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**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 31 May 2010**

**Lundi 31 mai 2010**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
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Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 31 May 2010

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 31 mai 2010

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by a moment of silence for personal thought and inner reflection.

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. M. Aileen Carroll:** I'm delighted to welcome to the Legislature today paramedics from throughout Ontario but especially the representatives who are here from Simcoe county, including Kenneth Priestman.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** On behalf of my colleague from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, Mr. Hillier, I'd like to introduce Robin Hawe, councillor for the town of Smiths Falls, and his wife, Anne, who have joined us here in the members' gallery today.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** On behalf of our wonderful page, Tristen Groves, we have his mother here, Victoria Lavine-Groves. We welcome her to the gallery.

**Mr. Dave Levac:** Today is the first annual Brant Day. There are over 75 people from my riding who have come down to the reception to share with my fellow members that Brant has lots to offer. I want to welcome them to Queen's Park today.

We also have, as the lead for this, the former member for Brant, Ron Eddy, mayor of Brant, along with a plethora of visitors who are with us: Lesley Lovett-Doust, the president of Nipissing University; Paul Armstrong, Neil McMahon and Lauren Olson from Mohawk College; Councillor Marguerite Ceschi-Smith and Councillor Greg Martin from the city of Brantford; Kevin Klein, Leslie Cooper and President Max Blouw from Laurier; and representatives from TCO. Let's just say we've got the best of Brant in the gallery today. Welcome, and I thank our members for being here.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I have a number of guests here today. I'd first of all like to welcome a new parliamentary press gallery intern, Nidhi Sandilya. She is here today. Please welcome her. Her father is also a chef in our parliamentary dining room, so it's really nice that she has come full circle here today. I want to welcome her.

I'd also like to welcome some guests who are in the west gallery: Cyndee Todgham Cherniak from Lang Michener is here with her mother, Lynn Todgham.

I also have Grant Wright of Wright Sales Tax Recovery; Jim Garchinski from the Police Pensioners Associ-

ation of Ontario; and Al Olsen, the president of the Police Retirees of Ontario. Please welcome them.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I want to welcome Kevin Leung. He's another intern here today; he's working in my office.

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

I too, on behalf of the House, would like to welcome Ron Eddy back, who was a member from the 35th Parliament representing Brant–Haldimand. It's great to have you back today, Ron.

We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today the first secretary of the embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Eljan Habibzade. Please join me in welcoming our guests today. Welcome.

On behalf of the member for Thornhill and myself as Speaker, I'd like to welcome to the Speaker's gallery today the grade 7 and 8 students from Henderson Avenue Public School and my friend and one of their teachers, Malcolm Crawford. We welcome them to Queen's Park today.

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I'm sorry; I'm a little late on the welcomes. But I wanted to welcome the president of Nipissing University, one of the finest post-secondary institutions in the province. Dr. Lesley Lovett-Doust is here today with us, and we welcome her. She's part of Brant Day, because we have a campus in Brantford.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** A question to the Acting Premier: As you know, Dalton McGuinty is going to force Ontario families to celebrate Canada Day with a massive new HST hike on everything. Families will also remember, as they're paying Dalton McGuinty's new greedy tax grab, that back in 2003 Dalton McGuinty was so eager to convince people he was not another tax-and-spend Liberal that he staged a photo op where he signed a promise not to raise taxes on families without their explicit consent, but then he increased taxes across the board anyway, including his massive health tax hike. I ask you, Acting Premier, why did Dalton McGuinty tell families something that he definitely is not?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** This government has made strategic investments in health care and education and was re-elected in 2007 on the basis of those kinds of undertakings. Unlike the member opposite, we don't think the

status quo is good enough. We are taking a tax change that will not raise taxes but overall will reduce taxes for some 93% of Ontarians. That's why Jack Mintz, that leader's expert witness at last year's budget hearings, says it's absolutely the best thing we could have done. That leader and his party supported it. That leader and his federal counterparts, Mr. Flaherty, Mr. Baird, Mr. Clement—all of them support this. They recognize, as that member used to recognize, that—

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Quite frankly, Minister, the only thing Dalton McGuinty has been strategic about is more inventive ways to take money out of the pockets of Ontario families and seniors. Let's look at some of the examples since Dalton McGuinty famously broke his promise to Ontario voters. He helped David Miller raise taxes for property taxes, vehicle registrations, property transfers, garbage collection and even plastic bags at the grocery store. Then Dalton McGuinty himself increased personal, corporate and small business taxes across the province; seniors' property taxes; taxes and fees for eye exams, visits to the chiropractor or physiotherapist; and even fees for students and on their athletic and extended health plan fees.

Minister, wasn't it just a shameless use of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation—

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

1040

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The electorate of Ontario cast their judgement in 2007 on that issue.

What I will say is this: It is complete fiction, what the member has just said. This year, as of January 1, Ontario has the lowest tax rate in the country for the first \$37,000 of income, which he voted against. We will have the lowest marginal effective tax rate on new businesses in North America; that member and his party voted against it. We created then doubled the seniors' property tax credit; that member and his party voted against it.

That member's expert said that our policy will create 600,000 net new jobs in the next 10 years. That's what it's about: a brighter future for our children and our grandchildren.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** During the 2007 campaign the minister talks about, Dalton McGuinty was asked if he was going to increase taxes. Dalton McGuinty said no, the critics—"They're wrong, they're wrong, they're wrong." But Ontario families knew better than to believe Dalton McGuinty when it came to his plan on taxes, and they were right.

Let's see what he's raised since the 2007 election: taxes on hydro, desktop and laptop computers, printers, television sets, BlackBerrys, iPods, digital cameras, telephones, DVD players, tires, commercial vehicle operator registrations, camping, destination marketing fees and more—now, Canada Day, your greedy HST tax grab.

Minister, isn't enough enough? Which of these items will you lower taxes on and actually give Ontario families a break?

*Interjections.*

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

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** That question is pure fiction. Let me tell the member opposite, 93% of Ontarians are getting a tax cut this year. He and his caucus voted against it.

Why isn't he so passionate about the cost of generic drugs? They're against that and for big pharmacy. Why did they vote against the seniors' property tax credit?

Premier McGuinty has set in place a policy that will create jobs, will create investment and will create a better future for our children. That member and his party want to go back to the days of Mike Harris, when you fire nurses, when you don't train enough doctors, when you undermine our schools and close hospitals. That is the wrong direction. This government, with the support of his federal cousins, is moving forward on an aggressive tax package to make our economy more competitive and better for—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Simcoe North.

New question.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Acting Premier: Let me tell you, Ontario PCs stand against his cuts to front-line pharmacy care, as we stand against his increases, his excessive greedy tax grabs.

On Canada Day, Dalton McGuinty is bringing his HST tax grab on everything. Dalton McGuinty is adding taxes to haircuts; cable bills; Internet bills; magazine subscriptions; vitamins; dry cleaning; ice rentals; ballet lessons; karate, judo and boxing classes; hockey school; and memberships to the YMCA, Curves and fitness clubs.

Minister, I've got to ask you, isn't this extraordinarily greedy, even for Dalton McGuinty's standards? When will you stand up and lower taxes on items so Ontario families can make things meet in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** In his typical—and I wish to respect you, Mr. Speaker; I don't want to be unparliamentary—disingenuous fashion, he has neglected to tell everybody—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No; just withdraw the comment, please.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I withdraw that. I'm trying to find a word. In a typical less-than-clear way, the Leader of the Opposition has refused to acknowledge the largest tax cut in the history of this province to individuals and corporations. He failed—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Members will please come to order.

Acting Premier?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** —failed to acknowledge the—  
*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Simcoe North, you were doing really well. I just started to sit down, and you started.

Acting Premier?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** —failed to acknowledge the largest sales tax credit in Canada. He failed to acknowledge a range of other tax credits—which he voted against—that will help seniors, help the lowest and most modest.

Now we hear it unequivocally: They're for Big Pharma. They're for higher generic drug prices. They're for paying more. They're for making sure seniors pay the highest generic drug prices in Canada.

Our plan is the right plan for jobs, for growth, for our children and our grandchildren. It's the right plan for Ontario's future.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Dalton McGuinty's attack on the pocketbooks of Ontario families has no end. On Canada Day, Ontario families will face higher taxes to fix a leaky faucet or a bathtub, to improve electrical wiring, to repair a broken furnace or water heater, or help with snow removal, lawn care, gardening or house painting. Now we see the government contemplating taxes on water bills and a second stage of the health tax.

How big is your appetite? How far does Dalton McGuinty's greed grow? What in the world aren't you going to tax since you're taxing everything under the sun beginning July 1 in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, 83% of what the typical Ontario consumer spends will not be affected by our changes. The member opposite insists on neglecting the other side of the story. I look at his colleagues sitting next to him—

*Interjections.*

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

Acting Premier?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Let me read to him what a fellow named John Tory had to say. He said about our tax policy, "It was a courageous and the right thing to do. It's being done right in Ontario as we speak, and it is, in many respects, a right thing to do for investment and job creation." That's John Tory. His federal counterparts have made this all possible because they recognize that, overall, it's a tax cut for Ontario families and businesses.

The people of Ontario will see through that argument. They recognize that this change is the right change for jobs, investment and higher family incomes. That's why we're pursuing it: for a better future for our children and our grandchildren.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I still can't believe the finance minister is spinning this tale that his HST tax grab is a tax cut for Ontario families. Even your Premier was finally forced to admit that it's a tax grab—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. You can be spun some place as well, too.

Please continue.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The minister in Wonderland says it's a tax cut to put the HST on air travel, on train tickets, on boat and bus trips and on the gas they will use to get to their destination. When they get there, Dalton McGuinty is waiting with the tax machine as they arrive—agricultural fairs, Shaw and Stratford Festivals, comedy clubs, plays, galleries, summer music festivals and increased taxes on accommodations when they want to lay their head down at night.

Minister, what will Dalton McGuinty do to help people in Niagara, Prince Edward county, Stratford and the communities around Algonquin park when people can't travel this summer because of your greedy HST tax grab that will take money out of their pockets?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** That's why we created the tax cuts and tax credits for all Ontarians. That means 93% of us will pay less in—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Leeds–Grenville will withdraw the comment that he just made.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I withdraw.

1050

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Let me read on about something his former leader John Tory said: "I think [Hudak] has not acknowledged something that pretty well everybody else has. A lot of people call and say it is going to help with productivity and job creation and investment and the cost of capital. So I felt dishonest if I came out and said I was ... against it because that benefit is significant."

John Tory has the courage of his convictions. John Tory has said what he would do. That member and his party and that caucus will not say what they'll do with the HST.

We're moving forward. It's right for jobs, it's right for investment, it's right for income. I only wish that—

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Order, Minister, member from Hamilton East, member from Sarnia. It's the last week, and I've tried very hard not to name anyone, but you're pushing me. I can start with some ministers too.

New question.

## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Acting Premier. There are only 31 days before the McGuinty government's HST kicks in. Ontarians are bracing themselves for the new unfair tax. They've been writing to me by the thousands, because they're very, very worried.

Lori Summerhays writes this: "My husband and I both work and have two children, seven and three.... Our

family will be forced to find an extra \$100 to pay for taxes each” and every “month. Please try to understand how difficult it is for the average family right now to just try and make ends meet.”

Does the Acting Premier understand the plight of the Summerhays family, or is he simply out of touch?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I respect the points of view and concerns that are raised by people, but let me read a few other comments to the leader of the third party that others have made with respect to our HST policy: “Ontario’s economy will grow by 3.5% this year and ... 3.7%” next year, leading all Canadian provinces. This is the Conference Board of Canada, an independent expert group. Households “will benefit from income tax cuts and from temporary sales tax transition benefits as the province moves to harmonize the provincial sales tax system with the federal goods and services tax ... in July 2010.”

What that means is that all the independent observers—the Chamber of Commerce, anti-poverty groups like the Centre for Policy Alternatives and even Hugh Mackenzie—have said this is the right policy. We’re pursuing it. It will create—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, perhaps the Acting Premier needs to know that families are united against the HST, because on average they’ll be paying about \$800 more each and every year. More than a quarter of a million people have signed the NDP’s petition to stop the tax, people like John Parent from Windsor, who writes, “I’m a 65-year-old pensioner on fixed income.... I figure the HST will cost me \$805 a year.... I am now considering doing a lot of shopping” across the border “in Michigan.” And Fiona Alford of Hamilton says, “I am a mom who works full time, married with a teenager and a seven-year-old. I just ... found that we will be paying out an additional \$955 per year!”

What does the Acting Premier have to say to Ontarians like Mr. Parent and Ms. Alford?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I would say, don’t take the NDP numbers as what they say they are. They are false.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Member from Hamilton East, please come to order.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Dalton admitted it was right.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I just called you to order. We can just let the clock run. We could get through four question periods this week.

Acting Premier?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The NDP numbers are simply inaccurate. They’ve been torqued to make it look like people are spending more than they will, which is typical of the NDP.

What I would ask Ontarians to do is look at what the Conference Board of Canada has said, look at what Hugh Mackenzie has said and look at what the Centre for Policy Alternatives has said. What was the title of their paper? Not a Tax Grab After All.

The leader of the third party can attempt to torque numbers and try to tap in to angst and fear. The fact is that New Democrats across the aisle asked us to raise the provincial sales tax 1%. We said no. We created a new system that will improve jobs—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** One would think that the finance minister of this province would have more respect for the people whose numbers I’m using—not NDP numbers, but the families of this province who sent us their numbers. Opposition to the McGuinty government’s HST reaches every single corner of this province, from families to small business owners. Barrie gym owner Lynda Keffer writes, “Adding this tax will surely impact members who can barely afford the \$44.95 per month—it adds the equivalent of an additional month” of fees “per year” for people.

Cliff Heaney says this: “What this tax is going to do is really hurt my business of selling steel roofs. The HST will add another \$1,143 to the price. This is going to seriously hurt my sales.”

Small business owners know that the HST is going to force them to cut jobs as their revenues fall. Why doesn’t this government get it?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** We have a great deal of respect for the people of Ontario, and that’s why we are moving forward to create jobs and lower prices in investment for all Ontarians. The leader of the third party again ignores the tax cuts, the input tax credits. It is a complex piece, and folks who want to move forward understand—folks like the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, people like the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, people like the Conference Board of Canada. It’s about 600,000 net new jobs; it is about an 8.8% rise in income; it is about \$46 billion in net new investment in the next 10 years; it’s about a brighter future for our children and our grandchildren. I rely on those organizations, those bodies, much more than I do on the leader of the NDP, who wanted us to raise—

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

## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also to the Acting Premier. This morning I was at Toronto city hall for the start of Bike Month. Cyclists want to see this province take active transportation much, much more seriously. Instead, what do they see? They see the McGuinty government making it more expensive. In 31 days, buying a bike and a helmet is going to cost 8% more. Why is the McGuinty government going to tax children who ride their bikes to school, and their parents who ride their bikes to work?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** One of the reasons I think Ontarians are suspect of New Democratic Party numbers is the following: It was this government that provided the retail sales tax exemption, and that member and her party

voted against it. You voted against it. She wants to have it both ways; she wants to tell part of the story. Those same people who buy a new bicycle are seeing their personal taxes cut; they're seeing sales tax credits unequalled anywhere in the country. There you go again, and that's why I rely on Hugh Mackenzie, of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. They say one thing; they do another thing; they distort the numbers; they refuse to acknowledge their own vote against that temporary sales tax exemption that went into place. It's absolutely shameful.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This morning at Nathan Phillips Square there were hundreds and hundreds of cycling advocates, and they all say that the McGuinty government should be making active transportation as accessible as possible, just as this government should be doing everything it can to take cars off the road, reduce smog and promote healthy lifestyles. My question is a simple one: Why, then, is the government making cycling 8% more expensive for people?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I don't imagine the leader of the NDP told the folks at Nathan Phillips Square that she voted against the reduction in the PST. I imagine that was just a convenient lapse of NDP memory. I'll bet she didn't tell the folks at Nathan Phillips Square that the NDP want us to raise the PST by 1%, having voted against the exemption on bicycles. I'll bet she didn't tell the folks at Nathan Phillips Square that the NDP government in Nova Scotia just raised their HST by 2 points, to 15 points.

The NDP want to have it both ways. They ignore their own experts; they ignore their own advocates, including the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. This is the right policy for jobs, for growth, for investments and for a healthier economy. That's why we don't support anything she says.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I think it's quite hilarious that the finance minister has decided to make NDP policy for us. Thanks very much, but no thanks. Also I think it's important to note that the CCPA has put in writing this very quote: "Accordingly, it is not correct to state that the CCPA supports the HST...." So the minister is totally off base.

1100

A few years ago, the Premier said, "We want to encourage more Ontarians to get outdoors, spend time riding bikes as a family and with friends, or try riding to work if possible, leaving the car at home." And he added, "Together, we're building a culture of health and well-being across Ontario by encouraging more families to embrace active living."

Will the Acting Premier then explain to Ontarians since when embracing active living meant having to pay 8% more?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** You know, it's typical of the NDP they would take out of context the Canadian Centre

for Policy Alternatives. Let me just read her the title of this document. It's called, Not a Tax Grab After All: A Second Look at Ontario's HST. It goes on to explain to the leader and her friends that in fact, most Ontarians will see a tax cut, some will be even and a very few, a small percentage, will pay more; generally speaking, higher-income people.

The NDP's record is on the record. You voted against the exemption. Check Hansard. We have a letter signed by her predecessor urging us to raise the PST by 1%. The record of the Nova Scotia government is crystal clear and subject to a vote.

Ontarians want consistency and a Canada response to a better future: That's what Premier McGuinty offers. That's in sharp contrast—

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

#### TAXATION

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is for the Acting Premier. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation broke it to Ontario families that Dalton McGuinty's HST will add between \$250 and \$400 a year more to the cost of gas and to fuel. For months, the McGuinty Liberals, they dodged, they ducked and they hid what they knew about the impact that Dalton McGuinty's 8% HST tax grab—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Members will please come to order.

Please continue.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Was it because you planned to bury the HST in the price of gas at the pump so nobody would notice your greedy HST tax grab?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** A range of Conservative experts have told us that the HST will create jobs. Let me tell you the start with Jack Mintz: "Within 10 years, Ontario will benefit from increased capital investment of \$47 billion." We will increase annual worker incomes by \$29.4 billion and we will create some 591,000 net new jobs.

I think that's why Jim Flaherty, Cheryl Gallant, Tony Clement, John Baird, even—here's what Tim Hudak said in March 2009. He said, "We understand how that (single sales tax) can help the economy."

Unfortunately, all the bluster in the world can't replace serious, sound policy that will create jobs for our children and grandchildren. It's right for our future—

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Let me dumb it down for the minister. It is going to cost Ontario families between \$250 to \$400 more for gas in their cars once his HST tax grab takes effect. Even Stéphane Dion's carbon tax wasn't going to tax gas. British Columbia's HST doesn't tax gas either. BC made a decision to protect families from paying more for fuel in their vehicles to get them to work and to take their kids to school or to go on family vacation. British Columbia didn't want families to pay more

for fresh produce either, or other groceries that would cost more to be trucked to market. You had choices, so why did you choose to make Ontario families pay more for everyday non-discretionary items?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, I would actually like to upgrade the debate in the House, as you have called on us to, refer to some facts and try to keep a cool perspective as we move forward.

Here's what another member of the CTF said: "Harmonization has some clear benefits." That's from the director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation in Saskatchewan.

This tax policy, in fact, will lower taxes for 93% of all Ontarians.

*Laughter.*

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The opposition wants to laugh. They want to ignore the recommendations of their federal counterparts. They want to ignore their own past when they spoke in favour of it. It's no doubt that it's a difficult policy that requires a great deal of work and explanation. We're committed to that because it will create jobs for our kids and our grandchildren. After all, I think that's the most important thing that any government can do.

#### FLU IMMUNIZATION

**M<sup>me</sup> France G elinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Sant e et des Soins de longue dur ee. A report that will be released tomorrow by Toronto Public Health finds that the H1N1 vaccination rate for Toronto residents was a mere 28% thus far. This is way below the provincial target of 75%.

Toronto Public Health's director of communicable diseases said, "The public health unit was stymied by changing directives from the provincial health ministry." Given what we've learned here in Ontario with SARS, given all the preparation time for the pandemic planning, how can the Minister of Health have bungled the communication and management of this issue so badly?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you for the question. I think that, as a little time has now passed since the H1N1 crisis was upon us, now is the time to be learning lessons from that episode in our health care history.

It certainly was a time when we were working under difficult circumstances. We had an uncertain supply, as the member opposite will recall. The federal government was responsible for the supply of the vaccine; the provincial government and the health units, for the distribution of the vaccine. Because of the uncertainty of the supply of the vaccine, it meant that we were working in real time, and we did have to make decisions quickly so that we could get the vaccine to as many people as quickly as we possibly could.

I look forward to the supplementary.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France G elinas:** On November 19, the minister said that "between 45% and 50% of Ontarians are planning to get the vaccine. We need to do better than that. Getting the shot is the single most important thing some-

one can do to protect not only themselves but the people around them...."

Minister, if that was the case, how is it that we missed the mark by so much, after all the press releases, the news releases, the ads assuring Ontarians that you were on the ball, that the targets were being met? How can Ontarians trust that this government will get it right the next time?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I understand that our chief medical officer of health is working on a report that will address that issue, as well as others.

I do think that, if we remember back to the time, last October, November, when we were dealing with this issue, there was a time when there was great demand for the vaccine, quickly followed by a time when we had the vaccine, we had the clinics, we were able to immunize people, and they did not come to the clinics in the numbers that we had hoped for. Getting the message out—getting the vaccine is the best way to protect themselves and their families is a message that we will be addressing.

I think it's only fair, though, to acknowledge that Ontario in fact had one of the best uptakes in the world. Was it perfect? No. Relative to other jurisdictions we did a very good job, thanks to the very hard work of those who worked on the front lines—

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, many families have been affected by the worldwide economic recession. Families who have a child with a developmental disability and who are facing emergency or crisis situations are looking to the government for help in these very difficult times. These families need the supports and services that developmental service agencies offer.

In 1995 and 1996, the previous government cut funding in the developmental services sector. Is the McGuinty government doing the same thing?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I would like to thank the member from Peterborough for his question. My answer to his question is no, we are not.

Since 2003, we have invested half a billion dollars in the developmental services sector. Even in these difficult times we are increasing funding to this sector by \$56 million; \$36 million will go towards supporting individuals in emergency and crisis situations.

Whether it's an aging parent who needs long-term care and can no longer care for their child, or a situation where there are acute mental health concerns, we are investing and working with our agency partners to ensure that these people get the supports they need.

We have made great strides, but we know there is more to do. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners.

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

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Thank you, Minister, for that very clear and direct answer.

The McGuinty government is clearly taking a very different approach from the government of 1995 and 1996. While I acknowledge that support for those in emergency situations is crucial, I'm also concerned about the fairness of our system. Parents have told me that the current system is not transparent, that it is confusing to navigate and that it is a burden to their already-complicated lives.

Minister, what can I tell these parents? What is the government doing to address these very pressing concerns?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** What the member can tell them is that this government has heard their concerns, and \$20 million will go towards the transformation of the developmental services system to make it fair, transparent, accessible and sustainable—changes that no previous government ever took on. The new system will have a single point of application for each region, consistent eligibility criteria and a single assessment tool for the entire province. Perhaps most important, we will offer choice for how people receive the supports they need.

Where other governments cut agencies' budgets, this government sees agencies as key partners in the system, and we will support them through this transformation.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a question for the Acting Premier. There are still 31 days left before the McGuinty Liberals unleash the HST tax grab, but they're already plotting the next new tax grab. Dalton McGuinty refused to rule out a tax on tap water. When Jeff Rubin proposed a carbon tax at Dalton McGuinty's summit, his caucus gave rapturous applause. Last week, the transportation minister told the Economic Club of Canada she plans to have a "conversation" about road tolls, and we all know what that means. Dalton McGuinty's economic advisors at TD Economics called for a new health tax.

My question is, which new tax grab does Dalton McGuinty have his eye on implementing first?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I would caution anybody against wild speculation of that nature. The fact of the matter is—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. Acting Premier?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The fact is tax policies are set in budgets. For instance, we lowered the tax rate on the first \$37,000 of income; that member and his party voted against it. We created a seniors' property tax credit; that member and his party voted against it. Then we doubled the seniors' property tax credit—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** There's nothing you guys won't tax. It's unbelievable.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** It is unbelievable how difficult it is to hear.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I think it would have been wild speculation to think that the Premier would break the signed oath that he made in 2003 not to implement new taxes.

Dalton McGuinty is a tax-and-spend Liberal. He introduced the single largest income tax increase in Ontario history with his so-called health tax in his first budget. He introduced the single largest sales tax increase in Ontario's history, the HST. Ontario families are not even officially paying the HST yet, and he's already salivating over the next new tax grab.

Why are none of the Liberal caucus or cabinet members standing up for middle-class families who Dalton McGuinty keeps taxing and taxing and taxing?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** This caucus and government are about jobs; that's why we're pursuing a large tax cut for personal and corporate contributors. We are about 600,000 net new jobs, and we're consistent about that, unlike that member and his party who used to say a harmonized sales tax was the right thing and now say it's not necessarily the wrong thing, because we still don't know why they won't repeal it or undertake to repeal it.

We've set out a policy that will create 600,000 net new jobs, increase family incomes and increase investment. It's the right policy for our children and grandchildren. It will lead to a healthier, stronger economy, even according to their own experts, their former leader and all of their federal cousins.

#### CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** To the Minister of Community Safety: Two more inmates stabbed at the Don jail, a third slashed; Don jail—understaffed, overcrowded, neglected. Why is the minister ignoring the crisis at the Don jail?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** We're doing anything, everything except ignoring the crisis. Ignoring is something they would have done when they were in government. They reduced funding to correctional services. They cut staff.

Here on this side of the House, we take it very seriously. That's why we're looking at the changing face of corrections. That's why we're investing in new facilities, unlike them, who didn't invest one cent in any facility with regard to expansion. We are on a 15-year plan whereby we are creating additional spaces, meeting the ever-changing needs of the corrections community. We will continue to do that because this is a government of action, not inaction.

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

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** The minister doesn't seem to understand that these knifings tell us that the inmates are armed with deadly weapons. Don jail—20 job vacancies as we speak. The promised institutional security team doesn't exist at the Don. Correctional staff continue to work in deplorable and dangerous conditions. When will this government finally fix the Don jail?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** The fact of the matter is, we're investing in two brand new facilities. The fact of the

matter is, we're investing in human resources. The fact of the matter is, we're investing in new technology, unlike the NDP government, who, when they were in office, cut corrections funding by \$20 million in 1993 and 1994, cut funding by \$13 million in 1994 and 1995, cut funding to correctional services by \$25 million in 1995 and 1996. They didn't build a single jail during their time. They didn't build a single cell during their time. But they did put forth a contract called the social contract to demoralize the correctional officers. We are about building capacity, not about demeaning the correctional officers.

#### FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** My question is for the Minister of Education. Parents in my riding are very supportive of our move towards full-day early learning. However, I have been hearing concerns in my community about the potential impact this program may have on existing child care programs, from changes to the age groups of children accessing child care to potential impacts on staffing.

Parents understand that continued support for child care is essential to the success of full-day learning. Supporting child care as we move to full-day learning in Ontario will ensure a continuum of services for families in our communities. Can the minister please explain to my constituents and child care providers the steps our government is undertaking to minimize the impact for existing child care programs and to ensure that we maintain and enhance child care services for families across our province?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** We have been listening very carefully to the child care community and to parents. They certainly support the leadership of our government in continuing to support our youngest learners.

With respect to the support for child care facilities, we are providing for those facilities \$51 million annually at full implementation to help stabilize the child care sector. In addition, we've also provided \$12 million to child care facilities so they can refit their businesses to accommodate younger children. In addition to that, in our last budget we provided the \$63.5 million that the federal government did not provide—

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

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**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you, Minister. It is reassuring that municipalities and child care centres have clarity about the support our government will be providing as we transition into full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds.

Full-day learning, as we know, was a recommendation of the Premier's early learning adviser, Charles Pascal. His report offers a series of recommendations for moving ahead with early learning in Ontario and sets out a plan for how Ontario can be the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce full-day learning. A big piece of his report was the integration and coordination of services

for kids and families, both while they're at school and before they are school-aged.

I have heard concerns that we are not moving quickly enough to implement Dr. Pascal's full vision. Could the minister tell us what our government is doing to better support our parents with younger kids and ensure we have the best possible conditions for our kids to learn and grow in Ontario?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** To the Minister of Children and Youth Services, please.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm very pleased to have a chance to respond to this issue and say how proud I am to be working with Dr. Pascal at present and in the months ahead as we embark upon an exciting initiative in this province.

We're looking at ensuring that all services for children zero to six are better integrated, better coordinated, and moving from a chaotic mix of services to one where every single parent, every single caregiver, every grandparent will know what door to use with their child to get them the services they need so that they will be ready when they start all-day junior kindergarten at the age of four.

Dr. Pascal's vision is one that builds on the Best Start networks. We'll be working with communities right across the province to help ensure that every single child in Ontario gets the best possible start in life, from the day they're—

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

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is for the Minister of Government Services, who is responsible for the ServiceOntario program.

A few days ago when I was in Georgetown, more than one person expressed to me concern about the impending closure of the Georgetown driver and vehicle licence issuing office and the possible loss of an important local service to our community. Will the minister inform the House why he's closing the licence issuing office in Georgetown?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar:** I want to thank the member for asking this question. I want to tell him that ServiceOntario is absolutely committed to providing services in Georgetown and the neighbouring areas as well. We have selected a new vendor of record through the procurement process, and the contract was awarded on April 26, 2010. The contractor, through the agreement, is supposed to open the new office within 90 days. So I'm very pleased to tell you that the new office will be operating and the residents of Georgetown will have the services they need and deserve.

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

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I thank the minister for that response, but I have to tell him that for longer than anyone in town can remember, the staff of the Georgetown licence issuing office have been providing outstanding,

efficient services on the main street of Georgetown. Where there have been years of courtesy and professionalism, there is now uncertainty and doubt.

Can the minister explain how this new office that he says he'll open will be an improvement? Can he assure us that the new location will be conveniently located, as the last one was, and that there will be absolutely no interruption of service to my Halton Hills constituents?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar:** I'm actually very pleased to share with the member that we are modernizing and integrating ServiceOntario services under one roof. The new vendor we have selected is an experienced vendor and will be providing the same kind of services that had been provided before. I also want to tell you that we will not only be providing just drivers' licences and vehicle stickers, but we will be adding health card services as well. So we will be expanding services. They will be available 90 days after the contract was signed, and it will be by an experienced operator.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Actually, I'd like a page to bring this over to the Minister of Health, please.

This question is to the Minister of Health on behalf of Robert Brackenbury and his family. Mr. Brackenbury sent the minister a letter on May 14 about the surgery that he urgently needs for a grossly herniated bowel and an aneurysm. These serious health conditions follow cancer surgery that he had last October.

Mr. Brackenbury is a senior who lives in Kitchener–Waterloo. He is described by his doctor as a survivor, but he is now facing lengthy and unconscionable surgical delays.

The McGuinty government repeatedly claims that health care will be there for people where and when they need it. When will the minister do something to ensure that that's going to be the case for Mr. Brackenbury?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Of course, I cannot speak to this particular case, but I'm happy to look into it.

I think the success of our government in bringing down surgical wait times is one of the true successes of this government. We have gone from not even knowing what wait times are to measuring wait times, publicly reporting wait times and actually developing a strategy to bring those wait times down. We have been very successful. In fact, we have been able to bring down wait times by over a year in some cases.

We are still working to continue the improvement, and as I say, I will look into this particular case to understand what's happening here.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I appreciate that because this letter was sent to all of us about two weeks ago—myself, the minister and others.

Mr. Brackenbury is just one of many who can't access timely health care in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. He has an open wound on his stomach measuring 28 centimetres by 23 centimetres. I've sent the pictures over to the

minister to indicate his condition. Unless his aneurysm can be dealt with quickly so that his intestinal surgery can go ahead in August, Mr. Brackenbury knows that he faces a life or death situation. His doctors want to operate quickly but they can't.

Will the minister commit today to look into Mr. Brackenbury's case and get him the urgent treatment he desperately needs before that aneurysm bursts and he dies?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** As I said in the first question, yes, I will absolutely commit to looking into this particular case to understand why this surgery is not proceeding.

I think it is important that the member opposite acknowledge the progress we have made on wait times—and it is not just our numbers. The cancer quality index report was released last week and it is publicly available. It demonstrates that we've actually gone from being a laggard when it comes to radiation, for example, to being one of the leading jurisdictions in the country when it comes to wait times for that particular procedure.

As I say, this is a government that is committed to transparency and to public reporting of wait times. That public reporting allows us to make the strategic investments we need to make to continue improving health care.

#### LIQUOR LICENSING

**Ms. Leeanna Pendergast:** My question is for the Minister of Consumer Services. The World Cup is here and in South Africa for the first time on that continent. Many of us are huge soccer fans. In the last month I have been in Richmond Hill, Windsor, London and upcoming in Peterborough with my son, who's a keeper for the boys under 12. They've won three tournaments this month for Kitchener Spirit.

Speaking of spirits, the city of Kitchener passed a resolution in council regarding the request for licensed establishments to extend their liquor serving hours by one hour during the World Cup. In the spirit of the World Cup, bar and restaurant owners in my riding of Kitchener–Conestoga have asked to extend their serving hours to attract more World Cup fans.

Can the minister advise the House what she is doing to address this issue?

**Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis:** Thank you to the member for the question. I am happy to tell this House that on Sunday—yesterday—at Ace Family Restaurant in Hamilton, I announced that Ontario will allow licensed bars and restaurants to serve alcohol an hour earlier during the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Ontario is one of the most diverse, multicultural communities in the world, and our government recognizes the significance of the World Cup to many cultural groups in the province. That's why it's making this special exemption to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario's policy on extending bar and restaurant hours.

The games are being televised from South Africa, which represents a six-hour time difference within Ontario. Some games will start as early as 7:30.

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

**Ms. Leeanna Pendergast:** There will be great support for all 32 qualifying countries right here in Ontario, and it's a great opportunity for businesses to generate further revenue, such as the Edelweiss Tavern—Lorne and Jason Miller—and Bob MacMillan of the Heidelberg in my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga.

But my first concern as a soccer mom and a former coach has always been the safety of my sons, their teammates and all the youth in Ontario. I'd like to know how the government will address concerns that some may have around safety in the province by promoting the consumption of alcohol?

**Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis:** That's a very important question. Our government understands the need for social responsibility with relation to the service of alcohol. With this extension, we have balanced the requests from businesses and World Cup fans, while understanding the need to maintain appropriate standards for the responsible service of alcohol.

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During the extended period, municipalities will be responsible for enforcing the Liquor Licence Act. But municipalities do have a choice. They have two options: They can decide to participate in allowing local establishments to serve an hour earlier, or the other option is to opt out in writing by sending a letter to the Registrar of Alcohol and Gaming.

It's an exciting time in Ontario. We're really glad that the World Cup is here.

#### PEDIATRIC FORENSIC PATHOLOGY INQUIRY

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** My question is to the Attorney General. Minister, five weeks ago, I asked when you would have answers for victims of Dr. Charles Smith. The Premier said, "Very, very soon." You said, "Very shortly."

"Very, very soon" is long past; "very shortly" is up. Do you have a compensation process ready to begin for the victims of Dr. Charles Smith?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** We all meant exactly what we said. The cases that are the subject of the question span many, many years and many decades, including many years when my friend sat in government.

We had a very important inquiry. Commissioner Goudge came forward with some extremely important recommendations, and one of the things he asked us was, instead of requiring every potential plaintiff to go through the normal civil litigation system, which they are able to do, can you find a shortcut for all of these different and disparate fact situations? We had a three-party expert group. They've been working very hard. We are coming forward very soon and we're quite hopeful of achieving the promise.

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

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Minister, after a year and a half, you have the nerve to use the term "shortcut"? No one

believes you anymore. If your words were said in good faith, you would have an answer. We all agree these problems are complex, but I disagree with you that a year and a half is a justifiable time to wait for a solution.

Minister, are you waiting for the summer to avoid critical assessment of your decision in this House? If five weeks doesn't define "very shortly," what does? Or will you have an answer for this House before it rises?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** I don't know about the honourable member, but I'll be working on June 5, I'll be working on June 6, I'll be working on June 7, and I'm surprised you aren't.

I'm sure whenever we come down with the answer, we expect you to be able to read it; we expect you to be able to criticize it; we expect you to be able to comment on it. I mean, come on—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Order. Members will please come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The honourable member from Halton knows the rules. If he's not satisfied with the answer, he can file a late show with the clerks' table.

*Interjections.*

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

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** These issues are enormously complex, and that's why Justice Goudge asked if—if—we could come up with something. That's why we asked some very well-thought-of experts to give us advice. That's why we're attempting to do something that the law doesn't easily do, which is to reconcile very disparate claims in very different circumstances through one approach. You could, in different cases, make these a class action, but it would be very difficult in a civil litigation system to do that. We're working very hard, we'll be able to report, and whenever we do, I know my friend will be able—

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

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Minister of Housing. Last week, a group led by the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation launched a landmark legal challenge to address the appalling lack of housing in Ontario and across the country. The applicants say that the Ontario government has failed to address homelessness and housing over the past decade. This challenge has come because this government continues to drag its feet on affordable housing. To the minister: Will this government oppose the legal challenge?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Of course, this matter is going to be before an adjudicative body, and the member will know that it would probably be inappropriate for me to comment on it at that time. She's a long-time member of the House now, and she knows that.

However, I do want to say that I know the member would want to extol some of the virtues of what has been done by our Parliament lately. I want to give credit to you: \$622 million, over two years, contributed by the province, matched by our federal partners. That is a tremendous amount of money that we're investing in affordable housing in this province. I think we're already seeing, in various communities across the province, the difference that is making. We have taken a number of other initiatives as well: rent supplements; we are fixing up the buildings that are there so that people—

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

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I assume, by his response, that means that they are opposing the legal challenge by housing activists across the province. This government's record on housing, by the way, is absolutely terrible.

Today, the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association and the Ontario region of the Co-operative Housing Association have shown that average rents increased three times the rate of inflation across the province in 2009. Waiting lists for assisted housing have over 142,000 families throughout Ontario. One in five Ontario renters are still spending more than half their income on housing. When will this government release its affordable housing plan, the long-ballyhooed one, to address this absolutely shameful record?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** That's a subjective evaluation, using the terminology that you did. I won't repeat it because in politics you don't repeat those charges.

However, I want to say this: First of all, I remember the rent guidelines under the NDP—I hate to go back into history. Under this government, under the present Liberal administration, the increases are the lowest they've been since we've had rent control in the province of Ontario. They used to be skyrocketing under the NDP. I know you didn't mean to do it, but it happened; it's a fact of life.

I want to say as well that units built under the affordable housing program are required to have rents at or below 80% of the average market rent. Harvey Cooper says, "Recent government initiatives show that the province understands the central role of housing to people's lives and the economy"—

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

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Dave Levac:** My question is for the Minister of Revenue. As Ontario's economy begins to recover from the global economic downturn, we have an opportunity to make our province more competitive and straightforward. Ontario currently provides the point-of-sale exemption for the provincial sales tax to First Nations in Ontario. With the move to the harmonized sales tax, the federal government must now provide that exemption.

My question for the government is: What are we doing to make sure that the First Nations' exemption is indeed maintained? I understand that the Minister of Aboriginal

Affairs and the Minister of Revenue have been working closely with the Chiefs of Ontario, and they've been able to come to a memorandum of agreement regarding the point-of-sale exemption. On May 27, they did sign that memorandum.

Recent reports indicate that Minister Flaherty has signalled that he may be interested in a discussion. What steps have we taken—

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

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** I want to thank the member for the question. I particularly want to thank him for his leadership on this file and his approach to it, and the work that he has been able to show us about how we have to stand shoulder to shoulder with First Nations in the province of Ontario to be able to get something that we need in this province, which is the federal government to agree to administer the point-of-sale exemption that we have requested of the federal government under the HST. It's why the Premier and Minister Duncan and myself have written our counterparts.

But for us to be able to get to that, we need to stand shoulder to shoulder. I was particularly pleased to hear from our Minister of Aboriginal Affairs that just recently, the political confederacy did ratify the memorandum of agreement that was entered into by the two of us and Chief Toulouse. It's by working together that we'll be able to get to where we want to be, which is a point-of-sale exemption—

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

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Dave Levac:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm sorry. I know it's unorthodox, but I wanted to let you know that the other half of the plethora of Brant came. I want to introduce Walter Gretzky, lord mayor of Brant. I want to thank him for being here today.

#### SPECIAL REPORT, ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER OF ONTARIO

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table an annual greenhouse gas progress report from the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario entitled Broadening Ontario's Climate Change Policy Agenda.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1140 to 1300.*

#### SIGN-LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I believe we have unanimous consent that sign-language interpreters may be present in the east gallery to interpret proceedings for guests in the gallery.

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

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would like all members to join me in welcoming a guest to the Legislature today: former East York member Gary Malkowski from the 35th Parliament. Welcome back to Queen's Park today, Gary.

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** It's my pleasure to welcome members of the Azeri community of the greater Toronto area as they celebrate their Independence Day. They actually celebrated Independence Day on Friday, May 28, so I welcome them in the public gallery.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### GROVES HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** One of the most eloquent public figures of our time once exhorted his nation, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

This call to action has motivated generations of volunteers around the world to get involved, help organize, build their communities or lend a hand to those in need, all for the public good.

I was born six months before John F. Kennedy died and I first saw the light of day at the Groves Memorial Community Hospital in Fergus. In the 20 years that I've been privileged to serve in this Legislature, I've always been very impressed in the extreme by the Groves Hospital Volunteer Association, who have taken President Kennedy's suggestion and made it their own.

Later this afternoon, the 250 members of the volunteer association will celebrate the fact that their activities have raised \$1 million for the hospital, fulfilling a pledge they made seven years ago. This comes on top of the half-million dollars they have raised over the past two years for our new CT scanner—raised one year faster than originally planned.

This amazing community success story didn't just happen. It involves literally thousands and thousands of hours of volunteer labour at two Opportunity Shops in Fergus and Arthur, as well as the hospital gift shop and TV rental service for patients—that and a sense of community spirit that is second to none in the province.

In closing, I want to thank all in the Groves Hospital Volunteer Association for the great work they do. Once again, as I have so many times in the past, I urge this government to show its appreciation by giving Groves the approval and support to move forward to the next stages of planning for the new Groves hospital that our community will soon need in this 21st century.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** Fourteen-year-old Stefanie Nadeau of Welland is a beautiful young woman who lives each

day in excruciating pain, and there doesn't seem to be room for her in Dalton McGuinty's health care system.

Paul Missiuna, orthopaedic surgeon and in fact a pediatric orthopaedic specialist, writes to me telling me that this young woman, Miss Nadeau, has a rare condition for her age of a curvature of 64 degrees of her spine from T6 to T12. She requires immediate surgery if she's to be relieved of the pain and if she's going to begin to recover from this health condition. But there's no room for her; there's no space for her; there's no time for her in Dalton McGuinty's hospitals here in the province of Ontario.

Dr. Missiuna is ready, the operating room personnel are ready, the nurses are ready, but the waiting lists persist. This young woman, Stefanie Nadeau, lives out each day as a child growing into an adult, knowing that the only thing she will remember is the daily pain day after day.

I say it's time for Mr. McGuinty to step up to the plate and create some room for Stefanie Nadeau and so many others who are stuck on long, unconscionable and painful waiting lists in our health care system today.

### FRANK ALVAREZ

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I am pleased to announce that on the morning of June 5, during this year's Portugal Day Parade, the city of Toronto will be honouring an outstanding Canadian of Portuguese heritage, the dynamic Mr. Frank Alvarez.

Frank immigrated to Canada in 1967 and became a media icon. He is president and CEO of CIRV Radio and FPTV, Festival Portuguese Television.

Thanks to the efforts of Jose Eustaquio and the Alliance of Portuguese Clubs and Associations of Ontario, Frank will be formally recognized with a street name dedication along the Dundas Street West corridor from Shaw to Ossington. This vibrant community area will be unveiled as Frank Alvarez Way.

Frank is being honoured for his tremendous contributions to the community. His leadership has inspired radiothons to support many charities that helped victims of tragic natural disasters such as the devastating floods in Mozambique and Madeira.

Frank's exceptional service includes being co-founder of the Canada-Portugal Chamber of Commerce and the Vila Gaspar Corte Real, and past president of the Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business and Professionals.

Frank has been applauded for his exemplary work by many levels of government and organizations. In 1998, he was inducted into the Order of Portugal as Commendador of the order of merit, and he received the Canadian Ethnic Journalists and Writers Club award in 1999. That same year, he received a key to the city of Toronto.

His service has been recognized by others, including the Queen's Jubilee Medal and the commemorative medal of the 125th anniversary of Canadian Confederation.

This well-deserved unveiling of Frank Alvarez Way appropriately occurs during Portugal Week festivities. As

communities around the world join and commemorate June 10 Portugal Day and Dia de Camoes, local organizations and volunteers have asked me to welcome everyone here to participate in the special occasion to honour Frank and Portugal Day.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly and its many friends, congratulations, Frank, and happy Portugal Day.

### FRUIT WINES

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize the fruit wineries, who are here today for the fruit wine tasting this evening, and I want to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on the work you have done to promote great Ontario food, including fruit wine, in this Legislative Assembly.

At last year's fruit wine tasting, we were celebrating that Bill 132, introduced by my colleague Bob Runciman, would be getting committee hearings. That bill would give fruit wineries access to more consumers by allowing fruit wines to be sold at Ontario farmers' markets.

During committee in December, the OFA said, "Bill 132 just makes sense from a market development, rural economic development and tourism development sense." But the Liberal members on the committee didn't support it. They voted down every single clause of the bill, even the title.

Less than a year earlier, this Legislature unanimously gave the bill second reading. Liberal members supported it enthusiastically; not one spoke against it. In fact, the PA to the Minister of Agriculture said, "The idea falls in line with OMAFRA's commitment to encourage rural economic development and promote innovative and unique branding and marketing opportunities for producers in this province." But the Liberals in the committee voted it down.

Bill 132 addressed the difficulties that fruit wineries have getting their product to consumers. The current LCBO system doesn't work for them, and they need a way to deliver their products to consumers.

This evening, I hope members will do more than just taste great Ontario fruit wines. I hope they will talk to the people who run the wineries and listen to their challenges.

### CARLETON TAVERN

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** I'm pleased to rise today and share with the House a milestone for the Carleton Tavern, a landmark of the Hintonburg community in the heart of my riding of Ottawa Centre.

The Carleton is, of course, a favourite of residents and workers in downtown Ottawa for refreshments and live shows, but they also do good work for their community.

One of the most prominent events is a free, open-to-all Christmas dinner, courtesy of owners Simon and Sam Saikaley. This annual event is where many members of the community come together to celebrate the holidays and make much-needed gift donations for kids and adults in need.

The Carleton Tavern also hosts a free Thanksgiving dinner for those in our community who are less fortunate, and is frequently utilized by members of our community as a venue for grassroots fundraising and awareness events on a variety of topics.

With this great contribution to our neighbourhood, both as a place of gathering and friendship, and also as an institution that gives back, I'm pleased to commend the Carleton Tavern for their role in my community, and congratulate them on 75 successful years in Hintonburg. Keep up the good work.

1310

### FRESHWATER SUMMIT

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to announce the start of the upcoming 2010 Freshwater Summit taking place on June 1 and 2 in Parry Sound–Muskoka. This forum on fresh water seeks to highlight issues and trends surrounding the management of fresh water and will strive to develop sound policy options to deal with those issues.

The goal of the summit is to identify the stresses on inland lakes and rivers and then develop a communiqué on proper freshwater management. That communiqué will then be presented to the provincial and federal government as well as the Canadian contingent at the G8.

I am proud to announce that the summit is being hosted by the town of Bracebridge, the district municipality of Muskoka, the Muskoka Watershed Council and Nipissing University. The forum consists of six keynote speakers, including Henry Lickers, Norm Yan, David Schindler, John Smol, Maude Barlow and our Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller. A parallel summit is being held for high school students across the Muskoka region in order to educate youth about their role in protecting our fresh water.

Freshwater management is a critical issue, as it has economic, social and environmental implications. The 2010 Freshwater Summit is an important step in developing a comprehensive plan to protect our inland lakes and rivers. I would invite all those interested in the future of our fresh water to attend.

### VOLUNTEERS

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** I rise in the House today to recognize the many volunteers from the township of South Stormont in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry. Recently, the township of South Stormont held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Gala at the Spot Light banquet hall. Eighteen volunteer communities were represented and honoured at the event, an event that celebrates the volunteer contributions made by the countless volunteers of the township in 2009.

Robert Thompson, a resident of Ingleside, was the recipient of the 2009 Fran Laflamme Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of his long-standing volunteerism to the community. This prestigious award is presented annually by the township of South Stormont, and it

honours one of the township's outstanding volunteer members, the late Fran Laflamme. During her lifetime she was a model of volunteer commitment to community.

Robert "Bob" Thompson, a retired educator from Rothwell-Osnabruck High School, in his hometown of Ingleside, has volunteered as a youth coach and organizer for more than four decades. He is more recognized for his contributions on the hard court. Thompson has been a great advocate for youth basketball programs and continues to coach numerous teams at Rothwell-Osnabruck. He is also recognized as one of the founders and the first president of the South Stormont Sports Hall of Fame, which was established in 2005. He currently contributes his work to this committee and is an integral part of the organizing committee for the annual induction ceremony for the hall of fame.

Through their energy, creativity and thoughtfulness, our volunteers contribute in making our communities healthier places to live. Volunteerism is alive and well in the township of South Stormont.

#### REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** I rise in this House today to honour the people of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as they have just celebrated their Republic Day on May 28. Republic Day commemorates the day Azerbaijan first declared its independence from the Russian Empire in 1918, becoming the first-ever Muslim democratic republic.

The Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was crushed by the Soviet forces in 1920. In its two short years of independence, Azerbaijan made great strides in state building, education and economic growth. The republic was even ahead of many western countries in granting the right to vote for women in 1918.

Azerbaijan's second opportunity for freedom and independence began in 1991 after the collapse of the USSR. Modern Azerbaijan is a secular democratic republic. In recent years, Azerbaijan has reached remarkable progress in improving its Legislature, boosting the economy and reducing poverty.

The achievements of Azerbaijan were acknowledged by the World Bank and the World Economic Forum. Azerbaijan is promoting trans-regional projects, first of all, in oil and gas, delivering oil and gas from the Caspian sea to global markets via a network of pipelines.

I would ask my colleagues to join me to congratulate the people of Azerbaijan on the 92nd anniversary of Republic Day and to renew our commitment to further develop and strengthen the bonds between our two peoples.

*Remarks in Azerbaijani.*

#### LARRY RUDD

**Mr. Dave Levac:** I'll be seeking unanimous consent for a moment's silence after this statement.

On May 24 at 12:30 p.m. local time, Trooper Larry John Rudd, a 26-year-old soldier, was killed by an IED in Panjwayi, near Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Trooper Rudd was the fourth member of the Canadian military killed in Afghanistan in just one month. Trooper Rudd was on a routine security operation when he lost his life. He was known to his colleagues and his friends as the Gentle Giant. Someone who never complained, a friend to all, Trooper Rudd stood tall, both in his height at six foot six and in his maturity, by showing the utmost commitment, dedication and sacrifice to the Canadian Forces.

Trooper Rudd moved to Brantford at the age of 7 and made Brantford his home, where in his formative years he was a bouncer at a local bar: respected, befriended and never violent. He joined the armed forces in 2008. He was a member of the Royal Canadian Dragoons and served with the First Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment based in Petawawa, Ontario.

Trooper Rudd was the 146th Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan since 2009. Panjwayi district is the birthplace of the Taliban and is notoriously dangerous. He took it in stride. In June 2008, another Brantfordian, Captain Richard Leary, was killed there as well. Unfortunately, dozens of Canadians have been injured or killed in this district.

I can't begin to imagine the emotions that Trooper Rudd's family is feeling today. My thoughts and prayers at this time are with his mother, Helen Zuidema.

I deeply admire Trooper Rudd's bravery. I had the opportunity to meet and know him, and want to take a moment for us to remember him and all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and have given life and limb.

Let me offer an ancient Gaelic blessing to the family and friends in our community.

Deep peace of the running wave to you.

Deep peace of the flowing air to you.

Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.

Deep peace of the shining stars to you.

Deep peace of the gentle night to you.

Moon and stars pour their healing light on you.

Deep peace of Christ, the light of the world, to you.

God bless Trooper Rudd.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd ask all members and guests to observe a moment of silence in memory of Trooper Rudd.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

**M. Shafiq Qadri:** Je demande la permission de déposer un rapport du Comité permanent de la politique sociale et je propose son adoption.

I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption, and send it to you by way of page Emma.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 21, An Act to regulate retirement homes / Projet de loi 21, Loi réglementant les maisons de retraite.

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

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 20, 2010, the bill is ordered for third reading.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I beg leave to present a report on community mental health from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

1320

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** This is a report stemming from the auditor's report section 3.06, dealing with community mental health.

This report of the auditor outlined the many weaknesses with regard to the reporting and information we have about community health across the province of Ontario. I think it's fair to say that the public accounts committee felt that there needs to be significant improvements in the information which the Ministry of Community and Social Services is receiving in order for them to make proper allocations of resources across our province.

Presently, our system is basically one of giving more money to communities that have existing mental health services. There are 330 various agencies across our province delivering these kinds of services. The committee, I think, feels—as did the auditor—that there isn't a good enough grasp by the ministry of what services are being provided in what communities across our province. This leads, of course, to an unevenness or an unfairness in some communities, in not having the same kinds of mental health services as other communities have. Therefore, the majority of our recommendations deal with asking the ministry to report to the committee on how they are improving their collection of information and setting benchmarks for the provision of mental health services across the province of Ontario.

It is hoped that the committee will urge the ministry to speed up its process of finding the information that is necessary, so that the ministry and future governments can be fairer in allocating resources to all communities across Ontario; so that we can ensure that it's not just one particular community that has a service for handling a

problem for one of our citizens, but that all communities across Ontario will be treated equally.

With that, I will adjourn the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Sterling has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE AGAINST PICKETING ACT, 2010 LOI DE 2010 VISANT À PROTÉGER LES GENS VULNÉRABLES CONTRE LE PIQUETAGE

Ms. Jones moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 83, An Act to prevent picketing of supported group living residences / Projet de loi 83, Loi visant à empêcher le piquetage devant les résidences de groupe avec services de soutien.

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

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** On division.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Carried on division.

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** The bill governs the picketing of supported group living residences in connection with labour disputes. Section 3 of the bill would prohibit the picketing of supported group living residences where persons with developmental disabilities reside.

##### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT (PROTECTION OF DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN), 2010 LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES SERVICES À L'ENFANCE ET À LA FAMILLE (PROTECTION DES ENFANTS MENACÉS PAR LA DROGUE)

Mr. Dunlop moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 84, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act to provide protection to drug endangered children / Projet de loi 84, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille pour protéger les enfants menacés par la drogue.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** The bill amends the Child and Family Services Act to add drug-endangered children as a category of children in need of protection. A child is drug-endangered in circumstances such as those where a child is exposed to a substance that is used to illegally manufacture an illegal drug or is exposed to that manufacture or production.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
AMENDMENT ACT  
(STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS FOR  
HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION), 2010  
LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
(COMITÉ PERMANENT DES COMPTES  
PUBLICS SUR LES SOINS  
DE SANTÉ ET L'ÉDUCATION)

Mr. Ouellette moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 85, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act to establish the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for Health Care and Education / Projet de loi 85, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative pour créer le Comité permanent des comptes publics sur les soins de santé et l'éducation.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** The bill amends the Legislative Assembly Act to establish a new Standing Committee on Public Accounts for Health Care and Education.

Being that the ministries responsible for health care and education utilize in excess of 62% of the provincial budget, this bill establishes a new committee whose sole focus is working with the Auditor General directly in completely reviewing the ministries' operational and fiscal aspects pertaining to health care and education in the province of Ontario.

PROTECTION OF MINORS  
IN AMATEUR SPORTS ACT, 2010  
LOI DE 2010 SUR LA PROTECTION  
DES MINEURS PARTICIPANT  
À DES SPORTS AMATEURS

Mr. Ouellette moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 86, An Act to provide protection for minors participating in amateur sports / Projet de loi 86, Loi visant à protéger les mineurs qui participent à des sports amateurs.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** The bill enacts the Protection of Minors in Amateur Sports Act, 2010, with respect to amateur sports programs in which persons under 18 years of age may participate. An organizer of such a program is required to obtain a copy of the criminal record from a police force for every person who acts in a position in the program that involves dealing with persons under 18 years of age on a regular basis, whether or not the position is for remuneration. If the police force is legally prohibited from releasing a copy of the criminal record, the organizer is required instead to obtain a written response to that effect. The organizer must obtain a copy of the criminal record or the written response, as the case may be, no earlier than four years before the day on which the program begins or no later than 90 days after the day on which the program begins.

The positions affected include the positions of referee, other officials, trainer or coach. A person is not allowed to hold any of these positions without consenting to have a police force release a copy of his or her criminal record to the organizer.

The minister responsible for the administration of the act can appoint investigators to enter and inspect any premises without a warrant if the investigator has reasonable grounds to believe that an organizer of an amateur sport program is using it to run the program or to store a copy of the criminal record of a person acting in an affected position in respect of the program.

It is an offence to contravene the requirements that the act imposes on organizers and affected persons.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I move that, notwithstanding order 98(g), notice for ballot item 32 be waived.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

### 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 Monday, May 31, 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 1330 to 1335.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Ms. Smith has moved government notice of motion number 18. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

|                      |                    |                     |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Aggelonitis, Sophia  | Gerretsen, John    | Meilleur, Madeleine |
| Arthurs, Wayne       | Hoskins, Eric      | Moridi, Reza        |
| Balkissoon, Bas      | Jaczek, Helena     | Murray, Glen R.     |
| Bartolucci, Rick     | Jeffrey, Linda     | Naqvi, Yasir        |
| Bentley, Christopher | Johnson, Rick      | Pendergast, Leeanna |
| Best, Margaret       | Kular, Kuldip      | Qadri, Shafiq       |
| Brown, Michael A.    | Kwinter, Monte     | Ramal, Khalil       |
| Brownell, Jim        | Lalonde, Jean-Marc | Ruprecht, Tony      |
| Chiarelli, Bob       | Leal, Jeff         | Sandals, Liz        |
| Colle, Mike          | Levac, Dave        | Smith, Monique      |
| Delaney, Bob         | Mangat, Amrit      | Sousa, Charles      |
| Dickson, Joe         | McMeekin, Ted      | Van Bommel, Maria   |
| Flynn, Kevin Daniel  | McNeely, Phil      | Zimmer, David       |

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

#### Nays

|                  |                    |                     |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Arnott, Ted      | Elliott, Christine | O'Toole, John       |
| Bailey, Robert   | Gélinas, France    | Ouellette, Jerry J. |
| Barrett, Toby    | Hardeman, Ernie    | Prue, Michael       |
| Chudleigh, Ted   | Jones, Sylvia      | Tabuns, Peter       |
| Clark, Steve     | Kormos, Peter      | Yakabuski, John     |
| Dunlop, Garfield | Miller, Paul       |                     |

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 39; the nays are 17.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome in the west gallery Charles Beer, who represented York North in the 34th and 35th Parliaments. Charles, welcome back to Queen's Park today.

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK SEMAINE NATIONALE POUR L'INTÉGRATION DES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Today marks the beginning of National Access Awareness Week. It's a time for Canadians to think about what it means to live in a society that welcomes people of all abilities.

Nous célébrons cette année le cinquième anniversaire de l'adoption de la Loi de 2005 sur l'accessibilité pour les personnes handicapées de l'Ontario par l'Assemblée législative.

Under the act, we are developing province-wide accessibility standards to break down barriers to make key areas of everyday life more accessible for us all. Once in place, it will be the most comprehensive set of accessibility standards in the world. It's important for us to realize what this will mean for our province.

When people with disabilities cannot fully participate in our community, we miss out on our own potential.

Improving accessibility is critical to strengthening our economy. Canadians with disabilities spend \$25 billion every year and influence the spending decisions of 12 to 15 million other customers. Accessible businesses will be better positioned to attract these customers and will also be able to capitalize on an expanded labour market that includes Ontarians with disabilities.

N'oubliez pas non plus les personnes âgées. La population de la province vieillit. Cela veut dire qu'un grand nombre de personnes vont être confrontées à des obstacles qui leur étaient étrangers auparavant.

#### 1340

Accessible customer service is now a requirement for our broader public sector, and 96% of Ontario's broader public sector has either reported full compliance with the standard or is in the process of reporting.

Dans moins de deux ans, la norme d'accessibilité pour les services à la clientèle entrera en vigueur dans les entreprises privées et les organisations à but non lucratif. Nous tendons la main à ces organisations en leur fournissant les outils et l'information dont elles ont besoin pour assumer leurs engagements.

The development of the information and communication employment and transportation standards is currently under way. During the public review process, we heard consistently that businesses want the requirements of the standards to be aligned. We listened and we agree.

Notre prochaine étape consiste à incorporer les trois normes—emploi, transport, et information et communications—dans un projet de règlement rationalisé. Nous afficherons l'information au sujet de l'harmonisation de ces normes dans les prochains mois pour satisfaire au processus d'examen public.

This integrated approach will make the standards easier to understand and implement. It will offer greater flexibility and reduce costs and regulatory burden, all in keeping with our government's Open for Business initiative.

More information about the progress we are making towards an accessible Ontario is available in the 2009 annual report on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, which I have tabled in this House today.

I am also pleased to table the independent review of the AODA that was recently completed by Mr. Charles Beer, who is in the House today. From September to December 2009, Mr. Beer consulted extensively with individuals and organizations across the province. I would like to thank Mr. Beer for his dedication to this project.

Le rapport de M. Beer formule des recommandations spécifiques. Pour certaines d'entre elles, comme l'harmonisation des normes, je suis fière de vous annoncer que nous avons déjà fait de grandes avancées.

The progress we are making will make Ontario a world leader in accessibility. As we kick off National Access Awareness Week 2010, that is something we can all be proud of.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone in the House and those who have helped us to develop the standard. Thank you for your co-operation, thank you for making Ontario more accessible, and thank you for making Ontario a leader in accessibility.

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I rise today on behalf of Tim Hudak and the Progressive Conservative caucus to mark National Access Awareness Week. Each year, National Access Awareness Week encourages Canadians to think about and find ways to break down the barriers faced by individuals with disabilities. The barrier can be a building or a space design that limits mobility; communication that limits understanding of information or lack of technology that prevents information access; potentially limiting policies and practices; and attitudes that foster discrimination. "Access" means more than just removing barriers; it means changes in attitudes and supports that allow all people with visible or invisible disabilities to be part of community life.

People with learning, developmental and psychiatric disabilities or other invisible impairments should not be forgotten when we strive for equal access. National Access Awareness Week promotes access for all people with disabilities, including people with mobility, sensory, non-visible and intellectual disabilities. It is very important that we raise awareness for accessibility standards not only during this week of recognition but every day. I fully support the intent to break down the barriers for Ontarians with disabilities.

I recently had the opportunity to participate, alongside some of my colleagues in the House, in the Canadian Paraplegic Association Ontario's Chair-Leaders awareness event. I quickly found out my first barrier to accessibility not too long after I got into my chair that day. As I made my way to my office in this building, I realized that I could open my door and I could knock on my door, but I could not get in my door. I had to have my assistant come and open it for me. As I made my way through the narrow doorway to get to my office, I again had to ask someone to move a table so that I could have access to my own office.

While this experience gave me a deeper appreciation for what people in wheelchairs experience daily, I know that I only experienced a small portion of what that experience is like. I am sure there are many other daily tasks like grocery shopping, transportation and work that are more difficult and more time-consuming, which I did not get to experience.

I was happy to participate in this event and enjoyed meeting members of the Ontario branch of the Canadian Paraplegic Association and discussing with them the challenges they face with accessibility. I want to thank the Canadian Paraplegic Association for their advocacy and for involving MPPs and other politicians across the province in creating awareness. I'm sure this will bring

much discussion going forward as the province and municipalities discuss accessibility issues within their own communities.

I also want to thank David Lepofsky, the AODA and members of the disabled community who participated and presented at the committee on Bill 231, the Election Statute Law Amendment Act. I was happy to see that the amendments of the PC caucus addressed some of the concerns of the differently abled in our community. In all, our party had seven motions accepted by the government, which will ultimately strengthen accessibility during Ontario elections.

That said, a number of our attempts to improve accessibility were rejected. We tried to ensure involvement of the disability community by requiring the Chief Electoral Officer to consult with Ontarians. We tried to make information more accessible by requiring that documents be available on an accessible website. We tried to ensure that the most cost-effective and accessible means of voting in a provincial election would be available to all Ontarians. However, as I said, these proposed amendments, among others, were turned down.

While we made some progress in ensuring that our elections process is fair and accessible to all Ontarians, we know we can do better, and it is incumbent on us as legislators to keep that pressure on.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened intently to the minister, and she started by making the statement: "It's time for Canadians to think about what it means to live in a society that welcomes people of all abilities." I don't disagree with that statement, but I think a much stronger statement—and the statement that should have been made—is that it's time for Canadians and this Legislature to take all the initiatives that are necessary to make full participation a reality, and that's what I'd like to talk about today.

It was five years ago when we were in this House that the government introduced a bill and talked about making participation a reality for everyone in Ontario. Unfortunately, I think the one drawback to that bill was that it has a 25-year time span, and 25 years is a long time for people to wait to have equality. Twenty-five years is a long time in a government's or in any society's life to tell people they have to wait and wait. A child born at the time that legislation was proclaimed would be finished university and starting a job, never having known what it was like to have full equality.

I stand here today saying that I celebrate the contribution of people with disabilities, but I think the government needs to do far more than simply talk about it. The government needs to do far more than just say we're having more reports and more studies, and two years from now there are going to be some regulation changes. I believe that the government has an obligation, through the financial levers it has, to do a number of things.

The first is to start building supportive housing, especially for people who have disabilities. That would include individuals with mental health issues, addictions and disabilities of all types, so that they have supportive

housing, because we very often find that people with disabilities are among our poorest citizens.

The second thing that I think the government needs to do is increase the number of supportive housing units that are available to people with disabilities. I think we need to change that ratio, so that people have full access.

**1350**

We have to start looking at our attendant care legislation. For example, people with spinal cord injuries require more hours of attendant service than are currently available, and I am given to understand that most people are limited to three hours a day of attendant service once they find themselves in a chair, once they find, through spinal injuries, that they're no longer able to care totally for themselves. They are limited, most times, to three hours a day for attendant service, and I think we can do better.

We need to start looking at the inadequate Ontario disability support incomes for our most vulnerable people and those who are disabled, because right now, it's a maximum of about \$1,000 a month, which is totally inadequate to live in anything except poverty. It is tantamount, if you are disabled, for many people, to have your life lived in poverty. There's no real way out of it. I think we need to look, if people are disabled, that we can do better than simply giving them \$1,000 a month. I would suggest that if the government can find monies to bail out banks and to give tax breaks to the wealthy, then they should be able to find money for our most needy citizens.

I think the government has also removed key income supports, such as the special diet allowance, which isn't doing much to help those who are disabled in our community.

My colleague from the Conservative Party talked about changes to the Election Act. New Democrats voted against that act, not because we didn't like what was in the act but because we didn't think it did enough for the disabled community. David Lepofsky came and suggested some 20 amendments that could strengthen the act so that persons with disabilities could run for office and could vote. We put forward all 20 of those amendments. Every single one of them was defeated by the government. Accessible voting places was defeated by the government, accessible returning offices was defeated by the government, accessible ballots was defeated by the government, and accessible all-candidates meetings was defeated by the government. I think we, as a Legislature, have to say that we can do more, and we should have done more in that.

Last but not least, I want to just say that Gary Malkowski, a former member, is here, and he is advocating flashing-light smoke detectors. It's a small item. I hope the government is listening to that one.

## PETITIONS

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's a pleasure to read a petition. It's actually from Northumberland Hills Hospital. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the government-appointed local health integration network (LHIN) has approved a budget proposal by the Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) that includes plans to close 26 hospital beds, outpatient rehabilitation and the diabetes education clinic; and

"Whereas these cuts will leave no outpatient rehabilitation (including physio- and occupational therapy) available for patients in Northumberland county;"—Lou Rinaldi's riding—"and

"Whereas this cut leaves all patients with insulin-dependent diabetes without education and support that is vital to prevent serious health decline; and

"Whereas these cuts will result in for-profit privatization of hospital beds and services and new user fees for patients; and

"Whereas private, for-profit, unaccredited retirement homes are not safe or appropriate to house patients who need professional nursing and health care; and

"Whereas the NHH is considered a very efficient hospital in comparison with peer hospitals and the people of west Northumberland have already made a huge sacrifice regarding hospital services;

"Therefore be it resolved:

"That the McGuinty government act immediately to protect patients in Northumberland Hills, fund the hospital to maintain the current services, and stop the hospital bed and service cuts."

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of the coalition as well as the hospital employees.

### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have a petition from the people of Nickel Belt.

"Whereas the Ontario government is making ... PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients under" certain "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, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario."

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

### COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Mr. Dave Levac:** I appreciate this opportunity. This is dedicated on behalf of the hard-working members from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale and Hamilton

Mountain. This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas MTCU has notified Neighbour to Neighbour Centre (Hamilton) of its intent to close its employment services effective July 31, 2010;

“The Hamilton Mountain community requests that funding be continued so that Neighbour to Neighbour Centre (Hamilton) can continue to offer employment services and support to the most vulnerable in our community.”

I sign my name to this petition on behalf of those two hard-working members.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank Ted Shuh and the folks from Community Living North Grenville for the petition. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas almost 12,000 Ontario citizens who have an intellectual disability are on waiting lists for residential supports;

“Whereas another 7,000 individuals are waiting for other supports;

“Whereas 80% of the 1,500 parents providing primary care for their adult children waiting for residential services are over the age of 80;

“Whereas the government of Ontario made a commitment in 2007 to provide a 2% base funding increase to agencies providing developmental services every year up to 2010-11;

“Whereas the government has decided not to provide the 2% funding increase promised for the current year;

“Whereas the failure to honour this funding commitment will cause further deterioration of supports and services for people who have an intellectual disability;

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

“That the government of Ontario reinstate the 2% base funding increase promised four years ago to service providers in the developmental services sector.”

I'll sign the petition and present it to the table. It's been certified and I'll give it to page Dylan.

#### SERVICES DIAGNOSTIQUES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'ai une pétition des gens de Sudbury.

« Attendu que l'Ontario fait de la tomographie par émission de positons (TEP), un service de santé assuré par le régime public pour les patients atteints du cancer et de maladies cardiaques ...; et

« Attendu que » depuis « octobre 2009, des TEP assurées » sont « effectuées à Ottawa, à London, à Toronto, à Hamilton ainsi qu'à Thunder Bay; et

« Attendu que la ville du Grand Sudbury est une plaque tournante pour la santé dans le nord-est, qui compte l'Hôpital régional de Sudbury et son programme

régional de cancer, de même que l'École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario;

« Nous, soussignés, demandons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario d'offrir de la TEP par le biais de l'Hôpital régional de Sudbury, donnant ainsi un accès équitable aux résidents du nord-est de l'Ontario. »

J'appuie cette pétition et je demanderai au page Yidu de l'amener.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontarians with developmental disabilities deserve a system that is fair, simple and sustainable;

“Whereas the McGuinty government passed developmental services legislation and invested nearly half a billion dollars to strengthen and expand services;

“Whereas the McGuinty government is now helping over 16,000 people with developmental disabilities live in the community, close to their families and friends;

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

“That all members of the Ontario Legislature continue to support those with developmental disabilities and their families by supporting the government and its efforts and investments in transforming this sector to create a society where people with developmental disabilities are engaged and included in their communities.”

I've signed this petition and I fully support it. I'll pass it on to page Emma.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I present this petition on behalf of the member from Cambridge.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas almost 12,000 Ontario citizens who have an intellectual disability are on waiting lists for residential supports;

“Whereas another 7,000 individuals are waiting for other supports;

“Whereas 80% of the 1,500 parents providing primary care for their adult children waiting for residential services are over the age of 70;

**1400**

“Whereas the government of Ontario made a commitment in 2007 to provide a 2% base funding increase to agencies providing developmental services every year up to 2010-11;

“Whereas the government has decided not to provide the 2% funding increase promised for the current year;

“Whereas the failure to honour this funding commitment will cause further deterioration of supports and services for people who have an intellectual disability;

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

“That the government of Ontario reinstate the 2% base funding increase promised four years ago to service providers in the developmental services sector.”

I agree with the petition, send it down with Caroline and sign my name as well.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** I'm presenting this petition on behalf of 56 of my constituents in Wallaceburg and area.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas almost 12,000 Ontario citizens who have an intellectual disability are on waiting lists for residential supports;

“Whereas another 7,000 individuals are waiting for other supports;

“Whereas 80% of the 1,500 parents providing primary care for their adult children waiting for residential services are over the age of 80;

“Whereas the government of Ontario made a commitment in 2007 to provide a 2% base funding increase to agencies providing developmental services every year up to 2010-11;

“Whereas the government has decided not to provide the 2% funding increase promised for the current year;

“Whereas the failure to honour this funding commitment will cause further deterioration of supports and services for people who have an intellectual disability;

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

“That the government of Ontario reinstate the 2% base funding increase promised four years ago to service providers in the developmental services sector.”

#### ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus support public health care and protecting access to front-line care;

“Ontario families have already given Dalton McGuinty \$15 billion in health taxes, which was wasted on the \$1-billion eHealth scandal. Now the McGuinty Liberals are cutting front-line public health care and putting independent pharmacies at risk;

“Dalton McGuinty's cuts will:

“—reduce pharmacy hours during evenings and weekends,

“—increase wait times and lineups for patients,

“—increase the out-of-pocket fees people pay for their medication and its delivery,

“—reduce critical patient health care services for seniors and people with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and breathing problems;

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

“That the McGuinty government stop its cuts to pharmacies.”

I affix my name in full support.

#### REGISTERED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I present this petition on behalf of registered marriage and family therapists from around Ontario.

“Whereas the government's passing of the Psychotherapy Act, 2007 and the process in place to establish the new College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario is a great step in promoting and protecting the public when it accesses mental health services in the province; and

“Whereas the Ontario Association for Marriage and Family Therapy represents over 800 members and over 500 of whom are registered marriage and family therapists (RMFTs); and

“Whereas RMFTs have among the highest and most rigorous training standards of any mental health professional in Ontario, which includes a master's degree in marriage and family therapy or a related field; and

“Whereas family therapists are highly trained and uniquely qualified mental health professionals who work in hospitals, in family health teams, in family counselling agencies, in children's centres, in addictions agencies, in mental health agencies and in private practice; and

“Whereas the public needs to be able to easily distinguish and access the most appropriate specialist within the psychotherapy profession to meet their health care needs; and

“Whereas marriage and family therapy is a distinct mental health profession and has statutory recognition and title protection in all 50 US states and the province of Quebec; and

“Whereas specialty title recognition for registered marriage and family therapists (RMFTs) that formally recognizes this mental health service as a specialized distinct and separate profession within psychotherapy will assist the public in accessing the proper qualified mental health service provider to meet their specific needs;

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

“That specialty title recognition for registered marriage and family therapists be established in Ontario.”

I will affix my signature and give this to Luke.

#### 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.”

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas hundreds of individuals are in dire need of residential supports due to emergency and crisis situations;

“Whereas aging Ontarians who provide care for their loved ones in their family homes require support when they can no longer provide support themselves;

“Whereas the McGuinty government has supported the developmental services sector with unprecedented funding increases in past years, creating new spaces and client supports while strengthening agency base budgets and employee wages;

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

“That all members of the Ontario Legislature support those with developmental disabilities and their families by supporting the government’s decision to provide \$36 million in much-needed funding to care for those in emergency or crisis situations while not reducing transfers to agencies.”

I’ll affix my signature to it.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas almost 12,000 Ontario citizens who have an intellectual disability are on waiting lists for residential supports;

“Whereas another 7,000 individuals are waiting for other supports;

“Whereas 80% of the 1,500 parents providing primary care for their adult children waiting for residential services are over the age of 70;

“Whereas the government of Ontario made a commitment in 2007 to provide a 2% base funding increase to agencies providing developmental services every year up to 2010-11;

“Whereas the government has decided not to provide the 2% funding increase promised for the current year;

“Whereas the failure to honour this funding commitment will cause further deterioration of supports and services for people who have an intellectual disability;

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

“That the government of Ontario reinstate the 2% base funding increase promised four years ago to service providers in the developmental services sector.”

I support this petition and I am pleased to give it to page Joshua.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### OPEN FOR BUSINESS ACT, 2010

#### LOI DE 2010 FAVORISANT UN ONTARIO PROPICE AUX AFFAIRES

Mr. Gerretsen, on behalf of Ms. Papatello, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 68, An Act to promote Ontario as open for business by amending or repealing certain Acts / Projet de loi 68, Loi favorisant un Ontario propice aux affaires en modifiant ou en abrogeant certaines lois.

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

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I will be sharing my time with the member from Mississauga South.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Thank you very much. May I continue?

I’m pleased to begin the second reading debate on our government’s proposed Open for Business Act. As I mentioned before, I’ll be sharing my time with the member from Mississauga South.

An important part of this legislation is that, if passed, it would ensure that the environment is rigorously protected while introducing a faster and more efficient approvals system. In fact, our aim is to enhance environmental protections as well as public transparency.

To accomplish both of these goals while also making Ontario a great place to do business, we simply need to modernize our approvals processes within the Ministry of the Environment. We need a smarter, faster, better system that reflects the environmental values of the 21st century and the way business is done in today’s world.

Under the current process, the Ministry of the Environment receives more than 6,000 requests for certificates of approval each and every year. Every single one of those applications is subjected to exactly the same process, even though they do not all require the same level of review. A significant number of the applications we receive are for activities that pose a low risk to the environment and to human health.

#### 1410

On top of that, the current system is a paper-based system that has been in effect for well over 30 years. We’ve sometimes received applications, quite frankly, that filled rooms with boxes and boxes of paper. It is clear that we need an updated system to reflect both the environmental and economic values of the 21st century.

Last September, we took the first step by eliminating a backlog of some 1,700 applications, some of which were outstanding for up to 18 months. Yet quite often, the

organizations that needed these certificates were operating during the time that the approval process was taking to actually approve those certificates, and that simply wasn't correct. Therefore, in March of this year, we launched the Ministry of the Environment's searchable electronic certificates of approval library. This online library enhances the transparency of the certificates of approval process and makes it easier for businesses to find and access past certificates of approval.

We've already received a very positive response from many and numerous stakeholders on this new electronic library. Now we want to move forward with a proposed new risk-based approach to environmental approvals. The proposed legislation, if passed, would allow for the creation of a searchable online registry for activities that pose a lower risk for the environment. This would allow us to focus our resources within the ministry and efforts on the approvals process for the high-risk activities that pose the greatest threat to the environment and to our public health. It would reduce paper and allow us to concentrate on environmental outcomes and further our goals in protecting the environment and human health. Our concerns within the Ministry of the Environment and within the government should always be about the environmental outcomes rather than the processes.

Our new approach would also increase public transparency by creating a searchable public website with detailed information on all the activities, both the high-risk as well as the low-risk ones, that are subject to approval or registration in Ontario. This web-based electronic system would make it easier for any member of the public to look up the details of any activity that might be taking place near their homes or businesses. This would make it faster and easier for Ontarians to get the information they need without having to resort to time-consuming and costly freedom-of-information requests, which is currently the case. It will also facilitate public oversight and appeals, helping us ensure compliance with our regulations.

Let me absolutely assure this House and everyone who may be listening or watching that all registered activities will continue to be subjected to a full range of compliance tools, including audits, field inspections and orders, in order to maintain and enhance the protection of the environment and public health. There's nothing in this bill that takes anything away from the strong protections with respect to the environment that we currently have in this province of Ontario. At the same time, the act would make it easier for businesses to work with government by introducing a more flexible and user-friendly approach that remains fully protective of our environment.

Under the current system, for example, a large manufacturing plant may require multiple approvals for emissions to air, land and water. This quite often leads to a complex process for both the manufacturer as well as the ministry. The new process that we are proposing would enable a single multi-media approval for the whole plant, covering all types of emissions. Not only would this be a more efficient way to process the appli-

cation; it would also enable us to assess the plant in a holistic fashion. We would be better able to assess all of the combined impacts of the plant on the environment and on human health. It would allow us to look at the cumulative impact on the environment that those in the environmental community, quite frankly, have been advocating for years. Now, this is not something that is as easy with the current process, since it requires several different applications and approvals for a single plant.

The new process we are proposing would clearly enhance our ability to protect our environment. The new system would also introduce operational flexibility to allow the applicant to make certain changes to their facility without having to apply for an amendment to the approval. Again, environmental protection would, as always, be paramount here, and operational flexibility would only apply if the proposed changes were within certain previously defined bounds.

These proposed innovations to the approvals process are based on our best scientific knowledge. We are far more aware today than in previous generations about how certain industrial activities that are commonplace today will impact our environment, and we are better able to adjust our approvals process so that it's flexible while remaining fully protective of the environment.

On that note, I should add that the proposed act, if passed, would also enable us to level the playing field in terms of approvals. Under the current system, some older facilities are operating under earlier environmental approvals that, quite frankly, no longer meet our current standards.

We propose to deal with this by putting in place a periodic updating procedure requiring facilities to apply for regular reviews of their approvals. Once again, this simple step would enhance our environmental protections by ensuring that all facilities, even the older ones, are in line with the latest and best science on the issue.

This would be a modern and effective way of dealing with approvals, and it would put Ontario in line with the way the world is doing this right now. This risk-based approach is already up and running successfully in other jurisdictions, including New York state, the state of California and the United Kingdom. Here in Canada, it's being used in British Columbia and Saskatchewan will soon follow. We want to join these modern regulators at the forefront of environmental protection.

We have consulted widely on this proposal to modernize the approvals system. Earlier this year, we posted our approach on the Environmental Registry. Last winter, we began a series of round tables with experts from the business community and environmental organizations, and we are still getting positive and constructive feedback on the proposed legislation from them. We have also held focus meetings with smaller groups of non-governmental environmental organizations to ensure that environmental protection remains front and centre in all of our concerns.

Let me share with you today some of the feedback—some of the comments—we received during the consultation process.

Bob Oliver, executive director of Pollution Probe, said that his organization “supports Ontario’s commitment to build a streamlined modern approvals system that is good for business while protecting the environment.” He went on to say, “The proposed risk-based approach could help achieve this balance.”

We’ve also had support from the Ontario Environment Industry Association, ONEIA, which held, as you may recall, its annual environment industry day here at Queen’s Park within the last couple of weeks.

We’ve heard many positive reactions from others as well. Ian Howcroft, vice-president of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters of Ontario said, “We are very pleased with the introduction of today’s legislation that will address many of the concerns and challenges that have long impeded businesses. We operate in a new economic normal and these reforms will ensure Ontario’s open for business by removing outdated processes and unnecessary red tape. This is a big step forward for Ontario.”

**1420**

Elyse Allan, who is the president and CEO of General Electric of Canada, said, “I applaud the government’s move to reduce business costs by streamlining regulations and harmonizing them with other jurisdictions, where possible ... With regulatory simplification and recent changes in the tax structure, the Ontario government has taken important steps to make Ontario an attractive place for companies to invest and create jobs.”

Adrianna Stech, manager of environment and sustainability for the Ontario Mining Association, has said, “To the mining community, the proposed framework for modernizing environmental approvals signifies a welcome move toward enhancing the business climate in the province on a par with other leading jurisdictions, while improving the efficiency and efficacy of environmental protection measures and ensuring worker health and safety.”

As we work to implement this approach, we will continue to consult these and other stakeholders. We will invite further input from the round table groups and sectors and others, should Ontario develop regulations and implement the proposed changes. As a matter of fact, we’ve already set up an aboriginal technical working committee to discuss the proposed changes, and this committee met for the first time in April.

If the legislation is passed, we plan to gradually roll out the new requirements over the course of 2011 and 2012, so the system is not going to change overnight.

We know that Ontarians want a strong and competitive economy, but they also want a very strong environmental system in place. A healthy and clean environment is best for all of us. We, as a government, believe that and we honestly believe that we can have both. This is what our proposed new approvals process would achieve.

We’ve also heard from some in the environmental community and they have stated a number of concerns to us. I just want to address a couple of them. The en-

vironmental community wants to ensure that the environment will be protected as a result of these proposed measures, so let me assure you that this will be the case. Let me just give you a couple of reasons for that.

Issuing multimedia and site-wide approvals means we can better assess potential environmental impacts from an ecosystem perspective. As I mentioned before, it will give us the ability to start looking at the cumulative effect of the necessary approvals. That was not the case in the past.

The online registry will provide far greater transparency. Anyone in this province will be able to look up information about environmental approvals and registrations in their community without having to resort to a freedom-of-information request or process.

The new process would require existing facilities with approvals issued decades ago to come back to the ministry for review to ensure that the compliance meets today’s much tougher stringent standards than standards that may have been in place 10 or 20 years ago.

The requirement for mandatory reviews could also be incorporated into the new approvals process. By using a risk-based approach, the ministry staff can actually focus their efforts on those proposals that are more complex and pose a greater risk to the environment. Today, each and every application is looked at in exactly the same light.

Through electronic submissions, we will be better able to look at applications in the broader context of their location and get a better understanding of the potential environmental impacts.

The other concern that has been raised by the environmental community deals with the whole concept of the registry. We’ve also heard from some of them that they are concerned about where exactly the line would be drawn between those proposals that will go on the registry and those that would require an environmental compliance approval and what this means for public consultation.

We understand that where you draw that line between the so-called simple, low-risk processes and the high-risk processes is going to be a tough call and that’s going to be the determining factor as to whether or not we’re going to be successful.

Now, let me say once again, if this legislation is passed, we will be consulting extensively to develop the rules that would allow a proposed activity to be placed on the registry; this is not going to be done overnight. That would be done, ultimately, through regulation. Detailed information on activities on the registry and those obtaining an approval would be available and searchable on a public information website, as I stated before.

Should this bill pass and a registry be implemented, the process to address issues raised by the public for registered activities that are low-risk would include inquiries or complaints which would be made to the local district office, and our environmental officers would investigate any concerns. Any contraventions could mean a suspension from the registry. If the facility is in com-

pliance but there are some site-specific concerns, the activity could also be moved from the registry to the environmental compliance approval system.

Ministry oversight in environmental protection is and will remain paramount. The new system would be improved and modern and still maintain and enhance, wherever possible, the highest possible environmental protection.

I would urge all members of this House to stand up for the kind of future we envision for the province of Ontario, to bring this system that has been around for the last 30 or 40 years into the 21st century and support this bill, which is good for the environment and good for our economy.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from Mississauga South.

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I am pleased to rise in the Legislature this afternoon to join in the debate on Bill 68, the Open for Business Act. Since the McGuinty government came into office in 2003, we have demonstrated a commitment to working with the business community to address barriers to investment and growth. Our balanced approach to strengthening the economy has lowered business costs while we continue to invest in the things that matter most to Ontarians: health, education, poverty reduction and the environment—all of which give Ontario a competitive advantage.

As the economy continues to recover from the sharpest economic decline since the 1930s, we are continuing our work to make Ontario the best place to start and grow a business. The Open Ontario plan, introduced as part of our 2010 provincial budget, is designed to open the province to new ideas and new investment, and Bill 68, the Open for Business Act, supports our economic plan.

Make no mistake: In order to compete in the global economy, Ontario must be open for business. In order to secure the next generation of jobs for Ontario families, Ontario must be open for business. And in order to help Ontario small business to achieve their full potential, Ontario must be open for business.

As a director of the American Chamber of Commerce, as a member of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, I understand the challenges faced by business. The business community is tired of dealing with complicated government applications, poor coordination between the levels of government and lengthy times for approvals. Three words sum up the more than 100 amendments from 10 ministries within the Open for Business Act: simpler, better and faster. Bill 68 will make things simpler for business by improving approvals and modernizing services. The proposed legislation will make it better for business by harmonizing Ontario's legislation with our neighbouring jurisdictions and lightening the administrative burden. Through improving government business services, Bill 68 will help provide faster services and approvals to the business community.

We can continue to protect the public interest and provide adequate government oversight without creating

unnecessary barriers to business. By making it simpler, better and faster for business to interact with government, all Ontarians will benefit in the form of increased investment and more jobs.

As a former business owner and as a banker to businesses, I appreciate first-hand the challenges imposed on small and medium-sized enterprise activities. As a member on the Small Business Agency of Ontario, the message given to me was loud and clear. The message was: In order for business to increase its competitiveness and improve its efficiencies, it requires governments to be more sensitive and responsive.

**1430**

I am proud to be part of a government that not only listens but has acted to implement sweeping changes that will enable greater opportunity for Ontario businesses. We call this change the Open for Business Act, and that's why, since the introduction of the bill, many prominent business associations have stepped in in support of the Open for Business Act. Ian Howcroft, the vice-president of CME for Ontario, supports Bill 68, saying the proposed legislation "will address many of the concerns and challenges that have long impeded businesses. We operate in a new economic normal and these reforms will ensure Ontario is open for business by removing outdated processes and unnecessary red tape. This is a big step forward for Ontario."

It's not just big business that is supportive. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has also praised the McGuinty government's efforts. Satinder Chera, CFIB's Ontario director, had this to say: "For too long, governments at all levels have been oblivious to the negative consequences of too much regulation on the job-creating small business sector. Today's announcement is another sign that Ontario is getting the message."

As a government, we recognize the importance of reducing the administrative burden on the small business community, and Bill 68 will deliver significant cost and time savings that will help entrepreneurs and small business owners to focus their efforts on growing their business and creating jobs for Ontario families. It's not just manufacturers that are supportive. Environmental groups have also been part of the consultation process and recognize the importance of moving to a modern, risk-based system.

Bob Oliver, executive director of Pollution Probe, had this to say: "Pollution Probe supports Ontario's commitment to build a streamlined modern approval system that is good for business while protecting the environment. The proposed risk-based approach could help achieve this balance. Pollution Probe looks forward to ongoing consultation on this process."

From these varied organizations, the message is clear: Ontario has listened and has acted. Our balanced approach and our thorough consultation process will bring cost and time savings to the business community, better protecting the environment by focusing our efforts on high-risk activities.

Let's take a closer look at just a few of the amendments in the Open for Business Act. The Employment

Standards Act has been frequently cited as a concern for business and is an area where Bill 68 will provide significant improvement. Among other things, the proposed changes would encourage employees and employers to settle disputes at an early stage, avoiding unnecessary costs for both parties and allowing employment standards officers to focus on the current backlog of claims. By eliminating the claims backlog, the Ministry of Labour can focus on public education and outreach and conduct more proactive inspections that would reach more workplaces.

Again, we have taken a balanced approach to growing the economy, and the proposed changes to the Employment Standards Act will deliver results for businesses, while providing fairness for workers.

The amendments to the Highway Traffic Act brought forward by the Ministry of Transportation will harmonize Ontario's requirements with the rest of the province in a range of areas, including: harmonizing vehicle-width exemptions with other provinces; phasing out the need for special permits relating to the length of recreational vehicles; and ensuring Ontario's vehicle-length regulations for full trailers meet obligations.

All of these changes have great potential for the business community. Let me explain quickly. Not having to apply for special permits, businesses will reduce their operating costs, and the harmonization of requirements with other provinces will enhance the movement of goods and people. This is good for Ontario's trucking and passenger industries and our economy. These changes would reduce the regulatory burden on businesses. It would also meet standards endorsed by the Council of Ministers of Transportation in support of the Ontario-Quebec trade and co-operation agreement. Furthermore, the proposed changes to the Dangerous Goods Transportation Act allow for the timely adoption of federal rules and would reflect the most current safety practices for transporting dangerous goods, a measure that will also reduce the duplication of efforts between the province and the federal government.

One set of rules makes it easier for businesses to comply and will continue to keep our roads among the safest in North America.

In addition to reducing the administrative burden on Ontario businesses, Bill 68 also supports a strong workforce. The Ministry of the Attorney General is proposing amendments to the Professional Engineers Act that will align definitions and licence requirements with inter-provincial and international expectations and improve self-governance mechanisms. This includes the removal of unnecessary citizenship requirements for individuals who apply for a professional engineer's licence. These amendments have been proposed by the Professional Engineers Ontario council, the governing body of the profession, and will make the administration of the engineering profession in Ontario more efficient.

In addition to responding to specific changes requested by stakeholders, the Open for Business Act will also modernize many pieces of existing legislation. Take,

for example, the proposed changes to the Construction Lien Act, also brought forward by the Ministry of the Attorney General. If passed, these would be the first substantive changes to the legislation in 20 years. The proposed changes to the Construction Lien Act would help ensure that courts are only involved in construction disputes when needed, by broadening the definition of the term "improvement."

It would clarify the lien process for condominiums and the right to cross-examine those who have registered liens.

It would protect the rights of claimants with sheltered liens, regardless of whether the original lien has been dealt with or resolved.

The Council of Ontario Construction Associations represents more than 10,000 construction businesses that employ more than 400,000 skilled tradespeople and has come out in support of these proposed amendments.

COCA president Ian Cunningham says: "The Open for Business Act is a significant victory for COCA and for Ontario's institutional, commercial, industrial and heavy civil construction industry, especially small businesses. COCA is very grateful to Attorney General Bentley and to Economic Development and Trade Minister Papatello for making these changes a priority in the government's mandate."

All of the ministries that have brought forward amendments to be included in the Open for Business Act have taken great care to ensure that these changes will continue to protect consumers, workers and the environment. By creating a more focused regulatory environment and providing clearer rules, we can ensure stronger and more rigorous compliance while improving the relationship between government and business.

The days of government and business acting in isolation are over. We recognize that success in the global economy depends on the public and private sectors working together to address barriers to investment and growth. The Open for Business Act, Bill 68, delivers significant changes that will save Ontario businesses both time and money.

Let me say again: We will continue to protect the public interest and provide appropriate government oversight without creating unnecessary barriers to business. Securing our place as a leader in the global economy depends on Ontario being open for business.

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

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I appreciate the opportunity to respond on Bill 68, the Open for Business Act.

There were some aspects that I didn't hear any comments about and I would have liked to have heard about. He mentioned the environmental organizations who had strong support. However, there's one provision in there where the selling off of conservation lands no longer requires ministerial approval. One of the difficulties that may end up coming down the line is that it's not initially the primary sale; it's potentially secondary and third sales that come off those lands that will—and can—impact communities greatly.

I know that in the past there were a number of areas that we looked at where potentially those lands were being sought after by developers yet they wanted to be protected by communities. By eliminating the minister's ability to sign off on that, that may open it up to those lands being sold off for development as opposed to what they were initially designed to do, which was to protect certain areas.

**1440**

He spoke about the MTO's jurisdictional consistency throughout a number of jurisdictions in basically the northeastern states. There are regulations or an ongoing standard that allows for those communities to maintain standards so that all the trucking industries and all the carrying industries essentially are there.

I'm not sure—I have not heard—how that will be different, other than that recreational vehicles are being allowed to tow and the dimensions on that. I know there was some concern regarding firefighters: the width of their trucks and allowances that need to be reviewed in that area. Hopefully, that will be brought in.

He spoke about dangerous goods and reporting. Having the privilege to sit on the public accounts committee, I know there were a number of suggestions that we made regarding dangerous goods and the transportation, regulation and reporting of them. The difficulty was that there was no consistency in the reporting to ensure the safety of those dangerous goods as they move through the system. I certainly hope that has been tightened up to make sure those dangerous goods are properly transported in the province of Ontario.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I listened intently to both spokespersons for the government, and I heard a lot of generalizations. I also heard a failure to deal with two or three rather serious specific issues.

In their background notes, the government says it wants to reform the Employment Standards Act because there is a backlog of complaints from workers about not being treated fairly by employers: workers who are not being paid vacation pay, workers who are not being paid overtime and workers who are not being paid—period. I would like to have seen something in the legislation to address that, but I didn't hear anything. When I look at the legislation, I must say I don't see anything that will address that. In fact, what I see is the opposite. Workers in a non-unionized situation are very precarious to start with. I think this legislation would make it even more precarious for them. I wanted to hear something from the government on that, and I didn't.

The other thing that I think we all need to recognize is that the government does intend here to rather substantially loosen up some of the environmental rules. I want to remind all members that the Bush administration thought it was a good idea to loosen up the environmental rules dealing with the oil industry to make it easier for them to drill: fewer regulations and less stringent regulations in terms of drilling for oil. They said

it would promote energy security and jobs. Well, if I look at what is happening in the United States today, people are worried about the loss of jobs and really worried about the environmental impacts.

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

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I'm very pleased to speak to this bill today. I think I would just like to mention, first of all, that we're not talking about loosening up environmental requirements but looking at taking on a new approach with ministry staff. I just had a couple of applications come in from an industry that is going to reduce greenhouse gases, is going to save on local pollution and is going to be very good for the environment.

But they have a long process. They have to get the design of their system in place. They have to start thinking of pre-ordering equipment, because there's a six- or nine-month ordering time for the special equipment they need. Then they want to make sure, when they have this investment of \$2 million or \$3 million on this process that's going to reduce trucking a great deal, that they can get it in place and have their investment working for them.

So I think it's more collaboration, and I'm really pleased about what I heard from the Minister of Transportation today. It's collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment to make sure they understand the economics of what a business has to do, what they have to go through and what they want in the end. They can't stand to have \$3 million and \$4 million sitting there for another six or eight months on a standard approval process. I think we work together. That is what we should do. What we're trying to do is make jobs for families. That's what it's in the interests of. So it's very easy, without lowering the standards whatsoever, to work collaboratively with industry who have good ideas to work for the benefit of creating jobs in our province of Ontario. I really commend the Minister of the Environment for what he said on this today.

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

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Open Ontario certainly sounds like a wonderful idea, and it would be a wonderful idea if in fact it was going to happen. The problem with this government is that it has a track record, and the track record would—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** People with memories—and I'm sure the member from along the north channel up there in Manitoulin Island remembers very well when De Beers was opening their diamond mine, they invested almost a billion dollars—a billion dollars of investment. That is a lot of money. It's almost as much money as this government wasted on eHealth—a billion dollars.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Almost.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Almost. They invested that money into a diamond mine in northern Ontario, and they did that under the understanding that when they started mining diamonds, they would pay a royalty to the

province of Ontario for every carat of diamond they took out of the ground. Of course, they based the development of their mine on the royalties they would be paying. Lo and behold, about a week before the mine opens, the Premier of Ontario shows up and practically doubles the royalty that Ontario is charging to De Beers.

Now that shut down Ontario's mining sector because no one in the world trusts this government anymore. This government isn't trustworthy.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Order.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** In the world of mining, Ontario is known very much like a banana republic because you've destroyed Ontario's good word—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Stop the clock. Thank you.

The member from Halton will continue.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Apparently we've hit a nerve, Madam Speaker.

When you break your word and you allow people to develop things in Ontario and then change the rules at the last minute, you're not opening Ontario, you're closing Ontario. This government should be ashamed of themselves for what they've done to northern Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The Minister of the Environment has up to two minutes to respond.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I will deal with some of the issues as they relate to the modernization of the environmental approvals process.

I'll be the first to admit that everyone fears change. Whenever something changes in our life and we don't know exactly what's next, we fear the potential result. I can well understand how within the environmental community there may be some fear that this is a loosening of environmental standards. I can tell you that this is absolutely not the case. When you look at all of the environmental regulations that we have in place with respect to air, with respect to water, with respect to land, I think everyone would agree that they are a lot, lot tougher than they were 30 or 40 years ago when this particular process was first put into being.

We are now 40 years later. We are still doing everything in paper mode, and we're still looking at everything, from the certificate of approval process, in exactly the same way—whether we're dealing with a relatively small unit, for example, the expansion of a heating system in a building, to building a huge, modern plant with a lot of outputs in both air and water. That simply isn't right. We should be putting our resources where they are most required, and they are for the high-risk activities.

Other progressive jurisdictions have taken the move that we're taking in this bill. If you look at the United Kingdom, they approved this kind of an approach many years ago. California and New York state, which are two of the more progressive states in the US, have done this. British Columbia has done it.

It is time that we bring our processes and systems into the 21st century, that we start computerizing particularly those parts that are of low risk. That's exactly what this bill is about. It is not about lowering our environmental standards in the province of Ontario.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to see that after almost seven years in office, the McGuinty government has finally seen fit to introduce a red tape reduction act. Now, of course, they do not call it a red tape reduction act; they want to call it "Open for Business" because using the term "red tape" would lead people to ask why they have done nothing for almost two terms in office to cut red tape for businesses and citizens.

**1450**

We know that red tape and overregulation are huge problems for businesses and citizens in Ontario. Let's take a minute to distinguish between red tape and proper regulation. Important regulations include issues regarding health and safety. They're designed to increase consumer confidence. They set up a level playing field for legitimate business, because everyone understands that the rules apply equally to everyone else. Regulations of that nature are both necessary and helpful. They create a healthy business climate.

Red tape, on the other hand, means overlap; duplication; a burden on business and individuals that's time-consuming, that can be expensive, that you can't have billing time cover; and it has the effect of decreasing consumer confidence because people begin to cut corners. This is too much of a burden, and so they're looking for ways to reduce that burden on themselves. What is the effect? Well, it has the effect of stimulating the underground economy. That's the only part of the economy that grows when you have red tape.

In January, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the CFIB, highlighted the devastating effects of red tape on small businesses. As part of the first-ever red tape awareness week, the CFIB released the report *Prosperity Restricted by Red Tape*, revealing the annual cost associated with red tape in Canada to be an estimated \$30 billion. In their January paper, the CFIB identified the burden of government regulation as a priority for business at 65%, second only to the total tax burden at 75%. Government members should remember this if they claim that the new sales tax will reduce the regulatory burden. The only item that worries small businesses more than overregulation is higher taxes. The aim should be to reduce both of them.

The CFIB stated in 2007 that this government makes no attempt to control red tape, either the size of the regulatory workload or the regulatory cost government imposes on small business. The CFIB said that additional regulation pours out uncontrollably from all levels of government. They also say that government regulation now far exceeds small business's capacity to cope and government's capacity to administer, communicate or enforce.

The CFIB's 2010 report provided some stark numbers about the costs of meeting government regulation on business owners: 73% reported it added significant stress to their lives; 62% said it takes significant time away from family and friends; 51% said they spent a significant amount of time on regulation outside normal working hours; 54% said it impeded their ability to compete with larger firms; and 63% said it significantly reduced their business productivity.

They report that the cost of regulation in 2008 dollars in Ontario alone was almost \$11 billion. The study also asked small businesses what they would do if regulatory costs were reduced: 54% said they would invest in equipment or expansion; 46% said they would pay down debt; and 28% would hire more employees.

Some more of the highlights of the report include: Only Manitoba beat Ontario on a measure of whether or not CFIB members felt red tape had increased in their province over the previous three years. "There have been no commitments made by the McGuinty government on publicly measuring the burden of regulation," says the report on page 18. In their regulatory accountability progress report, the CFIB gives three thumbs down for Ontario for no publicly reported measure for red tape, no current measurement of red tape and no permanent or legislated commitment to report on red tape.

Let's take a look at the Liberal record on red tape. The 2003 Ontario Liberal Plan for Economic Growth said, "We will convert the Red Tape Commission to make it an agency specifically devoted to meeting the needs of small business." This House should know that the Liberals did no such thing. The McGuinty government abolished the commission in 2004, and the only thing they have done to fight red tape in the years since is to issue a press release in March 2009 claiming they would cut regulations by 25% over two years—that was last March. That was 14 months ago.

In the spring, they did nothing. In the summer, they did nothing. Through the fall and the winter, they did nothing. Now, finally, they're introducing a bill to fight red tape. After seven years, someone on the other side of the House has realized to some extent that red tape kills jobs and restricts prosperity.

It's not as if they didn't have examples of what they should do. If we want some examples of what can be done, we need only look to British Columbia. British Columbia is a prime example of a provincial government offering action, not just words. The BC government has removed more than 151,000 needless regulations since 2001, a reduction of over 42%. If each regulation was represented by a single sheet of paper, it would make a pile 54 feet high. BC is committed to maintaining a net zero increase in regulatory requirements. In fact, in 2001, the government promised to reduce regulation by one third. Through deregulation and regulatory reform efforts, they exceeded their target, reducing regulations by 42%.

This is how BC said they did it: first, by identifying a minister responsible for deregulation. The minister

championed the initiative and reported to colleagues and to the public on government's progress.

Number 2: establishing a regulatory reform office responsible for leading the initiative. The office is located in the Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development.

Number 3: establishing a baseline measure by counting all regulatory requirements contained in provincial legislation and accompanying regulations and policies. This central database established a starting point so they could monitor their progress.

Number 4: reviewing existing legislation by developing and implementing three-year plans that laid out when each ministry would be reviewing existing regulation. Priority was given to regulation that affected economic competitiveness.

Number 5: controlling new regulation by creating a regulatory reform policy that sets out criteria that must be used to develop and assess new regulations. Ministers must certify that proposed legislation and regulations have been developed using the criteria and provide rationales for any deviations.

Setting targets and reporting on performance was number 6. Targets are set out in annual three-year service plans. The minister responsible for the initiative reports quarterly to cabinet on government's progress. These progress reports are also published.

#### 1500

When British Columbia started in 2001, the province had 360,118 regulatory requirements. As of their progress report on October 31, 2009, BC was down to 207,209 regulatory requirements. In Ontario, I doubt the province even knows how many regulatory requirements it has. In BC, they know exactly how many, and how much they have reduced. Maybe the McGuinty government should consult some of their colleagues in the British Columbia Liberal government to see how it's done. I know that the BC Liberal government is full of small-c conservatives, but it also has a lot of real Liberals in it, although they are obviously not the same as Ontario Liberals. Their views on the importance of strong businesses are certainly worlds apart.

BC has also done a lot of work in the area of labour mobility. They signed a trade, investment and labour mobility agreement so that skilled workers regulated in both BC and Alberta can freely practise their occupations in both places without added regulatory requirements like material exams or training. It also streamlined business registration and reporting requirements so that businesses registering in one province will automatically be recognized by the other.

To see an excellent system to deal with new regulations, we must also look to Alberta. The Alberta government established a Regulatory Review Secretariat with clearly outlined principles: necessity, effectiveness, proportionality, transparency, accountability and consistency. The Regulatory Review Secretariat is an agency with real powers in the Alberta government. Every department must obtain a compliance statement from the

secretariat before they can pass any regulation. Obtaining a compliance statement is a prerequisite to filing a regulation. There is no reason Ontario couldn't have a regulatory review process of equal strength to determine if any proposed regulation is necessary and workable.

When the Progressive Conservative government was in office we had a Red Tape Commission, which advised the government on reducing regulations and making government work better for businesses and citizens. Before it was abolished by the Liberals, the commission worked by: reviewing and commenting on ministry policy, legislative and regulatory proposals before they proceed to cabinet; coordinating the regular introduction of the red tape reduction and government efficiency legislation; reviewing red tape reduction plans developed by ministries as part of their annual business plans; working as an advocate to assist small businesses, institutions and individuals with specific problems; undertaking special red tape reduction projects and consultations, including the Fewer Forms, Faster Service project and working with the Ministry of Finance's small business advisory committee to simplify tax administration in Ontario; and engaging in communications and outreach activities to meet with business and other community interests to discuss red tape problems and solutions.

The commission achieved results. The commission coordinated the passage of 15 red tape reduction and government efficiency acts. These acts helped to repeal over 80 outdated statutes and amend well over 200 other acts. In addition, the commission worked with the ministries and their agencies to remove over 2,000 outdated and unnecessary regulations. The commission also helped over 200 small business owner-operators, institutions and individuals with their specific red tape problems. The CFIB even recommended that the federal government establish a red tape commission similar to Ontario's Red Tape Commission: 75% of CFIB survey "respondents favour the federal government setting up a red tape commission, following the successful Ontario example."

In 2003, Prime Minister Paul Martin appointed Mr. Hugh MacDiarmid as the chair of the federal government's External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation. The federal budget provided \$4 million over two years to support this work. Think of it. Even the last federal Liberal government recognized the importance of fighting red tape, before the McGuinty government even took office.

The Ontario Liberals seem to be the last Liberals to wake up and realize how important red tape is as a problem. One of their first acts was to kill our Red Tape Commission. It was more important to them to eliminate a PC government initiative than to use it to help businesses create jobs.

Fighting red tape has become a priority for governments throughout the world. Many of them are our economic competitors, and they are acting.

If this government wants an example of quick action, they should look to the United Kingdom. On May 20, the

new coalition government introduced its program for government. Liberal members should know that this program represents the views of British Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, their sister party in the UK.

Here are some of the points on what the new coalition wants to do when it comes to business and red tape.

"The government believes that business is the driver of economic growth and innovation, and that we need to take urgent action to boost enterprise, support green growth and build a new and more responsible economic model. We want to create a fairer and more balanced economy, where we are not so dependent on a narrow range of economic sectors, and where new businesses and economic opportunities are more evenly shared between regions and industries."

Then it gets down to specifics. Here are some of the proposals that could be relevant for Ontario:

"We will cut red tape by introducing a 'one-in, one-out' rule whereby no new regulation is brought in without other regulation being cut by a greater amount.

"We will end the culture of 'tick-box' regulation, and instead target inspections on high-risk organisations through co-regulation and improving professional standards.

"We will impose 'sunset clauses' on regulations and regulators to ensure that the need for each regulation is regularly reviewed....

"We will give the public the opportunity to challenge the worst regulations....

"We will make it easier for people to set up new enterprises by cutting the time it takes to start a new business. Our ambition is to make the UK one of the fastest countries in the world to start up a new business. We will reduce the number of forms needed to register a new business, and move towards a 'one-click' registration model."

Keep in mind that these are not just Conservative proposals; they are part of a coalition agreement between Tories and Liberal Democrats published on May 20, just nine days after the coalition took office.

Compare these nine days to the seven years the McGuinty government has dithered before it has taken action to fight red tape. I use these examples of what other governments are doing not just as examples of what the McGuinty government should be doing but also to point out that Ontario's economic competitors, whether they be in North America, Europe or anywhere else around the world, are fighting red tape and doing it better than Ontario has done since the time of Mike Harris and Ernie Eves.

Our party has told this government for years that red tape is a problem, and the Liberals have done nothing.

**1510**

The PC Party's 2007 election platform said that we would "reduce the regulatory burden on small businesses which create most of today's jobs." We also promised to "bring the successful British Columbia model of regulatory review to Ontario. It turns the usual government practice on its head: Instead of imposing regulation

and forcing business to adjust, we will require government to justify every new regulation created.

"Every ministry will have to show how much red tape it generates, having a rolling three-year plan to reduce that burden, and report publicly on its progress."

We also proposed to introduce "a 'smart' regulation system to measure the potential impact of new rules, track how they are affecting people and businesses, and report on how effectively they are working.

"Regulations that protect public health and safety, or that are working fairly, will always be preserved and enhanced as required.

"Rules that kill jobs or impose unfair burdens will be fixed. The public interest can be protected without killing jobs."

In 2008 my colleague Norm Miller, MPP for Parry Sound–Muskoka, introduced a private member's bill to fight red tape. Here is what his bill proposed:

"Upon introducing a government bill or moving second or third reading of a government bill, a minister is required to attach a statement to the bill confirming that the government has reasonably considered and has answered a number of questions relating to the reduction of the regulatory burden, if any, that the bill imposes on persons or bodies.

"If the answers to any of these questions are negative, the statement must confirm that the government is satisfied that the regulatory burden is not unjustified in the circumstances in the government's opinion.

"There is no requirement to consider and answer the question if the government is satisfied that the only effect of the bill is to increase fees by an annual rate that the treasury board has approved or to make changes that are not material in nature.

"The bill imposes similar requirements for the making of regulations, whether the regulations are made by cabinet or some other person or body.

"Within six months after the bill is enacted, the government is required to prepare a plan to review, within three years, all public acts and regulations from the viewpoint of the red tape reduction policy.

"The review is done by the minister responsible for each act being reviewed or the provision of an act under which a regulation being reviewed is made.

"The minister is required to prepare a report of a review and to submit it, as soon as it is ready, to cabinet and to table it in the assembly.

"The government is also required to prepare and table in the assembly progress reports of all reviews every six months during the review period."

Another Tory bill full of good ideas, and so of course the government did not allow it to go anywhere.

In 2009 our new leader, the member for Niagara West–Glanbrook, appointed me as our party's critic for red tape, and I introduced a resolution to fight red tape, debated last October 1. It went as follows:

"That, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty government has failed to help Ontario small businesses by reducing the financial and time burden of government

regulation; and therefore, the government should re-establish the Red Tape Commission, which it abolished; and, that the commission must publicly demonstrate that it has worked with small business leaders to reduce both the number of regulations and the time and expense required of Ontario's businesses and citizens in complying with government regulation."

After we debated my resolution, the government went further than they did with my colleague's bill. They defeated my motion, sending a clear message that red tape was not a priority and that they did not intend to take action.

Remember that my motion came months after the government promised to make their 25% cut in regulations, in March 2009, and dithered for months and months, doing nothing.

At the end of October last year, our leader and caucus announced our party's proposals for small business in our small business jobs plan. Fighting red tape was a key initiative in this plan. Our specific proposals included reinstating a Red Tape Commission that will eliminate the many unnecessary regulations that punish small businesses; implementing a moratorium on new regulations that will impact small business jobs until the Red Tape Commission is in place to reduce the overall regulatory burden; and other proposals to repeal the government's job-killing WSIB reforms in Bill 119—a one-year payroll tax holiday for small businesses, turning Ontario's three-to-one journeymen-to-apprentice ratio into a one-to-one ratio, suspending the McGuinty government's decision to place 100% of the cost burden for the blue box program on small businesses and fighting the HST.

In January of this year, Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus launched a new website inviting Ontario consumers and businesses to share their experience with Dalton McGuinty's most ridiculous regulations and burdensome red tape. I still encourage small businesses to visit [tiredofredtape.ca](http://tiredofredtape.ca). This website is a forum for people to share their experiences and frustrations with the McGuinty government's job-killing red tape.

The PC Party's commitment to fighting red tape is clear: We fought it when we were in government, and we have repeatedly and consistently spoken against red tape and its economic and social costs ever since. This bill contains many positive changes, but it comes too late to make a real difference. The McGuinty government should have started fighting red tape as soon as it entered office. Unfortunately, it has long believed that the only way to fight problems is to spend money. It does not understand that in many cases, for small businesses and entrepreneurs, government is not a solution; it is the cause of problems. Government needs to find ways to get out of the way, to let businessmen and businesswomen innovate, create jobs and build prosperity.

My colleagues will speak to some of our specific concerns about this bill. I am just disappointed that the Ontario Liberals have left the issue of red tape so late—seven years of inaction, when they could have done so much to help Ontario's businesses. Instead, today we are

a have-not province; we have had our economy shattered by job losses; we face increasing energy costs at an ever-increasing rate; we have the Premier talking about a knowledge economy, and at the same time Seneca College brings out a report on the failure rates of math students in our post-secondary institutions; we have tax burdens that continue to rise; we have the cost of doing business in this province increasing; and now the government claims that Ontario is open for business. Based on the last seven years, obviously, it has been anything but.

The minister refers in his remarks to committee hearings and the development of regulations. I think that the opposition's concern—amongst many, but two very important parts—is the speed with which this bill was introduced and following up so quickly to have today's remarks. The fact that the minister himself refers to the fact that this bill is overarching—I'm not sure that's the term he used, but certainly one that will require, then, significant work at the regulation level. People are always very concerned when they hear that the legislation is but a summary of what's to come, because regulations are not conducted in public in the same way that debate on legislation is. People have to be forewarned to be able to look, to try to become part of the consultation process of regulations. This is a very different animal than that which is brought forward in this environment, in this chamber as legislation.

1520

I think the important thing for all of us here is that while they are coming late to the party on the issue of the need to have a review of regulation in this province, as I outlined very briefly, there are a great many problems that the province faces today. So, open for business? Well, it seems to me that it's a bit late, when obviously it hasn't been for the last seven years.

The litmus test of this legislation, of course, will be in those regulations: Will they actually do what the government purports they shall?

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I listened to my colleague in the Conservative Party. While I do not agree with much of what she has said philosophically, I think she has identified one of the problems that the McGuinty Liberals have.

It depends on which day of the week you are listening to the McGuinty Liberals. One day of the week they will be pronouncing that they're bringing in new environmental protections that are supposed to safeguard the environment and the quality of life of people in this part of Ontario or that part of Ontario. Usually, these occur with a photo op—the Premier or the Minister of the Environment; usually, there are some kids in the background, this sort of thing. The messaging from this government is that more environmental regulation is a good thing. But if you turn around and wait, a week later you get other legislation, this legislation, which says that if you streamline the regulations and you do away with

some regulations and you change other regulations, that's a good thing and that's going to make life better for people.

I have to give my colleague from the Conservative Party credit for nailing this: It depends on which week you're listening to the McGuinty Liberals, because the message last week wasn't the same as the message this week. I guess they hope the Toronto Star is not going to point this out. But there is a contradiction between what the McGuinty Liberals say one week and what they say the next week.

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

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes to provide some response to the questions, the issues that were being raised by the member opposite.

Let's understand that this particular piece of legislation, Bill 68, speaks to being open for business. This is looking at ways of doing things more efficiently, faster, speeding up processes where possible, doing them in a more efficient and smarter way, and doing them in a more streamlined fashion when government is dealing with business. Business has and will continue to ask of governments of all stripes, at all levels, if we can call it that, to find ways of doing business more effectively between government and business, and our government is no exception.

We are doing this, at this point, in this fashion, through a legislative framework, as opposed to a committee that might be struck or through some other process that one might want to use—stakeholder or round table sessions. We're doing it in the form of legislation to really focus on the fact that we are and intend to be open for business and to find ways with business to make their jobs easier.

This will speak to opportunities in multiple ministries, not the least of which is the Ministry of the Environment and their modernization of approvals. This is looking at saving considerable amounts for business when they do work with the government of Ontario. The Ministry of Labour's employment standards modernization strategy—so we have at least two ministries identifying early on opportunities for them to find efficiencies in working with business without sacrificing the need, as government, to regulate certain functions. We see what happens, we know what happens when governments abandon their responsibility of having regulatory oversight. We can see that in small examples—and in extreme examples in some cases. I won't speak specifically to those, but that may be raised at some point in time.

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

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I want to comment on the member for York-Simcoe's remarks with regard to this act. I find it passing strange that we would have in an omnibus bill—and this is another omnibus bill brought in by the government. I think there's an intent by the government to bring legislation forward in an omnibus bill in the hope that members of the opposition will find

some part of the omnibus bill so much to their disliking that they have to vote against it on second and third reading. Then the minister of the day can stand up and say, "You voted against all of the matters in the omnibus bill, all 11 acts," when in fact the opposition might find only one or two matters they were objecting to in the act.

I protest strongly this practice of the government to bring in another omnibus bill. I don't know how many—I think that they bring most of their legislation forward now through omnibus bills. When you add all of the acts in the omnibus bill and the number of closure motions that they have, they now outstrip the Harris and Eves governments in terms of the closure motions that this government has brought forward, something which they have protested on many, many occasions. Just add up the acts, add up your closure motions on all of the acts, and you're the prizewinners now. So don't talk to us about closure and closing this place down. You guys are the winners.

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

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** There's a huge inconsistency developing here. Here is the party lecturing us on reducing red tape and bureaucracy and opposing the HST—\$8.5 billion in costs, \$500 million in reduced red tape administrative costs in tax processing, and I can't think of more friction being removed from the economy and from the cost of small businesses than a harmonized sales tax. I have yet to find a single serious commentator—a right, left or centre economist or columnist—who hasn't acknowledged that the job creation abilities of small businesses in Ontario are greatly enhanced by the removal of that friction. That just gives you one example of a politically courageous government in this province prepared to make tough decisions, and quite frankly one in Ottawa. I think it has been somewhat frustrating to my constituents, only 15% of whom voted Conservative in the last by-election in my constituency, an all-time low for that party, largely because most real small-c conservatives understand the importance of deregulating and debureaucratizing the tax system. It's interesting because tough choices get talked about a lot, and this is the party that has made that a tougher choice.

It's also interesting to me that we have been going through the largest global recession and at the same time bringing in reforms, from the not-for-profit act right through to the Municipal Act, that across this province have made it easier and less expensive, not just for business but for non-profits and municipalities, to operate.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from York-Simcoe has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I certainly wish to thank the members for Kenora-Rainy River, Pickering-Scarborough East and Carleton-Mississippi Mills, as well as Toronto Centre.

I found very interesting the last speaker's method of hooking together red tape and the HST because I immediately thought about how the people who worked for

PST got shifted to HST with their severance, even though they stayed in the same office—they merely changed their business cards. I wondered how many jobs that meant were lost in this HST process—obviously none.

**1530**

The other interesting thing about the HST, since that seems to be the point of red tape for the member for Toronto Centre, is the complexities that still remain in terms of the rebate program, so that the ratios of rebate that people received in the broader public sector still remain something of an issue. It's all taxpayer dollars and it's all going to taxpayer-funded things, but the rates range from about 78% to 92% of the rebate. So when the member talks about reduction in red tape, I think there are a lot of areas where real red tape could have been reduced on the HST.

But I understand now where the 60,000 jobs come from that the Premier has indicated would come: that's 30,000 in the public sector working out the details of how to administer the HST and 30,000 for the accountants and lawyers helping the private sector survive the HST.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** On behalf of the New Democrats, I'm pleased to be able to take part in this debate because I think there are a number of things that need to be said about this government's scheme called Open Ontario. This part of it is called "Open for Business." I expect we'll see other Open Ontario schemes or sub-schemes in the next few months as well. I want to say a bit about the concept. I also want to say a bit about some of the history.

What this legislation essentially says, or what the government is going to market it as saying, is that this government believes that by streamlining regulations and streamlining the regulatory environment, this will be good for business, and business will create jobs.

The government wants to say that this a very modern approach; that this is something new; it has never been thought of before; this is really world-class stuff. Well, maybe I've been here too long, but I've seen this stuff at least three times in the last 23 years. In fact, this is not the first time that a Liberal government has promoted this stuff.

When I was first elected, from 1987 to 1990, some guy named David Peterson, who was then Premier of the province, went from one end of the province to the other talking about how he was going to modernize government. He was going to streamline regulations and modernize those regulations. This was going to create a world-class, leading-edge regulatory environment. It was going to result in the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs. And then the spring of 1990 hit and you could see jobs being destroyed in this province. Despite the Premier and the Liberal government's rhetoric, you could see jobs being destroyed in this province at a rate of tens of thousands a month—accelerated to hundreds of thousands a month.

So, is this a new concept? No, Speaker. I could probably pull out one of Premier Peterson's speeches from 22

or 23 years ago, and it would sound remarkably in place with the rhetoric I hear from the Liberal government today.

It's not just Liberals who spoke this rhetoric. I remember someone named Mike Harris, elected in 1995, who said over and over again that he was going to cut red tape. He was going to deregulate. He was going to reduce the number of regulations, and it was going to create hundreds of thousands of jobs in the province of Ontario.

Well, there was red tape-cutting. There was red tape-cutting on the environmental front, and we now have the reality of Walkerton, shutting down provincial government labs that tested quality of water, telling people, "You're free to go to a private lab and we're not going to check up on you and the quality of the private lab. In fact, we're not going to check up on much at all." We remember the disaster that happened there.

There was a lot of talk about some financial deregulation. In fact, across the border George Bush really jumped on that one. He was going to cut regulations and reduce red tape for the financial sector, and it was going to create hundreds of thousands of jobs. Well, I've heard the rhetoric. The reality there was, it didn't create hundreds of thousands of jobs—it did for a while. You could always get a pyramid scheme going, and create jobs for a while, but what happened there, with the reduction of red tape, the deregulation and the cut of regulations, has been a financial disaster, a financial disaster that we've witnessed for a few years now.

The eventual loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs here, millions of jobs in the United States and elsewhere, and a principal part of that, everyone acknowledges, was this obsession with, "Oh, we're going to streamline the regulations. We're going to cut the regulations, we're going to do away with the regulations, and we're going to modernize the regulations." Well, it didn't create hundreds of thousands of jobs. I think the evidence is everywhere. The debris is everywhere that a lot of jobs were lost.

Now we have the McGuinty Liberals; they're going to sing the same song. They changed the rhetoric a bit. They don't talk about cutting; they talk about streamlining, focusing, eliminating some regulations over here. But it's the same old song. It is the same old song. It is the same old record being played over again.

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** You've got your eight-tracks out again, Howie.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I could give it to you on eight-track; I could give it to you on a CD. This is a song that has been played over and over again in different ways, many times, in the last 23 years.

Now, let me deal with the politics of this—the politics—because here's the politics: We're headed into a provincial election. The election campaign is, for all intents and purposes, really going to begin seriously one year from now. It will be one of these new-style election campaigns that go on for seven months and millions and millions of advertising is on television, radio and in the TTC, and just about everywhere else. The election campaign is going to start only 11 months from now.

Now, the problem that the McGuinty Liberals have is that we've lost hundreds of thousands of jobs in Ontario. What they're hoping and praying is that there is going to be a widespread economic recovery, especially in the United States, which will bring back some of those jobs. But what they want to be able to do is, they want to be able to create something over here to be able to say, "Ah, it was our Open for Business scheme that did this. It was our Open for Business scheme that created all these jobs and made life wonderful for people." But, really, it's the hoping and praying that something magical is going to happen in the United States, something magical that will re-create those jobs. But then the McGuinty Liberals want to be able to say, "Ah, but it was Open for Business; that's what created all these jobs and made things good." That's the politics.

Most of this is lacking in substance; most of this is political appearance, or hoped-for political appearance. But there are some things in this bill that people across Ontario should pay particular attention to. There are sections of it that people should look at very carefully because it has the potential to do a lot of damage. I want to zero in on some of these things because I think there should be a serious discussion about them—

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** The NDP plan for recovery.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from Toronto Centre.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** There should be really serious discussion about some of these issues.

The first one I wanted to zero in on is the Employment Standards Act. One of the realities of a modern economy is that there are a lot of people who have lost their jobs. There are a lot of people who have lost their pensions. There are a lot of people who have lost their homes. There are a lot of people whose incomes are much reduced now, compared to just a few years ago. There are a whole bunch of people who are really struggling, really having a very hard time. There are people who are owed literally tens of thousands of dollars in wages. There are people who are owed severance pay. There are people who are owed termination pay. There are people who cannot collect on their vacation pay. There are people who cannot retire even though they contributed to a pension plan for many years.

**1540**

Many of these people go to the employment standards branch of the Ministry of Labour and they say, "I worked, I worked overtime, I worked these many months, and the employer won't pay me. What am I going to do? I contributed literally for years and years to the pension plan, and now the employer says, 'Oh, do you know what? I didn't really fully fund the pension plan. I'm sorry, you're out of luck.'" Across this province there are literally hundreds of thousands of people in that situation.

The government says that this is going to help the situation. The McGuinty Liberals say that what's in this legislation is going to help that situation. I look at the legislation for something that's going to help address that economic and social injustice that we see in so many

communities across this province. I'm looking and I'm looking; I'm looking at the sections dealing with the Employment Standards Act.

Do you know what the government says is going to help? Do you know what the McGuinty Liberals say is going to help people? It says that if you have mediation or a meeting between that worker who hasn't been paid and the employer who refuses to pay or says, "I can't pay," that if you have a meeting or mediation before anything goes to the employment standards branch of the Ministry of Labour, that that's somehow going to help things.

Lord, what planet are these Liberals on? I have people come into my constituency offices all the time. Sometimes when I go home on a Thursday or a Friday or a Saturday or a Sunday, I'll have a succession of 10 or 15 people come in the office, and their complaints are under the Employment Standards Act. Many of them are young people; they're working, they put in their hours, then they're told, "Sorry. Your job is done."

They say, "I'm owed for 40 hours of work. I'm owed my vacation pay."

"Sorry, we're not paying you."

They've already talked to their employer. They've already said to their employer, "You haven't paid me. You're supposed to pay me. You are legally required to pay me." What good does it do for this McGuinty Liberal government to say to those workers, "You have to go back to that employer again. You have to see if you can work out some sort of mediated settlement"?

In these kinds of situations, that employer has all the cards. That employer has the money. He or she has already had the benefit of the worker's work. What possible good is it to send a worker back to try to seek some kind of mediated settlement with the employer when the employer has already said, "I'm not going to pay you. I'm not going to pay you what you are entitled to"?

This is not going to make things better for people who are already finding that the Employment Standards Act is not helping them, is not answering their problem, is not responding to the fact that they're owed money and are not being paid. This is not going to do anything for them. If anything, it's going to put them in a more vulnerable position. Many of the people who are employment standards applicants are people who feel they're owed overtime, but they didn't get overtime on the cheque. If they go directly to the employer and say, "You know, I'm owed this overtime," rather than going to the employment standards branch, what they face is the potential for immediate and very nasty repercussions from an employer who is already abusing them, already taking advantage of them. But more than that, from a government that says it is here to help people, this looks like abandonment. This looks like, "You're on your own. Look after yourself. And the fact that you may not have any money, the fact that you can't afford a lawyer, the fact that you've got no one who is prepared to act for you: too bad, so sad." You're on your own more than ever before.

I don't call that regulatory modernization; I don't call that regulatory streamlining. I call it literally saying to some of the most vulnerable workers in our society, "You don't count; you don't matter. Just shuffle on out of here and forget about filing an employment standards claim and having any sort of effective performance or any sort of effective amelioration of your situation."

If the McGuinty Liberals think this is going to pass muster, that this is going to work out there, good luck to you. I can tell you that the hundreds of thousands of people who feel aggrieved about not being paid, who are aggrieved about not getting severance pay and not getting termination pay, and who have paid into pension plans for all these years and now are told, "Sorry, you are high and dry"—I don't think they're going to swallow this. And they shouldn't swallow this.

This part of this bill is awful. It should be withdrawn and thrown in the junk heap, because it really does abandon some of the most vulnerable workers in our society. It doesn't matter what kind of rhetoric, what kind of photo ops you use, I don't think you're going to be able to escape that reality.

One of the other areas that I think the public needs to look at, and needs to look at carefully, are the sections dealing with the environmental protection. This government wants to say that streamlining and doing away with some of the environmental regulatory requirements is going to be a good thing. Again, I just want to cite some recent history. We're all watching the environmental disaster unfold in the Gulf of Mexico; we're all watching that. But I'd like to remind people of what went on before that environmental disaster unfolded.

What went on is this: In the United States, in terms of environmental regulation of the oil and gas sector, there was a lot of so-called regulatory streamlining, regulatory modernization that happened just a few years ago. Yes, this happened under the Bush government; it was very clear. And it's also very clear that in the time the Obama administration has been there, they haven't done much about it.

There were all kinds of regulatory modernizing and regulatory streamlining happening on the environmental front in respect to the oil and gas industry in the United States. The way it was sold was very much the language that's being used here. It was sold that these are big companies, they know what they're doing, they have an environmental track record, they have expertise, and they would never do something like this because it would really affect their branding and markets. So people were told, "We're safe to engage in this regulatory modernizing, regulatory streamlining as it effects the environmental regulation of the oil and gas industry."

**1550**

What happened? In this particular case, it's becoming clear what happened. British Petroleum started drilling their wells. Many of the guidelines—and that's what happened; regulations were replaced with guidelines—that were supposed to be followed, we now know, were not followed. They simply weren't followed. Things that

should have been done to a certain standard were not done to that standard. In fact, one of the people who worked on the drill rig said that shortcuts were being taken all the time because there wasn't effective regulation; there were guidelines, and as long as the company stayed within those guidelines, everything was fine. But we now know that people who—the survivors, because let's not forget that 11 people died and many more were injured. Some of the survivors said that shortcuts were being taken all the time. Why? Because it cost less—make more money and make more profit by taking the shortcut on many of the guidelines. And now you have one the greatest environmental disasters ever.

I'm not going to go into great detail on the environmental front. My colleague from Toronto—Danforth, Peter Tabuns, is going to do that. As a former executive director of Greenpeace, he has the professional credentials to go into this chapter and verse. But I just say to people across Ontario that what this McGuinty Liberal government is now promising in terms of environmental regulation—"Oh, we're going to streamline some of these environmental regulations. We're going to modernize some of these environmental regulations. And companies that have done thus and so over here—we'll just exempt them, or we'll lower the standard for them in terms of what they do on other sites." This sounds remarkably like what went on in the United States in terms of oil and gas regulation over the last eight years. The evidence of what happened there is growing clearer every day.

You have to be very, very careful when you start eliminating environmental protection regulations, particularly when you have industries that feel they can make a lot of money if they just run a little short on this guideline and a little short on that guideline, and maybe finesse a few things over here and finesse a few things over there. What has become apparent is that British Petroleum was doing a lot of finessing of the environmental guidelines, and now there's a multi-billion-dollar environmental and economic disaster that may have huge repercussions, not only for things like the marine environment and for all kinds of people who were engaged in working in fishing and gathering and the tourism sector, but it may have some very negative repercussions for the oil and gas sector as well.

I invite people to look at what the McGuinty Liberals are promoting here and compare it with what was being promoted in terms of regulatory streamlining, regulatory modernization in the United States as it pertains to the oil and gas industry and the unfolding disaster there.

Because we have other members who want to speak on particular sections of this bill, I'm not going to delve into those at great length at this time. But I would say that just on those two fronts alone, environmental protections and the Employment Standards Act, we're not seeing modernization; we're not seeing a better regulatory approach. On the employment standards side of things, I think we're seeing some of the most vulnerable workers in this province put in a more precarious situ-

ation than ever—some of the most vulnerable workers in this province, in effect, being abandoned. In terms of environmental rules and regulations, the language sounds oh, so similar to the language of the Bush government in the United States when it modernized and streamlined environmental regulation as it pertained to the oil sector there, and I think people need to look at that.

I said earlier, and New Democrats are fairly consistent in this, that I don't think that this legislation is going to create this brave, new wonderful world and I don't think it's going to create hundreds of thousands of jobs. That's the government's rhetoric. As I said, they're going to hope and pray that something happens in the United States, that hundreds of thousands of jobs are created, and then they'll try to claim credit. But despite the rhetoric, there's not the substance here to address the problems. So I want to deal with some of that substance now: what should be done, what needs to be done if this government were serious about creating jobs and serious about especially addressing the needs of small business.

It's pretty clear what's going on with small business. If you're a small business today—and by a small business, I don't mean somebody who's got a 200-person factory. I'm talking about people who are trying to start out, many people who are trying to create their own job because the job they had is gone. The problem small business is having is that small businesses can't get credit. They can't. They just cannot get credit. You've got all kinds of people—and I'm sure this happens in your constituency office as it happens in mine. I get people virtually every week coming in and saying, "I've got this great idea. This is something that I think would be useful. This is something we need to do. I've been to this bank. I've been to that bank. I've been to different lending institutions. I can't get any financial capital. I can't get any small business credit that will allow me to get started." The big banks don't lend to small businesses anymore. They don't. In my part of the world, if you're a small business and you're looking for credit to start up your business, overwhelmingly people have to go to the local credit union. The local credit union, which is concerned about small business in the community and wants to grow the local community, will lend some money. But forget about going to the big banks.

This is a real problem. It's a real problem that's been identified not just here, but today in the Financial Post, on page 7: "Obama urges US Congress to Act on Lending Plans for Small Business." Obama is "calling on Congress to approve a US\$30-billion program to use bailout money repaid by big banks to help community banks make loans to small businesses."

Small business simply cannot get credit. I look in this legislation and I say to myself, "Is there anything in this legislation that's going to help small businesses get credit?" None, nothing.

It's not just the Obama administration that says it's a question of not being able to get credit. The front page headline in the Financial Post: "Bankers Hurt as Deals Dry Up"—a lack of liquidity in the credit market.

The Globe and Mail business section today is talking about the same thing: Small businesses, medium-sized businesses simply cannot get credit—no credit liquidity.

Again, I look at this legislation and I say to myself, “Is there something here that’s going to create better credit conditions for small businesses?” I remember there was at one time a small business loan strategy. It was very small. Businesses starting out could get access to I think it was \$15,000 or \$20,000 in initial credit in this province. It was the sort of start-up thing that a lot of small businesses needed just to make the first baby step: to get a phone number, to get themselves set up as a limited partnership, to get their business licence and start doing whatever they wanted to do. Is there something in this legislation that’s going to do that? No; nothing.

**1600**

I’m saying to myself, Well, wait a minute, what gives here? The government says that this legislation is going to create hundreds of thousands of jobs; it’s going to make a difference. One of the biggest engines of creating jobs in our province is small business, and there’s nothing here to deal with the central problem that small businesses identify across the province, nothing here to deal with the difficulty in accessing credit, nothing to deal with the problem of credit liquidity. What gives? I think it’s just more evidence that this legislation is more about appearance and less about reality.

I want to deal with another area. The government, as part of its environmental deregulation strategy, is going to do away with a number of regulations in the forest sector under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and the Public Lands Act. I guess, again, it feels that these are going to create jobs. But in my part of the province, there used to be dozens of forest companies—dozens of them. Over the last five years, many of them have come to see me. Some of them who have come to see me are still in business; some who have come to see me are out of business. I haven’t heard one of them say that they’ve got a problem with the Crown Forest Sustainability Act—I haven’t heard one of them say that. I haven’t heard one of them come and say, “I’ve got a problem with the Public Lands Act.” Do you know what they’ve said? Especially if they’re on the pulp and paper side of things, they said, “Our hydro bill has doubled. It has doubled in the last five years. That’s what’s putting us out of business.”

So when the paper mill closed in Kenora, they were very clear. They said, “We can’t continue to produce. The mills that we’re competing against have hydro bills that are half of ours, and our hydro bill is 30% to 40% of our cost.” When the Cascades mill closed in Thunder Bay, they didn’t go around saying, “The problem is the Crown Forest Sustainability Act” or “The problem is the Public Lands Act.” They were very clear; they said, “This government’s policy of driving industrial hydro rates through the roof has caused our energy bill to double in the last three or four years, and we can no longer compete against mills in other jurisdictions that pay a lot less.” When the Abitibi Mission mill went out

of business, they said the same thing. When Bowater shut down a couple of their paper machines in Thunder Bay, they said the same thing—and the list goes on.

I look at this and I say, “Is there something here to address this problem? Is there something here that’s going to address that problem?” Nothing. I say, “Well, what gives here? This government says that it’s addressing some of the needs that have been identified by industry in this province.” I can tell you, Speaker, I have not had one forest company come in and say, “Hey, it’s the Crown Forest Sustainability Act that’s putting us out of business. It’s the Public Lands Act that’s putting us out of business”—no. What’s putting them out of business is they can’t afford to pay their hydro bill. That is happening not just now in the forest sector. The Premier met with Xstrata from Timmins, and Xstrata was very plain, very clear. They said, “Look, we are the major, we are the largest consumer of electricity in the province because our smelting and processing facility in Timmins runs on electricity. We are the single largest industrial user of electricity in the province. Our hydro bill is in the range of tens of millions of dollars a month.” They said, “We’re leaving the province. We’re going to continue to mine the ore in Ontario, but we’re going to ship the ore 70 or 80 kilometres across the border to Quebec and all of the smelting and refining and processing of the ore will happen there, and 2,500 jobs will go.”

But it wasn’t just Xstrata. A few years ago, when Inco shut down their copper refinery in Sudbury, the same thing: They shut down their copper refinery, about 150 direct jobs, probably another 150 associated jobs gone. Inco was very clear. They said, “The cost of doing the smelting and refining and processing in Ontario is too high. We’re going to take the ore out of the ground in Sudbury and we’re going to ship it to a refinery, a smelter in Montreal, and do it there.”

These are two industries, the forest sector and mine processing. Again, none of them have come to me and said, “Hey, it’s the Crown Forest Sustainability Act that’s killing jobs,” or, “It’s the Public Lands Act that’s killing jobs and pushing us out.” They didn’t say that. They said, “We cannot afford to continue to operate these facilities when it’s the policy of the McGuinty Liberal government to drive the industrial hydro rate in Ontario through the roof. We will save tens of millions of dollars a month by moving the smelting, the refining and the processing of the ore out of Ontario”—and by moving thousands of jobs out of Ontario to boot. Is there anything in this Open Ontario that’s going to address that? Nothing—absolutely nothing.

Again, this is a demonstration that this bill isn’t about substance. It’s not about addressing the issues of small business and their difficulty in getting credit. It’s not about the business of addressing the issues of large industrial companies who have historically done processing of the raw resources here in Ontario. It’s not about addressing their needs at all. It’s like they don’t even exist. Let me tell you, the changes to the Crown

Forest Sustainability Act and the Public Lands Act are not going to do one thing to address the needs of those large industrial employers.

I can tell you what's happening. The pulp mill in my hometown is running full blast. The Abitibi pulp mill in Thunder Bay is running full blast. The Domtar pulp mill in Dryden is running full blast. What those companies are doing is, they take the wood fibre now, they semi-process it into pulp, and they ship the pulp now to their mills in Quebec or in the United States where the industrial hydro rates are a lot lower, and the paper is being made there. The good jobs—the electrician jobs, the machinist jobs, the millwright jobs, the instrument mechanic jobs, the computer-aided technology jobs—are going with them. The companies are very open about this. Go to Domtar's website. Domtar is very clear. They run essentially two pulp mills in Ontario now. They process the pulp. They ship it to their mills in Quebec and United States and they make paper there. Abitibi is doing the same thing, the exact same thing. Is there anything that's going to address that in this bill? Nothing—nothing whatsoever.

I also want to raise some of the issues that other businesses have brought to my attention. You know, Speaker, in my part of the province tourism is a big, big industry. Typically in my hometown, during the course of the summer, you'll see close to a million Americans lined up at the border who come over from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa. They're all coming across the border to go fishing and to go hunting. They recognize that in our part of northern Ontario we have an abundance of these things.

**1610**

But I can tell you, I talk with tourist resort operators, and they're very worried. They will typically sell seven days at a fishing camp, seven days at a hunting camp, and it's not unusual that people will pay US\$2,000 for that opportunity—so roughly C\$2,300, \$2,400 at the current rate of exchange. They're not in the market all by themselves, though. You've got tourist resorts in Manitoba, you've got tourist resorts in northern Minnesota that they compete with. I can tell you what those small businesses are saying to me, all those tourist operators. They're saying to me, "I see what the HST is going to do to my bill. I'm not going to be charging \$2,400 anymore. I'm not going to be charging \$2,000 for my week. My bill is going to be a couple of hundred dollars, \$300 a week more than that. Meanwhile, the tourist camps that I'm competing against in Manitoba, the tourist camps that I'm competing against in Minnesota are not going to charge that." They're very clear. They say, "Look, I'm going to lose customers. I am not going to have customers pay an extra \$300 a week to stay at my tourist resort when they can save \$300 a week by going to one in Manitoba or by going to one in Minnesota." They're just very clear.

Many of them have been to the sports shows in Chicago, they've been to the sports shows in Minneapolis, they've been to the sports shows in St. Louis, they've been to the

sports shows in Milwaukee, and people are already telling them, "I'm not going to pay an extra \$300 in taxes to come to your tourist resort." Is there anything in this bill that's going to address that? Nothing. This a very serious concern for literally thousands of small businesses across this province, and yet there's nothing in this bill that's going to address that.

As we know, the government in their throne speech talked about the Ring of Fire. There was, I think, one paragraph about the Ring of Fire and mining in northern Ontario. So I'm looking at this bill and I'm trying to decide here what there is in this bill that is going to address some of those concerns. Because mining companies have some real concerns. They do. They tell us that northern Ontario, specifically north of the 51st parallel, has probably now got the greatest mining potential in the world. It's no longer the Congo River basin, the Amazon River basin or some deserted island in the Pacific or Indian Ocean. The place which probably has the greatest mining potential in the world is now northern Ontario, north of the 51st parallel. So companies are quite interested in that. But the same companies will say in one breath, "This is where the potential is," and they'll say in the next breath, "But, man, is it ever difficult—is it ever, ever difficult—to try to start an operation."

I hear some people try to blame First Nations. There's been some rhetoric about, "Well, it's the First Nations to blame." The companies themselves don't say that. The companies are very clear. They say, "Look, if you're serious about mining in this part of northern Ontario, you have to put in place legislation which recognizes the rights and interests of First Nations, and provide us and First Nations with some certainty as to what the rules are going to be. And you need to work co-operatively with those First Nations to do that." The same companies are saying that that environment doesn't exist in Ontario at this time. It doesn't exist.

I was at a chiefs' meeting last week here in Toronto. These are chiefs from the Treaty 3, Treaty 5 and Treaty 9 First Nations. Grand Chief Stan Beardy and Grand Chief Diane Kelly were both there. Chief Beardy extended his hand of diplomacy and wrote to the Premier, the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of the Environment, the aboriginal affairs minister and the Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry and said, "Please do not proceed with second reading of the Far North Act. Do not proceed. Please put it aside. There are more important issues that need to be worked out before you proceed with that legislation. From the First Nation perspective, this legislation has many flaws and there are things in it which individual First Nations in the Far North find, frankly, insulting." He was trying to extend the hand of diplomacy. What did he get? He basically got a "We're not interested in your view" response from the government. Did the government put the Far North Act on the side and deal with the discussions and the consultations and the negotiations with those First Nations that First Nations were asking for? No. The government

is proceeding to slam this legislation not just through second reading but through committee hearings, and time allocate it even through third reading.

Does this government actually think this is going to help? Does this government actually think it's going to do something for the mining industry when it does that? Let me tell you, nothing could be further from reality. This is creating a whole new level of distrust and a whole new level of anxiety amongst First Nations. Knowing that, I looked at this legislation and I said, "This government says that this is going to create jobs and is going to provide a better quality of life. Is there anything in here that's going to address those issues, which both the mining industry and First Nations want to have addressed?" First Nations are not philosophically opposed to mining—they're not. They're quite interested, but they want to know what the ground rules are going to be, and they want an equal role in establishing those ground rules; they want an equal role in establishing the legislation; they want an equal role in setting out what the environmental protections are going to be, how they're going to be met and how they're going to be enforced; and they want an equal role when it comes to the division of revenue.

That's a very important industry. In the government's own throne speech they said that this is the key to the northern economy. Yet I look at this legislation, this so-called open for business legislation, and I look for something, anything, that would address those important issues raised by First Nations and raised by the mining industry, and there's nothing—nothing.

These are the things, if this government were really serious about creating jobs, putting people back to work, seeing some small businesses established, maintaining some employers who have historically been the heart and soul of many communities in Ontario, and creating the kind of regulatory environment that the mining industry needs and that First Nations need, that need to be addressed, but they're totally absent from this bill—totally absent.

What are we left with? Back to where we started: This bill is not so much about doing something of meaningful, substantive change to create jobs in the province; it's not about that at all. This is about creating some appearance. This is about trying to create a political concept that has no reality to it.

**1620**

However, as I pointed out earlier, some real damage can be done to vulnerable workers in this province because of what this government proposes to do to the Employment Standards Act. And some real damage can be done to environmental protection in this province, because what this government is talking about, in terms of modernizing and streamlining environmental regulations, sounds oh, so similar to what George Bush had in mind for streamlining and modernizing environmental regulations as they pertain to the oil and gas sector in the United States.

As we watch the disaster unfold in the Gulf of Mexico with literally billions of gallons of oil now being spilled

into the ocean, upsetting fisheries, lobster habitat and much of the ocean habitat of Louisiana, Mississippi and Florida, I think people need to take a careful look at this.

If I were the government, I would take this bill back. I would look at the sections that weaken the Employment Standards Act; I would look at the sections that I think will seriously weaken environmental protection in this province; and I would also look at putting in some things that really deal with the real problems of small business, the real problems of industrial processors and manufacturers in this province, and the real issues that confront the mining industry and First Nations together. Then you'd have legislation that in fact has something to do with creating jobs and addressing the problems that have really been identified out there by people who are trying to create jobs in the province, by people who are trying to start small businesses, by people who are trying to sustain jobs and economic activity, and are having a very tough time doing it. I think the government would be wise to do that.

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

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** Since the global recession struck, times have been difficult for many Ontario families, especially in the manufacturing sector. The last two years have been particularly hard. That's why our government is responding to the extraordinary challenge of the global recession. Some say it's not enough; some say it's too much.

Open for Business is the Ontario government's initiative to create faster, smarter and streamlined government-to-business services and regulations that make Ontario more attractive for business development while protecting the public interest.

It's our duty to stimulate economic activity and business while protecting workers and our environment. That's why we intend to create more open and responsive ways for government to work with business. That's why we're going to reduce the regulatory burden on Ontario by 25% by 2011 and build a foundation for improving services to business that protects the public interest, fosters business competitiveness and welcomes new business to the province. That's why we're going to adopt the federal business number as a single account number for dealing with businesses, replacing the multiple identifiers currently used, starting with the Ministries of Labour and Revenue, with other programs to be added over time. We want to develop and implement a new risk- and performance-based environmental permitting and approval system that will transform the environmental approval program.

We are not going to stick our heads in the sand and hope somehow for a recovery that is going to develop elsewhere. We are going to act, and we're going to act to make positive change here in Ontario. We're going to make progress by meeting with our stakeholders in order to achieve the target of reducing the regulatory burden by 25%. The recently passed Good Government Act reduces the burden already by increasing transparency, account-

ability and effectiveness in the province's laws, regulations and other systems.

All these measures are a direct response to businesses—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Thank you. The member from Oshawa.

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I did listen to Mr. Hampton's speech earlier. He hit on some very key points when he spoke about competing energy rates, the difficulties that have taken place for the forestry and mining sectors, and the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and the impact it is having on the forestry sector in the north.

Some of the aspects of the bill that I think need to be brought up are about the closure of roads or access to roads. Access in northern Ontario is very key. The change coming forward removes the wording of forest access roads, eliminating that part from what we're seeing, and the concern now is that they can decide which roads will be closed in the north, whether it's camp roads or cottage roads as listed in southern Ontario, and the impact that's going to have for access for a great number of individuals throughout Ontario.

It's an ongoing debate from the tourist outfitters that the member from Kenora–Rainy River mentioned: the impact on the tourism industry and the number of people who cross there. It's an ongoing issue where residents want to make sure they have continued access, whereas a lot of outfitters are concerned that when they open up these areas and allow access to these remote camps that they've been providing service for, it will have a substantial impact.

I think we need to make sure that there is notification and that there are options to maintain these roads and facilities. In the past, I know that the Ministry of Natural Resources tried to close a number of these roads without notification. What was taking place was that there was a notification posted and then there was an opportunity to maintain these roads for insurance and a standard level to allow access to continue for that. I'm not seeing that that option is coming forward now, and I have some strong concerns. Hopefully the government will be able to address that.

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

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** You know, it's kind of difficult: I was teasing the member from Kenora–Rainy River that sometimes being in government during a global recession cannot be a lot of fun, and you would think the member, having been a member of a government in the last major recession that hit this province—the less severe one that was a made-in-Ontario recession as opposed to a global recession—would have a little more empathy.

When you hold us to the standard of perfect, that becomes the enemy of good. Here we are in a global recession, with Ontario leading North America with 3.8% GDP growth. A report that is coming out today was speculated in the paper to be even better than that. The auto sector is recovering at a faster rate than anywhere

else in North America: 11% growth in the first quarter of this year and accelerating, and second and third shifts being put back in Oshawa. You know, the whining is amazing. We're now hearing from the Conservatives about highways; we're building a highway to Sudbury right now that the people there have been promised for generations, that they're seeing. It's one of the largest infrastructure projects going on right now in this province.

The HST, aggregating, integrating and getting rid of a double tax system, will create 600,000 jobs; this has become a standing joke for my friends in the NDP. Well, in the last 60 days—not weeks, not months, but 60 days—50,000 jobs have been created. At that rate, I don't think—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** According to the Globe and Mail, according to the National Post, according to the University of Toronto and according to the University of Calgary. At the rate of 25,000 jobs a month, that would do it in two years, not the six years we said.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Glen R. Murray:** No, I don't think it's going to happen.

Some 50,000 jobs—and what did we get under the NDP? Some 1,000 jobs lost during a day. Under the Tories we never saw that kind of growth in good times, and they—

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

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I remind the member from Winnipeg that the Conservatives created a million jobs and the Liberals have promised to create a million jobs. Of course, they've promised a lot of stuff. They promised that they wouldn't raise our taxes; they've raised the largest income tax increase in Ontario's history. They're raising the largest sales tax increase in Ontario's history—

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker: I'd ask the honourable member from Halton to refer to the members by the ridings they represent. Speaker Steve Peters has spoken on that issue before.

1630

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Thank you for reminding me.

What this government hasn't done is delivered on its promise. It's delivered on very few of its promises over the course of its terms of office.

I mentioned earlier about the terrible debacle they had when they opened the diamond mines. Now we have the opportunity of the so-called Ring of Fire in the north, and yet the mining industry in the world—a lot of it has been centred in Ontario in the past, but the mining industry around the world knows that they can't trust Ontario and the royalty deals that Ontario makes with them, because all of a sudden they can build a mine and a few days before the mine enters, the name of the game changes. What that does to Ontario and its reputation around the world is a real concern for the future of this province.

If you go to northern Ontario, there are two or three things in northern Ontario that are the mainstay of that part of Ontario: pulp and paper and the lumber industry is one and mining is the other. This government is now bringing in a bill called Open Ontario that reminds me very much of closing the barn door after the horse is well down the road.

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

There being no more questions and comments, the member from Kenora–Rainy River has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I thank all the members for their comments. I think some of them had nothing to do with the bill, but I will try to get back to the bill in question, Speaker.

The reality is, there are some real challenges for small businesses in this province. When I look at this bill, it doesn't address them. What I hear small businesses saying to me—and it doesn't matter where you are in the province, their big issue is access to credit. That has been borne out by what people on the banking side of things are saying. As I quoted earlier, it's being borne out by what President Obama is saying in the United States and the measures they're trying to take to make sure that small businesses have access to credit.

On the industrial side of things—and it doesn't matter if you're talking to Dofasco or Stelco, now US Steel, in Hamilton, if you're talking to Xstrata in Timmins or Xstrata in Sudbury, or you're talking to Vale Inco, now Vale, in Sudbury, or you're talking to pulp and paper mills, they say their issue is not as the government would want to identify in this bill. Their issue isn't with the Crown Forest Sustainability Act or with some form of environmental regulation. Their issue is, this government is driving the industrial hydro rate in this province through the roof, making it increasingly costly for those major processors to stay in the province.

I look for something to address that in this bill, and I don't find it. But it is very shocking that this government would pick on vulnerable workers through undermining the Employment Standards Act.

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

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I'm pleased to have an opportunity to speak for a few minutes at least on this bill that is in front of us today. Let's be clear that we are debating a bill today which has a title known here right on the bill itself as Bill 68, An Act to promote Ontario as open for business by amending or repealing certain Acts. Again, the key words are "to promote Ontario as open for business." In that context, we, the government, have put out a message—and this came from the throne speech; parts of these pieces were even before the throne speech took place, but the throne speech sort of laid the groundwork that sent the message out that Ontario, this province, is open for business.

What do we mean when we say we're open for business? Do we mean that we're going to slash all the water

inspectors, meat inspectors and other important positions to save money? No, I don't think that's what the intention is. Do we mean to allow people who are mining or drilling to act in perhaps a negligent fashion without proper oversight, which was mentioned by the previous speaker and which is happening right now in the Gulf of Mexico? No, I don't think that's what this bill is about. We're not trying to get rid of these other things over here. We're trying to make this province stronger for business.

The world has changed, and everyone in this room and in the world knows that the world has changed. Since 2008, you saw the so-called global meltdown, which created perhaps the worst recession—some would even call it a depression—in the last at least 50 years, and since then the world has changed. Countries, governments throughout the world—not just a couple of countries like the United States, perhaps, and some European countries, but all around the world countries have gotten together and have decided that things have to change. The world is not the same; we can't go back to the old system. We have to go forward.

What the government's role is in this thing is an interesting phenomenon, because government, first of all, provides stimulus funding. This was worldwide. Whether in the United States or in Europe or here in Canada—the federal government and our own government put in millions and millions of dollars here in Ontario to stimulate the economy by creating jobs and infrastructure programs. But that's not going to solve all the problems in the world, especially in Ontario. Our government, instead of sitting back and saying, "Okay, we've done our part. We've put out the infrastructure monies and we're going to sit and wait and see the economy pick up on its own," said, "No, we have a plan, and the plan is pretty straightforward. The plan is to say to the rest of the world that Ontario is open for business." Ontario wants businesses to come here. Ontario wants businesses to thrive here, because if it doesn't happen here, it will happen somewhere else. We saw that with Samsung, a major company located in South Korea—its head office is there—deciding to open up a new operation. They could have gone to California or they could have gone to another part of the United States or another province, but they did not do that. They came to Ontario. We want companies like that coming to Ontario and hiring Ontario's skilled labour to work in their laboratories, in their factories and in their boardrooms to make sure that Ontario functions and becomes a leader in a lot of different fields.

One of the key roles in government is to bring back confidence. If government doesn't provide confidence out there to the business community—and we're not just talking about Bay Street; we're talking about whether it be small business or multinational corporations, they need to have confidence, and the government has to provide that. We are doing that with this bill. The bill sets out a number of different amendments to other bills, again, not to eliminate important positions such as water

inspectors and so on, but to clarify what their jobs are, what their positions are, and to make them more transparent so that people can see what these inspectors and others are doing.

We think about the world economy and how things change so much. Retired people like my parents, for example, get a government pension that's provided by the federal government, and a little bit of money that they've stashed away, which they live off of right now and which is tied into the stock market. It's odd, but years ago people didn't bother to look at the fact that if the stock market does badly or if bonds are rated lower, then their pensions can be affected, but it can happen to anybody. My parents are very working class. They weren't sophisticated and they're not sophisticated in understanding finance, but they want some stability and confidence to make sure that they're going to be able to live off the pension or the money that they have put away.

I just want to give an example of what happened elsewhere around the world. Not too long ago, the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, decided, "You know what? I'm not going to let this thing sort itself out. What I'm going to do is, I'm going to start bringing in really strong protectionism and really strong systems to prevent the economy from growing."

**1640**

There was an article in the Times Online, on May 19, and the headline was "Markets Plunge as Merkel Delivers Euro Warning and Bans Short-Selling." The first line in that article was, "European stock markets fell sharply and the euro hit a four-year low against the dollar today after Germany declared war on speculators, including a surprise ban on ... short-selling" and other measures.

"Ms. Merkel also urged the European Union to speed up supervision of financial markets and to introduce a new tax on them."

The response that came—it's all in the article here—from a financial analyst was that, "The German announcement came out of the blue, without warning, and there is major uncertainty about what this means, whether others will follow and how they will maintain this." This came from Stuart Bennett, currency strategist at *Crédit Agricole*.

"The backdrop is a very neurotic" worldwide "market which is inclined to give any euro-related news a negative spin, and we have seen standard safe-haven buying" of the US dollar and the Japanese yen.

Just from one announcement, from one chancellor in one part of the world, which created uncertainty, the result was that people have now swayed away from doing business with Europe and in Europe. This continued, even with the situations in Greece and now in Spain. They're not way out there somewhere; we're all intertwined now. What happens in other countries elsewhere around the world will affect us.

We in this country did not have the same problem that occurred in Greece and that is happening now in Spain

and perhaps a few other European countries because we've gone ahead and prepared a plan. We are attracting businesses here. The people who are out there investing know that—"You know what? I may not be safe in Europe, but we know it's going to be pretty darn safe in Ontario, and Ontario is taking steps to make business more open."

When you open for business, it doesn't mean you just get rid of all the regulators; you just change the way that they operate. In fact, in some instances they have to work in an even more detailed manner.

I was looking at the bill earlier, and there was a section here that was quite interesting. It's to do with the oil, gas and salt resource sector. The Provincial Offences Act is amended under this act to allow an inspector under this act "to conduct an inspection without a warrant in exigent circumstances where the inspector believes on reasonable grounds that there is evidence of an offence that could be lost, removed or destroyed in the time required to obtain a search warrant. In addition, the powers of an inspector conducting an inspection without a warrant are expanded to make them consistent with the inspection powers of a conservation officer under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, for example in stopping a vehicle, boat or aircraft, seizing things related to the commission of an offence and arresting a person who the inspector believes on reasonable grounds is committing, has committed or is preparing to commit an offence." This applies to oil, gas and salt resources.

The previous member wanted to talk about the situation in the gulf. We're all dismayed. We're all disappointed at what happened and what is happening in the Gulf of Mexico right now. What I just read out would help prevent those situations from happening. In the United States, the regulators, the people who would look over British Petroleum, weren't hands-on. That was loosened. We're saying that we want to give the people who deal with these permits more power, more ability to scrutinize and make sure that if you're going to go to our natural resources, whether it be oil, gas, salt or so many other resources that we have in this province—lumber; it goes on and on and on; the whole Ring of Fire up north with all the mines and the potential for discovering new minerals and diamonds and so on. We want to give the people who work with the government the opportunity to make sure that they properly regulate who works in here and what kind of work they do. We're not by any means telling inspectors, "Turn a blind eye to what's going on," or "Do you know what? We're going to move inspectors out of this area." We're doing the opposite. We're making their jobs more transparent, more visible and more understandable to the general public, and at the same time giving them powers to do things that perhaps would prevent an event like the thing in the Gulf of Mexico from ever occurring here in Ontario.

I also wanted to address an issue regarding some of the changes in the Ministry of Labour. Earlier, mention was made about the Employment Standards Act in Ontario. It is going to be amended by this bill, and the

Ministry of Labour is striving to streamline the system while maintaining all protection for employees' rights. The ministry is working closely with unions and with worker advocates to ensure that vulnerable workers can fully make their case in the new system. The ministry is working with both sides, the union and worker advocates. The ministry will provide workers with any personal assistance they may need to complete their claims form and obtain relevant information, because one of the problems is that some of the workers or others who want to put in a claim or have a concern don't know how to fill in the forms, and the red tape scares them away. In this act, the Ministry of Labour is going to be empowered with the ability to help these individuals. Some of them may be new Canadians who may not know how to speak the English language or just don't want to deal with the red tape. The government is going to help them deal with that so that their concern or complaint can be dealt with as soon as possible.

In addition, the changes will be communicated in a clear, user-friendly and accessible manner. The Ministry of Labour will provide resources in various formats, including guides, information bulletins, template letters and request-for-payment forms. The Ministry of Labour is also working on an online video to walk claimants through the claim process. Not everybody, but many people have access to a computer. If you don't have a home computer, you can go to the library computer that is usually available in most communities, and there's actually a video that an employee can watch, and they can listen to a person explain how to fill out their forms or their claim in the claim process. The ministry will continue to offer a toll-free call centre to ServiceOntario. Once again, we have a 1-800 number or a 1-888 number that is toll-free that allows to you contact ServiceOntario and eventually speak to a live person to ask for help in filling out your forms.

No reforms will be implemented until the appropriate worker supports are in place. Any of these changes—again, we are dialoguing and have dialogued with the appropriate stakeholders. These things won't take effect until proper worker supports, such as the ones I just mentioned above, are in place.

Again, this bill, Open Ontario, is something that is quite positive in so many ways and allows businesses to come here into Ontario, to function properly in a clear way—because we want businesses to come to Ontario, and if we don't act, they're not going to come here; they're going to go elsewhere.

Look at what Michigan did. They were the number one automaker in North America, if not, perhaps, the whole world. They've lost out because the state government or a combination of the state and federal governments didn't do enough to keep those factories in Michigan. Everyone knows now that the majority of the cars and car parts—Ontario makes more car parts and cars than Michigan does. That's because we've continued throughout the years—at least since the time that I've been here, going all the way back to 2003—to work very

hard to bring companies here. We had Toyota come into Ontario and expand just outside of Woodstock; as I mentioned earlier, Samsung; and I know that many others want to come here.

I also want to share a personal experience that I was able to witness myself. Just last week, the High Commissioner for Bangladesh, through the governments of Canada and Ontario, had set up a trade fair at the Metro Convention Centre where over 40 exhibitors, manufacturers and others, from Bangladesh were here in Ontario. They were exhibiting everything. The economies are growing in those countries—China, Brazil and Bangladesh. These are all countries that are moving very quickly.

**1650**

These exhibitors were there and I had a chance to speak to a lot of them. They were involved in manufacturing pharmaceuticals, even car parts, textiles, and so on. Going from booth to booth, the interesting thing was that they wanted to open up here in Ontario. They wanted to have a plant here as well. They were saying, "How do we open up here in Ontario? We like it here." They know that we have a good health care system for their employees. They know that there's an education system second to nobody in the world, where the children of the employees could go and learn. They like the education system, they like our health care system, and we've worked very hard as a government to make them second to none in the world.

I don't want to repeat what others have said earlier, especially on the government side here, but I can see first-hand, from my own experiences and from reading the newspaper and talking to my parents about how they feel about the economy, that Ontario is in a good position.

It was odd that Oliver Stone, the famous director who has won various Academy Awards, wanted to do another movie similar to the movie that he did years ago called *Wall Street*, and the American banks and financial institutions wouldn't let him in. They said, "No, we're not going to let you have access to our information."

He had to come here to Canada, and it was a bank in Canada—I shouldn't promote a bank, but it was a bank in Canada, one of the Big Five banks—that said, "You know what? Come and take a look at how we operate." The whole world knows that the banking system in Canada and here in Ontario is world-class, and Bay Street has developed a good reputation. Bay Street is not evil. People think there are a bunch of rich people on Bay Street who wear suits all the time and are just greedy and trying to make money for themselves.

It affects everybody. What happens on Bay Street affects all people in Ontario, whether it be for good or for bad. When Bay Street does well, Ontario does well. It's easy to point a finger at Bay Street and say that they're not helping, but they are a part of the economy and they continue to grow and expand. As a result, Ontario continues to grow and expand and the people in this province are given more opportunities.

Again, we don't want people working only in blue-collar jobs or in unskilled labour. We want them to be skilled. That's why we focused so heavily on the education system here and why we have technology centres like at the University of Waterloo and elsewhere, where education has become so important.

To sum up, my perspective is that I am very proud, as a member of this government, to see this bill put forward. I can't wait until it becomes law. I think that we will be attracting more business here in Ontario and we will be able to compete against not just the rest of Canada or the rest of North America, but the rest of the world, and we will be the place to go.

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

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I listened to the member intently, and he quoted the Oil, Gas, and Salt Resources Act and the changes coming forward there. Of course, I would hope that everyone is very concerned with what's taking place in the Gulf and the aspects there, but it's a different situation here. Most of the oil and gas is stored in a number of underground facilities, so that natural gas is actually pumped into the old oil sites and stored there for extended periods of time. Of course, there are problems with the utilization of non-allowable gases such as carbon dioxide, and those aspects, but the concern I have is that we are constantly moving forward to access without warrant. Inspectors are coming in without warrant on a regular basis, and a lot of the legislation that we are constantly hearing about is moving forward.

How many situations, I would like to know—being that he has quoted this section—have there been where a warrant has been denied or there has been the ability to get on-site to review some of these situations? It's going to move forward, because certainly, a lot of the legislation coming forward appears to have consistency in giving inspectors access without warrant. Moving forward without that ability: I don't know the situation, and if it is a problem, then it's something that needs to be addressed in the courts, to make sure that those warrants—and something needs to change place there to make sure that that access is given. Certainly, we want to protect the environment as much as we can and do everything absolutely possible; however, the way the wording is in the legislation, it is at the discretion of the inspector on what is and what is not allowed. I do have some strong concerns about that. I hopefully will be able to hear some responses as to the number of times a warrant has been issued or denied in that case, so we can get some background information as to where this is coming from.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I listened to my Liberal colleague's speech both while I was in the House and on television, and I hope he takes this the right way: It looks really good on television. That perhaps says something about modern politics: It's what looks good on television that counts. Notwithstanding that it looks good on tele-

vision, the question I would have to ask of him is, the government—this is really thin gruel, in my view—gets rid of a few acts that I think everybody in this Legislature would admit are out of date; they were passed at a particular time in the history of Ontario to deal with a particular problem. The Liberal government is proposing to do away with a couple of those acts.

I think the government is doing something that will hurt vulnerable workers. I think the government is also doing something that will put environmental protection at risk, but other than that there's not a lot here in this legislation that's going to create jobs. There's nothing in this legislation that deals with the credit crisis that small business is facing. There's nothing to deal with the cost crisis that major processors—for example, the mining processing field and the forest products processing field; there's nothing here that's going to address their problems with hydro rates that have skyrocketed through the roof. I wonder if the member can tell us: What exactly in this bill does the Liberal government think is going to create jobs?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Questions and comments? The member from Ancaster-Flamborough-Dundas and Westdale.

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** Thank you. Westdale would never want to be forgotten, Madam Speaker; it's one of the great spots in the riding that I'm privileged to represent, the home of McMaster University. Of course, up in Ancaster we've got Redeemer University and even Mohawk College, which is a neighbour.

But listen, we're not here to talk about my riding; we're here to respond to the member from Scarborough Southwest, who, I want to say—I think he delivered one of the most cogent, timely, prudent addresses I've heard in this Legislative Assembly for a long time. It was amazing how many issues he touched on in the brief few moments that he had. He talked about the need to be forward-looking, not to be looking in the rear-view mirror but to be moving forward, albeit in some cases, as the member from the north has said, incrementally, but that works for Liberals. We just don't want to go backwards. We want to move forwards.

I think he talked about that. He talked about the importance of the stimulus package and building confidence. I can tell you, as one who has been in business, that there's not a lot that the government can do to—experts tell us, a 15% or 20% impact in terms of government programs. It's really business that has to have the confidence. We have to set the table for that. He talked about the environment, and I was really pleased to hear about that, particularly the partnership with our First Nations people, which is excellent.

It occurs to me, too—just in the few seconds I have—that in a world where we can purchase resources, copy technology and borrow capital, the only real advantage we have, ever, is the quality of our workforce, a workforce that can compete very, very well in the global economy. That's what this bill is all about, and I think the

member articulated that exceptionally well. I'm proud of him.

1700

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

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Along with my colleague who just spoke, I was particularly impressed with the presentation that was made by the member from Scarborough Southwest this afternoon. Obviously he spent some time during constituency week last week canvassing a number of the constituents in his riding on a wide variety of areas and talking to them about the Ontario Open for Business Act. You can understand how he took that information—listening intently—from his constituents and bringing here today some of the thoughts that they've certainly provided on this very important piece of legislation, our government's initiative to create faster, smarter and more streamlining of government-to-business services that we'll all benefit from, from Thunder Bay to Cornwall, from Cochrane to Peterborough to Guelph to Sarnia to Windsor—all over this great province.

I had the opportunity to be in the municipality of Douro-Dummer just last Friday night—it's one of the rural parts of Peterborough riding—and I heard a number of reeves and deputies talk about OMAFRA's amendments to the Drainage Act that could result in approximate savings of \$1.1 million in that particular field due to administrative costs. We don't have a lot of tile drainage in the great riding of Peterborough, but we have some.

Another area that the member talked about today was where we can take advantage through the Open Ontario concept to do more business on an international basis. I know his riding is full of individuals who came to Canada to seek their destiny. I know he spends a lot of time talking to those individuals, and that was clearly reflected and articulated this afternoon in his presentation on this important act.

I'd like to add that with the GDP numbers this morning, Ontario is growing at rate of some 3.7% in our first quarter.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from Scarborough Southwest has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I would like to thank the member from Oshawa, the member from Kenora-Rainy River, the member from Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale and the member from Peterborough for their comments.

All one needs to do is read the Daily Commercial News for today, May 31. It's an international publication that says, "Despite Setbacks, Ontario's Economy Has a Strong Foundation." It says that the G20 has been selected to take place in Toronto; the Pan Am Games have been awarded to Toronto and parts of Ontario; "The Bay Street financial community has won the respect of the world"; provincial academic institutions are second to none; high-tech has become a major growth industry

here; and many new transit projects are taking place all throughout this province, all the way from the Windsor bridge to transit systems in Ottawa and highways leading all the way up to Sudbury and beyond.

I think the member from Kenora-Rainy River mentioned: Where in this act does it say we're going to create new jobs? I didn't find a section that said—section 24(a) or whatever—new jobs will be created. But what this does for business people who are out there, who are sitting there in their offices deciding, "Where should I locate my business?" is give them confidence. Maybe the name of the act should be the "confidence act" because businesses operate on confidence, and if you have a group of rules that you have here and amendments that are modern and up to date and make this a healthy environment here in Ontario, then people will locate here.

We're not talking about "maybe they'll come here." They have come here. Samsung came here. Toyota came here. So many other businesses have come here. You will see that more will come to Ontario than anywhere else in the world.

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

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 68, the so-called Open for Business Act. This is a large omnibus bill that includes changes to 10 different ministries.

I know that the member from York-Simcoe, who is the PC critic for consumer services, small business and red tape, has done a great job raising some of the concerns of the PC caucus. I know that critics in other areas are going to go into depth on the issues in their portfolio, so I'm going to focus my remarks on the impact on our agriculture industry.

When the minister introduced this act, she didn't even mention agriculture. Despite the fact that this omnibus bill contains amendments to nine different agriculture acts, it demonstrates once again the lack of respect this government has for the agriculture industry and our farmers. It demonstrates that, once again, the Minister of Agriculture's voice is not being heard at the cabinet table.

When she introduced this act, the Minister of Economic Development claimed that, "The Open for Business Act, if passed, would help Ontario businesses focus on what they do best: creating jobs for Ontario families." She's ignoring that the agriculture industry in Ontario and Ontario's farmers create jobs. In fact, they're one of the biggest sectors of our Ontario economy. This government is trying to use this omnibus bill to hide the fact that they're once again cutting support for farmers. This legislation is a wolf in sheep's clothing, and the government doesn't even want to pay for the damages that wolf causes.

The impact of the proposed changes to the Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act is that farmers will no longer be entitled to compensation for livestock or poultry that are killed by coyotes and wolves. The

McGuinty government is cutting compensation for honey bees killed by bears, and they are cutting compensation for poultry and livestock killed by dogs in unorganized territories. They had been paying that until now; this act says they will no longer do that. I'm amazed that the government is so out of touch with rural Ontario and the agriculture community that they are doing the exact opposite of what agriculture groups across the province have been asking for.

Currently, farmers who lose livestock to predators such as dogs, wolves or coyotes apply to their local municipality and receive compensation for their losses. The municipality is responsible for the cost of livestock and poultry which is killed by dogs, but the province reimburses the municipalities for any compensation they pay for livestock killed by wolves and coyotes. Since the Ministry of Natural Resources is responsible for controlling the population of wolves and coyotes, it makes sense that the province would have a responsibility for the losses that farmers suffer when the population gets too high.

For years, farmers have been asking that the compensation model for livestock killed by predators be updated and that the Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act be expanded to include more predators.

The Christian Farmers released a position statement on predation management and crop harvesting by wildlife, which said, "The CFFO endorses the modernization of the predation compensation program such that the program reimburses farmers based on the appropriate fair market value of livestock destroyed by wildlife; compensation should reflect ongoing, non-lethal production damage that results from stress or terrorized animals, based on the past records of the individual operation."

The OFA recommended "that the Ontario government update the Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act to include more predators, livestock and poultry. Secondly, the compensation schedule must be updated to reflect current livestock and poultry values."

In a 2008 letter to the Minister of Natural Resources, the OFA said, "As you know, the OFA has made wildlife crop damages and predation a top priority. In recent years, the increase in crop and livestock losses has escalated. The situation has become intolerable as compensation for economic loss is either nonexistent or woefully inadequate. The rapid increase in the cost of farm inputs, notably fuels, has further increased the direct financial losses to farmers." Farmers and farm organizations were asking that compensation be based on updated market values, not that they be removed from legislation completely.

As the OFA mentioned in their letter, the problem with livestock and predators has been growing. We have been hearing reports from farmers across Ontario about increases in the coyote population. The Kingston Whig-Standard recently called it a "coyote explosion."

Ontario Sheep said, "Livestock predation in Ontario has increased over the past few years to the point where in some case it threatens to put farmers out of business."

In 2009, the Ontario Cattlemen's Association passed several resolutions at their annual general meeting which all talked about the increased loss of livestock to predators and the need for the government to provide better compensation.

The Ministry of Natural Resources admitted earlier this year that the ministry doesn't track the coyote population in Ontario. In fact, when she was asked by a member of her own caucus in this Legislature whether the population was increasing, she avoided answering the question.

Farmers across Ontario are losing calves, sheep and poultry to coyotes. There are stories of farmers losing dozens of calves or 30 sheep to coyotes. That is a significant loss to those farmers. The problem here is that the number of livestock being lost to predators is increasing, and that it is increasing the cost to both the farmers and the province. Instead of looking for solutions like controlling the coyote population, the province is ignoring the real problem and cutting their costs by dumping the full cost onto the farmers.

#### 1710

It isn't just compensation for livestock lost to wolves and coyotes that is being cut. The McGuinty government is also cutting compensation to beekeepers who lose their colonies to bears. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs website, "The purpose of the program is to encourage production of honey in Ontario by having beekeepers report damage caused by bears and by compensating them for losses suffered."

If the goal of the program was to increase honey production, what message is the McGuinty government sending by cutting that program? Most beekeepers in Ontario have relatively low incomes. A recent survey found that the gross income for 37% of them was less than \$20,000 a year. There are already concerns about the decline in the bee population in Ontario. The government should be looking at what they can do to increase the industry, not cutting the program that our beekeepers depend on.

In most areas of the province, the municipal government is responsible for providing compensation for livestock killed by dogs. In areas where there is no municipal government, the province ensures that farmers would be compensated. This act removes that section and leaves the farmer to attempt to determine whose dog attacked the livestock and go after the owner of the animal, if they can be found. I think we all know that in most cases locating the owner of the dog and collecting the payment isn't going to be easy, and many of the farmers won't be compensated.

This is just the latest in a series of cuts that the Ministry of Agriculture has made to programs that support our farmers. Last year, it was cutting the subsidies to the deadstock disposal program, which helped farmers safely get rid of dead farm animals. Just a few weeks ago, there was an article in the Ontario Farmer that mentioned that there is now less deadstock being picked up from the farms. We warned the Minister of Agriculture last year

that this problem would occur, and she didn't listen. I hope that the new minister is paying attention now. If those animals aren't disposed of properly, they're going to lead to environmental risks and encourage more wild predators.

One of the few government programs that was working for farmers was the grain and oilseeds business risk management program, but this government ended that program, too.

They announced a program to help abattoirs meet the many new regulations, but it turns out that they ended the program and only spent 75% of the money they allocated. Several weeks ago in this Legislature, when I questioned her about the program, the minister claimed, "We will always meet the demand of the applications." I know that many abattoirs are being closed or are in danger of being closed because they can't meet those regulations, so I'm happy to hear that the minister is going to help them.

Within a few hours, I faxed her a letter asking that she post the application on OMAFRA's website and send my office a copy so that we could get them to the abattoirs where they were in demand. I'm still waiting for the application and a response to my letter.

In a few weeks, farmers will be taking another loss when the HST goes into effect and they lose their point-of-sale exemption. Currently farmers can go into the store and show their farm organization card when they make a farm purchase, and they automatically are exempt from the PST. This could have been continued, but the McGuinty government didn't care enough about our farmers to negotiate a point-of-sale exemption. Now the farmers will have to pay the HST and get their own money back from the government.

If this government was in touch with the reality of Ontario's farms, they would know that many farms operate at least part of the year on lines of credit and that waiting for their money to come back will increase their borrowing costs. Once again, no one in the McGuinty government was standing up for the farmers or thinking about how these changes would impact them.

The agriculture industry in Ontario has had a couple of tough years. Hog and cattle prices have meant that farmers have had a loss on every animal they sold. Input costs have been increasing, including wages, energy and fuel. Farmers who export have been dealing with the high Canadian dollar. Many farmers are already struggling, and every time they turn around, the government is quietly cutting another program that's supposed to be helping them.

Farmers have been asking for a new support program based on the cost of production, which would ensure that they could continue to farm even when market prices are down for several years in a row. Eight of the largest non-supply-managed commodity groups have come together with one voice to say this is what the agriculture industry needs. So far, the province has taken no action to help them. They have made excuses and promised to lobby on behalf of farmers. Farmers don't need a lobbyist; it is a

responsible government that they need, one that will take real action to address the problems that farmers are facing, one that will be honest and direct about the actions they are taking, not to try and hide the cuts in the omnibus bills like this one we have today.

Later this week, my colleague from Simcoe-Grey will be bringing forward a resolution calling for a business risk management program based on the cost of production. I hope that all members on the opposite side in this Legislature will demonstrate real support for our farmers by voting for that resolution.

I said I would focus my remarks today on this area of the act because I want to ensure that the voice of the farmers and the agriculture industry is heard on this important issue. This is another cut to farmers, and the government should not be allowed to slip it through by burying it in a red tape bill.

To ensure that farmers get the opportunity to have their input and talk about how these changes will affect them, I believe that there should be consultations across the province, including communities that are convenient for our agriculture community. There are a number of questions and other issues that are raised in this act, and I look forward to extensive committee hearings to hear from all the stakeholders that are affected by it.

As you know, this act was introduced only 14 days ago, and it contains 166 pages. It affects 10 different ministries. The ministry provided a general briefing on the day that it was introduced. But as you would know, Madam Speaker, that was several days before the bill was actually printed, and we would receive a copy when it was printed. Our request, through the critic's office, for another briefing once the bill was printed was refused by the minister and the ministry.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** How can they do that?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I don't know, but they did it.

That certainly doesn't sound like the government is open. However, I'm pleased that the government has finally listen to us about the fact that there is too much government red tape.

The definition—and I think this is very important—of red tape is regulation and legislation that is completely redundant.

Our party believes that you should get rid of red tape whenever you identify it. I remember that in 1995, when we first started talking about red tape, the Liberal Party said they were going to get rid of 50% of it. Well, if you can identify it all and it's completely useless and redundant regulation or legislation, I don't know why anybody would promise to only get rid of 50% of it. It would seem to me that getting rid of it all would be the answer.

Today, we have a similar situation: The McGuinty government has said that for every new regulation they will get rid of two. If you know what regulations are redundant and unnecessary, why would you wait for new regulations to be implemented? Why not get rid of those that you've identified now?

When we were in government, in our first year in office, we established a Red Tape Commission, and we passed 15 red-tape-reduction acts. We took several steps to reduce red tape for farmers, like creating a point-of-sale exemption and changing the farm property tax system so they no longer had to wait to get their own money back from government. The government's goal of getting rid of red tape is commendable but, as always, it's the implementation that's the challenge here today.

Farmers will tell you that they're still facing more burdens and more paperwork. They will tell you that OMAFRA is less about helping farmers to succeed than trying to catch them doing something wrong. Farmers will tell you about getting contradictory instructions from different ministries.

Agribusinesses that are trying to invest in Ontario will tell you that they can't get a clear answer on what the regulations are and what requirements they must meet.

The greenhouses will tell you that while the government is spending huge amounts of money on renewable energy, they can't get past the red tape for their environmentally friendly cogeneration program—and there's nothing about that in this bill, either.

Talking about cutting red tape and being open for business isn't enough. It takes action, and so far this government isn't succeeding.

In fact—this is rather interesting—in an internal report from OMAFRA in the first year of implementing this open-for-business policy, the business plan from OMAFRA said, “Changes were made in this quarter to nine acts. We were able to report a burden reduction of 957 by repealing, revoking and/or amending sections to the Farm Products Grades and Sales Act; the Farm Products Marketing Act; the Ontario Agricultural Museum Act; the Dead Animal Disposal Act; the Food Safety and Quality Act; the Animals for Research Act; and the Animal Disposal Act.” The important number in that is 957.

The next part of that same report reads, “We did report 962 additional burdens as new regulations were enacted under the Nutrient Management Act and the Food Safety and Quality Act as part of the deadstock file. Also, a new regulation was enacted under the Ontario Food Terminal Act and an amending regulation was made to the Animals for Research Act.” Well, those two numbers, 957 and 962, that was an increase of five regulations. Remember, we were going to eliminate two for every one we put in place.

This is even more interesting: The report went on to say, “With an established strategy in place, OMAFRA is on track towards reaching its 25% burden reduction target as well as completing its identified projects to open for business.” That means in the first year of implementing open-for-business, the regulations affecting farmers actually increased by five.

This must be some kind of new Liberal math, that you can increase the number of regulations and say you're on track to cutting red tape two to one.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** How is that possible?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm not sure how that would be possible.

Having said that, I hope the government will continue to take steps. Even though they haven't been very successful so far, I hope they would keep taking steps to reduce the red tape.

I don't see that there's much great interest in here for government listening. They're not known for listening to the opposing view, shall we say. In fact, they're not even interested in hearing—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Well, they don't even want to hear from the people from Ontario.

If all had gone the way it should in this place, today, I believe, we could have been debating a motion to give the people of Ontario an opportunity to vote on whether they thought it was appropriate to have the HST implemented or whether they should wait with that till after the next election so the people could decide. But the government saw fit not to have that opposition day today, and I think because of that, I'd move adjournment of this debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Mr. Hardeman has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1722 to 1752.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Mr. Hardeman has moved adjournment of the debate.

All those in favour will please stand and remain standing until counted.

All those opposed will please stand and remain standing until counted.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** The ayes are 8 and the nays are 40.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** I declare that the motion has been defeated.

Further debate?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I had almost finished my presentation when I was so concerned about there not being enough people hearing it.

I think businesses and farmers need to know that they have a government they can count on to be clear and honest. The sections that remove legislative compensation have to be taken out of this bill instead of trying to sneak them through.

With that, I'd like to move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Mr. Hardeman has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say “aye.”

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

I would say the nays have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1754 to 1824.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Would members please take their seats.

Mr. Hardeman has moved adjournment of the House. All those in favour will please rise and stay standing until counted.

All those opposed will please rise and stay standing until counted.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** The ayes are 2; the nays are 36.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** I declare that the motion has been defeated.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** I also declare that the House is going to be recessed until 6:45 p.m.

I declare the House now recessed.

*The House recessed from 1825 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 /<br>Député(e) et parti        | Constituency /<br>Circonscription                      | Other responsibilities /<br>Autres responsabilités  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)</b>  | Hamilton Mountain                                      | Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs   |
| Albanese, Laura (LIB)                           | York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston                    |   |
| Arnott, Ted (PC)                                | Wellington–Halton Hills                                | Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle  |
| Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)                            | Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est |   |
| Bailey, Robert (PC)                             | Sarnia–Lambton   |   |
| Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)                           | Scarborough–Rouge River                                |   |
| Barrett, Toby (PC)                              | Haldimand–Norfolk                                      |   |
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| <b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b> | London West / London-Ouest                             | Attorney General / Procureur général<br>Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones  |
| Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)                     | Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest          |   |
| <b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>    | Scarborough–Guildwood                                  | Minister of Health Promotion / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé   |
| Bisson, Gilles (NDP)                            | Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James                 |   |
| <b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>    | St. Catharines   | Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement  |
| <b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>   | Etobicoke–Lakeshore                                    | Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse<br>Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine |
| Brown, Michael A. (LIB)                         | Algoma–Manitoulin                                      |   |
| Brownell, Jim (LIB)                             | Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry                        |   |
| Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)                       | Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre                    |   |
| Caplan, David (LIB)                             | Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est                       |   |
| Carroll, M. Aileen (LIB)                        | Barrie   |   |
| <b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>        | Markham–Unionville                                     | Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture   |
| Chiarelli, Bob (LIB)                            | Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean               |   |
| Chudleigh, Ted (PC)                             | Halton   |   |
| Clark, Steve (PC)                               | Leeds–Grenville  |   |
| Colle, Mike (LIB)                               | Eglinton–Lawrence                                      |   |
| Craitor, Kim (LIB)                              | Niagara Falls  |   |
| <b>Crozier, Bruce (LIB)</b>                     | Essex  | Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée<br>Deputy Speaker / Vice-président   |
| Delaney, Bob (LIB)                              | Mississauga–Streetsville                               |   |
| Dhillon, Vic (LIB)                              | Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest                         |   |
| Dickson, Joe (LIB)                              | Ajax–Pickering   |   |
| <b>DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)</b>                      | Parkdale–High Park                                     | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative   |
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| <b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>         | Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre                | Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure  |
| <b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>       | Windsor–Tecumseh                                       | Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement<br>Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances   |

| <b>Member and Party /<br/>Député(e) et parti</b> | <b>Constituency /<br/>Circonscription</b>                   | <b>Other responsibilities /<br/>Autres responsabilités</b>   |
|--|---|--|
| Dunlop, Garfield (PC)                            | Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord                                  |  |
| Elliott, Christine (PC)                          | Whitby–Oshawa   | Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle  |
| Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)                        | Oakville  |  |
| <b>Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)</b>        | Mississauga East–Cooksville /<br>Mississauga-Est–Cooksville | Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail   |
| Gélinas, France (NDP)                            | Nickel Belt   |  |
| <b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>       | Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et<br>les Îles          | Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement  |
| <b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>     | Thunder Bay–Superior North /<br>Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord   | Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du<br>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<br>l'opposition officielle  |
| Hillier, Randy (PC)                              | Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and<br>Addington                    |  |
| Horwath, Andrea (NDP)                            | Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre                           | Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu<br>Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti<br>démocratique de l'Ontario   |
| <b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>         | St. Paul's  | Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires<br>civiques et de l'Immigration  |
| Hoy, Pat (LIB)                                   | Chatham–Kent–Essex  |  |
| Hudak, Tim (PC)                                  | Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-<br>Ouest–Glanbrook        | Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle<br>Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti<br>progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario                         |
| Jaczek, Helena (LIB)                             | Oak Ridges–Markham  |  |
| <b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>        | Brampton–Springdale   | Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles  |
| Johnson, Rick (LIB)                              | Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock                             |  |
| Jones, Sylvia (PC)                               | Dufferin–Caledon  |  |
| Klees, Frank (PC)                                | Newmarket–Aurora  |  |
| Kormos, Peter (NDP)                              | Welland   | Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu   |
| Kular, Kuldip (LIB)                              | Bramalea–Gore–Malton  |  |
| Kwinter, Monte (LIB)                             | York Centre / York-Centre                                   |  |
| Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)                         | Glengarry–Prescott–Russell                                  |  |
| Leal, Jeff (LIB)                                 | Peterborough  |  |
| Levac, Dave (LIB)                                | Brant   |  |
| MacLeod, Lisa (PC)                               | Nepean–Carleton   |  |
| Mangat, Amrit (LIB)                              | Mississauga–Brampton South /<br>Mississauga–Brampton-Sud    |  |
| Marchese, Rosario (NDP)                          | Trinity–Spadina   |  |
| Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)                            | Cambridge   |  |
| <b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>     | London North Centre / London-<br>Centre-Nord                | Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des<br>Soins de longue durée   |
| Mauro, Bill (LIB)                                | Thunder Bay–Atikokan  |  |
| <b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>      | Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud                                   | Premier / Premier ministre<br>Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario  |
| McMeekin, Ted (LIB)                              | Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–<br>Westdale                    |  |
| McNeely, Phil (LIB)                              | Ottawa–Orléans  |  |
| <b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>   | Ottawa–Vanier   | Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services<br>sociaux et communautaires<br>Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée<br>aux Affaires francophones      |
| Miller, Norm (PC)                                | Parry Sound–Muskoka   |  |
| Miller, Paul (NDP)                               | Hamilton East–Stoney Creek /<br>Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek   |  |
| <b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>          | Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre                         | Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de<br>l'Innovation<br>Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la<br>Formation et des Collèges et Universités |
| <b>Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)</b>       | Huron–Bruce   | Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de<br>l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales  |
| Moridi, Reza (LIB)                               | Richmond Hill   |  |

| <b>Member and Party /<br/>Député(e) et parti</b> | <b>Constituency /<br/>Circonscription</b> | <b>Other responsibilities /<br/>Autres responsabilités</b>  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>                         | York–Simcoe                               | Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House /<br>Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée<br>législative   |
| Murdoch, Bill (PC)                               | Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound                     |   |
| Murray, Glen R (LIB)                             | Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre           |   |
| Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)                               | Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre             |   |
| O'Toole, John (PC)                               | Durham                                    |   |
| Oraziotti, David (LIB)                           | Sault Ste. Marie                          |   |
| Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)                         | Oshawa                                    |   |
| Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)                        | Kitchener–Conestoga                       |   |
| <b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)</b>         | Elgin–Middlesex–London                    | Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative  |
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| Prue, Michael (NDP)                              | Beaches–East York                         |   |
| <b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>     | Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest              | Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du<br>Développement économique et du Commerce   |
| Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)                             | Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord          |   |
| Ramal, Khalil (LIB)                              | London–Fanshawe                           |   |
| Ramsay, David (LIB)                              | Timiskaming–Cochrane                      |   |
| Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)                               | Northumberland–Quinte West                |   |
| Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)                             | Davenport                                 |   |
| Sandals, Liz (LIB)                               | Guelph                                    |   |
| Savoline, Joyce (PC)                             | Burlington                                |   |
| Sergio, Mario (LIB)                              | York West / York-Ouest                    |   |
| Shurman, Peter (PC)                              | Thornhill                                 |   |
| <b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>     | Nipissing                                 | Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires<br>intergouvernementales<br>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<br>parti reconnu  |
| <b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>   | Mississauga–Erindale                      | Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services<br>gouvernementaux  |
| Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)                          | Lambton–Kent–Middlesex                    |   |
| <b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>       | Perth–Wellington                          | Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu  |
| <b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>                          | Simcoe–Grey                               | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier<br>vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée   |
| Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)                           | Kitchener–Waterloo                        |   |
| <b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>    | Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest        | Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports  |
| Yakabuski, John (PC)                             | Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke                | Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition<br>officielle  |
| Zimmer, David (LIB)                              | Willowdale                                |   |

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

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey  
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson  
Jim Brownell, Kim Craiton  
Bob Delaney, Garfield Dunlop  
Amrit Mangat, Phil McNeely  
John O'Toole  
Clerks / Greffiers: William Short (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Wayne Arthurs  
Toby Barrett, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Pat Hoy, Norm Miller  
Glen R Murray, Charles Sousa  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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

Chair / Président: David Oraziotti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Helena Jaczek  
Bob Chiarelli, Steve Clark  
Helena Jaczek, Kuldip Kular  
Dave Levac, Rosario Marchese  
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti  
Joyce Savoline  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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

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





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