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(Hansard)**

Tuesday 18 May 2010

Mardi 18 mai 2010

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
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Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 18 May 2010

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

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The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CREATING THE FOUNDATION
FOR JOBS AND GROWTH ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 POSANT LES FONDATIONS
DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA CROISSANCE

Ms. Smith, on behalf of Mr. Duncan, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 16, An Act to implement 2010 Budget measures and to enact or amend various Acts / Projet de loi 16, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures énoncées dans le Budget de 2010 et édictant ou modifiant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I will be sharing the majority of my time with the member from Pickering-Scarborough East.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: This seems to have become a bit of a routine as of late, where the House leader and/or the chair of cabinet are very gracious with their time that's allocated and provide it to me.

I'm very pleased today to join in the debate on the third reading of Bill 16, our budget bill. Obviously, subject to the concurrence of this body here, we might very well see the budget bill passed in relatively short order. It's only some two months from the time our budget was first introduced; although I'm sure not a record by any means, nonetheless, a fairly expeditious process in the context of our legislative framework.

Bill 16, Creating the Foundation for Jobs and Growth Act, 2010, speaks very firmly about what the budget this year is about, and it really is about establishing a firm foundation in spite of the economic climate or in response to the economic climate. We've all seen for the past couple of years a firm foundation for jobs for those in Ontario and for growth as we move forward through, hopefully, the tail end of this recessionary period; although not clearly out of the woods yet at this point, when you look at the international situation, you understand that, but moving out of that into a time of growth.

The 2010 Ontario budget moves forward the five-year plan, the Open Ontario plan, that was introduced as part

of the throne speech. Certainly, the budget is building on the Open Ontario plan to create new jobs and growth, at the same time taking the necessary measures in a responsible fashion to eliminate the deficit we find ourselves saddled with at this point in time, in a large measure due to the global economic recession and the need to invest in infrastructure and in stimulus as a mechanism to support this province and support the need for jobs in these times. It's money well spent for infrastructure needs that had been for some time, I would suggest—certainly prior to our coming to office—sorely neglected. We need to do this to create jobs and growth, and to work toward elimination of the deficit we find ourselves in.

We've made tremendous progress, I would suggest, over the half-dozen years we've now had, and this will build on that in supporting job creation and enhancing the programs and services that Ontarians expect of us. They expect us to provide opportunities for quality education for their children, they expect quality health care in their communities, they expect that their community hospitals will be there for them when they need them and they expect that they will have the opportunity, when they need it, for skills training. Part of this budget, as in past budgets, is providing career opportunities and skills training opportunities that might not otherwise present themselves for those who find themselves dislocated in the workforce.

Health and education, and the opportunity for skills training and post-secondary education to provide young people in particular with opportunities to prepare themselves for a new economy, have been the foundation values we have formed government on, and this budget truly reflects those values in this particular economic climate. As well, in this budget we look to manage government expenditures, including compensation restraints.

We know we are showing that type of leadership on a managerial side. As well, all of us in this House have really set the stage for that. We are now well into a period of restraint ourselves when it comes to wage increases. We started that process more than two years ago, and it's going to be extended, so each of us in this body has set an example. As well, our managerial/professional staff are also experiencing similar wage restraints.

In doing that, we're respectful of the collective agreements that are in place. We respect the people who negotiated those collective agreements, and we plan to honour those collective agreements. But we've made it clear in this budget process that with a \$21-billion deficit and the need to work our way out of that deficit over a responsible period of time—cutting it in half within five years

and eliminating it within eight years—there is going to be a need for those in the broader public sector, those to whom we make transfer payments and who depend on the provincial government, to recognize that our resources are limited and there will not be the capacity to provide the types of increases on an annual basis that were available in the past. Thus, as they enter their negotiation periods, they're going to have to be cognizant of that in the business they do.

We have a plan. It's a realistic and responsible plan for elimination of the deficit within a structured period. I've already said it will be cut in half within five years and eliminated within eight. It was interesting, when we did pre-budget consultations, a number of organizations came before us. I recall that the Ontario Chamber of Commerce spoke to us—I believe we were in London at the time—and talked about eliminating the deficit. They recognized that in an ideal world, one would be able to do it very quickly. But they proposed to us at that point that we show a measured mechanism, a measured strategy to eliminate the deficit, they said, within the decade. We are effectively within that target range; we're probably slightly ahead of that range. They were speaking broadly at that point in time, but they were making a serious point that there had to be a targeted initiative to do that within that period of time or less.

In that sense, we think we took good advice from those in the business community—small business in particular—about what we need to do, at the same time acknowledging the importance of public service, health and education in particular in this province, and the need to be respectful of those who work in the public sector that we fund through transfer payments and those who have collective agreements.

If there's anything this budget does, it certainly continues to respect the importance of public services in this province. In addition, there continue to be significant investments in infrastructure. This budget follows up on the budget of last year, where we assigned some \$30 billion plus—I think it was about \$32 billion—for infrastructure through stimulus and support. Some of that was spent last year, and some is being expended through this budget year. It was part of a more than one-year program, and it's one that is being done in partnership with other orders of government. We certainly appreciate the leadership that the federal government has taken in that regard, and we appreciated the opportunity to work directly with them, since we can't do it on our own. As well, our municipal partners, that other order of government, have traditionally been supporters and partners in initiatives such as this, but this time even more importantly so.

0910

This is a very, very significant investment that the province is making, as well as the federal government in their part of it and the municipal governments, to ensure that we rebuild the infrastructure that is so sorely needed, whether that's water and sewer systems—pipes in the ground; roads that need to be built; public transit; or community facilities. Those are not only needed by com-

munities, they're not only needed to restructure the infrastructure that is deteriorating over time, but they're also needed because of the economic climate we find ourselves in, and thus the need to unfortunately run a very significant deficit at this point in time, because we need the dollars expended in infrastructure to create jobs at a time when we need to support the economy.

If one looks now, as we move through the tail end of that recessionary period, what the world is saying about Ontario and about Canada in that regard is that we seem to have had it right. We seem to have avoided the worst of the calamities that were experienced and are continuing to be experienced by our friends and neighbours south of the border. One only needs to look to Europe at this point in time, whether it's Greece, Spain, Portugal or the Celtic Tiger, Ireland, as just preliminary examples of the stresses they find themselves under. But here in Canada and in Ontario, our fiscal systems seem to have sustained us well, but we also are making the right investments to help us work our way through the process, and this budget remains a significant part of that investment.

We've seen a rebound occurring, and that's pleasing. Obviously, the GDP is increasing; the projections are very good for us, compared to where we were not that long ago. But one only needs to look at places like the auto sector, and see the General Motors of the world, which are part of my broader community in Durham and tend to be our bit of a focus, if I can speak a bit parochially in that regard, on the Durham side, the Pickering side of my riding. It doesn't exclude others, by any means, but we see now that GM has come back to life.

On my way home yesterday, I heard they have announced that they're turning their first profit in over three years. They went, I believe, from a \$6-billion loss last year to something around an \$800-million profit in their first quarter this year. So we've seen a rebound. We see the new GM vehicles on the road, and that's not to talk down any of the other manufacturers, because there is activity happening throughout that sector. But where I and my constituents live, GM is a very important part of that.

Our investments in folks like GM provided confidence. Our investments last year and going into this year to support the economy in this province will help provide people with the jobs they need and the income they need to buy those vehicles. Whether it's a Ford vehicle, a GM vehicle, a Honda being built in Alliston or a Toyota being built elsewhere in the province, those are important investments that we made that are paying dividends, and what we're doing in this budget is continuing to support jobs so that people will have the disposable income to re-invest effectively back into the economy.

The time allocated today is going to be somewhat limited, as we try to work our way through. In particular, I certainly want ample opportunity for our opposition friends to speak to their views on this budget. But I have to tell you that I'm pleased to have worked with our minister, the Honourable Dwight Duncan, in that regard. We believe this is the right budget at the right time, and I

think we're seeing that the economy is beginning to bear out the decisions we made last year. I believe that the decisions we're making this year will be equally borne out this time next year, when people are talking about the successes we have had, and will recognize this is the right budget at the right time for Ontario and the folks who live here.

That's some of what I want to say. I do have a few other things I really want to add at this point in time—as I say, I'm cognizant of the time. I want to speak a little bit about post-secondary education. I talked about infrastructure and jobs, but I want to speak briefly to post-secondary education. That's critically important if we're going to prepare primarily young people for a new economy, a new way of doing business in the world. I'm not sure we know what that's going to look like yet. We know from our initiatives that energy is an important matter. We know that water in this world is going to be an important matter. It's why we've turned our attention to those things, over the past few years, on the energy front and more currently turning our attention to water: because it's an important element not only for business, but it's an important element for each of us every day of the year.

Here in Ontario and in Canada, we are privileged to have a vast quantity of fresh water. A lot of that water, surprisingly, doesn't run south; it runs to the north. People think we have access to all this fresh water readily available, but the fresh water we actually have available to us is a little more limited than we might otherwise recognize from the use by our existing population. Nonetheless, this continent and this country are still home to a vast majority of the world's fresh water.

Saying that, there is a focus we need to have on the future. We have to prepare young people, principally, through post-secondary opportunities in colleges and universities and postgraduate work, so that they are ready for that new economy, although we don't know quite what it's going to look like. That means that through the expertise that is being developed and has developed through the professionals, the professors and others, we have to provide the opportunity for young people.

This budget is providing opportunities, some \$310 million, if I can recall the number—and I may be off by just a small amount—on an annual basis to accommodate growth funding. It will accommodate some 20,000 new students, 20,000 new places in the post-secondary system, or systems—universities and colleges primarily, as well as some training. It's important for those young people to be able to step into the new economy, to have the skills, develop skills, and with the skills they have to be ready to take them forward in an entrepreneurial fashion.

It's not a matter, anymore, of training someone and sending them out to the job. We now have to have young people with skills, with the capacity to come out of the education system, and learning—not having finished that process and thinking they're ready to do the job—they have to come out of that hungry to learn, hungry for entrepreneurship, hungry to take advantage of the expertise,

the mentorship that can happen in a corporate entity or in a public sector entity, and we need those young people with the right mindset to do that. Part of these investments, in my view, will provide them that opportunity.

I have young people in my family. My children now have finished their university careers. My youngest is a couple of years out of university but still on a learning curve—a very steep learning curve, I might add. I look forward at this point to my grandchildren, three of whom are now in their teens, and one approaching that era—it won't be long before they're in our college and university systems. I'm hopeful that's where they will be. I want them to have the kind of opportunities in those systems that will prepare them to be leaders in the economy and leaders in the community when they leave those institutions and move into the workplace.

It's not to ignore at all those older workers. We are working jointly with the federal government on the target initiative for older workers. That's an agreement we have with the federal government, and it's targeted at hard-hit communities. There are those older workers, those who are displaced in this economy, those who do not have the skills necessary to readily step into these new roles. We have an obligation also to provide support where possible for those older workers in targeted communities that have been hard hit, to give them the kinds of opportunities they need to be able to work through the balance of their working career before they are ready to move into some other phase of their life, to provide them with a new set of skills where the demands are there for them to be able to take advantage of that. Ideally, in a perfect world, you don't want to dislocate people at the end of their careers and have them pick up their family and move, and those kinds of things. So we want to work within those communities that have been hard hit and help to retrain those particular workers so they can stay within their overall communities.

This budget, the 2010-11 budget, focuses on a number of issues. It certainly focuses on public service, which we have done. It focuses on the economy from the context of our infrastructure investment. It focuses on post-secondary education for young people. It focuses on those targeted workers, older workers who are dislocated. It pays attention to the deficit that we have, with a targeted time frame in which to eliminate that deficit, and cut it in half within a five-year time frame.

I believe firmly that a year from now the media and others will be speaking about this budget having been the right budget at the right time, in my view the same way they're speaking about last year's budget now. If we look at the media and the success Ontario has had, they're speaking about Ontario having done the right things at the right time for Ontarians.

Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity. Members of the House, I look forward to the balance of the debate. With the will of this House, we'll see our budget bill concluded in relatively short order.

0920

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

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to comment on Bill 16, which is the main budget bill put forward by the government. I'd like to begin by talking a bit about the process by which it's passing, and that is that the bill has been time-allocated. It is a substantial bill; there's some 31 schedules as part of it. The government has time-allocated the bill so it's on a very shortened time frame for passing through the Legislature.

In fact, there was but one day of public hearings—some five hours—for those people interested in commenting on the bill to have their say—with very little notice, I might add, for those interested. In fact, there was so little notice that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario missed the deadline for written comment. On the eve of the clause-by-clause about to occur, AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, was sending out letters and contacting MPPs, quite concerned about the fact that the result of one of the provisions in this bill—I think it was the insurance schedule—would be that municipalities would be forced to have much higher insurance premiums, and they were quite concerned about this.

That just outlines the flawed process that the government is using; they're rushing it through. In fact, with that specific schedule that was going to affect municipalities, the government voted against a section of their own bill in reaction to that. But as I pointed out, the municipalities missed the deadline for written submissions and missed the opportunity to come before the committee for the public hearings as well.

Who knows what else is hidden in this piece of legislation? They have this flawed process, very much demonstrated last week with Bill 44, which is the northern energy bill. That was the mother of all time allocation motions, I would say, the most rushed I've ever seen; so much so that I went to the subcommittee meeting on, I think, Tuesday, with a Wednesday deadline for hearings on Thursday. So, surprise, surprise, nobody made a written submission and nobody showed up for public hearings, it was so rushed. And there were no amendments to that particular bill. That was the northern energy bill, and I'm surprised it wasn't actually part of this one. I'm not quite sure why the government is insisting on rushing things through, thereby making mistakes.

Those who did come before the committee were mainly pharmacists, because they were aware, and became aware, that two schedules of the bill—schedule 5, the Drug Interchangeability and Dispensing Fee Act, and one other schedule, further along here—quite drastically affect them and the way they've been doing business. We heard from a lot of pharmacists during the five hours of public hearings. The message that came from the pharmacists is that they support reducing the costs of generic drugs, they support doing away with the professional allowance that they've been receiving, but they just need a little time to make those changes because they've been operating under a certain business model and it's being changed dramatically by the government. I proposed an amendment at committee to give them a little time to

make the transition. Unfortunately, the government voted that and other amendments down.

I know the government is trying to characterize them as Big Pharma, but it's the small pharmacies like, in my riding, Steve Vandermolten, who has a Gravenhurst pharmacy, or Darl Dillabough in Bracebridge, or Bill Coon or Helen Luvison, or Gordon Lane with Lane Family Pharmacy in Parry Sound, that will be most dramatically affected by this quick change.

As I say, the pharmacies are interested in lower generic drug prices and doing away with professional fees. They just need a little time to get there, because we have this wonky system right now where they fill a prescription under the Ontario drug benefit plan and they get paid \$7 even though the real cost is \$14, and then the difference gets made up through this professional fee. They don't want to see that. They'd rather be paid the \$14, as Alberta does, and some reasonable profit. Then they'd be able to continue to provide the front-line health services that our seniors and families count on.

In fact, I went and visited Steve Vandermolten at the Gravenhurst pharmacy last week—they were putting on a clinic—and there talked to folks who were coming in. They made it very clear to me how much they rely on the advice of the pharmacists. There were people there who said, "If we have some small problem, we'll come and see our pharmacist because it takes us three weeks to get an appointment with the doctor and usually, in most cases, the pharmacist is able to explain and help us or give us advice—sometimes the advice is, 'Go see your doctor'—but often cases they are able to provide help for."

When I went to the clinic, they were doing a photo op as well, and they did a blood sample on me. I found out my blood sugar is a little low, so I learned something myself going to the clinic that day.

It's these small pharmacies that are most at risk with the draconian measures the government is taking and this rush process that they are involved with, especially in rural and northern Ontario. The people in rural and northern Ontario, families and seniors, depend on those small pharmacies for the front-line health services.

Other parts of the bill—I mean, there are 31 schedules and it's time-allocated. We get all of 20 minutes in total for third reading. I'm going to be sharing that time with another one of my colleagues, so I obviously can't cover the whole bill itself in any detail whatsoever.

Another schedule, though, in the bill is the LHIN review, the local health integration network review; postponing that is part of this bill. Maybe that's why they're trying to rush it through, because they don't want too much attention. When the local health integration network legislation passed in 2006, it required a review by March 2010. The date came and passed, and the government didn't do the review on their new mid-level health bureaucracy. As a result, now they're putting in legislation to postpone that review, conveniently, until after the next election.

As the opposition, we see these new bureaucracies as a diversion of money from the front-line health services.

We think the review should have occurred when it was originally stated. I note that the problem of the government not complying with its own legislation has actually now been sent to the Legislative Assembly committee to deal with, although that committee has to, first of all, deal with another issue, the issue of members being restrained from being able to make it to the budget delivery on time on budget day of this year.

The parliamentary assistant talked about some other aspects of the budget bill. He talked about compensation restraint and the measures the government is taking. I simply say that it's half-hearted, and they are creating a lot of problems. We had the Ontario Hospital Association come before the committee and point out how they have non-unionized and unionized workers in different hospitals doing the same jobs, and now all of a sudden this is going to create great problems for them because the government is not restraining unionized workers, in most cases, until after the next election, but they are immediately freezing the wages of non-union workers, although with some loopholes to get around it in their case as well. This is creating problems, as in the case of hospitals, where they have some unionized and some non-unionized workers in some cases doing the same job.

About 50% of the budget is wages; most of those wages are unionized; most of the contracts don't come due until after the next election. So, really, despite the fact we have record deficits, despite the fact that Dalton McGuinty is on track to double the Ontario debt by 2012—that's a little scary. It took 23 Premiers to get to the debt of \$140 billion we had when Dalton McGuinty came into power in 2003, and he will have doubled that by 2012. That is something to think about. It's something that we all will have to bear and pay our way out of with future restraint.

The parliamentary assistant was talking about the deficit reduction plan. It's just not a credible plan. They're talking about balancing the budget by 2017-18. That's beyond two provincial elections, and it's probably beyond a typical economic cycle as well. What happens when we have the next recession? That's when government has to spend money, and if they still haven't balanced the budget, we will end up getting further in the hole without balancing the budget.

0930

I should just point out in wrapping up, because I'm already out of time, the fact that it's not a revenue problem. This year, they're budgeting on record revenues of \$107 billion—\$107 billion. The problem is they're also setting a record for spending: \$127 billion, so roughly a \$20-billion deficit planned again for this year. It was \$21.3 billion last year. The government has increased spending some 70% since coming to power. They just can't control spending. Their restraint measures are half-hearted and problematic. I have no hope that if this government was in power for 100 years they would ever—will ever—balance the budget going into the future.

I have real concern about the fact that the government is doubling the debt in the province and what that's going

to mean for the future of the province—all the interest payments, the risk of interest rates going up. We all know they're at historic lows, but they're going to be going up. I certainly have real concerns that we are dealing with a budget bill with 31 schedules in such a tightened time frame. With that, I'll close.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's a privilege to be able to rise here today and speak to Bill 16, the budget bill. Any budget bill addresses the priorities and values of the government that presents it. The reality here, as my colleague has said, is that the budget is very large; it covers a very broad scope, and it is very difficult to go through it in a way that one could call thorough. What I hope to do, though, this morning is address what I see as a number of the key elements in this budget, to give people some sense of the government's priorities and values.

The first thing I want to address is the unwritten part of this budget. The reality is that the McGuinty government is considering selling off Ontario. It's considering selling off some of the most productive and strategic assets that this province has: Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One, the LCBO, Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. We in this province are very familiar with what happens when a government facing an election and needing quick cash decides to sell off an asset to pay down the deficit and give it a little money to spread cheer and happiness around the province. We saw that with the Highway 407 deal, which people in this province still are suffering from, still losing value on, still feeling the sting of those private collections against their driving ability in Ontario.

The McGuinty government has met with the editorial board of the *Globe and Mail*, and the phrase that was quoted was that they don't want to look as though they are "burning the furniture" to keep the house warm. And you're right: They don't want to look like that, but that may well be what they are doing. In fact, I believe that is what they are doing, but they don't want it to look like that. So they are madly casting about for an expenditure that will be attractive enough that they can sell that sale, that they can get the political buy-in for cutting loose or starting the process of cutting loose some of the most critical assets in this province.

If, in fact, Ontario sold off Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One, the LCBO and the lottery and gaming commission, we'd lose more than \$3 in revenue for every \$2 that would be saved on debt servicing. In total, Ontario taxpayers would come out half a billion dollars poorer every year in lost revenue. Those four entities, those four bodies, operations, generate about \$4 billion a year. If you sell them off, you have to get a very high return on your investment to make up for what's lost. If you sell them off, you get rid of those strategic levers that we need in this province to build our economy in the decades to come. Yet this part of the budget, so far unwritten, still the subject of a mad scramble to find political cover, unfolds behind closed doors.

It speaks volumes as to who the consultants were. Who were the financial advisers hired to pull together this deal? The company Goldman Sachs, a Wall Street investment banker, was hired by Dalton McGuinty to do the work, to do the analysis, to present the case and the opportunities for this.

As you are well aware, Goldman Sachs has currently been charged with fraud by the Securities and Exchange Commission in the United States. According to the New York Times, they're under criminal investigation. According to the New York Times, their former client AIG, one of the larger insurance companies in the world—one that got badly burned in the subprime mortgage catastrophe—has ended their financial relationship with Goldman Sachs.

This is the company that's advising Ontario on how to dispose of its assets. This is the company that has recently testified before the American Congress, a company whose future is called into question by American lawmakers, who have called for a criminal probe of its activities. That is the Premier's consultant; that is the Premier's adviser. That's extraordinary to me.

I recently asked the Premier about Goldman Sachs. I talked about the recent revelations in newspapers about charges and investigations. It was interesting, what the Premier had to say: "I gather my colleague is making reference to some contractual arrangement that our government may have entered into with Goldman Sachs." He held them out here, at arm's length. He knew that there was a taint there that he didn't want on himself. He didn't get rid of them. He didn't say, "When I get their report, I will shred it." He just wanted to make sure he didn't have any political damage.

This is extraordinary. This is the unwritten part of the budget that we are debating today, a part that will be as consequential to this province as any other debate that we have. I raise this issue not only because it's a significant piece of the budget that should be debated, but also because I'm fearful that between the time this House rises in the next few weeks and the fall, Goldman Sachs and Dalton McGuinty will have done a deal that we will actually not have an opportunity to debate in this House. That is a very, very scary prospect for this province.

Having spoken about the unwritten part of this budget and the authors behind the scenes and their current state, I want to talk about the impact of this budget on public transit. I'll talk first about Toronto because that's the most visible part of the iceberg, that's the most visible issue and one that, frankly, people across Toronto are upset with. The government has said that it is going to save \$4 billion by pushing back Transit City, an investment to put light rail vehicles and high-speed streetcars throughout suburban Toronto so people can get places quickly, so people who are currently isolated don't have to stand on street corners and watch bus after bus after bus, packed to the rafters, pass them while they wait, desperately trying to get to work on time. That cut, called a delay, is a pushback until after the next election, making the reality of Transit City far more uncertain. Beyond that, when we see the truncated plans, the chopped-up plans, that

come from Metrolinx on the revisions to what's left after that funding is supposed to come back, we can see that the city of Toronto gets far less than it would have otherwise.

0940

Madam Speaker, as you are well aware, in the greater Toronto area congestion costs our economy about \$6 billion a year. Any intelligent government would be acting to reduce that burden on our economy. Any intelligent government would be saying, "If we want the economy of this urban region to prosper and grow, then we need to remove those things that are strangling it." Instead, this government is stepping backwards. It is stepping backwards with the cut to Transit City and with the truncation of any future plan. This is a blow to the city and an expression of where this government is at when it comes to transit. This government cancelled the Ontario bus replacement program. What they've said to municipalities is, "Now the gas tax money, which was flowing to help you with your transit costs—you can use it to buy buses." What it sounds like is they've cut this but in fact they are providing for it over here. No, they're taking an expense, moving it into an already stretched and stressed budget line and saying, "Make do with this smaller amount." So for Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Windsor, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Kingston, cities all over this province that have transit systems—they're not Toronto's transit system; it's a different scale of transit system, transit systems that people rely on, on a daily basis, transit systems that allow people to get to work, allow people to see their families, allow people to live the kind of lives they want. Those transit systems will be poorer when this budget is passed. Those transit systems will be stretched and stressed. That speaks to the values of this government.

In this budget there's barely any mention of action on climate change. In fact, I can see why this government wouldn't want to talk about climate change in this budget. If you cast back prior to Christmas, the report from the climate secretariat showed that this government was not going to meet its own goals, that the plans it had in place to deal with climate change were not going to succeed; they were going to fail. Then the Environmental Commissioner came along. He did his analysis and he concurred: Yes, this plan will not meet the requirements, the targets set by this government, and those targets already were weak. In a budget you get to see whether a government will put its money where its mouth is. Are they in fact substantially committed to dealing with climate change, or not? Well, the reality in this budget is that there's less money for transit, and that means more car use. Transportation is already about a third of the global warming gases, the greenhouse gases that are driving climate change in this province. This government has not answered questions when they've been put to it. What are the implications for your climate plan of the cuts to Transit City and other transit investments in Ontario? They have no answer. I guess no answer is a better answer than saying, "Well, in fact, we are undercutting our climate plan and we will fall even further behind in meeting the targets that we had set." That's the real

answer from this budget; that's the real environmental commitment: "We will not address the critical issues that need to be addressed to meet our targets."

I want to talk about this budget and its impact on poverty. On Friday, at the invitation of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, I went to the South Riverdale Community Health Centre in my riding, where the medical staff deal with a variety of people who have severe medical conditions, compound, sometimes mental health coupled with diabetes, coupled with other disabilities that make life very difficult for these people. What the staff had to say at the South Riverdale Community Health Centre was that in fact they saw far more illness arising out of these cuts to the special diet allowance. Because if you have diabetes, if you have other chronic diseases like MS and you are not able to get an adequate quantity and quality of food, you get sicker, and when you get sicker, you may well wind up in hospital at extraordinary expense to the people of Ontario.

This government has, in the transit area, ignored an investment that will cut long-term costs for our economy. In the cut of the special diet allowance for those who are on Ontario Works or ODSP, it has decided that large numbers of people are going to wind up in hospital, where they will be treated for conditions that, at their core, really just require enough food. That's the critical thing: People need food, and if you cut the allowance that allows them to eat decently, you are condemning them individually to misery and making sure that we, as a society, will have to deal with the cost of those consequences.

As a result of the cut to the special diet allowance, there will be a 1% increase in the basic needs allowance for Ontario Works and ODSP in the fall of 2010. One per cent does not allow people to keep up with the cost of rising rents, of the HST on their electricity bills or of the HST on their everyday expenses. It's a way, politically, to cover yourself and say that we haven't clawed back all the money from the special diet allowance, but it is not a contribution, an investment that will actually allow people to live with some dignity and build the platform on which many will be able to get back to work. Time after time, I talk to people who want to get to work, who find that because they aren't given any assistance to get into school, to get their kids into daycare or to pull together the supports that they need to get out of poverty and into working life, they're condemned to continue that life of poverty.

There hasn't been a medical evaluation of the special diet allowance to verify that the program wasn't meeting the objective of helping people meet their basic dietary needs. This is a political decision, not a medical decision, and not a decision based on any study of needs, of health outcomes, of health impacts. Respected health professionals have stated that the allowance is essential to meeting health needs, given the inadequacy of social assistance rates. I'd be very interested in hearing the contrary medical opinion that the government is relying on in making these cuts. Did it in fact talk to the medical community and come back with a conclusion that well, really,

people don't need to eat, or they don't need to eat that much, that they can eat much less and still be alive?

The Ontario Human Rights Tribunal recently called for an increase to the allowance, not its elimination. When the government says, "We were listening to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, but there were problems," fair enough. There were problems. But the problems weren't that people were getting too much money and eating too well; it was that there wasn't an adequate allocation.

If you look beyond the special diet allowance—although I think that encapsulates the values of the government, a government in which those with the least political impact are going to get hungrier and sicker in the next while and those with the least political pull or leverage will be left to their own devices.

I want to look at some other things that could have been done. There were no reforms to punitive social assistance rules which trap people in poverty. For instance, asset stripping: telling people to divest themselves of all the last little bits of property that they have before they go on social assistance so that, frankly, having done all that they are left in a position, in this society, where they're defenceless, utterly dependent. Should anything go wrong, should there be a dispute with the government, they will not have any resources to fall back on. That is a huge problem. People on fixed incomes, on social assistance, who will be paying more for gas and for electricity in their apartments, especially now that the government is going forward with the sub-metering of apartments—people are going to find themselves in far more difficult circumstances.

0950

In terms of dealing with employment standards, making sure that people who work for a living at minimum wage get paid decently, the government has said that it will spend \$6 million over two years for more employment standards officers. Really, we need more enforcement of employment standards than that. Talk to people who have found that they have worked for days and weeks for a company where the employer never pays. They know that for the most part, they're just left on their own. They don't get the enforcement that's needed.

This budget really does reflect the values of this government. A big part of it has been written in secret; the consequences of it have not been revealed. The reality is that this government that says that it's green and concerned about climate change has cut a substantial program that would, in fact, address climate change. This government that says that it will deal with poverty has, in fact, decided to make poor people hungrier, sicker and more desperate. This budget is a budget that this Legislature must vote against.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: I don't know if it's a pleasure to speak to Bill 16 and the time allocation of it, but it's important to speak to this budget. I can't help but comment on the member from Pickering-Scarborough East as he was making his comments about how the Liberals are not sure what the new economy will look like, but they're

embracing this new economy. I guess he was referring to the new economy that the Liberals have built over the last six years in Ontario.

Maybe I should refresh his memory of what this economy looks like that the Liberals have built, and what they're continuing to build with Bill 16. As we know, a few short years ago, before the Liberals came to power, Ontario historically had been the engine of prosperity in this country. Well, under their new economy, we're a have-not province. We're collecting welfare from the rest of Confederation. When they took power, we had a huge and strong manufacturing sector that contributed to our well-being and our standard of living. Under their watch, we've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs under their new economy. Under their proposals and what they have done—we did have one of the lowest unemployment rates. We are now above average in unemployment rates with the Liberal new economy. In our forestry sector, which used to employ tens of thousands and add huge wealth to Ontario, while under their new economy in the last six years we have lost 63 mills in northern Ontario. We have lost over 45,000 jobs in forestry in northern Ontario.

For the member from Pickering–Scarborough East, if he wants to see what the Liberal new economy looks like, just look at the devastation you've done to this province and you'll see clearly what your policies are doing.

This bill, Bill 16, the budget bill, is full of secrecy, it is full of unknowns and, as the Liberals witnessed last week, they got caught in their own unknowns, as there was a schedule in there that would have transferred liability for accidents on public roadways to our municipal governments. They got caught with their pants down. They didn't even read their own budget bill. It wasn't until AMO—the Association of Municipalities of Ontario—read through the details of that schedule that the bells went off and the red flags were raised. The Liberal government defeated its own schedule in committee once they realized, once they were told—I'm not sure; did they purposely put that transfer of liability in there or was it just incompetence? I'm unsure and I don't think anybody is really clear how that got in there. Certainly, they're not admitting to anything.

But I think it's also important—they talked about the north. What else is this Liberal government doing as they've devastated northern industries? Well, they have a \$130 crumb for energy credits—tax credits—for people in northern Ontario. As they extract over \$1,000 out of each person's family income, they give a crumb back.

Interjections.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I guess that hit a nerve with the government House leader. They have a little bit of a soft spot, I guess, when the truth comes out.

We hear about this “open-doors Ontario.” That's what their open-doors Ontario is: Open the door and leave, because there are no opportunities here under this Liberal government. Open the door in Ontario and what do you find? Half a million provincial regulations that this Liberal government has built up and barred the door with. That's what their open door is. Open the door and find a

mountain of regulatory obstacles that will prevent anybody and everybody from achieving any economic prosperity in this province.

The Liberals are exceptionally good at rhetorical language, the flowery phrases that make people—it sounds like they're actually concerned. Open doors and we get this new economy that has put Ontario in the caboose of Confederation for economic production. Of course, the Liberals will always say, “Well, there's a global recession.” Of course, there was a global recession. But how come Saskatchewan remained a have province? How come Saskatchewan saved and regained its prosperity? Newfoundland, Alberta, BC: four provinces that were have provinces stayed as prosperous economies, and we got the Liberal new economy down the drain.

We can talk about pharmacies, forestry, the HST, but it's also important to see how this Liberal government works. We have an opposition day motion that was scheduled. It was agreed that we would debate the HST, a \$3-billion tax grab by this Liberal government. We had an agreement with them that we would debate the HST and put the HST before the people in an election. That was our opposition day motion. What does the Liberal government do once they hear what that's all about? They run for cover. We get some squawking from the back benches about nonsense, but they cancelled their programming motion. They cancelled the agreement. They have no regard. It's not just the public that they break promises to; they break promises to everybody and anybody.

There is no such thing as an oath with this Liberal government. Just go back to your Canadian Taxpayers Federation oath that you would not put in a new tax unless you consulted and had agreement from the people. Well, we know that 80% of the people are opposed to the HST. The PC Party wanted to debate the HST, bring it before the people and really show that democracy respects people. Well, that is the last thing that this Liberal government ever wants to do.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The time is now expired. Pursuant to the order of the House dated April 21, 2010, I am now required to put the question.

Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 16, An Act to implement 2010 Budget measures and to enact or amend various Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say “aye.”

All those opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

Third reading vote deferred.

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

Hon. Monique M. Smith: We have no further business, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): This House stands recessed until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 1001 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Ted McMeekin: I'm absolutely delighted to introduce some family members of our page Jacob Alai-chi. We have with us today his mother, Laila. We also have his sister Phatima Alaichi; and brothers Raphael, Ismael and Kamal. We welcome you all here today.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I'd like to welcome the grandmother of Emma Allen, one of our pages, Betty-Ann Duncan, and her aunt Elizabeth Duncan. They're from Hanover and I think maybe her grandmother may have taught with my brother, so welcome.

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm very pleased to introduce the parents of my Leeds-Grenville page, Luke Goralczyk. In the members' west gallery are his father, Alex Goralczyk, and his mother, Nancy Gray. Welcome.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I'm very pleased to have here in the Legislature these past few weeks a page from my riding of Thunder Bay-Atikokan, Mary McPherson. Visiting to watch Mary in her duties today in the members' west gallery are her mother, Tracy Shields; Mary's sister Sarah McPherson; and her grandfather Ken Shields. We welcome them to Queen's Park.

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: In the east gallery we have a number of distinguished guests who are here today to celebrate a special event. All the members this evening are invited at 6:30 to celebrate a very special spiritual giant of the 20th and 21st century, His Holiness Pope John Paul II. Our guests are Marek Ciesielczuk, who is the consul general of the Republic of Poland, and Mr. Chris Korwin-Kuczynski, who is a former councillor of the city of Toronto.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm pleased to introduce some guests of Guelph page Rhett Figliuzzi who are here with us today. I think this must be the grandparents on the other side of the family and I think they're up there where I can't see them. His mother, Cheryl Figliuzzi, is back, along with grandmother Gale Baldwin and great-aunt Grace Beeney. Welcome.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: They haven't arrived yet but I want to introduce the students from Lakeview Christian School from Bayfield and welcome them to the Legislature and their teachers Ms. Friesen, Ms. Steiner, and Mr. Bender. Welcome when you arrive.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I would like to welcome to the House today Rick Strutt, who is the president of Community Living Toronto; and Sam McKail, who is here, and their annual Appetite for Awareness Day. MPPs can go to room 212a after question period for a complimentary box lunch.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On Tuesday April 27, 2010, the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Mr. Murdoch, rose on a point of order arising out of question period. The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound asked a question of the Acting Premier, who immediately re-

ferred the question to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. The supplementary was also answered by the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound attempted to file his notice of dissatisfaction to a response by the Acting Premier, and argued that her referral of his question to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure was technically a response. The member asked for some clarification on the rules and practice respecting this issue.

I had a chance to review the point of order, and I'd like to remind all members that standing order 37(e) states the following: "A minister to whom an oral question is directed may refer the question to another minister who is responsible for the subject matter to which the question relates." The Acting Premier referred the question which dealt with renewable energy and industrial wind farms to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, as the rule allows.

I also refer members to standing order 38(a): "The Speaker's rulings relating to oral questions are not debatable or subject to appeal. However, a member who is not satisfied with the response to an oral question, or who has been told that his or her question is not urgent or of public importance, may give notice orally at the end of the oral question period that he or she intends to raise the subject matter of the question on the adjournment of the House and must give written notice to the Speaker and file reasons for dissatisfaction with the Clerk before 12 noon, and the Speaker shall, not later than 4 p.m., indicate the matter or matters to be raised at the time of adjournment that day."

A notice of dissatisfaction on a question for adjournment proceedings—a late show—must be filed with the minister who responded to the question. Therefore, if the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound was not satisfied with the response the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure provided, then he would have been well within the rules to file his notice of dissatisfaction with the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

In support of this, let me make reference to the June 3, 1993 ruling given by Speaker Warner, in which he responded to a similar point of order by confirming that a notice of dissatisfaction can only be directed to the minister who responded to the question and not the minister who referred the question.

The referral of the question by the Acting Premier did not amount to a response to the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound's question. The response and supplementary by the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, however, did.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Tim Hudak: A question to the Premier: Ontario families are wondering what has happened to Dalton McGuinty after six years in office. Ontario's Ombuds-

man, André Marin, has served the public of Ontario with dignity, and your government has accepted each and every one of his recommendations for reform. Yet, Premier, you are presiding over an unseemly smear campaign to sully his reputation in an attempt to prevent his reappointment. In contrast, you have bent over backwards to appoint Liberal attack dog Patrick Dillon to his third government job in three years. Premier, what does it say about the Office of the Premier when the Liberal attack dog gets everything he wants and the Ombudsman, the watchdog for the people, gets a smear campaign?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm pleased to take the question.

With respect to Mr. Dillon, I think it is noteworthy that he was appointed by the NDP government in 1993 to the Ontario Construction Secretariat. In 1996, he was appointed by the then Ontario Conservative government to the WSIB. More recently, he was appointed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to the Corrections Canada advisory board. Mr. Dillon began his career in the construction industry in 1961. He's the business manager and secretary-treasurer of the construction trades council. The council represents 150,000 apprentices and tradespeople, and represents 13 affiliated unions. I think his credentials speak for themselves.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: The one credential the Premier notably left out is that Patrick Dillon heads the so-called Working Families Coalition that spent some \$7 million on attack ads, helping push the Liberal Party over its spending limits for campaign advertising.

This morning, the Liberals voted to appoint Mr. Dillon to his third government agency patronage appointment that pays him up to \$500 a meeting. The groups that financed Dillon's attack ads have received some \$23 million in government grants. But what does the Ombudsman, André Marin, get for his exemplary public service? One of the dirtiest whisper campaigns in memory to sully the character of a highly effective public servant.

Premier, what does this say about the character of the Office of the Premier? Will you do the right thing? Will you apologize to—

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I know that my honourable colleague is very much aware of the statements that I've made regarding Mr. Marin and, if I dare say so, the tremendous respect I have expressed for the work that he has done in terms of ensuring that the greater public interest prevails in so many particular cases.

1040

I would also say, my honourable colleague says that Mr. Dillon has somehow done something unwarranted and possibly even illegal under the elections laws of Ontario. I want to draw to my colleague's attention a letter dated April 17 from Elections Ontario where it says, in part, "Our investigation did not show that the advertising was created or disseminated 'on behalf of' any registered party, candidate or association...." This—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: It is very clear that the Premier has a very cozy relationship with Patrick Dillon and the so-called Working Families Coalition. Basically, they scratch his back with a \$7-million advertising campaign that advances the Liberal Party and you scratch theirs with government patronage appointments, millions of dollars in grants and legislation to satisfy their every wish.

Premier, we know that you don't like the Ombudsman. He has been tough on you, no doubt about it, but even in your heart, you must know that this kind of smear campaign against this highly effective public servant is just plain wrong.

I ask you to do the right thing. Will you apologize for the smear campaign to the Ombudsman, and will you give Patrick Dillon the boot?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I know my honourable colleague is supportive of the process to deal with the next Ombudsman, and we welcome Mr. Marin's application in that regard.

With respect to Mr. Dillon, I know that my honourable colleague, if he has such issues now with the qualifications of Mr. Dillon, might also ask why it is that his own government appointed him to an important responsibility. Why did Prime Minister Harper appoint him to an important responsibility? Why did the NDP government appoint him to an important responsibility? Again, I think his credentials speak for themselves. I think he's a man of tremendous talent and ability. There's no surprise whatsoever that all governments of all political stripes want to avail themselves of those talents and abilities.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question, as well, is to the Premier. Today, the McGuinty Liberals voted to approve the latest appointment for a senior member of the Liberals' surrogate campaign team. Patrick Dillon appeared at the government agencies committee where he was handed his third political appointment in just three years. He receives \$225 a day at the WSIB. He also receives \$550 a day at Infrastructure Ontario.

What is Dillon's price for helping the McGuinty Liberals break Ontario election laws?

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Withdrawn.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: For a government that decries smearing, it seems to me they're doing a pretty effective job at it right now and right here.

Again, we're talking about an individual who the official opposition has turned its attention towards, an individual who began his career in the construction industry in 1961. Along the way—again, to restate it—he's been appointed by an NDP government, by a provincial Conservative government, by a federal Conservative government and by a provincial Liberal government. If

that says anything at all, surely it speaks to an objective assessment about the talent, abilities and capacity of this particular individual. I'd ask my colleague to again ask herself, if he's so—

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: With respect, Premier, this same individual ran \$7 million in anti-Progressive Conservative attack ads in the last two elections.

This morning, Dillon refused to be sworn under oath. He was as evasive as a McGuinty Liberal cabinet minister on even the most straightforward of questions. He clammed up when asked about Working Families pollster Don Guy. Obviously, we all know that Don Guy was Dalton McGuinty's former chief of staff and election campaign director, who advised Working Families on the anti-PC attack ad campaigns. They ran in both 2003 and 2007.

The question is, Premier, do you really expect Ontario families to believe you didn't know that your chief of staff and campaign director advised Working Families on how to break Ontario election laws?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I don't need any help from the government side, thank you very much.

I'd like the honourable member to withdraw the comment, please.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Withdrawn.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Some of you—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. I want to remind you that many of you were in the chamber yesterday for a statement that I delivered, and if you weren't here, I would encourage you to read the Hansard from the end of question period yesterday. I say this all around, whether it is somebody who's asking a question or heckling that is coming from within the House as well, or somebody answering a question, remember the statement that I made yesterday. I caution all members that marring the reputation of an individual under the cover of privilege is not responsible. And I would—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No, and I say this to heckling that comes from within the House too. Smearing the reputation of an individual under the cover of privilege is not responsible and I would discourage all members from doing so.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague refuses to accept a few important facts. One is that every government of every political stripe has hired Mr. Dillon based on his capacity. Secondly, they refuse to accept the finding found in a letter dated April 17, 2009, from Elections Ontario that specifically addressed the chronic complaint of my colleagues opposite and said that it was without foundation.

It seems to me they've struck out in virtually every capacity when it comes to their complaints that they

continue to make. I would ask them to face up to reality. This man offers much to all governments of all political stripes. It is not surprising that we are all taking advantage of his talents.

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: They took advantage of his talents, all right: It was \$7 million in anti-Progressive Conservative attack ads in the last two election campaigns. That's an important fact, Premier, that you often like to forget.

Let's go back to Don Guy for a moment. He has received over \$3 million in public money since helping Working Families with its ad campaign. Arrow Communications and Policom are ad firms run by another Liberal, Marcel Wieder. Also, he has cozy ties with Working Families. You handed his firms \$2 million. Don Guy—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment of imputing motive.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Withdrawn.

Why have you condoned your inner circle working with Working Families?

1050

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, my honourable colleague may be setting some kind of a record here for the number of times she has called upon you to rise and intervene with virtually every statement that she makes.

I might say that families watching today might have a concern about the quality of their education, a question—

Mr. Jim Wilson: You skirted the law and you know it.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Simcoe-Grey will withdraw the comment.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Withdrawn.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd just remind you of my statement that I just delivered.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I would think that families watching today would have an interest in the future of their education, an interest in the quality of their health care, an interest in the strength of their economy and our capacity to create jobs, and an interest in our environment. None of those seem to be of even passing interest to the official opposition, and I think that's a loss to the people of Ontario.

PENSION PLANS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. In mid-June, Canada's finance ministers will meet to decide the future of retirement savings in this country. Last week, the McGuinty government voted unanimously against an NDP motion supporting public pensions and unanimously in favour of a Liberal bill that would mean billions more in fees that are going to be collected by banks and insurance companies. Is that the message the Premier's finance minister is going to take to the meeting

in June: that Ontario supports more ways for banks and insurance companies to skim money off of people's retirement savings?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I really do appreciate the question. I think my honourable colleague understands that her interpretation is not one that I share when it comes to what the vote represents and where we need to go.

To restate a couple of things: One, this represents a national challenge; I think it calls for a national solution. There's a real problem associated with the adequacy of retirement income levels for all Canadians, not just Ontarians.

Secondly, I think it's really important that we keep an open mind when it comes to the solutions. My honourable colleague is putting forward one particular solution which I think is important and cannot and should not be discounted. On the other hand, I think there are also some private sector opportunities. My instincts are telling me that the ultimate solution will be an amalgam of the public and the private, and I think we don't enjoy the luxury at this point in time of excluding one or the other.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier can't say it's a national issue and then support a private member's bill for an Ontario change. You can't have it both ways.

In two votes last week on diametrically opposed pension motions, it became very clear that the McGuinty government favours a fee-laden retirement savings option being pushed by the banks and insurance companies, rather than building on the successful legacy of public pensions such as the Canada pension plan.

Last week's votes are more than just a coincidence. So I'm going to ask the Premier again, is that the message that his finance minister is going to bring to meetings with other finance ministers from across the country: that the banks and insurance companies need new ways to skim fees off the retirement savings of hard-working Ontarians?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In addition to what the Premier said, I'd remind my colleague opposite that we have engaged Bob Baldwin, a noted economist, to provide in-depth research to us. He has also done work in the past for the Canadian Labour Congress. I've had the opportunity to hold four public forums across Ontario that had representatives from a variety of sources interested in post-retirement income issues.

We are trying to develop as thoughtful an approach as we can to an important issue that I think affects—I think the member would agree—all members. I look forward, on behalf of the McGuinty government, to attending the finance ministers' meeting in June as we begin the evolution of our post-retirement income system to help protect all Ontarians as we—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier and his finance minister are doing the best that they can to be evasive on

this question, but last Thursday his caucus voted unanimously in favour of a bill that was lifted directly from an insurance industry proposal. His caucus did that very clearly. At the same time, that week, they opposed our Ontario retirement plan, the public plan.

Every year, \$8.4 billion in fees is already being skimmed off Canadians' retirement savings by banks and insurance companies. When the finance minister heads off to the meeting in June, will he be suggesting that the \$8.4 billion coming out of the pockets of workers and pensioners just isn't enough for those struggling insurance companies and banks?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In my 2010 budget, we outlined a variety of options available to governments across the country to the provinces, to the federal government. That member and her party have voted against that bill.

I would remind her that we have engaged a broad public consultation across Ontario, which is appropriate under the circumstances. There are a number of pillars to our post-retirement income system which provide Canadians with a range of options.

I welcome the input of the member opposite and her party to this important debate. We welcome the input of a variety of organizations. Canada has one of the most successful post-retirement income systems in the world. We're committed to making sure that we build on that success and help ensure a better future—

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

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier as well. Independent studies indicate that the HST and the end of point-of-sale exemptions will cost Ontario First Nations families up to \$121 million a year. Why didn't the Premier, his Minister of Finance or his Minister of Aboriginal Affairs at the time consult with First Nations before signing HST agreements with the federal government?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: What is very important to recognize is that the government of Ontario stands shoulder to shoulder with First Nations in wishing to continue the point-of-sale exemption. We have signed a memorandum of understanding with Regional Chief Toulouse about that fact. The Premier has written a letter to Prime Minister Harper to continue that. In fact, we are working at every level—my colleagues Minister Duncan, Minister Wilkinson and myself—to make sure we continue that. It is a joint effort, and we will continue that for as long as it takes to continue the point-of-sale exemption.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Here's what the Chiefs of Ontario say about that agreement that the minister quotes from: This agreement "does not let the Ontario government off the hook for its failure to consult with and accommodate First Nations..."

The Premier had an opportunity to consult. He had an opportunity to include First Nations in point-of-sale exemptions in two agreements. He decided not to do it. Will the Premier now acknowledge and admit that his government utterly failed Ontario's First Nations?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: As I made clear, we have taken the necessary steps to work with First Nations to make sure that we present a joint, united front to get the Prime Minister and the government of Canada to continue the point-of-sale exemption on and after July 1, and we will continue those efforts.

But the relationship is evolving in a very important and positive way through the efforts of Premier McGuinty and the relationship-building that has been undertaken by my predecessor, Minister Duguid, and the great work that he has been doing, and a number of specific initiatives, such as my colleague's, Minister Gravelle's, over the development of the Mining Act.

Relationship, consultation and accommodation is happening in ways that it did not five or 10 years ago. This is an entirely new era of relationship-building for the government and the—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This government's relationship with First Nations is causing blockades across the province. Wait until you see what happens on July 1.

I was actually in Sault Ste. Marie just the other day and met with First Nations leaders, including the Union of Ontario Indians' Deputy Grand Chief Joe Hare and Batchewana Chief Dean Sayers. They're extremely worried about the negotiations with the Harper government on the point-of-sale exemptions, and they're really concerned. What they want to see is something very specific from this government. They're concerned that when the HST comes into effect on July 1, their point-of-sale exemptions will still be in place.

My question is: Will the Premier commit today to honouring First Nations' point-of-sale exemption after July 1 if the negotiations with the federal government are still ongoing?

1100

Hon. Christopher Bentley: As I made clear in my first answer, we stand shoulder to shoulder and are working every minute of every day with First Nations to make the federal government continue the point-of-sale exemption after July 1. They administer the HST; everybody knows that. But we have signed a memorandum of agreement with Regional Chief Toulouse and First Nations. We're working at all levels: the Premier, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Revenue and myself. We are going to continue that work for as long as it takes and address every issue that's necessary.

The relationship that used to exist, that was infused with centuries of unfortunate history, has completely changed. On this and so many other levels, we're working with First Nations to build a more prosperous Ontario and more prosperous First Nations communities.

APPOINTMENTS PROCESS

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier: I guess Ontarians are asking what has happened to you after six years in office. The way you have approached the André Marin affair and the reappointment of the Ombudsman is very disturbing to the people of Ontario, to members of this Legislature and to independent officers of this Legislature.

As you claimed yesterday in this House, you do care about Mr. Marin and the fair process, but if you really cared about Mr. Marin's reputation, why don't you do the right thing and fire those backroom Liberals who have been defaming Mr. Marin's reputation? Will you do that today, Premier, to clear up this incident?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague knows that I've had the opportunity to speak, on a number of occasions, publicly about Mr. Marin. I think the record is very clear in that regard. I've expressed a tremendous appreciation for the work that he has done and for the positive influence that he has lent to the workings of our government. I think we have struck a good partnership that serves the greater public interest, and I stand by those comments today.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: We're highly suspicious on this side that one of the main reasons that the Premier wants to get rid of Mr. Marin as the Ombudsman of Ontario is that he did a rather scathing report on the LHINs. You want to not release that report. If you get rid of Mr. Marin you could put in a Liberal-backed Ombudsman, not so independent, to get rid of that report.

The media today says that you are trying to wash your hands of this incident. Rather than washing your hands of this incident, why don't you show some leadership, do a search-and-destroy mission, get rid of those people who are defaming an independent officer of this Legislature, clear up this matter and bring some integrity back to this office, to this Legislature and to the Office of the Ombudsman?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm not sure if I can state any more clearly what I've already stated.

I would encourage my honourable colleagues opposite to continue to participate in the process. It's a fair process. It's a good process. It differs, I guess, from the appointment process used in the past by the Conservatives, but we think it's important to adhere to a process.

APPOINTMENTS PROCESS

Mr. Peter Kormos: To the Premier: Ontario Ombudsman André Marin says that the Premier promised him a fair Ombudsman hiring process. Marin also says that the Premier's word is gold. Is he right?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I didn't know there was a question there.

I do want to quote, with approval, my honourable colleague, who said this not too long ago: "New Democrats are adamant that even upon the occasion of a reappointment ... notwithstanding the stellar capacity of a person

who has served that role, there should be the same process,” and the process is pretty clear. You advertise the position, you see who’s interested in the job and you vet them. That’s exactly the kind of process that we are undertaking; that’s exactly the kind of process that we are pursuing. I would encourage my honourable colleague to continue to support that process.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Marin says the Premier’s word is gold, but just a minute: The Liberal member of the selection committee agrees to an advertising schedule that, according to Liberal insiders and government sources, yields 50 applications. The same government sources tell us that four applicants were interviewed. Now government insiders slander and libel Mr. Marin, and the government House leader wants to scuttle—derail—the selection process with her bogus claims about improper advertising. Is that fair, or is the Premier’s word nothing more than fool’s gold?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: There’s a process. My honourable colleague wants to make representations about the process in the Legislature. I think the appropriate forum for that is actually the committee itself that’s doing that work. I would encourage him to continue to work within the process and that we work together to ensure that the best result proves to be the outcome, because of our collaborative efforts.

PHARMACISTS

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. A prominent Toronto Star journalist recently spoke out about the ridiculous campaign against this government’s drug reforms. Let me quote from last week’s article by Jim Coyle:

“How odd it is that the pharmacies apparently don’t have” the “money to hire pharmacy students as interns this summer, but have the coin to underwrite a bash-the-government bus tour of Ontario for a posse of them.

“Word is that independent pharmacies kicked in \$1,000 to \$2,000 apiece—depending on who’s telling the story—to fund a war chest that amounts to about \$5 million.”

This smear campaign has deliberately targeted Liberal ridings like mine. In Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, seniors are getting voicemail drops from pharmacists, and telemarketers are hanging up on them if they voice their support for our government or are forwarding them to our—

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the member for her question. I was very disappointed to see that big-chain pharmacies cancelled their student placements this summer, when clearly they have millions of dollars to spend on full-page ads, radio campaigns, glossy brochures and a bus tour around the province.

These students are the future of pharmacy. They would be much—

Mr. John Yakubuski: Like your HST ads? How many billions have you spent on your HST ads?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Renfrew.

Minister?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: These students are the future of pharmacy. They would be much better off getting that work experience, getting a head start on their careers, rather than engaging in this campaign. The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities and I have sent a letter to the deans of the two pharmacy schools in Ontario expressing our concern and telling them that we are there to work with them on this issue.

Make no mistake about it: We are determined to get fair drug prices for Ontarians. Ontarians deserve—

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

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I’m glad to see the minister is making it clear to everyone that this government will not be swayed by the latest blitz of propaganda. I certainly will continue to stand up for all Ontarians, who deserve fair drug prices.

Many of my constituents don’t have the benefit of a drug plan and have to pay cash for their medications, so they’re glad to hear that our government is working hard to ensure that all Ontarians have access to fair drug prices and quality pharmacy services.

However, among my constituents there seems to be ambiguity as to how far drug prices will fall as a result of our reforms. Could the minister please share with this House some of the savings that could be achieved from our drug reforms when they are implemented?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The government is taking action to get fair drug prices for Ontarians, and we will not back down. We will work on behalf of Ontarians. We will ensure that people pay a fair price for the drugs they need.

Let me give you some examples. Someone who pays out of pocket for simvastatin, a drug for high cholesterol, will likely save over \$300 a year. A person paying out of pocket for metformin, a common diabetes drug, would save over \$100 a year. If they are taking pioglitazone, another diabetes drug, they would save almost \$8,000 a year.

People with drug plans would see either lower premiums or more services or both, and taxpayers will be getting better value for their precious, hard-earned taxpayer dollars.

This is the right thing to do for all Ontarians. I do not understand why the opposition—

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

1110

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is again for the Premier. Patrick Dillon refused to answer even the most simple questions about the relationship between Working

Families and Marcel Wieder. When I asked if Marcel Wieder and your former chief of staff Don Guy met to create anti-PC attack ads for Working Families, Dillon refused to answer. There are no minutes for meetings that senior McGuinty Liberal cabinet ministers had with Working Families in their ministerial boardrooms.

If you have nothing to hide, why will no one talk about what your campaign team and Working Families discussed in the months leading up to the 2007 provincial election?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I can't, frankly, understand the obsessive focus on Mr. Dillon, a man who has been appointed twice now by provincial and federal Conservative governments. I'll take this opportunity to impress upon my honourable colleagues opposite our need for their support in our efforts to reduce drug costs for Ontario families.

I know of their alliance with big-box pharmacy in the province of Ontario. We choose to side with Ontario families. We think it's important to stand up for our families. We think it's important to stand up for Ontario taxpayers. We're all paying for our drugs, either out of pocket, as taxpayers, or through drug plans at our place of work. We can come together and reduce drug costs for families. I think that's the right thing to do and I invite them to join us.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The Premier has a chance right now to stand up for Ontario families. There are two key facts he must be aware of: Working Families added \$7 million in advertising costs in the last two election campaigns; in addition to that, \$29 million of public money has gone to Working Families contributors and their ad firms.

So I have a question for you Premier: Since Patrick Dillon refused to speak under oath at the government agencies committee this morning, and so did the McGuinty Liberals, will you agree to appear before the legislative committee to tell the story so that Ontarians will know where their taxpayer dollars are going and why this group, Working Families, is spending \$7 million in anti-PC attack ads?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, on behalf of Ontario families, I'll remind my honourable colleague that today one of the most common antibiotics for children is called amoxicillin. We're going to cut the cost of that from \$10.25 to \$5.13.

One of the fastest-growing illnesses in Ontario today is diabetes. Metformin treats diabetes. Today, the cost is \$177; we're going to reduce that cost to \$107.

Birth control pills—important to our daughters. Aviane 21—today it costs \$123; we want to reduce that to \$82. These are important practical measures to improve quality of life for Ontario families by getting their drug costs down. This is something of real and meaningful value to our families in this question period today.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. I will again remind the House of a ruling of Speaker Milliken in 2003: "Speakers discourage members of

Parliament from using names in speeches if they are speaking ill of some other person because, with parliamentary privilege applying to what they say, anything that is damaging to the reputation or to the individual ... is then liable to be published with the cover of parliamentary privilege and the person is unable"—I repeat, the person is unable—"to bring any action in respect of those claims."

I say this to all members of the House: Please keep in mind the words of Speaker Milliken and let's not degrade this chamber.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Premier. Last week, I questioned the Minister of Labour about sending injured workers to an unaccredited career college as part of the WSIB's labour market re-entry scheme. The minister's response was inadequate, so I asked for a late show where the minister's parliamentary assistant gave even more inadequate answers.

This is a vital issue. I looked at just four examples of such private career colleges in Ontario: Grade Expectations, Summit Learning, Career Essentials and Niagara Retraining Facility. Among them, they have 109 colleges in Ontario that train injured workers; 94 of them are unaccredited.

The question and answer are very simple: Will the Premier direct the Minister of Labour to put an immediate stop to the practice of sending injured workers in the labour market re-entry program to unaccredited career colleges?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon. John Milloy: I'm happy to talk about the strides that we made in terms of private career colleges and the important work we're doing with the Ministry of Labour. I'd like to remind the member that moving forward, the WSIB has indicated that it will only use private career colleges that are registered under the Private Career Colleges Act and are in good standing with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

I'd remind members of the work that has taken place in our government in terms of private career colleges. For the first time in 30 years, our government has transformed the way in which we regulate private career colleges. If a PCC, a private career college, is found to be in non-compliance of the act, we will take the necessary steps to shut them down. I think members are aware, from debate and discussion in here, that we've recently introduced fines for PCCs operating illegally. Fines can range now from \$250 to \$1,000 per day—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Paul Miller: Here's one for the books, Minister: Last week, the Minister of Labour suggested that the new president of the WSIB is on the case; he's investigating the use of unaccredited career colleges. But we actually heard from some of the injured workers contacted

through this investigation that the WSIB investigator is employed in the WSIB public relations department, and is using Facebook to contact injured workers. Is using WSIB public relations staff to crawl through Facebook friends what the minister and the new WSIB president call an investigation into the scandalous use of unaccredited career colleges for the labour market re-entry?

Hon. John Milloy: Again, I'd remind the member of the important work that's going on with the Ministry of Labour and the decision that was made by the WSIB that they will only use private career colleges, moving forward, that are registered under the Private Career Colleges Act and are in good standing with our ministry. In the meantime, some programs are still under way in other schools and as the WSIB doesn't want to disrupt the courses that students are taking, we are allowing them to finish their courses—or the WSIB is—but they've ensured that none of these schools are operating illegally.

Once again, I'm very proud to report to the House the measures that we have taken to strengthen private career colleges. I had an opportunity to recently speak to their annual meeting, and the private career colleges are grateful for the strides we have taken because they recognize that bad apples hurt them all. We have taken the necessary—

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

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Glen R. Murray: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Today is Community Living Toronto's Appetite for Awareness Day. For years, Community Living Toronto has been a source of support for thousands of individuals with an intellectual disability, searching for accessible and meaningful ways to live in the community. Whether it's living alone or with a roommate, working in a supported environment or participating in community activities, Community Living Toronto is there to help individuals realize their full potential. Could the minister discuss how this government has worked with Community Living Toronto in order to support those who need our help the most?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I'd like to thank the member from Toronto Centre for this very important question. I'm so happy that Community Living Toronto is here again this year for their sixth annual Appetite for Awareness Day. I encourage all MPPs to take the time, after question period, to stop by Community Living Toronto's box lunch event in room 228.

Community Living Toronto provides a wide range of services to adults and children with developmental disabilities, everything from residential care in group homes to specialized community-based support. Because of their work, individuals with developmental disabilities are actively participating in their communities, schools and workplaces. Today is a great opportunity to congratulate everyone who works so hard in this field.

1120

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

Mr. Glen R. Murray: In the neighbourhoods I have the honour of representing, Community Living Toronto is integral to many families and individuals throughout my community. Thanks to the assistance of 1,200 staff and nearly 1,000 volunteers, individuals across Toronto are able to develop the skills that they need to live and thrive in this community. I understand this government has strongly supported Community Living Toronto since 2003.

Could you tell the Legislature what support the government has provided and continues to provide to that great organization, Community Living Toronto?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Thank you for the question. Our government is committed to supporting the developmental services sector. Last year, my ministry provided over \$51 million in annualized funding to Community Living Toronto. Our government also provided them with almost \$560,000 in annualized—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, withdraw the comment.

Mr. Paul Miller: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Since 2003, we have increased funding to these agencies by 43%. Today, Community Living Toronto—and I want to welcome the president of Community Living Toronto here, Mr. Strutt—is the largest ministry-funded developmental services agency in Toronto and serves over 5,000 persons with developmental disabilities throughout the city.

We have a great working relationship with Community Living Toronto, and I look forward to continuing to work with them. Again, I'd like to thank them for everything they do and—

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

TAXATION

Mr. Peter Shurman: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, Premier, representatives of hard-working convenience store owners were here to warn you that adding 8% HST on legal cigarettes is, in their words, “adding gasoline to the fire” that is the illegal tobacco trade, with its 50%-plus market share. It's going to accelerate the number of convenience store closings in Ontario, now at 2,400 in the last two years. This is clear cause and effect. These small business owners are offering a revenue-neutral solution to the mess you've created. Will you give it to them?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Revenue.

Hon. John Wilkinson: I want to thank the member for the question.

First of all, we have to remember what the problem is in contraband tobacco. It is a question, and I agree with Michael Perley, of supply and demand. What we're

doing in our ministry is being very clear that this is a problem that is unacceptable to the people of Ontario.

I say to the member that over the last two years, our convictions have tripled, our seizures are going up 50% year over year, and our penalties assessed now reach in excess of \$14 million, because we are working closely with law enforcement to make sure that the laws of this province are being respected.

I do quote Mr. Perley, who has been a great advisor to this government in regard to a smoke-free Ontario. He says that the contraband cigarette problem is a problem of supply and distribution, not of higher taxes. I'd be interested to know from the member whether they believe we should have cheaper smokes and more expensive generic drugs in this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Shurman: Minister, what are you smoking and can I have some?

The problem is so out of control, 32% of butts sampled outside the Department of Finance in Ottawa were illegal themselves, and that's a government building.

As Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair told me last week, the profits from illegal tobacco go directly to buy the guns and the drugs on our streets. Minister, put HST on legal cigarettes and you're putting money in the pocket of organized crime. It kills small business and it buys the guns that kill innocent people.

Will you hold the line on taxes on cigarettes on July 1, yes or no?

Hon. John Wilkinson: Let's be clear: I reject advice from the members opposite who believe that in this province what we should be doing is cutting the taxes on a product that kills people. Instead, I believe that our government is doing the right thing by reducing the price of drugs that actually save people's lives. I can't think of an issue in the province of Ontario today where there is such a clear division between what your party stands for and what we stand for on this side of the House. There are compounds that save people's lives and the price of those are going down, and we will not take advice from you in regard to the fact that you believe that we should be reducing the price.

What I find interesting is that your colleague the member from Parry Sound said, "I think we can learn a lot from Quebec." I might add that in their last budget, Quebec announced a sales tax increase and a corresponding increase to the tobacco tax. So you might want to talk to Norm Miller about your position.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. While patients at Ottawa hospitals are being warned they may be losing more front-line health care staff, the CEO of the Ottawa Hospital has seen his salary double in the last eight years. Under a compensation scheme that was introduced by the Premier and that he wants to see replicated all across the province, this kind of thing is going to happen again. If it didn't work in Ottawa, why

does the Premier think it's going to work in the rest of the province?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I look forward to hearing more about what is behind this question. I'm a bit puzzled, I confess, about the question.

We have introduced legislation that will tie CEO compensation and the compensation of other leadership in the hospital to achieving benchmarks when it comes to quality of care. We know that we can always improve the quality of care in our hospitals, and I'm delighted to have the support of the Ontario Hospital Association, the Ontario Medical Association and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario as we work to improve the quality of care in our hospitals.

Will hospital CEOs have to show that continuous improvement to earn their salary? Yes, they will. It's the right thing to do.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Patients are angry when they see front-line services vanish while executive pay continues to rise.

Last week, the health minister said that all of us who are paid by taxpayers need "to take a bit of a pause when it comes to increases in our compensation."

Later this week, the House is going to be debating my bill that caps public sector executive salaries at twice the Premier's pay. My question is this: Can I and the people of Ontario, the patients of this province, count on the Premier's support in this regard?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'd like to take the opportunity to talk about things that really matter to patients when it comes to health care. They care about getting wait times down.

At the Ottawa Hospital, they've been able to bring down the wait times for hip replacement surgery by 67 days; knees down 153—that's half a year; cataract surgeries down 236 days; cancer surgery down 53 days; and MRI procedures down 285 days.

Things are working when it comes to getting wait times down for people in this province, including at the Ottawa Hospital.

We've made some important investments in the Champlain LHIN, in Ottawa. One that I'm very proud of is our nursing graduate guarantee. Six hundred and ninety-two—

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

ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I have a question for the Minister of Tourism and Culture. May 18 is International Museum Day, a day that has been celebrated around the world since 1977. It recognizes the important contributions that museums, art galleries and heritage sites make to communities across the province and around the globe.

Today and throughout this month of May, Ontario museums are featuring hundreds of exhibits and events to showcase our diverse history and innovative future.

Days like today are important because they help us appreciate the important role museums play in our communities. They help us discover who we are and what brings us together.

Minister, what is the government doing to support Ontario's museums so that they can promote and showcase our rich history and heritage?

Hon. Michael Chan: I want to thank the honourable member from Davenport.

It gives me great pleasure to speak about museums on International Museum Day. Museums play a critical role in our everyday lives. It's a place where children can learn, families can connect and adults can engage. Museums are educational institutions that open windows for us to look back on to our past and to envision our future. This is why our government is proud of our investments.

1130

Since 2003, we have invested over \$232 million in museums and organizations across the province. Museums are treasures of this society, and we are committed to protecting and supporting them.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: Mr. Speaker—

Hon. John Gerretsen: That's a great museum tie.

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: How did you know it's a museum tie? You're right: This is my museum tie.

The motto for International Museum Day is: "Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples." This speaks to the role that museums play in our lives.

Some have said that no trip to Toronto is complete without a visit to the Royal Ontario Museum, and I cannot agree more. With its recent architectural transformation and six million pieces in its collection, there is something new to discover around every corner.

In addition to being great cultural institutions, museums are also great tourism attractions. People from around the world travel to Toronto to see the unique exhibits held at the ROM.

Minister, what are you doing to ensure that local museums such as the ROM are competitive—

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

Hon. Michael Chan: Thank you for the question.

Museums are much more than just educational institutions; they are experiences that we can share with our friends and family.

For the ROM to remain competitive, it must keep up with technology. This is why our government has invested \$178 million to assist with the transformation of the ROM. The ROM is working on a project to allow visitors to personalize their tours online. This will enhance the visitors' experience. Happy visitors are more likely to return. But more importantly, they will tell their

friends and relatives, and this will help attract visitors and stimulate our local economy.

INFRASTRUCTURE HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSOCIATION

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Premier. Premier, there seems to be some confusion as to who is in charge of your new Infrastructure Health and Safety Association. On March 26, in a public meeting with stakeholders, the CEO of the IHSA, Michael Delisle, shed some light on that confusion. He said that he was having "a separate, private meeting with Pat Dillon to work out the slate of labour representatives."

Premier, why is the head of the Working Families Coalition deciding who represents labour in your government agency?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: He's not.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: That answer reminds me of that sage advice from Mark Twain: When in doubt, tell the truth.

In that—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Withdraw the comment, please.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Withdrawn.

In that public meeting on March 26, there was one union present which did not donate to the Working Families Coalition, and that was the Christian Labour Association of Canada, which represents more than 10,000 workers in Ontario. At the public meeting, they asked Michael Delisle if they could participate in that meeting, where your hand-picked CEO had already confirmed that he and Pat Dillon were working out the slate of labour representatives. His response to that query was: "That's not going to happen."

Minister, why are Pat Dillon and the Working Families Coalition dictating policies at government agencies?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, they're not.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): New question. The member from Beaches—East York.

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order.

Start the clock.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: "Tea Party" Tim, how're you doing?

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

My comments, as I said earlier, are directed to all members of this House.

POVERTY

Mr. Michael Prue: My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. This morning, the Minister of Children and Youth Services, the member from Haldimand—Norfolk and I had the privilege of addressing a large group of anti-poverty activists from across On-

tario. The minister spoke about commitment, she spoke about co-operation, she spoke about sharing a vision, but she stopped short of admitting that affordable housing waiting lists, food bank lines and poverty rates are getting worse, not better. She then dropped the bombshell: She admitted that the social assistance advisory council has presented its report to the government. Why hasn't the minister tabled this much-anticipated document with the House?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I am very pleased to say that this morning, I had a chance to speak to 25 in 5 about the important partnership that we have with organizations across the province to reduce poverty by 25% in five years—90,000 kids to be out of poverty. It is with great respect for the work that they do and continue to do that we come to them in partnership to seek their advice, to work collectively, to determine what the next steps might be as we continue to tackle these important issues.

I had the opportunity to highlight to them where we were in the upcoming time period, and we do know that we've asked an incredible group to come and provide thoughtful advice to the government with respect to the social assistance review. We've had a chance to receive some preliminary information with respect to that ongoing report, and when the process completes itself and the documents are translated, I do know that these—

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

Mr. Michael Prue: I listened intently to what the minister had to say, and by the lack of applause from her own colleagues, it's quite obvious to me—

Applause.

Mr. Michael Prue: Okay, go ahead.

It's quite obvious to me that she has no intention of filing this report until after this Legislature is no longer sitting, sometime in June. The minister as much as apologized this morning for this government's wrong-headed and cruel elimination of the special diet allowance; again, she stopped short of promising to reinstate it. The minister also didn't mention that for the first time since 2006, social assistance rate increases have fallen below the rate of inflation.

My question again: Is this government keeping the contents of the advisory council's report a secret until after this House ceases because they are afraid of what it says?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: Absolutely not, and I am prepared to compare our record to theirs any day, my friend, any day: some \$63.5 million in long-term funding to child care to help families in this province, and you voted against it; all-day JK and SK for Ontario kids to help lift those families out of poverty, and you voted against it. We are working with families to ensure that every year, those families and those working mothers have the Ontario child benefit so that they can lift themselves and their families out of poverty, and the members opposite voted against it.

We're not scared of these issues. We've made a written commitment. We are tackling this issue publicly

and in partnership with our friends and colleagues and also with those who might bring criticism to us. We look—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The members will come to order, please.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Tim, I just want to know if you write on your hand.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Economic Development, you can have that conversation out in the hallway with the honourable member.

Hon. James J. Bradley: She can go out for tea.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): And the Minister of Municipal Affairs can join her.

TAXATION

Mr. Bruce Crozier: My question is to the Minister of Revenue. Minister, small businesses play an important role in my riding and in ridings all across this province. Jack Mintz, the economics chair at the University of Calgary, estimates that our comprehensive tax package will create 591,000 jobs, \$47 billion in new investment and increase work wages. The president of the Canadian Auto Workers' union, Ken Lewenza, has said, "We are arguing about elements of the harmonized sales tax, but brothers and sisters, don't buy into this tax rage...."

Michael Oliphant from the Daily Bread Food Bank has said, "In terms of the net impact on sales tax harmonization, we think that overall it will actually improve the incomes of low-income Ontarians." Who can Ontarians trust? Can they trust—

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

Hon. John Wilkinson: I want to thank the member for the question and having me to his riding.

In particular, I want to share with the House that yesterday I was invited by our colleague the member for Oakville to visit a company called Entripy. Entripy is an amazing company started by a young man when he was still at the University of Toronto. Today in Oakville, after 11 years, they have 25 people there. I had an opportunity to visit that company, and the press then asked him that question: "These savings—what does that amount to for your small business?" He said, "Between \$15,000 and \$20,000 a year." The media then asked him, "What are you going to do with that money?" He said, "Hire more people."

That's what our tax reform package is all about. I want to say to Jas Brar and the good people at Entripy that they understand that the nature of our tax reform is one that lowers the cost of business, which allows them to be more competitive. He has a vision now of not only serving Canada but also the US market—

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

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I rise on a point of order regarding order paper questions. According to standing order 99(d),

“The minister shall answer such written questions within 24 sessional days, unless he or she indicates that more time is required because the answer will be costly or time consuming or that he or she declines to answer, in which case a notation shall be made on the Orders and Notices paper following the question indicating that the minister has made an interim answer, the approximate date that the information will be available, or that the minister has declined to answer, as the case may be.”

While this may not be important for some people, it is very important to the constituents of Dufferin–Caledon. As you know, you had to remind a number of ministers last week that my order paper questions were now due, and I would ask for your advice on what I can do to ensure that they actually get answered.

I have submitted order paper questions two subsequent times and, in both cases, the replies have been standard ministerial press release quotes with no reference to my specific question.

I do not understand why I was late in receiving responses when it was obvious, by the lack of answers, that the ministers did not spend any time answering the questions I asked. In fact, for some questions the same answer was cut and pasted as a reply to other questions. Now I have lost 24 sessional days, in fact almost two months, waiting to receive answers to questions that are important to my constituents.

I believe that my privileges as a member of this House have been violated, and I ask that you review the answers provided—I have copies of all the order paper questions I’m referencing—and that you offer your advice on how I can assist my constituents with actually getting answers to the order paper questions submitted. If I could have a page, I’ll give that to the Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I thank the honourable member for her point of order. The point she raises is not a new one, and I will make some quotations in a few moments.

I’d just like to say to the member that numerous Speakers have ruled that during oral question period ministers may answer a question any way they see fit. It’s also the case that it is not the Speaker’s responsibility to ensure that the answer to a written question satisfies that question.

This is further supported by O’Brien and Bosc on page 522 where it says—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order. It’s important to all members.

“There are no provisions in the rules for the Speaker to review government responses to questions.”

I’d say as an addendum that it is not a new issue, and I’m going to tell you why: because certainly it’s an issue that opposition parties have been concerned with since at least 1935. Speaker Hipel, a former Speaker in this chamber: “I have quoted May very fully to show that this whole matter of the reply to questions is within the jurisdiction of the ministers of the crown, that it is optional with them as to whether and how they shall answer the

questions addressed to them and that the answers they do give are final subject to the their own consent to give additional information.”

I would say, though, that I would implore all ministers, when answering questions, to endeavour as much as possible. Let’s break the public’s feeling of this place and remind and demonstrate to the public that this is truly question period and that an important part of question period is answering questions. I would say as well that an important part of a written question is an in-depth answer to that written question, because as members we all want to do the best job we can to assist our constituents.

Thank you for the point of order.

UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We agree with the proposition that when the Speaker determines that offensive or disorderly language has been used, the member will be requested to withdraw the unparliamentary word or phrase and that the member must rise in his or her place to retract the words unequivocally.

The Speaker has been particularly vigilant about addressing unparliamentary, offensive or disorderly language. The difficulty that we have, though, is that the Speaker, and for reasons I think I might understand, has not stated what language, what word or what phrase is unparliamentary. What that does from time to time is leave the person who’s asked to withdraw in confusion about what specifically they’re withdrawing. Second, it eliminates the instructive quality or aspect of Speaker’s rulings in this regard.

Look, I understand that there’s a dilemma because, on the one hand, you have unparliamentary language that’s on the record, and you have unparliamentary language which everybody would agree is unparliamentary. For instance, if somebody were to address me by a reference to a body part, that would probably be unparliamentary. I may not necessarily be offended, but it would probably be unparliamentary. If it were on the record, it’s there, it’s too late. If it weren’t on the record—for instance, an interjection—the Speaker might be loath to put it on the record by virtue of drawing attention to it. But at the same time, the confusion around what people are being called upon to withdraw prevails.

So I’m asking you Speaker—and I don’t know the views of other members of the House—if you could help us—seriously, help us—to identify what words are being deemed unparliamentary, offensive or disorderly, not just for the sake of the person who is being called upon to withdraw them but also for, I suppose, the educational function that those rulings ought to have when they’re made here in the chamber.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I thank the honourable member from Welland.

I would say that there is no definitive list that the Speaker works from for what is unparliamentary. As I have said on previous occasions in here, often it is the

context in which a word is used. Some may deem it to be unparliamentary, but in the context that it's used I may find that it is parliamentary. By and large, I'm quite certain that when I ask a member to withdraw language that is unparliamentary, they understand why I'm asking them to do that. I will not, in my tenure as Speaker, be repeating what is unparliamentary. I will reserve that ability, that judgment, as my call as to what is unparliamentary. You may agree with me or you may disagree with me.

For myself, an important thing when a comment is made is, does it cause disorder within the House? My goal is to endeavour to do what I can to maintain order in the House. I am also conscious of the tone and the content of what is actually said.

I'm not going to repeat what I deem to be an offensive term. I come back to all members in the House that it does us all a disservice when unparliamentary language is used. We are working in the most unique work environment, and we are being closely watched by individuals.

I do thank the honourable member. I'd just ask that all members be conscious of the language they use, and I will be endeavouring, to the best of my ability, to enforce that.

DEFERRED VOTES

CREATING THE FOUNDATION FOR JOBS AND GROWTH ACT, 2010 LOI DE 2010 POSANT LES FONDATIONS DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA CROISSANCE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 16, An Act to implement 2010 Budget measures and to enact or amend various Acts / Projet de loi 16, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures énoncées dans le Budget de 2010 et édictant ou modifiant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1150 to 1155.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 16. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol
Albanese, Laura	Gerretsen, John	Moridi, Reza
Arthurs, Wayne	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Bentley, Christopher	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Best, Margaret	Jaczek, Helena	Pupatello, Sandra
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Qaadri, Shafiq
Broten, Laurel C.	Johnson, Rick	Ramal, Khalil
Brown, Michael A.	Kwinter, Monte	Ramsay, David
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Rinaldi, Lou
Cansfield, Donna H.	Leal, Jeff	Ruprecht, Tony
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Sandals, Liz
Carroll, Aileen	Mangat, Amrit	Smith, Monique
Chan, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Sousa, Charles

Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight

Mauro, Bill
McGuinty, Dalton
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milloy, John

Takhar, Harinder S.
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

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

Nays

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri
Dunlop, Garfield
Elliott, Christine
Gélinas, France
Hampton, Howard
Hardeman, Ernie
Hillier, Randy

Horwath, Andrea
Hudak, Tim
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kormos, Peter
MacLeod, Lisa
Marchese, Rosario
Martiniuk, Gerry
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia

Murdoch, Bill
O'Toole, John
Ouellette, Jerry J.
Prue, Michael
Savoline, Joyce
Tabuns, Peter
Wilson, Jim
Witmer, Elizabeth
Yakubuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 59; the nays are 31.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

NOTICE OF REASONED AMENDMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 71(b), the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has notified the Clerk of his intention to file notice of a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 68, An Act to promote Ontario as open for business by amending or repealing certain Acts. The order for second reading of Bill 68 may therefore not be called today.

NOTICES OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Premier concerning the IHSA. This matter will be debated at 6 p.m. today.

Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Nepean–Carleton has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Premier concerning an appearance before the government agencies committee. This matter will be debated tomorrow at 6 p.m.

There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1200 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. John Gerretsen: I'm sure everyone knows that today is Ontario environment industry day here at

Queen's Park. All of the water tech companies and other clean tech companies from around the province are here to meet with us today. I'm very pleased to say that today we have with us Alex Gill, the executive director, and Bob Redhead, who's the chair of ONEIA and the executive director of government affairs of Newalta. We also have with us Tom Heintzman, the chair of environment industry day and president of Bullfrog.

I would just like to remind all the members that there is a reception tonight at 5 o'clock in the legislative dining room so that we can all meet the fantastic leaders in the environment industry that we have in the province of Ontario.

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: On a point of order, Speaker: I would like to correct the record. In response to a question from the member from Beaches–East York, I incorrectly stated that the NDP voted against full-day learning when, in fact, they voted for it.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. That is a point of order.

I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale and page Jacob Alaichi, to welcome his aunt Jamili Sleiman; his uncles Mohamad, Kamal and Ahmad Alaichi; and uncles Mahmood and Zein Oleiche to the public galleries today.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Mr. John O'Toole: It's my pleasure and privilege to congratulate 135 of my Durham riding residents who were recently honoured with Ontario Volunteer Service Awards.

In particular, I'd like to recognize two volunteers from my riding who have 60 years of service with their organizations serving their community. They are Edna Meyers of the Bethesda-Reach Women's Institute and Roy Fleming of the Union Rod and Gun Club. Also recognized for 50 years with the Syberian Society of Canada was Czesler Borek. For 40 years, recipients from the Durham riding include Paul Young of the Union Rod and Gun Club and Louis Lalonde of the Knights of Columbus, Council 8549.

It was my privilege to attend both evening awards ceremonies in Durham on April 26 and 27 and to meet so many outstanding citizens from across Durham and indeed Ontario. Whether you were a volunteer for five years, 50 years or even more, you have made a positive contribution to the quality of life and lives of others by helping to build a stronger community and a stronger Ontario.

I'd also like to recognize the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and honestly to respect the members of the staff at the Honours and Awards Secretariat for an outstanding job. Thank you as well for serving our community and our province.

CYCLING SAFETY

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Speaking of the environment, today we will be tabling a three-foot passing law for bicyclists in Ontario—five feet on the highway, three feet in the city. We were supported in this by cyclists across Ontario. It got a lot of media attention, and I would really call on the government, in light of the fact that each day 80 people, mostly youth and children, visit an Ontario emergency ward due to a cycling injury, and cyclists are seven to 70 times more likely to be injured than those who drive cars. Cyclists in North America are twice as likely to be killed and eight times more likely to be seriously injured than cyclists in Germany, a place that has this law in effect, as do 16 states in the United States. So we're not leaders on this file; we are following a far distant second.

This is the first time in Canada that this bill will be proposed and I would ask this government, particularly the transportation minister, to rise above partisan differences and to actually for once do the right thing: Pass this law. In so doing, you'll be saving lives from here on in, and certainly you'll be speaking to the environment, because, as we know, cycling is not only a safety issue, it's also an environmental issue. We want to make it safe on our streets for cyclists because we want to make our environment safe for the children, the adults, and the seniors who breathe it. I will be delighted to bring that in. On behalf of all Ontarians, I would ask the government to do the right thing and pass it.

WOMEN'S MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE AND COUNSELLING CENTRE OF DURHAM

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: This past Saturday evening, I had the pleasure of attending a masquerade ball hosted by the Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre of Durham. The event, Quest for a New Home, was hosted by the executive director, Esther Enyolu, and board chair Marilyn Oladiemeji of the WMRCC. This event was held to raise money as they've outgrown their modest space and need a new home to continue supporting women, children and youth throughout Durham region.

This not-for-profit charitable community organization was founded in 1993 to provide services and to increase public awareness of the rising incidence of women assaults in our community. WMRCC of Durham reaches out to immigrant and refugee women, women from diverse cultural, racial and religious backgrounds. Here are just a few examples of the many types of assistance they provide: referrals to shelters, crisis intervention, support groups for women and children, health promotion and education, skills development and training, youth counselling and programs, public education and awareness campaigns.

I was pleased to be in the company of my colleague Joe Dickson, the member from the riding of Ajax–

Pickering, regional chair Roger Anderson, the mayors of Pickering and Ajax, and the many community leaders in both public service and the private sector.

I'd like to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate the Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre of Durham for their dedication and hard work and to sincerely thank the many sponsors and supporters of this very worthy event.

PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Ms. Sylvia Jones: On Thursday, May 20, the Kinsmen Club of Orangeville is holding a special event to honour the outstanding work of the paramedics of Dufferin County Ambulance Service. Dufferin County Ambulance Service works closely with the emergency services committee at Headwaters Health Care Centre and the Cambridge base hospital paramedic program. This unique relationship with the hospital ensures the patients are transferred seamlessly into the emergency department.

Currently, more than 70% of our full-time paramedics are certified at the advanced care level. Advanced care paramedics are highly trained and skilled pre-hospital emergency care providers. Advanced care paramedics perform complex patient assessments and make critical emergency care decisions in a fast-paced environment. This training allows our paramedics to make life-saving assessments including, in consultation with physicians, special bypass transfers to South Lake Regional Health Centre for cardiac care and Trillium Health Centre for strokes.

The Dufferin County Ambulance Service has been rated as one of the best in the province by a provincial review team. Three ambulance stations in Orangeville, Shelburne and Grand Valley have allowed our paramedics to have good response times throughout Dufferin.

Under the leadership of ambulance manager Tom Reid, Dufferin paramedics provide outstanding care to the residents of Dufferin. I would like to thank them for their dedication and commitment to our community.

1510

TRILLIUM HEALTH CENTRE

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: It's a pleasure to rise in the House and share with you the day that I spent at the Trillium Health Centre-Queensway Site in Toronto west with Take your MPP to Work with the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.

Ruby Brown, the executive VP and the CEO; Susan Bisailon, the executive director of clinical operations; Cathy Dibert, director of nursing; and Doris Mohrhardt, director of communication, were the individuals who took us around to show us exactly what was happening at this very unique ambulatory centre where over 36,000 operations take place every year; where they look at the individual from a holistic perspective; where they

integrate their services, both for seniors and for those who are coming in and out throughout the day. It's really unique in that there are windows, there's sunshine, there's openness, and patients have the ability to communicate with each other as they're going through things such as kidney dialysis.

Trillium is a good example of the care and compassion that the nurses have. I think my constituency is very fortunate. Although we don't have a hospital in the constituency, Trillium is the closest to us and is used consistently by many members of my community.

Again, thank you and a tribute to the nurses in Ontario for their care, their compassion and the work they do on behalf of all Ontarians, but in particular, obviously, mine in the west Toronto area.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr. Ted Arnott: The 2010 budget was tabled in this House two months ago. Buried within the budget papers document, released on March 25, was a so-called plan to balance the budget by 2018. This means that if the plan is truthful and is followed, for the next eight years the provincial government will continue digging the debt hole even deeper. To place this in context, people need to know that, having taken office in 2003, the profligate McGuinty Liberals will have doubled the provincial debt by 2012-13.

Now, having ignored prudent warnings to keep the lid on their spending, they say they can balance the budget if we will just trust them and be patient. Trust and patience? These virtues are in short supply when it comes to this government, and with good reason. When you look at the details of the budget papers, you see that their balanced budget plan is predicated on the government keeping overall spending increases below 2% a year. Considering the fact that the McGuinty government's spending increases have averaged more than 7% a year during their time in office, one must question the integrity of their numbers.

While there is a legislative requirement that the Auditor General express an opinion of the accuracy and veracity of the government's budget just before a provincial election, I believe we need an objective assessment of all of the government's key budgetary documents and financial reports in the years between elections, undertaken by the Auditor General or another independent and qualified professional.

If the government is playing games with the numbers in the budget, the taxpayers of Ontario need to know the truth.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Bill Mauro: Very recently there was more great news for my riding of Thunder Bay-Atikokan. In the early part of May, the Toronto Transit Commission exercised an option for an additional 126 subway cars to

be constructed by Bombardier, with a lot of that work to happen in the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay–Atikokan—the Red Rocket, as it’s called.

Constituents in Thunder Bay will remember that in December 2006, the original contract was announced, calling for 234 cars. The original value of that contract was somewhere in the order of magnitude of \$700 million. The option for 126 cars is worth another \$300 million or so, bringing the total value of the contract to approximately \$1 billion. There are approximately 800 people working at that plant currently, and obviously this work is going to add to that and extend the time of the employees at that plant.

This is not the \$1.2-billion contract we announced last year. You will remember that our government put in \$400 million to that contract—unbudgeted dollars, I might add. Unfortunately, there was no federal government support for that particular contract, but the one I’m here talking about today is \$1 billion, not the \$1.2 billion that we announced last year. It’s some tremendous news for the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay.

From 1994 to 2003, there were zero dollars spent on mass transit in the province of Ontario. Our government has invested well over \$9 billion. The plant in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan is now well positioned into the future.

ENVIRONMENT INDUSTRY

Mr. Phil McNeely: Today is the 10th annual environment industry day at Queen’s Park, sponsored by the Ontario Environment Industry Association, or ONEIA.

Over the last decade we’ve seen incredible growth in this vital sector, made up of over 2,600 companies across the province, employing over 60,000 people, and producing \$8 billion in revenues each year.

Ontario’s environmental companies are powering innovation, keeping us competitive in the global marketplace and, above all, safeguarding the environment with their products, technologies and services.

We want to help them keep growing. Our five-year Open Ontario plan is guiding our efforts. Our government is committed to making Ontario a global leader in clean industry, and we’re engaged in a broad range of initiatives supporting this commitment, from our landmark Green Energy and Green Economy Act to the Toxics Reduction Act to our proposal to introduce a new Water Opportunities Act.

To echo the Minister of the Environment, I encourage all members to stop in and meet with ONEIA members in the legislative dining room today at 5 p.m.

I want to thank ONEIA and its members for all their efforts. Let’s continue working together to build a clean, sustainable and prosperous future in Ontario.

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: On May 18, 1920, a very special boy opened his eyes to the world. A future pope

was born—in fact, the only Polish pope. But it would soon turn out that His Holiness Pope John Paul II would become the pope for everyone. His reach was vast, his travels international and he touched millions, yet he touched you and me as individuals.

He certainly left a significant impression on me. I had the great pleasure of having a private audience with him the day after the Vatican science council met, and I asked him if science and faith had something to say to each other. He replied that I should study the fathers of quantum physics. Here is what Max Planck, the German physicist who’s considered the father of quantum physics, said:

“After 40 years, I cannot be identified as a fanatic. I’m a scientist. I come to two conclusions. The first conclusion is simply this: One, there is no matter per se; and two, there is an intelligent spirit in the world who brings the atoms into oscillation.”

Consequently, what is the significance of this? John Paul II, this pope, did not run away from science, but he embraced it. In my mind, he is the great spiritual leader we need to remember. Today at 6:30, I would like to invite all the members to recognize this special pope in room 228 in this Legislature.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Peter Shurman: I beg leave to present a report on the Brampton Civic Hospital public-private partnership project from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

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

Mr. Peter Shurman: No, thank you, Speaker. I move adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated May 18, 2010, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 108(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

WATER OPPORTUNITIES AND WATER CONSERVATION ACT, 2010 LOI DE 2010 SUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DES TECHNOLOGIES DE L'EAU ET LA CONSERVATION DE L'EAU

Mr. Gerretsen moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 72, An Act to enact the Water Opportunities Act, 2010 and to amend other Acts in respect of water conservation and other matters / Projet de loi 72, Loi édictant la Loi de 2010 sur le développement des technologies de l'eau et modifiant d'autres lois en ce qui concerne la conservation de l'eau et d'autres questions.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1520 to 1525.

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

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Duguid, Brad	McNeely, Phil
Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Milloy, John
Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Naqvi, Yasir
Broten, Laurel C.	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Brownell, Jim	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Cansfield, Donna H.	Jaczek, Helena	Pupatello, Sandra
Caplan, David	Jeffrey, Linda	Qaadri, Shafiq
Carroll, Aileen	Johnson, Rick	Ramal, Khalil
Chiarelli, Bob	Kormos, Peter	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Crozier, Bruce	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smith, Monique
Delaney, Bob	Levac, Dave	Sorbara, Greg
Dhillon, Vic	Mangat, Amrit	Tabuns, Peter
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Van Bommel, Maria
DiNovo, Cheri	McMeekin, Ted	

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 44; the nays are 0.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Hon. John Gerretsen: During ministerial statements.

PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO CALEDONIA ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR L'ENQUÊTE PUBLIQUE RELATIVE À LA SITUATION EXISTANT À CALEDONIA

Mr. Chudleigh moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 73, An Act to provide for a public inquiry to discover the truth about the provincial role in the ongoing dispute on the Douglas Creek Estates property in Caledonia / Projet de loi 73, Loi prévoyant une enquête publique pour découvrir la vérité sur le rôle de la Province dans le conflit en cours sur la propriété Douglas Creek Estates à Caledonia.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. 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 provincial role in the ongoing dispute on the Douglas Creek Estates property in Caledonia and to make recommendations. The commission has the power of a commission under the Public Inquiries Act. Once the inquiry begins, the commission must make an interim report in six months and a final report in 12 months.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (SAFE BICYCLE PASSING), 2010 LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (DÉPASSEMENT SÉCURITAIRE DE BICYCLETTES)

Ms. DiNovo moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 74, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to promote bicycle safety / Projet de loi 74, Loi modifiant le Code de la route afin de promouvoir la sécurité à bicyclette.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

First reading agreed to.

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

1530

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: The bill amends the Highway Traffic Act in connection with bicycle safety. New section 147.1 of the act is added to provide that cyclists travelling at less than the normal speed of traffic must, subject to specified exceptions, proceed in the right-hand lane or as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.

New section 147.2 of the act provides that every driver or operator of a vehicle meeting or overtaking a person on a bicycle must maintain a safe travelling distance. The safe travelling distance is three to five feet, depending on the vehicle's speed.

In the case of a collision, the driver or operator of the vehicle is presumed to have not left a safe travelling distance between the vehicle and the bicycle. It is an offence not to leave the required safe travelling distance when passing or overtaking a bicycle. A person convicted of the offence is liable to a fine of not less than \$310 and not more than \$750 and is required to attend a remedial program. A driver or operator of a vehicle is liable to an additional fine of (a) \$1,500 if the contravention results in serious bodily harm to a cyclist or (b) \$5,000 if the contravention results in a cyclist's death.

SANDRINGHAM DEVELOPMENTS LTD.
ACT, 2010

Mr. Caplan moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr33, An Act to revive Sandringham Developments Ltd.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION
AMENDMENT ACT (DISCLOSURE RE
INVESTIGATIONS), 2010

LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR L'ADMINISTRATION FINANCIÈRE
(DIVULGATION DE RENSEIGNEMENTS
SUR LES ENQUÊTES)

Mr. Tabuns moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 75, An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act to provide for the disclosure of information by prospective providers of financial advice or management services to the Minister of Finance / Projet de loi 75, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration financière pour prévoir la divulgation de renseignements au ministre des Finances par les éventuels fournisseurs de conseils financiers ou de services de gestion financière.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The bill sets out a proposed amendment to the Financial Administration Act. The proposed amendment applies if the Minister of Finance considers entering into an agreement with a person or

entity to provide financial advice for management services to the minister. The minister is required to request certain information from the person or entity concerning investigations by police or regulatory authorities that may be relevant to the adviser's integrity or suitability to provide advice or services—Goldman Sachs, for instance.

VISUAL FIRE ALARM
SYSTEM ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LES SYSTÈMES
D'ALARME-INCENDIE À AFFICHAGE
VISUEL

Mr. Arthurs moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 76, An Act respecting visual fire alarm systems in public buildings / Projet de loi 76, Loi sur les systèmes d'alarme-incendie à affichage visuel dans les édifices publics.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1535 to 1540.

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

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	DiNovo, Cheri	Moridi, Reza
Albanese, Laura	Duguid, Brad	Naqvi, Yasir
Arthurs, Wayne	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David
Brotten, Laurel C.	Gerretsen, John	Pupatello, Sandra
Brown, Michael A.	Hoskins, Eric	Qaadri, Shafiq
Brownell, Jim	Hoy, Pat	Ramal, Khalil
Cansfield, Donna H.	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Caplan, David	Jeffrey, Linda	Ruprecht, Tony
Chiarelli, Bob	Johnson, Rick	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Kormos, Peter	Tabuns, Peter
Crozier, Bruce	Mangat, Amrit	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	
Dickson, Joe	Milloy, John	

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 37; the nays are 0.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: This bill, if enacted, would provide a visual notice, in addition to the standard audio signal, that a fire alarm has been activated. This visual notice would give those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing the necessary warning to exit those buildings quickly and safely.

STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HOSPITALS
ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LE RENFORCEMENT
DES HÔPITAUX PUBLICS

Mr. Caplan moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Public Hospitals Act with respect to board membership / Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les hôpitaux publics relativement aux membres du conseil d'administration.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1543 to 1548.

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

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Brotten, Laurel C.
Brown, Michael A.
Brownell, Jim
Cansfield, Donna H.
Caplan, David
Carroll, Aileen
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce

Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Duguid, Brad
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gerretsen, John
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
McMeekin, Ted

Milloy, John
Moridi, Reza
Naqvi, Yasir
Oraziotti, David
Pupatello, Sandra
Qaadri, Shafiq
Ramal, Khalil
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Smith, Monique
Van Bommel, Maria
Zimmer, David

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 36; the nays are 0.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. David Caplan: The Strengthening Public Hospitals Act makes amendments to the Public Hospitals Act. It prohibits elected officials, members of councils of municipalities, members of the Legislative Assembly and members of the House of Commons of Canada from sitting on public hospital boards. The legislation also prohibits the aforementioned members from being appointed as life, term or honorary directors of public hospital boards. This act will put an end to the direct conflicts of interest which occur for individuals who must balance board membership with their duty to represent their constituents.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 33(f), the time for introduction of bills has expired.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Tuesday, May 18, 2010.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1551 to 1556.

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

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Brotten, Laurel C.
Brown, Michael A.
Brownell, Jim
Cansfield, Donna H.
Caplan, David
Carroll, Aileen
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce

Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Duguid, Brad
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gerretsen, John
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Mangat, Amrit
Mauro, Bill

McMeekin, Ted
Naqvi, Yasir
Oraziotti, David
Pupatello, Sandra
Qaadri, Shafiq
Ramal, Khalil
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Smith, Monique
Takhar, Harinder S.
Van Bommel, Maria
Zimmer, David

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

Nays

Bailey, Robert
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri
Hardeman, Ernie
Hillier, Randy

Kormos, Peter
MacLeod, Lisa
Miller, Paul
Murdoch, Bill
O'Toole, John

Ouellette, Jerry J.
Savoline, Joyce
Shurman, Peter
Tabuns, Peter

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 38; the nays are 14.

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

Motion agreed to.

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES**

WATER SUPPLY

Hon. John Gerretsen: Today I'm pleased and privileged to introduce the proposed Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act for first reading.

Before doing so, I'd like to introduce a number of individuals who are in the east gallery here who are very much interested in this bill and have been very actively involved in giving advice with respect to it.

I'd like to introduce Anastasia Lintner, who is with Ecojustice; Tim Morris, who is with the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation; Carol Maas, who is with the Polis Project; Mark Hinchcliffe, who's with Hennessy and Hinchcliffe; Chris Holcroft, who is with the Rideau Institute; Derek Stack, who is with Great Lakes United; and Brent Wootton, who is with Fleming College. They're all here to join us at the introduction of this bill.

1600

I would also like to introduce the ministry folks who have really been very actively involved in putting this bill together, and I think they should be given credit where credit is due. They include John Lieou and Paul Evans, two assistant deputy ministers; Sharon Bailey, who's the director of water services; Kelly Brown and George Rocoski; as well as two members of my own staff: Anna Head, who is an intern in our office this summer, along with Brenda Lucas, who gives us excellent advice on all issues relating to water.

If passed, this bill would make Ontario the place to come to for new technologies and leading-edge products and services in water treatment and water conservation. As part of our government's Open Ontario plan, it would lay the foundation for innovation in this fast-growing global sector, bring investments and create good jobs for the people of Ontario.

For too long we have taken our water, particularly in this province, for granted. As pressures on water continue to grow as a result of climate change and population growth, there will be a 40% gap between global supply and demand for water in the next 20 years. We have a clear responsibility, as Ontarians and as legislators in this Legislature, to fully understand what this incredible resource means to us and to be prepared to protect and conserve it for future generations.

Water is a distinct part of our heritage. In fact, the name "Ontario" has its roots in the words of a number of aboriginal languages that describe a "beautiful lake." We have a vision of Ontario becoming a North American centre of water technology and innovation, helping to provide the solutions so badly needed around the world.

Let me be clear: We want to export our know-how and expertise. We will not allow the bulk export of water.

Our proposed Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act is intended to deliver three key outcomes:

—to make Ontario a North American leader in the development and sale of technologies for water conservation and treatment. Today I had the opportunity to be at Discovery 10, which is at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. It is truly inspiring to see the over 300 different companies that are involved in the clean tech industry, including many in the clean tech water industry, be represented there and be actively involved in trying to get others interested in the products and services they're selling. There has been a huge advance that has taken place over the last five to 10 years.

—to encourage sustainable infrastructure in conservation planning, including using innovative technologies to

solve water, waste water and stormwater infrastructure challenges.

—to encourage all Ontarians to use water more wisely.

As a key part in delivering these outcomes, the proposed act, if passed, would create the water technology acceleration project—or, as we like to call it, TAP—a corporation that would support research and development as well as the commercialization of new technologies and innovations in Ontario's water sector.

We are looking at the success of these kinds of partnerships in other leading jurisdictions, such as in Germany, Singapore and Israel, and we are serious about making Ontario a strong and competitive player in a global sector currently valued at around \$400 billion per year and soon to be \$1 trillion per year.

The proposed Water Opportunities Act would involve creating partnerships with universities, colleges, municipalities, industry and entrepreneurs, along with others. We are working together with the Ministries of Research and Innovation, Energy and Infrastructure, Economic Development and Trade, Natural Resources, and Municipal Affairs and Housing to make this happen.

Just as importantly, we are focusing on transforming Ontario from being a water waster to a water conserver. We all know that water efficiency is the most cost-effective way to generate additional water and waste water treatment capacity. Investing in water conservation and innovative technology can avoid or defer significant infrastructure costs. Ontario examples clearly demonstrate that the cost of conservation programs by municipalities may be as little as one quarter of the cost of new infrastructure.

In Ontario, we use an average of 260 litres of water per person per day, and we know we can do much better than that at conserving. The proposed act aims to encourage efforts that would significantly reduce Ontario's residential water use. As a matter of fact, in Germany and the United Kingdom, for example, average water use is around 150 litres per day, almost half of what we use here in Ontario.

If passed, this act would also allow the government to bring in water efficiency standards for consumer products such as faucets, shower heads and rain sensors. It would also allow us to require standardized information about water use on water bills, so that Ontarians know more about their water use than they currently do, and would enable government facilities to demonstrate leadership through water conservation planning.

We intend to consult widely on the proposed legislation, as we already have. My parliamentary assistant, Helena Jaczek, the member from Oak Ridges–Markham, and I have met with many individuals, with companies large and small, with many academics and with many municipal leaders in the water business to talk about what could be in an act like this. We've already done a lot of consultation, but we have to do a lot more on the act itself. We intend to consult widely on the proposed legislation as it moves forward and, if passed, as we develop the new regulations under it.

Our government's bold, progressive and visionary approach will help provide solutions to one of the world's most pressing environmental challenges and put Ontario's expertise, which is already available around the world, on the map even more.

It's the right approach. It is the right thing to do for our environment, and it's the right thing to do to make Ontario open for business in the new, clean economy. I urge all of my colleagues to join together in supporting this bill.

SEXUAL ASSAULT
PREVENTION MONTH
MOIS DE LA PRÉVENTION
DE L'AGRESSION SEXUELLE

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I rise to recognize May as Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Ontario. Sexual assault is a crime of power, of control, of war, of oppression. It is a crime committed in dark corners and in broad daylight. Its effects are seen in the health and well-being of our society. Sexual assault knows no social or generational boundaries.

The statistics are chilling. The United Nations estimates that globally, one in three women experiences physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. In Ontario in 2008, there were more than 7,300 sexual assaults reported to police, but we know that the number of incidents was in fact much higher, because in Canada less than 10% of sexual assaults are reported to police.

En 1993, les Nations Unies ont adopté la Déclaration sur l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes. Ce document d'une grande importance reconnaît que la violence contre les femmes ne ressemble en rien aux autres types de violence; c'est un crime d'oppression et de discrimination que les hommes infligent aux femmes.

It recognizes that violence against women stems from a long history of inequality between men and women which, to this day, continues to prevent women from fully participating and succeeding in all parts of our society.

The statistics reflect this gendered reality of a crime perpetrated by men against women. According to Statistics Canada, police data for 2007 show that the female rates of sexual victimization were nearly six times higher than the rates for males, and that 97% of persons accused of sexual offences were male.

These hard truths are why we must all take action. It begins with understanding the reality of the risk factors for sexual victimization; it begins with changing our attitudes; it begins with holding the perpetrator accountable; it begins with not blaming the victim; and it begins with giving our children the positive role models they deserve and teaching them about healthy relationships.

Nous ne mettrons fin à la violence sexuelle qu'à condition de mettre fin à l'inégalité qui persiste entre les hommes et les femmes. Il nous reste encore beaucoup à faire, et les centres d'aide et autres organismes partout en Ontario se dévouent sans relâche pour sensibiliser la

population et aider les victimes d'agression sexuelle. Merci pour votre dévouement à l'égard des femmes.

1610

There is much work to be done, and sexual assault centres and other organizations across Ontario are working hard to raise public awareness and support victims. Thank you for your dedication to women.

Our government seeks to be a strong partner in this work and has increased funding to \$13 million a year for the province's 42 sexual assault centres. This ensures that each year more than 40,000 women are helped to rebuild their lives. Ontario's front-line workers have created a safe haven for the thousands of women whose lives have been destroyed by sexual violence. The White Ribbon Campaign, the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres and others are engaging men and boys in speaking out against gender-based violence.

Ontario has accomplished much by investing in public education and its services for victims and their children, but our work is far from done. That is why we are embarking on the development of what will be our province's first sexual violence action plan. My friend and colleague the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex will be leading our government's efforts by engaging in conversations across the province with our partners and experts, service providers, and most certainly with survivors, as we look to better support those who have been victimized to heal and as we lay the groundwork for a future free of oppression and discrimination, and without sexual violence.

This plan is being created with Ontario's women in mind so that every woman, young or old, aboriginal, francophone, immigrant, disabled, gay or straight, can feel safe in her home, her workplace and her community, so that she may live without the fear of sexual violence, because they deserve it. True equality requires it.

J'invite tous les députés présents aujourd'hui à se joindre à moi pour renouveler l'engagement de l'Ontario envers l'élimination de l'agression sexuelle, parce que telle victoire mènera à un monde réellement meilleur pour les futures générations.

I invite all the members here today to join me in declaring Ontario's renewed commitment to the elimination of violence against women, because when we succeed we will truly be creating a better world for this generation and the next.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

WATER SUPPLY

Mr. Toby Barrett: I have about two and a half minutes to respond to a water bill promising to make us a North American leader. We'd better run that one by Obama's Buy America procurement policy.

I got a copy of the bill. My staffer was locked out of the announcement this morning, although I did read about this in the Saturday Star. Robert Benzie quotes a Liberal insider: "This will help people to save money on their water bills," said the senior high-ranking insider.

That could be worrisome. I'm concerned that people won't be able to afford this McGuinty water bill if they're required to, because of pricing, use less water if there is a price hike, a fee hike or a tax hike, so we'll see on that one. This could be a warning, obviously, for residential users, industrial users, farmers with water-taking permits and farmers dependent on irrigation-based agriculture. I think of carrots, potatoes, obviously, tobacco.

The cost: What will McGuinty's water bill add up to? We know that former health minister Caplan's water and sewer private member's bill would add something like an additional \$600 a year on the bill. We recognize and we understand that clean water is essential to the health and success of a thriving and prosperous Ontario, but there's little doubt that as the international community puts a greater emphasis on clean water, they, too, will understand the significance of the expertise that resides in this great province, the expertise that resides in China, for example, and elsewhere.

For these reasons our former government, for decades, really, committed to enacting water legislation, regulation, the recommendations of O'Connor—the commitment to the centre of excellence in Walkerton. We put forward the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act some eight years before this bill.

The proof is in the pudding. We'll just see how much this will cost people and how it works out.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: As the Progressive Conservative critic for women's issues, I'm very pleased to speak today about Sexual Assault Prevention Month. We have now been recognizing the month of May for over 20 years, and this month gives all of us here in this assembly an opportunity to renew our commitment to ending the sexual violence that is faced every day in the province of Ontario. Unfortunately, it is primarily young women who are subjected to sexual violence.

Acts of sexual violence can be both physical and psychological. Regardless, they can both be, and they are, devastating to the victim, and can range anywhere from sexual abuse to unwanted sexual touching or name-calling. The effects of sexual violence are similar to those of other violent crimes. It leaves the victim feeling anger, confusion and frustration.

Sexual violence is experienced by Canadian women in particular every day. It can be in their home, at work, at school or on the street. It is estimated that close to 50% of all Canadian women have experienced at least one incident of sexual violence in their lifetime, and young women between the ages of 15 and 24 are most likely to be victimized.

Over half of the sexual assault victims reported to police in 2007 were children and youth under the age of 18. However, and this is sad, only about one in 10 sexual

assaults are reported. Victims commonly feel that the incidents are not important enough to report, or they fear that reporting will lead to further victimization or stigmatization.

These statistics reveal why Sexual Assault Prevention Month is so crucial. There is so much more work for all of us to do. This month we can raise awareness, we can make sure there is a dialogue, and we can support the victims and make sure they know where they can go. People in this province, whether men, women, boys or girls, should all be able to feel safe each and every day. So I urge all members of this House to work together and within their communities to end sexual violence.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I rise also to address Sexual Assault Prevention Month in May.

We talk about other places in the world where there are wars on women. We think of Darfur; we think of the former Yugoslavia, where it became an aspect of modern warfare to attack women. But let me tell you that in the United States—this came through a noted journalist—700,000 women every year are sexually assaulted. Now, if that's not a war on women, I don't know what is, and that's in the United States. We can only imagine—I don't have the statistics—that it's similar for Canada.

What do women need now? Well, first of all, they need a place to run to—a safe place. We need more housing and more beds. I just want to give a shout out to Redwood shelter in my own riding. They do phenomenal work. Victim Services Program of Toronto does phenomenal work.

And a thank you: Despite the fact that this government will not move on my motion to have an all-women, all-party committee to look at sexual assault and domestic violence, Donna Cansfield and Christine Elliott came together with me, and we launched Ruth's Daughters, which will actually work with women across the faith spectrum to get them active around domestic violence, which is part of the sexual assault against women; 12% of all violent crime in this province is domestic violence.

We ask now that we all work together, absolutely, to try to create affordable housing and more beds and shelters; to try to change the fact that women make 71 cents on the dollar. We need to make women economically independent, so that they have options so they can get away from continued sexual violence.

I'm going leave some room for my benchmate to speak about the other bill, but suffice to say: Not enough, not yet. Let's wait. Let's do more. Thank you.

1620

WATER SUPPLY

Mr. Peter Tabuns: First, I want to thank the environmental NGOs who push for, lobby for and advocate for action on water, and who understand quite clearly, quite

well, that there is tremendous economic opportunity here for Ontario, for Canada, in clean water technology. Not only is there opportunity, but there's a necessity. It's quite correct: Our world is changing. The availability of fresh water is going to be in decline, and if we in fact don't take action now, we will face far more difficult choices in the future.

Unfortunately—and I know the Minister of the Environment will not be surprised—I am not going to hold my breath for those opportunities to be realized here in Ontario. I have to say that I was present when the Premier made his announcement of his climate change targets and action plan a number of years ago. I was present in December when both the Minister of the Environment and the Environmental Commissioner reported that Ontario would not meet even those weak targets. I was present when the budget was presented. I understand that the funding for public transit has been cut. So even in the weak targets within a plan that was failing, further reductions have been put forward.

I was around for the greater Golden Horseshoe growth strategy—tremendous optimism on the part of the environmental community when that came forward. By the time the final product came before us, what we had was something that the Neptis Foundation and the Pembina Institute said would give little better than business as usual.

I have to say that I was part of the parliamentary committee that went around and listened to presentations on the Green Energy Act and heard credible testimony that the energy efficiency standards in the building code are not enforced in this province. I raised the issue with the then Minister of Energy, who said that this was a matter for another ministry.

If we're not enforcing the efficiency codes that we have now for energy, what leads one to believe that they will be enforced for water in the way that they have to be enforced? I say this to the environmental movement: They have to rally now; they have to pull together their forces; they have to push to ensure that this bill, which will most likely pass, actually has regulations that go with it that will be of consequence.

I do not expect this government to actually take on the fights that are going to be necessary to actually make a difference. I hope that this bill will at least provide the framework for a future government with an environmental commitment to make a difference.

PETITIONS

TAXATION

Mr. Peter Shurman: I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario—as a matter of fact, I have about 4,000 of them—to prevent the growth of the illegal tobacco trade crisis.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the illegal trade of cigarettes already accounts for almost 50% of all cigarettes purchased in the province and illegal products are available at a price that is already much lower than that for legal cigarettes (average \$70 for a carton of 200 legal cigarettes versus \$10 for 200 cigarettes in a plastic bag); and

“Whereas the HST, effective July 1, 2010, will raise legal tobacco prices by 8%, or another \$4 to \$7 per carton of 200 cigarettes, making illegal cigarettes even cheaper, and will likely only make the problem of illegal cigarettes worse in the province; and

“Whereas this situation will represent further losses to already suffering law-abiding retailers while only benefiting the organized crime groups behind the illegal trade;

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

“To prevent the growth of illicit trade by temporarily reducing the provincial tobacco tax to offset the impact of the HST and keep the price of legal tobacco products static until the contraband problem in Ontario is under control.”

I agree with this petition. I will sign it and give to it page Michelle.

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition that is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontarians pay more for popular generic drugs for diabetes, high blood pressure and other common health issues than patients in other jurisdictions; and

“Whereas Ontarians deserve fair prescription drug prices so that families and seniors are not charged more than those in other countries; and

“Whereas some members of the opposition have sided with large corporations to preserve the status quo rather than make prescription medications more affordable for Ontario patients by supporting the proposed drug reforms;

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

“That all members of the Ontario Legislature support Ontarians by passing the government's legislation to lower the cost of prescription medications.”

I am pleased to sign and support this petition and to ask page Lars to carry it for me.

ELMVALE DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Jim Wilson: To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Elmvale District High School is an important part of the community of Elmvale and surrounding area; and

“Whereas the school is widely recognized as having high educational requirements and well known for producing exceptional graduates who have gone on to work

as professionals in health care, agriculture, community safety, the trades and many other fields that give back to the community; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised during the 2007 election that he would keep rural schools open when he declared that ‘Rural schools help keep communities strong, which is why we’re not only committed to keeping them open—but strengthening them’; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty found \$12 million to keep school swimming pools open in Toronto but hasn’t found any money to keep an actual rural school open in Elmvale;

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

“That the Minister of Education support the citizens of Elmvale and flow funding to the local school board so that Elmvale District High School can remain open to serve the vibrant community of Elmvale and surrounding area.”

I agree with this petition and will sign it.

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas professional allowance revenues for generic drugs are not being used to directly benefit patient care and there being evidence of abuse in the system;

“Whereas Ontarians pay far too much for generic drugs because of these professional allowances; ...

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

“To continue to pursue legislation that will put an end to this flawed system of professional allowances for generic drugs in order to reinvest the savings to the benefit of Ontarians.”

I agree with this petition, will affix my signature to it, and send it to the table with Jacob.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Ted Arnott: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas multiple industrial wind farm projects are being considered by the government of Ontario in the absence of independent, scientific studies on the long-term effects on the health of residents living near industrial wind farms;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the government of Ontario to put a moratorium on any renewable energy approvals for the construction of industrial wind farms in the province of Ontario until such time as it can be demonstrated that all reasonable concerns regarding the long-term effects on the health of residents living near industrial wind farms have been fully studied and addressed.”

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from the people of the riding of Sudbury:

“Whereas the Ontario government is making ... PET scanning, a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients under conditions ... ; 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 ... 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 signature to it, and send it to the table with page Lars.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: 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;

“To continue to invest in the health and safety of Ontarians through our water supply.”

I agree with this petition, sign it, and send it via page Nicole.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1630

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from the people of Sudbury, Nickel Belt and Port Colborne.

"Whereas the strike at Vale Inco's mines, mill and smelter in Sudbury and Port Colborne has been going on for too long and showing no chance of settlement; and

"Whereas this strike is causing hardship to the 3,300 workers, their families, the communities and the businesses and contributing to a significant net drain to the economy; and

"Whereas the resumption of production with replacement workers has demonstrated an unwillingness to negotiate a fair collective agreement with the workers and has produced undue tension in the community; and

"Whereas anti-replacement legislation in other provinces has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of replacement workers; and

"Encourage both parties to negotiate and reach a fair settlement."

I fully support this petition, will affix my signature and send it to the Clerk with page Lars.

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

Mr. Bob Chiarelli: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontarians pay more for popular generic drugs for diabetes, high blood pressure and other common health issues than patients in other jurisdictions; and

"Whereas Ontarians deserve fair prescription drug prices so that families and seniors are not charged more than those in other countries; and

"Whereas some members of the opposition have sided with large corporations to preserve the status quo rather than make prescription medications more affordable for Ontario patients by supporting the proposed drug reforms;

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

"That all members of the Ontario Legislature support Ontarians by passing the government's legislation to lower the cost of prescription medications."

I support the petition and have signed it.

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

Mr. Steve Clark: I have a petition that I picked up last Friday from the good folks at Gananoque Pharmasave. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas the Ontario government is cutting front-line health care at pharmacies, which could mean higher prices, less service and even store closures for us;

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

"Stop the cuts to front-line health care at our pharmacy now."

I agree with the petition, and I will sign it and send it to the table.

MINING INDUSTRY

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from the people of Sudbury.

"We, the citizens of Sudbury, are concerned for the sustainability of the mining resources in our area. Historically, the mines were managed for long-term sustainability and profitability in all cycles. However, Vale Inco is now destroying the long-term dependability of these resources through their high-grade mining habits.

"We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to guard against unchecked, irresponsible high-grade mining practices."

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

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 30(c), the 90 minutes allotted to routine proceedings have expired.

ROYAL ASSENT

SANCTION ROYALE

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, His Honour the Administrator was pleased to assent to certain bills in his office.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): The following are the titles of bills to which His Honour did assent:

Bill 16, An Act to implement 2010 Budget measures and to enact or amend various Acts / *Projet de loi 16, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures énoncées dans le Budget de 2010 et édictant ou modifiant diverses lois.*

Bill 17, An Act to authorize the expenditure of certain amounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010 / *Projet de loi 17, Loi autorisant l'utilisation de certaines sommes pour l'exercice se terminant le 31 mars 2010.*

Bill 19, An Act to proclaim Vimy Ridge Day / Projet de loi 19, Loi proclamant le Jour de la bataille de Vimy.

Bill 24, An Act to proclaim Franco-Ontarian Day / Projet de loi 24, Loi proclamant le Jour des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes.

Bill 50, An Act to amend the Members' Integrity Act, 1994 / Projet de loi 50, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1994 sur l'intégrité des députés.

Bill 158, An Act to repeal and replace the statutes governing The Certified General Accountants Association of Ontario, the Certified Management Accountants of Ontario and The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario / Projet de loi 158, Loi visant à abroger et à remplacer les lois régissant l'Association des comptables généraux accrédités de l'Ontario, les Comptables en management accrédités de l'Ontario et l'Institut des comptables agréés de l'Ontario.

Bill 231, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Election Finances Act / Projet de loi 231, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale et la Loi sur le financement des élections.

Bill 235, An Act to enact the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 and to amend other Acts / Projet de loi 235, Loi édictant la Loi de 2010 sur la protection des consommateurs d'énergie et modifiant d'autres lois.

Bill 236, An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Act / Projet de loi 236, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les régimes de retraite.

Bill 242, An Act to amend the Education Act and certain other Acts in relation to early childhood educators, junior kindergarten and kindergarten, extended day programs and certain other matters / Projet de loi 242, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation et d'autres lois en ce qui concerne les éducateurs de la petite enfance, la maternelle et le jardin d'enfants, les programmes de jour prolongé et d'autres questions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FAR NORTH ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LE GRAND NORD

Mrs. Jeffrey moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 191, An Act with respect to land use planning and protection in the Far North / Projet de loi 191, Loi relative à l'aménagement et à la protection du Grand Nord.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'll be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Sault Ste Marie. I'd also like to acknowledge a number of Ministry of Natural Resources staff who are here with us in the gallery today, and I'd like to thank them for their support.

Last month, as minister I had the opportunity to visit the Far North of Ontario. It was an awe-inspiring experience to fly over this vast and remote region of our

province and to see first-hand the beauty of the boreal landscape stretching below. Aside from the beauty of the north, I was struck by the warm hospitality which was extended to me by the First Nations communities that I visited.

I would like to take this chance to thank the people from Neskantaga, Marten Falls, Eabametoong and Mishkeegogamang for sharing their knowledge and experiences with me. I came home with a greater appreciation for the extraordinary connection between the First Nations people and the land, as well as the challenges of living in such isolated communities.

My visit also gave me a greater appreciation of the urgency of providing First Nations in the Far North with stronger support and partnership in tackling their very serious economic and social issues.

With this experience still fresh in my mind, I'm proud to rise in the House today to move second reading of Bill 191, the Far North Act, 2010. This milestone legislation would place Ontario among world leaders in boreal protection and enable economic opportunities that would potentially contribute to greater stability and prosperity for the people and the communities of the Far North.

Bill 191 would aim to protect at least 225,000 square kilometres of the Far North in a network of protected areas. It would allow sustainable economic development of the region's abundant natural resources. It would ensure that Far North First Nations can participate in land use decisions that affect their communities, their culture and their quality of life. And it would support the environmental, social and economic interests of all Ontarians.

We know that the abundance of untapped forest, mineral and renewable energy resources in the Far North has the potential to provide a more prosperous future for the people who live there, as well as economic benefits for the province as a whole. Ontario's vision for the future of the Far North is to work jointly with First Nation communities to strike the right balance between sustainable development of those resources and protection of one of the world's largest intact boreal ecosystems.

Bill 191 not only supports that vision, it also enshrines a new respect and working relationship between the Ontario government and the Far North First Nations. If passed, this proposed legislation would mark the first time in Ontario's history that a requirement for First Nations approval of land use plans on public lands would be embedded in law.

Our Far North initiative addresses land use planning on both a broad scale, as well as at the local community level. Bill 191 sets out a process for Ontario to work jointly with Far North First Nations to develop an all-encompassing land use strategy for the region. This broad-scale strategy would improve our overall understanding of the Far North and provide science and land-related information to better support community-based land use plans.

In preparing this strategy, we would jointly develop policy statements covering a variety of subjects, such as

biological diversity, electricity transmission, roads, other infrastructure as well as cultural and heritage values.

1640

At the local level, community-based land use planning would allow Ontario and First Nations to determine together what areas of the Far North will be protected and where environmentally sustainable economic development may take place. It will provide First Nations with an opportunity to collect and record their historical use and relationship with the land for future generations. It will help build capacity within communities through skills development and employment opportunities. And it will ultimately provide resource industries with much-needed clarity and certainty about how and where economic development such as forestry, mining and renewable energy may take place in the future.

On my trip to the Far North, I had the pleasure of visiting some First Nation communities that have taken the lead and are already working with my ministry to develop community-based land use plans for their areas. I'm pleased to report that, so far, eight communities have established joint land use planning teams, and they're making significant progress towards the preparation of community-based plans. There are also 25 communities at various stages of engagement with my ministry in preparation for initiating plans.

To further assist this process, my ministry negotiated 30 transfer payment agreements with First Nations communities, tribal councils and Nishnawbe Aski Nation from 2008 to April of this year. Through these agreements, we're helping to put in place the components necessary for sound and effective land use planning. We're investing in training, science and information, supporting greater community involvement and building First Nations capacity.

Communities are using the funds to hire project coordinators and planners to conduct community meetings, deliver workshops and provide advice and expertise. Other communities are using the funds to provide local training in how to use geographic information systems technology, a skill that will be applied to collecting traditional aboriginal knowledge related to lands and resources as well as cultural areas. Projects are also under way to gather information on woodland caribou populations and habitats as part of a broader effort to understand the species. These are just a few of the ways we're working with First Nations in the Far North to boost community capacity skills and expertise around land use planning.

Last October, the government tabled a number of amendments to the proposed legislation that are reflected in the bill before the House today. These amendments were made to address comments received from Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Far North First Nations, partners and the public following first reading last June. I want to thank all those who took the time to make their views known. Their valuable input has helped make this stronger legislation, and I would like to highlight some of the changes for the members of the House today.

One of the amendments responded to a concern from First Nations that the legislation's protection objective for the Far North was unilaterally imposed and would be established by Ontario. We have addressed that concern by clarifying that the areas for protection in the Far North would be identified by First Nations in a joint process with Ontario and designated through the community-based land use planning process.

In response to concerns that the Far North land use strategy would be prepared by the Minister of Natural Resources, with First Nations only given unspecified opportunities to participate, we amended the bill to state explicitly that Far North First Nations would be invited to work together in contributing to the preparation of the strategy.

We also heard that the proposed legislation didn't provide First Nations with an established leadership role. The bill was amended to clarify that it is indeed individual First Nations who indicate their interest in initiating the planning process and then work with Ontario through a joint planning team to prepare a land use plan.

First Nations also expressed the concern that previously they felt that they would not have an opportunity to ensure that the definition of protected area categories reflected their understanding of protection. We have amended the bill so that categories of protected areas are now on the list of policies that we will develop jointly with First Nations in preparing the land use strategy.

Previously, there were concerns expressed that some areas of the Far North would be closed to development in the meantime, because it would take a number of years to complete land use plans for all Far North communities. The bill now addresses that concern by setting out specific exceptions that could allow development to proceed under certain circumstances, particularly if the development is predominantly for local community use.

As these and other amendments demonstrate, Ontario has been listening to the concerns that First Nations and stakeholders have expressed about Bill 191, and we've taken the steps necessary to address those concerns.

In addition, I am pleased to advise the House that I will recommend that the bill again be referred to standing committee for further public hearings after second reading. This would provide additional opportunities for further input and discussion.

We will also continue to work with participating First Nations and partners to examine opportunities for some development to proceed at the same time a community-based land use plan is being prepared. We're considering, as well, whether more clarity is needed regarding how First Nations and the Ministry of Natural Resources could improve the way we work together on the Far North land use strategy. I'm confident that, together, we will develop a bill that meets the concerns of all parties and benefits all Ontarians.

Ontario's vision for the Far North is built on an understanding that this region is part of the global environment and makes an essential contribution to global biodiversity. The Far North of Ontario is indeed one of the

world's last great boreal ecosystems, a vast and remote landscape of largely untouched forests, pristine lakes and rivers, ocean coastline, tundra and wetland. It's home to woodland caribou, the American marten, and Ontario's only population of Arctic fox, snow geese and beluga whales.

The world's southernmost population of polar bears, a species that we have recently designated as threatened in Ontario, lives along the coastline of James Bay and Hudson Bay. Golden eagle and wolverine are among the 200 other species in the region that are designated at varying degrees of risk.

Every spring millions of migratory birds fly thousands of miles north to nest in the Far North's boreal forests, and many areas of our Ontario coastline are internationally important summer breeding grounds for Canada geese, snow geese, and varieties of sea duck and shore-bird.

In this International Year of Biodiversity, it is appropriate that we are putting forward legislation that would provide protection for such an extraordinary variety and abundance of our planet's precious biodiversity.

We should be proud that Bill 191 also represents one of the largest land protection commitments in North America to fight global climate change. As in other polar regions of the world, the effects of climate change are readily apparent in the Far North of Ontario. Every year, the sea ice in Hudson Bay and James Bay is breaking up earlier and freezing up much later. This in turn is taking a toll on the overall health and longevity of Ontario's polar bear population by reducing the amount of time the bears can spend on the ice hunting for seals.

Climate change is also causing greater frequency and intensity of wind and ice storms across the Far North. The resulting blowdowns of forest stands, along with the warmer temperatures, are making northern forests more vulnerable to disease, insect infestations and forest fires.

It's difficult to anticipate all the impacts climate change might have in the future on individual species or ecosystems. Entirely new conditions may emerge as species and ecosystems respond and adapt to climate change in unique ways.

We should not forget that climate change can and will have social and economic consequences for the Far North. Increased forest fires could threaten business operations. Changing weather could also make some communities less accessible, particularly with the potential impact on getting supplies in through the winter road network, as these frozen roads are not lasting as long as they have in the past.

The Far North land use planning strategy set out in the bill would help us better understand, adapt and plan for a range of climate change impacts.

1650

We believe the Far North itself is one of our most valuable tools in the fight to reduce the effects of climate change. Acting as a giant sponge, the region's immense boreal landscape helps to filter the earth's atmosphere by absorbing more than 12.5 million tonnes of carbon

dioxide from the air every year and storing in it trees, soil and peat. By aiming to keep at least half of the Far North protected and free from industrial development, Bill 191 would help ensure the region maintains its natural capacity to absorb and store carbon dioxide. Regardless of where we live in Ontario or the world, we would all benefit from this decision to protect the Far North.

The Far North of Ontario is clearly a global national treasure and one of our province's greatest environmental and economic assets. With this proposed legislation, we have an opportunity to fulfill an exciting new vision for the future of the Far North and its people. We have an opportunity to assist First Nations communities in the Far North to work toward economic self-sufficiency and open a door to a better future for their children and their grandchildren, and we have an opportunity to position Ontario as a world leader in boreal conservation and climate change mitigation.

Our challenge moving forward is to support sustainable resource development that will not compromise the region's ecological integrity and biodiversity. With the participation of First Nations communities and by providing for input from resource industries, environmental groups and other stakeholders, Bill 191 gives us the tools to meet that challenge.

Bill 191 supports our shared commitment to undertake comprehensive land use planning for the Far North of Ontario that will have lasting benefits for our environment, our economy, our climate and our northern way of life. We have a clear responsibility to Ontarians today and to future generations to pass this proposed legislation.

I look forward to participating in the debate on this important piece of legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. David Oraziotti: I'm pleased to rise in the House today to support the Minister of Natural Resources on second reading of Bill 191, the Far North Act, 2010. As you are aware, Speaker, our government is moving forward with this legislation for a number of reasons, and I am pleased to have an opportunity this afternoon to outline the rationale behind that as well as the consultations that have taken place and will continue to take place with First Nations to ensure that, on this side of the House, we get this legislation right.

I think it's historic in many ways. Most bills go out to consultation, if at all, a single time. This bill will be going out to consultation in the Far North a second time and involves discussions that have taken place over about a two-year period to ensure that the concerns expressed by First Nations and by Ontarians are included in the bill, and that there are opportunities to make amendments to ensure that this legislation is effective for all Ontarians.

The Far North region stretches roughly from the 51st parallel to Hudson Bay and east from the Manitoba border to James Bay and the Quebec border. The Far North of Ontario is one of the last great wilderness spaces on our planet, a boreal landscape so vast that it takes up a staggering 42% of Ontario's land base.

When the decision was made to work with First Nations on land use planning for this immense and largely undeveloped region of our province, the Premier set out three key goals: first of all, to provide First Nations in the Far North with a joint role in determining how lands they have historically used will be developed; secondly, to protect at least half of the Far North in an interconnected network of conservation lands—that's the roughly 225,000 square kilometres that have been referred to by those who are familiar with this bill, First Nations and in the discussions that have taken place in the Far North; and thirdly, to enable sustainable development of the region's natural resources in a manner that benefits First Nations and takes into account ecological and cultural values.

Bill 191 is an important step forward in achieving those goals. It would give us the land use and protection tools we need ensure the Far North remains one of Ontario's greatest environmental and economic assets.

We know that the interest in the Far North—mining, forestry and green energy potential—is rapidly growing. That's great news for everyone living in the Far North and that's great news for all Ontarians. As was signalled in the 2010 budget, passed today at third reading, our government remains committed to supporting industrial exploration and investment in the Far North in co-operation with First Nations, creating new jobs and long-term economic opportunities.

Despite the vast natural resource potential in the Far North, there is currently very little industrial activity. In the coming decades, the region will undoubtedly see more people and more pressure for development. That's why it is so important that we act now to ensure we establish clear and open policy directions, in partnership with the people living in the Far North.

We want to ensure that development of the Far North's resources is orderly, sustainable and meets the protection goals of Ontario and First Nation communities. Bill 191 would balance environmental protection and economic development right across the region and it would work with policies and legislation already in place, including the northern growth plan, which has been developed in consultation with northerners—there were certainly extensive consultations in my community of Sault Ste. Marie, and I know in many other communities across the province—as well as the Green Energy Act and the Mining Act, to provide us with unparalleled opportunity to act strategically in achieving this balance.

As members of the House are aware, one of the most promising and exciting development opportunities in northern Ontario in perhaps a century is the area that has been referred to as the Ring of Fire. While still in the exploration stage, current estimates suggest that there may be more than 100 years of chromite production contained in the Ring of Fire, as well as sizable nickel, copper and platinum deposits.

As a northerner, I'm excited about the potential for this mineral-rich area to be a major economic development contributor to northern Ontario's economy and a

benefit to the provincial economy. This creates the opportunity for significant regional and community infrastructure development and increased value-added manufacturing opportunities in northern Ontario. This includes economic development opportunities and jobs for First Nation communities, businesses and other communities, similar to the benefits we've seen with the De Beers diamond mine near Attawapiskat.

Through community-based land use planning, Ontario will work jointly with First Nation communities to establish a collaborative approach to planning and development on lands in the Ring of Fire, as well as throughout the rest of the Far North region. First Nations peoples make up 90% of the Far North's population of about 24,000 people, living in small communities spread widely across this vast area. Many First Nation communities in the Far North are already working with the province on community-based land use plans that would determine where areas will be protected and where environmentally sustainable economic development may take place. Eight First Nation communities have established land use planning teams and are making significant progress toward the preparation of community land use plans, and this is good news for those communities and for all of us.

There are 25 First Nation communities at various degrees of engagement with the Ministry of Natural Resources. We have provided funding to 30 First Nation communities, tribal councils and NAN through partnership agreements and transfer of payments, and we have provided funding for everyone who has come forward and is interested in developing a land use plan in the Far North. Some \$30 million will be provided over four years—that was announced in the 2008 budget—to support land use planning in the Far North. In addition, we will develop a broad-based Far North land use strategy which will provide the framework and tools to support community-based land use planning.

Bill 191 would establish the legislative foundation for First Nations and Ontario to proceed jointly with community land use planning across the Far North and work together on developing a land use strategy. This bill would ensure that First Nations are the ones that initiate community-based land use planning, while working jointly with the province to that end.

1700

It would require that the Minister of Natural Resources cannot approve a community land use plan until after it has been approved by First Nations communities. A community land use plan must be in place before specific major developments are constructed, such as mine openings, forestry and wind and water power, or all-year roadways. However, the bill also states that specific activities may be permitted while land use planning is under way. Those activities could include mineral claim-staking and exploration, feasibility studies such as wind testing, and environmental clean-up activities such as what is going on right now with the Mid-Canada Line radar sites. Other activities that contribute to First

Nations communities' needs or are predominantly for community use may also be permitted if certain conditions are met.

It is not essential that a full, complete land use plan be developed, but for major endeavours that will change the landscape of the Far North, those land use plans need to be put in place, and those land use plans can be developed while the First Nation group, for example, is working with the ministry to achieve that. These permitted developments would not jeopardize the protection goals of the bill or weaken the land use planning process, but would allow communities to better be prepared for future land use possibilities once a plan is completed. As we moved forward with community-based land use planning, we want to be confident that the plans are built on the best science and knowledge available in order to address the Far North's many complex ecological, social and resource-related issues.

Aboriginal traditional knowledge will also play a key role in increasing our understanding of the Far North and will make essential contributions to the land use planning process. The ancestors of present-day First Nations inhabited the Far North region thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans. The Cree and Ojibway peoples who live there today continue to have a close connection with the land. Land use planning is an opportunity for First Nations in the Far North to document their historical use of the land and draw on their unique insights into the natural world around them, as handed down from generation to generation over many centuries.

Because the Far North is so remote, well beyond most of Ontario's major road and rail systems, there is much about this vast region that we are not aware of. For example, there is limited mapping information available in the Far North. Even those areas that have been mapped were last charted more than 30 years ago at a scale where only major features can be displayed. To fill this and other knowledge gaps, the ministry is working with First Nations to increase the overall understanding of the Far North through 32 information and knowledge management projects. We are close to creating a more detailed topographic map for the Far North, and we are also working on producing more detailed maps of all of the Far North, showing rivers, streams, lakes and existing infrastructure at a level of detail that is more effective for better land use planning. Another project will map vegetation and terrain to help identify wildlife habitat and other ecologically significant areas.

This information will be useful in monitoring changes to the landscape over time, whether from natural or other disturbances. Other mapping efforts are focusing on water sources and watersheds. Those maps will enable communities, planners and scientists to determine what and who is upstream or downstream for any location on the landscape.

Other projects will study the Far North's unique ecosystems to gain insights into species' protection and the effects of human-caused and environmental disturbances such as forest fires.

We know that the forest and peatlands in the Far North help fight global climate change by storing billions of tonnes of carbon. Research projects are under way to look at how the region's ability to store carbon in the future might be affected by climate change and industrial development.

It's important to note that Bill 191 is the result of a collaborative process reflecting about two years of discussion, as I had said earlier, outreach and co-operation among the province, First Nation groups, the resource industry, scientists, environmental groups and the public.

In 2008, the Ministry of Natural Resources began talks with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation through the Oski-Machiitawin land use planning technical table to develop principles and processes to guide Far North land use planning. The ministry has also sought advice from six tribal councils and 31 Far North First Nations communities and will continue to do so. We have also met with many northern mayors and councils, industry and environmental groups.

As Minister Jeffrey has indicated, during the summer of 2009 we received input from First Nations, stakeholders and the public after first reading, and we have responded by tabling amendments to the bill in response to many of those concerns.

In October 2009, we put forward amendments to improve the bill, and during clause-by-clause we clarified that First Nations will initiate the planning process. We also clarified that First Nations will determine what areas are protected in their communities. We also clarified by adding that First Nations will be invited to work with us to contribute to the Far North land use strategy, including policies related to categories of land use, designation and protected areas.

We have listened to many of the concerns that were brought forward and incorporated those in this framework, and we will continue to do so over the coming consultations.

There is no question that the Far North is a priceless natural asset for all Ontarians. It cleans our air, protects our precious biodiversity and provides essential habitat for some of our most vulnerable species. Its untapped natural resources represent tremendous potential to provide economic benefits to the people of the Far North and all Ontarians.

With this bill that is before the House today, Ontario is poised to embark on an unprecedented land use planning initiative with First Nations in the Far North. If passed, this bold and forward-thinking legislation would contribute to a new era of long-term economic sustainability in the Far North and help ensure that Ontario remains a world leader in boreal conservation and biodiversity protection.

I'm very pleased on behalf of the minister and our government to be speaking to Bill 191 today, the Far North Act.

I had the opportunity to visit several communities in the Far North. I think of the opportunity I had to visit the De Beers diamond mine off the coast of James Bay and

talk to some of the First Nation community representatives who were benefiting from the skills training in partnership with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry—to be able to work with First Nation communities, partner with them, to see them excited about the economic opportunities and the prosperity being able to be brought to their communities with the support of our government for education opportunities and training opportunities, so that First Nation communities in the Far North can play a greater role in the economic wealth of this province and in the enhancement of the quality of life in their own communities.

So I think there is a tremendous potential here in this legislation for us to do, really, what is set out, which is to help clarify, in partnership with First Nations, the land use planning process, as well as to provide the tools and the resources so that First Nation communities can initiate this process, bring that plan forward and ensure that we have responsible, sustainable economic development in the Far North for generations to come.

So, on behalf of the minister, I'm very pleased today that we are discussing this piece of legislation. I want to encourage members opposite to support this legislation and recognize that this is something we need to move forward on. We can no longer ignore the opportunities that exist in the Far North. We can no longer ignore responsible land use planning and economic development planning.

I want to encourage my colleagues opposite to support this bill because it is so important to Ontario's economy and it's important to First Nations.

With that, Speaker, I will turn the floor over to my colleagues.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions.

Mr. Jim Wilson: On the advice of our critic and as a former Minister of Northern Development and Mines, I will not be supporting this legislation. Your consultation, particularly with native groups, is deplorable. I note, and my colleague just handed me a resolution put forward by Grand Chief Stan Beardy of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, NAN, indicating that 225,000 square kilometres of the land you're setting aside for non-development in the north affects their land, NAN lands, and asking the committee that examined this legislation to abandon the bill, to withdraw the bill.

1710

Since the Premier first made this announcement last July, the government has not openly discussed this legislation, the Far North strategy, with other groups. Such principal stakeholder groups as the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, the Ontario Fur Managers Federation and other outdoor organizations were not consulted and were not aware of the details of this bill. The groups were also excluded from participation in the government's Far North Advisory Council to provide input and direction on the strategy. Interestingly, the only group that was both advised of this

legislation and consulted ahead of time was the World Wildlife Fund.

Again, First Nations are opposed to this legislation. I recall that in the 2003 and 2007 elections you promised great things to First Nations. You were going to wipe the slate clean in terms of First Nations government relations, you were going to recognize their treaty rights and you were going to move forward. As far as I can tell, this is a huge step backward. You have not moved forward, you have not settled any treaties and you have not lived up to your campaign commitments whatsoever.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Peter Kormos: I can tell you that New Democrats are very, very concerned about this legislation, its implications and, I suppose, the history, or lack of history, that led to this legislation being presented to this House and being debated for second reading today.

I tell you that you that our member of the NDP from Timmins–James Bay, Gilles Bisson, will be addressing the bill in due course, when our opportunity happens, by way of the lead commentary for New Democrats. Howard Hampton, the member for Kenora–Rainy River, also has a strong interest in these matters and will be speaking to the extent available to him, as will France Gélinas from Nickel Belt. All three are northern members who have, over the course not just of their political careers but of their lives in northern Ontario, acquired an acute sensitivity to the special needs of the north and an acute sensitivity to the need for respect for First Nations communities. As the Speaker has been told, and I'm sure will be told frequently over the course of second reading debate—which of course is but debate in principle but one which, from the New Democrats, will result in a strong focus on the needs of the north and not just the needs but the rights of aboriginal communities, First Nations communities—NAN First Nation does not support the process of this bill. Indeed, it is one of those bills where we all might have been better off had the government put it out to a committee process after first reading. I recall making that suggestion to the government House leader in a House leaders' meeting, and that proposal on the part of New Democrats was declined.

My concern is that the government is simply not only travelling where it remains in the dark, but that it is ignoring some important constitutional and inherent rights—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comments and questions?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It's a pleasure to make some comments on the minister's and the parliamentary assistant's speeches on Bill 191 and what it means for the Far North.

I think what we're not talking about here is the time it has taken to do some planning on a big piece of Ontario with a huge amount of resources that is virtually undeveloped. I know it has happened to me a number of times, Madam Speaker, and I'm sure it has happened to you and other members, that as we travel through this province, even on the 401 across the city of Toronto,

sometimes we make comments: “Where were they when they were planning this?” In earlier times, there wasn’t a lot of planning, and unfortunately you cannot turn back the clock. We have to live and work around those decisions.

In this case, with Bill 191, the Premier first made a commitment in June 2008 to protect the boreal forest and also develop those parts of that vast area in a way that was very, very inclusive.

Yes, it would be foolish to say that everything is addressed, that everything is in accordance with everybody, all the First Nations and other people of northern Ontario, but this is why we’re going through this process. We recognize the potential, we recognize an opportunity to do some really good long-term planning for that part of the province, which actually will impact the whole province.

Yes, we’re not there; yes, we hear the member opposite that there may be some issues, but that’s why we’re debating here in the House. That’s why the commitment to take it out on committee was made. We look forward to those results.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Bill 191 is back for debate, and of course, Bill 191 is the reason why this Liberal government was called Canada’s worst government by the Financial Post.

Listen to the nonsense over there. We heard that this was their commitment to work with the First Nations. Well, their commitment to working with the First Nations has resulted in resolution 10/22 from NAN, which says to this Liberal government, “Keep off our land, get rid of this Bill 191, get back to the table and do your job.” Do your job of working with them. This resolution was dated April 1 of this year. So much for the minister’s rhetoric about amendments and working with the First Nations. There’s the result: a resolution by NAN First Nations that you defer and get rid of Bill 191, the bill that makes this government Canada’s worst government ever.

We’ve heard from people all over that Bill 191, this super-park bill of the Liberals, is going to destroy any opportunity for prosperity in the north. It takes away a quarter of a million square kilometres of land, and we don’t even know what’s up there. Actually, I requested from the Ministry of Natural Resources a map of crown lands in the north, and guess what? That big monster bureaucracy couldn’t even give us a map of what the crown owns in northern Ontario. And here they are going to wipe off half of it—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The minister has two minutes to respond.

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I appreciate the comments from the members from Simcoe–Grey, Welland, Northumberland–Quinte West and Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington. Some comments were quite helpful and some were misguided. Clearly, there are some facts that haven’t been on the table.

Our government remains committed to working with First Nations in the Far North. It’s important to note that

individual communities remain very interested in land use planning and Bill 191—so interested, in fact, that we had 33 out of 34 Far North First Nation communities participating in the land use planning workshops we held in Thunder Bay. I don’t think you would have had that much uptake from the First Nations community unless they were interested and engaged. In any of the communities that I visited, the chiefs were finding how they could get engaged and what the process was. They want development. They want to manage it, they want to do it thoughtfully and carefully, and I have heard nothing but positive responses from the First Nations communities. Certainly, their leadership is engaged and wants to be participatory.

We have a great plan to work with the First Nations. We listened the first time we went out, and we certainly are receptive to talking about any other amendments the opposition wants to put forward that will make this legislation stronger. We have one chance to get this right for the past, the present and the future. Our First Nations are an extraordinarily important partner—and as well, our northern communities. The northern mayors and my colleagues on this side of the House who represent the north have been very vocal and very proactive in trying to make sure that this legislation represents their community and will do a good job in the future.

I’m looking forward to sending the bill out for consultation, and I look forward to constructive, thoughtful recommendations from the opposition on how to make the bill better and being part of a positive process.

1720

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

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: First of all, I want to make notice that I’ll be sharing my time with the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington.

Certainly, as I stated in Chapleau, I’ve had the privilege and honour to be in Fort Severn, which is Ontario’s most northern community. It’s where Hudson Bay, Manitoba and Ontario come together. I’ve been to Peawanuck, Moosonee, Sioux Lookout and Pickle Lake, but I really don’t know anything about the north.

The conversation I had with a member from the third party about an individual going up north—my suggestion is that any individual in this Legislature should see the entire province and see it in its intensity, because certainly the province of Ontario is something that is so vast and huge that many of us forget many of the aspects that take place on a day-to-day basis in other parts of the province. We take so many things for granted here in southern Ontario, that the north is such a jewel that needs to be protected, and anything that’s done needs to be done the correct way and is something that we need to move forward with.

My remarks are going to be such that I’m going to try and comment on the minister’s and the PA’s comments in the fashion or the words that they brought out, and then move into the base of the contents of my concerns with the bill.

It was good to hear that the minister spoke about roads and hydro and infrastructure development, because during the committee process, one of the key concerns that I brought out was that the new 225,000-square-hectare protected area runs from Quebec to Manitoba, and the difficulty in that is that it has to be continuous.

Having had the privilege and honour to be minister for a while, you certainly know the difficulty there is in moving roads, for example. I recall one area where one company had access or had private land, but had to go through an old road that was opened in a provincial park before, but was denied now because the new individuals or the mindset within the ministry was that there was no access. So, if you're going to move a large piece of protected area from Quebec to Manitoba, it's certainly going to be very difficult to ensure that there is access through southern Ontario.

What's going to take place in Hearst, for example? Many members may not know that one of the busiest times of the year in Hearst is during the snowmobiling season. They have a run that runs right up to James Bay. They bring trains up where individuals get off the train with their snow machines and sled throughout Hearst.

How are you going to go through a protected area under the defined definitions of the protected areas now when it goes from Quebec to Manitoba? You're going to have to find some way to get through there. There's going to have to be permitting. Who's going to protect it or who's going to enforce all these aspects of what they're trying to move forward with?

It has to be probably a new definition of a park or a protected area. For those who don't know—and many don't. I'm not sure individuals know what the definition of a protected area is. The actual definition of a protected area by the world standard is that there is no commercial forestry, no new mining and no new hydro development within those areas.

The difficulty is that some of the areas that we have now protected don't allow for hydro lines to go through. They don't allow for roads to go through or snowmobiling and cases like that. But having the minister mention that certainly means that individuals within the ministry are starting to look at that.

The next aspect to mention was economic development. I know there was a very strong concern that in the legislation—I'll get to that later on in my debate—the economic development has to benefit the community, for the sole benefit of the community. So, for example, in the diamond mine in Attawapiskat, who is the net benefactor for that mine? Is it not the mine owners or is it the community? The concern then comes forward that when you're making decisions on who is going to be the net benefactor, is it the individuals who are investing or is it just the sole community? The concern with that was regarding hydro or energy generation. There is a large potential in a lot of these areas for energy generation which could be transmitted throughout southern Ontario and through other parts of North America; predominantly the Midwest states is a key area that could receive a lot of

this. But would they be the net benefactor because they're the ones they're selling the energy to, or would it be the local community? We need to make sure that that's been looked at.

Protecting the boreal: We constantly hear this, but what's happening now is not protecting it. Virtually, access to these areas is very limited. You have winter roads—I'm sure a lot of people watching would know and have seen the ice road trucker show; there's a staging area at Pickle Lake to take things north. How are you going to protect those areas or get access to them? A lot of individuals would fly in or they would come in through the wintertime or try to access various areas. But protecting those areas—yes, they need to have some level of concern and protection, but there is a lot of legislation out there that ensures that these areas are protected and managed in a proper fashion; whether it's forestry or mining, there's certainly a lot of compliance that needs to take place.

So to come forward and say we're going to protect the boreal—I should quote one thing that the founder of Greenpeace very specifically stated after he left Greenpeace; he came to realize that “so long as the forest has value, it will continue to be a forest.” For those who don't realize it, in a lot of Central America and South America, where the forest is being completely eliminated, it's because the forest has no value. The value in those properties is in farmland. So as long as the forest has value, it will continue to be a forest. Quite frankly, foresters are the ones who want to make sure that there is enough fibre or wood flow to make sure their business continues a regular basis. So we need to make sure that allowing those in the forestry and mining sectors to continue on, in proper fashions that will benefit a lot of communities in the north, actually takes place.

The next aspect I wanted to talk about was an area where they talk about the consultations with the First Nation. They spoke about eight different planning areas that were currently in place, but the difficulty is that in a lot of these areas, there are non-treaty or non-status First Nations communities who are still living off the land. There's no provision there to say that those individuals will be included with that process in any way, shape or form at all.

Many members may not realize, but I work quite a bit with Grand Chief Stan Beardy in trying to help curb youth suicide. A lot of the First Nations communities I deal with are not treaty First Nations communities. We try to give the kids some focus, some sports equipment, on a regular basis, and we've been able to send up a transport truckload to try to help youth in the north, to give them another focus in life.

The difficulty here, when we're talking about what's taking place—and the only reason I mention that is because you have to have a sense of what goes on in order to help out and find ways to assist; we've tried to reach out in many aspects—is that there are a lot of First Nations communities up there that are not necessarily signatories of Treaty 5 or Treaty 9, all of which are

governed by the Nishnawbe Aski First Nation community. Grand Chief Stan Beardy is doing a great job, but we want to make sure that all of those communities are included in what's actually taking place there.

The government, the minister and the PA talked at great length about the great working relationships. I want to read you a document that I have received that was just passed, actually, on May 5; it's from Nishnawbe Aski, and it reads as follows:

"To begin my communication with you, I would like to start off by saying that First Nations and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) have a say on what happens on their homelands, and that anything that may happen on their homelands requires their free, prior and informed consent.

"First Nations want to secure economic opportunities for their communities and future generations and also have a responsibility to the Creator for the care of the land. First Nations have always determined their use of the land and will continue to do so.

"Bill 191 conflicts with these principles and approach to the land. Therefore, I have been asked by the First Nations in Nishnawbe Aski Nation to send you the following message:

"As Bill 191 continues to be considered for second reading in session 2 of Parliament 39 in the Ontario Legislative Assembly, the First Nations in NAN would like to remind you and other members of Parliament that they oppose the bill as it is currently written.

"NAN First Nations have been consistent in their opposition to the bill since it was first read and carried on June 2, 2009. NAN First Nations continue to oppose the bill, even though the Standing Committee on General Government reviewed it and made amendments on October 22, 2009.

"The NAN First Nations have passed Resolution 10/22, demanding that the bill be deferred until:

"(1) The government of Ontario and NAN First Nations agree on a process for consultation and accommodation; and

"(2) The government of Ontario obtains their free, prior and informed consent.

"NAN's position is that these unaddressed issues alone should prevent its passage. The NAN First Nations continue to oppose the bill as it is written since a number of First Nations proposed to put forth the amendments and have gone unheeded.

"NAN First Nations will not provide their free, prior and informed consent until these concerns have been addressed."

As a result of the inability of the government to stand and to work with the First Nations, I would ask that we move forward with an adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Oshawa has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1731 to 1801.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): All those in favour, please rise and be counted by the Clerk.

All those opposed, please rise and be counted by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 9; the nays are 37.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Chair (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

BREASTFEEDING

ALLAITEMENT MATERNEL

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Nickel Belt has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Health Promotion last Wednesday concerning breastfeeding.

The member for Nickel Belt has up to five minutes to pose her question.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Last week, for the eighth time in a row, I asked the Minister of Health Promotion point-blank if she will adopt a province-wide breastfeeding strategy for Ontario. I had left nothing to chance. I had taken the report and put a copy on every single MPP's desk. I had organized a press conference and informed her office that we would be launching this report. When I asked the question, "Will you adopt the report?" I got an answer as if I was coming from left field, when she, her ministry and everybody else in this House knew this was coming. I had put a copy of the report on everybody's desk. Lots of MPPs came and talked to me about the importance of a breastfeeding strategy for Ontario. The lead ministry for this is the Ministry of Health Promotion, and she acted as if she was surprised.

The recommendation for a provincial breastfeeding strategy highlights the benefits of breastfeeding, and it outlines the necessary steps the government must take to ensure that more of Ontario's children are given the opportunity to breastfeed. That's all.

The report costs next to nothing to the government. The strategy pays huge dividends. It is supported by a coalition of virtually all the stakeholders on this issue, from breastfeeding committees to the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario to lactation consultants, breastfeeding clinics, public health units, midwives, hospitals, pediatricians, and the list goes on and on.

This report was written independently of the government by groups and individuals who truly recognize the

importance of breastfeeding. They know that mothers and families in Ontario need help and support to take action, and they did. They wrote a report that was well researched, well documented and, most of all, very logical. Here is, step by step, what a breastfeeding strategy could look like in Ontario.

To me, the answer to my question should have been a resounding yes, that Ontario will move and adopt a breastfeeding strategy. Instead, I feel that my question was not answered. Instead, it only highlighted the government's continued reluctance to address this issue and make changes for the people of Ontario.

The minister stated in her answer that she understands the importance of breastfeeding to healthy children and healthy moms. She stated that her ministry is supporting parents through resources and support phone lines, but this was not what I asked. I asked if she would support an Ontario-wide breastfeeding strategy.

In my supplementary, I again tried to demonstrate the importance of this issue and the desperate need for the government to take action to support moms to breastfeed. You all know by now—you got my report—that 90% of mums initiate breastfeeding, but only 15% of them succeed to six months.

This is not an issue that can be changed by a minister who “urges” mothers to breastfeed. It requires a minister who acts and supports moms so that they can breastfeed.

While most people can agree that breastfeeding is the best option for our children, moms do not have adequate support to successfully do this. The fact is that Ontario has a patchwork of services and very little support for organizations and individual practitioners who are dedicated to supporting breastfeeding.

Without a strong policy and programming framework, we see formula companies continuing to push their products on new moms with packaged samples and coupons for all sorts of formula products.

I'm not against formula. It has a role to play for those children who cannot be breastfed or for moms who decide that breastfeeding is not for them. But when you see the aggressive marketing campaigns to moms who want to breastfeed, who are struggling to succeed in this natural occurrence—it's not easy when you see what's happening. You need a Minister of Health who answers, “Yes, we need an Ontario-wide breastfeeding strategy.”

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell has five minutes to respond.

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde: Je tiens à remercier la représentante ou la députée de Nickel Belt pour sa question. Je dois dire que l'Ontario est choyée, vraiment, d'avoir une personne de ce genre qui siège à l'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie. Elle joue un rôle important par sa présence au réseau des femmes de l'APF. Le réseau des femmes de l'APF comprend 76 pays et gouvernements.

Healthy relationships between mothers and children are essential in building strong communities. Breastfeeding is a fundamental part of the development of this

relationship between mother and child. We support mothers who are breastfeeding. It is important for mothers who are breastfeeding to have the best information and the best supports. This is why, through Ontario's 36 public health units, the government provides funding for breastfeeding supports and services, including parent information and support phone lines, breastfeeding resource materials and website postings, prenatal classes, breastfeeding clinics and the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program. We in the Ministry of Health Promotion understand the importance of developing supportive environments for breastfeeding infants and their mothers.

1810

In December 2009, a report called Recommendations for a Provincial Breastfeeding Strategy for Ontario was developed by a collaboration of organizations. I would like to thank the 19 organizations and individuals who have worked on this report. We are looking at the report and will take its recommendations into consideration as we move forward with improving breastfeeding supports in the province.

To better understand the extent of breastfeeding supports and services in the community, the Ministry of Health Promotion initiated a survey of all 36 provincial health units. The results are currently under review with our partners in the survey. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care conducted a similar survey of hospital supports. The results will help us develop new policies and practices to increase support for breastfeeding, and we look forward to completing that review soon.

LABOUR DISPUTE

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Nickel Belt has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question to the Premier last Wednesday concerning replacement workers. You have up to five minutes to make your comments.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm before you right now because I was dissatisfied with the answer that I received during question period last week from our Premier when I asked, “Will your government commit to anti-scab legislation for Ontario?”

Over the last several months, I have spent a fair amount of time reading different papers on the effect on labour relations when replacement workers are used, as well as when laws are put into place to ban the use of replacement workers. I also spent quite a bit of time reading through debates in this House on the subject over the last 20 years. I've got to say that there's anything but clarity in the position of the Liberal caucus on this issue.

Look at the record: When the NDP brought in the law banning the use of replacement workers, the Liberals voted against it. When Mike Harris abolished the anti-replacement-workers law so that replacement workers are now legal in Ontario, the Liberals voted against that, too. So they voted against the bill coming in, but they voted

against the bill being repealed. The Liberals voted against anti-replacement-worker legislation in 1992. Then they voted against repealing it in 1995. Last fall, we voted on my and my colleague from Welland's anti-replacement workers private members' bill in second reading. All but one MPP present in the House voted against it—Liberals, that is.

So Madam Speaker, you can understand my confusion when I asked if Liberals would support a law banning replacement workers in Ontario and yet again I witnessed what I would call a cryptic answer from the Premier. Instead of answering the question, whether we would move forward with anti-replacement-worker legislation, he said that he is committed to a negotiated settlement.

Anti-replacement-worker legislation is not new. It used to be the law in Ontario, and it has been the law in Quebec since the 1970s and in BC since the 1990s, and unlike Ontario, successive governments in those two provinces have not done away with the anti-replacement-worker legislation. Why is that? The Liberal government in BC could have taken it away, and the same thing with Quebec, but they are keeping it because it works. Labour disputes are shorter, as the focus of negotiations is not on managing the replacement workers on the part of the employees and opposing it on the part of the union. It focuses the negotiations on what the points are that brought about this labour dispute.

Let me quote from a paper entitled *The Effects of the Use of Striker Replacement Workers in Canada: An Analysis of Four Cases*, authored by Parbudyal Singh, Deborah Zinni and Harish Jain: "The use of replacements also leads to longer strikes.... Among the consequences of using replacements are more antagonistic union-management relationships and possibly longer strikes. Policy-makers should consider these consequences when debating or considering striker-replacement laws in North America."

Let me quote from a paper entitled *A Federal Anti-Scab Law for Canada? The Debate Over Bill C-257*, by Larry Savage, assistant professor, and Jonah Butovsky, associate professor, both at Brock University:

"In the short period time of in which anti-scab legislation was in effect in Ontario, investment and employment actually increased substantially....

"The fact that anti-scab laws continue to enjoy broad support from politicians across the political spectrum" in British Columbia and Quebec "goes a long way to diffuse the argument that a ban on replacement workers would cripple economic growth and drive away business, jobs and investment."

I could go on—but I don't have enough time—and quote from many more papers published on the subject that point to the same direction. It does not drive business away or investment away. What it does is it tears at the social fabric of a community. It inflicts wounds on its people, its families and its community that take generations to heal.

I can speak of what's going on in Sudbury right now. Vale Inco and the Steelworkers have been on strike for

over 10 months. It is legal in Ontario to use replacement workers, and replacement workers are used. It is tearing my community apart.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane has up to five minutes to respond.

Mr. David Ramsay: I welcome this opportunity to respond.

Our government is very conscious of the effect this labour dispute is having on the whole community of Sudbury. We have all seen and heard how frustrating and emotional this process has been for all the parties. Minister Bartolucci has shared many stories about the hardships faced by the dedicated workers and their families, and I want to commend the member for Sudbury for working very tirelessly on behalf of his constituents.

As the Premier has said, the best thing that we can do at this point is to focus on getting the parties back to the bargaining table. We urge the parties to find some common ground so they can ultimately resolve this dispute.

I understand that the parties have briefly met with senior mediator Mr. Kevin Burkett. While we're all very anxious for resolution, a lasting agreement between Vale Inco and the Steelworkers will only be reached once they determine how they can resolve those differences, and that's where this government's energy is focused. We are working hard to support the two parties in the negotiating process.

It is well known that agreements reached by the parties at the bargaining table are the most stable and the most productive.

In terms of the debate over replacement workers, what I want to reiterate to the member from Nickel Belt is that our government's energy at this time is focused on the parties setting aside their differences and sitting back down at the bargaining table. That's the only way this dispute will be resolved. We will continue to offer whatever assistance is necessary to help the parties reach a deal and put an end to this dispute.

I also want to remind the member from Nickel Belt of our government's labour relations record since we took office six and a half years ago. We have built a system in this province that we can be very proud of. In 2005, we restored fairness and balance to the province's labour relations system through the Labour Relations Amendment Act. The number of work stoppages is now the lowest it has been in over 30 years. Furthermore, over the past few years, approximately 97% of negotiations have resulted in settlements with no work stoppages. That translates to almost 2,000 settlements reached each year in Ontario without a strike or lockout. This excellent record is in large part thanks to our emphasis on the collective bargaining process.

We also assist parties throughout this process with our dedicated and highly skilled Ministry of Labour mediation team, who have had a great deal of experience in assisting even the most difficult and challenging labour

disputes. This mediation team is standing by and ready to help the parties involved in this dispute whenever they are ready to resume talks.

Ultimately, though, I must remind everyone that it remains the company's and the union's joint responsibility to sort out their differences in order to put an end to this dispute. I will reiterate that this dispute can only be resolved at the bargaining table.

1820

I urge both Vale Inco and the union to think about their respective positions and to focus on the hard decisions that have to be made before a settlement can be reached.

We understand that bargaining can be difficult and stressful, but like everyone in Sudbury, we're all extremely hopeful that the two sides can find a way to resolve this dispute. We urge them to start talking with each other again as soon as possible and find a negotiated solution at the bargaining table. We know that, in the end, the will is there to end this dispute.

INFRASTRUCTURE HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSOCIATION

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Premier concerning the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association. You have up to five minutes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I'd like to ask the people of this province, as well as the people in this House, what is a member to do when he asks a question that is based on facts, based on documented evidence, and the Premier's response contradicts and is not consistent with the facts and evidence? That is why we're having this further question tonight.

I suggested in the House—and I think it's good, sage advice for everybody—that old Mark Twain saying that when we are in doubt, we ought to always tell the truth. This question arises out of the IHSA. I asked the Premier directly why Pat Dillon, who is not appointed to the IHSA, but is head of the Working Families Coalition, was making appointments to the IHSA in conjunction with the chair of that IHSA, Michael Delisle.

Let me read from a letter from the Christian Labour Association of Canada, CLAC: “We discovered that a private ... meeting had been scheduled by IHSA for the” Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario “affiliated unions. No notice of this meeting was sent to CLAC, nor were we advised that the nomination meeting had become a management side only meeting. We were advised that we would not be welcome at the labour meeting; all spots were to be determined by the BCTC affiliates.” That's headed up by Pat Dillon as well.

There seems to be some confusion here between the government and its agencies. The Premier says that Pat Dillon doesn't select the labour representatives on government boards, and when I asked him why Pat

Dillon is in charge of selecting labour representatives, flippantly he said, “He's not.”

First of all, I should say that the Premier has appointed Pat Dillon to the College of Trades. That's what Mr. Dillon was doing here in the Legislature today, this morning, when he was at the government agencies committee. In our committee hearings, Pat Dillon gave this description of his new appointed role: “The appointments council will be not only acting as the transition board but as the appointments council, preparing names to put forward for the governing board, the industry board and the trade board.”

It seems to me that Mr. McGuinty is not only well aware of this fact that he's selecting labour representatives at the College of Trades, but he thinks it should be happening more. He's appointing to a new committee every year.

The appointments council of the College of Trades exists for only one thing: to select representatives for various boards within the College of Trades. So I'm a little bit confused here when I hear the Premier say that Pat Dillon doesn't select labour representatives in the province of Ontario.

But what's confusing me even more was the report that I received of Mr. Dillon's private meeting with IHSA CEO Michael Delisle. It's confused me because Pat Dillon isn't an impartial arbiter of labour relations in this province. Pat Dillon represents the Working Families Coalition. Pat Dillon is a member of the Building and Construction Trades Council, which of course has been very supportive of the Liberal Party of Ontario.

So here we have Pat Dillon saying that his job is to appoint people; we have the Premier saying he's not. So why does the Premier say that Pat Dillon isn't selecting labour representatives, even though he put him on the appointments council of the College of Trades with that mandate? Why is Pat Dillon selecting labour representatives to another agency, the IHSA, without the mandate to do so? Most importantly, as well, why is he excluding the CLAC membership? Is this because CLAC is not part of the Working Families Coalition that Pat Dillon heads up as well?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Timiskaming–Cochrane has up to five minutes to respond.

Mr. David Ramsay: I'm very sorry that the member is so confused about this, and I hope through this process we can elicit some clarity for the member.

The Ministry of Labour and our partners understand and support one common belief, and that is that workplace safety is everyone's responsibility, including Pat Dillon's. The strength of our system is based on broad participation by many organizations, including Workplace Safety and Insurance Board employers, employees, and health and safety associations. Health and safety associations are independent bodies funded by WSIB.

This past January, the Construction Safety Association of Ontario has amalgamated with the Electrical and Utilities Safety Association and the Transportation

Health and Safety Association of Ontario. The new organization is called the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association, or IHSA.

There are six different committees under the IHSA. In February, letters were sent out to all of the stakeholders asking for nominations and participation in the nomination process for the six committees. Furthermore, many different stakeholders, including Mr. Dillon, were invited to meetings to provide advice based on their specific expertise relating to the six different advisory councils, as well as their advice and input into the nominations for the governance board.

The member would like this House to believe that the membership of the IHSA is somehow picked unilaterally. That would be further from the truth. As the member well knows, the membership of the board is determined by an independent nomination committee which includes a cross-section of industry stakeholders. The committee is seeking consensus to ensure full representation of different groups and regions in Ontario. The names of union, non-union and employer representatives have been solicited and received for consideration. At this stage, the boards have not yet been established and no selections have been made.

In his question to the Premier this morning, the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington referenced a meeting on March 26 chaired by the IHSA CEO, Michael Delisle. This meeting was for the nomination of the heavy civil and aggregates advisory council. In attendance was the Christian Labour Association of Canada, which was one of the many different unions invited to be part of the nomination process.

As you can see, the IHSA board selection process has been fully transparent and has solicited the participation of all of the partners concerned with the health and safety

of our workers. It goes without saying that all of us in the labour sector are working towards the same goal of safer workplaces in the province of Ontario. The McGuinty government is proud of our record on worker health and safety, and we are continuing with our efforts to prevent workplace incidents from occurring. Since taking office six and a half years ago, we've doubled the number of inspectors in the field, this in stark contrast to when the party of the member opposite was in power, when they fired water and food inspectors.

Our government has also launched a Safe at Work Ontario strategy and has conducted 17 proactive and targeted blitzes in our province's work sites. As a result of these efforts, we have decreased the lost-time injury rate by over 30% and dramatically decreased the number of fatalities since taking over from the previous government. And, I'm proud to say, we're always striving to do better. That is why the Ministry of Labour has put together a panel of industry experts to conduct a comprehensive review of Ontario's occupational health and safety prevention and enforcement system. This expert advisory panel will look at the range of issues, including the entry-level safety training, the impact of the underground economy on health and safety practices, and how existing legislation services worker safety.

As you can see, the McGuinty government is working hard in collaboration with many different groups, to protect our workers so that we can assure that they can return home every night safe.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried.

This House stands adjourned until 6:45 p.m.

The House recessed from 1830 to 1845.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

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

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	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	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	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	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	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	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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	
Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, 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
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	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	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	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	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	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	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	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	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
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	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister 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	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of 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
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of 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

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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
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Leeanna Pendergast
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

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Creating the Foundation for Jobs and Growth Act, 2010, Bill 16, Mr. Duncan / Loi de 2010 posant les fondations de l'emploi et de la croissance, projet de loi 16, M. Duncan
Third reading agreed to 1605

Notice of reasoned amendment
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters)..... 1605

Notices of dissatisfaction
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters)..... 1605

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS /
PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Hon. John Gerretsen..... 1605
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters)..... 1606

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS /
DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

Volunteer service awards
Mr. John O'Toole..... 1606

Cycling safety
Ms. Cheri DiNovo..... 1606

Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre of Durham
Mr. Wayne Arthurs 1606

Paramedic services
Ms. Sylvia Jones 1607

Trillium Health Centre
Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield 1607

Ontario budget
Mr. Ted Arnott..... 1607

Public transit
Mr. Bill Mauro 1607

Environment industry
Mr. Phil McNeely 1608

Pope John Paul II
Mr. Tony Ruprecht..... 1608

**REPORTS BY COMMITTEES /
RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

Standing Committee on Public Accounts
Mr. Peter Shurman 1608
Debate adjourned 1608

Standing Committee on Government Agencies
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters)..... 1608
Report deemed adopted..... 1608

Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act, 2010, Bill 72, Mr. Gerretsen / Loi de 2010 sur le développement des technologies de l'eau et la conservation de l'eau, projet de loi 72, M. Gerretsen
First reading agreed to..... 1609

Public Inquiry into Caledonia Act, 2010, Bill 73, Mr. Chudleigh / Loi de 2010 sur l'enquête publique relative à la situation existant à Caledonia, projet de loi 73, M. Chudleigh
First reading agreed to..... 1609
Mr. Ted Chudleigh 1609

Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safe Bicycle Passing), 2010, Bill 74, Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2010 modifiant le Code de la route (dépassement sécuritaire de bicyclettes), projet de loi 74, Mme DiNovo
First reading agreed to..... 1609
Ms. Cheri DiNovo..... 1609

Sandringham Developments Ltd. Act, 2010, Bill Pr33, Mr. Caplan
First reading agreed to..... 1610

Financial Administration Amendment Act (Disclosure re Investigations), 2010, Bill 75, Mr. Tabuns / Loi de 2010 modifiant la Loi sur l'administration financière (divulgarion de renseignements sur les enquêtes), projet de loi 75, M. Tabuns
First reading agreed to..... 1610
Mr. Peter Tabuns..... 1610

Visual Fire Alarm System Act, 2010, Bill 76, Mr. Arthurs / Loi de 2010 sur les systèmes d'alarme-incendie à affichage visuel, projet de loi 76, M. Arthurs
First reading agreed to..... 1610
Mr. Wayne Arthurs 1610

Strengthening Public Hospitals Act, 2010, Bill 77, Mr. Caplan / Loi de 2010 sur le renforcement des hôpitaux publics, projet de loi 77, M. Caplan
First reading agreed to..... 1611
Mr. David Caplan..... 1611

MOTIONS

House sittings
Hon. Monique M. Smith 1611
Motion agreed to 1611

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS
MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

Water supply	
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1611
Sexual Assault Prevention Month / Mois de la prévention de l'agression sexuelle	
Hon. Laurel C. Broten.....	1613
Water supply	
Mr. Toby Barrett	1613
Sexual Assault Prevention Month	
Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer.....	1614
Sexual Assault Prevention Month	
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1614
Water supply	
Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	1614

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Taxation	
Mr. Peter Shurman	1615
Ontario pharmacists	
Mr. Bob Delaney.....	1615
Elmvale District High School	
Mr. Jim Wilson	1615
Ontario pharmacists	
Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	1616
Wind turbines	
Mr. Ted Arnott.....	1616
Diagnostic services	
Mme France Gélinas	1616
Water quality	
Mr. Yasir Naqvi	1616
Hospital funding	
Mr. Gerry Martiniuk	1616
Replacement workers	
Mme France Gélinas	1617

Ontario pharmacists	
Mr. Bob Chiarelli	1617
Ontario pharmacists	
Mr. Steve Clark	1617
Mining industry	
Mme France Gélinas	1617
Royal assent / Sanction royale	
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1617

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Far North Act, 2010, Bill 191, Mrs. Jeffrey / Loi de 2010 sur le Grand Nord, projet de loi 191, Mme Jeffrey	
Hon. Linda Jeffrey	1618
Mr. David Oraziotti	1620
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	1623
Mr. Peter Kormos.....	1623
Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	1623
Mr. Randy Hillier	1624
Hon. Linda Jeffrey	1624
Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....	1624
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	1626

**ADJOURNMENT DEBATE / DÉBAT SUR
LA MOTION D'AJOURNEMENT**

Breastfeeding / Allaitement maternel	
Mme France Gélinas	1626
M. Jean-Marc Lalonde	1627
Labour dispute	
Mme France Gélinas	1627
Mr. David Ramsay	1628
Infrastructure Health and Safety Association	
Mr. Randy Hillier	1629
Mr. David Ramsay	1629

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 18 May 2010 / Mardi 18 mai 2010

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Creating the Foundation for Jobs and Growth Act, 2010, Bill 16, Mr. Duncan / Loi de 2010 posant les fondations de l'emploi et de la croissance, projet de loi 16, M. Duncan

Hon. Monique M. Smith	1585
Mr. Wayne Arthurs	1585
Mr. Norm Miller	1588
Mr. Peter Tabuns	1589
Mr. Randy Hillier	1591
Third reading vote deferred	1592

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Ted McMeekin	1593
Mr. Bill Murdoch	1593
Mr. Steve Clark	1593
Mr. Bill Mauro	1593
Mr. Tony Ruprecht	1593
Mrs. Liz Sandals	1593
Hon. Carol Mitchell	1593
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur	1593

Adjournment debate

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters)	1593
---------------------------------------	------

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Government appointments

Mr. Tim Hudak	1593
Hon. Dalton McGuinty	1594

Government appointments

Ms. Lisa MacLeod	1594
Hon. Dalton McGuinty	1594

Pension plans

Ms. Andrea Horwath	1595
Hon. Dalton McGuinty	1596
Hon. Dwight Duncan	1596

Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath	1596
Hon. Christopher Bentley	1596

Appointments process

Mr. Jim Wilson	1597
Hon. Dalton McGuinty	1597

Appointments process

Mr. Peter Kormos	1597
Hon. Dalton McGuinty	1597

Pharmacists

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel	1598
Hon. Deborah Matthews	1598

Government appointments

Ms. Lisa MacLeod	1598
Hon. Dalton McGuinty	1599

Injured workers

Mr. Paul Miller	1599
Hon. John Milloy	1599

Services for the developmentally disabled

Mr. Glen R. Murray	1600
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur	1600

Taxation

Mr. Peter Shurman	1600
Hon. John Wilkinson	1600

Executive compensation

Ms. Andrea Horwath	1601
Hon. Deborah Matthews	1601

Arts and cultural funding

Mr. Tony Ruprecht	1601
Hon. Michael Chan	1602

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association

Mr. Randy Hillier	1602
Hon. Dalton McGuinty	1602

Poverty

Mr. Michael Prue	1602
Hon. Laurel C. Broten	1603

Taxation

Mr. Bruce Crozier	1603
Hon. John Wilkinson	1603

Answers to written questions

Ms. Sylvia Jones	1603
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters)	1604

Unparliamentary language

Mr. Peter Kormos	1604
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters)	1604

Continued on inside back cover