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**Monday 12 April 2010**

**Lundi 12 avril 2010**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 12 April 2010

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 12 avril 2010

*The House met at 1030.*

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

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** I'm pleased to introduce Al Strathdee, who is a very proud father from my riding. He is visiting his daughter Andrea today, who is one of our new pages from the great riding of Perth–Wellington.

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I'm pleased to welcome Keith Pacey, a friend of mine from the city of North Bay and a retired teacher. We're delighted to have him here today for the opening day of the Blue Jays.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd like to ask my colleagues to welcome Miss Louissa Barnes, a grade 10 student from Lorne Park Secondary School in Mississauga, and her mother, Pauline Barnes. Louissa's essay on her wish to job-shadow a provincial minister was selected as one of two winning submissions from over 200 female students from across the GTA and Niagara peninsula in Youth in Motion's Women in Politics and Government career learning day. Welcome, Louissa.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** It is my privilege to introduce students from St. Marcellinus Secondary School. They are visiting Queen's Park today, and they are a grade 12 politics class. They are in the visitors' gallery. I would like to welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to welcome the family of page Owen Singer to Queen's Park. Joining us today from my riding of St. Paul's are Owen's mother, Tina; his grandmothers Sandy and Rochelle; and his grandfather Morty. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** We have with us today in the Speaker's gallery the Consul General from the Republic of Chile here in Toronto, Mr. Patricio Powell. Please join me in welcoming our guest.

### POLISH COMMUNITY

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Before I put my question to the Acting Premier, I wish to take this moment to express the condolences of the Ontario PC caucus to the family of President Kaczynski, the Polish people and the great Polish-Canadian community on this tragic loss.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. I think the honourable member raises a good point. The Polish

people have lost a number of highly esteemed individuals, including their Deputy Speaker as well. I would ask all members, if they would, to please rise and join me as we observe a moment of silence to those individuals who tragically lost their lives.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Our condolences go out to the Polish community here in Toronto, and those in Poland as well.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Speaker. I think it's very appropriate for us to share that moment.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** To the Acting Premier: Premier McGuinty promised that he would stop making hospitals pay for bureaucrats seconded to his pet projects. Why did Premier McGuinty break that promise?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** This government believes in transparency and accountability at all levels. As a result of suggestions last year, we in fact revealed, at the back of the lists that we published, all of those officials across all ministries and departments who have been seconded and whose pay is captured in different places, to ensure that that accountability and transparency is there.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** That's certainly not what the PC caucus heard and not what Ontario families concerned about this ongoing abuse heard. We heard the Premier say, "We're going to change it." We feel it is inappropriate to take money that is supposed to go to front-line care in hospitals to pay bureaucrats who are not even working at those hospitals but seconded to the Premier's pet projects. When we look through this year's sunshine list, we see that the McGuinty Liberals are still paying for special bureaucrats at the pet projects through hospital budgets. This wasn't meant to be tucked away as some kind of endnote to the back of the sunshine list. The Premier said he was going to end it. Why did Dalton McGuinty break yet another promise to Ontario families?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The list is separate, published within the sunshine list; it's there. It's, I believe, in alphabetical order. I don't have it right in front of me. It's there for everyone to see. They can see that.

Do you know what they couldn't see? They couldn't see Hydro One's salaries when the Tories were in office.

They couldn't see OPG when that government was in power. That was deliberately left out of the sunshine list. In fact, we said we would separate out that list; we did. It's published; everyone can see it. It's about accountability and transparency. We even corrected the accountability and transparency overlaps of the previous government.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Sadly, Dalton McGuinty entered into office by famously breaking his promise not to raise taxes on families and now still, six years later, this Premier says one thing and does the opposite. Minister, I'll remind you, in this very House on October 19, the Premier said, "I disagree with that practice and that's why we're going to change it." Yet still we see money meant for hospitals, for front-line patient care, being diverted to seconded bureaucrats for the Premier's pet projects. Some kind of endnotes buried away at the end of the list are not good enough. You said you would change this practice. I ask the minister, why is Dalton McGuinty still breaking promises to Ontario families?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** We've provided for appropriate accountability and transparency. The list of those secondments—and I would remind the member opposite that secondments of this nature have been happening for many, many years across governments of all three political parties—has been provided for. It is on a separate page in the sunshine report. I don't have it in front of me. My recollection is that it's near the back. It's in alphabetical order. It shows individual employees and who's being paid what. It's apparent; it's accountable; it's transparent. That's what we said we would do, that's what we're doing, and that's what this government and this party are all about.

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

1040

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Quite frankly, Minister, burying some sheet with some kind of asterisk next to it at the bottom of thousands and thousands of pages is a far cry from ending the practice and is yet another broken promise by this Premier.

#### LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Acting Premier: The sunshine list reports that a Gloria Whitson-Shea was paid \$227,000 by the Grand River Hospital, but the Waterloo Record reports that she left there in August 2008. She does not appear in these so-called endnotes the minister speaks about. So, Minister, can you explain to patients in Kitchener-Waterloo why \$227,000 meant for front-line care was diverted from the local hospital to someone that you don't even list on your so-called endnotes?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** If I may, here is the list. I will indicate to the member that it is in alphabetical order, as I said. It's one full page. It lists taxable benefits, salaries paid, the seconded position, the position, the ministry that

the position was seconded to. There it is, right what we said we would do. It's clear; it's accountable; it's transparent. So when the Leader of the Opposition says we didn't do it, I ask the people of Ontario to cast your judgment. There's the list, in alphabetical order, by ministry, by salary and where they're seconded to. That's what we said we would do; that's what we did.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** No, that's not what Dalton McGuinty promised. He said he would end the practice.

I notice that the minister does not tell us what page Gloria Whitson-Shea is listed upon. In fact, she is working for the Waterloo Wellington LHIN. And she is not the only bureaucrat working at the LHINs who is being paid out of hospital budgets. In fact, you're making Bluewater Health pay Antoinette Adey six figures to be the director of community relations for the Bluewater area LHIN, and that's over and above the six figures she is paid by the LHIN.

Minister, are you burying salaries of executives at your high-cost LHINs because you want to skirt salary guidelines, or are you trying to hide the ballooning numbers of your runaway regional bureaucracies?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** In fact, the Leader of the Opposition has the numbers, the figures, the names, what organization they're part of. They're not hidden. They're there for the public to see. The fact that he has them is indication of that.

I'll tell you what we are doing. We are shortening wait times for key surgical procedures. We are making our health care system better for all Ontarians. We are building hospitals. We've added hospital beds. We've stopped the practice of the previous government of firing nurses, of laying people off indiscriminately in favour of poor public policy choices.

There's no doubt there are difficult choices in the health care system. Premier McGuinty and his government will ensure that Ontario has the best public health care system in the world.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** First Premier McGuinty says he's going to end the practice, and he does not. Now the finance minister says they're all listed when they're not. Clearly, after six years these guys are still the same gang that says one thing to Ontario families to their face and does something totally different behind closed doors. It's just not only the Waterloo Wellington LHIN, Minister. You're making the Royal Victoria Hospital pay Sandra Easson-Bruno to work for the North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN; the Hôtel-Dieu Grace Hospital pays Paul Audet to work for the Erie St. Clair LHIN; and Hamilton Health Sciences pays Jennifer Everson to work for the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN.

Minister, why are these expensive LHIN bureaucracy salaries buried so deep that you can't even find them on your sunshine list endnotes?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Tory research was able to find them. If Tory research can find them, I think just about anybody can.

This is all about better health care for Ontarians. It's about a better delivery of service, it's about reducing wait times, improving front-line services, and making sure that Ontarians have access to the best health care system in the world. This government is all about accountability and transparency. The member has the numbers. The public has the numbers. The member knows where they've been seconded to and from. That's because we are providing that information. The people of Ontario know that, and the people of Ontario know that this government continues to work hard to improve the level and quality of public services available to all Ontarians.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Acting Premier. When seniors can no longer fully care for themselves and need to move to long-term care, should they be forced to live far from family and friends and slapped with fines if they refuse?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What I can tell you is that we are absolutely committed to providing the best possible care for our seniors. That includes seniors who are at the point in their life when it is time to move into a long-term-care home. We're also committed to providing that care as close to home as possible. I cannot tell you how meaningful it is for us to see those new long-term-care homes open in our communities, to see the homes that were frankly in a state that didn't meet the standards of any caring—people in this community being upgraded to quite wonderful new homes. We're committed to improving care for those in our long-term-care homes, and we will continue to do that.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Seniors who have worked hard all of their lives and now need some help as they grow older are being told in communities across Ontario that they must move to long-term-care homes hundreds and hundreds of kilometres or more from their families. Would this minister accept this for her own family?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I agree with the member opposite that we need to continue the work we're doing when it comes to providing the right supports for seniors. But in fairness, we have increased funding in the long-term-care home sector by over \$1 billion. That's a 55% increase in funding since we were elected in 2003. We've got 6,100 new full-time staff, including 2,300 nurses, who are delivering 12 million more hours of care for our seniors. We are continuing to improve long-term care. We are building new homes. We are opening new homes so that we can provide the very best care for people who need that level of care.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Hospitals are telling patients that they must take the first open bed, regardless of whether it's hundreds of kilometres away, or they have to pay a penalty out of their own pocket. Experts at the

Advocacy Centre for the Elderly say what's going on is "often illegal."

Will the McGuinty government enforce its own law, put an end to this practice and commit to making sure that families have access to long-term-care beds close to home?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** As I said, we are absolutely committed to improving long-term care in this province. Our record speaks for itself. We're spending more than \$1 billion more now than in 2003.

Another way we can help seniors in this province is by reducing the cost of generic drugs. I made an announcement last week that will cut in half the cost of generic drugs for seniors in this province. I have not yet heard from the leader of the third party what her position is. I hope that she would inform us of that position.

1050

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is again to the Acting Premier. Getting people out of overwhelmed hospital and emergency rooms and into home care and long-term-care facilities makes life better for patients and for their families, but not when seniors are shipped away hundreds of kilometres from their homes and their loved ones. When will the McGuinty government put a stop to this heart-wrenching practice?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Again, the member is correct: We still have work to do when it comes to improving long-term care in this province. But the improvements we've made are quite remarkable.

I think the member opposite is talking about the importance of making sure the people who are in our hospitals are people who need the care that only a hospital can provide, and that those who can have their needs met and in fact get better care elsewhere actually have that opportunity to move elsewhere.

We are focusing on our alternate-level-of-care patients. Approximately 17% of the people who are in our hospitals actually could be better served outside the hospital. We're working very hard to do that.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** For people already struggling with tough times, this is another cruel challenge that they're being forced to face. A family in Sudbury is told that an aging parent must move to a long-term-care facility in Parry Sound. That's a four-hour round trip every single time they visit. For too many working people, that's simply impossible to do regularly. Why is this government forcing this hardship on seniors when they need their families the most?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am in complete agreement with the member opposite that having long-term care as close to family as possible is a very high priority for us. That's why we've opened 8,000 new long-term-care beds in this province. We're adding another 2,000 long-term-care beds in this province. This is a challenge

for us, not just for today but for coming years and coming generations. It's very important that we get people the care they need as close to home as possible. We remain committed to doing that.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'm pleased that the minister agrees, but the problem seems to only be getting worse in the province. In hospitals across the province, beds are being filled by people who could be and should be recuperating in long-term care or at home. Despite six years of promises, those beds still aren't there and our home care system is broken. Now seniors who have earned the right to some dignity in their later years are being ordered out of their beds and shipped far from family. Would the minister accept this if it was her own family? Why does she think it's fair to subject families to this emotional strain?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I am more than prepared to look into the case she has raised. As I say, I agree with her that care closest to home is the best care, and I will happily look at that particular case. The LHINs are working hard to create the right environment for people in care.

I do want to ask the member opposite, though, about her concern for seniors as it relates to the cost of drugs. This is an important initiative. I am very hopeful that the member opposite will support our initiatives to lower the cost of drugs for seniors and others in this province.

#### LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is for the Acting Premier. If one of the LHIN bureaucrats you make hospitals pay for closes the hospital that pays his or her salary, does the LHIN bureaucrat lose their job too? Do they collect severance, or do you just bury the salary in another hospital budget?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The campaign against community-based health decision-making continues. We have given the local community a voice in making health care decisions that are right for their communities.

The local health integration networks are providing extraordinary integration at the local level. They are tying together the care from the perspective of the patient. That is the right thing to do. For too long, we have had a health care system that has been stuck in silos, and the local health integration networks are working with their community members to break down those silos and provide care that is right and best for the people.

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

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Premier McGuinty does an end run around accountability when the hospitals who pay the salaries of LHIN bureaucrats have no say in the work they do or how money is being diverted from front-line care. It's also an end run around accountability when he leads Ontario families to believe that the \$17 million reported in the sunshine list last week accounts for all LHIN bureaucrats earning six-figure salaries. Now he's taking an end run around transparency too, hiding at least

\$1.5 million of secret LHIN bureaucrat salaries in hospital budgets. These bureaucrats are not independent of the hospitals who pay them.

The Premier has created a conflict of interest here. Deputy Premier, why didn't you disclose the details of LHIN bureaucrats who are being paid out of hospital budgets?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** These salaries that we have hidden are in the report; they are publicly available. That's how the member opposite has them. This is just another attack on community decision-making when it comes to health care in this province.

I implore the member opposite to actually learn what the LHIN is doing in her community. Take the time and understand that integration that is happening. I think that the Central East LHIN has done a very, very good job in driving that integration in their communities. They've worked with nine hospitals so that each one of them has a balanced budget plan. They're allocating the aging-at-home dollars; we're spending over a billion dollars on aging at home. That is all being directed through the LHINs, using the community organizations that are there so people can stay in their homes longer.

The LHINs are the future of health care, and I think the member opposite should take the time to learn what's happening in her community.

#### JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** To the Acting Premier: The Rahim Jaffer case just won't go away. With a sordid trail of hookers, bikers and sleazy business deals, it has even cost a federal cabinet minister her job. Jaffer was caught driving drunk with cocaine in his vehicle, yet got off with barely a slap on the wrist. Who was involved in cutting this sweetheart plea deal?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The member opposite knows that this is a matter that was before the courts and before the police and was resolved through the due process of our legal system. Accordingly, it wouldn't be appropriate for me to speak beyond that, but again, I would say to the member opposite that these issues are a matter of due process within the legal system. The member opposite knows and understands that, I think.

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

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** That's the problem. The matter isn't before the courts anymore. The optics here reek. The OPP officers involved were experienced and very diligent. According to the Toronto Star, the police were surprised at Jaffer's sweetheart deal, a deal that demonstrates that there's one set of rules for some people and another for everyone else. Why would the Attorney General's office cut this deal—holding a drunk driving charge and a possession of cocaine charge—when this government purports to be tough on drunk drivers and, I presume, stoned drivers as well?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The member opposite knows that crown attorneys are independent and make their decisions. The crown—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just ask the member from Durham to keep his comments to himself. If he has an issue with another member in this House, have that discussion with an honourable member outside.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No. Please continue.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No, I'm not accepting—stop the clock. No, leave the clock running; pardon me. I would just ask the honourable member that if he has an issue with another member in this chamber, to have those discussions outside. I don't need to hear it going back and forth. It's not helpful to any of us in this House.

Deputy.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The honourable member knows—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** That's not helpful either, Minister of Finance.

Please continue.

1100

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The member knows that crown attorneys are independent and make their decisions. The crown stated on the record that these were issues related to the evidence. We have to abide by that and respect the independence of the crown attorneys' office so that, in fact, justice and due process can proceed as intended.

#### PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

**Mr. David Zimmer:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. My constituents want assured access to both low-cost prescription drugs and to a pharmacist. Both are important to them. There are plans in the works to reform the drug system, and part of the plan is to remove professional allowances. Those are the rebates that are paid to pharmacies by generic drug companies to stock their products on their shelves.

Pharmacy stores like Shoppers Drug Mart oppose the changes. They say, "Look, it will hurt our bottom line and affect services we provide." But on the other hand, groups like the Canadian Cancer Society and the Canadian Association of Retired Persons praised the changes. They say they will improve access to drugs.

Minister, what's the real story on drug reform? Who do we believe? What are the facts?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Compared to other jurisdictions, other OECD countries, Ontarians are paying far too much for generic drugs. The biggest reason is these so-called professional allowance payments from generic companies to the companies that own the pharmacies in exchange for stocking their products; 70% of these payments, which are supposed to be used for patient care, are

actually being spent on salaries, bonuses, fringe benefits, and, yes, to boost their profits.

Our proposed reforms would make our system more transparent by removing these allowances. Instead, we'll be paying pharmacies for the vital services they provide as well as supporting pharmacies in rural and underserved areas. This will allow us to cut the price by at least half that Ontarians are paying for these—

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

**Mr. David Zimmer:** My constituents in Willowdale get really ticked off when they read that in Ontario, we pay as much as four times more for most of the popular generic drugs for diabetes, high blood pressure and other common health problems as they do in the United States. To hear that the cause of these inflated prices is the abuse of the rebate system really makes people's blood boil.

Minister, in fact, how are the allowances being abused and what proof do you have that the allowances are being abused?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I believe that we do have a responsibility to take action on this issue. We cannot stand by as the prices that government pays, that individuals pay and that health plans pay are inflated because of allowances that are being abused.

Of the 206 on-site inspections conducted at pharmacies in 2008-09, there were violations in 100% of inspections. In all cases, pharmacies were required to repay the money to the government and to taxpayers. In some cases, legal action was pursued.

In April 2009, we uncovered a drug-recycling scheme. We laid 22 provincial offence charges for providing false or incomplete information or obstructing an inspection. We issued 12 rebate penalty orders and filed five complaints with the Ontario—

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

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** My question is for the Acting Premier. We're 80 days away now from your government's greedy HST tax grab kicking in. Already, a senior McGuinty Liberal is softening the ground for you to increase the HST from 13% to 15%. Dalton McGuinty's former strategic adviser Andrew Steele praises the NDP in Nova Scotia for hiking the HST by 2%, calling it "fiscally prudent."

We always knew you were addicted to increasing taxes, but when were you going to tell Ontario families of your secret plan to hike the HST?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I am pleased that on January 1, personal taxes in Ontario were cut. I am pleased that on July 1 of this year, the capital tax will be eliminated. I am pleased that on July 1 of this year, the tax on manufacturers and processors will be cut from 12% to 10%. I am pleased that the general corporate tax rate will be cut from some 14% to 10% by 2013. I am pleased that the Conservatives' leading expert at last year's budget hear-

ings said that our policy will create 600,000 jobs in the next 10 years.

I can't account for why the NDP would raise the HST—

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

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I'm just counting all those jobs, Minister.

Even if the minister says he won't hike the HST, you've got to read the fine print, because the one-time director of strategic research and policy for that party is already out there floating the idea of an HST rate hike. The McGuinty Liberals' adviser calls Nova Scotia's NDP Premier "smart" for running a deficit, raising taxes and cutting government.

You're going to increase the HST to 15%, aren't you, Acting Premier? Are you raising the HST (a) to be able to pay secret salaries of LHIN bureaucrats, (b) so you don't have to get control over runaway spending on eHealth and LHIN consultants, (c) so you can keep subsidizing foreign countries, or all of the above?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Why won't the Tories commit to undoing the HST? I think that's the mystery question that all Ontarians ask. What is your position? Are you going to leave it in place? I think they are, Mr. Speaker, because they haven't said anything to the contrary.

Look, I can't account for why the NDP would raise the HST in Nova Scotia. I don't understand—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. The members were doing extremely well through the first half of question period, but the noise level has accelerated, and I would just like it decreased. Minister?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The Tories won't say what they will do. Their federal brethren are voting for it; they gave us \$4 billion to do it. Their expert says it's the right tax policy. They said it was the right tax policy before we did it. We've laid out a plan. We've seen 100,000 net new jobs since last May and 1.6% growth in GDP in the fourth quarter. Things are getting—

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

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. In its recent budget, the McGuinty government took the drastic measure of reducing funding for new transit lines in Toronto by \$4 billion—almost half the money promised over the next five years.

One would hope that the McGuinty government did a careful assessment of the impacts of this decision. Would the minister please share with Ontarians the impact of the cut to transit in terms of lost jobs, increased pollution and lost economic productivity?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** First of all, I need to correct the member opposite. This is not a cut of the fund-

ing. What we have said is we are going to delay the cash flow for the first five years. The commitment—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The party opposite can deride the answer, but the answer is the answer. The \$11.5 billion is in place. You've heard that from the finance minister, you've heard it from the Premier and you've heard it from me. What we have had to do, because of the economic downturn and because of the fact that we do have a deficit in this province, is slow down the cash flow. But I'm working with Metrolinx, and Metrolinx is going to be bringing forward a plan to keep all of those projects on track. They will be completed—a little bit slower, but they will be completed.

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

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** The McGuinty transit cuts will undermine hundreds of good jobs in Thunder Bay building streetcars. The McGuinty transit cuts will worsen Toronto gridlock, which already costs \$5 billion a year. The McGuinty transit cuts will worsen smog, which costs Ontario \$1 billion a year in health care costs. The McGuinty transit cuts will worsen poverty, which costs Ontario \$30 billion a year. The McGuinty transit cuts will hasten climate change, which is already costing Ontarians billions of dollars in drought, storms and heat waves.

I ask again, why won't the McGuinty government admit that the real costs of cutting transit funding for Ontarians far outweigh any short-term savings?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have to say that it is a bit rich coming from this member, questioning the transit build. This member is the single member in this House who has opposed the building of the air-rail link, has opposed the work that's been going on in the west end of Toronto, and has been stirring up opposition to building good transit in this city for months.

1110

The reality is, we are going to build transit in Toronto; we are going to keep those five projects on track. Metrolinx will be bringing forward a plan to make sure that those projects continue. It would be wonderful if the member opposite would work with us in her community to make sure that the transit gets built.

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** My question is to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. Last week, green businesses throughout our province got some good news. It is clear now that Ontario is serious about becoming a leader in clean and renewable energy. Last week, the minister, at Durham College in Oshawa, announced the awarding of 184 contracts to large-scale renewable energy projects. There is no doubt these contracts will change the landscape of Ontario's green economy.

Our feed-in-tariff program is already attracting international attention and praise. The \$7 billion of investment by Samsung in Ontario is a prime example of this. But too much international interest could mean that On-

tario's own green businesses get left behind on home turf. Would the minister please elaborate on how these feed-in-tariff contracts are making Ontario a destination for green energy development while still looking out for the interests of our own—

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I thank the member for the question. The announcement last week made at Durham College signalled a great day for green energy in this province. These 184 projects will generate 2,500 megawatts of renewable energy. That's enough to power 600,000 homes in Ontario. These projects will include 76 ground-mounted solar panels, 47 onshore wind projects, 46 water power projects and seven biogas projects, among others.

Combined with the 510 medium-scale feed-in-tariff contracts, Ontario will see 20,000 jobs created, which will generate \$9 billion in investments in this province, something that the people of Ontario are looking forward to. I can tell you that those students at Durham College who will receive these new-generation jobs are very excited about this announcement.

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

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** It is clear that these FIT contracts are truly a landmark initiative for the province. I can say without any hesitation that the people who live in my community of Ottawa Centre are passionate and eager to see Ontario leading in green energy. Better still, beyond the desire for cleaner sources of power, my constituents see the value to our economy in green energy investments.

I understand that 694 medium- and large-scale contracts were awarded province-wide. I'm sure there are many members in this House whose constituents will likewise benefit. They are counting on this government to make sure the Green Energy Act lives up to its full potential. Will the minister ensure that Ontarians are not disappointed?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I can tell you, we're absolutely determined to ensure that our Green Energy Act lives up to its full potential. Ontarians definitely will not be disappointed, nor will the people in the member's own community in Ottawa, who I believe received six of these very important contracts. His community is going to fare very well as a result.

Last week's announcement was really an indication that our government is showing that we are very serious about green energy here in this province. The impacts of the FIT contracts stretch well beyond the economic benefits and reach all corners of this province. Through the Green Energy Act, the FIT program will help us in our goal to eliminate coal-fired generation from our energy mix by the year 2014. By eliminating dirty energy from coal, we're working to ensure that we're protecting the health of all Ontarians. This will be something that future generations will be grateful that we took the tough decisions today to ensure—

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

#### PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Minister of Health. The McGuinty government continues to waste money intended for front-line health care through slush funds, the billion-dollar eHealth boondoggle and unelected, unaccountable LHINs. Now, rural pharmacies will have to close because they choose consultants over trusted, front-line health care providers.

Why are you cutting front-line services in my riding of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke in favour of your Liberal-friendly health care consultants?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me begin by offering the member opposite a briefing on exactly what is included in our plan to bring down the cost of drugs in this province. We are concerned about the access that people in rural Ontario have to pharmacies. That is why we are actually increasing the dispensing fee in rural Ontario. This is the right thing to do. This is the right thing to do for patients in Ontario and for Ontarians who are paying too much for generic drugs. It's the right thing to do for taxpayers.

We are committed to enhancing the role of pharmacists by paying them directly for the vital services they provide. We will pay pharmacists directly for things like managing multiple medications, for helping people manage chronic diseases. In rural Ontario, we will be paying a higher dispensing fee.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We've seen emergency rooms shut down in Fort Erie and Port Colborne. You are closing acute care beds at the Brockville hospital and nurses are being laid off in Ottawa. Money for front-line health care is being wasted on consultants, and more and more rural communities will have to deal with the fallout. I know the member for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock won't ask this question on behalf of his constituents, so I will: Where will the residents of Lindsay, Haliburton and Minden go for front-line health care when their pharmacists are forced to close shop because of your drug reforms?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me reiterate my offer to educate the member opposite on what our reforms entail. What the member opposite is essentially saying is that it's okay that we are spending money that is going to services that do not improve health care in this province. Rather, he is on the side of pharmacy on this. We are on the side of cancer patients; we are on the side of CARP; we are on the side of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. I'm surprised that the member opposite is taking the position that he is taking.

This is an important reform. It's important for all of us in Ontario. It is particularly important for those who need those drugs to get the health care they deserve. I again implore the member opposite to educate himself on what we are reforming here.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Last week I was in Niagara Falls, where I hosted a local town hall meeting about health care. People were angry and frustrated, and shared gut-wrenching stories about the impact of ER closures in Port Colborne and Fort Erie. Nancy Beam from Stevensville said, “We’ve got to get our nurses back. We’ve got to get our doctors back. They do the best they can, but they need help and the government has to step up.” Will the McGuinty government step up and reopen these emergency rooms?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I think that the investments that we have made in health care indicate our commitment to improving health care in this province. We have made substantial new investments in health care and we are seeing the results. We have over 900,000 more Ontarians attached to primary health care than when we were elected. Many of those are in the Hamilton-Niagara area. We have been able to bring down wait times for key procedures dramatically. We post those wait times and people can see for themselves.

We have invested in home care. We have invested in long-term care. We’re committed to improving health care in this province, and that includes all parts of the province, including the Hamilton area.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I have a story about wait times to tell this minister, because shutting down the local emergency rooms has swamped neighbouring ERs. Melanie Cooper took her badly injured teenage son to St. Catharines and waited four and a half hours in the ER for treatment before she finally gave up, put her son in the car and drove him to an entirely different community down the QEW, where he was seen promptly, after waiting four and a half hours—there’s a wait time for you, Minister—with a head injury. Will the minister stop hiding behind her LHINs, take responsibility and reopen Niagara region’s local emergency rooms?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am concerned when I hear stories about people who are not getting the health care they deserve in this province. That’s why we’re making the investments that we are making and that’s why we are focusing a lot of attention on bringing down wait times in our emergency departments. It’s important that people get the care they need as quickly as possible. We are working with our hospitals and, yes, with our LHINs to bring down those wait times.

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The Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN has really done exceptional work when it comes to wait times on a number of procedures. I know they are working on bringing down those emergency department wait times.

There is still work to do, and we are committed to doing the work and making the tough decisions that need to be made in—

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

## SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

**M. Phil McNeely:** Ma question s’adresse à la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones. Mes commettants francophones m’ont fait part de leurs préoccupations en ce qui concerne le budget que le gouvernement a annoncé le 25 mars dernier.

Ils comprennent que le gouvernement a besoin de se serrer la ceinture, mais ils s’inquiètent que les services en français en souffrent. Notamment, le commissaire aux services en français, François Boileau, demandait dans son dernier rapport que son budget soit augmenté afin qu’il soit en mesure de remplir sa mission correctement.

Madame la Ministre, que répondez-vous au commissaire et à mes commettants?

**L’hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je remercie le député d’Ottawa–Orléans pour sa question pertinente. Oui, nous traversons une période économique difficile qui exige que le gouvernement fasse des choix. Cependant, je peux assurer le membre d’Ottawa–Orléans et ses commettants que les contraintes budgétaires évoquées dans l’annonce du budget ne touchent pas directement les services en français.

Le budget de 2010 s’engage à maintenir le budget du commissaire au niveau où il était, tout comme le budget de l’Office des affaires francophones. Bien sûr, s’il y avait plus d’argent, nous aurions été très heureux d’ajouter au budget du commissaire, mais vu le contexte économique, nous ne pouvions pas.

D’ailleurs, permettez-moi d’ajouter que c’est notre gouvernement qui a créé le poste de commissaire aux services en français; donc, si ce n’était pas une priorité, le poste n’existerait pas. Le fait de maintenir les budgets alloués aux affaires francophones au même niveau montre que notre gouvernement s’est engagé vis-à-vis des francophones, et il va continuer à s’engager pour améliorer les services en français.

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

**M. Phil McNeely:** Je vous remercie pour votre engagement à l’égard des francophones. Comme tous les autres membres de cette Assemblée, j’ai lu le budget avec beaucoup d’attention, mais je n’ai pas vu de mesures spécialement dédiées aux francophones. Pouvez-vous me dire ce que vous faites pour les francophones cette année?

**L’hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Merci pour cette question. J’aimerais faire remarquer que le gouvernement est le gouvernement pour tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes. Alors, notre gouvernement est inclusif. Ce n’est pas parce que je suis la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones que mes autres collègues ne s’occupent pas des affaires francophones dans leur ministère respectif. Il n’y a pas de budget spécifique pour les francophones. Les francophones, comme tout le reste de la population, vont profiter des mesures contenues dans le budget, comme les réductions d’impôts et les dépenses en infrastructure et en éducation. Mais surtout, les mesures annoncées dans le cadre du plan Ontario ouvert sur le monde, particulièrement ciblées vers les résidents du

nord de la province et vers les étudiants, vont profiter aussi aux francophones.

Pour conclure, j'aimerais ajouter que la récente présentation de la loi sur la journée franco-ontarienne devant l'Assemblée démontre la volonté de notre—

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

#### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the minister responsible for infrastructure. After awarding a multi-million-dollar contract for the development, construction and management of 400-series highway service centres under a very questionable bidding process, the ministries of transportation and infrastructure agreed to an undisclosed settlement to Carillion Canada Inc. The settlement agreement contains a gag order that forbids the reasons for the settlement and the amount to be made public.

Can the minister tell us, is he aware of this secret agreement, and how can the government justify making this secret deal and sealing it with a gag order?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** No, I'm not aware of what the member is referring to, but what I can tell you is that we're very, very proud of the investment we are making in Ontario's roads. They're important investments. They're all part of our \$32.5-billion investment that we're making. We're now halfway through that two-year period of time—a record amount of investment, more invested in infrastructure than ever before. It's something that we're very proud of and something that's creating thousands of jobs across this province at a time when we really need it.

When we look at the jobs being created here, these aren't just our figures that are rolling out. The Conference Board of Canada has indeed brought forward figures of their own which indicate that our figures very much jibe with theirs. In fact, ours may be a little bit conservative. But I'd be happy to look into the issue the member is raising—

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** We have it on good authority that the reason for this secret payment is that the government was once again caught red-handed mishandling the bidding process. What started out as a public tender ended up as essentially an exclusive invitation to only two companies to bid. When the contract was awarded, there was no firm pricing and a lengthy list of conditions yet to be negotiated, with the result that the final contract could be inflated by millions of dollars—essentially an open-ended contract coupled with this undisclosed secret payment to the losing bidder.

Will the minister agree to table the settlement agreement with Carillion Canada Inc. with full disclosure of the reasons the government agreed to this secret payment?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm going to refer this to the Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the member opposite, who was a Minister of Transportation himself, understands that the 23 service centres along Highway 401 needed to be upgraded, and that's what we're talking about. Host Kilmer Service Centres Inc. is confirmed as the new service provided for Ontario's service centres. The government selected Host Kilmer Service through an open, transparent and competitive procurement process. There was an independent fairness adviser who closely scrutinized everything we did, and they agreed that this contract was awarded following a fair and transparent procurement process.

What's important is that we need these service centres upgraded. They are in the process of being upgraded. They will have tourist information—

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

#### TVONTARIO

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, given the ongoing decline of TVO in-house production, given that we have capable film and television people working at TVO who can produce good, revenue-generating content, what assurances will you give that Ontarians will see more actual television that reflects their lives and more of their stories produced by TVO itself?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Speaker, I'm sorry, but I think that I'm going to have to ask for some clarification with the supplementary.

Our government remains committed to providing resources to public education television through TVO and TFO in both of our official languages. That has been our commitment. There's no question that there have always been challenges, but because we respect and recognize the education component of TVO, we continue to work with those who play a very important and key role in ensuring the quality programs that it delivers for the people of Ontario.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** In Ontario, we can produce good, quality television that can be sold to generate revenue and put people to work. Can you tell us, Minister, how many hours of increased television production Ontarians can look forward to as a result of their support of TVO?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Again, our government is committed to providing quality public education television to the people of Ontario. I've just recently had information from my colleague, the Minister of Finance, who would say that because of the tax credits that we have provided in the film industry, that has generated a good deal more of quality product for public education television.

We have recognized that TVO is a very important vehicle. We will continue to work with our partners in that industry.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** My colleagues here are identifying many excellent programs that are enjoyed by the people of Ontario—

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

### TOURISM

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** My question is for the Minister of Tourism and Culture. As you know, small businesses are the lifeline of Ontario's economy. They support, stimulate and strengthen our province. The tourism industry is very important in my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, including along the beaches of Lambton Shores and in small communities like Dresden, which is the home of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

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Thousands of small businesses from one end of the province to the other rely solely on the revenue that the tourism industry brings into Ontario. The number of visitors we attract to Ontario has a direct impact on the success of these businesses. These businesses need to lower their costs and boost their savings.

The world and the industry have changed since the recession, and so should our approach. To the Minister: How are we helping Ontario's tourism-based industries work through these tough economic times?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to thank the honourable member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex for the question. I appreciate the opportunity to talk about tourism in Ontario. The global economy has indeed changed. At times it is quite challenging, but we are committed to remaining competitive. Since 2003, we have invested almost \$700 million in our tourism agencies. Tourism businesses across the province will also benefit from the single-sales-tax reform. This is the single most important step we can take. It will mean tax cuts and tax credits for tourism businesses. Over the next 10 years the tax reform will result in \$47 billion in new investment as well, creating 600,000 jobs.

We are on track to strengthen tourism—

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

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** Tax cuts do provide significant benefits, but we must go further to strengthen the tourism industry and the businesses that rely on it.

The global market continues to grow. It's even more competitive and at times rather volatile. As such, we need to re-evaluate the way we market and brand Ontario to local, national and international visitors. In a vast province like Ontario, we really need greater efficiencies and coordination in the way we reach out and showcase this province's beauty and natural resources.

What steps will the minister take to ensure that this government is on the right track to creating a stronger and more competitive industry for years to come?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you again for the question. We are committed to attracting more jobs and investment to Ontario. This is why we are moving for-

ward with the implementation of 13 new tourism regions. These new regions will help improve and coordinate tourism, attract more visitors and generate more economic impact. We are also investing \$65 million annually over the next two years to support this implementation.

We are going further: Our government has introduced the Open Ontario plan, a plan that will support Ontario to better compete on the international stage.

There will always be more to do, but our government is on the right track. Our tourism industry will be stronger and more viable well into the future.

### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

**Mr. Frank Klees:** To the minister responsible for infrastructure: The minister did not answer my question as to whether he would look into this matter and table the settlement—the secret agreement, the secret settlement—with Carillion Canada and to provide the House with a full disclosure of the reason for that secret deal.

I want to make it very clear that we are not questioning the need for the redevelopment and construction of these service centres. Neither are we calling into question the integrity of Host Kilmer, the company that was awarded the contract. We are calling into question the process that the government followed in awarding this contract. So I ask once again the minister responsible: Will he agree to table that secret deal and let us know how much money was paid and why a gag order was placed on—

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'll refer this to the Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I understand that the member opposite is asking serious questions about a serious issue, and I'm happy to have that conversation with him if he would like to get whatever details that are available. But the point is, we did follow the rules. There was an independent financial adviser who looked at everything that we did, said that the whole process was above board and was absolutely acceptable.

I come back to the reality that what we need to do is revitalize those service centres along the highway. They are necessary for the people who travel that highway every day.

As I said, I'm willing to talk with the member opposite if there are other details he's looking for.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I am not looking for a conversation with the Minister of Transportation on this issue. I made it very clear that, on behalf of all members of Legislature, we believe we are entitled to know what that secret agreement was, how much was paid to Carillion Canada and why it was paid, because we do know that they challenged the government over the bidding process. So once again, back to the Minister of Transportation: Will she agree to table that secret deal with Carillion and let the public know how much was involved and why they

engaged in a gag order around this agreement to begin with?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I have said to the member opposite is that I am willing to have a conversation with him to provide him with whatever details are available. Obviously, if there are details that a particular company has that I don't have, then I can't give him that information, but I am absolutely willing to have that conversation with him.

But I have to say that Host Kilmer was confirmed as the new service provider. An independent financial adviser looked at the process and said that it was open, that it was transparent and that everything that needed to be in place was in place. I'm happy to have the follow-up conversation with the member opposite, but I am absolutely confident that the process that was put in place was one that will withstand any scrutiny that the member opposite might want to bring to it.

#### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** A question to the Deputy Premier: As you know, your climate plan won't even meet its current targets. The cuts to Transit City will further weaken your efforts. How do you plan to make up the loss of Transit City cuts to greenhouse gas emissions? How will you make good on your plan with this reduction in investment?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I reiterate what the Minister of Transportation said earlier in question period: There are no cuts. That's patently wrong.

But let's talk about green action plans and let's talk about carbon reduction and about the first government in North America that's closing its coal plants. That is more than any other jurisdiction anywhere in North America. While other governments are wrestling with how to price carbon, this government is wrestling with how to close coal. It has not been easy. It does involve renewable energy, and I congratulate my colleague for his outstanding announcement last week. It involves substantial investments in public transit, which we have made—billions of dollars—and I'll remind that member and his party that they were against buying streetcars in Thunder Bay to extend the subway system.

This government has done more on the climate change file to lower greenhouse gas emissions than any other in North America. We need no lecture—

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

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: I believe I misspoke in my answer to the member opposite. At one point, I said that an independent fairness adviser—that's what I intended to say. I think I said "independent financial adviser." It was an independent fairness adviser.

#### MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege for which I gave notice to you and to House leaders on Thursday, April 1. The question of privilege relates to interference with the freedom of members of this assembly to move within the legislative precinct. I raise this matter at the earliest opportunity. Because the breach of privilege was committed against me and several members of the loyal opposition, it took time to investigate the facts and confirm the details that I will be referring to you in this submission.

In brief, I, along with the leader of the official opposition and the members for Oxford, Sarnia-Lambton, Haldimand-Norfolk, Halton, Simcoe North, Whitby-Oshawa, Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, Dufferin-Caledon, Nepean-Carleton, York Simcoe, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Durham, Leeds-Grenville, Thornhill, Simcoe-Grey and Kitchener-Waterloo, was obstructed by the government or its security staff after our briefing on budget day.

You may recall, and Hansard records from March 25 will show, that several members of the opposition were not in the House when the finance minister tabled the budget. We might not have been in the House for the minister's budget address were it not for the timely intervention of the opposition House leader and the member for Wellington-Halton Hills.

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It was not by choice that we were not present in the House for the beginning of the government's announcement that its planning had produced a record \$21-billion deficit or the minister's explanation of what that will mean for our constituents. We were prevented from being in the House for the beginning of this important debate. Government security staff detained us at the briefing room, even though the budget briefing was over and the finance minister was tabling the budget.

The privilege of members to move freely within the legislative precinct is well established. The privilege is protected so that a member may act on his or her constituents' behalf, as the member sees fit. In our democracy, our constituents hold us accountable for the decisions we make on how to participate in debates.

In this regard, the government's interference with my ability to be in the legislative chamber at the time the budget was tabled also interfered with the fundamental relationship that exists between me and my constituents. While breaches of this privilege are rare, they are not without precedent. Speaker, I will refer relevant parliamentary authorities and precedents to you in a moment. These precedents show that Speakers found that a prima facie breach of privilege was established in similar circumstances. But before I do, I should add that the obstruction of me and my colleagues comes despite the finance minister having turned his mind to what ought to have happened at the end of the budget briefing.

On March 19, Tim Shortill, chief of staff to Minister Duncan, sent an email correspondence that set out a

rollout plan for the budget briefing. The briefing, as is customary, was subject to lock-up. This means that members and staff who attend the briefing agree to remain in the briefing room and not to communicate the information provided to them until they are released.

What is significant in the correspondence of the Minister of Finance's office is that it communicated a plan for how we would be released and able to be in the legislative chamber in time for the budget being tabled. Mr. Shortill advised, "Shortly before 4 p.m., MPPs will proceed to the Legislature (escorted by a member of the minister's office and OPP officers) to be present when the minister tables the budget."

However, like so many other things with this government, there was a significant divide between the plan and its execution. What happened at the end of the briefing departed considerably from the plan Mr. Shortill shared with us. After the briefing had concluded, members remained at the briefing room and awaited our escort to the legislative chamber, but as 4 p.m. neared, we were not permitted to leave the room.

We asked security to escort us or release us so we could make our own way to the legislative chamber in time for the budget address. We were not released or escorted; rather, security stated that they were awaiting the finance minister's orders before we would be permitted to leave the briefing room.

Again, this was not in keeping with what Mr. Shortill said the plan was to be. This deviation from the plan is also not what I or my colleagues consented to or could be taken to have consented to by attending the briefing.

We were detained. The breach of privilege begins with the detention. The breach is aggravated by the fact that we were not permitted to be in the legislative chamber in time for the Minister of Finance to table the budget.

In House of Commons Procedure and Practice, Marleau and Montpetit state, "The House has the authority to invoke privilege where its ability has been obstructed in the execution of its functions or where members have been obstructed in the performance of their duties."

O'Brien and Bosc go on to explain both the privilege and the role of the Speaker in more detail. In chapter 3, which deals with privileges and immunities of members, O'Brien and Bosc state, "In circumstances where members claim to be physically obstructed, impeded, interfered with or intimidated in the performance of their parliamentary functions, the Speaker is apt to find a prima facie breach of privilege has occurred."

What constitutes a breach of this privilege has been considered in rulings by several Speakers of the Canadian House of Commons. In 1989, Speaker Fraser, for one, was asked to rule on what transpired after a member was stopped by security at a roadblock and prevented from accessing Centre Block by car. On October 30, 1989, Speaker Fraser ruled that a prima facie case for obstruction existed and referred the matter to a standing committee. You may find it pertinent for your deliberations to note that in making his ruling, Speaker Fraser considered the fact that the member was free to

walk to Centre Block, but he still ruled that a prima facie case of obstruction existed.

In 1999, Speaker Parent considered a point of privilege raised by members of Parliament who had difficulty accessing their offices. The members objected to the lack of access, saying it prevented them from performing their functions and meeting their obligations in a timely fashion. This was for routine work, not something as eventful as a budget presentation. But Speaker Parent ruled that a prima facie breach of privilege existed, and he referred the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

Following the authorities and precedents, I respectfully submit there's no conclusion but that a prima facie breach of privilege exists for the interference my colleagues and I experienced on Thursday, March 25. We were physically obstructed, impeded and interfered with when we tried to make our way to the chamber for the presentation of the budget to the assembly. We were held back from the legislative chamber even though, according to the government's own plan, the lock-up period was over.

This is a serious matter. In a civil context, a court would have little difficulty finding that we were held against our will. But in this parliamentary setting, the detention is even more serious, because it interfered with the interests our constituents have in our full participation and attention on the budget.

Our mere absence from the legislative chamber at the beginning of the budget presentation is proof that the interference occurred.

The precedents I have cited show that this is enough to establish a prima facie case that our privilege was breached. Add to it my submission that we followed the plan sent to us by the Minister of Finance's staff, but the government did not.

In my submission, it is also compelling to consider that the opposition members did everything reasonably within their capacity to be in the chamber, but it was the failure of the government to ensure we were escorted.

Following the parliamentary authorities and precedents I've cited, a prima facie case of obstruction exists, and this matter should be referred to a committee to examine the deviation from the rollout plan, why it happened and how it can be avoided in the future.

Upon your ruling that a prima facie breach of privilege exists, I am prepared to move a motion calling for this matter to be referred to an appropriate committee of the Legislature to examine the breach and report back to the Legislature with recommendations.

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** Speaker, on behalf of New Democrats, I rise in support of this point of privilege and wish to speak briefly to it. First of all, it's a very, very serious matter. It's far from a trivial matter.

It's important, perhaps, that we remind ourselves again, by reference to Beauchesne, where Beauchesne quotes Erskine May—because here we have a breach that could be perceived as a breach of an individual member's privilege; or it could be a breach of the corporate pri-

vilege, a privilege of the House as a whole. In my submission, it's the right of the House to have full attendance of its members, unless those members are not present in the House for any number of valid reasons. Take a look at what Beauchesne cites of May—I'm referring to Beauchesne, 6th edition, page 11: "Parliamentary privilege is the sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively as a constituent part of the high court of Parliament, and by members of each House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions and which exceed those possessed by other bodies or individuals."

It was interesting, I happened upon a reprint of John Hatsell's four-volume *Precedents of Proceedings in the House of Commons*, first published in 1818. I'm referring to the reprint published in 2010 by General Books. The first volume opens to page 4, and Hatsell prioritizes privilege as number one in the list of parliamentary issues that he discusses. This dates back to the period prior to Henry VIII in the British Parliament. I'll just read briefly from Hatsell's commentary on this. "As it is an essential part of the constitution of every court of judicature, and absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers, that persons resorting to such courts, whether as judges or as parties, should be entitled to certain privileges to secure them from molestation during their attendance; it is more peculiarly essential to the court of Parliament, the first and highest court in this kingdom, that the members, who compose it, should not be prevented ... from their attendance on this important duty, but should, for a certain time, be excused from obeying any other call...."

**1150**

Now, historically, as I understand it, and I'm sure others agree, this protection from molestation or interference with one's right to attend and obligation to attend at the High Court of Parliament was interfered with as a result of things like civil arrests for debt, amongst other things, and that's specifically what is considered in historical considerations of these individual/collective privileges.

Just very briefly, another interesting decision—this one predates Confederation here in Canada. It's from the Upper Canada Court of Queen's Bench in the case of *Wadsworth*. There was a case where a member of the Legislature—before Confederation; no Parliament—was arrested, and the court found that his civil arrest was a breach of his privilege. The court states at paragraphs 10 to 11 of the decision, "Now, if it is essential to the public interests that the several members should be at liberty, when called upon to attend to their legislative duties, and that these duties must be regarded as paramount to private or individual interests, as they are undoubtedly considered in England, it follows, as it appears to me, that a member cannot be restrained at the instance of any individual from attendance upon these duties."

What is shocking and egregious in the case put to you by the member for the Conservative Party is that, as we see it and as we know it now, the police were operating at

the direction of the Minister of Finance. We're told that they, the police, were awaiting the finance minister's orders before members could leave the briefing room.

My final submission—and this is a decision by Speaker Milliken, which I submit to you is very, very much on point and very, very valuable to you, sir, in determining the outcome of this point made by Mr. Miller. I'm referring, of course, to the second edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, O'Brien and Bosc, page 111:

"In 2004, a question of privilege was raised regarding the free movement of members within the parliamentary precinct during a visit by the President of the United States, George W. Bush." We don't have a scenario here where, as in some of the other cases cited from the federal Parliament, we have a demonstration or we have a picket line; this is a visit by an American President. Back to the text: "A number of members complained that, in attempting to prevent protesters from gaining entrance to Parliament Hill, police had also denied certain members access to the parliamentary precinct and thus prevented them from carrying out their parliamentary functions. Speaker Milliken found a *prima facie* case of privilege and the matter was referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs."

What's most interesting about this is what the committee did. If you take a look at the footnote on page 111, it tells us, "The committee concluded that members' privileges had been breached and recommended that the Sergeant-at-Arms and the RCMP provide written reports to the House outlining how such a situation would be avoided in the future."

That seems to me not only to confirm the validity of this point of privilege, but also to confirm the scenario wherein Speaker Fraser—wherein the obstruction was technical but not particularly effective, and that is the case where cars were blocked from going onto Parliament Hill, but people could have walked. Speaker Fraser found that the mere blocking of cars, even though people could have circumvented the blockade by walking in, in and of itself was a *prima facie* breach.

Here we have police officers and security staff holding members of the Legislature who are protesting their detention, who are pointing out that the time is coming that it's 4 o'clock, who are declaring that they have been assured that they will be allowed back into the chamber, escorted, in time for 4 o'clock, and the response, as we hear it at this point, from security personnel and presumably the OPP, is, "Oh, no. Nobody's going anywhere until the Minister of Finance says so."

I don't want to be critical of the police officers in this instance, because I think that we have a case here where police officers are following directions. I think that we also have a case, the decision of Speaker Milliken, which not only confirms the breach that's occurred here, but also provides, in my respectful submission, the appropriate remedy should this matter go to debate after the Speaker finds a *prima facie* breach.

Thank you kindly, Speaker. Also, as you can well imagine, I'm grateful to the learned persons who referred

me in the first instance to Hatsell as a source of parliamentary precedent. I'll be referring to it again, I'm sure.

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** Thank you to the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka and, of course, it's always lovely to have another opportunity to hear the member from Welland refer to his precedents and all the things that he loves to do.

I would argue that there is no breach of privilege in this particular circumstance. I would also note that under section 21(b), a question of privilege is to be taken up immediately. While the member has provided us with written submissions dated April 1, this alleged breach of privilege occurred Thursday, March 25. The House did sit for a full week afterwards, and it could have been raised at that time. I did not receive the submissions in my office until April 8. So I am just pointing out for the record that it was not done in an incredibly timely way, though section 21(b) does require that it be taken up immediately.

I would also argue that the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka misspoke in his submissions by saying they were obstructed by the government. They were, in fact, obstructed by security at the time. Procedures were set out and instructions given to all members of the Legislature with respect to the lock-up that occurred around the budget, which was delivered on March 25. Unlike other budgets, like that presented in 2003 at Magna, this one was presented here in the Legislature for the general public to have access through the parliamentary network, for the public to have access to hear, for those who were invited to attend that day, and for all members of the Legislature to attend.

I would note that in 2003, I was locked out of a ballroom at the North Bay Best Western, as I had not been a privileged invitee to see the in-camera presentation of the budget at Magna. So I was delighted to be here on March 25, and to be able to share with all viewers across the province the presentation of the budget. I would note that all three caucuses do go through the lock-up procedure.

On the day, March 25, all members were told that before 4 p.m. they would proceed to the Legislature, escorted by a member of the minister's office and the OPP. That was set out in the instructions. The Conservative caucus was advised that they could leave shortly before 4; that's what I'm told. I am told, as well, and I am seeking to confirm, that there was some confusion between the security and the staff at that time as to how they were to be escorted.

I would note that at 4 p.m. on the afternoon the budget was introduced, a couple of members of the PC caucus did manage to get here in time and raise their concerns that the rest of their caucus had not been able to leave the lock-up. We were also concerned. We agreed with your ruling at the time, Mr. Speaker, that we stand down the reading of the budget speech until all members of the caucus from the Conservative Party were allowed to reach the chamber. The absence of members of the Conservative caucus was brought to your immediate

attention. We all agreed with your ruling that we should wait until they were allowed to arrive, and we all sat here patiently awaiting their arrival. The finance minister did not start his budget speech until he received an indication from you, Mr. Speaker.

I would note that the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka misspoke in his presentation by saying that his members were not able to be in the House when the minister was tabling his budget. That in fact is incorrect. The budget was not tabled until all members were in the House who wanted to be here. I would suggest to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke that you did not have to stop him. There was a request that we pause until all were here, and we acceded to the request. No privilege was breached. Everyone was here for the presentation of the budget. There's no prima facie case of privilege. All members who made their way to the chamber were in their seats when the finance minister rose and began his speech. The government intended to allow time for members of all three caucuses to make their way to the Legislature. Unfortunately, that was not the case, but remedial action was taken that allowed us to proceed.

I would note that all precedents presented by the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka are not on point. They do not involve the presentation of a budget. They involve protests, and we all know that we were very familiar with procedures around protests here during the 1999-2003 period. That was not the case in this particular circumstance. They were not dealing with the budget procedure. Twice the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka stated that they were not allowed to be in the House when the budget was presented, which in fact is false.

#### 1200

I would also note that there was no lock-up the day of the throne speech. The leader of the official opposition managed to be late for that as well, despite the fact that there was no lock-up, so I question the—there's no accounting for punctuality.

The Minister of Finance will be working with the OPP and legislative security to ensure that this circumstance does not happen again, Mr. Speaker, and I will be providing you with written submissions in response to the letter we received on April 8.

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** I have no quarrel with people providing written submissions, but I do recall that when member Ouellette rose on a point of privilege, there was a response by way of written submissions from the government House leader, and that's fine. At the time, I queried whether it was in order for those not to become part of the record. I was shocked when I subsequently discovered that Mr. Ouellette hadn't received them either. I just assumed—it was so naive of me. It was so unusual. I just assumed that they would have been served upon Mr. Ouellette so that he could rebut, if he chose to, any portion of it.

I have no quarrel with written submissions. If there are written submissions, though, I submit to you, sir, that the

opposition parties have an opportunity to receive those submissions and to respond to them, should they wish, prior to the Speaker making a ruling.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Yes, I thank the member for Welland for that point, and I'll speak to the point of privilege, but let me just come back to that.

As the honourable member will remember, and all members of the House will recall as well, I did speak to this and encouraged this discussion to take place amongst House leaders.

For the honourable members' information, when I received the notice of the point of privilege from the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, I noted at the bottom of his point of privilege that it had been cc'd to the government House leader. That is why the honourable member from Welland, who is the House leader of the third party, received that same letter today, because I felt it was appropriate that he be aware of the information that I had from the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka that had also gone to the government House leader. I felt it was important for you to have that in responding to the point of privilege.

I would just, once again, reiterate, to encourage that discussion to take place, that I'm quite happy to have direction given to me from the House leaders in future instances, such as being given notice that the Speaker automatically copy that to the members. But again, I think this is an issue that we do need to discuss.

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** With respect, this isn't privileged correspondence when one serves notice upon the Clerk and/or the Speaker, for instance, about a point of privilege to be raised. It's not privileged communication. The Speaker is free to do whatever he or she wishes to.

I submit that the Speaker has, in fact, taken control of the matter by ensuring that all caucuses receive a copy of the notice. I think that's fair and appropriate, and I think the Speaker has every right to do that unilaterally. I don't know what Mr. Miller may say to it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Perhaps, and I'm certainly prepared to do this as Speaker, to assist me in making that decision, if any of the new information that has been put forward has not been copied to all three parties, or all members are not aware of it, then I will not use that in my deliberating.

The member from Whitby–Oshawa on the same point of privilege.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** If I could just concur with the points that have been made by the member from Welland in the case of the point of privilege that was brought previously by the member from Oshawa, it would appear that a decision was made on the basis of information that wasn't available to all parties. I'd submit that it's contrary to the rules of natural justice in the sense that you need to know the case that you have to meet. When you don't see those written submissions, it's impossible to respond.

I would encourage you, Mr. Speaker, to consider a requirement that in the future, all matters be copied to all members who are involved with these points.

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I would remind the member from Whitby–Oshawa that this isn't a court of law. I do recognize what you're saying, but we weren't given submissions from the member for Oshawa when he made his submission. We had to respond orally to what was presented in writing to the Speaker when it was presented to us in the House. So we had no submissions with which to respond to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** And again, I think this is a very worthy topic for the House leaders to discuss. I also, though, believe that, just as a courtesy amongst all members, if somebody is going to be writing to the Speaker with a point of privilege, the easiest thing to do to avoid any of the discussions that we're having right now is to cc it to the other two parties.

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** I don't want to belabour this. This isn't a court of law, but it is the court of Parliament, the highest court, if you will; a court which has the capacity to regulate itself. I don't want to quarrel on this particular issue, but in fact there are frequent references to either the high court of Parliament or the court of Parliament and its adjudicative role. I simply wanted to respond to the government House leader with that observation.

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

First, in response to the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka: I think it's important to clarify, since reference was made to standing order 21(b), that 21(b) refers to a matter being taken up immediately once the Speaker finds that that a prima facie case of privilege exists. It does not refer to immediate raising of the point in the first place, to clarify that.

I thank the honourable member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, the member from Welland, the government House leader and the member from Whitby–Oshawa for their comments. I will welcome any additional information and would remind members that it should be copied to all members. I will defer my decision to a later date.

There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1207 to 1300.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### BETH DONOVAN

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I rise today to pay tribute to Beth Donovan, who passed away suddenly on April 4 at the age of 67.

Beth's influence in community care is evident with the Beth Donovan Hospice in Kemptonville bearing her name.

Donovan began her involvement with the hospice in 1994, two years after it was formed by Father Brian Hart and the parish council in Merrickville. Originally known as the Merrickville Community Hospice, the rectory at St. Ann Roman Catholic Church was used to provide respite hospice care services. A registered nurse, she joined the hospice to help coordinate volunteers and

started the first volunteer training program. As the program grew, it moved to Kemptville, and Beth served as executive director. She worked tirelessly, passionately, and was committed to ensuring that those who wanted to remain at home could and that they were cared for.

The hospice service area was also expanded and now covers those in need from Merrickville-Wolford and North Grenville to the township of Elizabethtown-Kitley.

Beth Donovan's proudest moment was when she launched the building campaign for a new 10-bed residential hospice to be built near Riverside Park in Kemptville in December 2008. It was a goal of hers to erect a building where a day hospice program could be established.

To her husband, Stanton, and their family, my sincere condolences. It is my hope that Beth Donovan's dream will soon become a reality.

#### EVENTS IN STONEY CREEK

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'm pleased to tell the Legislature this afternoon about the Stoney Creek Warriors Junior B hockey team, which, by winning the Niagara district title, has moved another step toward winning the Ontario Junior B title.

In a game last week against the St. Catharines Falcons, the Stoney Creek team won game 6 to become the 2010 Golden Horseshoe conference champions.

They will now play in the round robin tournament with two other division winners. The two top teams will move on to a seven-game final for the Sutherland Cup.

I congratulate all the players, their coaches, the owners and of course the parents, all of whom play a significant role in the success of this and any sports team.

I'm delighted also to congratulate the Lake Avenue Public middle school band, which won a gold medal at this year's MusicFest. This accomplishment is even more significant when we realize that these students come from a very high-needs school, where over 85% speak English as a second language and where the school regularly meets students' nutritional, emotional and social needs. Despite these difficulties, the students' families are dedicated to their education, both academically and in music.

The next level of competition is to be held in Ottawa on May 20, but the cost of \$250 per student is way beyond their families' means, so we are seeking support for this school band of 45. As well as direct donations, to support their trip to the Ottawa competition through the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Foundation, I invite all who will be in the Stoney Creek area on April 24 to buy a \$10 ticket at the Creek Community Church, 605 Highway 8, Stoney Creek. As well as having a great dinner, you will be entertained by the Lake Avenue school band.

#### EPILEPSY

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** March was Epilepsy Awareness Month, and I would like to take this opportunity to com-

mend all those individuals, families and organizations that came together to raise awareness of this neurological disorder. Epilepsy affects over 300,000 Canadians, yet many Canadians do not know much about this disorder and how it impacts the lives of those who suffer from it. This is why speaking out about this issue is so crucial and why I give this statement today.

Two organizations that I would like to specifically acknowledge for their hard work and efforts to raise epilepsy awareness are the Epilepsy Cure Initiative and Nutricia North America. These two organizations held a reception in Toronto last month with the purpose of educating the public about epilepsy and dispelling the stigma surrounding this disorder. This reception also provided the opportunity for advocates to speak about various avenues through which patients can manage this condition; for example, through nutrition and many other initiatives.

It was a wonderful event, one full of hope and promise. I commend all those who strive to raise awareness of epilepsy, to educate the public and to find a cure for this physical disorder.

#### POLISH COMMUNITY

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I rise today in the House to offer my deepest sympathy and condolences to all the people of Poland and to all Canadians of Polish descent. As we know, on the weekend, the president of Poland, Lech Kaczynski, his wife, Maria, the army chief of staff, the navy chief commander, heads of the air and land forces, the national bank president, the deputy foreign minister, the army chaplain, the head of the national security office, the deputy parliamentary speaker, the Olympic committee head, the civil rights commissioner and at least two presidential aides and three members of the Legislature were killed in that tragic plane crash near Smolensk, Russia, where the plane went down in dense fog as they were flying to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre at the hands of the Stalin regime.

The void that has been created in the Polish leadership and the mourning that that country is going through are hard for any of us to comprehend. My riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke is home to Wilno, Canada's first Polish settlement, and this Wednesday, Donald Tusk, the Prime Minister of Poland, was to visit there. Obviously, that state visit has been cancelled. I share, with all the Canadian Polish Kashubs from my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke who were looking forward to the Prime Minister's visit, in giving our deepest condolences to those of Polish descent all around the world.

#### OPEN ONTARIO

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** Our government's Open Ontario plan is addressing three critical challenges that our province is facing.

The first is aging: One in four of us will be over the age of 65 within 20 years.

We're also confronting issues of environment and energy. We are losing biodiversity on this planet; one third of species will have disappeared by 2050.

Finally, we have the movement of an economy from one of production to one of innovation.

We are meeting the challenge of an aging population by making our neighbourhoods friendlier to seniors through Places to Grow, building transit-friendly, walkable communities for many older folk who will no longer be able to drive a car. We have also added 1,000 more police officers to the province's forces.

We are meeting the environmental challenges from energy and water by creating new solutions to climate change and water scarcity with the Green Energy Act and our new water act, while also building jobs and hopes for many Ontario families.

We are meeting the challenge of the new economy by ensuring Ontario capitalizes on the global reputation of our universities by ensuring that they become portals that fuel the dynamic economy with the best talent in the world. Our tax reforms, investments in innovation and research, and unprecedented investments in economic and cultural infrastructure, from the AGO to rapid transit, will enhance Ontario's leadership role in the new economy.

These are just a few of the ways our government's Open Ontario plan will help improve the lives of Ontarians: safer, cleaner and more accessible communities while investing—

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

1310

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Last week, the Liberal government announced 47 new onshore wind power projects and one offshore wind project. This announcement of large wind turbine projects is in addition to last month's announcement of 510 medium-sized projects.

All of these Liberal wind projects will be built under the terms of the Green Energy Act. Under the current law, they will be built with limited public input and no municipal planning control. In communities across Ontario, the voices of constituents and elected representatives have been effectively shut down as a result of the Green Energy Act.

When the Green Energy Act was being debated, municipalities across Ontario asked the government not to curtail their ability to shape and negotiate wind power projects under the Municipal Act. Dufferin-Caledon, Mulmur, Melancthon, Amaranth and Caledon all passed resolutions urging the government not to remove their planning oversight.

The Green Energy Act changes mean that municipalities have lost all power to alter a project to meet the needs of their community. Municipalities have traditionally had responsibility for planning so they could be responsive to community needs.

I believe planning oversight should rest with our municipalities, and so today I will introduce a private

member's bill to give municipalities back their Planning Act powers for renewable energy projects.

I would urge all members of the Legislature to support my private member's bill. Ontario residents should be allowed to express their views and influence how renewable energy projects will proceed in their communities.

#### PHIL HARTMAN

**Mr. Dave Levac:** I stand today to recognize the late Phil Hartman, legendary artist, actor, comedian, screenwriter and father.

Most of us know that Phil was Canadian, but what most of you do not know is that he was born in Brantford, Ontario, in 1948, and spent his formative years there, in my hometown.

Phil is known for his many contributions to the world of arts, including the renowned Bill Clinton impression on Saturday Night Live, among many other characters.

As the founder of the city of Brantford's Walk of Fame, in 1997, I personally met and became a friend of Phil during his induction as one of the first three inductees in our city. Phil came home and he loved it.

Phil's career was both diverse and impressive. Not only was he a part of the cast of Saturday Night Live for eight seasons, he was also in several commercials, movies, sitcoms and cartoons, such as the Simpsons. He was the man of a thousand faces. Tragically, his genius life was ended too soon.

I am currently working with the city of Brantford and Phil's brother Paul and his team to encourage Canada's Walk of Fame to recognize Phil Hartman in this year's ceremony. There is currently an online petition circulating, entitled "Phil Hartman for Canada's Walk of Fame 2010." You can find it on ipetitions.com. There's also a Facebook page with thousands of fans already on it. I hope we can add all our names to have Phil Hartman put onto the legendary Canadian Walk of Fame. I can see no other reason why—we should honour Phil Hartman.

#### MEMBERS OF PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Ontario is a diverse province, and so are the people who represent it in the 39th Parliament. Ontario's 107 MPPs were born on four continents, in 16 different countries.

Most of us were born in North America—83 members. Of members born in Canada, 85% of Canadian-born MPPs are from Ontario. Two members were born in the Caribbean and one of us in the United States.

Europe is the birthplace of 14 MPPs: three from the Netherlands; one each from Poland, Portugal, Ireland and Germany; five from Italy; and two from Great Britain.

Asia is the birthplace of nine MPPs: four from India, two from China and one each from Iran, Pakistan and Lebanon.

In Canada, only British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and the territories did not spawn a

sitting Ontario MPP. Sixty-eight MPPs were born in Ontario, six in Quebec, two in Nova Scotia and one each in New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

We bring to this Legislature, and to the business of Ontarians, a global range of backgrounds, upbringings, education, work experience and outlooks. We speak, read and understand more languages than I was able to count, and we bring together, and to Ontarians, a truly world-class group of parliamentarians.

## POVERTY

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** In these challenging economic times, our government remains committed to breaking the cycle of poverty. We set a target to reduce the number of children living in poverty by 25% over five years, a move which would take 90,000 children out of poverty by the year 2013.

Our budget announced that we will be investing \$63.5 million per year for child care to permanently fill the funding gap left by the federal government. This investment will save over 2,000 child care spaces across Toronto.

We are also moving ahead with full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds to ensure that all children have every opportunity to succeed. The early learning program will be in over 20 of our schools in my community of Scarborough this September and will serve around 1,400 kids.

Last year, we nearly doubled the Ontario child benefit, two years ahead of schedule, and are committed to fully implementing it at \$1,310 per child by 2013.

Our comprehensive tax reforms will remove 90,000 low-income Ontarians from the tax rolls.

These are just a few of the many initiatives our government has taken to help families living in poverty, and we will keep working hard to support Ontarians in need.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### PLANNING AMENDMENT ACT (RENEWABLE ENERGY UNDERTAKINGS), 2010

### LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DU TERRITOIRE (ENTREPRISES D'ÉNERGIE RENOUVELABLE)

Ms. Jones moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 29, An Act to amend the Planning Act with respect to renewable energy undertakings / Projet de loi 29, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire en ce qui concerne les entreprises d'énergie renouvelable.

**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. Sylvia Jones:** Currently, the Green Energy Act means that municipalities have lost all power to alter a project to meet the needs of their community. Municipalities have traditionally had responsibility for planning so they could be responsive to community needs.

I believe planning oversight should rest with our municipalities, and this bill will give municipalities back their Planning Act powers for renewable energy projects.

### EHEALTH ONTARIO SPENDING ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2010

### LOI DE 2010 SUR L'OBLIGATION DE RENDRE COMPTE DES DÉPENSES DE CYBERSANTÉ ONTARIO

Mr. Chudleigh moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 30, An Act to provide for a public inquiry to discover the truth about Ontario's Electronic Health Records Initiative / Projet de loi 30, Loi prévoyant la tenue d'une enquête publique pour découvrir la vérité concernant L'Initiative des dossiers de santé électroniques de l'Ontario.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** The bill requires the Lieutenant Governor in Council to establish a commission to inquire into and report on the spending related to Ontario's electronic health records initiative, and to make recommendations directed to the avoidance of unacceptable spending in other agencies in similar circumstances relating to Ontario's electronic health records initiative.

The commission has the powers of a commission under a public inquiry. Once the inquiry begins, the commission must make an interim report in six months and a final report in 12 months.

## PETITIONS

### TAXATION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to rise today on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham to present a petition 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 can least afford it;

"Whereas, by 2010, Dalton McGuinty's new tax will increase the cost of goods and services that families and businesses buy" and use "every day. A few examples include:" rent, "coffee, newspapers and magazines; gas for the car, home heating oil and electricity; haircuts, dry cleaning and personal grooming; home renovations and home services; veterinary care and pet care; legal services, the sale of resale homes, and funeral arrangements;

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

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition" from the riding of Durham "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 and support this and to present it to Kyle, one of the new pages here at Queen's Park.

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#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition from the people of Sudbury, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario government is making ... PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients ... ; and

"Whereas" since "October 2009, insured PET scans" are "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, will affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Khaleel.

#### ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

**Mr. Dave Levac:** This petition is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the health of the First Nations youth in Ontario is of growing concern;

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

"To continue the partnership with the Right To Play partnership with the Moose Cree First Nation;

"To expand the Right To Play program to other First Nations communities; and

"To follow up these programs to ensure that other initiatives continue to promote the health of First Nations youth in Ontario."

I affix my name to this petition and pass it on to Carrington for delivery.

#### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Natural Resources Canada has cancelled the ecoEnergy Retrofit for homes program and the Ontario government has committed to matching grants up to \$5,000;

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

"Commit to the continuance of the provincial portion of the ecoEnergy grants."

I agree with this petition, and I'm pleased to sign it and pass it to my page, Andrew.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the worldwide demand for water is expected to be 40% greater than the current supply in the next 20 years; and

"Whereas Ontario has developed many new clean water technologies and practices since the Walkerton water contamination, which resulted from the poor water regulation practices of the former Conservative government; and

"Whereas Ontario has now implemented many new, improved practices for clean water regulation, developed better policies and fostered new clean water technologies; and

"Whereas the Ontario government's Open Ontario plan includes strategies to increase our province's ability to develop and sell clean water expertise and products to the rest of the world;

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

"That all parties of the provincial Legislature support the government's plan to introduce a new Water Opportunities Act to take advantage of the province's expertise in clean water technology, create jobs and new economic opportunities for our province and help communities around the world access clean water."

I agree with this. I will affix my signature and give it to page Ahsan.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Bill Murdoch:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the residents of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound do not want a provincial harmonized sales tax that will

raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

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

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

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

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

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

I have signed this, and I continue to receive many, many more of these.

#### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas we currently have no psychiatric emergency service at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre in Thunder Bay, Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to support the creation of a psychiatric emergency service in emergency at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre in Thunder Bay, Ontario.”

I support this petition and put my signature to it.

#### POWER PLANT

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the province of Ontario, through the Ontario Energy Board, has selected a location for a gas-fired electrical generating power station within three kilometres of 16 schools and more than 11,000 homes; and

“Whereas the Oakville-Clarkson airshed is already one of the most polluted in Canada; and

“Whereas no independent environmental assessment has been completed for this proposed building location; and

“Whereas Ontario has experienced a significant reduction in demand for electrical power; and

“Whereas a recent accident at a power plant in Connecticut demonstrated the dangers that nearby residents face;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to immediately rescind the existing plan to build a power plant at or near the current planned location ... on Royal Windsor Drive in Oakville and initiate a complete review of area power needs and potential building sites, including environmental assessments and a realistic assessment of required danger zone buffer areas.”

I’m pleased to sign this petition and pass it to my page, Khaleel.

#### FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

**Mr. Kuldip Kular:** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas early childhood learning is a fundamental program in the development and education of Ontario’s youth;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

“To continue to expand full-day learning across the province;

“To continue to make our children a priority for this government;

“To continue investments in the infrastructure of our education system;

“To continue to support Ontario’s families through these initiatives; and

“To never go back to the days of forgotten children and mismanagement of schools we saw in the 1990s. We applaud the new investments in full-day learning and look forward to their continued growth across the province.”

I agree with the petitioners, so I put my signature on it as well.

#### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m pleased to present a petition on behalf of constituents of the riding of Durham, as well as the riding of Halton, it appears. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Natural Resources Canada has cancelled the ecoEnergy Retrofit for homes program and the Ontario government has committed to matching grants up to \$5,000;

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

“Commit to the continuance of the provincial portion of the ecoEnergy grants.”

I’m pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents and present it to Kyle again, the page from Oxford.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I have a petition today to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we never want to see another tragedy like Walkerton ever again. The health and safety of Ontarians can never come second to profit and greed. Clean, safe drinking water is a right all Ontarians should be able to enjoy.

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

“To continue to upgrade our current water filtration system;

“To continue to monitor and test our water systems;  
 “To continue to strengthen Ontario’s trust in the safety of our drinking water;  
 “To continue to invest in new systems and personnel to monitor and test our water;  
 “To never forget the mistakes of the past and always hold our water supply to the highest standard; and  
 “To continue to invest in the health and safety of Ontarians through our water supply.”  
 I agree with this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to page Andrea.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I have a petition, also from my riding of Durham, which reads as follows:

“Whereas the municipality of Clarington passed resolution C-049-09 in support of Lakeridge Health Bowmanville; and

“Whereas area doctors, hospital staff and citizens have raised concerns that Bowmanville’s hospital could turn into little more than a site to stabilize and transfer patients for treatment outside the municipality”—not unlike other communities;

“Whereas Clarington is a growing community of over 80,000; and

“Whereas we support the continuation of the Lakeridge Bowmanville site through access to on-site services, including emergency room, internal medicine and general surgery;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, request that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the McGuinty government take the necessary actions to fund our hospitals equally and fairly. And furthermore, we request that the clinical services plan of the Central East LHIN address the need for the Bowmanville hospital to continue to offer a complete range of services appropriate for the growing community of Clarington.”

I’m pleased to sign and support this and present it to Owen, one of the new pages here at Queen’s Park.

1330

#### FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** I have a petition that reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas early childhood learning is a fundamental program in the development and education of Ontario’s youth;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

“To continue to expand full-day learning across the province;

“To continue to make our children a priority for this government;

“To continue investments in the infrastructure of our education system;

“To continue to support Ontario’s families through these initiatives; and

“To never go back to the days of forgotten children and mismanagement of schools we saw in the 1990s. We applaud the new investments in full-day learning and look forward to their continued growth across the province.”

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

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I have a petition in support of the Eglinton LRT:

“Whereas investing in public transit and infrastructure is important to Toronto and to Ontario to help reduce gridlock, improve air quality and create jobs; and

“Whereas the Eglinton rapid transit line is a much-needed link that will travel along Eglinton Avenue, from Kennedy station in the east to Pearson airport in the west”—connecting Durham region with Peel region;

“Whereas the Eglinton rapid transit line would create 10,000 green jobs in construction, engineering and public transit;

“Whereas the Eglinton rapid transit line would be a boost for neighbourhood improvement, promoting local business and increasing property values for current retailers and homeowners; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario has found it necessary to phase in the public transit projects due to the current ... economic downturn;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make the Eglinton LRT line a priority when developing the plan to phase in the public transit projects.”

I support this petition and affix my name to it.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition that’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the worldwide demand for water is expected to be 40% greater than the current supply in the next 20 years; and

“Whereas Ontario has developed many new clean water technologies and practices since the Walkerton water contamination, which resulted from the poor water regulation practices ... ; and

“Whereas Ontario has now implemented many new, improved practices for clean water regulation, developed better policies and fostered new clean water technologies; and

“Whereas the Ontario government’s Open Ontario plan includes strategies to increase our province’s ability to develop and sell clean water expertise and products to the rest of the world;

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

“That all parties of the provincial Legislature support the government’s plan to introduce a new Water Opportunities Act to take advantage of the province’s expertise in clean water technology, create jobs and new economic opportunities for our province and help communities around the world access clean water.”

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

#### PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** A number of petitions came in today addressed to Premier McGuinty and health minister Matthews titled “Please Don’t Cut Community Pharmacy Funding.”

“I am an Ontario community pharmacy customer and patient. I am aware that the Ontario government is considering cuts to elements of community pharmacy funding. I depend on the convenient, accessible advice and services I get from my pharmacy. I want to ensure that my pharmacist is there when I need him. I want to know that I can talk to my pharmacist after work when I can’t get to my doctor’s office or when my doctor’s office is closed. I want to know that my pharmacy will continue to be able to provide valuable health services to my community, so please do not make the cuts to the neighbourhood health care my community pharmacy provides.”

The final statement: “I support my community pharmacy,” as I do as well. I will affix my signature to this.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### 2010 ONTARIO BUDGET

##### BUDGET DE L’ONTARIO DE 2010

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 1, 2010, on the amendment to the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some time left. You see, my debate was split. I had an opportunity to speak some time ago, and in fact it’s hard to keep track of what we were up to or what I might have been speaking about a couple of weeks back, because since then we celebrated the resurrection of our Lord on Easter Sunday, we then had a break, and of course yesterday Phil Mickelson won his third green jacket as the Masters champion. So, much has transpired since I last spoke on this budget.

A lot of things have changed, but some things haven’t changed, Madam Speaker. I said “Mr.” to start, and I see that that also has been transformed, into “Madam.” One thing that hasn’t changed is, it’s still a bad budget. It was a bad budget before Easter and it’s a bad budget now.

The other thing about the budget is, you just have to wonder where it was coming from. Since they tabled this budget, have you heard the Premier going out on his soapbox and saying how we need municipalities to tighten their belts and we need them to rein in salaries in the municipal sector, we need to do this and we need to do that, and we need to show leadership on restraint? As Randall Denley wrote in his column in the *Ottawa Citizen* a couple of days after the budget—and he didn’t say it in these words, but I’ll say it: What a joke.

If the Premier wanted to show leadership on restraint—he had an opportunity when this recession was deepening and it was clear to everybody that business as usual was simply not going to work anymore—he would have at least had the moral authority to stand in his place and say to public service unions, be they provincial, be they municipal, be they the MUSH sector, such as universities, schools and hospitals, “We’re instituting restraint today.” But no, he let a whole year and a half go by, almost two years, doing nothing, with his head in the sand. And now he stands up there as the champion of restraint. How duplicitous is that? It’s unbelievable that he can portray himself as being the champion of fiscal responsibility after squandering the opportunity and ceding the moral authority that he actually had when this recession was deepening to at least get people to buy in and agree that, yes, we all have a role to play and we all can play our part. No, he makes sure he signs all of the contracts. He forces hospitals to sign long-term contracts with their staff that go years into the future. For example, now he tells hospitals, “By the way, you might get 1.6%, or maybe you won’t, even though we’ve already forced you to sign contracts that obligate you to much greater spending than that.”

Now he wants to be Dalton the defender, when we all know he is Dalton the debt doubler. Shame on him, because before we leave this place in 2012, the debt of this province will have doubled under Dalton’s watch.

Hopefully, mercifully, he will not be the Premier at that time, because I really do, in my heart of hearts, believe that this province cannot take another term of this rudderless, aimless, planless—I was going to say “shameless” and “blameless” just because they rhyme, but they wouldn’t apply, because they take the blame and they should be ashamed of what they’ve done to this province in the six or seven years they’ve been in government, particularly with regard to our fiscal condition.

The Minister of Finance talks about how we’re going to get out of this. He’s got an eight-year plan. Well, his eight-year plan is predicated on holding government spending to an increase of about 1.8% or 1.9%.

**1340**

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My friend from Wellington-Halton Hills says “1.9%.” We want to be accurate because we wouldn’t want the Liberals getting upset. It’s 1.9% per year for that time frame.

Since they've been in government, they've never been able to keep spending below—I think it is about a 6% increase. Oh, there's a little chart here. It's a great chart, but I'll have to put on my glasses. These are their spending increases: "holding the annual growth in program expense to an average of 1.9% beyond 2012-13."

Given their record, that's not only fiction—fiction even has a basis sometimes in reality. It may not be true, but it has a basis in reality. This has no basis in reality whatsoever, not the reality that we've seen under Dalton McGuinty and Dwight Duncan.

I want to touch on a couple of things before my time runs out, unless I get unanimous consent to speak longer.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Apparently, the government House leader is not in agreement, so I will move as expeditiously as possible.

I would like to talk about something that is very, very troubling in my riding. I was talking to my friend from Oshawa just a minute ago about how the new Minister of Natural Resources from Brampton—that rural place outside of Toronto called "Brampton"—is now telling people in rural Ontario that she fully backs the Endangered Species Act enacted by the previous minister. No thought was given to the ramifications and the effect that the regulations coming out of that act are going to have on rural people.

You see, when the act was first tabled, and as we went through committee, there was an undertaking by the then Minister of Natural Resources that they would use the Crown Forest Sustainability Act—it's a bedrock piece of legislation that has stood the test of time in preserving and protecting our forests, by its very name, the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. The minister undertook to the industry that they would use that act when bringing in regulations to protect habitat for endangered species or species that were threatened. Once they passed the legislation—and this is no surprise to you, Madam Speaker, I know, and no surprise to anybody else in this House—they broke their promise and decided to go to a permitting system. Permitting systems don't work because all of the advocates who are opposed to logging or any development or doing anything on rural land that allows us to try to raise our standard of living are going to oppose all of those permitting applications, which means they'll be tied up in the courts and nothing will ever happen.

Am I going to get that time, or do I say "goodnight" for—

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** Say "goodnight."

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Goodnight.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** I'm not sure where the previous speaker was coming from. It's not this country or this planet.

We are a government here that is building the tax base, not the tax burden. Our friends over there, in good times, managed to rack up a \$6-billion deficit while we

were growing revenue. I was mayor of a city at the time. We need no lessons from these folks. I cut the cumulative deficit of my government in half, reduced taxes every year and took the credit rating to better than Ontario's on a small tax base. These guys couldn't manage a two-car funeral.

The people of Toronto Centre remember all too well how they solve deficit problems. They closed the Wellesley hospital. They closed the Central Hospital. We're building the tax base.

Their finance minister federally has said that the growth rates in Canada are sufficient right now to build through growth in the tax base—to build us out of the deficit, which is exactly what we're doing.

So, why do the federal Conservative members who used to sit in this House understand our strategy and are imitating it, but their colleagues in opposition don't seem to get it? They want to go back to closing hospitals, stripping our school system, downloading social services and health, to avoid their responsibilities, on municipalities. They have left in their wake in municipal government the biggest downloading onto municipal governments in history and never gave them the tax revenues, which we did with the City of Toronto Act and are continuing to do in our infrastructure strategies.

It is passing strange to me that there is such a growing disconnect between the Conservatives' engagement strategy in the economy nationally and our cousins here to our right. We understand, as do the federal Conservatives, that the HST is going to build hundreds of thousands of jobs in Ontario. We understand, through Open Ontario, the global opening up of our universities to make them the portals to the most talented people in the world, to bring them here—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** Quite frankly, it took over 160 years to get the budget to where it was, and in six short years we've virtually doubled it, to the point where we're spending \$2 million an hour more than we're taking in. You show me exactly where the great benefits to the province of Ontario have been, and I question that.

Oh, yes, we hear about all these great things, but quite frankly, I don't see the doubling of the budget and the doubling of the response in the communities and our places.

Oh, yes, the member speaks quite openly about their great work, yet when I speak to individuals about the great things that happened in their community—and the police chiefs are very near to that—it's considerably different than the projected image that has been brought here to this chamber.

I have a lot of concerns about what's taking place in this province. When the times were good, we should have been banking things and making sure that industry was strong. End result: Look at the budget deficit that we're spending today. Who's going to pay that but our kids and generations and generations to come?

I think that individuals who stand up and grandstand about the fact that this province is doing a great and wonderful job with the government they have had better look twice at what's happening in this province, because quite frankly, I don't think generations will understand what is taking place and being discussed today until they have to start to pay for it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France G elinas:** It's my pleasure to add a few comments to the speech that was given by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I was one of the ones who were willing to give him more time, because I thought you were on a roll and doing quite well, so I'm sorry we don't get to hear you more.

I can say that as a member representing rural Ontario, I share with him some of the comments that he has made. Some of the strategies laid out in that budget will really have a detrimental effect on people living in northern and rural areas, some of the constituents that he represents.

I just ended a tour of northern and rural hospitals with the Ontario Health Coalition—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I'm always pleased to comment on anything that my Conservative colleague from the Ottawa Valley has to say.

Let me just touch for a minute on something he raised just before he was forced to sit down, and that is what is happening in forest communities not only in the Ottawa Valley but across northern Ontario and the fact that here we have a budget that the government proposes is going to do something about that but in fact is not going to do anything at all.

The McGuinty government has finally acknowledged that their policy of driving industrial hydro rates through the roof is forcing the closure of one paper mill after another after another. When you do not have paper mills, then you have fewer pulp mills. When you have fewer pulp mills, you have fewer places for sawmills to send their chips to. Sawmills have to be able to sell their lumber and sell their residual chips to stay in business. So you have community after community closing, literally tens of thousands of hard-working people out of work. This government, after five years, finally acknowledges that their policy of driving industrial hydro bills through the roof has contributed greatly to this.

But what do they propose to do? Do they propose to reduce industrial hydro rates? No. They're going to essentially cap the industrial hydro rate increase for the next three years, I would argue, just to get them through the next election. But this is not going to reopen one single paper machine. It's not going to reopen one single sawmill. So these communities, these workers, find themselves out of work, in a desperate situation, with a budget which doesn't do anything to address the real problems.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has up to two minutes to respond.

**1350**

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I appreciate the comments from the members from Toronto Centre, Oshawa, Nickel Belt and Kenora–Rainy River. I always appreciate comments.

I do want to say thank you to the members from Oshawa and Kenora–Rainy River, and Nickel Belt as well, because they actually commented on some things that I was saying, whereas I have to ask the member for Toronto Centre: How do you stand in your place in this House and chastise a government that had a deficit in the year of mad cow, SARS—which was an unknown disease in the world at that time; it cost over a billion and a half dollars—a hydro outage where 50 million people were out of hydro in eastern North America, which also cost almost a billion dollars; and then you had mad cow disease, which also cost in the neighbourhood of half a billion to a billion dollars? We're talking about \$4 billion worth of things to deal with that were unheard of before, in this country or any other.

As well, the sad truth is that that deficit could have been dealt with in that fiscal year if this government, which was elected in October 2003, actually wanted to do something about it. But the truth is, they wanted that deficit to remain. They wanted that deficit to exist so that they could have something to hold against the previous government, which had actually eliminated four consecutive years of \$10-billion deficits in the past when they did come to government. This is a government that has a deficit of \$21.7 billion, which will double the debt in the next term of office of this Legislature. In fact, by 2012-13, the debt of this province will be double and our children, our grandchildren and the new pages working here today will be the ones who are going to have to deal with the debt because of Dalton McGuinty and Dwight Duncan and their irresponsible fiscal policies.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France G elinas:** It's my pleasure to rise today to add my voice to a few comments regarding our budget. The first one I'd like to talk about is that in the budget we have this one paragraph about drug reform. It is part of this big document, and—remember—one paragraph. Basically, all it talks about is that the government will reform the personal allowance and they will define what normal business practice is. We have found out since what that will mean. It will mean that the price that is paid for generic drugs will be altered substantially.

So, at the base of it, I think everybody agrees that if you can get a better deal to pay for your drugs, that will be something good. If the price of drugs decreases, it makes them more affordable and easier for people to access. It's a good thing. But, as is often the case, a good intention can go bad if it's not wisely done. I want everybody to realize the opportunity for your MPP—all of us—to influence this is very minimal. All there is in the budget is one paragraph that talks about changing the professional allowance and defining what normal business practice is. Those are broad comments. Every-

thing else—should we pay as a generic price 25% of the brand name, or 40% or 35%? We presently pay 50%. None of this is part of this bill. It will all be dealt with afterwards in regulation, which basically means that for us to have an informed decision, we need more than one paragraph. Everything else will be done away from your MPP, with the MPP not having the chance to participate.

We have to realize that right now, the province of Ontario pays for drugs for a number of people. It pays for older people, people on Ontario disability—they pay through the Trillium. There's a number of places. Out of all the millions of dollars they pay for drugs, 24% of that goes to pay for generic drugs, which means that 76% of the expenses have nothing to do with generic. They have to do with name brands.

Are there savings to be made in drugs? Absolutely, there are major savings, but right now, we're going after the small fish. We're going after the 24%. What happened to the 76%? There are great opportunities to reduce savings on a much bigger part of the pie, a much bigger part of the expenses, if we look at how we reimburse brand-name drugs. There was a very good project being put forward to that effect. Under academic detailing, which is the way that brand names are marketed to physicians, this was cancelled. So our government had the opportunity to substantially affect the 76% of the expenses that we spend on drugs but chose not to do so, and in place of it went under the 24%. There's nothing wrong with achieving savings; it's in the way that you do it.

The second thing we have to say is that right now, what is on the table through regulation—not in the bill, because none of this is in the bill—there will be \$800 million worth of savings. The government will reinvest about \$150 million through compensating pharmacists for other services that they render: all good, so far. But you have to realize that you cannot take \$800 million out of an industry and think that there will not be repercussions. There will be changes. I want to make sure that those changes are not going to be on the backs of Ontarians who live in rural and northern areas. Right now, to give a \$1 increase—from \$7 to \$8—in reimbursement for dispensing fees is not my idea of having thoroughly studied what will be the effect on northern and rural hospitals. I have a real fear that what will happen is that you will see a decrease in service, a lack of access, as well as a hike in prices of drugs for people living in northern and rural areas.

There is no Walmart or Costco in Nickel Belt and there will never be one. We just don't have the kind of city that supports those. Everybody who lives in a big city will continue to have the \$2 dispensing fee, \$4 dispensing fee, at the big chains. People in Nickel Belt are paying \$14 in dispensing fees. This is a big difference, a sevenfold increase, whether you buy your drugs in a big city or you buy them in northern and rural areas.

With those changes, the effects on northern and rural accessibility and dispensing fees have not really been

explained. As I said, as your MPP, I will have no occasion to talk about those except right now. There will be no discussion of this bill in and of itself, only through the budget bill. To me, this is an important reform, a reform that every single one of your MPPs—you should have a chance to talk to your MPP and let your MPP represent your voice in the changes in this new bill, but we won't have an opportunity to do this; everything is being pushed into regulation.

To make matters worse, it seems like we're seeing an escalation of tensions between the pharmacists' association and our minister. The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care decided to send a very strongly worded letter to the pharmacists of Ontario, the kind of letter that will be perceived as escalating a conflict. If you know you have a conflict with professional care providers, what is there to gain by escalating this conflict? Really, they should try to work together. If we want a good pharmacy service that provides the services we need to every Ontarian, no matter where you live, then the ministry has to work with them, not escalate a conflict.

I could give some suggestions. First of all, why aren't pharmacists part of the interdisciplinary teams that we're putting into place? So few of them are. If you bring in a pharmacist within an interdisciplinary team, pay them the salary that they're worth and make sure that they are free to offer the full gamut of services that a pharmacist is capable of offering, that would bring new service to the people of Ontario at a fair price, as well as maintain access to drugs no matter where you live in Ontario. But we're not looking at this. We're looking at bringing care elements into what is basically a business model. While the business model may try to bring some care elements into it, at the end of the day it's still going to be a business model. If you're serious about wanting to improve health care, then start by putting a framework forward that will allow for a care model, and then, if you want, bring business elements into it. We are going at it the other way around.

#### 1400

The second thing I wanted to talk about that is also in the budget is the new hospital funding model. It's called HBAM, health-based allocation model. HBAM is a model that is being put forward in this new budget for funding of hospital services. This model has been around for quite some time. It has been tried in other jurisdictions in other developed countries on this earth and has failed. It always leads to the same thing: a concentration of services in big urban centres.

Don't get me wrong. I have nothing against a concentration of services to some extent, because if you do 1,000 cataract surgeries a month, you're going to be very good at it. You will have good results and you will have good health outcomes, and this is something that we can all support. But it cannot come at the exclusion of accessibility. It is this balance between concentration of care to a point where you become very good at doing something versus having no access at all if you live

outside of those major centres where those concentrations of services are offered.

I can give the example that is already happening in Sudbury. The Sudbury Regional Hospital is the hospital that offers services to the people of Nickel Belt. What happens is that already you can see—take hip and knee surgeries, which are part of the wait-times strategy where the government has started to put fixed costs for the procedure, and the more procedures you do, the more money you get etc.—very much along the philosophy of HBAM. What happened? If those I would call the healthy mobile people of Nickel Belt and Sudbury don't want to wait the length of time that it takes to get the surgery done at Sudbury Regional Hospital, they go to Toronto. It is their choice. They choose to do it. Their physician makes arrangements for them to have it done faster in Toronto.

What does that mean? That means that all of the healthy, mobile and wealthy—because you have to have some bucks to be able to afford the travel—go to Toronto. The more complex cases, the cases that may require more follow-up rehab, stay in Sudbury. So already you start to see this concentration of health care services that gives a very good outcome in big urban centres to the detriment of people in northern Ontario.

I can give you examples throughout this province where it has to do with people living in rural Ontario and northern Ontario. When it comes to health care, access is just as important. You have to bring forward policies that balance the two, but this new HBAM is not something that will do this. It is something that will create big centres of excellence—so far, so good—but it cannot be exclusive and to the detriment of northern and rural.

I also wanted to talk a little bit about the independent expert advisory panel that will be coming. We, New Democrats, have always been supporters of research and clinical guidelines. But I thought this was what we had in the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, better known as ICES. They produce excellent quality reports that can be implemented to develop best practices in the health field. So what are we trying to do here with this? Again, it's not clear. We are asked to make a decision and vote on a budget that has very low substance—most of it will come later.

They also talk about improved provider and executive accountability. I and very many New Democrats before me have asked for Ombudsman oversight of hospitals and long-term-care facilities to give people who have complaints, who have gone through the existing channels of dealing with their hospitals and LHINs and who are still not satisfied, access to the Ombudsman, and to let him or her do their job. But no; this government has been steadfast in its refusal to allow Ombudsman oversight of our hospitals and long-term-care facilities, to the detriment of care.

We have seen fantastic results with some of the investigation that the Ombudsman has done into the fringes of health care, because he—Mr. Marin, right now—hasn't got the right to investigate hospitals directly: only when

they are under supervision or in their dealings with the ministry. This is not acceptable. If we want better accountability, then let's start by bringing in Ombudsman oversight.

Je voulais également parler de la francophonie. La francophonie, dans notre budget, on peut dire là qu'elle brille par son absence, dans un premier temps. Je ne dirais pas qu'il y a des pages et des pages de dire « la francophonie ». En fait, il n'y en a pas. C'est quand même un document assez exhaustif. J'oublie le nombre de pages, mais je vais m'en rafraîchir la mémoire : 196 pages. On aurait pensé que peut être un paragraphe sur la francophonie, si ça aurait pu—mais non, on n'a pas eu ça.

Par contre, qu'est-ce qu'on sait? C'est qu'on aura la maternelle et le jardin à temps plein pour les petits enfants. Pour la francophonie, ce n'est pas quelque chose de nouveau. Les écoles francophones, tant du côté public que du côté catholique, ont adopté depuis plusieurs années des programmes de maternelle à temps plein avec le système de garde avant et après l'école. Ces systèmes-là nous ont permis de développer des réseaux dans des communautés souvent minoritaires, et ces réseaux-là ont été capables de s'épanouir et d'amener une richesse à la francophonie.

Lorsqu'on regarde le cas exemplaire de l'Hôpital Montfort, ce que M. Caza avait démontré pour gagner sa cause—M. Caza est l'avocat qui a défendu la cause Montfort—c'est que, pour les francophones, les institutions sont tellement importantes. Il décrit souvent la francophonie comme les gens qui nagent, qui nagent, qui nagent, puis, quand tu es francophone en Ontario, tu ne peux jamais arrêter. Le seul moment où tu peux te reposer, c'est quand tu arrives dans un îlot de francophonie, puis ça, ce sont nos institutions francophones.

Bien, le système de garde avant et après l'école et le système de maternelle à temps plein dans la francophonie, ça nous a permis de faire ça. Ça nous a permis de développer les îlots qui font que la francophonie est plus forte et capable de rayonner et de s'épanouir. Maintenant, on a un gouvernement qui arrive avec ses gros sabots et qui dit, « On a un programme magnifique qu'on va mettre en place qui n'existe nulle part ailleurs. » Ils ne parlent certainement pas aux francophones quand ils disent ça, parce que nous, dans la francophonie, on l'a depuis longtemps. Ils vont mettre ça en place, mais dans un cadre tellement rigide que tout le beau travail qui s'est fait, tout le rayonnement qui s'est fait, les divers organismes qui se sont développés qui font maintenant partie de la fabrique francophone de notre province, sont maintenant à risque. Ils sont à risque parce qu'ils ont mis en place un cadre législatif tellement serré que les partenariats établis ne pourront pas continuer. On vient de forcer un chambardement d'une magnitude peu vue, pour aucune raison. Pourquoi est-ce qu'on ne donne pas un peu plus de temps? Pourquoi est-ce qu'on ne donne pas des paramètres un peu plus flexibles pour reconnaître que dans la francophonie, ce n'est pas du révolutionnaire, ce que le gouvernement est en train de faire là—c'est

quelque chose qui existe depuis longtemps—et apprendre de nos meilleures pratiques qui sont développées au cours des années? Ça démontrerait vraiment un gouvernement qui est engagé envers la francophonie.

Dans un dernier temps, par rapport à la francophonie également, j'ai été très heureuse de voir qu'on va célébrer, le 25 septembre qui s'en vient, la journée franco-ontarienne. C'est quelque chose qui me fait plaisir. De plus en plus, les gens se rendent compte que tout l'appui que ce projet de loi-là a reçu vaut la peine d'être amené un pas de plus en en faisant un congé férié. J'espère que le gouvernement va écouter non seulement les Franco-Ontariens, mais tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes qui veulent vraiment donner à la francophonie le respect qu'il se doit, en faisant de la journée du 25 septembre une journée de congé férié pour tout le monde en Ontario. Vous allez voir qu'il y a des pétitions en ce sens qui s'en viennent.

**1410**

Absent from the budget is something that we all need. This morning, there were a number of questions about ALC, alternate-level-of-care, patients in our hospitals. Right now, if you look at all of the beds in all of the hospitals in Ontario, 19% of them are occupied by somebody needing alternate level of care.

The solution to the alternate-level-of-care crisis that has grown in so many communities is to prevent more frail, elderly people from getting in trouble in the first place and ending up taking up a bed in the hospital from which they're not able to be discharged. The solution to this is to give them the care they need in their own homes through a strong and robust home care system. But our home care system is broken, and unless the government is willing to fix it, we will continue to see dozens and hundreds of elderly, frail Ontarians getting in trouble in their own homes, ending up in emerg, ending up in a hospital bed, and not being able to be discharged from that hospital in a safe and respectful manner. They end up being labelled as alternate-level-care patients and they cost a hospital a lot of trouble. It is not a hospital problem, but the hospitals are ending up facing the problem. Absent from the budget was home care reform.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I'd like to thank the member for Nickel Belt for her comments, those in English et aussi en français. She raised a number of points relating to health care that I'd like to take and elaborate on.

One of the things that not merely the budget does, but certainly builds on the throne speech, in the Open Ontario plan, is the commitment to a very strong public health care system. To this end, the budget has pledged new legislation to improve accountability within the health system.

Over the past years, among the things that we've seen that are a major benefit, particularly to those of us in the fast-growing areas of the greater Toronto area, has been the capacity expansion to enable people in fast-growing

communities to have fair, proportionate access to health care.

Out in the area that I live in, in Mississauga, we've seen in the last few years major capital expansions of our hospitals that provide us with the clearly accountable, publicly funded, publicly run facilities that we need to deliver the quality and the amount of health care to a growing population, when and where it needs it.

I think we're going to see the degree of segmentation that we're seeing in Mississauga, where at Trillium, it's the best place in the world for cardiac care. Between the time of a 911 call and the time at which treatment actually begins, nowhere in the world does it happen faster than at the Trillium Health Centre. We're seeing at Credit Valley Hospital similar advances in the speed and the effectiveness of cancer treatment in the regional cancer centre.

These are only two areas of the type of progress that's at work that's ongoing in this year's budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** The member spoke well about the budget and its effect on Ontarians. I was particularly very interested in the pharmaceutical area. The speaker was quite right: That's going to have a very detrimental effect on small pharmacies located around Ontario.

The same kind of thing happened in your first term of office, when the small pharmacists were set upon and weren't considered in the overall plan. I think it speaks to one of the recurring themes in this government, in that they don't do a lot of consulting before they come out with these plans and they don't know the consequences of how it's going to take effect in the real marketplace. That's a real problem, particularly if you're a small pharmacy in a small town, where perhaps you're struggling anyway but providing a great service to the people of that area. There are going to be some \$650 million or \$800 million taken out of the pharmaceutical business. You can't take out that much money without doing irreparable harm.

Of course, that harm is unevenly distributed, and it affects small pharmacies far more than it will affect large pharmacies. It will also affect large pharmacies, but they will probably survive this process. The member is quite right again, in that northern Ontario is going to be disproportionately affected because the population up there is so small. All pharmacies are small in the north in comparison to large pharmacies in southern Ontario.

The member for Kenora—Rainy River talked about the devastation that has occurred in northern Ontario and how this budget hasn't effected anything positive for the north. This is just one more thing that is going to affect the north negatively.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** It's always not just a pleasure but so insightful to hear the NDP health critic address these issues. The member for Nickel Belt has proven herself to be not just an astute critic of this government's short-

comings, but also someone who is eminently capable and demonstrates that on a daily basis in coming forward with options and solutions that are better suited to meet the needs of real Ontarians.

When she talks about this budget and health care in the context of this budget, I can't help but hearken back to down where I come from in Niagara and Mr. McGuinty's closure of emergency rooms at the Fort Erie hospital and the Port Colborne hospital. It's no longer hypothetical to suggest that people are going to die as a result of those closures, because we've already got a coroner's inquest into one death. I don't know whether there will have to be coroners' inquests into other deaths.

You see, what happens if you're in a motor vehicle accident or if you suffer a trauma and you're down toward the far end of the QEW, down toward Fort Erie, is, they can't take you to the Fort Erie hospital anymore. The emergency room is gone. It doesn't exist. It's closed. The doors are locked, bolted and barred. So you have to commence a lengthy and tortuous, treacherous and sometimes deadly search for emergency rooms in the northern part of the Niagara region. If you get to St. Catharines, you have to wait four and a half hours, because, you see, what happens when you shut down emergency rooms, the pressure on the remaining emergency rooms is compounded—just like the young man Andrea Horwath talked about, waiting four and a half hours in St. Catharines and then his mom finally throws him in the car and takes him further up the QEW, where he finally gets treatment.

I'm looking forward to speaking to this motion in my own right.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** I'm so anxious that a couple of minutes ago I thought I might actually pre-empt the member from Welland, I was on my feet so quickly.

I want to take a couple of minutes to speak to the member from Nickel Belt's comments in respect to the budget. She spent quite a bit of time speaking around the matters of health care, and I want to reflect on how investments in health care affect budgets and how they affect people's lives.

In my own riding, in the general area, I had the opportunity recently to participate in the opening of a new emergency department at the Ajax-Pickering site of the Rouge Valley Health System. It was something that was planned for and fought for by the community for a period of eight or 10 years. Funding came along, and just in this past year we managed to open that, and the funding that is flowing into that now will allow it to serve a community that has grown probably by 50% or 70% during the time frame in which it was being planned for and built.

I had the opportunity more recently to attend Lake-ridge Health in Oshawa, and I see the member from Oshawa is here today. We were there at the same time on a dialysis unit. I think the number of stations are a four-pod—I'm going to say 40; I may miss the number of

actual stations. It's somewhere in that range. It's a four-pod unit that is state of the art, that will obviously be funded through the financing of health during this and subsequent operational years. It's a facility much needed in Durham region to service the needs of some 600,000 people, with dialysis facilities that were certainly not being met—the member opposite spoke extensively in regard to health care within her comments, and I just wanted the opportunity in the two minutes to be able to reflect on how investments in budgets can affect lives and communities and health in a very significant way.

**1420**

For me, it's particularly important because I happen to come from a geography and a jurisdiction where a tremendous amount of growth has been and continues to go on, and those investments are so critically important in those communities.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. The member from Nickel Belt has up to two minutes to respond.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I will use my two minutes to quote from Hansard from 1975. It goes:

"Everything that is fairly modest, the Minister of Health is able to do. But in the three most critical areas of health" care "policy, he is"—it was a he at the time—"as all his predecessors, completely defunct. Do you realize, Mr. Speaker, that we have entered the year 1975"—that was Mr. Lewis talking at the time—"and there is no program for the serious construction of community health centres right across Ontario to reduce the cost of hospital beds in Ontario and to shift the emphasis to preventive medicine? Do you realize that we have come through"—at the time—"32 years of Tory rule, and in March 1975, we still don't have a preventive medical alternative to the most rigid, inflexible and inefficient delivery system men and women can devise?"

"Do you realize ... that we have come right through to March 1975, and despite all the talk of the last years, we still have not arranged an alternate method of payment for the medical profession? They are still on fee for service. They are still getting their \$45,000 plus per year—and every year going up. We still haven't worked out salary arrangements, capitation arrangements, fee for service plus salary—all of the things that we have talked about—to prevent health from being destroyed in terms of the charge on the public purse. None of that has occurred. All of the major problems then remain acute failures of political leadership."

That was Stephen Lewis in 1975, and I would say that those are still absent from this budget. We're still not looking at prevention. We're still not looking at more community health centres. We are still not looking at alternate ways; fee for service does not serve this province well.

It was interesting to hear from the members from Mississauga, Halton, Welland and Pickering-Scarborough East. I appreciate their comments.

What's missing from the budget is a strategy that would bring us sustainability. It's not there.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bob Chiarelli:** I'm pleased to rise and debate the budget today, but if I can indulge the House and make a few comments on the reality that I've just returned to the House from a by-election, I'd like to make a few comments and speak about a few thanks that I want to extend to some of the people upon my return.

This is my first opportunity to debate since my re-election, my fourth time being elected as an MPP, on March 4 of this year. As you know, I served from 1987 to 1997 in this House, representing the riding of Ottawa West, and I've been away from this place for a period of 13 years.

I've had a very warm welcome back from the Speaker, the Deputy Speakers and from the 28 members of this Legislature that I sat with previously for my last two or three years. I'm now returning to something like 18 caucus members that I sat with then and 10 members from the opposition, and they've all given me a very warm return and welcome, including the Clerk, the staff of the Clerk's office and the administrators at the Legislature. I just want to extend a very significant thank you and gratitude for what they have done in welcoming me back.

I must say, upon my return, that I was expecting to see three or four bronze statues on the front lawn: perhaps a statue of the member from St. Catharines, Jim Bradley; or Carleton-Mississippi Mills, Norm Sterling; or perhaps York Centre, Monte Kwinter; or from Davenport, Tony Ruprecht. I'm very pleased to find that they were all inside the building, working very, very hard and continuing the leadership that I've always known them to be demonstrating in this place.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the voters of Ottawa West-Nepean for electing me as their member of Parliament. This is the fourth time that I have been elected as an MPP. On one occasion, I was elected by more than 50% of the voters; the other three times I was elected by something between 40% and 50% of the voters, so I'm generally elected by less than 50% of the voters. Even so, I've always served on the basis that I represent all constituents, regardless of their political stripe, political or personal philosophy or lifestyle, where they live in the riding or for how long. My door is open to all individuals, all groups and all stakeholders. This was true in my former life as an MPP, as the elected regional chair of Ottawa-Carleton and as the mayor of Ottawa for six years. As a matter of principle, I have always believed in collaboration, facilitation and partnership with other elected officials at other levels of government, with stakeholders and with the members of the other parties. These are some of my values that I bring back to Queen's Park.

Speaking of values, I revisited my maiden speech, which I delivered to this House on November 19, 1987. I just want to make one quote from that speech because I believe it's as relevant today as it was then.

"I mentioned earlier that I would speak of some principles. I believe in them, and I believe many others in

this House from all parties believe in them. I also am of the opinion that they are embodied in the throne speech. I believe they are worth repeating, in the words of a well-known social democrat.

"It means we campaign to win on the merits of our causes and to break new frontiers in education, housing, social services, health care, and social justice.

"It means we speak for those who work for a living, white-collar and blue-collar, young professionals, men and women in small businesses trying to prove their worth and earn a living.

"It means we speak for minorities who have not yet entered the mainstream.

"And it means we speak for women indignant that we had refused to etch into our governmental commandments a simple rule, "Thou shalt not sin against equality.""

Those are still some of the tenets that I come to this place with.

Before I speak about our government's agenda, as reflected in the throne speech and the budget speech, I want to speak briefly about my riding, a community benefiting immensely from our government's policies and programs, again quoting from my original maiden speech.

"First, let me say that the greatest resource, the greatest pride and the greatest strength we have in" the riding "is our people. The citizens I have the privilege and honour to serve include the second-highest number of senior citizens ... of any constituency in Canada. These elderly represent a feisty, active, self-reliant and proud segment of our community." Many of them, "as we know, require the special help afforded by our social assistance infrastructure, yet even these seniors accept their adversity with courage, dignity and understanding. These seniors hold a special place in our hearts and remain one of my riding's most cherished ... assets."

We are blessed in Ottawa West-Nepean with the benefit of the foresight of those who came before us, elected officials and otherwise. Almost the entire northern boundary of my riding of Ottawa West-Nepean is publicly owned and accessible to the public along the majestic Ottawa River, thanks in large part to former Nepean heads of council Ben Franklin and Andy Haydon. We enjoy expansive green spaces and world-class recreational facilities, neighbourhoods with community pride and an exceptional quality of life. We have leading institutions like Algonquin College and the Queensway Carleton Hospital, and we are blessed with exceptional community and social services: the Pinecrest-Queensway community health and resource centre, the Carlington community health and resource centre, the Olde Forge seniors centre, Nepean Seniors' Home Support and many others.

Ottawa est une ville où les Franco-Ontariens ont une fierté très forte de leur histoire et de leur patrimoine. Aujourd'hui, dans ma circonscription, avec une population francophone de plus en plus importante, nous avons quatre écoles élémentaires et une école secondaire

de langue française, et un centre communautaire robuste, Franc-Ouest.

#### 1430

Pendant 10 ans, j'étais fier de travailler avec mes collègues Jean Poirier, Gilles Morin et le père du projet de loi 8, Ben Grandmaître, qui ont toujours servi leur circonscription et la population franco-ontarienne avec distinction. Je suis heureux que le flambeau soit aujourd'hui porté par mes collègues d'Ottawa-Vanier et de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

I say thank you to the visionary community leaders who came before us, and I will try to lead by following their example.

I returned to Queen's Park because I want to support the Premier's vision and agenda for Ontario. That includes transforming our economy for the future through our tax reform policy, through our energy policy and through our education policy.

Firstly, tax reform policy and the HST: In January, when I announced that I was going to be seeking the nomination in Ottawa West-Nepean, I had a media conference, and the media asked me how I would defend, or try to defend, the HST. I told them that I would not try to defend it but that I would be a very strong advocate of our tax reform policy, which includes the HST.

I mentioned at that time that we were now experiencing, as of January 1, the largest provincial income tax cut in the history of the province of Ontario—\$10 billion—and that was accompanied by a \$4.5-billion business tax cut for small businesses. Ninety-three per cent of individual taxpayers in Ontario were enjoying an income tax cut starting on January 1. Ninety thousand individuals in Ontario—low-income Ontarians, including many seniors—were 100% removed from the income tax rolls.

The tax reform package also includes a new sales tax credit of up to \$260 per year for low- and medium-income families and individuals; an additional \$270 per year of Ontario property tax credit; and an additional \$500 per year in the seniors' property tax credit; plus, as we all know, a one-time payment of \$1,000 per family and \$300 per individual.

In addition to the \$4.5-billion tax cut for small business, Ontario businesses will save \$500 million per year in administrative costs.

Stephen Harper, John Baird and Jim Flaherty all voted to implement our HST in Ontario. Indeed, the federal government gave Ontario \$4.2 billion to help implement the HST, and that's because Ontario and Canada both know it will make our manufacturing economy more competitive and create over 600,000 new jobs. Here's what Jim Flaherty, the federal Minister of Finance, said just over seven months ago, and I'm quoting exactly: An HST "is the single most important step that provinces with" a provincial sales tax "could take to stimulate new business investment, create jobs and improve Canada's overall ... competitiveness."

Our tax reform policy is good for Ontarians and it's good for Canada. So are the McGuinty government's energy policies, which are also helping to transform the economy of Ontario.

The end of the Mike Harris administration, in which the current Conservative leader was a leading minister, burdened Ontario with blackouts and brownouts, emergency generators in our cities and electricity reliability at its lowest level in recent history in Ontario, and the opening of our restructured electricity markets was in total disarray.

Between then and now, reliability of electricity supply and infrastructure has been stabilized and upgraded, and Ontario generated more new energy capacity per capita and more new green energy per capita than any other jurisdiction in North America.

Just last week, our government delivered the largest green energy initiative of its kind in Canadian history. Under the Green Energy Act's feed-in tariff program, 184 new contracts for big green energy projects were approved. We previously announced 510 medium-sized projects. This new announcement creates 2,500 megawatts of new generation.

Under the Samsung consortium partnership, Ontario will benefit in a number of ways: from \$7 billion of foreign investment; the building of four major manufacturing plants in Ontario to manufacture green energy products and equipment; the building of new green energy generation facilities; and the creation of over 16,000 green energy jobs.

The McGuinty government has re-established electricity reliability in Ontario, has established Ontario as the new leader in North America for green energy generation, has laid the groundwork for a green energy manufacturing industry and has laid the foundation for 50,000 new knowledge-based green jobs. This is real progress for today and for the future.

In addition to our tax reform package and energy initiatives, we are also leading with our education to build Ontario's economy in the future. Under the Harris/Hudak Tories, we saw: strikes, turmoil, massive budget cuts and ballooning class sizes; under our government: no strikes, reduced class sizes, sustainable budgets for school boards, and optional full-day learning for four- and five-year-old kindergarten. We have been supporting post-secondary education with capital expansion, investments in innovation and research, sustainable budgets, and, of course, we've just announced in our budget more spaces for 20,000 additional students to go to colleges and universities this September, with new annual investment of \$310 million—that's \$310 million per year. We've also announced other significant budget initiatives for our colleges and universities.

We are building better people and a better economy through education. We are preparing Ontario for the smart and green jobs in the smart and green economy of the 21st century.

Our government has been working hard and successfully to build a 21st-century economy. In all that time, we have heard nothing positive from the official opposition. We've heard bleating, shouting and spinning. Everything is negative.

From 1995 to 1997, I occupied an office on the fourth floor in the northeast corner of this legislative building.

That's an office that has had, for the last 100 years or so, ghost sightings—some in recent history. Well, since I returned, there's been a new ghost sighting right here in this chamber. It's the spirit of Mike Harris in the body of Tim Hudak. Last month, the Leader of the Opposition did an interview on Ottawa talk radio. He was asked if the Hudak government would bring back workfare. Here's what he said: "I was part of a government that brought in workfare. I think that made a tremendous amount of sense; I think that is a fair principle we uphold." He went on to say in different ways how our social safety network was too expensive and that we had to cut back on it.

A couple of weeks ago, the Leader of the Opposition announced a 10-point plan for Ontario. The plan, in some respects, is very close to plagiarism—I probably should take that word back—to copying from the Mike Harris Common Sense Revolution, going back to 1995.

In the 10-point plan, the Leader of the Opposition has written, "Cut wasteful government"; the Common Sense Revolution wording was, "Cutting out fat and waste." The Hudak wording: "Bring public sector agreements in line with reality"; the Common Sense Revolution: Reform labour law and "shift power" away "from labour bosses." Again, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hudak: "Reduce the tax burden on employers"; and the Common Sense Revolution: "Cutting payroll taxes."

The opposition Conservatives have a 1995, hard, right-wing manifesto with the child of Mike Harris; the government of Ontario, the McGuinty government, is implementing a plan to build a smart, green, 21st-century economy for Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I'd like to welcome Mr. Chiarelli back to the legislative chamber, which he left to run for the mayoralty of the city of Ottawa. It's unfortunate that he is continuing to fight Conservatives, whether they're in government or in opposition, as he did as mayor, and continues to do back in the government benches. I believe that we should work co-operatively for the city that we represent and that we should continue to do that regardless of which side of the Legislature we sit on.

1440

Mr. Chiarelli has talked about the past government of Mr. Harris, of which I was a proud member, when we created over a million jobs for the people of Ontario, whereas this government has created less than 100,000 private sector jobs for the people of Ontario in their seven years here.

We have a lot of history in this place. Mr. Hudak represents the views of many centre-right Conservatives in Ontario who would like to see fiscal prudence and proper management of our taxpayers' dollars as we go forward. Just let the electorate decide in 2011 which they want: a spending Premier like Dalton McGuinty or a Premier like Tim Hudak, who wants to be careful with our taxpayers' dollars and get the most services possible for those taxpayers' dollars.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I'm pleased to join this debate on Bill 16 today. I fully agree with the member from Ottawa West–Nepean that this bill lays the foundation for a strong Ontario workforce, a prosperous economy and a better education system. This bill also opens Ontario to new ideas, new investments and new jobs.

Education is this government's highest priority. As a former teacher, nothing pleases me more than to see education thriving. My parents always told me that it's only through education that families become stronger and more prosperous.

This September, this government is introducing a full-day learning program for our four- and five-year-old children. This will be implemented in 600 schools across Ontario, including three schools in my riding of Mississauga–Brampton South. This will provide a seamless and integrated program for our children, and it will make life easier for parents and learning easier for our children.

Under this budget, our government is investing \$63.5 million to protect child care spaces across Ontario; 542 child care spaces will be protected in the region of Peel. Our government is also investing \$310 million to add new—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** The member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills was absolutely right: This member hasn't changed his spots. I know this is his maiden speech, so we're supposed to be nice.

When Ernie Eves left this Legislature in 2001, he took a severance, as was appropriate at that time. He then returned to this Legislature in a by-election the next year—2002, I believe it was—and he returned as leader of our party. He immediately paid back that severance because he didn't feel that he deserved it.

I haven't asked the member whether or not he has paid back his severance or not but, being a Liberal, I can stand here and I can guarantee the people of Ontario that he has not paid back that severance he took.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I'm pleased to welcome back the member for Ottawa West–Nepean. He was away for a while. He was missed. I congratulate him on giving his non-partisan speech—or at least the beginning of it was non-partisan. The end was not a speech about the budget; the end seemed to be an attack upon the opposition leader. I would hope that we would continue to focus on the issue before us, which is the budget. I would hope that at a time when Ontario has the largest deficit ever in its history, we would focus on the budget; at a time when we have unemployment rates which rival, or are very close to rivalling, what the unemployment rate was in the Great Depression, that we would focus on the budget. At a time when the government plans to introduce a new tax which will take \$7 billion a year out of the pockets of Ontario citizens and hit modest- and middle-income

families hardest, I would hope we would focus on the budget.

These are real issues and they are the issues of real people. I would hope that's what we would focus on. I would hope—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** If Liberal members want to speak, I invite them to get to their feet.

I would hope that we would focus on the fact that there are literally millions of Ontarians who are hurting there very badly. In my part of Ontario, you can go virtually to every community and find the community on the verge of shutdown—sawmill town after sawmill town, paper mill town after paper mill town, pulp mill town after pulp mill town. Those are the real issues we should be—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. The member from Ottawa West–Nepean has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Bob Chiarelli:** I'm very pleased that the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills spoke about co-operation between parties. He made some comments about that; he didn't mention downloading at the time. But in any case, I'm very, very proud of the McGuinty government's collaboration with Conservatives, particularly the federal Conservatives when it comes to the HST, because that was a very collaborative effort. As I mentioned, Stephen Harper, John Baird, Pierre Poilievre, MPs from our community in the Ottawa area all voted with Ontario, and Ontario worked very collaboratively to improve the competitiveness of the Ontario economy. There was a very, very strong endorsement in that quote from Jim Flaherty that we were doing the right thing and we were following his lead.

I also want to say that we are very close in terms of our policies and philosophies with the federal government on reduction of the deficit. There's a sense that we cannot start cutting, burning and slashing at this particular point in time, that we have to keep our economy growing and robust to get it strong and back on its feet again. Once again, the policies, the time periods and the direction of the federal government in terms of its fiscal management are very close to what we're doing here in Ontario.

We are collaborating, we are co-operating and we are moving Ontario in the right direction. About three weeks ago, the Conference Board of Canada issued a report indicating that in Ontario in 2010 we are moving to a growth rate of 3.5%, which is one of the highest that Ontario has experienced in almost a decade, according to that particular Conference Board report. So we are doing the right things. We're building the economy of Ontario—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thanks for including me in today's debate on the 2010 Ontario budget. Madam Chair, as you know, being a member of this distinguished place, as do all of my colleagues, it's always a privilege to have the opportunity to address this distinguished chamber on

the priorities that our constituents have. In Nepean–Carleton, we share many of those with Ontarians.

Former Prime Minister Joe Clark once referred to Canada as a “community of communities.” I can't help but wonder if he coined that phrase when he was thinking about communities such as Nepean–Carleton, which are very large, diverse and built on Matthew 19:19's fundamental premise of “love thy neighbour as thyself.”

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This year I'm particularly pleased to enter the budget debate because it falls so closely on my fourth anniversary as an MPP in this chamber. Furthermore, my maiden speech in this chamber took place almost four years ago to the day, and I spoke, at the same time, about those priorities that my community sent me to Queen's Park on during that 2006 budget debate.

Four years ago and two elections later, I want people in Nepean–Carleton to know that I will continue to bring to this place a desire to protect the values that are shared by the people of North Gower, Manotick, Osgoode, Greely, Riverside South and Barrhaven. Those are the values of safe streets, strong families and self-reliance. People like Nancy Davis, Sue Ayyad, Anna Suzuki, Kim Sheldrick and Kelly Ross have all sent me to Queen's Park to defend our suburban-rural way of life. They expect me to stand up for seniors in our community, who have given us so much, like Ron Shurtliff, Walter Foster, Eldon Brownlee and Arthur Rice. They expect me to stand up for families like Steve and Ann Noonan's, Karla and Doug Clark's, and Richard and Karen Fromm's. And they expect me to stand up for small businesses like the family-run businesses of BarrhavenLive.ca, Randy's Pools and Spas, and Earl Stanley's Maple Lane Farm.

The people of Nepean–Carleton expected that the budget would reflect their values, they expected that their budget would reflect their priorities, and they expected that our province would also defend seniors, families and small business, all of whom contribute to a community that not only cherishes safer streets, strong families and self-reliance, but a community that lives it.

Sadly, the most recent McGuinty Liberal budget does not reflect the values or the priorities of the people of Nepean–Carleton. Please let me explain why.

In my maiden speech to this chamber just four short years ago, I pointed out that D. Aubrey Moodie founded what is today Nepean, and he did it based on family values that were learned on the farm and in the rural communities that surrounded Ottawa, values that we can truly be thankful for today. Self-reliance, hard work and honesty—the archetypical virtues of humanity that when applied to governance made governance work. That spirit still lives today in Nepean–Carleton. It is a community where families still work hard for their community and for each other.

That spirit, however, is threatened by this most recent budget. When government takes away the incentive for hard work and replaces it with high taxes, more regulations and reliance on bureaucracy, our communities suffer.

In Nepean–Carleton, I'm proud of the people who give our community so much so that it remains strong and so that it will continue to grow. People like Joe and Linda Price of PJ Quigley's restaurant make sure that every sports team and church has the opportunity to fundraise. They very much live on their desire and drive to give back to Nepean–Carleton.

It's the same with Andrea Steenbakkers, who works for so many community-led initiatives, such as Barrhaven Run for Roger's House and for the St. Andrew school council, just to name a couple.

Manotick's own Grace Agostinho has been quietly working for years to help build an orphanage in Haiti. She only recently got recognition because of the disaster there. She's supported by legionnaires like Alan Hahn, and Jeff Morris from Barrhaven Independent, the newspaper that people in my community so frequently read. Jeff, of course, is possibly Mr. Community himself, devoting many hours not only to his newspaper but to community events so that we can thrive as a growing community.

Then there are people like Meredith Brophy, Ron Issac, his son Jason Issac, Marlene Casey and Kris Shulz, each giving back to their communities every single day through their numerous activities, whether it's in Manotick or Kars or Metcalfe or Vernon.

They all give back without sweetheart deals or corporate welfare, like what we saw last week with an \$8-billion corporate welfare announcement, the largest in Canadian history, one that will be paid for by these community volunteers through higher hydro bills. So this budget sends them the wrong message.

This government is on the wrong track. It tells the community activists in Nepean–Carleton and right across Ontario that they should rely on government: Leave it to government to do because government can do better than the community. And that's a wrong message. In fact, I prefer what Ronald Reagan said: "The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: 'I'm from the government, and I'm here to help.'"

This budget, for all it claims to support, forgot many segments in society: small business, families and seniors, and it forgot farmers. It forgot the people who built Ontario with their strong work ethic.

I had the privilege last week to meet with a retired cattle farmer, John Newman. Last week we talked a lot about this approach to agriculture. I'm disappointed that the 2010 budget speech mentioned neither agriculture nor the family farm once. A livelihood and way of life for so many in Nepean–Carleton, like Dwight Foster, Peter Ruiter, Brent Taylor and Ed Schouten, it was not even so much as acknowledged by the finance minister in his address, despite this sector's economic significance.

I want to pay tribute to my seatmate, who's actually sitting a little bit further away from me today, our agriculture critic, the member from Oxford, who just two weeks ago in this very chamber suggested that leadership on the agricultural file has now been relegated to the role of the lobbyist. That is not how you support our farmers. It is not how you support our agricultural sector.

The families in Nepean–Carleton were also disappointed with this budget. Parents are justifiably concerned with the state of Ontario's books today and what the most recent tax hikes are going to mean for them and for their children. For example, hard-working and community-minded families like Stef and Melanie Gauthier's or Cheryl and Hugh Cooper's have budgets. They would be shocked at how the Liberal government is mismanaging their tax dollars, especially because they work so hard to pay their taxes, live by the rules and support their neighbours.

And what kind of message is this budget sending to our students, like Ashley Croke or Cassandra Edwards, who have their student loan debt to worry about but now also a very large provincial debt? I'm not sure that any of these people can fathom that Dalton McGuinty has tripled our reliance on federal welfare payments.

There was a time in this province just six short years ago, when Dalton McGuinty came to office, that have-not status and equalization payments coming into the province of Ontario would have been unthinkable.

Dalton McGuinty will also have doubled the debt from the time he took office in 2003 to when he leaves in 2011. That means the household share of the provincial burden and the debt on families like Paul and Krista MacKenzie's Barrhaven family went from \$30,000 in 2003 to \$60,000. Dalton McGuinty has also presided over a deficit which is now larger than all of the other nine provinces combined. Clearly not a priority, Mr. McGuinty proved that the debt and deficit were an afterthought when he relegated them to the second-last page of his budget document.

The families in Kars, Vernon, Metcalfe, Craig Henry and Findlay Creek are getting nothing in return from this government with the exception of a massive \$15-billion health tax; a \$3-billion HST which takes effect on Canada Day; a \$1-billion eHealth boondoggle that saw sweetheart deals to Liberal-friendly firms; and hidden fees and taxes like the eco-tax, the hydro tax which is coming and gosh knows what else. It is getting tougher by the minute to raise a family in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario.

We are going to reach the tipping point very soon, because enough is enough. I'm fortunate to have a loving family. My husband, Joe, and my daughter, Victoria, mean the world to me. I see our friends with small children, too. They're paying their mortgage, putting gas in the car and food on the table. Hopefully, they have money left over to send their kids to soccer or hockey registration with the Nepean Hotspurs or the Metcalfe Jets, but with Mr. McGuinty's continued taxation it's going to be so tough on those who want to put their kids through sports because, even then, kids' sports registration is going to increase by 8%.

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Take, for example, Janice Crowe of the Nepean Studio School of Dance. She teaches hundreds of kids each year how to dance. Whether they want to express themselves or the parents want to give them the gift to dance, they

will be forced to pay an extra 8% come July 1, 2010. In fact, Janice had to send out an email telling parents to beat the HST by registering early.

Families are working to make ends meet in Ontario, and I can't for the life of me understand why the Liberals have decided to penalize them.

But perhaps the only other group more unfairly targeted than Ontario's families are Ontario's seniors. How Mr. McGuinty thinks Helen Byers, Shirley Mahoney or Helen and Vern Foster can afford to give Mr. McGuinty thousands more dollars in taxes and hidden fees next year, including the new hydro tax, Mr. McGuinty's 11.6% rate increase on hydro and the 8% HST on top of all that, is beyond me.

Because of this budget and Mr. McGuinty's history of massive spending and little regard for restraint, particularly during economic recession, seniors have been unfairly tapped to balance his budget. How much more are seniors living at Robertson House, Thorncliffe Place, Orchard View Living Centre or Prince of Wales Manor expected to take?

These are the people who built this province, who fought for our country. It is unfair that in addition to paying 8% more for a variety of services, he's going to tack on another 8% to their mutual funds, their haircuts and funeral services. With all the extra revenue, Mr. McGuinty is going to reap from seniors, they will still have to contend with a health care system which is short on long-term beds. Last time I checked in the city of Ottawa alone, that is 250 beds.

Nepean-Carleton businesses have not escaped the wrath of the Dalton McGuinty tax-and-spend budget either. Today, they're grappling with the third hike to the minimum wage in three years, and that is tough on business owners like Ken and Kelly Ross of Ross' Independent, who, like so many, give so much more back to the community than they will ever get. Realtors like Betty Hillier or health care professionals like Victoria Clark and Salima Ismail have not been spared. The dreaded HST is going to affect them, too. Mr. and Mrs. Lee, Korean immigrants to Canada, have worked so hard to build their Brown's dry cleaning business in Barrhaven. On July 1, dry cleaning bills will go up by another 8%, and that's going to affect their bottom line. It's simply not fair for these new Canadians.

At a recent Barrhaven Business Exchange breakfast, I was told time and again by local business owners that the HST is going to hurt, not help them. You just have to ask John Herbert of the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association about how the HST is going to impact the home renovation sector. An often-quoted statistic of what happened in Nova Scotia is that one third of the renovation sector stayed in business, one third went out of business and one third went underground.

The attacks on small business have me so concerned that the project to revitalize Bells Corners will be in danger if this government doesn't get back on track. After all, Ontario relies on a strong small business sector to create jobs. With increased regulatory and taxation burdens, the job creation climate has them stifled.

This budget has lost credibility with everyday Ontarians. Amid the wasted money, the billions of dollars at eHealth, OLG, WSIB, Cancer Care Ontario and the LHINs—our local health integration networks—Ontarians cannot for the life of them understand why they should pay more but continue to receive less.

I've heard dozens of my constituents who are fed up with the \$100,000 sunshine list. Last week, it was revealed that there are 10,000 more people making over \$100,000 in Ontario's public service than there were last year.

Small business owners like Thom Bennett of Bennett Insurance, Michele Brydges of Act II consignment and Ozzie and Caroline Rossi of La Porto a Casa work darn hard to make their businesses viable, to employ staff and to pay their taxes, all before taking home a paycheque. Under the McGuinty Liberals, however, Ontario's private sector is being outpaced by the public sector, and it is not sustainable. But that's no surprise: Dalton McGuinty has tripled the number of people making over \$100,000 in the public service since he took office.

I'm not sure that there is a person in the Bells Corners, Osgoode, South Carleton, Greely or Barrhaven legions who can understand why precious health care dollars are being spent on bloated bureaucracies at the LHINs, which have seen the amount of people making over \$100,000 in their ranks triple in three short years.

I know Ontarians can't understand how Dalton McGuinty can justify paying a \$25-million severance to people who are not losing their jobs. That's why PC leader Tim Hudak is calling on the McGuinty Liberals to support his budget amendment, which would redefine who is entitled to severance and who is not. We believe that if you do not lose your job or miss a day of work, you do not receive severance.

It's also why PC leader Tim Hudak has offered 10 ideas that Mr. McGuinty could have adopted to get Ontarians working again. His solutions can be found at [10for2010.ca](http://10for2010.ca). They include suspension of the tax on new jobs, eliminating job-killing red tape and regulations, making home ownership more affordable, restoring the balance on the WSIB system, expanding job opportunities for young workers, creating jobs in northern Ontario, cutting wasteful government, stopping corporate welfare, capping spending and bringing public sector agreements in line with reality. Ontario can lead again, and the people of Nepean-Carleton like Bill Tupper, Gib Patterson and Norm MacDonald deserve no less.

I conclude with an observation that I made four years ago in my maiden speech: "Whether you are a farmer in Nepean-Carleton or live in the GTA or northern Ontario, you should be able to expect that the government will work for you and will treat you equally and with respect, but clearly it is not the case under this current government."

It is clear that with the runaway spending, waste and mismanagement of this government and the lack of priorities in this budget, the McGuinty Liberals have become disconnected with the people whom they have

been sent here to represent. Based on this 2010 Liberal budget, there is a major disconnect with the people in Nepean–Carleton, who value safe streets, strong families and self-reliance, because this budget attacks those very same things. They have mortgaged not only our future, but they have mortgaged our children's.

“You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today,” President Abraham Lincoln once said, but this is exactly what Mr. McGuinty has attempted to do. As a result, I will be casting my vote against the 2010 Liberal budget, its deficit, its debt and its runaway spending.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I listened attentively to my Conservative colleague from Ottawa—there seem to be a lot of Ottawa speakers here today. I'm not sure how this happens on a particular day, but there seems to be some competition amongst them.

I want to acknowledge that she correctly describes how much the HST is going to hurt modest- and middle-income families. The fact of the matter is that this is a tax on just about everything. If you get a haircut, there's a tax; you take your pet to the vet, there's a tax; you go to see a movie, there's a tax; you take a taxi cab, there's a tax; your car breaks down on the highway and you have to have it towed to the garage, there's a tax; a loved one in your family passes away and there's a funeral, there's a tax. The list goes on.

I think members of the McGuinty government need to stop and reflect for a while on what is happening out there. Across this province, there are more and more people who have less income now than they had four or five years ago. Go to Windsor: All kinds of people have less income now than they had four or five years ago—or Sarnia, or Chatham, or St. Thomas, or London, or Brantford, or Cambridge, or Kitchener-Waterloo, or Hamilton, or the Niagara peninsula, or Oshawa, or Peterborough, or anywhere across the north, or Cornwall, and you will find a great number of people who have less income now than they had four or five years ago. Yet the plan of the McGuinty Liberals is to increase the taxes on people who have less income now than they had four or five years ago. I think this government needs to reflect on what that is going to do to people's prospects.

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**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak to the comments made by my colleague from Nepean–Carleton. Here's another Ottawa member speaking.

I don't understand where the member from Nepean–Carleton is coming from in terms of the very strong economic policies this government is putting forward to ensure that we grow our economy as we recover from a very devastating global recession. This is a recession which has not impacted just Ontario; it has impacted all of Canada, every single province in this great country of ours, but also across the world.

When it came down to cutting personal income taxes for Ontarians, this member and her party voted against it. When it came down to cutting business taxes for our small businesses, the same businesses she's speaking of, when it came down to cutting those small business taxes significantly, this member and her party voted against it. It's the same thing with the harmonization of the GST and PST, which will create more jobs for our economy: This party refused to be in favour of it, this party whose federal cousins are for it and have passed it in the federal House of Commons. They voted against it because they are being duplicitous toward Ontarian people—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** I would ask you to withdraw that comment.

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** I withdraw—taking a different position than they have taken in the past.

Just right now there's a report that has been filed by Canadian Press which is reporting that Ontario's GDP is the best in Canada and the United States. Ontario, in terms of economic growth, is leading in North America. Why? Because we have the right set of economic policies in place, through this budget, through the Open Ontario plan, we are asking, we are urging all the members of this Legislature to be a part in this as we grow this economy.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I understand why the member from Ottawa Centre doesn't understand where the member from Nepean–Carleton is coming from, because he doesn't understand, the McGuinty government doesn't understand and he as president of the Ontario Liberal Party does not understand what fiscal prudence is about. This government has led in creating debt, in creating an enormous, enormous negative for our future kids and grandkids. They've doubled the long-term debt for each kid, each person, each child in our province over a short seven- or eight-year period.

About two or three years ago I asked Premier McGuinty a question. I said, “Premier McGuinty, you have a surplus of \$5.5 billion in your budget. Why don't you pay down the long-term debt now so that when we have a rainy day you'll have some money to spend?” Do you know what his answer was? “Of the \$5.5 billion, we're going to use \$.5 billion, or \$500 million, to pay down the debt and we're going to throw the rest out across the province and create things like the transit fund of \$750 million for the Toronto area,” which hasn't been spent yet. When they had the money, they could have saved and they could have knocked down the debt so that when we're in a rainy day now, they could have spent the money without increasing the long-term debt. They didn't take the advantage. In other words, “You got the money, spend it. When you get into trouble, borrow, borrow, borrow.” This government doesn't understand—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** I was pleased to be able to listen carefully to the comments by the member for Nepean–Carleton, and I'm astounded and quite frankly shaken—

not to say taken aback—by the critique of her by other members of this assembly.

She's talking about the sort of things that folks are talking about down where I come from. She's talking about seniors and other folks who wish they could be hard-working, were hard-working until they lost their job, and in the case of seniors who simply can't afford to retire—because if they had a pension plan, it's been gutted, and if it hasn't been gutted, the value of the defined benefit portion of it hasn't risen over the course of the months and years to the point where they can maintain that standard of living that they expected and they worked so hard for.

Look, down where I come from, people are very, very frightened about the impact of the HST on their day-to-day lives: on their welfare; on their ability to help their grandkids, struggling with ever-growing college and university tuitions; on their ability to remain mobile in the community; on their ability to, dare I say it, maybe take two or three weeks in the peak of wintertime to take a vacation to warmer parts of the world. People are going to be impacted significantly. People's lifestyles are going to change significantly. At the end of the day, people are going to have less in their pocket to spend at their corner store, to spend in their local merchant stores, to buy the things that, well, their neighbours probably don't make anymore because Mr. McGuinty and his Liberal team have allowed this province to be gutted of its manufacturing sector. Those wealth-creating value-added manufacturing jobs are gone, gone, gone.

I'm looking forward to Howard Hampton, member for Kenora–Rainy River, who's going to be speaking to this motion next. You know that he's going to bring a unique northern perspective, so if folks share that excitement, they should stay tuned for Howard—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. The member from Nepean–Carleton has up to two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I want to say thank you to my colleagues: my neighbour from Carleton–Mississippi Mills, my colleague from Welland and my colleague from Ottawa Centre.

Look, this speech meant a lot to me, and it did because I took a long time to speak to my constituents, who feel that they are being unfairly treated by this Liberal budget. I felt it important to do what I promised them on day one in this chamber, which was to communicate their views effectively and forcefully from my seat in the chamber, which I have.

What I'm trying to convey to the government is that people in my riding, and I believe throughout the rest of the province, feel that you have been disconnected from the people who sent you there. That's disturbing; it's troubling. They only have to start to listen to them again. This happens from time to time in election cycles: You see governments come; they go. The reality is, they're here to represent people, and the people across the province—I am speaking particularly for the people of Nepean–Carleton—are having difficult days. They can't

afford new taxes, they can't afford new hidden fees, and they get extremely frustrated and angry when they hear about waste and mismanagement, whether that's at OLG, at eHealth or, now, their local health integration networks.

By not doing what the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills said, which is start to pay down that debt, they have done exactly what Abraham Lincoln told us not to do, which is, you cannot escape responsibility for tomorrow by evading it today—which is what this government has done consistently over the past six years, which it has done again through this 2010 budget.

I stand in good conscience, knowing that when I vote against this budget bill, I am doing so because the people of my riding expect better of their government, they expected better of this budget, and I know that in speaking for them, I'm doing just that.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate?

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I'm pleased, on behalf of New Democrats, to have an opportunity to engage in this budget debate. Let me get right to the first point I want to make.

The reality in Ontario today is that more people are falling into poverty. The reality is, those people who are dealing with poverty are, in fact, dealing with a heavier burden and tougher circumstances than ever before.

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Let me just give you some examples, examples that are too close to home for me.

Start, for example, in Chapleau. Chapleau used to be a town that had three sawmills. Today you might find one. Literally hundreds of jobs have been lost, in a small community like that.

Then you go over to Sault Ste. Marie, where just two weeks ago St. Marys announced they were shutting down the paper mill, putting another 400 workers out of work in the mill, and likely another 400 out of work in the forest and in transportation.

Wawa: The oriented strand board mill has shut down. Dubreuilville: The sawmill has shut down. Hornepayne: The sawmill has shut down. White River: The sawmill has shut down. Longlac: The sawmill, the particleboard mill and the waferboard mill are shut down. Nakina: The sawmill is shut down. Marathon: The pulp mill is shut down. Terrace Bay: Both pulp mills are shut down. Red Rock: The containerboard mill is shut down. Nipigon: The plywood mill is shut down. Thunder Bay has lost over 10 paper machines, and three sawmills have shut down. Ignace: sawmill shut down. Atikokan: sawmill shut down. Sioux Lookout: sawmill shut down. Dryden: sawmill and two paper machines shut down. Ear Falls: sawmill shut down. Kenora: paper mill gone; sawmill shut down.

This represents tens of thousands of good jobs that are gone; people who have exhausted their employment insurance; people who are now either in the situation of exhausting their life savings or having to rely upon Ontario Works.

More and more people are falling into poverty in this province, so it was with some interest that I read the throne speech—and not one mention of poverty; not one mention of how to help these people who are now struggling with very low incomes. It was as if, for the McGuinty Liberals, poverty doesn't exist. I know this is a government that talks a good line about having targets, and it talks a good line about having consultation. Many of these people have been unemployed now for four years. The employment insurance is gone. The life savings are gone. In many cases, they would sell their home if they could get anything for it, all to put food on the table, pay the heating bill, pay the hydro bill.

I looked for something in this budget that said this government is going to do something. This budget doesn't even mention the word "poverty." It's as if it doesn't exist in the dictionary of the McGuinty Liberals. You don't even mention people who are poor, people who are struggling on low incomes. It's as if, for the McGuinty Liberals, these folks don't exist.

At a time when there are more people unemployed, more people who are trying to live on lower incomes and more people who do not have any employment income, it is nothing less than a travesty for a government to come forward with a budget like this.

What's equally incredible is that this government is about to put on the people of Ontario the largest single tax increase in the history of the province. At a time when more people have less money, you're going to see the largest single tax increase in the history of the province.

I want to deal with that from the perspective of one group of people, because once again they've been largely left out of this budget in terms of the government's consideration. I'm talking about the First Nations of Ontario. The implementation of the HST is going to have a substantial negative effect on First Nations people, because the HST does away with the point-of-sale exemption for First Nations.

Under the provincial sales tax, a native person going to the store in Thunder Bay or the store in Kenora or Sioux Lookout or Red Lake or Longlac or Geraldton or Nakina and shopping to get the winter coat and the winter boots would be able to present their status card at the cash register and they were tax-exempt from the PST. Under the HST, First Nations will no longer be tax-exempt.

Why is this a problem? Because by any income survey that is ever taken of Ontario, who, as an identifiable group, is always at the bottom in terms of their income? Native people. First Nations have the lowest incomes, and yet with one single stroke, this government is going to subject very low-income First Nations people to the biggest tax increases ever in their lives.

Let me give you an example of just what's going to happen here. Gasoline: A native person goes to the service station in Dryden and they fill up their tank—boom, 13%. If you thought gas was going to be \$1 a litre, when you add on the HST, it's \$1.13 a litre. That's a significant tax increase.

If someone, as I said, buys a pair of winter boots—and for northern First Nations, you better have a pair of winter boots—there's no point-of-sale exemption. If the price says \$40, then it's \$40 plus 13%.

A lot of native people do not have cars. To get to medical appointments, to get to where they need to go, they need to take taxis. If you have a \$50 taxi charge, that's now \$56.50. The HST applies to taking a taxi.

For a lot of First Nations in my part of the world, if they need to get to Winnipeg, if they need to get to Thunder Bay, they take the bus. If the bus ticket is \$100, it's now \$113. The HST applies.

A lot of native people have older vehicles. Older vehicles, I know because I have one, are prone to breakdowns. If it breaks down on the side of the highway and you have to have it towed to the garage at a \$200 towing charge, it's \$226 now.

The list goes on and on and on. This is going to be a substantial tax increase for First Nations.

I know there's a bit of Ping-Pong between the McGuinty Liberals and the Harper Conservatives in Ottawa. The McGuinty Liberals say, "Well, you could apply to the federal government to get the tax refunded." First Nations know that you don't get a tax refund. The rule for a tax refund runs relatively like this: You have to prove you live on the First Nation and you have to prove that the goods purchased were delivered to the First Nation. But if a native person goes from Wabigoon Lake First Nation to Dryden to buy a winter jacket and a pair of boots and the price comes to \$200—in other words, \$226 with the HST—you put the boots on, you put the coat on and you go home. You don't have, in paper terms, proof that it was delivered to the First Nation. You can't get the rebate.

The taxi: How do you prove that the taxi took you from Dryden to Wabigoon Lake First Nation? But the service is still going to be taxed. You don't get a tax rebate, and you don't get a tax rebate for the car that breaks down on the side of the road.

It's obvious, when you go through the list of all the items that are now going to be taxed, and for which now, under the HST, First Nations will be taxed—domestic air, rail and commercial bus tickets; campgrounds; over-night summer camps; hotels; ice rink rentals; motor vehicle services, like towing your car or having your car washed; labour costs related to home renovations; funeral costs; carpet costs; dry cleaning; if you go to a conference or a seminar; if you go to a movie theatre; if you use a taxi; if you buy postage stamps—my God, if you buy vitamins.

A lot of the First Nations communities in my constituency and across northern Ontario deal every day with issues of lack of appropriate nourishment and nutrition. The public health nurse tells everyone, "Buy vitamins." But under the McGuinty Liberals' plan, as soon as you buy vitamins, you're taxed—vitamins.

#### 1530

Professional fees: If you're a First Nation person and you have to hire a lawyer—that's not unusual in Ontario.

Disproportionately we charge, convict and imprison First Nations, so you have to get a lawyer. HST applies. You get a haircut: HST applies. You have a pet, you take the pet to the veterinarian: HST applies. Adult footwear; if you use the Internet: HST applies. This is going to be a substantial and huge tax increase for native people, for First Nations.

What First Nations are asking is simply, “Look, can’t you continue the point-of-sale exemption?” The response from this government is, “Go talk to the federal government.” It’s the McGuinty government that’s implementing this. It is the McGuinty government that brought legislation before the Ontario Legislature to implement the HST and to take away the point-of-sale exemptions from First Nations. So why doesn’t the McGuinty government do something about it?

In fact, you know what I find intriguing? The McGuinty government had no trouble exempting homes that sell for \$400,000 or less. It sounds to me like the McGuinty Liberals were worried about what would happen to their voting prospects in and around Toronto, where a lot of homes sell for \$400,000. The McGuinty Liberals had no trouble exempting homes for \$400,000 or less in Toronto and in the greater Toronto area. When there was public concern raised about the Tim Hortons coffee and a muffin, the McGuinty Liberals had no trouble exempting that from the HST. Then I read today that the government is going to introduce legislation that will give renters an HST break.

If the McGuinty government, in one way or another, can negotiate exemptions for homes that cost up to \$400,000, and the McGuinty government can implement exemptions from the HST for the Tim Hortons coffee and doughnut or coffee and muffin, and the McGuinty Liberals can provide HST breaks for renters, why can’t the McGuinty government continue the HST exemption for First Nations, identified as one of the lowest-income groups in the province of Ontario?

Let me offer what I think the reason is. The reason is, the McGuinty Liberals care about voters in the suburban and urban Toronto area and the \$400,000 homes that they might buy. The McGuinty Liberals care about those people who go to Tim Hortons or Coffee Time and buy the coffee and doughnut or the muffin and coffee. The McGuinty Liberals have suddenly figured out that if renters get a raw deal from the HST, that’s going to come back to bite them in terms of lost votes. But in terms of aboriginal people who are, by and large, struggling on low incomes, the McGuinty Liberals don’t care so much, don’t care enough to continue the point-of-sale exemption from this sales tax.

I’m astounded. This is a government that says it wants and it has a new and better relationship with First Nations. There was no dialogue, no discussion, no negotiation, no consultation whatsoever with First Nations on this. The McGuinty Liberals simply went in the backroom with the Harper Conservatives and signed the deal which dramatically increases taxes on native people, on First Nations, and does away with the point-of-sale

sales tax exemption, with no consideration that this is going to substantially increase taxes for people who probably have the least ability to pay more taxes, the least disposable income to be able to afford to pay more taxes. I’m astounded at the silence in terms of members of the McGuinty Liberal government on this issue.

I spoke earlier about the fact that the word “poverty” is not even mentioned in the budget, despite the fact that more people are living in poverty in Ontario than ever before. It’s as if the McGuinty Liberals are hoping that the very negative impact of this huge tax increase on native people will somehow be ignored, will somehow be flushed into the background. I don’t think you can substantially increase taxes on people who have some of the lowest incomes in Ontario and pretend that that isn’t going to matter, pretend that it isn’t going to hurt.

The fact of the matter is—and you can go to almost any First Nation community across this province—First Nations are having a hard time paying their hydro bills as it is, having a hard time paying the heating bill as it is, having a hard time paying the food bill as it is. In most First Nations, the First Nation band council has to get involved with emergency funds because so many families are having their hydroelectricity disconnected. Now the McGuinty government wants to come along and add substantial new fees and taxes and pretend that this isn’t going to hurt. But I think what really rubs salt in the wound for First Nations is the fact that a government that claims to want to have a better and more positive relationship with First Nations would do this in the backroom with no dialogue, no discussion, no negotiation, no consultation with First Nation leaderships whatsoever.

And the government that is going to do away with the point-of-sale exemptions for First Nations because it’s not important to the government, that same government, is going to exempt homes that cost \$400,000 or less; that same government is going to spend money to exempt the cup of coffee and the muffin or the cup of coffee and the doughnut at Tim Hortons; that same government is going to put in place measures to lessen the burden of the HST on renters. But that same government says, “No. No possibility of continuing the point-of-sale exemption for First Nations.” I think that’s what really, really goes beyond the pale.

There is still time. This legislative change that was apparently just leaked yesterday, “Renters to Get HST Break”: What this says to me is that there is still time for the McGuinty Liberals to reconsider the error they are making here. There is time between now—early April—and July 1 for this government to go back and reconsider their decision to do away with the point-of-sale exemption for First Nations, and I’m asking the McGuinty Liberals to do that. If you can exempt the coffee and the doughnut at Tim Hortons or Coffee Time, if you can exempt homes that cost up to \$400,000 from the HST, if you can put in place legislation to lessen the burden of the HST on renters generally, then I think it’s only right and proper that you continue the point-of-sale exemption. Otherwise, First Nations in this province and First Nation

families are going to get whacked and hurt like nothing we've ever seen before. People who struggle now to keep their hydroelectricity connected, to pay their heating bill and put food on the table, will not be able to under the regime that you intend to implement.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** I'm pleased to be able to provide a brief comment on the speech by the member from Kenora–Rainy River.

The budget, certainly in part, has focused and continues, through our economic plan, to focus on those in the province of modest and lower incomes, and those include people throughout the province.

1540

Let me speak here to some of the things both in the budget and as part of the comprehensive tax package that we have put in place as of January 1 of this year. We saw a decrease in the personal income tax for about 93% of Ontarians. There will be, with the implementation of the HST, a one-time rebate—one-time transitional payments for individuals and families, up to \$1,000 for families, income-based, at a fairly high threshold.

There will also be continuing payments of up to \$260 per person—not just per family, but per person—on an annual basis to offset some of the impacts of the tax shifting that will occur with a different type of a tax structure, a consumer tax based more on the HST than on some elements currently of the PST, where there are services that are being added for the purposes of that tax restructuring in the province.

We recognize that certainly children in the province—and part of our poverty reduction strategy—we need to continue to address that matter even in a modest way with the current economic climate that we have. As part of that overall structure, we are picking up some \$63.5 million—thereabouts—of what had been federal money, which is no longer available, to put into child care to maintain the child care capacity and the support that exists in the province for that purpose.

As well, ODSP and Ontario Works, even in the economic climate, have been increased again this year by one percentage point. Apart from the direct budgetary implications, certainly the increase has been called for in the past by the third increase in the minimum wage. We saw just two weeks ago the final instalment of that: some additional 75 cents.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** The member for Kenora–Rainy River has offered the House a strong account of what he's hearing in his riding and in his travels throughout Ontario. While our caucus often diverges in opinion from the New Democrats, I think he has offered a very interesting perspective. As you know, this budget debate allows considerable latitude, and a lot of issues are discussed during the course of the debate on the budget motion.

I want to bring forward my concerns about the war on pharmacy that the Minister of Health declared on

pharmacists across the province last week. I have heard from a considerable number of pharmacists in my riding who are very concerned about what this will mean for their patients. Certainly, I heard from Joe Walsh of Walsh's Pharmacy in Arthur. He sent me an email—he actually addressed it to the minister—today on April 12. I'm glad the minister is in the House to hear this. He said that “the face of pharmacy will be changed forever” if these proposals go through. “Longer waits, service cuts, and store closures are imminent, all brought upon by your ministry!

“You are giving pharmacies monies back i.e. MedsCheck, this program is a farce! I spend 1.5 hours on a MedsCheck review for a patient with 10 meds and you give me \$50. This is less than it would cost you to have your car fixed. Shame on you, Ontarians' health is worth more than fixing their car! What about the \$100 million proposed to be given back to pharmacy? I will max out at \$25,000 for my store and lose \$264,000—you do the math (or have one of your misinformed consultants do it).”

He goes on and on. I've known Joe Walsh all my life, and I believe that what he is telling me is absolutely true. I'm very, very concerned. I share the concern of the small-town pharmacies and certainly of many of the pharmacists across the province. This government has declared war on them. They're going to respond the only way they can: with facts and with arguments. And this side of the House will support them.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** As I told folks before he began speaking, the member for Kenora–Rainy River, Mr. Hampton, has, of course, done an effective and thorough analysis of this government's plan to bilk Ontarians out of yet more tax dollars and the disastrous impact it's going to have on native communities, aboriginal communities, already hard hit by a history of denial and isolation and hard-pressed to concede that they were ever consulted, even when it's a constitutional requirement that they be consulted. Now with an HST that's going to create even greater obstacles for women, men and kids in those aboriginal communities, I say this to the government: Rather than attacking the member for Kenora–Rainy River for bringing this message to Queen's Park, perhaps the government would be better advised to listen carefully and review its ill-conceived commitment to the HST and the tremendous new tax burden that it's going to create for Ontarians from all walks of life, from every part of this province and at every age level.

Let's make this very, very clear: The goal, the end-game here, is all about increasing revenue. So at the same time as Mr. McGuinty and the Liberals cut huge tax breaks for wealthy and very prosperous banks, they imposed new tax hikes on some of the most vulnerable and the people least capable of paying them. That's not the kind of province that most of us want to live in.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** It's my pleasure to rise in this House and to speak about the budget motion. I listened to the speakers previous to myself, and when they talk about the tax increase, I'm rather surprised, because the numbers in the budget speak for themselves.

One of the elements of this budget, which is actually based on our five-year Open Ontario plan, is based on reformation of our tax system. Based on this reformation of our tax system, 93% of Ontarians are going to pay fewer taxes than before; there will be over \$15 billion in tax cuts for corporations, businesses and individuals; and 90,000 Ontarians are going to be removed from the tax roll. The numbers are there. I'm rather surprised when my colleagues from the opposite side are talking about tax increases. This is absolute nonsense; there is no such thing. The numbers speak for themselves.

Based on this budget, we will be creating 600,000 new jobs. We are eliminating the embedded tax, which will cause a reduction in the price of goods and services in Ontario. This tax reformation is going to attract \$47 billion in new investments to Ontario.

We've already seen the \$7 billion in new investment that came from Samsung corporation. This \$7-billion investment that came to Ontario could have gone to other provinces or other countries. Why did Samsung bring \$7 billion of its own money and invest in Ontario? Because we are going to create such an environment for businesses to grow, to profit in this province, and to create jobs for Ontarians.

This tax reform and also the budget is the one good for—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. The member from Kenora–Rainy River has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I'm intrigued. I spent a large part of my speech raising the issue of what is going to happen to First Nations, and not one government member responded to that. I suspect, once again, that the reason for that is, this is a government that hopes that they can just hide what's about to happen here behind the radar screen: that an identifiable group that has, in all income surveys, some of the lowest incomes in Ontario, is going to be hit the hardest by the HST. No one on the government side has the courage to stand up and defend what the government is doing here.

To respond to one government member who actually did try to respond to my comments about the fact that the word "poverty" isn't even mentioned in the budget, I would just say to the member that a 1% increase for ODSP and Ontario Works is not even going to keep up with the increases in the hydro bill. It's certainly not, for an urban area such as the one you reside in, going to keep up with, for example, the increases in TTC or the increases in heating costs. In effect, this meagre 1% increase in ODSP and Ontario Works benefits simply illustrates that those people are going to be living in more difficult circumstances than ever before. Their poverty is going to deepen and not be alleviated. Similarly with the increase in the minimum wage: Yes, an increase in the

minimum wage is welcome, but it will continue to be a minimum wage that leaves people below the poverty line.

That's the point here. There was nothing in this budget that's going to do anything significant for those people who are struggling on low—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Further debate.

1550

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I appreciate having the time this afternoon to speak for about 20 minutes on our budget that was delivered here in the Legislature on March 25. I'm very pleased to have this opportunity because, by anybody's definition, certainly by mine and I think by most people in northern Ontario who have had an opportunity to speak with me about it, those people I've had an opportunity to speak to, either through the media or individually or in small groups, what we have managed to bring forward in our budget—I'll speak a bit parochially this afternoon as a member of the northern caucus and the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan. This budget was truly and significantly a budget that favours northern Ontario. As the chair of the northern caucus, I'm very excited and very pleased by what we've managed to deliver on behalf of people living in northern Ontario, and I'm going to spend most of my time this afternoon speaking about items specific to northern Ontario.

The first piece that I wanted to make reference to is a piece that I know many people were very excited to see us having committed to in the longer term, and that is our energy subsidy plan that we have brought forward that is going to be in position now for all large industrials in the province of Ontario. Previously, up until this point, our energy assistance plans that we brought forward over the course of the last several years have been available only to wood product industries. This new rate will now be available to all large industrials, and that will include the steel mills, mining companies and the forest companies in the province of Ontario.

This energy rate subsidy is valued at approximately \$150 million per year for three years. It will take what is currently an 18-cents-per-kilowatt-hour subsidy up to a 20-cents-per-kilowatt-hour subsidy. Just to translate that, that's a \$20-per-megawatt-hour reduction in the price of energy that these large industrials will have to pay. That will translate into approximately a 25% reduction for some of them in terms of their energy costs in the province of Ontario. By any measure, this is an extremely significant announcement for the people of northern Ontario, and I was very thrilled when our government made it.

What I do want to spend a little bit of time talking about, however, is the characterization of this energy rate plan as being too little, too late, and of course where that has predictably come from is the NDP. Still, for me, I must say, it was a little sad, even though predictable—very predictable—to hear the same old, same old coming from the New Democratic Party. Too little, too late, as if to imply to the people of northern Ontario that this is the first time we have brought energy assistance, or assist-

ance generally, to the wood products industry in northern Ontario. That's the implication when they say it's too little, too late. They want the people in northern Ontario—in Thunder Bay and all those communities that we heard rhymed off a little while ago—to think and believe that this budget is the first time that we've brought assistance to that sector. Of course, that is complete nonsense.

There has been energy rate assistance applied to our forestry companies for several years—three or four years. But it is not the only form that our assistance to energy companies comes in. It is not the only form. Besides energy rate assistance for our forestry companies in northern Ontario, we've been providing assistance to them in a variety of other ways. Over the course of the last four years, in addition to energy rate assistance, we've provided other programs that provided significant support for forestry companies in northern Ontario. For example, our roads program, when first introduced, was valued at \$225 million over three years: \$75 million a year. We've extended that for two years more since that original three-year program lapsed. It's important for me to remind people in northern Ontario—it's important for me to remind people in Thunder Bay—that that roads program used to be the purview of the province of Ontario until it was downloaded onto the backs of the forestry companies in the early 1990s by the New Democratic Party. They did that. From about 1993 to about 2005 or 2006, when we brought it back, I have no idea how many tens of millions that cost the forestry companies, but it did cost them a lot of money. We've had that roads program in place for several years in addition to energy rate assistance programs.

We've provided stumpage relief on a variety of species to forestry companies in northern Ontario for a number of years. We have been providing, for forestry companies, significant tax relief. The HST is one tax you're not going hear the forestry companies complaining about, or the corporate income tax reductions in place, or the elimination of the capital tax, or the significant reductions in business education tax rates that were left disproportionately in place by the Conservatives when they took over responsibility for it in 1997 or 1998. All of that combined, along with stumpage relief, with a roads program, with previous energy assistance, is a significant package of supports for forestry companies over the last number of years.

The previous speaker, who had 20 minutes, rhymed off a long litany of communities in Ontario, primarily in northern Ontario, that have seen pulp and paper mills and sawmills close. And he's right: They have closed; what he's wrong about is why they've closed. But he doesn't tell you the other half of the story. He doesn't tell you why they've closed and he doesn't tell you, if you wanted to give the people of Ontario a further geography lesson, that if he knew his geography in British Columbia and in Quebec, he could probably provide for the people of Ontario, if he so chose, the same litany of communities where pulp and paper mills and sawmills have been

closing by the dozens in those provinces as well. Unfortunately, that's not the message the NDP wants to communicate. They want the people of northwestern Ontario or of northern Ontario to think that the forestry crisis only hit there. They don't want them to believe that this transformational change in this industry occurred anywhere else. They don't want them to know that.

We could list off dozens of communities in British Columbia and dozens of communities in Quebec, both jurisdictions of which have seen more mills close and more job losses for men and women than in Ontario. And guess what: British Columbia and Quebec have lower energy costs than we do in Ontario. They always have and they likely always will. Yet in those jurisdictions, there's significant job loss.

In the last six or eight years over 200 mills, pulp and paper and sawmills, have closed in this country alone. I suppose somehow Dalton McGuinty and the provincial Liberals in Ontario are responsible for those mill closures as well. Or maybe there are other reasons for it occurring; maybe something else has happened that has caused the transformation in this industry and the significant job loss.

I know these people who work in these mills and sawmills. They're my friends. I grew up with them. I was in a union hall with many of them. I coached their kids in school. I went through high school with them. I coached their kids in sports. I understand very personally what's going on in those families. I think it's important that we convey to those people exactly what it is that has gone on in this industry.

Why doesn't the member from Kenora—Rainy River ever talk about the appreciation in the value of the Canadian dollar? AbitibiBowater in Thunder Bay: In one pulp and paper mill, a one-cent appreciation in the value of the dollar represents approximately a \$3-million to \$4-million expense to their bottom line—one penny. When we came into government in 2003, the Canadian dollar was about 73 or 75 cents. It topped out some time ago at \$1.10; today it's at about a dollar, almost on par with the American dollar. So 75 cents to a dollar, 25 cents times \$3 million or \$4 million: about \$100 million on one mill's bottom line every year—one mill. Corporately in Ontario for AbitibiBowater you extrapolate that out and that one cent comes out to about \$12 million to \$15 million, for one penny on their bottom line, depending on who you want to talk to. And yet the NDP will continue to say, as they have for the last five or six years, that somehow the catastrophe that has hit this industry is the responsibility of provincial Liberals in the province of Ontario. They'll continue to sing from the same song sheet because they know no other.

I also want to draw a distinction for people when we talk about the forest products industry in any province. When they continue to attach the cost of energy to the job losses that have occurred in the wood products industry, there is a significant energy cost in part of it—the pulp and paper side—and only if they use a process that's called TMP, or thermal mechanical pulping, and we have

provided assistance there. But in the sawmilling industry, where there have been significant job losses all across Ontario, in British Columbia, in Quebec, in the United States, electricity pricing is hardly even mentioned or on the table as a significant contributor to the bottom-line costs of those operating sawmills. It's not a significant factor when it comes to the cost of operating a sawmill. So all of those job losses that have occurred in sawmills over the last six, eight or 10 years are not connected to energy pricing in any way, shape or form. You won't hear the large sawmill guys talking about it. If you want to offer them energy rate relief, of course they'll say yes; they'll step up to the front of the line. Who wouldn't take it lower if they could get it lower? But to suggest that energy pricing has something to do with the closures of sawmills is absolutely incredible. They are very different.

**1600**

Nobody wants to talk about the decline of newsprint, because they know that the demand for that particular product has shrunk in some quarters by as much as 50%. Companies have merged so they could take commodity out of the market and try to prop up the commodity price of newsprint, because there is not as significant a demand for the product as there used to be five or 10 years ago. That demand is not likely to come back, although I do hear from some that it's possible they could start identifying new export markets overseas. I'm not sure, but some people say that there is some hope for that there.

But at this point, newsprint demand and the appreciation of the Canadian dollar, not to mention a pretty significant credit crisis—one in my riding that's in CCAA in the United States has a \$6.2-billion debt. I'm not sure how that happened. Somehow that was our fault too. But they have a \$6.2-billion debt, and when the credit crisis hit in the United States, well, guess what? The banks called in their loans. That's \$6.2 billion, which is not an insignificant amount.

The second part of the budget that was significant for northerners—and again, I'm very proud, as chair of the northern caucus, that we were able to achieve this and see this included within our budget—is our northern energy tax credit, a permanent tax credit available only to northerners. I'll start by saying that this is permanent. It is there, and it will benefit only northerners. It is up to \$130 for singles and up to \$200 for families, and it is income-tested as well. I think the \$130-for-singles credit starts at about \$35,000 and goes up to about \$48,000. I think that for the up to \$200 for families, it starts somewhere around \$48,000 and phases out, I think, somewhere around \$65,000, give or take. It's very significant relief.

Many people have had a lot of fun in this Legislature and around the province talking about the impact of the HST on families. This credit is only available for northerners and is in addition to all the other tax cuts that you've heard referenced here often that are permanent. I want people who are following this on television to

remember this stat if they can: If you are able to qualify for—and receive the maximum as a family—the \$200 tax credit, you would have to spend approximately \$2,500 on previously PST-exempt goods and services before you would use up that \$200. I'm going to repeat that: If you get the full \$200 tax credit, you will have to spend about \$2,500 on previously PST-exempt items before you will use up that \$200 tax credit, and that's only one of the permanent tax reductions that are in place not only for northerners but for all people across Ontario. This is a very significant piece, and we're proud to have it.

One of the other tax reductions that we've heard of is the 1% reduction on the first \$37,000 of income. Some 93% of people in the province of Ontario are going to pay less tax, 1% on the first \$37,000, and many people are obviously going to qualify for that. That 1% is \$370. When you take that into income and you're taxed on that, let's say you net \$300. When we take the \$300 and add it to the \$200 on the tax credit, that's \$500 times about \$1,250 apiece. Now you have to spend \$6,000 on previously PST-exempt items before you will have used up just those two reductions, and I haven't mentioned the sales tax credits for individuals and families that are means-tested.

All of this is why there is such a broad section of people across the province of Ontario who are supporting the HST. It's why poverty groups are very publicly supporting it. I'm not here to say all, but a broad section of people, whether it's from the poverty side, whether it's the business side, whether it's municipal leaders, whether it's individuals, are very, very supportive of this. When you start to add up the permanent reductions—and I know the opposition likes to talk about the transitional money and bribing this and buying that—that's the one-time transitional assistance of up to \$300 for singles and up to \$1,000 for families, one time—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Absolutely. But in addition to the one-time money, there is a series of permanent, significant tax reductions, and people need to file their tax returns to make sure they take advantage of all of those tax reductions. They need to make sure they do that.

The last piece that I want to talk a little bit about that, as a government and as a northern caucus member, I'm very proud we committed to and continued our commitment to is the northern Ontario heritage fund. Back in 2003, when I was first elected to this Legislature, I was appointed the parliamentary assistant to the then Minister of Northern Development and Mines, Rick Bartolucci. One of the first things he asked me to do in my capacity as his parliamentary assistant was to tour the province and see what we were ultimately going to do with the northern Ontario heritage fund. When that fund was created in the late 1980s by the Liberal government of David Peterson, the northern Ontario heritage fund was intended to be there to create private sector employment in the province. Somewhere from its inception in the late 1980s to the time we arrived in 2003, that \$60 million per year was no longer being used to create private sector

employment but had become a public infrastructure fund, I guess, for lack of using perhaps stronger language.

The purpose of the tour I undertook in 2004—we toured about eight communities in Ontario, and in each of those eight communities I would think we heard from anywhere from 15 to 25 different groups. All of those groups—no; wrong to say “all of them.” Many of those groups maintained and came through very clearly to me that they were interested in seeing the northern Ontario heritage fund revert back to its original mandate under David Peterson in terms of trying to create private sector jobs in the province of Ontario.

So when that consultation ended, we came back, we filed an interim report, and that's exactly what we've been seeing happen in northern Ontario with that fund for some four or five years now. But more to the point, when we were elected in 2003, the northern Ontario heritage fund had \$60 million in it. In the 2007 election, we made a commitment to the northern Ontario heritage fund that we were going to ramp it up by \$10 million a year over the course of the next four years. In 2008, it went from \$60 million to \$70 million; in 2009, it went from \$70 million to \$80 million; and from 2009 to 2010, as contained in our budget, we have met our commitment. There is now \$90 million this year in the northern Ontario heritage fund, \$30 million more than there was in 2007, representing \$60 million more having been spent in those three years on top of the original \$60 million annually spent through that fund. This represents a tremendous commitment to the people of northern Ontario.

It would have been very easy for us to have taken that \$60 million, \$70 million, \$80 million out of the northern Ontario heritage fund. It would have been very simple for us not to maintain the commitment to go from \$60 million to \$70 million or from \$70 million to \$80 million or from \$80 million to \$90 million, given the economic circumstances that we find ourselves in. It would have been very simple. But not only have we maintained the fund; we've increased the fund by \$30 million over the last three years. It's now up to \$90 million, there to create private sector employment in northern Ontario only. We could have taken it out, and we didn't.

I should remind people interested in northern Ontario as well that the last time there was a recession in the province, when the NDP was in government, they took the entire \$60 million out of the northern Ontario heritage fund and did something with it. I wasn't here, but I'm sure they thought they found a more appropriate use for it at that time. I'm not sure the people of northern Ontario agreed with them.

**1610**

My 20 minutes is up, but I just want to thank all the members of the northern caucus, who work very hard on these issues that I've had 20 minutes here today to speak about. We're very excited about this budget. We think it's a good budget, especially given the economic circumstances that we find ourselves in in the province at this time.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** The member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan has informed the House this afternoon of his views on the budget, and certainly, in response, from the opposition side, we hold a very different view, obviously. We have been continuing to put forward our points with respect to this government's budgetary policy.

I would like to use my brief two minutes here in questions and comments to actually ask the member a question. The government of Ontario has declared war on the pharmacy sector in the province of Ontario. Clearly, that's what's happened. Some of the government members apparently don't understand that, but that's what's happened. They're pursuing a policy of taking hundreds of millions of dollars out of the income of pharmacists, which we're told will lead to the closure of many pharmacies in small-town Ontario and probably northern Ontario as well. As well, there will be reduced service for patients, and patients—in many cases, you'd have to characterize this as a cut in health care.

I would ask the member: Has he heard from pharmacists in his riding? Is he concerned about this issue? If he has heard from his pharmacists, what is he doing to advocate for them? What is he doing to bring those concerns to the attention of the Minister of Health so that we can try to influence the government's policy to take another look at this issue and not destroy the pharmacy sector in the province of Ontario?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I listened intently to the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan. I'm always interested in the story he tries to weave to avoid the McGuinty government's responsibility for the destruction of jobs in the forest sector.

Everyone acknowledges that the forest sector is going through some changes. I don't know where the member has been; everyone acknowledges that. But what's happening in Ontario is, a whole industry is virtually leaving the province. The member is from Thunder Bay. No less than nine paper machines have shut down in Thunder Bay during this government's six years in government—thousands of jobs in his home community.

As they've closed, they've been very clear about what's happening. When the paper machines in Kenora were closed, the company said very publicly, “It's because the government is forcing up the industrial hydro bill.” When Dryden, the most modern paper mill complex in all of Canada, closed, a mill that makes office paper—no office paper is made in Ontario anymore; it all has to come from outside the province—when the two paper machines were shut down, the company was very clear: Their hydro bill had escalated by 40% over five years under the McGuinty government. When Cascades shut down their machines in Thunder Bay, they were very clear: It was the hydro bill. Bowater is very clear: Its mill in Thunder Bay has become the highest-electricity-cost mill of all their mills anywhere in Canada and the United States. Similarly, St. Marys, which shut down the operations in Sault Ste. Marie a few weeks ago, said, “It's our hydro bill; we cannot afford to pay this.”

I say that what the government has done is too little, too late. Yes, after thousands of people have been put out of work and the mills are closed, to come along and say, “Well, we’re going to cap the rights rates now” is a little too little and a little too late.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** The member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan I think shed a lot of light on the severe challenges that are being faced by the forestry industry in the province of Ontario.

There’s no doubt about it. When the Canadian dollar was at 63 cents US, it was common knowledge—it was reported in all the business papers—that, in fact, the forestry industry in Ontario was doing extremely well because they had a product that was going into other markets—it’s all valued in US dollars—at a 40% discount. So we’ve witnessed, as the Canadian dollar moved to parity and beyond, the kind of pressure that that certainly put on not only the forestry industry in the province of Ontario but the forestry industry in Quebec, Manitoba, British Columbia and other jurisdictions, and even the forestry industry in the southern United States, which has a very different growing season to what’s experienced here in the province of Ontario.

The member is quite right that the government of Ontario has responded to some very difficult situations, but I find it interesting that the new NDP poster boy across Canada, Darrell Dexter, the Premier of Nova Scotia, introduced his new budget on April 6, increasing the harmonized sales tax in his province from 13% to 15%, and his finance minister called it “smart, strategic, and steady” to increase the HST in Nova Scotia—because it’s a tax down there that is progressive. The people need it. They need the revenue to increase revenues in the government of Nova Scotia.

This is a real doozy: The new health minister of Nova Scotia looks to constrain health care spending in that province. They increased the HST. They’re going to constrain health care spending.

And that’s the new NDP poster boy in the province of Nova Scotia.

I really appreciated the comments from the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan. He said—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Dave Levac:** I appreciate the opportunity to lend my voice to the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, who passionately outlined his work as chair of the northern caucus. We need to applaud him for the work he has personally done with the northern caucus, and the northern caucus itself, for bringing the voice of the north to the government directly, through the members of the northern caucus. He outlined very clearly that, unfortunately, some members are using it as an opportunity to continue to do the things they always do: government bad, opposition good; nothing’s right, everything’s wrong.

Quite frankly, he laid out quite clearly the actions that this government did—he himself, along with the northern

caucus—which seems to have been lost in the minds of the people on the other side, who sit back trying to say that there was no way anyone should have done anything else other than what they thought during this economic meltdown. Those companies had all of the reasons and more that the member was talking about to explain why it happened here in northern Ontario; it happened in southern Ontario; it happened in British Columbia; it happened in Canada; it happened around the world. What we were seeing was the response to that and how a government was able to craft a budget that is trying to address what has happened around the world. China was losing jobs, for crying out loud. To turn around and say that the member hasn’t got an idea of what he’s talking about is not just a comment that’s based on whether or not he made the 20 minutes’ worth—he filled every minute of that 20 minutes in an articulate and very sound manner, in which he said that the north was going to be supported by this government.

What’s really unfortunate about this is that we’re not entering into the debate. We get a member on the other side who wants to talk about something else that’s happening in health care, and he doesn’t even want to talk about the north. Talk to the speech that was made, and I’ll tell you—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. The member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank all of the members who spoke, even those who didn’t respond to the 20-minute speech and found something else that they wanted to talk about.

When I talked about the relief that is in this budget for the forestry sector, I want to again remind the people of northern Ontario that when you hear somebody tell you that this is too little, too late—the people in northern Ontario need to know that this is misleading them, by trying to imply that there has not been assistance for forestry companies over the last three, four, five years. I laid out, in my 20 minutes, three or four or five different programs through a variety of means that have been in place for years to support forestry companies.

I understand and appreciate that there are always going to be people around here who want to try to focus the messaging on only one part. It is to completely ignore what is obvious and becoming more obvious, I would say, to most people every month or so.

I must say, too, I think it’s a bit unfortunate when we convey a message to laid-off workers who may think, “If the McGuinty government would just lower energy rates by this much, I’ll have my job back”—when he makes that message, people in all those communities who have listened to him say the same thing for six years, who bought in and believed it, who thought, “If only energy prices would go down, my mill would reopen.” He’d been misleading them for six years. It’s wrong, and he shouldn’t have been doing it.

He talked about Cascades. Cascades has changed ownership three or four times in the last 15 years. I wonder why.

He talked about the mill in Dryden, but what he didn't tell you is, that big mill in Dryden—he talked about their energy rates. Sixty per cent of their energy is produced how? Burning natural gas. He has never told you that in six years, but he wants to lay that one at the doorstep of the McGuinty government as well.

1620

I'm very proud of what's in this budget, especially for the people of the province of Ontario in northern Ontario. It's a good budget; I'm very proud of it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I'm standing to address what's essentially a spending plan for the year 2010. I do so recognizing the fact that this government has been told many, many times about the danger of the road that it has been travelling down since its inception very clearly. One way I would summarize it is, we have a government that is addicted to both taxing and spending; hence, the well-known phrase, the creature known as the tax-and-spend Liberal.

This government very clearly spent its way through the good times, spent its way into a recession, and now it's attempting to spend its way out of a recession. They see a problem and they throw money at it. The difficulty is, by throwing money at a problem, that in itself becomes a problem.

You cannot spend your way out of a recession. Bob Rae proved that a number of years ago. That was the exact strategy that the Bob Rae government followed at that time, and we now see the Dalton McGuinty Liberals attempting to prove that all over again. You cannot spend your way out of a recession. And I may repeat this a number of times. But apart from their spending, this government does not have a revenue problem; this government has a spending problem. The money that's coming in, the revenue that is coming in, is coming in at record levels. When you have a spending problem—we have the result that by the year 2012-13, we know that at this rate of spending, the Dalton McGuinty government will double the debt in their reign as a provincial body. For that reason, and we hear this expression a lot as well, Dalton McGuinty is known as "Dalton the Debt-Doubler." It's a term that's being picked up certainly in my riding.

Very clearly, apart from these problems that I've been hearing all afternoon, we must consider a number of remedies. For example, we must make government smaller. We must end deficit spending and balance the budget. When we're done, we need to produce a government that is effective in performing its key functions, and it must focus on those key functions. For this government in particular, the task is huge.

What I do suggest is that Dalton McGuinty's record of high taxes, corporate subsidies and record deficits clearly has left Ontario as a have-not province. It has resulted in what we see now as a lower standard of living than rust-belt jurisdictions like the state of Michigan. We've heard this before. We have a higher unemployment rate than countries like Greece and the Central African Republic.

This McGuinty government is spending at an unprecedented record level; yet, at the same time, we see a reduction in services that we all rely on. We see a government that's closing emergency rooms, a government that's laying off nurses across the province.

I want to make reference to the \$289.3-billion debt that is projected for the year 2012-13, a debt that will be double what this government ran up in their first year in office. What does a debt of that size mean? It means our children will have fewer jobs. They'll pay higher taxes obviously, have lower incomes and be less able to afford homes because of this debt. Today, it seems that we're selling off the house and leaving the kids with the mortgage.

Add to these troubles the high Canadian dollar. It is heartening that the members from northern Ontario made reference to this issue. The high Canadian dollar is an issue that was not discussed in the budget speech, regrettably. Obviously, this contributes to a decline in our exports to the United States.

I feel it's very worrisome, what this budget does not address. I'll give you a few examples.

For example, unimpeded access to the US market must remain Ontario's top economic priority—no mention of that fact in the budget speech. This was not addressed. It was not addressed in the speech from the throne either. We must recognize that the United States, by far, is Canada's and Ontario's largest trading partner. This government cannot afford to neglect our relationship with our southern neighbour.

The US economy, I remind the members opposite, is not only the world's largest; it's the world's most powerful. Unfortunately for our steel industry—I think specifically of Hilton works and the Lake Erie works—agriculture and manufacturing jobs, the financial crisis, the economic recession we find ourselves in now, a recession that started in 2008, has sparked a new wave of protectionist measures in the United States. And President Obama's buy-American provision is not the only new protectionist measure. We also are subject to country-of-origin labelling—the COOL moniker—which is applied to many of our food products, and which has contributed to the decline in pork exports and the decline in beef. That commodity was already at rock bottom because of BSE.

Regrettably, this budget does not mention agriculture. Very recently, some of the members opposite have been scrambling to cover for what was not covered in the budget speech: the forest industry, for example. There's no mention of the softwood lumber trade war. That's been going on for years. It continues today into an era now of plummeting US housing construction.

Since 9/11, the American attitude towards our shared border has changed dramatically, and obviously, cross-border trade has suffered as a result. Resulting border restrictions and waiting costs continue to threaten the integrated supply chain with respect to manufacturing—again, no mention of that in the budget.

We have two US cap-and-trade bills that are looming to reduce greenhouse gases. As a result, Congress will

impose tariffs or levies at the border—in their view, to protect their trade-exposed industry from other jurisdictions that may have different regulations or different levels of greenhouse gas allowances. None of these issues were discussed in the recent budget speech. Again, I find that worrisome.

The problem continues. I reiterate: This government does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem. It's attempting to spend its way out of the results of the recession. This year's budget indicates that the McGuinty government has increased spending something like 70% since taking office. Expenditures for this now-commenced fiscal year will come in at a whopping \$125.9 billion. By 2011-12, the Ontario Ministry of Finance projects that the province will be raising \$100 billion in revenue. Again, we don't have a revenue problem. Revenue will have increased 46% since the year Dalton McGuinty took office, yet expenses still exceed revenue by nearly \$20 billion.

We may recall—it was just the day before the budget announcement—that this government congratulated themselves in announcing that their original deficit projection was off, bringing the deficit for the 2009-10 year to \$21.3 billion. Again, only in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario could a \$21.3-billion deficit be considered good news. This is still far and away the largest deficit in the history of Ontario, and even with this eleventh-hour recalculation, it's still greater than all the other provinces combined.

Every hour of every day, this government spends \$2.8 million more than it receives in revenue. At this current rate of spending, by 2012-13, as we know, the debt will double.

#### 1630

If we go back to 2003, Ontario's debt has grown by \$65 billion and government spending has increased by 65%, yet over the same period, Ontario's economy has only grown by something less than 6%. On a per-household basis, Mr. McGuinty has increased the province's debt by \$13,500 for every family in Ontario.

Wasn't it just a few years ago that Mr. McGuinty stated, "I ... will not raise taxes or implement any new taxes without the explicit consent of Ontario voters and not run deficits"? To continue the quote: "I promise to abide by the Taxpayer Protection and Balanced Budget Act." That was the pledge that was signed on September 11, 2003. Of course, it didn't take him long to tear up that pre-election pledge, sending us down the trail of successive deficit budgets that will take years to climb out from under, and I think this government projects another seven years of deficit spending. You add up deficits; every deficit accumulates into the debt.

If this government has proven one thing, it's that spending is the driver of deficits and debt. Just to reiterate for anyone here who maybe doesn't get the connection between a deficit and a debt, deficits occur when a government borrows money because the revenues it collects, in its view, are insufficient to finance their spending. This is, of course, different from debt, which is

basically the accumulation of deficits plus interest on the debt over time.

It's not difficult to recognize that more deficits mean more debt. More debt obviously means more interest to be paid, and that means fewer resources for health, education and other government services.

Considering where the money is being spent, I also wonder to what extent this Ontario program of stimulus spending, of shovel-ready spending, has been effective, either in stimulating economic activity or creating jobs, for that matter. In my view, I suspect: very little. What I see, essentially, is a process, the end result being very simply a redistribution of wealth rather than increased economic activity as a result of direct government spending.

Despite spending more than \$32 billion on stimulus and shovel-ready projects and promising to create more than a million new jobs, the McGuinty government has presided, as we know, over a net loss of 141,600 net jobs. That was in 2009, and since becoming Premier, we have seen the loss of something in the order of 300,000 manufacturing jobs.

At the same time, we have witnessed a staggering expansion of the public sector—eight times as fast the private sector. In fact, there is some evidence of jobs being created through stimulus funding. I saw some recent figures; each job created has required something in the order of \$1 million in stimulus spending.

Of course, stimulus spending creates public sector jobs. Somebody has to sit there and put the stamp on the forms, and under this government's reign, this is partly reflected in data we see from the so-called sunshine list. Under the sunshine list, we have seen a tripling of public sector employees making over \$100,000 a year. Since 2003, the number of government servants at that level of income has gone from 20,249 to 63,836.

Anyone listening will understand that there are successful ways of stimulating an economy—stimulus funding, if you will. The approach which has been proven time and time again is to focus on tax cuts. Unsuccessful stimulus funding focuses on government spending.

We had six days of finance committee hearings, and during those days I came to realize that, although roads are being paved and arenas are being planned for construction, there was virtually no evidence—and I asked the question time and time again—of direct jobs, permanent jobs, being created as a result of Ontario's shovel-ready stimulus spending: There were no figures available.

Once again, I submit that there is a lesson that this government refuses to learn, and I feel this is a key lesson with respect to Ontario's economic competitiveness. We must focus on tax relief. We must provide incentives for people in Ontario to work, to save money, to invest, and to be entrepreneurial. I do wish to draw attention to the fact that this present budget before us does virtually nothing to address the destimulating effect of a host of new taxes, fees, permits and licences, includ-

ing all the attendant rules and regulations, red tape and forms to fill out that go along with this. These kinds of disincentives, these kinds of fees and taxes, raise the cost of living and make our province more uncompetitive with comparable jurisdictions. There's a list we can go through: the health tax, obviously going back a number of years; the corporate income taxes that came in right as this government took office; small business taxes; driver's licence renewal fees; taxes on beer, wine and spirits; new land transfer taxes; new vehicle registration fees in Toronto; OHIP de-listings—for example, chiropractic, eye exams and physiotherapy; electronics recycling taxes; tire taxes; registration and licence fees for people who operate commercial vehicles; the new electricity and energy taxes that were announced just a week or so ago; and, of course, the implementation of the \$3-billion HST tax grab—which alone supersedes the health tax and is now the single largest tax increase in the history of Ontario—which will be coming in July 1.

As a result, private sector growth has lagged, obviously, in large part due to the excessive red tape, the rules and the regulations—regulations that cost us money and cost us jobs. The Toronto Star reports that in the province of Ontario, there's something on the order of 500,000 regulatory items out there, and the CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, estimates that this burden is costing business in Ontario something like \$11 billion a year. Most of this over-regulation really has no purpose other than to ramp up the cost of business and kill jobs. It costs us time. It costs us money. It forces businesses to either pay up or shut down or leave the province.

Regrettably, we've seen a number of them that have decided on the last two options, certainly down in my neck of the woods. In my area, we still have well over 1,000 steel workers on the picket line at US Steel in Nanticoke. There is an important meeting tonight. Perhaps we have an agreement coming forward with US Steel.

Again, my concern: It's worrisome that in the budget speech, there was no mention of the steel industry; no mention of any kind of a strategy for primary industry—steel or any other related industry; no mention of agriculture; and no mention of help for farmers.

I see someone across the way shaking his head, I assume in agreement. It is sad: no mention of agriculture in the budget speech.

**1640**

Meanwhile, south of the border—I wish to reiterate this—we have Obama's buy-America provisions; we have country-of-origin labelling, BS-related measures, putting our industries and our farmers at a further competitive disadvantage. I really regret that, on that point alone, whether it be forestry, agriculture or heavy industry, this budget made no mention.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I appreciate the opportunity to follow the speech of this member.

There is no question that this budget that's before us is one that is not going to address, in the way that they need to be addressed, the needs of this province. There's no question that, in fact, at the end of this budget, when it has run its course, Ontario will continue the decline of its economic base, just as it has in the last few years, when times were better.

It's unfortunate that this budget, instead of offering the kind of investment in transit and in social services that Ontarians needed, offers a corporate tax cut and a standstill on action on the environment and on climate change.

When I look at this budget—and I will get an opportunity briefly to talk about it at greater length—I say that this is not a budget of leadership. This is a standstill, make-sure-that-the-wheels-continue-to-turn budget, ignoring the reality of what's going on in Ontario: the reality that, in fact, as a manufacturing jurisdiction, we have continued to lose the base that we must have. This is a budget that will not arrest that decline.

This is not a budget that will deal with the polarization of the population in this city and in this province. As you, Speaker, are well aware, studies have been done showing the change in incomes and the distribution of middle-income households in the GTA. Increasingly, we have poor people living in some areas, wealthy people living in others, and the mix that was historically Toronto's heritage, Toronto's gift to this province, is being lost.

This budget does not arrest that polarization, does not arrest that drift to setting people aside in different areas rather than bringing us all together. It is a mistaken budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** I'm delighted to have an opportunity to speak to my friend from Haldimand-Norfolk's dissertation on the budget. I would have to suggest that in the world we live in, he seems to be in another one.

The world we live in is one that faced a financial collapse of unparalleled devastation over the last year and a half. The world we live in saw a collapse of the financial sector, which the Western world has faced, whether you're the government of the US, Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany—the major industrialized countries of the world—or even the Far East. We live in a world that is very intertwined, that has very interesting and important trade links on a very broad scale.

I would suggest to him that if he looks at the economies of Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania or New York, he will find that those industrial economies in the US would be very happy to be in the position that Ontario is in, led by Premier McGuinty and this government.

This government has done things that I don't think we could actually have imagined over the past—well, forever. Who would think you would buy shares in General Motors? Who would think that you would buy shares in Chrysler? Who would think the government of the US

would do the same thing, even under George Bush? That's what we've had to do. That's what the situation is.

Ontario will be stronger, is stronger, and will lead Canada out of this recession.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** Following along in the previous speaker's bent, who would think that we would have a \$21.4-billion deficit, twice the deficit of 1995, when the NDP left government? Who would think that we would lead all of the provinces in terms of negative growth in Canada?

The reason, perhaps, that Canada has not suffered the same fate as some of the states in the United States has nothing to do with the McGuinty government. It has to do with the solid financial sector, which is regulated totally by the federal government and not by the provincial government. The provincial government has nothing to do with banks. The banks in Canada have been rock solid in relation to anyplace else in the world, and that has nothing to do with Dalton McGuinty.

Now, getting back to my friend from Haldimand-Norfolk, I want to tell you, I've talked to some of his constituents recently, and there is no harder-working rural MPP than Toby Barrett in Haldimand-Norfolk. Toby Barrett works night and day to represent his people. There's nobody who knows the suffering of the agricultural community more than Toby Barrett, and Toby Barrett has brought to this Legislature the fact that this government has forgotten agriculture in this budget. They've forgotten the plight of the agricultural sector, and particularly, might I say from eastern Ontario, in the eastern Ontario rural area. Toby Barrett should be listened to, and this government hasn't listened to Toby Barrett because they haven't included agriculture in the budget—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I did listen intently to the presentation by the member.

It's interesting, as I look at the budget numbers here: The budget for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs will increase by some \$140 million over the previous fiscal year. We, as a government, negotiated with the grains and oilseeds sector in the province of Ontario to come up with a risk-management program. I say to my friend, there was a full ad in the recent edition of the Hill Times with all the umbrella organizations in the province of Ontario. They know where the province of Ontario stands in terms of a cost-of-production model for our farmers that are not covered by supply management. What was the title of that ad? I'll get it for the member. "We want Minister Ritz to come to the table and provide the 60% share," which is the share the federal government must provide in order to make a cost-of-production model work in the province of Ontario for those sectors that are not covered by supply management. That's what that ad said. Every umbrella group in the province of Ontario has come together in unison to put pressure on Minister Ritz to bring that to the table.

It's interesting. I look at the tax cuts for businesses: cutting the general corporate income tax rate from 14% to 12% and then 10% over the next three years; cutting the corporate income tax rate from manufacturing and processing, mining, logging, farming and fishing from 12% to 10%; cutting the small business corporate income tax rate from 5.5% to 4.5%; and finally, eliminating the small business deduction surtax of some 4.25%. Those are progressive measures to help Ontario's business community.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from Haldimand-Norfolk has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I appreciate the responses from the various members, and I'm quite heartened that 20 minutes of facts and figures would generate a bit of interest.

I am concerned, though, and I'll reiterate what was not mentioned in the budget. Agriculture was not mentioned in the budget speech, and with respect to forestry, somebody has to deal with that softwood lumber dispute; that's been going on for too many years. That's in the interest, obviously, of all three parties here.

There was made mention of states across the way—Pennsylvania, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, the large, formerly industrial states. They put President Obama in. President Obama and the big unions have a buy-American program that is killing our steel industry. We have to go beyond just debating taxing and spending and more taxing on our own residents of Ontario. We have to look beyond Ottawa; we have to talk to Washington.

**1650**

With respect to agriculture, which regrettably was not mentioned, we fully support risk management. There was a three-year pilot program for cash crop. That's been cancelled. Three and a half years ago, the federal government made it clear to the Ontario government that they would not fund companion programs. You knew that going in. To your credit, you did a three-year pilot. We request one for horticulture and beef. We request one for hogs. No mention of these companion programs—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Member from Peterborough.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Why is it you brought in a program, you cancelled it and you—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Stop the clock for a minute. The member for Peterborough, I have asked you repeatedly. Next time, you'll be named. Thank you.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Just to wrap up, this government does not have a revenue problem. It has a spending problem. You cannot spend your way out of a recession.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** As I said earlier, it's my opportunity, my honour to have a chance to talk today about the budget that was presented by this government. I'm

not going to cover every element of the budget, but there are five areas that I want to touch on in particular.

The first, obviously, is the whole question of the cut in investment to Transit City, which I see as symbolic of everything that is wrong with this budget, everything that is wrong with this Liberal government's approach to actually making sure that we have a livable province and that we have an economic and environmental future. That's reflected in this decision. Some \$4 billion was taken out of the Transit City project.

I have to say that a few years ago I went to the announcement in Mississauga for the whole grand \$50-billion project. I asked even then, "So where's all this money going to come from?" Some parts of it were committed: \$11 billion, so much smaller than the \$50 billion the Premier talked about in the first place, and even of that money, \$4 billion now is being moved out.

Some, like the Minister of Finance, may say it's simply being delayed. To my knowledge, there isn't a date when that money's going to actually hit the ground and provide the transit that is going to be needed in this city—that is needed in this city and in this province right now.

There are real costs to not making that investment, as you are well aware, Speaker, because you have many schools in your riding. You deal with parents of young children who have asthma. You are well aware of the impact of smog in this city on the health of children, on the health of those who have heart disease, on the health of those who have lung disease and the health of those who will develop those conditions by breathing in that dirty air.

So what's happened with this either cut or delay and, in either event, a pushing off of the investment in transit, is that the air in this city will continue to kill people when it does not have to happen, when we do not have to have people pushed into emergency rooms because they are breathing air that damages their health.

At the first level, this is a mistake because it harms the health of people in this community, it increases smog, and we don't have to have that happen.

Let's say it doesn't matter to you that people get sick from this decision. Let's say that Premier McGuinty here decided, "Well, I don't care about health, well-being or our children. I'm just going to care about the dollars and the economic well-being of the greater Toronto area." Even on that basis alone, a very cold basis, it's a substantial mistake.

As you are aware, the cost of congestion in the GTA is in the range of \$4 billion to \$6 billion. This project would not eliminate all the congestion, but to the extent that it had a real impact—and I believe that it would—then that congestion would be reduced and the cost to our economy would be reduced. Our overall wealth would be increased. But instead of taking a step that's good for health, for the environment and for our economy, this has been pushed to the side, if not cut entirely.

This is the time to make this investment. Interest rates are at historic lows. People need the work all over this

province. People need the work in Thunder Bay making streetcars. People need the work making the steel. People need the work doing construction.

Now is the time to do this. If the economy is at its peak, interest rates are high and the demand for labour is high, then we know that the cost of this project will soar. Why you would not do it when the conditions are at their absolute best for a large-scale infrastructure project is beyond me. It is false economy. It is a misunderstanding of how we build this province and how we build the city that this Legislature is in.

Madam Speaker, there is a social cost that you are entirely aware of. A few years ago, a professor at the University of Toronto, Dave Hulchanski, and a team of urban geographers looked at what's happening in Toronto. What's happening in Toronto is what has happened in Latin American cities and what has happened in the past in European cities. That's that there's a concentration of more and more wealthy people at the centre of the city, where it's easier to get around, where it's convenient, where they're close to the workplace. And increasingly, poor people are pushed into the suburbs, where the transit and the congestion are far worse.

What we have with Transit City is an effort to make sure that every person in this city has an opportunity to conveniently and affordably get to work, get to visit their friends and family, get to travel on a fairly—"free" is not the right word, because there's not a lack of expense, but travel on a basis where they are not inhibited by disastrously bad bus service or inhibited by their inability to afford a car. If you want to have social cohesion, people have to have that ability to get around their city. They have to be able to get to workplaces so that they can employ themselves. On all those bases, it was mistake to cancel Transit City.

But I want to say that there's one other piece that I touched on in a question today that is quite extraordinary to me. I have heard the Premier and I have heard the Minister of the Environment speak about climate change and the absolute necessity of action. They understand the consequences of not acting. They know that they can be very dire for this society.

When the climate report came out from the Minister of the Environment prior to Christmas, you may well remember that the minister's report showed that, with the efforts that were on the books, this province couldn't meet the weak targets that were already set by this government. Then, a few weeks later, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario came out and said, "Yep, that's right. They can't meet their targets. They're failing to meet their target. In fact, after 2014, greenhouse gas emissions continue to climb—they'll miss the 2020 target by even more than the 2014 target."

In his commentary, the Environmental Commissioner was very clear: If you're going to deal with this issue, you've got to deal with transportation. You've got to have investment in transportation. One would think, given the fact that this McGuinty government has said

that climate action is a priority, that indeed they would follow through and deliver the goods on Transit City to at least be able to say, "We're doing what we need to have done there." That's not what is happening. That decision alone is enough to condemn this budget and say that no one should vote for it. That decision alone says that the priorities of this government—environmentally, socially, economically—are wrong-headed and ultimately destructive of the way of life that we want to build here in Ontario.

I want to speak as well about the issue of daycare. In this budget, thanks to the pressure of parents from all over the province, \$63 million was put in to ensure that subsidies for daycares continue to go forward. That was critical. There were parents who were desperate because they knew the impact of having that daycare subsidy cut to thousands of children and thousands of families across this province.

In the budget, when you go on to talk about full-day learning, we have the other shoe that may well drop and pose huge problems for daycare workers, families and children across Ontario.

**1700**

People who are watching this budget debate are well aware that Dr. Charles Pascal wrote an extensive and highly praised report on how to deliver full-day early learning in this province. That is something that the people, the families, the children of this province need and need badly. When he brought forward that report, he was very clear that if you want to do it, you have to do the whole integrated package, because if you do it partially, there are very negative consequences. The chickens start to circle; they're looking for a place to roost.

We're looking at those consequences now. In my riding, in Jackman school, parents are contacting me, saying that if there is not support for the existing non-profit daycare in the school, then the loss of the four- and five-year-olds to full-day learning, as good as that program would be, could well mean the collapse of the daycare centre itself and the loss of care for the two- and three-year-olds.

We don't want to lose the care for toddlers. We don't want to lose the care for the younger kids. But in fact, if you don't have transitional funding and you don't have a plan that allows those daycares to go from one state of being to another, then we will lose daycare, and that is disastrous; that is a huge mistake. This budget so far has not revealed where the funds will come from for that transition. Those funds have to be there, and if they have to be redirected from another pocket, they have to be redirected. But a failure to put the money in in the first place has caused huge disruption, huge anxiety for parents, for daycare workers and for children. That is a fundamental mistake.

I don't know how you can mess up something as good as all-day care—I really don't—because it's such a good idea, such a necessary thing, but the reality is that today, all-day care has provided hope for quite a few families and tremendous anxiety and worry for many more. This has to be corrected.

In the course of this budget debate process, I call on the government to look at the daycare situation, the all-day learning, recognize the impact of that hole in its budget on families and correct that so that families are not made to pay a price for this initiative.

I want to address the question of hunger, the special diet allowance that is going to be cut and the impact that will have on people in this province. People have contacted me; my constituents have contacted me, people with heart problems, coupled with mental health problems, who do not know how they will function with a substantial reduction in the allowance they get for their diet. People have contacted me who have MS or other long-term debilitating diseases and don't know how they will be able to make their lives work without a proper diet.

If the government is going to cut what we have now and not put in place a system that safeguards the health and well-being of those who depend on this society for their existence, then it has made a fundamental moral mistake and it has to correct this budget.

There are other elements to this. When one person is sick in the community, you can be very sure that at some point, that person will be sick in a hospital. There are costs that come from treating people badly and making them hungry—abandoning them to hunger. That has to be corrected in the course of this budget.

People should not be put in a situation of desperation. Right now, that is where they are headed. This McGuinty government made huge noises about how it was going to address poverty. In this budget, with one step, it has plunged many into despair.

I want to talk about something that bears on the budget, that will affect capital spending or operating spending—it is not clear which yet—but which is not directly addressed in the way that it should be addressed in this budget, and that's the sale of crown assets, also known as privatization.

This past Saturday, Adam Radwanski wrote in the *Globe and Mail* about the meeting that Dalton McGuinty had with the *Globe and Mail* editorial board and the questions posed to the Premier about the privatization of crown assets. I have to say that everybody should read that article because in the course of the article, it becomes clear that the Premier is looking for a way to make this sell-off one that is palatable to the public, and they have not yet found the right messaging, the right box to put it in so that they can sell it, both in the larger political sense and in terms of the cash to come in.

The Premier used the phrase that they don't want to be seen to be "burning the furniture to stay warm," but in fact, that's all that you can do with this. What else can it be? We've been talking about the sale, the lease, the partial sale and the financially creative and imaginative repackaging of four critical assets in this province: the lottery and gaming commission and the LCBO, which bring in billions of dollars a year into this province, and Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One, which also bring in money but more importantly are critical levers

when it comes to operating the economy of Ontario and in terms of shaping the future of Ontario's energy industries.

The company that was hired to do the packaging work on this: Goldman Sachs. Others who have sat in this chamber before have heard me talk about this company. I suggest they do a Google search. I suggest they look at the New York Times and the report that was written about TXU, the Texas utility company that was purchased by a group of which Goldman Sachs was the leader. That purchase didn't turn out very well. The Canada pension plan put in quite a bit of money and apparently lost most of that money, according to the New York Times. According to the New York Times, the partners who were working with Goldman Sachs, at one point in the whole process, started asking themselves, "Who exactly is Goldman Sachs working for in this deal?"

That's part of the reason that I've asked for a copy of the contract with Goldman Sachs: to see if, in fact, Ontario is protected from this company, because you have to know that the contract that is said to have been signed with Goldman Sachs for \$200,000 to assess these firms and make a recommendation to the province on how to proceed—200,000 bucks is what they charge to pick up the phone. It is an extraordinarily small amount of money. In many ways, it's like a free estimate. It's a sales job. To have that company here looking at our assets, getting inside the books, getting behind the scenes, troubles me profoundly and should trouble everyone in this province who cares about making sure that our financial future is protected.

Those who don't know this company should be aware that in the early part of this decade, they made an agreement with the government of Greece in which they made a loan to Greece disguised as an exchange of foreign currency, a loan that in fact covered over the reality of Greece's fiscal situation, easing its entry into the European Union. In exchange, Goldman Sachs got access to the future revenue from the national lottery and the national airports. So in fact, Greece got a quick hit of cash and gave away its revenue for decades to come.

How will we know that we're actually getting a good deal from this company? How will it be structured? What will be obscured in the course of the deal that's brought forward? This budget is not over. This budget exists beyond the document that we are dealing with today because the decisions about privatization will have an impact on our revenue for a long time to come and on the money that will be available to this government to spend before the next election.

1710

I see that my time runs short.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I know there's general dismay in the chamber, but I have to say, in my two minutes, which I will get later on, I will try to get to some of the last few points that I think are important to cover.

I want to say that when you think about a budget, you have to see a budget as expressing two things: the

underlying wealth of a society and the relations between the different social and interest groups in this society. The reality in this budget is that the wealthiest are getting a cut through corporate tax cuts and the poorest are going to go hungry. That alone should say that this budget is wrong.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** My colleague opposite, like Lady Godiva, finally reached his close. He had a lot to say in the 20-some-odd minutes there, and it's tough to respond to very much of that in about two minutes, but let me just say at least in passing and in partial response to many significant points he raised—many of which I agree with, by the way—that it was no less than Al Gore who suggested recently that Ontario is far and away the most progressive green jurisdiction on the continent. I think that's pretty high praise, coming from somebody whose environmental credentials are so wonderfully impressive.

I want to also say that transit doesn't begin and end in the city of Toronto. There are other municipalities that look forward in breathless anticipation to some of the potential opportunities, my beloved city of Hamilton being one of those. The proper kind of transit mix—implemented through Metrolinx, another exciting vehicle that our government has put in place—will hopefully lead to some dramatic economic enhancement there.

We just came from a meeting of the standing committee on the full-day learning bill. The member opposite may be pleased to know that a number of very important changes have been made in that area. So we're not pushing off anything; we're pushing forward as best we can.

On the full-day learning front, Pascal did a brilliant piece of work. His work indicated that some 28% of our children arrive at grade 1 cognitively, emotionally and linguistically not prepared to go through that process, and 40% of them never catch up. We're bound and determined that this government's going to make sure those kids have a chance—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I didn't hear all of the member from Toronto—Danforth's speech, but you know what? I agree.

As we look at this budget and we look at the debt load that the province of Ontario is carrying, in terms of other jurisdictions around the world, it's absolutely disgraceful. It's because of the mismanagement of this government; it's because of the way they have mismanaged the economy, never setting aside money in good times. They've spent, spent, spent—gave it away to their friends and their buddies, their consultants etc. We've seen it with eHealth; we've seen it with OLG, but the list goes on and on. Now, they're actually trying to sell this to the citizens of the province of Ontario and would actually expect somebody on this side of the House to vote for this. Not ever would we vote for a disgraceful budget like this.

I look forward to other comments coming from the Liberal members, but as they presented the budget a couple of weeks back, we saw the look on their faces—because there really wasn't anything there. I'll be very curious to see the jobs that are created under the Water Opportunities Act. How can you create jobs there? There are only a few companies that make water filtration equipment etc. in the province, and there are many, many outside, in the rest of the world. However, they think that this jurisdiction is going to attract all that, with high taxes and a mismanaged economy. I don't think that's right. There may be a few jobs here and there. You might get five jobs in North Bay and two or three in Peterborough or something like this, but you're not going to create hundreds of thousands of jobs and all this nonsense they continue to talk about.

So I'm with this member, and we will not be supporting this disgraceful budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** I was pleased to be able to sit through and listen to the comments made by my colleague the NDP member for Toronto–Danforth, Peter Tabuns, with respect to this budget motion.

The debate is going to end in a matter of minutes—those are the rules—and before there has been an opportunity for all those who surely want to speak to this motion to have had that chance. It's going to be dealt with in a matter of mere minutes. I'm pretty confident that members of the opposition will be calling for a recorded vote. We want folks out there in Ontario to know where people stand.

I fear that the budget motion is going to pass, because the government has its majority and it's not afraid—it has demonstrated that so many times—to use that majority to impose even the worst of legislative initiatives on the people of Ontario.

The government would have some believe that somehow there's a great recovery taking place here in the province of Ontario. I say, certainly not down where I come from; certainly not up in St. Catharines, a riding that Mr. Bradley and I share—because he has the northern part of it and the centre of it, and I have the south end of it; certainly not down in Niagara Falls. Heck, the casino is laying people off. Do you know what that means and what that implies? The casino was the employer of last resort. I've told this to you before. When you lost your job at Atlas Steel or Union Carbide, because those plants are gone; when you lost your job at Welland Tubes, because that plant is gone; when you lost your job at John Deere, because that plant is gone, maybe you went to Niagara College and you trained to be a blackjack dealer or a slot machine technician and you got hired by the casino. But hell's bells, the casino is laying people off now, so that's not available.

The reality is that this is a jobless recovery. The stock market and the big Bay Street barons who play the market and manipulate it may be making money—Conrad Black is probably turning over some mean bucks,

even when he's sitting in that federal penitentiary down in Florida—but working people are still doing without their jobs.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** It's a pleasure to rise to make a couple of comments to the member from Toronto–Danforth.

Let me say up front that I did listen to what he had to say. I normally have an enormous amount of respect for the member, but I must say, when I hear his interpretation of the pressure to preserve daycare spaces that was imposed by the people to make that happen—well, I guess we differ in that.

The difference is, we listened. We hoped the federal government would come back to the table. Frankly, they abandoned child care in the province of Ontario. So we came back to them—of course we heard from people. I don't call that pressure; I call that listening to the people and delivering what needs to be done, more so than our friends Doom and Gloom over there. I'm not sure who's Doom and who's Gloom—they can make that decision themselves—but the sky is going to collapse.

Let me tell you what I heard about the budget in my riding, thanks to the chambers that organized a breakfast and a lunch. After we did the presentation, I was congratulated, and our government was congratulated, for coming out with a responsible budget under the circumstances. We didn't rip contracts. We didn't close agricultural offices like the one in Brighton, in my riding, like the former government. No, we kept them. We put some controls. One of their former members closed his own place of employment after he was down here. We didn't take that approach.

That's what I'm hearing every day, wherever I go in my riding. So I'm not sure where the member gets that information.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from Toronto–Danforth has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I want to thank those members from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale, Simcoe North, Welland and Northumberland–Quinte West for commenting on my speech.

I want to talk first about Mr. McMeekin's comments. He's right: Transit doesn't end with the city of Toronto. That's absolutely true. But I have to say that if this government can get away with cutting \$4 billion from the budget for Transit City in Toronto, those who are in other parts of Ontario should expect that the mercy visited on them will be no less tender. It will be very tender indeed.

**1720**

There's no question that Hamilton needs more rapid transit, but I don't see this happening. I look at that budget, I see the cut to the replacement fund for buses, which is going to hurt a lot of medium-sized cities and towns in this province, and say that is part of that ongoing process of cutting back the money that needs to go to transit.

I want to speak to the comment made by the member from Simcoe North about water opportunities. I actually think the potential is there for large-scale job creation through water opportunities, but I have to say, and he knows this very well, that if you don't treat your groundwater, as we do at site 41—if you don't treat your groundwater and your river water and your sources of water with respect and make sure they don't get contaminated, it doesn't matter how fancy your water conservation process is; you aren't going to have the water you need to drink. That's a problem that exists all over this province. I get letters and emails on a regular basis from people who are frustrated that they can't get action to—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you.

Pursuant to standing order 58(d), there having been eight hours of debate, I'm now required to put the question.

On March 25, 2010, Mr. Duncan moved, seconded by Mr. McGuinty, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

On March 29, 2010, Mr. Hudak moved “that the motion moved by the Minister of Finance on March 25, 2010, ‘that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government,’ be amended by deleting the words following ‘that this House’ and adding thereto the following:

“Supports the principle that if you do not lose your job, you do not get severance; and

“Cannot support Premier Dalton McGuinty's decision to pay six-month severance packages, worth as much as \$45,000 each, to more than 1,250 HST tax collectors who will transfer to the federal government without losing a day of work; and

“Strongly opposes this government for failing to address any uncertainty in the provisions the McGuinty Liberals negotiated and ratified in the collective bargaining agreements it concluded in 2006 and 2009; the comprehensive integrated tax coordination agreement; the Ontario Tax Plan for More Jobs and Growth Act, 2009; and the human resource agreement for the transfer of staff from the province of Ontario to the Canada Revenue Agency, resulting in severance payments to HST tax collectors who will transfer to the federal government without losing a day of work; and

“Failing to enact measures in the budget that amend the Ontario Tax Plan for More Jobs and Growth Act, 2009, including schedule R, section 50 and the comprehensive integrated tax coordination agreement, including part XI and Annex C, ratified and confirmed thereto;

“Concludes that if the McGuinty Liberal government is incapable of protecting the interests of Ontario families

when it comes to so-called severance payments to HST tax collectors, then it cannot be trusted with the stewardship of the provincial finances.’

“Therefore, the government has lost the confidence of this House.”

The first question to be decided is the amendment to the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House that Mr. Hudak's amendment to the motion carry?

All those in favour of motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

I'll call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

I believe, government House leader, you have something to give me.

The government House leader has just given me a deferral slip. It reads as follows:

“Date: April 12, 2009

“To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:

“Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the motion by Minister Duncan, government order number 4, be deferred until April 14, 2009”—on the amendment to the motion. Sorry.

On the amendment to the motion—I couldn't read the little squiggle—“Pursuant to standing order 28(h), the amendment to the motion, I request that the vote on the motion by Tim Hudak be deferred until April 14, 2009.” Is there consent?

Seeing that there's consent, so ordered.

**Interjection:** But it's 2010, though; it's not 2009.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** It's 2009 on the original. Sorry. So is there consent to have the vote on April 14, 2010?

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I believe we have unanimous consent to have a recorded division on this motion and to defer the vote until Wednesday, April 14, at the time of deferred votes.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Do we have consent to this deferral slip? Agreed. So ordered.

*Vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Orders of the day?

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** We have no further business today. I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

I therefore order that the House will be adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1727.*

**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
<b>Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)</b>	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
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	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	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
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, M. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)</b>	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)</b>	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
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	
<b>Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
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	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
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	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)</b>	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	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	
Murray, Glen R (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
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	
<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)</b>	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>	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	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
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
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
<b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey  
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson  
Jim Brownell, Kim Craiton  
Bob Delaney, Garfield Dunlop  
Amrit Mangat, Phil McNeely  
John O'Toole  
Clerks / Greffiers: William Short (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Wayne Arthurs  
Toby Barrett, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Pat Hoy, Norm Miller  
Glen R Murray, Charles Sousa  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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

Chair / Président: David Oraziotti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Helena Jaczek  
Bob Chiarelli, Steve Clark  
Helena Jaczek, Kuldip Kular  
Dave Levac, Rosario Marchese  
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti  
Joyce Savoline  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Laura Albanese, Michael A. Brown  
Donna H. Cansfield, M. Aileen Carroll  
Howard Hampton, Ernie Hardeman  
Lisa MacLeod, Leeanna Pendergast  
Jim Wilson  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

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

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Ted Chudleigh  
Mike Colle, Christine Elliott  
Peter Kormos, Reza Moridi  
Leeanna Pendergast, Lou Rinaldi  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

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

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi  
Bas Balkissoon, Bob Delaney  
Joe Dickson, Sylvia Jones  
Amrit Mangat, Norm Miller  
Yasir Naqvi, Michael Prue  
Mario Sergio  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

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

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Shurman  
M. Aileen Carroll, France Gélinas  
Jerry J. Ouellette, David Ramsay  
Liz Sandals, Peter Shurman  
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller  
David Caplan, Kim Craiton  
Jeff Leal, Gerry Martiniuk  
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch  
Michael Prue, Lou Rinaldi  
Tony Ruprecht  
Clerks / Greffiers: Trevor Day (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

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

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon  
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo  
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones  
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin  
Shafiq Qadri, Khalil Ramal  
Elizabeth Witmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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

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





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