION REFORM

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I rise today to bring members' attention to a demonstration which will be occurring here at Queen's Park tomorrow. Pension plan members from the automakers and Nortel will be here to demand this government's help in protecting their pension plans. Our pension system desperately needs reform. Presumably, that is why this government set up the Expert Commission on Pensions. Unfortunately, it has been 11 months since the Arthurs report was released, yet we have not seen any move by this government to fix the pension system.

If the Minister of Finance is not ready to introduce full-scale pension reform, I ask him to change one thing immediately. I raised this issue with the Minister of Finance in estimates committee in July. The current legislation requires that when a company ceases to exist, FSCO, the Financial Services Commission of Ontario, must wind up the pension plan, requiring plan members to purchase an annuity. That's the only option they have at the present time. With interest rates at an historic low, an annuity purchase today would only pay between 25% and 50% of what the pension pays.

The minister could ensure these people a much brighter retirement if he would either postpone the winding up of the pension plan or allow them to move their share of the pension plan into an RRSP rather than purchase an annuity. Time is of the essence. Nortel's pension plan is going to be wound up. The minister needs to do something now.

McVEAN FARM

Mr. Kuldip Kular: I would like to share with my colleagues news of an exciting project in my riding of Bramalea-Gore-Malton. The McVean Farm recently received a grant through the Trillium fund that will help grow a new generation of farmers in our province. The McVean Farm is a place where urban Ontarians and newcomers explore opportunities in agriculture and agribusiness. A grant of \$318,000 over three years will fund a new incubator facility and encourage farmers to meld traditional wisdom with modern science and research to develop fresh, local, marketable products for consumers.

As a farm in an urban landscape, the McVean Farm is an example of sustainable development at work, a viable alternative to conventional land use in an urban setting. It celebrates the pioneering spirit of Ontario's growers and contributing to the future of Ontario's farming industry.

I trust my colleagues will join me in congratulating the McVean Farm and its partners and offering best wishes for future success.

FILIPINO COMMUNITY

Mr. Peter Shurman: On September 26, Tropical Storm Ketsana hit the city of Manila and surrounding

provinces in the Philippines. This was the biggest and most devastating storm that the region has seen in over 40 years, with 1.9 million people affected by this disaster. The death toll rose to 280 and more than half a million people are left without their homes

This past Sunday, I participated in the efforts of Thornhill's Filipino community, led by Erlinda Insigne, who gathered at the Patricia Kemp Community Centre to organize donations of clothing, blankets and food for a much-needed relief shipment.

The hard work and dedication by the Filipino-Canadian Charitable Association of Vaughan, the Philippine Heritage Band and the Leyteno Association of Ontario and the generosity of the people who dedicated hours of their time to help those in need overseas is one of the reasons that I am very proud to represent the riding of Thornhill.

It is especially in such tragic and difficult circumstances that a community's strength is revealed, and I am proud to say that this strength shone especially bright on Sunday as the Filipino community gathered for a common cause.

On behalf of the residents of Thornhill, I wish to also express my sincere condolences to the families and friends of those lost in this disaster and wish a speedy recovery to the many injured residents in Manila and surrounding regions.

SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to put on the record some comments made by Jonathan Scott, who wrote a discussion paper for the Ontario Student Trustees' Association. He says the following:

"Extracurricular activity fees can include everything from sports teams, drama productions, club membership and social events. Extracurricular activities are the main mechanism for effective instruction in leadership, sports, art and drama by way of experiential learning. In our education system, separating extracurricular activities from the scope of learning is not only difficult but wrong-headed."

He says, "Among the findings:

"—some 77% of secondary schools charge fees, sometimes as high as \$500;

"—student activity fees have increased by over 50% since 2001; and

"—in an average-sized board, start-of-term fees ranged from \$10 to \$55.

"Increasingly, the reality of public education is one of dichotomy between the rich and the poor. A substantial part of education is neither free nor equitable. The rich receive the benefit of experience while the poor receive a no-frills education. The wealthy can afford to participate in extracurricular activities while the poor cannot....

"The issue discussed in this paper confronts the government's goals of equity and poverty reduction," and says to the minister, "You've got to deal with this."

I hope she does.

ESSEX COUNTY

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you and my colleagues today some good things about Essex county. As my wife, Joan, and I often do, we were taking a leisurely drive around the county last Sunday, and I got to thinking about how great it is to live in this part of the country—in southwestern Ontario but particularly Essex county.

Where else in the first week of October can you still get sweet corn? Essex county. Where else in the province of Ontario in the first week of October can you still get field tomatoes?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Let me guess.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: In Essex—you got it? In Essex county. Where else can you get all the pumpkins and gourds and sheaves of corn that we need for Halloween?

Interjections.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Essex county. You got it. It's a great place to live.

In addition to that—I suggest you take the trolley around the county for this one—we have 13 wineries. So you can take a great fall wine tour, driven by the trolley, and just enjoy yourself and enjoy the outdoor atmosphere in Essex county.

I know you all live in great places in this province, but there is none greater than Essex county.

STROKE RECOVERY ASSOCIATION

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: I'm proud to rise today to recognize the 30th anniversary of the Cambridge district chapter of the Stroke Recovery Association. Founded in 1979, the Stroke Recovery Association assists stroke victims and their families through support, information, education and social events.

Over the years, countless people have expressed appreciation for the program and the peer support offered by the volunteer-run association. I commend the association's coordinator, Norma Rudy, and many of the other volunteers for their hard work and commitment to assisting victims of stroke.

Tomorrow evening the Stroke Recovery Association members will gather at the Preston Mennonite Church for a celebration dinner. Thirty years serving stroke victims and their families is a record to be proud of.

1510

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the many volunteers for their support, dedication and motivation. Our community relies on the excellent work of the Stroke Recovery Association. The support you provide to stroke victims and their families is a valued resource in our community. Congratulations to all on this important occasion.

GENERATING STATION

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Last week, my community learned that TransCanada was awarded a contract by the Ontario Power Authority, the OPA, to build a new power

generating facility on Ford's property in the town of Oakville. The decision was met with shock and disappointment by myself and all the members in my community. My constituents have raised the question: How can the OPA proceed and build a facility near a residential neighbourhood with an already stressed airshed?

I will support all efforts to ensure that the Clarkson airshed achieves improved air quality. I'm fully supportive of the efforts of the elected officials at the town of Oakville, which recently introduced an interim control bylaw to review approval of sites just like the one we're discussing now. I understand, though, that this bylaw, which was introduced by Oakville's duly elected officials, will be challenged next week at the Ontario Municipal Board by Ford of Canada and by TransCanada.

In the coming days I hope to be speaking with the representatives of ratepayers' organizations in the town of Oakville. Along with Mayor Burton and town council, they have protested this facility over the past few months. I look forward to working with all to develop the most favourable and the most successful course of action to protect my community.

FILIPINO COMMUNITY

Mr. Mike Colle: I join my colleague from Thornhill in asking all of us in Ontario to support our Filipino brothers and sisters who are trying desperately to help the victims of not one but two typhoons that have hit the city of Manila. Last Sunday, I attended a special service at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in my riding in aid of the victims of this massive devastation. Hundreds of people came to collect food, clothing, medical supplies, anything that they could, to donate to the victims of the typhoons, who have lost almost everything.

These typhoons have affected their brothers, their sisters, their mothers and fathers back in Manila. Hundreds have perished; hundreds are still trapped and feared dead. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced out of their homes. They're trudging through sludge, high water—lack of clean water is also a problem—and they've lost their homes.

Members of the Filipino community across Ontario and Canada are bravely trying to do whatever they can to help their loved ones back home. I hope that all of us will join together with our fellow Filipino-Canadians in being generous and helping them to fill these containers with food and medical supplies so that we can help our brothers and sisters who are affected by this horrible climatic change in the Philippines. Please do what you can in supporting our fellow Filipino-Canadians in this time of great need.

VIETNAM

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: On behalf of Premier McGuinty and the government of Ontario, I'm delighted to introduce to you the trade and government delegation from

Vietnam. They're visiting our Legislature today to meet with the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and Premier McGuinty.

When Canadians think about Vietnam, it is inevitable that they think of conflict, of war, of poverty, rice paddies, thick jungles and so on, and these images are hard to change. But the Vietnam of today is totally different, and we have to change our image. The country has joined the World Trade Organization. Over 60% of its citizens between 18 and 25 are motorized. Building cranes are everywhere. Export is increasing, and the whole country seems to be on the move. It is very clear that one could see what can be done when weapons of war are turned into ploughshares: we saw tremendous economic growth and development. Living standards are, of course, rising, and generally the quality of life is improving.

What truly amazed me when I visited Vietnam was the fact that every provincial Premier we met read from the same script: encourage foreign trade, encourage foreign investment, expand the market share of your products and educate and train the workforce. That too is our goal in Ontario. That's why we welcome especially this trade delegation from Vietnam, because we think that our equipment here and the way we move in Ontario could be very helpful to those in Vietnam as well, and consequently, we want to encourage trade and our friendship with them.

Today in the delegation we have the People's Committee of Kien Giang province, and in fact the President is here—his name is Bui Ngoc Suong—and Luu Phuoc Luong, who is the Lieutenant General of the southwest steering committee.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2009

LOI DE 2009 SUR LE JOUR DE LA SENSIBILISATION À LA SANTÉ MENTALE

Ms. Aggelonitis moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 205, An Act to proclaim Mental Health Awareness Day / Projet de loi 205, Loi proclamant le Jour de la sensibilisation à la santé mentale.

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.

Ms. Sophia Aggelonitis: Before I begin I'd like to recognize Chelsey Henderson, a grade 11 student at Waterdown District High School, who's joining us here today with her parents. Chelsey's teacher, Mr. Nathan

Tidridge, challenged his class to draft a private member's bill to be introduced to the House, and this is Chelsey's bill.

I'd also like to take an opportunity to thank the representatives of Children's Mental Health Ontario for being here today to support this bill.

Mental health affects all of us. One in five Canadians will experience a mental illness in his or her lifetime, and the remaining four will have a friend, family member or colleague who experiences mental illness. Recognizing the continued need to remain aware and informed on mental health issues, this bill would proclaim the last day of Mental Health Week in every year as Mental Health Awareness Day.

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT (REPLACEMENT WORKERS), 2009

LOI DE 2009 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL (TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS)

M^{me} Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 206, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 / Projet de loi 206, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail.

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.

M^{me} France Gélinas: The purpose of the bill is to restore the provisions that were incorporated into the Labour Relations Act by the Labour Relations and Employment Standards Law Amendment Act in 1992 and subsequently repealed by the Labour Relations Act in 1995.

The purpose of the provisions being restored is to prevent an employer from replacing striking or locked-out employees with replacement workers. The bill allows replacement workers to be used in emergencies.

1520

BLACK HISTORY MONTH ACT, 2009

LOI DE 2009 SUR LE MOIS DE L'HISTOIRE DES NOIRS

Mr. Balkissoon moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 207, An Act to name February in each year Black History Month / Projet de loi 207, Loi visant à désigner le mois de février de chaque année comme Mois de l'histoire des Noirs.

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. Bas Balkissoon: The history of Canadians of African descent and their struggle against slavery, racism, exclusion and inequality is a significant part of Ontario's history. This bill will give us the opportunity to remember, educate and celebrate all of Ontario's history and the contribution of our black community.

CONDUCT OF HOUSE PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I just want to take this opportunity to make a couple of comments about members' statements and introduction of bills.

Remember, members' statements are one minute and 30 seconds long. I have given some leeway for some additional time on statements that are not political in any way. I would like to continue to do that, but if we persist in going well beyond that minute and a half, I'm going to have to cut everyone off at one minute and a half.

I would also say, too, just a reminder on the introduction of bills: When you are introducing a bill, what you are to read to the House is the explanatory note and not a member's statement. I'm going to have to get to the practice of making sure that I have this in front of me. If you're not reading from the explanatory note, I will have to call you to order for that.

Mr. Jim Wilson: A point of order, Speaker: I appreciate the point, and it's probably quite parliamentarily correct, but I wonder if there wouldn't be some leniency. Often the explanatory note doesn't really reflect what you're trying to get across in one minute to the audience. In fact, it's gibberish and often legalese because the lawyers do it, and we don't get a lot of say in how the explanatory note reads.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you for the point of order from the honourable member. The Clerk has just said that, in the introduction of the bill, it is to be explanatory, but you are not to be engaging in any sort of debate. The debate will happen when the bill is debated for second reading.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

SMALL BUSINESS

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I rise in the House today to recognize a group of people who are leading our economy out of the recession. They're the people running the companies that are making the parts, delivering the services and sustaining the workers that enable big corporations to operate, and they're growing many of the innovative firms which are securing Ontario's future economic outlook. I'm talking about the men and women who run Ontario's small and medium-sized businesses, and today we want to congratulate them.

We work with these companies year-round, but October is traditionally the month when we recognize our small business sector. I want to recognize my parliamen-

tary assistant, Sophia Aggelonitis, who is very excited about the small and medium-sized business sector. She comes from this sector herself, and it's such a good opportunity to work with her as well.

As our economy shows signs of recovery, it's our small businesses leading the way. The purpose of this statement today is to make sure that credit is given to the sector where there is that strength. From the Main Street businesses we use every day to the professional practices in technology-intensive, leading-edge firms, it's these entrepreneurs that operate the more than 370,000 small and medium-sized employer businesses in Ontario. And it's these establishments, with less than 500 employees, that together employ about 2.9 million people. They account for approximately \$250 billion in annual economic activity. This is massive.

Small and medium-sized enterprises represent over half of all of the private sector jobs in Ontario, so today, I ask this House to join me in recognizing Ontario's small business sector and the contributions that it makes to our economy.

Small business owners and operators deserve the credit. They take the risks and they put in the long hours, week after week. Our government knows this, and we're doing all we can to help our entrepreneurs weather these tough economic times and build their businesses for the future.

On July 1, 2010, Ontario is proposing to implement the most important tax reform in a generation: the harmonized sales tax, or the HST. Businesses will save over \$500 million a year in administrative and compliance costs alone. Instead of a duplicate process, a harmonized sales tax will mean one set of forms and one payment.

A January report from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, which represents many, many of these small and medium-sized businesses, said that sales tax reform is among the most effective ways to prepare Ontario for a period of strong economic growth. Remember that over 130 countries have already adopted a single sales tax system.

On top of this, Ontario will be providing \$4.5 billion in corporate income tax cuts over three years. This is historic. The small business corporate income tax rate will be reduced from 5.5% to 4.5%, effective July 1, 2010: another significant move forward.

We'll eliminate the small business deduction surtax, which acts as a barrier to growth. And to help Ontarians transition to this harmonized sales tax, the Ontario government proposes \$10.6 billion over three years in direct payments and personal income tax cuts. This is really important.

Meanwhile, our government offers a range of programs and services to help entrepreneurs establish and grow their business right across our province. We have 57 small business enterprise centres across the province. Our centres, part of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, provide access to information, expertise and technology to help entrepreneurs succeed. Twelve regional offices provide direct consulting services to small and medium-sized businesses.

We're working to create faster, smarter and more streamlined government-to-business services while protecting the government and the public interest. Programs like Summer Company, the Ontario secondary school business plan competition—they plant the seeds of entrepreneurship with young business leaders of tomorrow—and initiatives like ServiceOntario and the online Ontario business program guide provide a fast, efficient and one-stop shop for business owners to access the government programs and services they need.

In closing, I welcome this opportunity to pay tribute to Ontario's small business owners and operators. Our government is going to continue to work with this group, with this sector, to create the best possible environment for entrepreneurs here to start and grow their businesses, innovate and create jobs.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

Mrs. Julia Munro: I am pleased to speak on Small Business Month in Ontario, and I'm very happy to honour Ontario's small businesses for the work they do. Small businesses are Ontario's number one job creator: They represent 99% of businesses in Ontario.

As we strive to pull Ontario out of a recession, it will be small business owners and entrepreneurs who lead the way, and it should be a priority for government to do everything it can to help small businesses succeed so that they can create prosperity and jobs.

It's just too bad that the McGuinty Liberal government does not share this view. For six years, all they have offered Ontario's small businesses is more regulation and more tax. The CFIB reports that 77% of their members report the total tax burden as a major concern, and 68% report government regulation as a major concern. This means that the two greatest worries for Ontario's small businesses are government-created worries. It is unfortunate that these issues do not worry the Liberal government or Liberal members.

Every signal this government sends to small business indicates that they have no desire to help. Last March, they established a so-called Open for Business strategy, promising to help small businesses by cutting government regulation by 25% in two years. So far, they have done nothing. Seven months have passed, and the government has not removed a single regulation under this plan. They have not even announced a timeline to remove regulations. In fact, the government has said nothing and done nothing about this plan since its press release in March.

1530

This is why I introduced a resolution in this House calling on the government to cut red tape for small businesses. The House debated my resolution on red tape just last week. I called on the government to honour their promise to cut regulations. What did they do? They voted it down. Liberal members who spoke to the resolution would not even address the issue of cutting regulations. I wonder if any plan to cut regulations still even exists for this government. I would suggest that small business owners in Ontario not hold their breath waiting for the McGuinty Liberal government to take action on red tape.

Yet, we do see that the government is willing to take action when it comes to raising taxes. Less than nine months from today, every service business in Ontario will see an 8% increase in its provincial tax burden. The minister refers to the small business corporate income tax rate going from 5.5% to 4.5%, but businesses know that their clients may face an 8% increase to be able to purchase their services. You do the math. That is going to impact on business in this province.

How many small businesses will go under when the McGuinty government puts in its massive tax hikes? Why is the government changing the tax system on small business during a recession? Many small businesses have actually gone under because of this recession. Why does the McGuinty government want to punish those small businesses who have survived?

All the government has offered small business is a phony Open for Business strategy. It has failed on red tape. It has failed on taxes. Small businesses have given up hope about receiving help from this government. They know that what they need is a change of government. Tim Hudak and the PC Party will offer small businesses that change.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's with pleasure that I stand to honour small business owners, entrepreneurs across this province. I stand to correct a few fallacies and add a few facts.

In fact, small business is responsible for creating up to 90% of the new jobs in this province. Actually, what's really interesting is that this government has in fact let go of a ministry of small business. We no longer have a minister of small business across the aisle. So, for all the hoopla about small business and its importance, they've decided to remove that ministry from the portfolio of cabinet. That's number one.

Number two: Of course, this government has not stepped up and, as my friend from Leeds–Grenville just said, this government is a party of Bay Street, not Main Street. They would know that, if they actually spoke to the proprietors on Main Street and found out what they were thinking, because we have. Here's what they say: "CFIB up in arms against the HST." They know it will, to quote my friend from Trinity–Spadina, "whack" their membership with an added burden of tax and tax collecting. They know it's going to hurt their business, and that's why they are asking for its repeal—not its amendment, its repeal.

TABIA, which represents over 300 businesses in the greater Toronto area, all, to a person, oppose the HST. They do it because they know it's going to hurt their business.

My friend who talked about the red tape—absolutely. Again, this is a government of Bay Street, not Main Street. Why do we know that? Because of their actions. This is the government that brought in onerous regulations, for example, for small butchers over and against large meat processors. It drove some of our small butchers out of business with an extra \$200,000 of added work that didn't need to be done.

The Toronto Board of Health knew that, for example, Karl's butcher shop had been in business 40 years and

was doing a good and safe job. It wasn't Karl's butcher shop; it was Maple Leaf Foods that had problems in their processing. That's what this government stands for—big business, not small business.

We're seeing the same issue with pharmacists. Our small pharmacists are being driven out of business because WSIB clients cannot use them. Where do they need to go? They have to go to Shoppers Drug Mart—big business again, not small business. That's the action of this government.

So what do we call for, as New Democrats? What we call for is a few very basic moves that would show that this government is in fact practising what it preaches. Number one: yes, taxes. Onerous taxes. Ridiculous taxes. We've called for reform to the business education tax because if you're in the 905 area, you pay less than you do in the 416 area. That makes no sense. Our tax laws need to be reformed where it comes to small business.

We need to reinstitute the grant program that our government brought in between 1990 and 1995. You could get, back then, a non-repayable grant to start a small business. In a recession, that helps. We need a grant program for start-ups for small business.

We need to look at regulations and we need to see that they're applied fairly and that big business doesn't get a break where small business gets, to quote my friend from Trinity-Spadina, "whacked," because that's what's happening across industries.

Finally and most importantly, we have to stop the HST. Every small business knows across this province that this is going to hurt them. We have got petition after petition signed by small business owners. If any of the government members walks along Main Street and walks into any of those Main Street stores or businesses, they will hear the same thing. One thinks they haven't. One thinks they aren't listening, because if they were listening they would know what small business and what all the representatives of small business are saying about this regressive and unwanted tax.

What happened to the Ministry of Small Business? Gone. Gone, but not forgotten. What happened to the moves to help small business instead of hurting small business at the behest of big business, which is what has been happening over and over and over again by the McGuinty government?

Finally, we call, with thousands—literally thousands—of Ontarians and thousands of small businesses across this province, to please not move ahead with the HST. Then, and only then, will they be truly small business friends.

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: I have a petition with 4,707 signatures attached to it.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government is closing approximately 70 privately operated driver and vehicle licence-issuing offices in Ontario, and it is requested that the Legislative Assembly take a further look at the impact this action will have on the affected communities and to stop the closures from happening;

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

"It is in our best interest to request that the current private driver and vehicle licence-issuing offices of Ontario remain open. They operate in an incredibly efficient and cost-effective manner that has been proven for almost 100 years, continuing to provide quality customer service excellence to Ontarians. To allow the transition of this service to the government centres is unconscionable and is unacceptable to the taxpayers of Ontario."

I will affix my signature in support of this small business sector in Ontario.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from the people of the riding of Sault Ste. Marie asking for a PET scanner.

"Whereas the Ontario government is making PET scanning a publicly insured health service; and

"Whereas, by October 2009, insured PET scans will be performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario."

I fully support this petition by the people of Sault Ste. Marie, will affix my name to it and send it to the clerks with page Kaitlin.

1540

AIR QUALITY

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Power Authority awarded TransCanada a contract to build a 900-megawatt power generating station on Ford of Canada's Oakville property in the Clarkson airshed; and

"Whereas the Minister of the Environment conducted the Clarkson airshed study and found the airshed to be stressed; and

"Whereas a power generating station would add pollutants to" an already "stressed airshed; and

"Whereas Oakville has opposed the construction of a power plant and demanded cleaner air; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario unveiled plans to improve air quality in the southwest greater Toronto area; and

“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment is launching a new task force that will be required to develop and report back by the end of June 2010 on a detailed action plan to improve air quality through the reduction of emissions from local industrial, vehicular and residential sources;

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

“The government of Ontario halt the construction of the power generation station in Oakville;

“The government of Ontario commit to a serious and sustainable emissions reduction strategy to clean up Oakville’s air, with clear improvement targets and timelines; and

“That the government of Ontario examine the Ontario Power Authority process that allows a power plant to be located in stressed airsheds and residential communities.”

I agree with this petition wholeheartedly and will sign it and submit it with Kingsong.

TAXATION

Mr. Jim Wilson: I want to thank David Turner from Green Briar in the town of New Tecumseth for sending these petitions.

“Whereas the hard-working residents of Simcoe–Grey do not want a harmonized sales tax (HST) 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, to name just a few, gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, house sales over \$400,000, fast food under \$4, electricity, newspapers, magazines, stamps, theatre admissions, footwear less than \$30, home renovations, gym fees, audio books for the blind, funeral services, snowplowing, air conditioning repairs, commercial property rentals, real estate commissions, dry cleaning, car washes, manicures, Energy Star appliances, vet bills, bus fares, golf fees, arena ice rentals, moving vans, grass cutting, furnace repairs, domestic air travel, train fares, tobacco, bicycles and legal services; and

“Whereas the blended sales tax 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 consumers.”

Interjections.

Mr. Jim Wilson: And given the chirping behind me, I’d be happy to start all over again on this petition, but meanwhile I’ll sign it. Thank you.

DENTAL CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a petition from the people of Peel region.

“Whereas \$45 million a year for five years was promised for dental care for cash-poor people during the 2007 provincial election campaign, and the accumulated \$135-million expenditure was approved in the 2008 provincial budget; and

“Whereas so far only \$14 million has been released across Ontario, earmarked for children 14 to 17 years of age, and none assigned to helping seniors; and

“Whereas Peel region is spending \$1.2 million annually from regional funds to help cash-poor seniors in need of dental treatment; and

“Whereas Peel region has a wait list of 3,000 cash-poor seniors needing dental care, and the wait list is growing by 75 seniors a week; and

“Whereas Peel region has 16,000 low-income seniors, many of whom would benefit from dental care which they cannot now afford;

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

“To release immediately the remaining portion of the \$135 million for dental care among low-income families and apportion the money so that Peel region receives a fair share according to population and need.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the Clerk with Megan.

CEMETERIES

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a number of petitions here from folks from the greater Toronto area, and they read as follows:

“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 with Kaitlin.

TAXATION

Mr. John O’Toole: I have a petition from the riding of Durham which I’m pleased to present on their behalf, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty is increasing taxes yet again with his new 13% combined sales tax, at a time when families and businesses” are struggling and can’t afford it; and

"Whereas by 2010, Dalton McGuinty's new tax will increase the cost of goods and services that families and businesses buy every day. A few examples include"—I don't want to mention them all—"coffee, newspapers and magazines; gas for the car, home heating oil," sunbathing, "haircuts, electricity; dry cleaning and personal grooming; home renovations and home services; veterinary care and pet care;" registering your children in hockey, soccer, football; legal services, the sale of resale homes," funeral services, condo fees—Mr. Speaker, the list is so long, I will just relinquish it.

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised he wouldn't raise taxes in the 2003 election. However, in 2004, he brought in the" largest tax increase in Canadian history, which costs "upwards of \$600 to \$900 per individual. And now he is raising our taxes again;

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

"That the Dalton McGuinty government wake up to Ontario's current economic reality and stop raising taxes on Ontario's hard-working families and businesses."

I'm pleased to sign it and support it and give it to Jacob, one of the pages who are finishing up this week.

TAXATION

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

"Whereas Ontario has lost 171,000 jobs since October and over 300,000 manufacturing and resource sector jobs since 2004; and

"Whereas many families are facing the threat of layoffs or reduced hours; and

"Whereas, rather than introducing a plan to sustain jobs and put Ontario's economy back on track, Dalton McGuinty and his government chose to slap an 8% tax on everyday purchases while giving profitable corporations a \$2-billion income tax cut;

"Be it resolved that the undersigned call on the Legislature to cancel the scheduled implementation of sales tax harmonization."

I support this petition.

TAXATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. I'd like to thank Ron Flanagan and Karen Davie, both of Meadowvale, for having collected the signatures for it. It reads as follows:

"Whereas a retail sales transaction in Ontario should not be subject to two separate taxes, at two different rates, under two sets of rules and payable to two levels of government; and

"Whereas Ontario will implement a comprehensive package of income and business tax cuts in 2010, which will especially benefit working families and retired seniors; and

"Whereas the income taxes of Ontarians will be cut permanently, seniors will receive double their former

property tax credit and other permanent savings will flow to Ontarians; and

"Whereas the cost to businesses to produce goods will go down permanently as embedded sales tax is permanently eliminated from the business cycle, enabling those businesses to lower business costs and pass savings along to their customers; and

"Whereas these measures represent the most comprehensive tax reform in a half century, enabling Ontario to be the most competitive place in North America to create jobs, move, grow and operate a business;

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

"That the government of Ontario and the members of the Ontario Legislative Assembly support measures to swiftly enact Ontario's comprehensive tax reform measures, including the move to a single sales tax in Ontario, as proposed in the province's 2009-10 budget."

I perfectly agree with this. I'm pleased to sign it and to ask page Elizabeth to carry it for me.

SALE OF DOMESTIC WINES AND BEERS

Mr. Robert Bailey: My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from the Ontario Korean Business Association. The title is "Say Yes to Beer and Wine Sales in Convenience Stores."

"Whereas the province of Ontario restricts the sale of beer and wine to the LCBO, a few winery retail stores and the Beer Store, and the three large beer companies are owned by multinationals;

"Whereas other provinces (notably Quebec) have been selling beer and wine in local convenience stores for many years without any harm to the well-being of the public;

"Whereas it is desirable to promote the sale of beer and wine in a convenient manner consistent with a contemporary society;

"Whereas it is essential to support local convenience stores for the survival of small businesses;

"Whereas it is obvious from the current market trends that the sales of wine and beer in convenience stores is not a question of 'if' but 'when';

"We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the Liquor Control Act to permit the sale of beer and wine in local convenience stores to the public throughout the province and to do it now."

I'll send it down with Chantelle.

1550

TAXATION

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

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

“Be it resolved, I am opposed to Dalton McGuinty’s 8% sales tax grab and call on the Parliament of Ontario to cancel its plan to introduce a harmonized sales tax on July 1, 2010.”

I agree with this petition.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Mike Colle: Here’s another sweet and short one.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

“Whereas over 70% of Ontario’s unemployed are not eligible for employment insurance ...

“Whereas an Ontario worker has to work more weeks to qualify and receives fewer weeks of benefits ...

“Whereas the average Ontario unemployed worker gets \$4,000 less in EI benefits than unemployed workers in other provinces ...

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to press the federal government to” fix the EI mess.

I support this petition and affix my name to it.

TAXATION

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: This petition comes to me from the Waterloo senior citizens’ card club, and it’s to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty said he wouldn’t raise taxes in the 2003 election, but in 2004 he brought in the health tax, the largest tax hike in Ontario’s history, but he still cuts health care services and nurses;

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty will increase taxes yet again on Canada Day 2010, with his new 13% combined GST, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it;

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty’s new 13% combined GST will increase the cost of goods and services that families and businesses buy every day, such as: coffee ... gas at the pumps, home heating oil ... postage stamps, haircuts, dry cleaning, home renovations, veterinary care, arena ice and soccer field rentals, Internet fees, theatre admissions, funerals, courier fees, fast food sold for over \$4, bus fares, golf green fees, gym fees, snowplowing, bicycles, taxi fares, train fares, domestic air travel, accountant services and real estate commissions;

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

“That the Dalton McGuinty government wake up to Ontario’s current economic reality and stop raising taxes, once and for all, on Ontario’s hard-working families and businesses.”

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

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Orders of the day.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I’d appreciate your giving an explanation when there were just over 30 seconds left when I stood to do a petition and you wouldn’t allow me. It started at 32 and by the time

you smirked at me, it was 27 seconds left, so I just want to know why I’m being discriminated against in this case.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would say to the honourable member that I wasn’t discriminating against him. I would say that I apologize that I did not see him and assure him that if he’s in the House tomorrow, he will be delivering the first petition.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to 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, the Standing Committee on Justice Policy be authorized to meet on Thursday, October 8, 2009, during its regular meeting times for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk of the committee shall be noon on Thursday, October 8, 2009. On that day, at no later than 5 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration.

Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Monday, October 19, 2009. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

That, on the day the order for third reading of the bill is called, one hour shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Ms. Smith has moved government notice of motion number 140.

Debate?

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'm pleased to rise and take part in this most unusual motion—

Mr. John O'Toole: Be outraged.

Mr. Robert Bailey: —outraged as well—that, if passed, will severely restrict the amount of debate of Bill 183, the college of trades bill.

Our concerns with this bill revolve around the fact that it is entirely possible for the current government to stack the college of trades with its cronies or people who may not have the public interest in mind.

Back in 1993, when a similar bill was being debated, there was a certain member of this House, who happens to have a different position today, who asked some questions at that time. He asked at that time, "Who's in charge, who's responsible, who is charged with looking out for the public interest? What the bill purports to do is it says, 'We're going to throw a bunch of people in who represent particular causes, and hopefully, through some mysterious process, they're going to come up with something that resembles the public interest.'" Some people might ask me who that member was—the guy is missing his cue.

Anyway, from Hansard of January 26, 1993, the chair addressed Mr. McGuinty, "Very briefly, please, and I mean it this time." Hansard records Mr. Dalton McGuinty, member for Ottawa South: "Gentlemen, you raise a very good point, I think, which strikes at the very heart of this bill. The question we've got to ask is, who's in charge, who's responsible, who is charged with looking out for the public interest? What this bill purports to do is it says, 'We're going to throw a bunch of people in who represent particular causes'"—

Mr. John O'Toole: Who said that?

Mr. Robert Bailey: The member for Ottawa South at that time, Dalton McGuinty; the honourable member asked. This is from Mr. McGuinty's remarks: "I don't have any faith in that happening. The people charged with representing the public interest are those people. That's what they were elected to do. There's simply no accountability for the directors on" this said "board, and the local members as well, to properly be held accountable."

We agree completely with the remarks of that member at that time. That's why I thought it was important that we get them on the record today. Those remarks were true then, and they're true now. That's why my party introduced amendments to allow for the direct election of working tradespeople to the appointment council of the new college. We believe, on this side of the House, that this college should be run by people who are still working in the trades and making their living from actually participating in the trades, not just by the Liberal Party hacks who are owed some kind of favour by this government.

This government chose not to listen to our well-reasoned amendments. One thing that struck me on the

committee was the very sincere issues raised by workers who felt that, for religious reasons, they would be unable to join the college of trades. It is well-established labour law in Ontario that you can, on religion grounds, object to joining a trade union or belonging to any organization therewith. Certain faiths, in fact, will demand that you do that.

1600

We presented an amendment that would allow for certain religious objectors to join the college of trades. The government members seemed sympathetic, but still said no at the end of the day. There was absolutely no spirit of co-operation coming from the government side, and we decided to do something about it.

Now, we know that government wants this committee to be nothing but a sham process. They will only accept their own amendments and dismiss all others, no matter how much support they have from the stakeholders they allegedly represent. The Ontario Home Builders' Association came to us with what I thought was a very simple request: They asked, "Can you not do an economic impact analysis on what this bill will do to the construction industry?" We have had a long-standing policy in our party of looking at the economic impact analysis of new laws and regulations, but again, the government just wasn't interested in those regulations.

I will come back to some other amendments that we proposed a bit later, but I wanted to bring up some important facts for the House that are driving why we felt we need this bill debated fully in committee.

I was shocked to learn that a Conference Board of Canada study has estimated that by 2025 Ontario could face a shortfall of 364,000 workers. That means that we will be lagging economies that focus more on skilled training. We need more of a plan to deal with the looming skills shortage than a bill that is full of vague notions of forcing trades together.

By the way, most of the details in this bill will be worked out in regulation. That was the answer given to the people who were asking for that religious objection exemption: "Don't worry; be happy. We'll take care of you at the end of the day. Trust us."

The Premier and his minister need to show some leadership on this front. Instead of a college of trades, they should strike a Premier's skills council, with a mandate to develop a provincial skills strategy.

We had many other amendments that are also worthy of mention here. Principally, we wanted a council that was elected by working tradespeople. Self-government can work as long as it is done in an open and transparent way. The college of teachers is an example that our government brought in that had a huge potential. Unfortunately, the college of teachers has been stacked with Liberal appointees who have different ideas of what makes a successful education system. We want to make sure at this time that this college isn't stacked, so we called for an election of tradespeople to the appointments council. We wanted the majority of members to be still working in the trades so that they truly represent the

people and their fellow members. We thought that would give it the balance that it needed.

We are also very concerned that the appearance of impartiality is important, so we wanted to make sure that anyone who was appointed to the appointments council was free of a conflict or any perceived conflict of interest. To avoid a conflict, we proposed that you could not be on the appointments council if you had worked for any labour organization—or any other organization, for that matter—that had received a grant of any sort from any branch of this provincial government. Again, we thought this was fair and balanced, to use words from the media: “fair and balanced.” I like that. The government and their union friends thought differently.

We also proposed an amendment that would have all tradespeople represented. Not just craft unions, but wall-to-wall unions need to be represented as well as non-union tradespeople.

This bill needs to be studied further. The government is keen to use closure when they don't need to. All they have to do is have further debate.

This government desperately needs to fix the ratio of apprentices to journeypersons so that we can close the skills gap and help our people achieve high-paying jobs in the new economy. I would just like to read a few letters that have come to my office about this, and I'll read a few of those into the record at this time.

This one's from Tracy: “Every week, we have people ask us to help them find jobs in electrical, plumbing, heating, air conditioning and other exciting apprenticeships, but with the current ratios, we are unable to help them.”

This is from Ken: “We ask the government to change the province's unfair apprenticeship ratio to allow our young people to enter the workforce as soon as possible. It is ridiculous to put up barriers.”

This is from Rory: “As a long-time member of a variety of job assistance programs for youth, I have long been aware of the frustration of employers and potential apprentices resulting from this ratio requirement in the province of Ontario. It is clear that many more training opportunities would be made available if they would change the ratio.”

This is from Gary: “It has come to my attention that your government has adopted the stand that three qualified electricians for each electrical apprentice is needed. I teach high school in northern Ontario, and your government has just sent many of our students to larger centres down south. Our qualified tradespersons in Cochrane operate on their own.”

This is from Rolly: “Keep doing a good job. The unions are only interested in keeping themselves employed. We're struggling union contractors competing against non-union contractors who do not use any ratios.”

This is from Eric: “I have an electric contracting business that is in dire need of employees. Other electrical contractors are asking my company if we can spare men for them for a couple of days. One large home builder asked my company if I can wire houses for them because they are unable to provide membership.”

These letters go on. There's a pile here. I've got more here. I might read a couple of these into the record just for convenience:

This is to the former minister: “I am writing this letter to express my frustration with the current government regulations under your control and ask you to change them.”

This is another one to the minister: “Licensed contractor ... our business going well ... we have a substantial and ongoing demand of work for apprentices.”

This is another to the minister: “I'm writing this letter to advise you that I had to explain to another potential apprentice that we cannot hire him due to existing provincial government ratios in the electrical trade.”

These letters go on at great length. They all demonstrate the same issue, that people are being restricted in employment and in their opportunities to advance in this economy. We do need to have people trained so that they can take their rightful place in this economy that is developing and evolving over time. This government desperately needs to fix this ratio.

This is from the Canadian Electricity Association. It talks about the human resource crisis:

“According to Canadian Electricity Association, funded in part by the government of Canada, retirement estimates show that over 17% of the 75,000 existing workforce will be eligible for retirement by 2010 and 37% by 2014. We need over 17,000 persons over the next eight years. Over a third of our retirees will be trades-related.”

“The human resource crisis in the Canadian electricity sector: A shortage of skilled labour will have serious repercussions on the electricity sector in a number of ways: reduced reliability, increased costs of production, infrastructure projects delayed, decreased safety and productivity due to less experienced employees.”

I'm going to share my speaking time with a number of members from my caucus and so at this time I'm going to stand down and turn over my time to the member for—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate? The Minister of Innovation.

Hon. John Milloy: It's a pleasure for me to stand today, and as the minister who is responsible for Bill 183, which is basically at the heart of this motion, I'm pleased to stand and put a few remarks on the record.

The motion that's before the Legislature at the moment—and the House leader read through it—is a very lengthy motion, but what it's basically doing is directing the committee to deal with this bill in a rather rapid fashion because it has had a number of hours of debate and send it back to the House so that we can proceed with third reading debate. The reason we are pushing for it is because of the importance of this bill. In fact, this bill deals with a number of issues, ironically, that my colleague from the opposition just raised, a number of very important issues related to apprenticeship and the trade system.

I just want to take a brief moment and provide a bit of context for what this bill is about and its importance in

bringing it forward. I think all of us recognize the importance of the skilled trades sector in the province of Ontario. It really is very much a third pillar of post-secondary education to go into a trade.

1610

We have, right now, about 150 apprenticeable trades in Ontario. They're individuals who are involved in literally building the future of this province. They're involved in the service industry. They're involved in a whole range of services throughout the province, and it's very important that we continue to develop the skilled trades.

The entry point, of course, into the skilled trades is through the apprenticeship system, where we ask young people and others to come in to serve time through on-work experience and also through the classroom experience so that they can become certified in one of these 150 or so trades that are offered right now in the province.

I have said over and over again in this Legislature that our system of apprenticeship, the system of skilled trades, is in need of reform, and I think that's an area where both the opposition and the government agree 100%. There is a variety of areas where we need to take a look at the trades, and some of those have been brought up by opposition members in terms of the recruitment of young people into the trades.

There's the issue of ratios: What's the ratio of journeypersons to apprentices? How are these young people trained?

There's the issue of compulsory certification: In which trades in the province does one need to be a qualified journeyperson? We think of electricians, for example. You cannot practise that trade unless you're a qualified journeyperson. Are there other trades—right now there are about 20 that are compulsory—that should be added to that list?

There's the issue around women. Women are not overly represented in many trades. How do we get them to enter into them?

All these issues relate to reforming our system of skilled trades. The government, under my predecessor Christopher Bentley, had asked Tim Armstrong, a noted expert in this area, to take a look at it. He came back with a recommendation that what we needed to do to overhaul this system was to move forward with a self-regulatory college to bring all sides together and to give them the power and authority to research the skilled trades field, to take a look at a whole variety of issues and to come to conclusions, to give them ownership over it. What we brought forward with Bill 183 is this self-regulatory college, a college of trades, which would do that.

I'll just read some of the key items that this college would deal with: promote careers in the trades and attract more people to them, especially youth and under-represented groups; help make it easier for internationally trained workers to get certified and find work in the trades in Ontario; set training and certification standards to serve the skilled trades sector in the public interest; conduct research to help make sure Ontario trains the right workers for the future; and finally, give the skilled

trades sector ownership of critical decisions on issues such as compulsory certification and apprenticeship ratios.

These are all very important issues for the future of skilled trades in this province. We see the college as being this level playing field where all sides can come together and make decisions which are going to strengthen trades, which are going to bring more apprentices into the system and make sure that Ontario is prepared for the future.

I find it passing strange that the opposition, which has been standing in this House in question period and other debates and asking for action on these areas, asking for the type of reform that the college promises, would be holding it up in committee. We had no choice as a government but to bring forward this motion which, despite its length, is basically saying that it's time for the committee to finish their work so that the Legislature can deal with this bill on third reading and we can move forward to reform the apprenticeship system.

I urge all members who worry, who are concerned about the future of apprenticeship, about the future of skilled trades in Ontario, to support this motion so that we can go on to establish this very important new institution for the future of skilled trades in the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to say that time allocation motions are always complicated for the opposition. Whether it was Liberals in opposition or now Tories and then the NDP in opposition, we tend not to support time allocation motions. That's just the way it is. What it does is cut off debate on anything that is before us. This is something interesting, of course, because it comes out of what is happening in committee, and through a procedural motion which the Conservatives are using it is slowing down the process of dealing with the amendments.

I have to say that Liberals use that practice, Tories have used it, New Democrats have used it; we've all used it. It just depends where you are in the rotational system around here. So it's really very difficult for me to say, "Ah, the Tories are bad because they're using a tool, and the Liberals are good because they're moving time allocation." I just want to say to the citizens of Ontario that Liberals have done this too in the past—

Mr. Mike Colle: The NDP—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And we did too; I already said that. We have all used the rules differently, depending on the position you have in the Legislature. I just wanted to say that for the record.

What the Liberal government does, conveniently, is use members who are new to make these arguments so they can say how outraged they are; they're in committee, working so, so hard, sitting there and raising their hands at the appropriate moment, and working so hard and wanting to get the job done that they're outraged by the tactics used by another political party. It sounds all so

good and so sincere, because the new members don't know. The cabinet ministers throw these new members to the dogs and say, "Okay, go get them." And then, of course, they write their speeches, and so you read them out. The new members can sound so persuasive, so convincing, so sincere—

Mr. Jeff Leal: And eloquent.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: —and at times, even eloquent, dare I say it—at times. That's what I wanted to say for the record.

You will notice they don't use experienced people to make these arguments. If they used experienced people, we would all be laughing on this side, saying, "Of all people, you're the one that they selected to make that argument? Don't you remember when you were...?" So that's why they don't use the experienced members, right? Just for the record, so that you new members know, and those citizens and taxpayers who are watching get the benefit of the full range of opinion as we move around this place, I wanted to say that.

The Tories are using a tool in committee. After an amendment has been dealt with, they want to reflect on the amendment, so they cite the relevant section, saying, "We want 20 minutes to reflect on the profundities of this amendment" and off they go to reflect on the seriousness of the amendment, the depth of it. Then they come back and they move on to another amendment. Of course, there's another amendment, and again the Conservative members say, "We need to reflect once again on that amendment, because we really need time, more time, another 20 minutes, to reflect on it," and off they go. That's the routine, right?

It can be awfully irritating, I admit, even for those Liberal members who have to sit there and say, "Oh, God, now I've got stand up or sit here for another 20 minutes and not do anything." It's tiring. It's exhausting, just to sit there for 20 minutes.

What do I do to stave off the exhaustion? I just get up, go to my office, do some work and come back again as if nothing happened. It feels great. But most of the Liberals are stuck there and they have to sit through it. God bless. What are you going to do? That's the nature of the job. They pay you to sit there every now and then for the whole afternoon, but that's what you get paid for. It can be rough—I understand—but that's the way it is.

They are using the tools that they have to disagree with the government. I happen to disagree with most of the disagreements the Conservatives have with this bill, but that's a different matter. We are not debating that. That's not the issue. I really didn't want to debate the bill so much as why we have to deal with this procedural motion that is before us. That's really what we should be debating. But, God, you've got to spend 40 minutes to speak on it. You say, "Gee, what am I going to say?" Right? So you've got to reflect on what you're going to say.

I needed to tell the citizens that the Conservatives are using the rules and they have a right to it. Even if I disagree with it, they have a right to it.

Of course, the Liberals say, "Hmm, this could take a while. If they keep doing this, if you do the math, we could be here until November or so." So the Liberals—

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: What's the NDP going to do?

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Mr. Rosario Marchese: I was very helpful, actually. I'm just trying to do my best to be, you know, part of the team. It's bad when you're co-operating so much with the Liberals, because people say, "Oh, gee, I don't know."

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I'm awfully nervous that my friend the member from—where is he?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Oakville, Ontario.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Oakville. Kevin might say some nice things about me, and I say, oh, Jeez, I don't know if I can handle that. I'm not sure it's a good thing. So I don't know. Keep that to a minimum, because I don't want people to think that somehow I'm too nice to you guys, right?

The Liberals have decided that it will take too long if we continue on this track, so they've introduced a time allocation motion, which is within their rights to do. We might disagree with it, as we do, but everyone has tools at their disposal to express a desire of support or a desire of opposition. That's what we're doing in this place.

The Tories have already stood up to say, "We've introduced a number of amendments that the government has rejected, and that's why we're really nasty with the government, so that's why we're using the tools to express our dissatisfaction"—I'm assuming. They could have other beefs against the government. God knows there are many. The harmonized sales tax is a biggie, and I happen to agree with the Tories in this regard.

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: You agree with the Tories?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yeah, God bless. It's beautiful to listen to my friend Robert Runciman from Leeds-Grenville, who says that the harmonized tax is about Bay Street, not about Main Street. I thought, "This is brilliant. He sounds like a New Democrat." That's why I love them when they're in opposition, right? Because they—oh, here he is. Bob, I was just quoting you. Did you hear me or should I repeat it?

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: Repeat it.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Just for the benefit of the member from Leeds. He said the harmonized sales tax is about supporting Bay Street and not Main Street. I turned around and said, "I agree with you absolutely," and I said, "except that New Democrats mean it and you don't."

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: You shouldn't be so cynical.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But we agree. We agree on this. That's why I say that when they're in opposition, we have so much in common. It's amazing. We've taken on this harmonized tax together. I thought maybe that's why they're using this tactic in committee: to express strong dissatisfaction to the government, saying, "We're going to punish you because we disagree so much with the

harmonized tax that, in committee, we're going to use all the tools at our disposal to make sure we slow this process down, bring this place down."

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Maybe. I don't know, but it's a way of expressing your feelings, right?

You might disagree, because I know you guys have so many facts at your disposal, and "All the research shows that this harmonized tax is going to create jobs." It's a laughable thing that you can say it. But you've got a whole lot of research and you've got a whole lot of cheerleaders, both new members and old members, saying, "This is really great. This is going to modernize our tax system."

That was another laughable remark: "This is going to modernize our taxation system." How does that modernize it? How is introducing a flat tax against the working people who earn anywhere from \$25,000 to \$50,000 or \$60,000 going to help those people? How progressive could it be, and how does modernizing it help you? So I'm with the Tories on this one. If that's why they're using the tools, I say, "Okay, I can handle that."

But maybe there's another reason. Obviously they disagree strongly with the direction of the college of trades. It's very clear from the amendments they're introducing that they don't like the bill. It's very obvious to me. I have to admit that I support the bill.

Applause.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Please don't clap, because I don't do that.

Interjections.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes, yes. No, I don't want that.

I support the direction that this bill goes into—and we've introduced amendments, some of which they are accepting and many of which they are rejecting, which is typical of what they do on the whole.

To be fair, I think they're accepting two amendments that we made, which is a big deal, because they rarely support amendments; they do. They hardly ever support amendments. That's why I get so upset in this Legislature, because rather than throwing a few crumbs to the opposition and saying, "Here you go, Rosie," or "Here you go, Bob; we've got a few crumbs for you," rather than doing that, they crush you each and every time. They don't have to do that. All you have to say to an opposition member is, "Here you go," and then we feel, "Ah, this is great. They listen to us." So instead of criticizing them 100%, then we criticize them maybe 70%, 80% of the time. But there's so much benefit to giving in a little. I'm not saying give in too much, because that would be wrong, but every now and then do it. They've accepted two of my amendments. Imagine how good I feel because they throw you those crumbs. But they don't do that too often. We support the general direction—

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: They were good amendments; they weren't crumbs.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But what I'm saying is that we often introduce good amendments that are rejected,

but in this case it happens to coincide with your interests. You know, that's fine.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: You were of a like mind.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Every now and then we are of like mind. We are not of like mind on some other amendments which I made. Just to give you one—we'll have time in the third reading debate for me to have the full hour, because it's not about that today. One issue, and the minister talked about this briefly: He said proudly that we have 150 trades, but most of those trades are not in the traditional sense trades. You see, that's why Harris, God bless him, separated the original act and created two separate acts, the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act and the other one, the Apprenticeship and Certification Act. He did that for a purpose, and that was to separate the genuine trades from the other skill-set trades, which means what you would do is fragment the real trades into little pieces, and then you call them trades.

One of the amendments we had introduced was to say—and the OFL, the Ontario Federation of Labour talked about this—create a new division and a clear division that says authentic trades and skill-set occupations. The idea of authentic trades is that you've got to go through an apprenticeship program. Most of these apprenticeship programs take anywhere from two to four years, if not longer, and yes, it involves those ratios that the Tories are so upset about. But the authentic trades means you've got to go through a rigorous program, and at the end of it we say, "You're certified." It's authentic; it's a real trade. If you separated that in that way from the other occupations, which are the fragmented skill-set trades, then you would be able to say to the people that they're different types of skill sets, different kinds of so-called trades. But the government has decided, in its Liberal wisdom, not to do that, so they lumped them all together, the skill-set ones versus the authentic trades.

You'll recall, because in the past I beat you guys up, and the minister, too, when you funded the telephone operators, remember, in Ottawa in particular? And you gave them \$5,000 apiece just to train, and all you do is answer phones.

Hon. John Milloy: Rosie, WorldSkills had a competition; that was recognised at the WorldSkills.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: That to me, Minister, was not a trade, I've got to tell you. You don't classify it as a trade. It doesn't even fit as a trade. That's why I attacked it at the time, because it was literally a way of giving money away to a corporation, and then, by the way, at the end of it they just closed shop and left. So we gave them millions, I think it was up to 12 million bucks, and then they closed shop, gone, with all of those beautiful trades that we gave them. They just left—gone.

Hon. John Milloy: People went on to find jobs.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: They went on to find other jobs answering phones: "Hello."

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But, Minister, come on. The citizens watching this and the taxpayers, they are as out-

raged as I am. Please, don't call answering phones a trade. It doesn't make any sense.

Hon. John Milloy: It's not answering phones; it was tech support.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You've finished your remarks already. You needed more time, for God's sake.

Member from Oakville, could you throw him back some time? Because he wants to respond to what I'm saying. He deserves time.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I understand. Give him more time so that he can respond because I can see he wants to engage me. That's okay. I've got no problem with that.

So I say that was one of the amendments that I put forth, which they rejected.

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Mr. Jeff Leal: I've never seen him so excited.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The minister, yes, I know. It's true. He's excited today.

So I introduced that amendment, and of course, they rejected it. I understand. They want to continue to expand the nomenclature "trade," and make it appear like, "Oh my God, we have 150 trades. This is really good." But the point is it's deceptive. It's deceiving to say that we have 150 trades, because they're not authentic in the sense that I described to you.

You see my point. I didn't want to get involved too much in the details of the amendments, but I wanted to mention one. I do say that, with respect to the objects of the bill—and the minister touched on this—it's really hard to oppose it on the basis of what's here. "The college has the following objects: to establish the scope of practice for trades; to regulate the practice of trades; to govern the members of the college; to develop, establish, and maintain qualifications for membership.... ; to promote the practice of trades"—which I hope they will do, because the government, so far, has done a poor job of promoting the trades.

You've got to admit, Minister. I think your government has done a poor job of promoting the trades, and if you don't admit that, maybe the member from Oakville can tell me how it is that you have promoted the trades in the last four or five years that you've been in government. And don't tell me that the way you promote it is by saying, "We have 150 trades versus the 110 that we used to have."

Hon. John Milloy: We have 60,000 more apprentices.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes, but the 60,000 more apprentices, if they include telephone operators—right?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: You're getting obsessive about the telephones.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But I wanted to tell you that if the college is going to promote the trades, this is good. It's really good. I know that a lot of Conservative members who come from the trades sector like that part of it. I'm convinced they do.

I believe the college can do it better in terms of promoting the trades, but they should not be doing it exclusively. The minister has to do something publicly

about recognizing and valuing what the trades do for all Ontarians, and they have to work together in making sure that that promotion happens.

"To establish apprenticeship programs and other training programs for trades including training standards, curriculum standards and examinations; to maintain a public register of its members; to determine appropriate journeyman to apprentice ratios for the trades subject to ratios"—and by the way, that particular one is the subject of some contention with the Conservative Party. They always wanted to eliminate that ratio of three to one or four to one and make sure that it's a one-to-one ratio. That's really what Tories want. They want a one-to-one ratio of apprentices to journeymen, and in some cases it doesn't work. Maybe the member from Oakville, given his trade, can speak to that. In some cases it doesn't work. For the purposes of safety, you may need two or three journeymen, depending on the type of work you're doing, in order to give us all the protection we're looking for.

I don't believe it's the ratios that are causing the problems of the lack of trades. It's not that. I think the Tories have it all wrong in this regard. But the point of it is that this college is going to have people—true, they're going to be appointed by an appointments council, which is problematic because people will say, on either side of the fence, "Can you trust them? Who appoints the people on the appointment council, how neutral are they going to be, and can we trust them?" So I understand that part. That's why I believe that some of the employee reps should come from the trades themselves; they should be nominated by the trades.

The government doesn't support this, but they should be nominated by the trades and should be rubber-stamped by the government, the appointments council in this case. Why? Because in this way you at least ensure those who are affected—and in this regard I'm talking about the trades—are engaged meaningfully through the selection process of people they want to be on the various structures that you've created, in the various governing councils that you've created. I believe that would have been a good thing and it's still a good thing to do. That has been rejected. But at least the objects of this bill are things that we, as New Democrats, can support. We'd like to make it stronger, and some of the amendments helped to get us there, and other amendments that I have talked about, only two, have been rejected. That's not a problem; I understand where Liberals are coming from.

Then, of course, you've got to deal with the public and those constituencies that are affected by way of the fallout. The government has to deal with that, and so do opposition parties, of course. The general direction of this government, through this bill, is something that we can support.

"To receive and investigate complaints against members of the college and to deal with issues of discipline, misconduct, incompetency and incapacity.... To address compliance issues in respect of matters within the jurisdiction of the college." In this regard I have to say

that the compliance issue could be made stronger, and the Liberals have been unreasonable in this regard. There are a number of amendments that have been made by the Coalition of Compulsory Trades in Construction, and that includes the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario, the Mechanical Contractors Association of Ontario, the Ontario Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Contractors Association, the Ontario sheet metal contractors' association, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Construction Council of Ontario, the Ontario Pipe Trades Council and the Ontario Sheet Metal Workers' and Roofers' Conference. They talked about an amendment that says, "promoting and ensuring compliance, with restrictions on prohibitions on the practice of trades, journey-person-to-apprentice ratios and the use of titles."

They talked about promoting and ensuring compliance. None of the amendments that have been introduced by the government, after listening to many of these deputations, deal with promoting and ensuring compliance. I think they should have done that. I think they could have done that. I don't see any downside in accepting those amendments, but sadly the government refused to accept that particular one. It's just a way of suggesting that opposition parties make amendments, and sometimes they're supported and sometimes they are rejected.

They supported the idea of including apprentices as membership to this college, and every deputation that came forward said that apprentices should be part of this college. We had that amendment and so did the government. Clearly, in that regard the government was listening and had to listen. As a result, they too included that as one of the amendments, and in this case you could argue that the Liberals are accepting my amendment but they had their own.

"To provide for the ongoing education of members of the college ... to work with other governments in Canada and the minister with respect to the interprovincial standards program for apprenticeship and with respect to qualifications required for trades ... to conduct research in relation to trades," and by the way, the whole idea of conducting research is a good thing. I would hope they would conduct research not just within Canadian jurisdictions, and not just in Canada as it relates to Quebec. Quebec has been one of the most progressive of provinces with respect to the issue of training. But I think you should go to Ireland, I think you should go to France, I think you should go to Germany and do that kind of research there and learn from the long history of training and apprenticeship programs that those countries are involved in. And Quebec: I've often used Quebec as an example. I even had my own resolution, which was rejected both by Liberals and Tories in this Legislature.

One of the ways that Quebec has dealt with a shortage of trades was to force corporations that have earnings of over \$1 million to contribute 1% of their income to training, and that included even small businesses as of a year ago. Imagine how progressive that is.

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Of course, the Liberals and the Tories were both against it saying, "Oh, how that would hurt the corporations. Oh, how bad that would be. We can't do that." I argued, why can the corporate sector not take some responsibility for training? Why is it that some corporations do it and others don't? One of the reasons why some corporations are not doing it is because they can easily poach workers from those companies who are doing the training. But that's not a very valid system. It doesn't work. That encourages some corporations to say, "Why should I invest in training when my workers are going to be taken or stolen by another corporation who's not investing the time or the money?" But some of the corporations recognize that in order to keep their own, to keep them there, they've got to do ongoing training and retraining of their members. This is a good thing.

Why wouldn't some of those corporations who are losing their trades because of age, because they're retiring and there's nobody that's going to replace them, be themselves promoting the training and retraining of their membership, so that they could fill in the vacancies as they happen year after year? So many are retiring just about now and in the next couple of years, they're going to be short of some workers.

Why is it the obligation of government to have to do the training? Why are we solely responsible for the training, was the argument I made. Surely the corporate sector has a shared responsibility to do training. Quebec is leading the way. Quebec picked up that idea from Ireland and France. They've been doing it for years. Why is it that we are so slow in picking up good ideas when other countries have done it so successfully for so many years? Why does it take us so long? Why do we reject good ideas?

There's a component here that says "conduct research in relation to trades," and I think that's good. If they can do some good research and then implement it for themselves, God bless. It can only be good. This college, even if it doesn't accept all of the recommendations I or New Democrats have made, is still important to have, because once it's established, it can be improved.

There were people who argued that the college of trades is a difficult name in and of itself because "college of trades" is confusing. I felt they had a good argument to make because the first time you hear "college of trades," you think, "Oh, it's another college" like Centennial College, let's say, or Seneca, and this particular college deals with trades—easily confused with that, I felt.

We proposed a name change. The OFL recommended a name change. I proposed it, and it was rejected by the government. That's the way it goes. Different folks have different ways of reacting and responding to these bills, and we do our best to make them as effective as we possibly can.

So just as a brief recap, the Tories are using the rules in committee and I say, God bless. Use the rules that you can to make the point you want to. The Liberals have introduced a time allocation motion to stifle that debate

and that tactic and, God bless, the Liberals are using their power and the rules to be able to do what they feel they need to do.

I support the direction the government is going in with the college of trades, but we remain steadfast as New Democrats that time allocation motions, in general, cannot be supported by us because stifling the tools that opposition parties use to be able to defend their points—those are something that they need to keep in order for us to be able to do our job effectively. So I will not be supporting the time allocation motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Colle: I'm here in regard to an act to revise and modernize the law related to apprenticeship training and to create a new college of trades for Ontario. This is an act that was introduced on May 13 of this year, so it's been before this Legislature since May. The minister talked about it last September, over a year ago. He also commissioned a study to find out what should be done. The study was done under the auspices of Mr. Kevin Whitaker, who's a labour specialist, and he recommended the implementation of this college of trades. So there's been a lot of material before the House, before all sides.

But as you know, this is a time allocation motion, and the reason it's here—as the member for Trinity–Spadina said, the opposition Conservatives are using a stalling tactic by calling multiple recesses of 20 minutes each. It's their right to do that at committee, but it's kind of rich when the Conservatives then come here and say, “Well, we can't debate.” I don't call calling recesses giving them the ability to debate. In other words, they don't really want to debate. They just don't like this bill because they don't support the establishment of this new mechanism to train and recognize young people who want to go into the trades.

So it's their right to say that they disagree and to use stalling tactics, but let's get the record straight: They've been filibustering in committee by continually calling recesses and stalling progress on a bill that relates to jobs at this very critical time, especially for many of our young people who are looking for retraining.

All you have to do to see how popular retraining is—you can see the uptake on the new Second Career program, a program where we said that we were going to offer money to people going through retraining, up to 20,000 people over three years. Well, we've already reached I think about 23,000 people in the first year. It's been so overwhelmingly popular because people do want to work, they want to get trained, and Second Career is a great success.

This college of trades is so critical because it will increase the positive profile of the trades and the tradespeople we have in this province. For too long, our young people and our media in general have tended to marginalize our tradespeople, who are critically important and who perform so many vital functions in our society. Whether they be plumbers, carpenters, formers or mech-

anics, they are critical to the success of the Ontario economy and Ontario society.

The elevation of these trades into this body is going to be of great importance to people seeking employment through an apprenticeship program or a trades training program. It's going to encourage more people to enter the trades, and that's a good thing because there are many good, high-paying jobs. Industry needs them, our cities need them and our hospitals need them. Therefore, it is critical that this bill comes to fruition, because it has been before us for over a year—almost—and it's being stalled at committee.

The bill is a good economic bill. It's got some challenges because it's something new, but we've had the guidance of Kevin Whitaker. It's something that's very tangible, very practical, and needs to be supported as we provide more employment opportunities for young people, who are constantly coming to our offices looking for employment.

In the riding of Eglinton–Lawrence, a lot of young people are going into plumbing and carpentry. They think there are good careers there, and I encourage them to do that. This will help and will reinforce their apprenticeship opportunities. That's why the number of apprenticeships is increasing, almost doubling what the Tories used to have, on a yearly basis.

I'll give you an example of how dramatic the change is in apprenticeship. There's an incredible success story of a tradesperson who has opened up her own mechanic shop. I don't know if you've heard about this amazing lady. Her name is Jessica Gilbank. She operates a company called Ms. Lube at the corner of College and Bathurst. She is a mechanic, fully trained, a Mercedes-Benz mechanic, for 12 years. She is the head of the company, and she has four mechanics, all women, and they operate this incredibly successful mechanic shop, repair shop, and it employs nothing but women.

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She has more than enough business. I think she's going to open up franchises all across North America, she's so successful. This is an example of the new type of people who are getting into the trades. Ms. Gilbank is a perfect example of that. She operates Ms. Lube by what she calls Mechanchik.

Anyway, this bill is about new horizons, new opportunities; it creates jobs, especially at this time of a downturn, a slowdown. Young people need the jobs. People are saying that the government should facilitate apprenticeship training, make it more in tune with the reality of the workplace. This is a bill that needs support. It doesn't need to be stalled with games at committee that go on and on. It has been before us for over a year, so it's time to get on with getting these young people the jobs and not to play games in committee. That's why we're trying to get this bill done, so we can get these young people working. We should not stop them from getting the jobs they need to keep paying their rents and their mortgages and putting food on the table.

I fully support getting on to having this bill getting passed. It's a good bill. It has been studied. It has been

supported by a lot of stakeholders. Let's get on with the job.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: Just a few brief comments on the legislation and the impacts: I want to talk about the makeup of the board at the college, the people who are going to be involved, and really what's behind the creation of the college. That is a significant concern of the official opposition, the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, despite the comments from the member from Trinity-Spadina, Mr. Marchese, questioning our motivation.

It always puzzles me when Mr. Marchese speaks in the House. He devotes the bulk of his time to criticizing a government that was in place over six years ago rather than devoting his efforts towards the government of the day. I often wonder if he shouldn't be crossing the floor, because it boggles the mind with respect to the role we play in here and the pressures he faces in his own riding, but for whatever reason, he seems to be, I don't know—"obsessed" may be the proper adjective with respect to Mr. Marchese and his continued focus on the past. Certainly we criticize the government, as his members do, with respect to the Liberal government's focus in question period and other areas and debates as well on the past, so it's a bit of a contradiction on his part.

But in any event, I don't want to spend too much time on that—

Mr. Mike Colle: Say it to his face, Bob.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: I'd be glad to. It's in Hansard. I'll be glad to. He was saying things about me when I wasn't in the building. He kindly repeated them, but he knows my view. I've said it over the course of debates in here, my concern about his emphasis on the past instead of what the current government is doing or not doing to benefit the people of Ontario.

In any event, shutting down debate on this—the member who just spoke, representing the governing party, suggested that this was because of our tactics in committee.

Speaker, as you well know, there are a very limited number of tools available for the opposition when they're dealing with a majority government in this place, and we have to look at all of those tools available and utilize them to the degree we feel is appropriate. I guess we can't criticize the members opposite for questioning our motivation with respect to that, but I can tell you, from our perspective, we are doing what we believe is right, what we believe we have to do in terms of putting our concerns on the record and putting an exclamation point behind them.

One of our big concerns about what has actually been the catalyst behind the creation of this college is the relationship between an organization known as Working Families and the Liberal Party of Ontario. We have a complaint, Madam Speaker, which you may not be aware of, going before judicial review with respect to the fact that we believe Working Families has acted as an agent

of the Liberal Party of Ontario. When you look at the makeup of the college and the people who will be involved with making decisions related to ratios and really, in essence, having virtually complete control of apprenticeship programs in Ontario, ratios etc., I think we have cause for concern. If you look at the people who were involved in Working Families, who in the 2007 election spent more in advertising in support of the Liberal Party of Ontario than the Progressive Conservative Party spent in that election, that's pretty significant. I believe it distorts democracy in this province and is something that we should all be concerned about.

So take a look at the people involved in that in relation to the college and the role that representatives of these organizations may play in the makeup of the board, the decision-making authority on this board. There are significant contributors to Working Families: the Canadian Auto Workers, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Ontario Pipe Trades Council, the millwrights, the painters district council, the International Union of Operating Engineers, the building trades council. These are people, Madam Speaker, whom we believe will play a role, and we believe that this is, again—and you may rule me out of order—let's just say an agreement. I don't want to be ruled out of order, so I'm going to use polite language here with respect to support given and whether this is in the best interests of the province and the best interests of people who want to enter into the trades. That's the big issue here, whether it's protecting the interests of certain groups and certain organizations in the province versus the good of the province in terms of having an adequate number of trained people to meet the needs in the trades going forward. That's our big concern.

I don't want to go off the subject, but one of the key players, of course, Pat Dillon, who was co-chair of Working Families—we saw his name in the press recently as someone signing Steve Mahoney's expenses, the \$140,000 man at the WSIB. That's a part-time job, but I think it gives you an indication of the infiltration of individuals very actively involved in Working Families, entrenched in boards of this government.

Mr. Mike Colle: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: I'm just wondering if the member is speaking to the item before us, which is the closure motion. He seems to have wandered way off into right field on this, and I would ask him to keep to the issue of the closure motion before us.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I ask the member to continue.

Mr. Robert W. Runciman: Thank you. The member who interjected should go back and read Hansard with respect to his own comments. I guess this must be getting under their skin because they know what's happening here is wrong, if anyone here really cares about democracy in this province, the distortion that's occurring as a result of the involvement of a third party in a very significant way. And if you take a look at activities that

have occurred subsequent to those elections—legislative decisions, appointments to boards, influential appointments with respect to decision-making, whether it's workers' injuries and WSIB, and a whole range of other areas where I think our concerns are with respect to the college, the makeup of the board of the college, the decisions that they will be taking and the significant control they're going to have over apprenticeship programs—I think that we have a very legitimate right to be concerned, a legitimate right to use the tools available to us to deliver that message not only to members of the government but to the public at large who, at this point in time, have very little awareness of the role Working Families plays in influencing the current government.

1700

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 183 and on the time allocation motion that we have before us. Having spent a day last week in the committee and watching some of the activities that took place, it was interesting to hear the speakers from the Conservative side of the House trying to justify their actions and trying to dress up those actions as somehow having some sort of a noble intent.

There's an appetite for change within Ontario today. There's an appetite for change amongst the apprentices, amongst the tradespeople, amongst the trade unions themselves and amongst the employers of this province. They want to see the shortage of skilled trades addressed in this province. The way we're trying to address those is to form a college of trades to finally give the recognition to the trades that they deserve.

When you look at all the career choices that a young person in this province could make today—physicians, for example, have their own college, teachers have their own college and lawyers have the law society. Why would you not have a college of trades if you're trying to promote the trades amongst young people?

Let me tell what you took place last week because certainly what took place at the committee is within the rules. The rules allow for a 20-minute recess before a vote is taken. The intent of that, I'm sure, when those rules were put into place was that if something unanticipated had arisen, some new information had come forward, it would allow the committee to go back and spend some time on its own, caucusing on the issue.

What was happening at the committee the other day was that every time a vote was called, the Progressive Conservative Party asked for a 20-minute recess. Now, it got so absurd—it just showed they hadn't done their homework—they called for a 20-minute recess on their own amendment. You would think that a party that had put forward an amendment to be heard formally by a standing committee, to be addressed by that standing committee, would be prepared. But no, instead they had to go and have a 20-minute recess or a caucus somewhere. I don't know where they went.

Mr. Jeff Leal: They were all in the room, Kevin.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: They were all in the room. They could have talked to each other, but they didn't.

Now, when you contrast the childish activity that took place at the committee on that day with the member from Trinity–Spadina, a member of the opposition who doesn't agree with everything that's going on but who agrees with the basic tenets of the bill, I think, and the concept behind the bill, he was progressive enough to come forward with some suggestions. The government thought that two of the amendments made the bill better, and we supported them. That's what the opposition—

Interjection.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I hear somebody from across the hall talking about payoffs to unions. You can choose to work with the trades, you can choose to work with the unions, you can choose to work with the employers of this province, or you can get involved in the childish activity that you and your party exhibited last week which did absolutely nothing on behalf of the taxpayers—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask you to make your comments through the Chair, please.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Well, I was. My finger was crooked. I'm sorry, Speaker. I was pointing that way.

Anyway, there's a vehicle now to address some of the concerns that have been raised over the years by both employers and trades, and that's ratios, that's compulsory trades versus voluntary trades. It can all be addressed now because a vehicle is being put in place that, in a balanced way, will be able to address those issues.

The members in the Conservative Party don't want to see a balanced way of addressing them. They want to have their own way. Instead, what we're saying is that we respect the trades, we respect the employers. We understand that there's enough expertise within that field that they're able to deal with these issues themselves, that if a group of reasonable people from management and labour can sit around a table, they will be able to come to agreement on how the trades should be governed. We have trust in the trades in this province. We have trust in the employers in this province. The Progressive Conservative Party does not, and that's a shame. It's unfortunate.

I'd like to commend the member from Trinity–Spadina for his activities at the committee. He was critical of the government at times and he was complimentary to the government at times. I think he presented the bill in a way that proved to be a reasonable piece of legislation that deserves passage.

There are some great amendments that have been put forward from the government and from the member from Trinity–Spadina. We got maybe halfway through, but let me tell you that as a result of the Conservative's action the other day, there are 59 amendments in total. Twenty-three of those amendments came from the government; 31 of those amendments came from the NDP, so they obviously did their homework; five amendments came forward from the Conservative Party, and they had to have a recess after each and every one of them. You tell

me that's doing their homework. In total, they called 12 20-minute recesses. Under the guise of working on behalf of the taxpayers of this province, they had to have 12 20-minute recesses. Where they went, I don't know. Back to their office, out for a coffee, out for a smoke? I have no idea, but what they weren't doing was sitting at the committee table and they weren't working on behalf of whoever they purport to represent and the other people in this province who have an interest in this issue. It was a shameful display. I hope that by supporting this motion today we put an end to it and we're able to move on, on behalf of the apprentices, on behalf of the journeypersons who are involved in the trades, the employers in the trades and the young people today who are considering perhaps getting into a trade. This is a good way of doing it. It's the way that we should be doing it. I would ask for all members of the House who support and trust the trades and employers in this province to support this bill and allow it to move on.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I have three points I want to make as succinctly as possible. I'm going to start by looking at the bill specifically, but I want to make sure that I reinforce the fact that this time allocation motion is another example of a government that refuses to listen, refuses to work with the opposition, and in fact has no intention but to steamroll ahead with guillotine motions like this, where they stop and end debate. This is unforgivable.

But in the interest of contributing to the debate here today, I'll switch to the bill. But it is a time allocation motion. If you look at this motion itself, you'll see that there is about an hour, and the hour is only set aside because they've made some serious errors in drafting. They're not going to adopt any of the amendments; I predict that right now. Whether there are five or 17, they'll vote them all down. They have become so arrogant and indifferent to working with the opposition of either party that it disappoints me.

I think the member from Leeds–Grenville made a very definitive argument with respect to the Working Families Coalition. It's clear now, it's in the media, and everyone understands that this is a way of appointing the people who raise the money, who put the signs up, who defeated our government and got McGuinty elected. Those signs and the money they spent—this is payoff time, basically. They're going to appoint them to the college. I predict right here that Pat Dillon will probably become the registrar.

I'm only saying this because I'm going to talk about the substance. The college is the question here, and I want to put this on the record. There is a statement here, and it was made by the member from Ottawa South in 1993, and I'm quoting from Hansard. He says, "The question we've got to ask is who is in charge, who is responsible and who is in charge of looking out for the public interest. What the bill purports to say is, 'We're going to throw a bunch of people in who represent particular causes and hope through some mysterious process

they're going to come up with something that resembles the public interest.'" Who was that? It was Dalton McGuinty. He said it then and it applies now. These appointments are nothing but the diversion or deflection from the minister's responsibility.

The point has also been made throughout this debate on the issue of ratios. The member from Simcoe North has made a complete and comprehensive argument that should be listened to about ratios and how they make Ontario less competitive. We can't stand for that being ignored.

I have an example letter from my constituent, Norm Fenton. He e-mailed me in January and I sent a letter directly—I have a copy of it here—to Minister Milloy. I sent the letter to Minister Milloy, and that is dated September 22, and I have a reply back.

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The question comes from the constituent, who said, "I'm a teacher at the Durham College Skills Training Centre. I have recently had brought to my attention a number of situations where apprentices have been laid off and for financial reasons are unable to continue with the in-college portion of their apprenticeship training. Although it is well understood that their class seats are still available to them, it is not so well understood that there is no funding available to them to assist them in attending classes." He goes on to argue in favour of his students having more chances in apprenticeships, and this is by a teacher from my riding.

I got a letter back from the minister. At least he did write back, but it was talking about something completely different. It was like question period here.

I want to just mention, in the few seconds I have left—because our member from Parry Sound–Muskoka really is going to wrap up for us and hit a home run, I'm sure. This is on part IX. It's "Ratios, compulsory and voluntary Trades." This is very important. It says here that they are going to appoint a board, and these will be basically orders in council by Premier McGuinty. That's who will appoint them. They will be people who were at the fundraisers and things like that. "If a trade has been prescribed by a minister's regulation as being subject to a journeyperson to apprentice ratio, the board shall, by a board regulation, prescribe the number of apprentices who may be employed by an employer in that trade in relation to the number of journeypersons employed by the employer as determined by a review panel." So they're going to make us less competitive. We should at least say that we're going to compete on a level playing field with other provinces and other jurisdictions.

It goes on to talk about the compulsory and voluntary trades, which has been discussed.

I have one more section that I think is important. Remember, they're appointing a college, which becomes a self-regulatory authority, like the college of nurses, the college of teachers, the college of doctors, the college of optometrists. They're regulated professions, and there's a physician here listening. They should be independent of the process, not the head of the union. That's a conflict.

How can they deal with disciplinary matters at the same time as the union is representing the interests of workplace disagreements? There have to be professionals that have integrity. I want to see the composition of that board.

Here's the last part. Everyone should read part XII. This is where the minister takes it all back. He sets up a college to do all of these things, sets up laws and bylaws and regulations. The minister has the following functions: to promote trades; to register training agreements; to issue guidelines and policies for the purpose of the act; to work with the government of Canada for inter-provincial standards; to approve persons that will provide training for apprenticeship programs by the college; to administer the examinations that may be prescribed by the board; to conduct policy development, evaluation and research into trades—the minister is running the whole thing. Who are you kidding? This board will meet four or five times a year, go out for drinks, and that'll be the meeting, right there in a nutshell.

Anyway, I think Bill 183 avoids the real issue: that there are no jobs in the province of Ontario. Our economy is going off a cliff at 100 miles an hour. What are we dealing with? Creating more red tape. I don't think anyone in their right seat should be supporting this bill.

Mr. Mike Colle: Call a recess.

Mr. John O'Toole: We should call a recess on this government, because right now what I see is that they're time-allocating bills. They're not giving due consideration, some respect for genuine passionate input. They're ignoring it all. It's frustrating. I'm going to sit down because they're not listening.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: I'm very pleased to enter the debate on time allocation and Bill 183. I've got to say that we all need a little history lesson here today, and I tell you, I'm more than prepared to get it on the record here because we've heard from both sides of the opposition and, quite frankly, it's a bit of a stretch.

"The NDP government changed the standing orders in 1992, making it easier to time-allocate bills (the government was now able to put forward a debatable motion unilaterally imposing limits on the length of debates on government bills and motions. These reforms marked the first time that time allocation was codified in the standing orders. Previously, time allocation motions were presented as substantive government motions that required debate)," as we are doing today.

"Since the change, the percentage of government bills passed using time allocation has steadily increased," from here, from there, up that side of the House, "until"—and I know that everyone wants to know the answer to this—"the McGuinty Liberal government" was elected. That's when things changed.

To get it on the record here, "During the last Tory government, the government"—the Tory government—"time-allocated 60% of its bills." To hear them stand up in the House today and talk about time allocation in any

manner than what in fact they did while they were in government—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Could you say it again?

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: Sixty per cent. You can't argue with the math, although I know there will be arguments with the math. "The McGuinty Liberal government time-allocated 25% of its bills." So I say to the members in the House today, you can argue all you want, but you can't argue the facts. And those are the facts: 60%.

Change the legislation to make up the rules as you see fit, which removes the actual debate within the change to the standing orders, so that we do not debate the standing orders for time allocation—no debate in this House. And that, my friends, is a significant change.

I have to go on and talk about—and I must say I didn't have the opportunity to sit on this committee, and quite frankly I'm a little disappointed that I didn't, because when I read—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's in your notes.

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: —the notes here, yes—I couldn't believe it: 59 amendments in total; 23 from the government, 31 from the NDP, five from the PCs and 15 completed. Twelve 20-minute recess calls. In fact, the members from across the way even called a recess on one of their own amendments. So what do you think the argument would have been when they went out into the hallway? Do you think they debated amongst themselves what their amendment should have been or could have been? One would wonder at that.

But you know, with a 60% background, that's what they bring to the table: 60%. I can tell you that that is significant. And we can see the government today: 25%.

I did want to speak to—this is a wonderful opportunity for me to talk about the good things that are happening in the most beautiful riding in the province of Ontario. We recognize, by having the largest work site in all of the province where construction is happening today, at a Bruce Power site, how important skilled trades are. We are very, very pleased.

Over the years, especially in rural communities, it has been very difficult to train your employees. One of the grants that was received from the McGuinty government went toward our carpenters, one of our skilled trades. I can tell you, what they did with that was absolutely incredible, and so reflective of the rural communities that they work within.

One of the things they did, other than a training centre with the room to bring the staff in and train—they have a trailer. In that trailer are desks and work equipment, so they're able to go out into all of the different work sites and move the trailer around. This group, this union, provides service for four counties. That's Grey county, Huron county, Bruce county and Perth county. If any of the members have had the opportunity to be in the southwest, you would realize how much driving time that would take.

I am very pleased to see the training being provided in something that is portable. It is so reflective of our rural communities, and they really do get it and understand

that a skilled workforce and ongoing training ensure safety as well as an increase in skill sets.

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One of the other things that I wanted to speak to—as I have an opportunity to speak about skills today, I'm very pleased to be able to have the time to talk about the most beautiful riding in the province. One of the things is the high skills majors. We recognize that in order to increase the trades, we must encourage our young people, and by bringing in the high skills majors, bringing it back to the schools—it's all about being respectful and understanding of what the communities need. That was one of the things that I always found the most difficult about the previous government, the cookie-cutter approach that they would use. Whether it be urban or rural, there was no respect for the communities or an understanding of what would work in that community. But by bringing forward the high skills majors, it encourages our young people in all streams. So within my riding, we have masonry, we have electrical—and I can tell you, because I know you'll be anxious to know this, that as we produce 25% of the energy that the province uses, we are one of three within the province that have a high skills major with electric.

We also have agriculture. Obviously, as we're the largest producers of all agricultural product around the province, it was critical that we have an agricultural base where we can encourage our young people to choose agriculture. When we think about the skills that are needed in agriculture today—because it's changed significantly, the skills that are required in order to run a farm today. So this is so critical.

The other thing with the high skills majors that we just announced is arts and culture. As many of you know, we have a very strong cultural community.

But what this is about is recognizing what our young people need—the training they need, getting it as close to home as possible, and also getting the encouragement—while being very respectful of our rural communities. And whether or not that is the career choice, the career path, that they will choose, to go into the skilled trades, it gives them what I would say is a test drive. They can go out and determine if that is where they want their career to be, their future jobs. So before they make the significant investment of post-secondary, it gives them the opportunity to see if that is what they want do or something that they would like to expand on.

It really is important, at all levels, to encourage our young people, and to make sure that we have the trades in place for the province to grow. And that's what I see with this bill. It's laying out a process, a recognition that the trades have changed significantly, and it gives the opportunity for input from our organizations. That, to me, is often what was lost with previous governments, sadly.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The lost years.

Mrs. Carol Mitchell: Yes, the lost years. We think about the years that were lost. But we are catching up and we are making up time, and we must sometimes bring forward a time allocation.

I will end with my final comments on time allocation. Our government struggles, quite frankly, with bringing forward time allocation. But there comes a time when the business of government must move forward, and that's what today represents. But clearly, 25% is significant. That's how much it's lowered from that side of the House: 60% down to 25%. So reluctantly, we bring it forward today, but we understand that Bill 183 is important government business in order to continue to move the province forward.

So I thank you, Speaker, for allowing me to enter the debate, and I look forward to hearing more about this important bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to be able to speak to Bill 183, which is An Act to revise and modernize the law related to apprenticeship training and trades qualifications and to establish the Ontario College of Trades. We're discussing this afternoon a time allocation motion to shut down debate on that bill.

"The Bill sets out a scheme for the governance of the practice of trades in Ontario...." This is from its explanatory note. Interestingly enough, it "prohibits a person from engaging in the practice of a trade designated under the act, employing journeypersons in those trades or sponsoring or employing apprentices unless the person is a member of the college." So all the plumbers and electricians out there are going to have to join this new college if the bill is passed.

It, of course, has a whole section dealing with apprenticeship ratios, something the opposition's been asking for the government to just deal with and be like the rest of the provinces. With the stroke of a pen tomorrow, if they wanted to, they could change our ratios which are so hurting all the young people who are trying to find apprenticeship places. They could do it tomorrow if they really wanted to.

Part XI of the bill "establishes the appointments council which will be responsible for appointing the members of the board and other key bodies in the college's governance structure." When I read that, I'd say that means the unions are going to have control. Very few unions are going to have control of this college, and they don't seem to be in favour of things like apprenticeship ratios that match the rest of the provinces.

I think that's what this bill is really all about, as the member from Leeds–Grenville pointed out. It's really connected with the Working Families Coalition, a third party supported by many unions which is spending millions of dollars in provincial elections. You remember in 2003 they ran ads like, "Not this time, Ernie, not this time"—you know, the nasty stuff in an ad—so Mr. McGuinty can say it's not him, his hands are clean. They've got a third party doing the dirty work. This bill plays to the friends of the Liberal Party and rewards them for support in past elections, and that was pointed out by the member from Leeds–Grenville.

I think our critic the member from Sarnia-Lambton has been doing an excellent job on this bill.

There are a lot of businesses out there, small businesses in particular, that do have concerns about the bill, and I'd like to get some of those on the record.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which represents 42,000 small and medium-sized members, have concerns with Bill 183. They represent virtually every sector of the economy. They account for more than half the employment of the province, more than half of the GDP; 81% of Ontario businesses right now have fewer than five employees.

One of the chief complaints from small business is the shortage of skilled labour. CFIB's latest report on training shows 37% of member businesses are currently experiencing labour shortages in areas or in jobs that require apprenticeship training. One way for small businesses to deal with these shortages is to train.

CFIB estimates that, on average, small and medium-size businesses spend \$2,700 per employee per year on both informal and formal training. Typically, the smaller the business, the higher the cost of training, which essentially means that the smallest firms out there are disproportionately affected by training costs.

When it comes to apprenticeship training, small businesses have identified some key reasons that actually motivate them to train apprentices. First, apprenticeship training is a good way for them to deal with labour shortages; second, it helps them prepare the next generation of journeypersons and come up with a succession plan; and, third, it helps them grow their business.

But businesses have identified some key challenges when providing apprenticeship training. They sometimes lose their investment in training when their apprentices are being poached by larger businesses; a lot more needs to be done about the in-class portion of the training so that it doesn't disrupt business operations; and, of course, the issue of ratios, especially to the smallest firms in those trades that currently have restrictive ratios.

Ratios are the top challenge for apprentices. I've personally received many comments from apprentices and small businesses and resolutions from councils where businesses are being negatively affected. If I have time at the end of my speech, I'll read some of them into the record.

In many cases, apprentices actually approach an employer directly to sponsor their training and the employer is not able to do that because of ratio requirements. There's a growing sense of unfairness among Ontario businesses and tradespeople in terms of the ratios that are currently in Ontario in light of efforts that have been made across the country to reduce ratios in other provinces. To be clear, for example, if you're an electrical company, you need three journeymen for one apprentice. In most other provinces it's one to one, so you can have more apprentices.

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Last year at this time, the Ontario Electrical League and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business

joined with Ontario youth representatives at Queen's Park to demand action from the provincial government on job-killing apprenticeship rules. Both organizations note that thousands of young Ontarians are turned away from apprenticeship jobs even though "contractors have numerous unfilled vacancies." The remedy: Reduce the ratio of certified electrical tradespersons required for each apprentice from three to one to one to one, which is in line with other provinces.

The Ontario Electrical League has this to say about ratios: "The Ontario government actively encourages young people to enter skilled trades at the same time it obstructs employment opportunities through unfair apprenticeship ratios.

"The same policy also harms thousands of small businesses that provide contracting services because they are barred from hiring the skilled employees they need to replace retiring workers or meet growing workloads."

Mary Ingram-Haigh, OEL president, says, "Electrical contractors alone could hire hundreds, if not thousands, of apprentices right now if given the chance. Instead of pink slips, Premier McGuinty should offer apprenticeship candidates new rules that will let them work."

When it comes to incentives within the existing apprenticeship training, the tax credit is a helpful measure. However, CFIB reports that almost half of them were not aware of this credit. A lot more needs to be done to promote this credit. Of those businesses who actually know about it, some are not in a position to take full advantage of it because they are not allowed to hire as many apprentices as they can because of ratio requirements.

In terms of the existing apprenticeship structure and when it comes to provincial apprenticeship committees, small business was never really represented on those committees. Now, going forward with the elimination of those committees and replacing them with trade boards under the proposed legislation, small businesses are not really convinced that their representation will improve. Understandably, there is a heightened level of skepticism about whether the proposed trades college will achieve its goal and create a level playing field.

The college will be self-regulating, though we've seen that the government has now taken steps to intervene with other similar health-related agencies. For example, not long ago, the Minister of Consumer Services introduced legislation to rein in the Technical Standards and Safety Authority's operations. One of the areas that he's looking at is representation. The other area he's looking at is policy measures.

Another example is the Electrical Safety Authority. Recently, the Minister of Consumer Services had to intervene to put in place a moratorium on charging fees on manufacturers at a time when the manufacturing sector was on its knees.

There are no criteria in the proposed bill about the selection of the appointments council. This is going to be a body that is of critical importance because this will be the body that will set up the permanent governance board

and the review panels that will deal with ratios and compulsory certification. Small businesses want to know who is going to be on that council and whether they will be represented or their concerns considered.

Member fees are also a concern. They are seen as a tax on tradespeople. There's no clarity as to how the price will be determined and what the value for money will be to tradespeople who will be paying those fees. I'm sure my local plumber will be really thrilled to find out that he has to join this.

Finally, there's nothing in this bill that will help reduce training costs. On the contrary, training costs may actually increase because of the new fees that tradespeople will have to pay. This may discourage new employers from engaging in apprenticeship training.

I'd just like to get a couple of e-mails that I have received—I've received many on this issue, especially to do with apprenticeship ratios.

Here's one from Stinson Electrical: "As per a conversation I had with Yvonne yesterday, I am sending along documentation that pertains to our concerns over the current electrician-apprentice ratios. We are feeling frustrated over this whole issue. As for the young man who sent us his resumé for an apprenticeship program, we receive e-mails and calls weekly. You would think that the provincial government would want to look to the future and allow opportunities for gainful trade employment for youth. It does provide with us an 'apprenticeship tax credit' program as an incentive for employers to hire apprentices, but then, ironically, limits the number of apprentices we are able to hire with unfair ratios." That's from Stinson Electrical.

McDougall, Parry Sound and Seguin sent a letter—I won't read the whole thing. They sent this in April of this year. They note:

"It has come to our attention that to obtain a second apprentice in a business in some trades you may need at least three licensed journey people. We feel that due to the current shortage of the skilled trades workforce in our area a review of these requirements is necessary. In smaller communities such as ours, it is often difficult to have one licensed journeyperson in a business let alone three. These ratios are currently putting a halt to the growth of our trades industry because businesses can often only take on one apprentice and therefore eager apprentices are out of work and become discouraged and frustrated. It is our opinion that the apprenticeship ratios should be changed to one apprentice to one journey-person."

That comes from McDougall, Parry Sound and Seguin, and it's signed by the mayors of all three towns.

I had an email from someone involved in the Parry Sound area:

"Apprenticeship program

"Today I received an inquiry from Bay Area Electrical and plumbing about what appears to be a real problem with the apprenticeship program. Hopefully, you can help. Presently, it is almost impossible for companies like Bay Area to get licensed plumbers so they have to train

their own. In the case of Bay Area, they have three plumbers' licences, but yet can only sign on one apprentice. They were told that they need to have four licences before they can sign up a second apprentice. That doesn't sound right to me when we are desperate for plumbers. Can you help." That came to me.

Another letter here that reads: "We have been hearing rumblings for quite some time now about the importance of changing the apprenticeship ratios as some of the other provinces have done. At this point in time we have little hope that this will happen any time soon. Let me indicate to you how the current ratio provisions directly affect my day-to-day operation negatively"—and they go on. I won't read the whole letter.

Just in conclusion, I say that we cannot support this bill. I don't think it will make a difference in terms of this apprenticeship ratio problem. One part of the problem—in fact, I think what's going to happen is that it's going to give control of all the trades to the unions, and this will not be of benefit to the economy of this province or to young people seeking opportunity.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Leal: I'm delighted to have the opportunity this afternoon to make a few comments on the time allocation motion.

But first of all, I'll give a bit of an announcement here. On behalf of David Crowley, the president of the Norwood Agricultural Society, I invite everyone to Norwood this Thanksgiving weekend to enjoy the Norwood Fall Fair, which is always a great opportunity to get a feel for rural Ontario in the great town of Norwood.

It's interesting, there was a lot of talk, first of all, about closure. Modern-day closure, of course, started in 1956 during the great pipeline debate and has been used by successive governments, both federally and provincially, since that time when there's a need to push forward on a piece of priority legislation. I also have a great respect for the opposition parties which, from time to time, use the rules to stall a particular government initiative. But in this particular case, Bill 183 is such an important piece of legislation, particularly for the young people in the province, that it's incumbent upon us all to move forward with this bill.

In my case, I've met a lot of young people—Sam, Ed, Jennifer and Charlene—in my constituency office who want to have the opportunity to pursue a trade in the province of Ontario. Many of them have been involved through their high schools, through the Ontario youth apprenticeship program, and want to use that as a platform to move into a full apprenticeship training program to get their apprenticeship and to fulfill and pursue their destiny.

It's interesting enough that this afternoon there's been a lot of talk about Working Families. I know the working families that I see, or certainly the working families that I meet each and every Friday at the East City Coffee Shop in Peterborough. We get a chance to sit down, enjoy a soup and a western sandwich for \$6 and have an oppor-

tunity to talk about what's going on in their particular sectors. Also, if you want to go to the Branch 52 Legion in Peterborough on Fridays, they also provide a \$6 lunch, which is a great lunch. You get an opportunity to consult with the folks on a wide variety of issues.

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A group that is not part of the Working Families Coalition, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, made a submission on Bill 183 by Stuart Johnston, who's their vice-president of policy and government relations. I just want to get a few of his thoughts on Bill 183.

"The Ontario Chamber of Commerce commends the provincial government for developing the framework for the college of trades as outlined in Bill 183: Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009. The OCC believes this legislation will help foster the skills development that will help enable Ontario to transition to a more productive and efficient economy.

"The skills trade shortage has been a serious concern for our members over the past few years. This concern has been exacerbated by Ontario's slowing birth rate and aging population. Both are major challenges Ontario faces in attaining the labour force it requires for economic growth. It is estimated that from 2011 to 2020, Ontario's labour force growth will weaken to 0.7% from 1.8% over the previous decade. More alarming is that, combined with these increasing labour market pressures, Ontario's population growth rate will shrink even further over the next five years, averaging 0.5%."

It goes on to say: "The OCC released two reports" talking about "addressing the skills shortage: Taking Action on Skilled Trades: Establishing the Business Case for Investing in Apprenticeship, 2005; and Retooling for a Prosperous Ontario: A Global Perspective on Skilled Trades," in 2006. They go on and on, and they do talk about an example that they believe Bill 183 will emulate. They talk about Australia:

"Initiatives such as the 'one-stop shop' have proven to be successful in other jurisdictions. For example, in 1996, the Australian government streamlined the apprenticeship program and created a national standards training package. The national approach was successful. It created a 'one-stop shop' for apprenticeship services, cutting through red tape and simplifying training arrangements for employers. It was also responsible for the implementation of a national marketing campaign to communicate the benefits of new apprenticeships to employers and young people"—exactly the kind of thing that Bill 183 will be doing.

It's interesting enough, when you talk to young people, that they really see apprenticeship training as an opportunity for gold-collar occupations in the province of Ontario, the kinds of occupations, through training electricians, machinists, toolmakers, you name it, to pursue wonderful careers and in fact pursue what they feel would make a significant contribution to Ontario's economy.

I also want to quote from another submission that was made, by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Mr. Mike Yorke. He said:

"My name is Mike Yorke and I am here today on behalf of the Carpenters' District Council of Ontario, a progressive labour union that represents roughly 24,000 skilled men and women across our province.

"I would like to begin by conveying strong support for Bill 183 and, before I go into detail regarding that support, I want to offer a few words of thanks to some of the people who deserve credit for this groundbreaking legislation." He goes on to talk about Tim Armstrong and Kevin Whitaker, who have produced reports on apprenticeship training in the province of Ontario.

He goes on to say, "Our initial hope was that this review would lead to the creation of a fair, open and transparent process for interested voluntary trades to apply to become compulsory.

"Well, Bill 183 does provide that opportunity, but it offers the entire community of skilled trades much more.

"When both Armstrong and Whitaker reached out to stakeholders across the province, they heard many of the same concerns and complaints.

"For example: The current PAC system is not functioning properly"—I agree with that; the government needs to listen to reform that process; "There are too many bureaucratic layers to deal with"—I agree with that; and, "There is no adequate mechanism for dealing with compulsory certification or ratios" in the province of Ontario. The list goes on and on. He concludes by saying that Bill 183 will address a number of these concerns.

I just want to reference the bill for a moment. One part of it that I think is particularly important is something that has been asked for by many people who are involved in this area in Peterborough. I want to reference in particular section 60, which deals with "Ratios, compulsory and voluntary trades." It clearly indicates in section 60 that "If a trade has been prescribed by a minister's regulation as being subject to a journeyman to apprentice ratio, the board shall, by a board regulation, prescribe the number of apprentices who may be employed by an employer in that trade in relation to the number of journeymen employed by the employer as determined by a review panel."

So during the first year that the transition board is put in place, they will look at this issue of ratios, and then every year beyond that there's going to be a built-in four-year review. I think that is particularly important, that we don't get sort of fossilized and put something in place for ever and ever and evermore, that indeed every four years we'll get the opportunity to take a look at the ratios, something that by and large I think is accepted in the community, something that we need to do.

Mr. Speaker—or Madam Speaker, I should say; you're doing a very fine job in the chair—I want to also preface something that appeared in today's business section of the Toronto Star. It's called "Deal Sparks Green Envy." They're talking about a proposed agreement between the government of Ontario and one of the largest industrial groups in the world called the Samsung Group, looking at investing millions of dollars in On-

tario's renewable energy sector. One of the things that's very important about that is increasing manufacturing opportunities in the green energy sector in the province of Ontario. One of the things they talk about is the need to have a qualified and trained workforce to take those jobs within the green energy sector.

One of the ways we can do that and provide hope and opportunity for Ontarians is to have Bill 183 in place, have a solid college of trades for apprenticeships in the province of Ontario. Many of those young men and women who will get the opportunity to enter apprenticeship programs in a variety of fields will find that they'll be able to pursue their destiny and their careers in the green energy sector of the province of Ontario. I think we've got to move ahead with this bill right away.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The time having expired, Ms. Smith has moved government notice

of motion number 140. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Having received the deferral slip, the vote is deferred until deferred votes tomorrow.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): This House stands adjourned until 9 of the clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1748.

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	
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
Brotten, Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
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	
Craiton, 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	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième 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
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB) Gélinas, France (NDP)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville Nickel Belt	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
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) Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts 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
Hoskins, Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
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 Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales 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 Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
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 Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation 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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
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 Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
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	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire 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 Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
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 Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
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	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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Jim Brownell, Kim Craitor
Bob Delaney, Garfield Dunlop
Phil McNeely, John O'Toole
Khalil Ramal
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Khalil Ramal
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Bob Delaney, Joe Dickson
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Norm Miller, Khalil Ramal
Peter Tabuns
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Phil McNeely, Jerry J. Ouellette
David Ramsay, Liz Sandals
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel
David Zimmer
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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller
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Kim Craitor, Gerry Martiniuk
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch
Michael Prue, Tony Ruprecht
Mario Sergio
Clerks / Greffiers: Trevor Day (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon
Sophia Aggelonitis, Vic Dhillon
Cheri DiNovo, Linda Jeffrey
Sylvia Jones, Jean-Marc Lalonde
Carol Mitchell, Shafiq Qaadri
Elizabeth Witmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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spécial de la santé mentale et des dépendances**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Elliott
Bas Balkissoon, Christine Elliott
Kevin Daniel Flynn, France Gélinas
Helena Jaczek, Sylvia Jones
Jeff Leal, Liz Sandals
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