



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 39^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 19 October 2010

Mardi 19 octobre 2010

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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



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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

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The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

NOT-FOR-PROFIT
CORPORATIONS ACT, 2010
LOI DE 2010 SUR LES ORGANISATIONS
SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 7, 2010, on the motion for third reading of Bill 65, An Act to revise the law in respect of not-for-profit corporations / Projet de loi 65, Loi modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les organisations sans but lucratif.

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

Mr. Peter Kormos: I've just got a few minutes left. This is a time-allocated debate—the guillotine motion. The government didn't want to hear from the Parliament of Ontario around this bill.

I just want to recount what I had to say, because it was some time ago that I had a chance to commence my comments on this bill. I remember that I did congratulate and commend the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, one Rick Johnson, for assuming the ad hoc role of parliamentary assistant during the course of this bill through the committee. It was a pleasure to work with him.

I recall how the government House leader was in a snit at the time, which is why this bill got forced into time allocation. As a result of the snit that the government House leader was in—don't forget, she was in a little bit of hot water because of inappropriate comments that she made around the reappointment of Ombudsman André Marin.

As it ends up at the end of the day, the government House leader embraced André Marin with both arms. She was overwhelmed, I must say. I'm sure she was overwhelmed at his reappointment—I recall that very clearly—as were most of the government backbenchers. But she was in a snit around the reappointment of André Marin and her having gotten into some hot water because of comments she had made in the press about the selection process, even though she was totally unaware of what happened in the committee around the selection

process. So it was inaccurate information that she conveyed to the public through the media.

Of course, there were the countless numbers of unidentified government sources, unidentified Liberal sources, that were badmouthing André Marin, slandering him, libelling him in the media.

Just as a brief aside, it's remarkable how the negative commentary on Mr. Marin ended immediately after he was reappointed. That's most interesting. Isn't that interesting? It allows one to infer, rather logically, that there was a concerted, concentrated and specific campaign to derail Mr. Marin by Liberals. Of course, the Liberals have just finished their weekend confab during which the keynote speech was on the art of mudslinging. I do notice—

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Did you write that?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Well, I read the book just Friday night, after I read that in the paper. But I do notice that there was some material distributed during that weekend confab. I have copies here. There were leadership campaign brochures:

“Chris Bentley for leader: Why wait until October 7th 2011?”

“Kathleen Wynne for leader: She's taken out one leader already!”—which is a reasonably good theme. I trust that she'll continue to use that in her leadership campaign.

“Glen Murray for leader: the right Manitoban for the job!” Of course, why not?

“Sandra Pupatello for leader: ready to move up to the better junkets.”

I don't make this up. This is material that was handed out, I'm told, at the weekend confab by the Liberals where they were being spoken to by the American king of mudslinging, Warren Kinsella, for whom I have a great deal of admiration and who is, of course, an expert at mudslinging. I only wish he was one of ours, rather than Liberals'. I like Warren Kinsella.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: A comment on the subject matter would be appreciated, I think.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I remind the member that it is Bill 65 that we are debating.

Mr. Peter Kormos: But the bill is rather boring and tedious, and the leadership aspirations of various—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask the member to stay within the topic of the bill being discussed and to not use a prop.

Mr. Peter Kormos: As I pointed out, Bill 65 is rather tedious.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Does that mean you're going to support it?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Of course, we've already supported it. Ms. Wynne, who has already taken out one leader and who's prepared to take out another, to wit, her own—internecine, I suppose, is the word that's appropriate.

But I really should speak to the bill, and I only have eight minutes left. For me to speak to the bill means that I can't mock Officer Bubbles once again, as I did yesterday afternoon, that wimpy Toronto cop, Constable Adam Josephs, who is suing people—the cop who said, "Oh, a bubble hit me." A bubble in the groin, perhaps. This wimpy Constable Adam Josephs, Officer Bubbles, who's suing for defamation, is now the subject matter of more mockery and abuse by his own colleagues, I'm sure, than he is by anybody out there in the community. So I can't talk about him, as I did yesterday afternoon during the government's good government bill, which is an oxymoron. Josephs alleges that the—

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I just remind the member to stay with the bill.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Josephs alleges that—perhaps a non-profit corporation could assist him. He may find himself utilizing Bill 65 once it becomes law, as it undoubtedly will, after third reading vote this morning. But Officer Josephs alleges that this pictorial display has brought him "ridicule, scandal and contempt both personally and as a member of the (Toronto Police Service)." By Constable Adam Josephs' behaviour—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I remind the member to stay with the debate on the bill.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you. Bill 65. Constable Adam Josephs' behaviour during the G20 has brought him "ridicule, scandal and contempt both personally and as a member of the (Toronto Police Service)."

You will recall that I also mocked the funeral industry last time we spoke to Bill 65. I tore a strip off the Catholic Cemeteries planning board because they, of course, were the subject matter of the committee. You recall that, don't you, Speaker? They were the subject matter of one of the submissions before the committee on Bill 65. So I tore a strip off of them and, amongst other things, the glossy brochures they had, which noted, "At the end of life, the church makes one last act of love by providing holy ground for us to rest and await the resurrection." I suppose if that's what it takes to get money from people, so be it.

New Democrats have supported this bill. New Democrats were surprised at how sloppy the bill was, and we discovered that once it came to committee, in terms of what it failed to address. New Democrats were amazed at the fact that the original author or sponsor of the bill, who is the member for Hamilton Mountain, because I can't refer to Ms. Aggelonitis by name, the Minister of Revenue—how she was the original author of the bill but

how quickly she had her name deleted from the bill and had it replaced with the name of the current Minister of Consumer Services, the member from the Kingston area.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Can we move on to another speaker?

Mr. Peter Kormos: I should note that the member for Essex is antsy this morning. I don't know whether he is colicky or—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): It is not in order to discuss another member here. Just stay with the bill.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: The member for Welland is simply trying to impugn some sort of motive of mine. All I want, Speaker, is—in this case, he is going at great lengths to intimidate, I think, the Speaker because he won't stay on the subject, and I just think we should move on to another speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask the member to confine his comments to the bill.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I will, and I have, if people will listen carefully.

Now, I find—the member from Essex, of course, is at the kiddie table, as his cabinet minister—

Mr. Bruce Crozier: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: If there's anybody in this place I don't appreciate being attacked personally by, it's the member for Welland, and I wish that you would interfere in his comments and see that he does not do that.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask the member to refrain, as he knows, and continue.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I apologize profusely. I just apologize from the heart and the gut. But in this morning's Star the Minister of Economic Development and Trade indicated clearly that if you're not in cabinet, you're at the kiddies' table. It's in her quote in the Star. So the members from the kiddies' table who want to raise—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask you to continue speaking only on the bill.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Just move on.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Of course, with reference to Bill 65, the member from Essex appears to have a problem this morning. I don't know whether it's a function of—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I've already reminded you. I'd ask you to withdraw that comment.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I withdraw that comment. The member from Essex is whiny this morning, and I apologize to him too. If there's anything I've done—

Mr. Bruce Crozier: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: I think the member for Welland, although he's doing it poorly, is trying to attack me. I don't know why. I quite enjoy the job I do in this Legislature as Deputy Speaker, albeit a much more important job than he has. I just wish that he would refrain and that perhaps you could move on to somebody who has something substantive—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): It is not a point of order.

I ask the member to contain his remarks to Bill 65.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you kindly, Speaker. Of course, you know that I always appreciate your direction and your counsel, and I appreciate you having had the member for Essex sit down. So I thank you, Speaker, and I value your leadership in this institution.

We know we're going to be supporting Bill 65—everybody in the Legislature is—which is why it just struck me as odd that the government would time-allocate it, and it struck me as odd that the government would order it to have hearings in Kitchener and Sudbury and Kingston and one other city—I can't remember—but that not a single soul in any of those cities wanted to speak to it. This government was prepared to blow tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars on the committee travelling to visit those communities when not a single soul from those communities wanted to speak to it, but for two who were accommodated by television and telephone communication.

So here's a government—it's clear that it's on the ropes. We see the polling. We know what we hear in the markets when we go home on Saturday morning. Here's a government that is pathetically desperate, that is prepared to use mudslinging, and indicated that clearly at their weekend confab over at the Sheraton Centre here in the city of Toronto. Here is a government that thinks it can somehow lure some popular support with Bill 65, but in fact most of the concern about it was, "Oh, well, it's relatively benign." But it failed to incorporate some of the most fundamental things that non-profit corporations sought, including asset protection.

It's just incredible that the government missed the boat on this one again. First, it's not-so-smart stupid meters that are increasing people's electricity rates, then it's Internet gambling so kids can blow mommy's or daddy's credit card in the privacy of their bedroom on their computer, and now it's a somewhat benign Bill 65—eight seconds left—that New Democrats, of course, will be supporting, but also acknowledging that this government is an absolute failure.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate? The member for Stormont, Dundas and North Glengarry.

Mr. Jim Brownell: South Glengarry.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Close.

Mr. Jim Brownell: Yes, it is close.

I am honoured to rise in the House today to support the Minister of Consumer Services on the proposed Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. As parliamentary assistant to the minister and MPP for the riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, I know first-hand of the importance of not-for-profit corporations and the reform that is necessary to help our partners in this sector operate effectively.

If passed, this legislation would provide a modern legal framework to better address the needs of Ontario's approximately 46,000 not-for-profit corporations. It would make it easier for them to operate in today's world, as well as strengthen the overall sector.

Reform is long overdue. Let me explain with a bit of history. As the Minister of Consumer Services said in his

introductory remarks to this third reading for Bill 65, Ontario's not-for-profit sector is currently guided by the provisions of the existing Corporations Act. This legislation was enacted in 1907. It was set up to apply to all types of corporations, including not-for-profit, business, insurance and mining. It has not been substantially revised since 1953. Since then, there have been only small amendments.

Through the 1970s, the province introduced separate statutes to govern business corporations. However, the act was not updated to reflect this fundamental change or the many other changes over the decades in this sector. The result: For decades, large parts of the Corporations Act have been outdated. Not-for-profit organizations have told the Ministry of Consumer Services that they have been forced to piece together provisions of the act that apply to them. As you can imagine, this makes it difficult to use. Even lawyers have told the ministry that they, on occasion, find it difficult to locate the applicable law.

0920

There are also significant gaps. For instance, the current act lacks provisions that set out the duty and standard of care of directors and officers. There are no statutory defences for them against personal liability. It lacks a complete set of rules to address director and member meetings. Further, it is not consistent with the newer legislation in place in other Canadian jurisdictions. Basically, it is outdated legislation.

Our government wants to modernize the outdated legislation. Ontario's not-for-profits deserve fair, comprehensive and up-to-date laws that enable them to operate well in a modern world. The proposed not-for-profit corporations act would meet the need. If passed, this legislation would offer clarity and completeness. It would follow a logical order. It would address a range of issues, from incorporation to corporate governance, to member rights and protections, to defences for directors and officers and to dissolution. It would be a welcome improvement for the sector.

Some might wonder what constitutes a not-for-profit corporation in Ontario under the current legislation, the Corporations Act. There are three key elements: (1) It is an organization that carries on its activities without the purpose of gain for its members. (2) It is incorporated as a corporation that does not issue shares. (3) It must have not-for-profit purposes and use any profits that it makes to promote these purposes.

These are the facts, but as we all know, not-for-profits are so much more than the sum of their parts. From daycare centres to food banks, from social clubs to service clubs, from professional groups to neighbourhood associations, these organizations are the heart and soul of our communities.

Last night, if I could just digress for a moment, I was in my riding as the guest speaker for a not-for-profit group, the Lost Villages Historical Society, doing great work in the community, preserving and protecting our history.

They make remarkable contributions to our society, our people and our economy, and they are vital to the strength and success of our province.

I would like to clarify which organizations would and would not be affected by our proposed reform. All not-for-profit organizations that are incorporated in Ontario under the Corporations Act would be affected. There are some types of not-for-profits operating in Ontario that would not be impacted. These include not-for-profit cooperative corporations, not-for-profits that are incorporated federally and unincorporated not-for-profit organizations. Additionally, some not-for-profits are incorporated through other special private or public acts. These corporations would not be affected by our proposed reform if either type of act expressly states that the proposed new act does not apply. For example, the Corporations Act does not apply to municipal corporations. Therefore, municipalities would not be affected by our proposed reform.

With respect to charities, our proposed legislation would govern their incorporation, governance and dissolution, but not their regulation. It would also facilitate the activities of not-for-profit social enterprise corporations in Ontario. Not-for-profit social enterprise corporations, which are organizations with specific social or environmental goals, would be permitted to engage, with no restrictions, in commercial activities to advance or support their not-for-profit purposes.

I'd like to share some of the key reforms of the proposed new act and illustrate how they differ from the current Corporations Act and the positive impact they would have on not-for-profit organizations should the proposed new act be implemented. The first thing I'd like to point out is that the structure of our proposed new act would be quite different from the current act. You have heard that the current act is difficult to navigate and many of its provisions are difficult to find. Let me give you an example. About 25 sections in part II of the current legislation that relate to share capital corporations are made applicable in part III to non-profit corporations by cross-reference to section numbers. As a result, even many lawyers find it hard to find the applicable law.

In addition, many provisions, such as the rules relating to conflicts of interest by directors, indemnification of directors and rotating boards, are out of date.

The proposed act would be much clearer. It would follow a logical order: incorporation, governance and dissolution. The proposed act would have no set of provisions governing different types of not-for-profit corporations. This would keep the proposed statute simple to follow and make it easier for a not-for-profit organization and corporation to know which provisions apply to it.

It would also provide clearer rules, such as setting out a duty of care for directors, which does not exist in the current act. Bill 65 clearly sets out that directors and officers have a duty to act honestly and in good faith, with a view to the best interest of the corporation. They must exercise the care, diligence and skill that a reason-

ably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.

Good corporate governance is essential to running any organization, and not-for-profits are no exception. We have heard requests for improvements to the current act's corporate governance provisions.

For example, there is no provision setting out directors' and officers' fiduciary duties. Stakeholders have expressed concerns about accountability, the need to reduce unnecessary burdens and ensuring the flexibility required to deal with today's world. The lack of corporate governance provisions creates an element of uncertainty for the not-for-profit sector, which we intend to address in the proposed new act.

The proposed new act would provide more flexible and up-to-date rules for dealing with the relationship between the corporation and its directors, officers and members. The amendments would enable not-for-profit corporations to govern themselves more efficiently and enhance decision-making structures.

Proposed new provisions would be added to address gaps in the current legislation and clarify rules. A duty of care for directors would be set out in the statute similar to that found in the Ontario Business Corporations Act.

Stakeholders have expressed concern regarding the corporate governance provision in three specific areas, which our proposed new act would address.

First, the maximum number of outside directors: The current act does not contain a provision that permits outside directors, because all directors must be members of the corporation. The new act proposes to allow outside directors and would not place a limit on the number of non-members that can be directors.

We have heard, too, about the need for appropriate oversight in the case of corporations that receive significant outside funds. The proposed legal framework ensures there is appropriate oversight in the case of corporations that receive significant outside funds.

The new act would continue the requirement that not-for-profit corporations have a minimum of three directors. A public benefit corporation is required to have no more than one third of the directors who are employees of the corporation.

Lastly, meetings: The current act does not contain a provision to permit a resolution in lieu of a director's meeting. Stakeholders have identified this as an unnecessary burden in conducting the affairs of their business.

The new act proposes that a unanimous resolution is permitted in lieu of a director's meeting. This would provide an important degree of flexibility and allows corporations to avoid the cost and expense of holding meetings, while still ensuring participation in decision-making.

Another key area where our proposed act makes significant improvements over the current act is with regard to member remedies. We propose members should have increased remedies to ensure directors are acting in the corporation's best interest. The current act contains limited remedies that can only be used in limited

circumstances by certain complainants. This increases the need for costly and time-consuming remedies such as litigation.

Under our proposed legislation, member democracy would be enhanced. For example, the proposed act would increase accountability by ensuring a corporation and its directors and officers act according to the articles and bylaws of the corporation and in the corporation's best interests. This reduces the need for costly and time-consuming remedies and provides appropriate deterrence for improper practices.

0930

These are just a few of the significant changes our proposed new act would bring to the governance and day-to-day operations of not-for-profit organizations.

I would like to take a moment to put Bill 65 into the larger context. As you may have heard, the federal government enacted the new Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act last year. Our proposed act would, if passed, become consistent with the federal act. Both would provide, for example, a clear and easy structure to follow, a simplified incorporation process and enhanced member remedies. Our provisions would also be broadly consistent with those of other Canadian provinces that have introduced modern legislation to govern not-for-profits, such as the province of Saskatchewan.

As you know, our government has been committed to a business modernization initiative. We have enacted the Securities Transfer Act, we have updated the Ontario Business Corporations Act and the Personal Property Security Act and made amendments to various other related statutes. Now we propose to modernize the law of not-for-profit corporations. The combined effect of these changes would establish Ontario as a leading jurisdiction in business law.

The proposed Not-for-Profit Corporations Act would also support our government's Open for Business initiative by streamlining operational and administrative requirements and processing applications more efficiently.

It would also align with Ontario's poverty reduction strategy. There are thousands of not-for-profit organizations across this province that are dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable children and families who live in poverty. This proposed act would make it easier for them and for all of Ontario's unique and diverse not-for-profit organizations to operate and conduct business in today's marketplace.

If passed, Bill 65 would provide these vital organizations with many new and important benefits. It would provide more flexible and up-to-date rules for directors, officers and members of not-for-profit corporations; provide improved corporate governance and accountability; provide efficient means for incorporation and operation of not-for-profit corporations; address gaps in the current legislation, such as providing specific protection for liability for directors; harmonize the law with other Canadian jurisdictions; and provide clear and more comprehensive rules: for example, it would set out a duty of care for directors.

Ontario's not-for-profit sector contributes greatly to our society, our communities and our province. The sector is crucial to those who depend upon the diverse services that its organizations provide. It is vital to our economy, generating about \$50 billion in annual revenues and employing almost one million Ontarians. Our government is committed to strengthening this sector that offers so much to so many. We urge all members of the House to support the proposed new, modern Not-for-Profit Corporations Act by approving this bill.

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

Mr. John O'Toole: It's a real pleasure here to, first of all, speak on Bill 65, which, at this point in the debate process, is being time-allocated, meaning they're actually shutting debate down.

A couple of speakers this morning: One read from a very carefully prepared script and the other improvised rather spontaneously, shall we say. My attempt would be to mix both approaches.

I have looked in the past at what the comments have been, and we should be on the record as saying that in a general way we're supportive of this rather omnibus type of bill. It seems these bills that come forward nowadays are kind of sliding under the disguise of being large and complex, so many members don't spend a lot of time thumbing through them. I lost my original copy; I think it's probably in my office somewhere. But I did take time, because there were a couple of issues that I had some questions about. They were very technical, I'll say that. Most members have commented that this is a technical area.

I made reference to a couple of the remarks made by our side on this and have found them to be quite informative, and I encourage them to the reading of others.

This bill was first introduced in May 2010, with second reading in June. At that time, it was time-allocated.

It's important to put in perspective what the bill is trying to do. I think it's trying to modernize, as they say, and make some efficiencies in the current legislation that governs not-for-profit organizations.

When I looked at the remarks, I thought there were two—one is our member from York-Simcoe, who is now in the chair, by the way.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Who is that, by the way?

Mr. John O'Toole: We're not supposed to use names here, but it is Ms. Munro. She has been here for some time.

She has actually done quite a bit of work in this area, because in 1995, when Mike Harris was Premier, he assigned Ms. Munro to a very, very powerful mandate to investigate the whole volunteer sector. She did commission a select committee. She did commission a group of advisers who work in the not-for-profit industry and, from that, developed a pretty strategic plan for recognizing and, indeed, celebrating the work of volunteers in our society.

We all know that Ontario and Canada are well recognized for the work of the volunteer sector, both inside our

own province, in the country and around the world. I know members here, in their own communities, in almost every case, on every side of the House, will at some time in their journey to this place, and after, have spent time in those sections.

The most important thing to look at is the role of youth. One of the changes that was made, and quite controversially at the time, was the mandated hours of community service. The intent, when you strip away the ideology and the politics of it all, is that we all should contribute to the community, that community being our family, our town, our province or our country, depending on the sets of skills and things that we bring to those activities. Initially, I had many, many complaints about those community volunteer hours, and I can only say this: Those hours, I think, have benefited almost every child who has participated in them.

Learning and mentoring is the role of some of the adults in those supervisory roles, making sure it is a meaningful activity. A good example would be the pages who are here today and who do come to this place from various grade 7 and 8 programs. The experience they get here, although they don't get paid, cannot be measured in dollars. It has to be measured in experience.

That's really what volunteers do. They should all be thanked. The debate rages on about whether or not they should be rewarded in some way, financially or materially. I don't have a problem in many cases with that.

When you look at this bill, it talks about the structures. The two types of structures under those are those with share capital, with voting shares, and those with non-share capital. For the most part, this deals with the volunteer, non-share capital corporation organizations. I think that's important, because in one of the questions I have, some of them do accumulate property. This bill allows them to borrow money; this allows them to do certain functions. There's not quite as much accountability, I think, as there could be. That's one of the things I have a concern about.

I want to go back to the fundamentals here of the background that I have. The bill should provide for accountability mechanisms and review. I think we all agree with that. To determine if this bill could reduce costs and red tape, we should have some benchmark or method of saying, "Have we achieved the verbal objectives, or the stated objectives, of Bill 65?"

Also, you want to make sure that there's accountability within the organization itself and the board of directors—how they're appointed, how they're removed—and that's covered in one of the sections here. As I said, there are 15 different sections. In the few minutes I have left, I might go over some of them.

There are an estimated 161,000 not-for-profit charities in Canada. Half of these—54%—are run entirely by volunteers.

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Imagine, when you look at volunteers, how much they contribute to the welfare of our common society. I think it's incredible. Yesterday we had the MS Society. I'm

involved in my riding of Durham with the MS Society. They put on a seminar here yesterday to educate members about a disease or affliction that's really disabling for individuals and their families and those around them. Now there's hope on the horizon with Dr. Zamboni's liberation therapy.

I've seen firsthand how much the volunteers work at the MS Society or the Cancer Society, how much money they raise and how much they make up come together as a community. It's inspirational, without a lot of money being spent on organizational structures. Often, if you send government in to do a job, you've got 5,000 bureaucrats, each making \$100,000 a year, running the thing. We're dealing with it now in the hospital sector; there's an issue here about the use of consultants. I think we need to make sure that we keep it as simple as possible, yet with accountability and transparency.

This bill is quite cumbersome if you look at it. We deal with lots of bills here. As I said before, I just looked through a few sections and the ones I had trouble with were primarily—this could be a troubling area. I'm bringing up something more controversial than necessary in the time allocation motion, what we call a guillotine motion. Why are they trying to eliminate debate? In fact, it's my understanding they're not going to proclaim this into law until way after the next election. What's the problem here? We're all in harmony. I think all sides agree with it.

We need public hearings. The bill has been amended and I think there needs to be more consultation with the stakeholders themselves, to see if it achieves the goal and the objectives outlined in the preamble or the government's ministerial statement. Does it achieve that? Is it measurable? How and when do we measure it? Is there a report here on these not-for-profit companies or organizations?

When I look at the one section—part XII, on liquidation and dissolution—it's quite an interesting section. Let's take, for instance, the cemeteries. Those are interesting groups and I know I see people smiling. I've had contact with the Mount Pleasant group. I know Mr. Smitherman, the mayoral candidate in Toronto, had made promises to resolve that issue prior to the election and then virtually refused to meet with them to resolve the issue. I think that deserves the light of day. I'm not qualified to make an assessment in any way of whether or not either party has abided by the laws, but if you look at that section here—part XII, "Liquidation and Dissolution"—it says, "Voluntary winding up"; there's a section on that; "Inspectors"; "Vacancy in office of liquidator"; "Removal of liquidator"; "Commencement of winding up"; "Corporation to cease activities."

What do they do with the property? This is the issue here which somebody slowly, by their own bylaws—whether those bylaws constitute laws in themselves, I would question. They have not been approved by government. In fact, these corporations are approved by government. Their filing and fundamental records, their corporate finance, all of it—this whole idea of mem-

bership and accountability—is set up by a government structure under the act itself.

Incorporation is in part II and these organizations must have a certificate of incorporation and, as such, are accountable to Premier McGuinty. If there's anybody who's not abiding by the law—certainly, in the case of the Mount Pleasant group, if these accusations are true that they're trying to slowly take over this corporation and its assets, which are all the land holdings that they have by some right of legislation, then that should be brought to the forefront as well.

But let's move back to the general principle of our society, a society that I think is very well celebrated as we speak by the work that is done by Ms. Munro, as I said before, for setting up the practical level of giving experience to young people.

I like the remarks by the new Prime Minister of Great Britain, David Cameron, who tomorrow, Wednesday, is probably going to make the most profound shift in the British entitlement society—that's going to be shocking—because they have a huge deficit. In terms of their deficit versus Ontario's, they are the Titanic; they are headed for the iceberg for sure. In the monetary crisis they were very much extended and their six major banks were all in trouble, but somehow the debt they've accumulated, the debt-to-GDP ratio, is about 10 times higher than the one in Ontario, in Canada, and it's a serious problem.

David Cameron has come out with—his proposal during the election was called the Big Society proposal. The Big Society ultimately speaks to what I think are Conservative values. The values of this are personal responsibility and respect. I think those are very simple and understandable terms of personal responsibility. I'm responsible for what I do, to myself and to you—and respect for one another. An organization, a society in its greatest form, the family unit, today could be said to be under some siege.

I think that, if we look at our activity in society, whether it's under this bill, the statute that we're talking about, if we had personal responsibility and respect, especially for volunteers who make our society a better place to live, we'd all be better off collectively.

If this bill sets out to achieve this elimination of red tape and streamlining and modernizing it, and we can measure that, then I'd be supportive of the bill. That being said, I think we should clarify the issues with the stakeholders. If there are unresolved issues in the transformation of our new not-for-profit sector, then they should get on with fixing and reviewing those problems in a public forum. Anything we can do to streamline and harmonize and make it easier for volunteers to make our society a better place, I would want to be on record as being in favour of that. Because this is a time allocation motion, I probably will not be given any more time to speak on this bill, but I look forward to public hearings.

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

Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2010, I am now required to put the question. Mr. Gerretsen has

moved third reading of Bill 65, An Act to revise the law in respect of not-for-profit corporations. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say “aye.”

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Third reading vote deferred.

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

Hon. Gerry Phillips: No further business.

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

The House recessed from 0949 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Reza Moridi: It is my pleasure to welcome page Jonathan Antony's parents in the public gallery: Ms. Viji Antony and Mr. Joseph Antony. Please welcome them to the House.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I would like to welcome Bill Laidlaw, the executive director of the Canadian Assistive Devices Association, along with members of the association to the House.

Mr. Steve Clark: I know they were introduced yesterday by the Minister of the Environment, but I'm glad to be here today and introduce Tom and Marilyn Campbell from the town of Prescott, located in my riding. I know their daughter Dawn Waltenbury is over on the government side, and they're here because of the new page, their grandson and son, Nicholas Waltenbury from North Bay.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I would like to introduce the mother and family friend of page Jayden Rae from the great riding of Whitby–Oshawa: Page Rae and Rhonda Sauderson. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'd like to introduce, in the public gallery, the chair of the Renfrew County District School Board, Roy Reiche; the mayor of the town of Petawawa, His Worship Bob Sweet; Lisa Kuehl, the superintendent of business for Renfrew county school board; and Roger Clarke, the director of education for the Renfrew county school board, who are here to meet with officials from the Ministry of Education.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member from Pickering–Scarborough East and page Sanjay Pavone, to welcome his mother, Dr. Rosemarie Lall; his father, Leo Pavone; his sister Damiana Pavone; and his grandmother Francesca Pavone. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

On behalf of the member from Ajax–Pickering and page Olivia Kelly, we'd like to welcome her mother, Wendy Kelly; her father, Craig Kelly; her sister Lauren Kelly; and her grandfather George Kelly to Queen's Park today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg the indulgence of the House to allow the pages to assemble for introduction.

I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming this group of legislative pages serving in the second session of the 39th Parliament.

Jonathan Antony, Richmond Hill; Emmett Bisbee, York–Simcoe; Harnameh Dhawan, Brampton West; Elle Doherty, Huron–Bruce; Carina Hochgeschurz, Carleton–Mississippi Mills; Bridget Heeman, from the great riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London; Ffion Hughes, Welland; Priscile Itoua-Mamic, Scarborough–Guildwood; Olivia Kelly, Ajax–Pickering; Haadiyah Khan, Scarborough–Rouge River; Kieran Lawlor, Toronto–Danforth; Calder Morton-Ferguson, Guelph; Eric O'Brien, Oxford; Sanjay Pavone, Pickering–Scarborough East; Jayden Rae, Whitby–Oshawa; Kimberly Ren, Mississauga South; Soumiya Suresh, Markham–Unionville; Anika Szabo, Willowdale; Marie-Josée Vercooteren, Chatham–Kent–Essex; Nicholas Waltenbury, Nipissing.

Welcome to all of our pages.

VISITORS

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: Today, the assistive devices folks are with us at Queen's Park to let us know about what they do and the issues that folks who are disabled have challenges with on a daily basis.

I would like to tell you about the generosity of Joe Millage from Shoppers Home Health. He has donated the wheelchair that I am going to be using for the rest of the day to a worthy organization in Burlington, so I would like to thank him for that publicly.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is for the Premier. Premier, in March, you told Ontario families that your plan to restore Ontario to fiscal health was premised on getting the public sector to agree to a wage freeze. But public sector union leaders did not take you seriously, and they've walked away from the table. In the meantime, you've lost three arbitrations in a row. Premier, given that your plan has gone off the rails, what is your new plan?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In fact, we wrapped up our first round of consultations with our partners in the public and broader public sectors. We have engaged what I would call a very fruitful dialogue on issues that are important to Ontarians: the provision of health care, the provision of education. We will continue this process as we have, and I will be reporting later in the fall with respect to the overall fiscal situation in Ontario.

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But we have had what I would term a very robust consultation with our partners in the public and broader public sectors, speaking with them in an open and honest fashion. We look forward to continuing that as we move forward to preserve and, indeed, enhance Ontario's public service.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I do want to say, Premier, that I'm disappointed you didn't answer my question. It appears that your only plan seems to be to run from the issue. Maybe that's the sound we hear of your footsteps backtracking yet again.

Back to the Premier, with all due respect to the finance minister: Premier, you said that you expected your transfer partners to bargain responsibly "so that, together, we can ... protect schools and hospitals," but arbitrators have gone the other way. You've lost three arbitrations in a row, one of which awarded a 4.5% wage increase, leaving administrators to say they're going to have to cut front-line services in return. Basically, the premise is that your transfers were based on a wage freeze across the public sector that you have failed to deliver. So I ask you, Premier: What front-line health care services do you plan to cut now that your wage restraint plan has gone badly off the rails?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The way to make progress in building our public health and education systems is with respect and working together. If we learned anything over the course of the last period of time, it is that working together, Ontarians—whether labour or management, whether white collar or blue collar—will pull together to guarantee and help build those services that all Ontarians rely on.

We think that is the right approach. We're pleased with the progress we're making. We've had a very fruitful round of consultations and we look forward to continuing to build partnerships, to help ensure that we never go back to a time when we lost 26 million school days in our education system and that we can work together to build better public services for all Ontarians.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier again, as opposed to the finance minister: Premier, you need to show leadership on this issue. You have made some very clear commitments of a wage freeze in order to protect front-line services. You have failed to do so.

Seven months have passed since you made that promise. You've lost three arbitrations in a row. As a result, we're seeing cutbacks in hospitals; we're seeing senior citizens not getting the service they require in our long-term-care homes; arbitrators continue to give out wage increases, up to 4.5%; and hard-working Ontario families are forced to once again pay the bills for your mismanagement and lack of leadership on this issue.

Premier, are you planning to backtrack yet again, or what exactly is your plan now that the original one is off the rails?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Premier McGuinty has shown the leadership that has the best labour relations record in the history of Ontario.

You want to pick a fight, don't you? That's what you're all about. That member and his party want to pick a fight. When he's not expensing his McNuggets, he wants to pick a fight with teachers, with firefighters and with communities. We reject that. We reject going back to an era when school kids lost 26 million days.

We pledge to continue to work with all of our partners in the public and broader public sectors as we return to balance and, at the same time, enhance and build the vital public services that all Ontarians count on and that all of the partners in our sector work hard to deliver. Let's stand up for partnership and for working together.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Tim Hudak: Again for the Premier: I'm disappointed you didn't answer the question. It is also disappointing that on a very serious issue, the finance minister simply chooses to fill the airtime with bluster. Sadly, it means he has no answers. That's not good enough for Ontario families. The Ontario PCs will deliver for Ontario families, who pay the bills.

Premier, we suspect that the auditor's report tomorrow on hospitals will show that you have failed to keep another promise and that Liberal-friendly consultants will be back at the trough. We also see today that you are cutting vitamin D testing and sacrificing front-line care to seniors and Ontario families because your plan to control spending has gone off the rails.

So Premier, I will ask you now for the fourth time: What's next? What services are you going to cut because you have no plan to keep your promise for a wage freeze?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to assure the people of Ontario that we will not join the leader of the official opposition and his party in their solemn commitment to cut \$3 billion out of health care. I think—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Renfrew will withdraw the comment that he just made.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I withdraw.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, we have a different approach—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Renfrew, I just asked you to withdraw. I just sat down and you started to comment again.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Kick him out.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I don't need any help from the member from Northumberland—Quinte West.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: We have a different approach when it comes to health care, and my honourable colleagues opposite know that. More importantly, Ontario families are experiencing that.

We're the first government in Ontario to track wait times, and they're coming down. People don't have to wait as long to get their cancer treatment, hip and knee surgeries, MRIs and CT scans. Nearly one million more Ontarians now have a family doctor. There are over 10,000 more nurses and 2,300 more doctors. We're building 18 new hospitals in Ontario, and we've worked very hard to cut the price of generic drugs in half. Those are positive, progressive steps that we've taken on behalf of Ontario families.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I think that says a lot about what has happened to Premier McGuinty after seven years in office. He dodges my first three questions, and then the first words out of his mouth are—how do I say it in parliamentary language?—words that are not even in passing acquaintance with the facts. We will invest in front-line services to help the families who pay the bills.

Premier, look at your priorities. Since you took office, the number of assistant deputy ministers in the Ministry of Health has increased from five to 10, a 100% increase. Your LHINs have sucked some \$250 million out of health care, and they don't do a single surgery or a single MRI. Families in Hamilton and Niagara, which I represent, are now having their home care cut while you give a bureaucrat in your bloated ministry the money that should be going to patients through the CCAC.

Premier, what happened to you after seven years in office? Why did your priority become bloated—

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: There are a few other numbers I think Ontarians might be interested in, including 10,000 more nurses, 2,300 more doctors and 18 new hospitals.

My honourable colleague says that he is concerned about ensuring that we use every health care dollar efficiently, but when we stood up in this Legislature and introduced a new law to cut the price of generic drugs in half, saving money for families, government, taxpayers and businesses alike, they voted against that. So it's hard to tell from one day to the next whose side he's really on.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: The sad reality under the McGuinty government is that Ontario families are struggling to make ends meet. They're working harder and longer and paying more in taxes but seeing less in return. The Ontario PCs want to make sure that every dollar goes into front-line health care services, not the bloated bureaucracies that Dalton McGuinty has created. We suspect—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member on the use of names.

Mr. Tim Hudak: We suspect, Premier, that tomorrow's report will show that the Liberal-friendly consultants are back at the trough at the LHINs and at the hospitals.

But here's what speaks to the McGuinty government's approach. Look at the \$250,000 sole-source contract you gave to McKinsey and Co. It was for a so-called lean project that was supposed to be a plan for reducing waste in the Ministry of Health by 20%, but your so-called lean plan went 100% over budget, into the pocket of consultants. Premier—

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: We're looking forward to introducing a new law tomorrow, a new bill, which will deal more specifically with lobbyists. We think it's inappropriate for a lobbyist to be paid with public dollars to try to solicit more public dollars from the government.

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I can tell you what we're also proud to do on behalf of Ontarians. We have, so far, reduced government-wide use of consultants in contrast to the previous government; we have reduced government-wide use of consultants by more than 54%. Overall, travel expenses are down by 23%, and government advertising is down by 20%. I am proud to report that, overall, government spending by the Ontario government, on a per capita basis, is now 30% below the average of the other provincial governments.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. This winter will be the first winter that millions of Ontarians will be paying time-of-use hydro rates, and families who use electrical heating are worried sick about rates that are going to hit them hard when they can least afford it, when they have to heat their homes. Independent experts are saying that switching to time-of-use pricing will drive hydro rates higher. My question is a simple one: What is the Premier's plan for relief for Ontarians?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to a very important matter of public policy once again.

The fact of the matter is that at the time we formed the government back in 2003, our electricity system was in a terrible state of disrepair. It had gone wanting for a long time in terms of new investment and new generation and new transmission. The first thing we set out to do was to put in place a reliable electricity system, so that no matter who you are, whether you're working in an office, at the hospital, at a school or at home, when you flicked that switch, the lights came on. We have achieved that.

The second thing we're working on is cleaning up our electricity sources. That's why we are shutting down coal-fired generation. We just shut down four more plants. That's like taking two million cars off the road.

The third thing we are doing, of course, is building a new and exciting and vibrant sector of the economy. It's a new industry. It is green energy, and we're talking about 16,000 new jobs so far.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Families who rely on electricity to heat their homes simply cannot shift their usage. They'll just end up paying much, much more.

Sandi Mugford writes this: "My husband is severely disabled and at home. Do I turn down the heat in the day to save money and risk him getting pneumonia? Do I tell his support workers and my caregiver relief, 'You cannot do household chores or dry clothes during peak hours; please come back after 10 p.m. and do the work'?"

What does the Premier think Ms. Mugford should do?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Time of use is a very important part of our modernization plan for our energy system. It's something that's going to give families—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Some of these comments that members are making, that they think they're making under their breath, are being picked up by the Speaker.

Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Time of use is a very important part of our plan to modernize our energy system.

I would think the NDP would be onside for our efforts to bring modernization to our aging energy system and replace those decades-old meters with new, modern smart meters. Apparently, they're not. Apparently, they want to take us back. Apparently, they don't believe Ontario families deserve the opportunity to engage in efforts to shift their use off of peak.

As we go through these new programs, we understand that Ontario families need some assistance, and that's why the Premier brought forward, very recently, our Ontario energy and property tax credit. Two thirds of Ontario seniors are going to benefit from that; 2.8 million low- and middle-income Ontarians are going to—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Apparently, this minister and the Premier don't believe that families in Ontario are struggling and can't pay their hydro bills. Each and every day, my office hears from more and more of these Ontarians, and they're worried, like Susan Jones, who writes this: "The cost of electricity is one whole paycheque for me, as it runs between \$550 to \$600 every two months.... I work in the health care profession and I work every other weekend and have days off during the week.... When smart meters came into effect, I couldn't do my wash on my days off because I would be charged more."

Taking the HST off hydro would give Ms. Jones the very break that she needs. Why won't the Premier simply do that?

Hon. Brad Duguid: We fully understand that Ontario families have been through some tough times. We've been through a global recession, and Ontario families are still struggling; some are trying to work their way out of that.

We recognize that we are in a time of rising energy costs, and that's why our Premier brought forward the

Ontario energy and property tax credit. Two thirds of Ontario seniors are going to benefit from that; 2.8 million Ontario families are going to see relief as a result of this. This is a good thing.

I guess my question to the Leader of the Opposition is, why does she not support our efforts to modernize our energy infrastructure? She stands up in this House day after day opposing our efforts to build a stronger energy system, opposing our efforts to make the important investments to improve our system for 8,000 new megawatts of power, opposing our efforts to invest in our energy system to make it more reliable—

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

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. Energy consultant Bruce Sharp of Aegent Energy Advisors says, “Simply switching householders ... to time-of-use pricing drives bills higher.” He adds, “Since nearly everyone in the province now has a smart meter that enables time-of-use pricing, the switch to time-of-use pricing is in itself a subtle rate increase.”

The government’s not-so-smart-meter scheme is not helping people save. It’s forcing them to pay more. To help offset the not-so-smart meter whammy, why will this government not do the right thing and take the HST off hydro?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I know a lot of folks are weighing in on this, and understandably; it’s an important issue of public policy, and families are concerned about what’s happening to electricity prices. But I think we can continue to have a tremendous amount of faith in the wisdom of our Environmental Commissioner. He said this: “There’s a lot of exaggerated claims that ‘prices are going through the roof.’ And I am worried this is going”—

Laughter.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: They may want to laugh at the Environmental Commissioner, but I think we should pay heed to his advice here.

“And I am worried this is going to trump environmental concerns, and sacrifice long-term benefits for short-term political and financial gains.... It has been proposed to let people choose whether to pay a flat rate for their electricity, or have time-of-use pricing. I believe this would be short-sighted.”

I think the Environmental Commissioner offers some very sound and prudent advice, and I think we should also pay close attention to that.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It’s time the Premier started listening to the people of Ontario. That’s what his job is. Time-of-use rates were supposed to encourage consumers to use more power in off-peak periods, but since they were introduced in 2006, off-peak rates have increased by 46%. That is a fact. No matter how hard they

try, families are stuck paying more because of this Premier’s not-so-smart energy decisions.

He can actually take the sting out of hydro rates for people. He actually has the ability to do that by taking the HST off hydro. My question is, why will he simply not do that?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Clearly what the leader of the third party wants to do is bring us back to where we were seven years ago and go back to that old-fashioned and unmodernized system that we inherited at that time.

Let me quote the Environmental Commissioner again. This isn’t us saying this; this is Ontario’s Environmental Commissioner, somebody who has a great deal of respect across this province. In referring to smart meters, he says, “They are necessary, absolutely necessary for the proper functioning and future functioning of the distribution system for electricity.”

We’re doing everything we need to do to move our energy system forward. We inherited a mess seven years ago. The NDP clearly have changed their position. They want to take this back. Ontarians don’t go backwards. We’re going forward to a modernized energy system that’s going to be more competitive and provide Ontario ratepayers with the efficiencies they deserve.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Ontario families are hurting, and it’s time for the Premier to realize exactly how much they’re hurting.

John Akermanis writes this: “It was bad enough that the smart meter doubled our hydro bill ... despite the fact we consumed less than previous periods.”

People aren’t saving money; they’re not saving energy either. The Premier can provide people with real and immediate relief by removing the HST from the hydro bills. I just need to know: What the heck is he waiting for?

1100

Hon. Brad Duguid: We’ve talked about this before, and I’m pleased to share with the leader of the third party again—I would suggest that maybe it should be in her next householder so she can ensure that her constituents indeed are being provided with the knowledge they should have on these issues—that the Ontario energy and property tax credit will benefit two thirds of Ontario seniors. It will provide 2.8 million low- and middle-income Ontarians with relief on rising energy costs. It’s something that indicates that we really do understand that those families are going through challenging times, and we’re responding to those families.

At the same time, the leader of the third party owes those families the right to know where she stands, because we know what she opposes. She opposes our efforts to create jobs and bring on more economic recovery. She opposes our efforts to clean up our energy system and make it more—

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

LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is for the Premier. Tomorrow the auditor will release his report on consulting contracts at hospitals and local health integration networks, which will shed new light on the pattern of waste at eHealth and the LHINs. The Ontario PC priority is putting money back into front-line health care, but the Premier's priority is to make Ontario patients pay \$10,000 for Kathy Durst, the chair of the Waterloo Wellington LHIN, to take management courses at McMaster. Premier, why are Ontario families paying for your hand-picked Liberal appointee to take courses at university when the money should be spent on front-line health care?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. There are a number of ministers who are commenting while somebody is asking a question, and it's important for the Speaker to be able to hear that question. I'd just like to remind those ministers to be respectful of the questioner.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It seems that the opposition continues to attack the LHINs. They continue to attack community members having a voice in the planning of their health care system.

I can tell you that we are committed to strengthening the LHINs. The LHINs are playing a very important function in our health care planning. They are, for the first time ever, responsible for the integration of health care. We are seeing tremendous results from the work that the LHINs are doing, especially when it comes to reducing, for example, alternate level of care patients—ALC patients—who are in hospital, who actually would be better served at home or outside of the hospital. The LHINs are doing that work.

I know the opposition thinks there should be no planning whatsoever for the over \$20 billion that is administered by the LHINs. I simply disagree with that.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Back to the Premier. I know that the Premier will be visiting Waterloo later this afternoon, and media and families in that community are looking for an explanation from the Premier of Ontario. During the period that Kathy Durst attended accountability and change sessions, Durst also billed the Ontario taxpayer and patients for her \$350 per diem. Ontario PC caucus researchers also uncovered information that revealed that the same chair of the Waterloo Wellington LHIN billed Ontario patients \$81,000 in per diems, even though the job was posted as part-time to the Ontario public. She doesn't see a single patient, nor does she provide any front-line care, so why has the Premier put his bloated health bureaucracy ahead of Ontario families and Ontario patients?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I have to say, when it comes to health care the opposition simply does not get

it. What they need to understand is that the sustainability of our health care system—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Lanark, the member from Oxford, the member from Renfrew—and the honourable member from Nepean, who just asked the question. I would trust that she would listen to the answer. She certainly understands the standing orders, and if you're not satisfied, you can file a late show. But I would hope you would be respectful and listen to the minister's answer.

Minister?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As I was saying, the—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Lanark, I just sat down and you just opened up. I would just ask that you be a little more respectful of the Chair and respectful of the need for this House to do what it is supposed to do during this one hour allocated for question period.

Minister?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, the—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister for Community Safety, the same message that I just delivered to the member from Lanark I'm delivering to you. It goes both ways in this place. Quite honestly, if we don't want to have question period, I'm quite happy to stand here and let the clock run, but I don't think that's fair to the people who are here watching or fair to any member of this House.

Minister?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The party opposite has a \$3-billion problem. You see, they are committed to cutting \$3 billion out of health care. They are on the record as eliminating taxes that add up to \$3 billion so far, and they're just getting started. What they need to do is be honest with the people of Ontario and explain where the cuts are that are going to correspond—you cannot cut taxes and not cut services.

Their attack on the credibility of the people providing excellent care in this province is all about them trying to justify an unjustifiable cut to health care in this province.

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

PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. In April 2009, I asked about access to physiotherapy following cuts at St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton Health Sciences Centre, Joseph Brant Memorial and West Lincoln. The health minister assured me, "Patients will get the care they need." But Chris Heinrich, a physiotherapist in Hamilton, tells a different story of patients who need care: "They are desperate. They have nowhere else to go. They have no one to turn to. They have no private insurance. They have nothing."

Can the minister advise Mr. Heinrich what he should tell these Ontarians?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We are working very, very hard to continue to strengthen health care in this province. We have measurable improvements. I think all members of this Legislature understand—if they talk to their constituency office staff—that we're not getting the calls we used to about needing access to a doctor or a nurse practitioner. Access to primary care is significantly better than it was when I was elected in 2003.

We've brought down wait times so that now people are waiting far less—over a year less than they were when we were elected in 2003. We've focused on reducing wait times. We've focused on improving access to primary care. We are turning our attention to quality. I am very encouraged by the progress we're going to make when it comes to improving the quality of care. It is only through those initiatives that we will be able to provide health care—

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: My question was very specific about access to physiotherapy, a service that has been delisted and a service that most hospitals are cutting in trying to balance their books. It looks to me like the McGuinty government has tried to find some cost savings on the backs of the most disadvantaged Ontarians so that precious health care dollars can be poured into lobbyists, consultants or maybe even executive salaries.

But delisting and cutting physiotherapy is heartless. It makes no financial sense. When Ontarians can't access preventive care, they end up in the most expensive part of our health care system, emergency departments, costing the health care system way more.

Is the minister satisfied that she has finally eliminated access to physiotherapy for the most needy Ontarians in the Niagara region?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think all of us would agree that there are always going to be things we want to do more of when it comes to health care. There are always significant demands for more spending. When it comes to physiotherapy, we have improved access to physiotherapy for seniors. We're expanding physiotherapy services in our long-term-care homes. We're now providing OHIP-funded physiotherapy to approximately 138,000 seniors every year in this province. That's important service, important care, that they are receiving.

1110

At the same time, we are focusing on our highest-priority areas: bringing down wait times. In the Hamilton Health Sciences centre, we've been able to reduce the length of time people wait for hip replacement surgery by 277 days—that is a remarkable achievement; knee surgery is down 267 days; angioplasty—

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

LOBBYISTS

Mr. Dave Levac: My question is for the Minister of Government Services. Last week, the member from Whitby–Oshawa introduced a motion on the use of

lobbyists, even when our government announced we're moving forward with legislation, a much stronger measure than a motion, to increase accountability and transparency. What I don't understand is how the member from Whitby–Oshawa could introduce a motion when her own leadership campaign manager, Andrew Boddington, took health care dollars for lobbying—and I hope she did tell him to stop. Her campaign manager's father, George Boddington, also a Conservative insider, lobbied on behalf of—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I trust—stop the clock.

Mr. Ted Arnott: Point of order, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No, the member from Wellington–Halton Hills knows the rules.

I trust that the honourable member is going to bring this around to a question that has something to do with the portfolio, because, as I'm hearing right now, it's not leading that way.

Mr. Dave Levac: I appreciate your counsel, Speaker, and I'll get to it right now.

You can't only talk about accountability; action is necessary and needed. The status quo cannot continue, regardless of what party we're talking about. Minister, I want to know what our government is doing to protect public money, to increase accountability, to improve transparency and to change the status quo that we're presently in.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I want to thank the member from Brant for asking the question. As the member has indicated, the Minister of Health will be introducing legislation to ensure that the front-line dollars actually go for front-line services.

We have made it very clear in the Legislature that using public money to lobby for extra dollars is not acceptable. I want to tell you that when the Conservatives were in power, there were about 14 hospitals that were using lobbyists. This practice, to us, is not acceptable, and we're going to put an end to this practice.

Last year, we introduced the Public Sector Expenses Review Act, and I'm very pleased to tell you that the expenses for consultants have gone down more than 54% since 2001 and 2002. We will continue to make sure that the taxpayers' dollars are used for the best purposes.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Dave Levac: I appreciate the answer, and it talks to us about changing the status quo. We need to improve that, for all of this House's sake.

When it comes to keeping an eye on our precious taxpayer's dollar, we have examples from the opposition, who set the tone: anywhere, any time, any place. The status quo must change. So we're on the hook for a fishing licence; we're on the hook for a trip to Brazil; we're on the hook for McDonald's McNuggets. The practice continues—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'm going to remind the member again: Get to the point of the urgency of the question, please.

Mr. Dave Levac: Thank you again for that guidance, Speaker. Again, I'll get to the point.

After all that has been spoken of, including any other trip that has been taken that we're now finding out has been happening inside of this place over the years, I want to know if the minister can tell us why the public did not know about these expenses and what he is going to be doing to stop the status quo and move us forward—

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

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I want to thank the member again for his very insightful question.

As you are aware, last February I asked both the leaders—the leader of the third party and the Leader of the Opposition—to post their expenses—

Interjections.

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

Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Economic Development.

Interjection.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Economic Development. The member from Simcoe North. The member from Barrie. The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

Minister?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: Mr. Speaker, I was saying that, last year, you are aware that I asked the leaders of both the opposition and the NDP to post their expenses. This was supposed to strengthen the transparency and the accountability for taxpayers. Even the Leader of the Opposition has indicated—they both actually indicated their willingness to post these expenses. The Leader of the Opposition indicated that those expenses have been posted, but we actually haven't seen where these expenses have been posted. So I would encourage the Leader of the Opposition to tell us exactly where the expenses have been posted so that the public can actually see where those expenses are and what any of those expenses are.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is for the Premier, and I'd like to thank the member from Brant for his great segue. Tomorrow, the auditor is set to release his report on consulting contracts in hospitals. Freedom-of-information records received by the PC caucus reveal that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Finance and the Minister of Economic Development.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: —Chatham-Kent Health Alliance handed out a sole-source contract after the Premier said these sweetheart deals were banned.

Premier, why did you backtrack on your sole-source contract ban?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This government is a government that has committed itself to increasing transparency—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): How could I anticipate that that was coming? The member from Durham will withdraw the comment.

Mr. John O'Toole: I withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We've committed ourselves to increasing transparency and improving accountability, and our record speaks for itself. We inherited a system where there frankly was not sufficient oversight in a number of areas and we have taken many steps, step-by-step, to improve that. And as you know, tomorrow I will be introducing legislation that will take the next step forward.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Lanark, I'll ask that you withdraw the comment. Comments like that just are not useful to try and keep—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. It's also not helpful when the Speaker is about to ask a member to withdraw a comment to have interjections coming from the minister's side. Please withdraw the comment.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I withdraw.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: The contract was for \$30,000 to defend the plan to close the Wallaceburg emergency department. The deal was handed to Laurie Lashbrook. Lashbrook is a big donor to the McGuinty Liberals and to the health minister herself. She's also married to the former president of the federal Liberal Party and former head of the Attorney General's riding association.

Premier, how can you tell Ontario families that your priority is front-line health care when you're getting the Liberal family to help you close emergency rooms?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, this is now just going to the absurd when it comes to opposition attacks on our health care system.

Let me talk to you about some of the results from the actions we have taken. We have cut consulting expenditures in half, from \$656 million to \$304 million. We've saved \$67 million by converting over 1,500 consultant positions to regular full-time employees since 2003. We've brought in tough new procurement rules that all agencies and all ministries must follow. We've brought the following agencies under freedom of information: Cancer Care Ontario, universities, Hydro One, OPG and local public utilities. We've expanded the role of the Auditor General so that the Auditor General now can go into hospitals, colleges, universities, school boards—

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

FIRE SAFETY

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Minister of Community Safety. We have witnessed several tragic fires in retirement homes over the past few years. Seniors have been seriously injured, suffered brain damage, and several have lost their lives. What advice has this minister and the past Minister of Community Safety received from the Ontario fire marshal about automatic sprinklers in all Ontario care occupancies?

1120

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. We need to give the honourable member the opportunity to answer his phone. I'd just remind the members again that telephones should not be—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please continue.

Hon. James J. Bradley: There are a number of people in the province of Ontario and a number of members of the Legislature who are interested in fire safety in this province.

What I was able to do when I assumed the office of new minister, just as my predecessor did, was engage in some significant consultation with all of those who have a viewpoint. There are a number of recommendations that would come forward from all those individuals. We have those who are professional in terms of their fire-fighting service; there are others who are advisers; there are those who would talk about the building code and how it can be adjusted—and you know there have already been some adjustments there. But I found these consultations to be very valuable.

One of the other things I found, I must say to the member, is that nobody said there was one single thing that could be done that was best, but a variety of activities that might—

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

Mr. Paul Miller: When a fire safety plan is inadequate to ensure that residents can be evacuated and their lives protected, there are a few options, such as increasing the number of trained staff on duty, reducing the number of beds and residents, and installing automatic sprinkler systems.

On the record, did the fire marshal give advice to the minister—yes or no—that sprinklers would save lives? Did the fire marshal recommend that the government introduce legislation to require the retroactive installation of sprinklers in all care facilities?

Hon. James J. Bradley: I received a variety of recommendations from those people—including the individual to whom you've made reference—and from people right across the province on how things could be strengthened. I'm glad the member mentioned some of these components.

One of them, for instance, was having an adequate fire plan. A good example I want to give to him—and I think he would agree with me on this—is that in Niagara Falls, the fire service there has been very proactive in their inspections and in their working with those who have seniors' homes in Niagara Falls. And there are a number of others as well.

There are many recommendations coming forward. I'm very interested in those recommendations. I know the member himself has a bill before the House on Thursday. I think it would be very valuable once again that we discuss these issues, and I hope that we can find a total package that will work well in bringing about fire safety—

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

ELDER ABUSE

Mr. David Zimmer: My question is for the minister responsible for seniors. Today is Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Ontario. I first raised this issue in this chamber back in 2004. The intention was to promote awareness about the importance of protecting seniors in Ontario from elder abuse. This chamber, in its collective wisdom, made October 19 Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Ontario. It's a day for all of us who love and respect the seniors in our lives, whether they are parents, grandparents, friends, neighbours or just fellow citizens, to reflect on what we can do as individuals to help combat elder abuse.

Unfortunately, elder abuse remains an issue in our communities. Minister, what actions is this government taking to combat elder abuse in Ontario?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: I'd like to thank the member from Willowdale for the question, and I congratulate him for all the great work he does in his community when it comes to seniors.

The safety and well-being of Ontario's seniors is a top priority for our government, and that is why we are the first government in the province's history to regulate retirement homes.

Since 2003, Ontario has invested \$4.2 million in elder abuse prevention, and that includes \$900,000 in annual funding to the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse. There's also \$415,000 from the Trillium Foundation for a hotline to assist seniors at risk of abuse.

The network is working to implement Ontario's strategy to combat elder abuse.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you, Minister, for outlining some of these actions that our government is taking to protect seniors from elder abuse. But it's also very, very important that this information is available directly to those affected in the first instance by this issue: the seniors themselves. Minister, how is the government raising awareness of elder abuse day, and how is our government helping seniors inform themselves so that they know what their rights and expectations should be?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: The member is correct: Raising awareness on this issue is extremely important. We are supporting initiatives that educate seniors on how to protect themselves from abuse and fraud. In fact, in June of this past year, along with the Bank of Canada, we hosted a successful conference for seniors on financial abuse and fraud awareness.

We are also continuing to work with our federal, provincial and territorial governments to raise awareness of these issues. A great resource for our seniors is the new Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario. We'll be sending copies of that guide to all members of the House today. It includes information on preventing elder abuse and has updated information and contact phone numbers. I encourage members of the House to use this guide and to make it available to our seniors. It is also available online at ontario.ca/seniors.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, will you release the list of children's aid societies that, last week, were asked to amalgamate?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I'm so pleased to have an opportunity in this House to speak about the transformational work that's under way in this sector to make sure that we have sustainable children's aid societies in the future. It is this government that has taken steps to ensure that we've increased funding to the highest levels ever—to \$1.4 billion. Last year, we put an additional \$26.9 million into the sector to stabilize high-risk CASs.

My commitment has always been that our focus should be on the kids and that we should ensure that our CASs are there to make sure that Ontario's children, the children that we have responsibility for, have a CAS that answers the phone and that opens the door when they need that help.

The work that the commission is doing right across the province is work that is going to ensure that we have sustainable CASs on a sure footing into the future to do that work.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: The list, Minister: We're looking for the list.

Where is the transparency in this process? Letters were sent out last week to 53 children's aid societies, telling them they either had to consolidate services with a neighbouring agency or that it was business as usual. But there has been no announcement, no ministerial statement, no press release, no press conference. There hasn't even been a tweet.

Minister, why are you trying to hide these consultations from Ontario families?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: It's very rich coming from that side of the House to lecture us on transparency, on consultation, on how to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Nepean. The member from Oxford. The member from Halton, who's not in his seat.

Minister?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: We established a commission in late 2009 to do historic work that has not been done in this province. The work of the commission is done at arm's-length from the government so that they can travel across the province. In the last year, they've had more than 2,000 meetings.

They've issued some recommendations that we'll be taking a look at on how we can reduce some of the administrative burdens that exist on our CASs. They have also recommended that some CASs need to look at their operation.

1130

It is incumbent upon all of us to find a new way of doing business. We've asked three experts to travel the province and work in co-operation with CASs. If the member opposite had listened to the comments that I've publicly indicated, we're looking to work co-operatively with CASs. We've asked the commission to do that. We do that because—

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

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Ottawa families are finding it harder and harder to pay their hydro bills. Stephany Ward-Smith and her husband have two young children. She writes, "The cost of everything our family purchases has increased. The biggest hit was hydro, our hydro bill was \$743.03 for 62 days.... This has put us in a financial situation. We can no longer sustain status quo." Why won't the Premier take the HST off of hydro and give Ottawa-area families like the Ward-Smiths a break?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Once again, as we've said previously today and as we've said for some time now, we understand that Ontario families have been through a tough time. We understand that the global recession had hit Ontario particularly hard and we understand that as we recover from that global recession, some Ontario families are still struggling. So we get it—and our energy rates are going up—that Ontario families have challenges. That's why we brought forward the Ontario energy and property tax credit, so that two thirds of Ontario seniors could receive relief; so that 2.8 million Ontarians, middle- and lower-income Ontarians, would receive relief.

This is over \$1 billion of relief that's being provided to those families. We care about those families. We're going to continue to work with those families. What we're not going to do is go back to where we were seven years ago, like the NDP wants us to do, and pull back on the important investments that those—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Ward-Smiths aren't the only Ottawa residents struggling to make ends meet. Kathryn Barber writes, "The latest shocker came in the form of my hydro bill—\$161 for two months in a three-and-a-half bedroom apartment! I have never paid more than \$90 a month, so this was quite a jump and a hit on the budget. I'm feeling the pinch!"

When will the Premier finally start listening to people like Ms. Barber and Ms. Ward-Smith and agree to take the HST off of the hydro bills?

Hon. Brad Duguid: My question to the leader of the third party is when will the leader of the third party let all Ontarians know where she stands when it comes to making investments in our energy sector? She clearly doesn't support our investments to build 8,000 new megawatts of power into our system. She clearly stands opposed to investments to get out of dirty coal. We closed four more coal units just a few weeks ago, cleaning our air and providing better health outcomes for ourselves and our children. When she stands up here, day after day, opposing the important investments that are getting us there, she is standing dead set against our policies to get out of coal by the year 2014.

The NDP has clearly lost their direction. The NDP clearly has to take another look at where they're going here. The NDP is clearly—

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

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Jim Brownell: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. My riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry recently welcomed 32 new affordable housing units into the community. I think it's an understatement to suggest that this \$2.2-million investment on the part of our province and the federal government will go a long way in ensuring that those who require affordable housing have access to it when they need it, but there is always more to be done with respect to affordable housing.

I receive many inquiries from constituents as to what programs and services are available to them, specifically when it comes to the renovation of older affordable housing units. Could the minister please outline what provincial programs are available for rehabilitation and renovation of older affordable housing units?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: I want to thank the member for the question. This member truly understands the need for affordable housing in the province and in his riding.

Our government is truly committed to helping those living on low and fixed incomes, which is why after years of neglect by the previous governments, we are investing heavily into affordable housing programs. We have provided more than \$2.5 billion since 2003. These investments are helping us build and repair more than 200,000 units across our province. Part of that investment is our social housing renovation and retrofit program, a

\$704-million commitment which has been allocated to renovate and repair units across Ontario.

Unlike previous governments, we have a plan, a plan that we are going to implement, a plan that is meaningful to the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Brownell: The constituents in my riding will certainly be pleased to know that there are programs available for the renovation of units currently occupied.

Again to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: There has been much talk on all sides of the House regarding our government's long-term affordable housing strategy and what it means for Ontarians. In fact, today there are groups staging protests across Canada, calling on the federal government to make do with a national housing strategy.

Minister, in your earlier response you indicated a strong commitment on the part of our government to create and renovate affordable housing units across the province of Ontario. Through you, Speaker, could the minister tell us what Ontario's new strategy will mean and how it will complement what is already being done on the part of the province?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: I am very proud that very shortly, we will be introducing a long-term affordable housing strategy. We are the first government to introduce such a strategy. The Harris-Hudak regime's strategy was to—

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

I just want to remind the honourable member of a previous ruling I made regarding the use of names in the House. In that ruling I made reference to previous references that had been made in this House to the Harris government or the Eves government or the McGuinty government or the Rae government. The Leader of the Opposition has not been a leader of a government and I would just ask that that phrase not be used.

Please continue.

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Well, the previous Tory government—

Interjections.

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

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I withdraw that comment.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Unequivocally.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I will withdraw the comment.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: The previous Tory government's strategy was to declare war on the homeless. This government's strategy is to declare war on homelessness. We are very proud that we're putting forth a long-term affordable strategy. Yes, there are protests across Canada today calling on the federal government—the federal government should have a long-term affordable housing strategy in place—

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

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Mr. John O'Toole: My question is to the Premier. Because of the McGuinty government's disastrous policy of raising taxes, hiking electricity rates and spending our province into its largest debt in history, seniors and families will struggle to pay their electricity bill this winter. The Premier has no plan and has created an energy crisis in Ontario. Prices are going up while they ignore the issue of baseload capacity.

Premier, nuclear energy produces 50% of Ontario's power supply, but you have ignored it. The Darlington new build is part of the solution for reliable energy, but you have cancelled it. Your costly energy experiments are taxing seniors and families out of their homes.

I ask the Premier, what is your plan?

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

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I'll refer it to the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm very pleased to respond to this because last week, the Leader of the Opposition made it very clear what his disastrous nuclear policy would be. What he indicated to us last week is that he is a buy-at-any-price, impulse shopper when it comes to nuclear. That irresponsible approach would cost us billions and billions of taxpayers' and ratepayers' dollars if we were to take it.

This government believes in investing in—
Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Oxford. Member from Nepean.
Minister?

1140

Hon. Brad Duguid: If we listened to the advice of the leader opposite, today we would have been purchasing units—billions of dollars more than we would need to have paid. Nuclear energy is not something you buy on an impulse; nuclear energy is something that you have to make sure that you're taking every—

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

Mr. John O'Toole: The fact is that smart meters, HST and other profit incentives, including a failed Green Energy Act, have made energy less affordable in Ontario. The Darlington new-build program offers solutions: clean, reliable energy for the future. Durham region and the board of trade—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Agriculture will please come to order.

Mr. John O'Toole: A little bit of ethanol over there.
But Durham region and Clarington board of trade—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): That's not helpful, and I think maybe one of the—I'm not even going to say it. I just remind the Minister of Economic Development to please come to order. Comments that the member from Durham made as well, directed to a minister, are not

helpful. It's important that we all maintain as much respect and decorum as we possibly can in this House.

The time for question period has now ended.

DECORUM IN CHAMBER

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to call your attention to the question today from the member from Brant directed to the Minister of Government Services. I would like to cite standing order 37(a) with respect to the urgent importance of the question, for starters, which you wondered about aloud yourself, and then I would also like to reference standing orders 23(h) and (i) with respect to making allegations against another member and/or impugning the motives of another member. I believe that this question was nothing more or less than a personal attack on another member of this House and should have been ruled out of order, and I would ask for you to make a ruling on that, please.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Welland on the same point of order.

Mr. Peter Kormos: May I join that briefly? One, I repeat my lament, oft stated to you, for a more strict enforcement or application of standing order 37(a) as to what constitutes a proper question to be put during question period, regardless of whether it's from opposition members or from government members. That's number one.

Number two: With all due respect, sir—and you have done yeoman service in terms of trying to create some order here in a very disorderly place, and I have the highest regard for that and I think I speak for all members. But it's increasingly apparent that there is a persistent flouting of your authority on a regular basis. Let me explain that. That is to say that you will, for instance, caution members who say something inappropriate or who act in a way that's inappropriate, and all that serves is to have their name in Hansard in a way that it wouldn't be—it identifies that they were here that day—because otherwise, there would be no record whatsoever of them being in the House or the chamber on that particular day.

I encourage you, sir, at some point, to use your full authority. I suspect it would only have to happen two or three times before there was a more consistent acknowledgement of your authority rather than a snickering flouting of it on a regular basis. I urge you to consider using that authority and being firmer as a means of creating a mood here, an environment here, that truly reflects your goal and what this place should be.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Brant on the same point of order.

Mr. Dave Levac: Yes, Speaker, it is on the same point of order. I believe I was within the standing orders. In terms of your decision on this point of order, should you rule, I will respond to that appropriately.

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

Hon. Gerry Phillips: Just to say, Mr. Speaker, that we have complete confidence in you. I would hope that you will review the proceedings as you always do, and if you have direction for the House that can be helpful to the decorum of the House, we'd certainly welcome that. I would say that I think your rulings to date have been fair and measured. As I say, we look forward to your comments.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to thank the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the member from Welland, the member from Brant and the acting government House leader for their comments.

First, specifically to deal with the point that was raised by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke regarding the question, I will remind the honourable member that yesterday I called one of his own members to order in a very similar vein within the line of questioning.

I take this to remind all members that we are here to deal with issues that are of great importance to the people of Ontario. But at any time, whether it is a question coming from the opposition or a question that comes from a backbench member of the government, when we start to attack the integrity of another member, that degrades the whole of this House. I would again urge you—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Halton, it's not helpful. I would prefer that you listen, please.

It degrades the dignity of this whole House. I would ask each of you, whether it is you or your staff who are writing those questions, whether you are in opposition or in government, to please not take it down to the personal level; to be cognizant of the fact that there is a job to do, that the opposition has a role to play to keep the government accountable, that the government has a role to play to try and talk of its various initiatives, and not lob these little grenades back and forth at each other. As you can see, what it does is it just brings down the whole tone and tenor of this House.

To the honourable member from Welland, I struggle with that standing order. As I have said before, I have read numerous questions from when your party was in government, when the opposition was in government and since this party has been in government. That tone of those questions has not changed. I can tell you, and I've said it before, that every Speaker struggles with that. As I've pointed out before, one member's pothole is another member's crater.

I will remind the honourable member that I did jump in yesterday during question period because I was very concerned over the direction of a government question and the way that it flowed.

My comment to the ministers is, having sat in that chair and having realized the role that a minister plays in developing those questions, to ensure that when those questions are written, they are of urgent public importance and that they are questions that are not being done to advertise a new government initiative.

This is a plea that I put out to the backbenchers: You've got enough issues in your own ridings that you need to deal with that, my goodness, you should be able to ensure that you come forward with an issue that is of utmost importance to your constituents.

I put this over to all the whips: Remember who you are here to represent.

I thank the honourable members. I too share the frustration.

I need to close with this: I have endeavoured to stay on top of the tone of this House. I think one of the things that honourable members should do sometimes is take some time out of their seat and go sit in one of these galleries. Sit down, and look down, and listen to what is going on in here. You don't catch it on television, I can assure you, but when you are sitting here you do.

I just beg the indulgence of all members to please do everything that they can. I certainly recognize we're in for a challenging year; I'm more than prepared, in my role as Speaker, to deal with that, and I will push back if needed.

I can tell you what makes the Speaker's job a heck of a lot easier, and that's the co-operation of all members. If you don't like the way things are, be part of the solution. And if you're concerned about the way members within your own caucus are dealing with things in this House, I would urge you to go to those honourable members as well.

Mr. John O'Toole: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: At the end of question period today, I had posed the initial question, and I had begun asking a supplementary question before I was interrupted by the Minister of Agriculture, when you stopped the proceedings and I did not—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): When there are issues of loudness within this House, one of the challenges is trying to ensure that when an honourable member is expected to answer a question, that an honourable member can hear the question that was asked. I found it extremely difficult, and I do apologize. It was a question of timing. It was right at the end of question period. There was disorder that was taking place on both sides of the House. I tried to calm the House. Unfortunately, you were a casualty of the clock running out of time.

DEFERRED VOTES

NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LES ORGANISATIONS SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 65, An Act to revise the law in respect of not-for-profit corporations / Projet de loi 65, Loi modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les organisations sans but lucratif.

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

The division bells rang from 1152 to 1157.

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

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol
Albanese, Laura	Fonseca, Peter	Moridi, Reza
Arnott, Ted	Gerretsen, John	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Gravelle, Michael	Naqvi, Yasir
Balkissoon, Bas	Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John
Barrett, Toby	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Best, Margaret	Hudak, Tim	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Phillips, Gerry
Broten, Laurel C.	Jeffrey, Linda	Prue, Michael
Brown, Michael A.	Johnson, Rick	Pupatello, Sandra
Brownell, Jim	Jones, Sylvia	Qaadri, Shafiq
Cansfield, Donna H.	Klees, Frank	Ramal, Khalil
Caplan, David	Kormos, Peter	Rinaldi, Lou
Carroll, Aileen	Kwinter, Monte	Ruprecht, Tony
Chan, Michael	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Savoline, Joyce
Chudleigh, Ted	Leal, Jeff	Shurman, Peter
Clark, Steve	Levac, Dave	Sorbara, Greg
Crozier, Bruce	MacLeod, Lisa	Sousa, Charles
Delaney, Bob	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sterling, Norman W.
Dickson, Joe	Mathews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mauro, Bill	Van Bommel, Maria
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	Witmer, Elizabeth
Duncan, Dwight	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Paul	Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 78; the nays are 0.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

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

The House recessed from 1201 to 1500.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

VAUGHAN HOSPITAL

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Thornhill.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Shurman: He was just telling me that it was the Shurmanator to start.

A few weeks ago, the NDP included the Vaughan Health Campus of Care in its list of hospitals using public dollars to hire lobbyists. But the NDP got it wrong, and its leader needs to stand up in this House and retract that. The truth is, Vaughan Health Campus of Care is not a hospital. They and we would like one, but as of now, that's just a wish.

Created in 2003, the Vaughan Health Campus of Care is a not-for-profit organization funded through private dollars. The specific goal is to bring a hospital to the city of Vaughan. Last week, at its annual gala, VHCC raised almost \$800,000, bringing its seven-year fundraising total to over \$6 million.

It's now seven years later, and how appalling that this Liberal government still has not committed to building this hospital—the same Liberal government that short-changes the 905 region on health care by some \$200 per capita.

The 2005 needs assessment study stated the obvious: Vaughan needs a local hospital. The land for the site at Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 400 has been purchased and is ready to go. All that's needed now is a date for the shovels to go into the ground, yet the health minister has not even met with this group.

Vaughan has done its part. It's time for the McGuinty Liberals to step up and do theirs.

WASTE DIVERSION

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Our government is committed to preserving the environment in Ontario, and we've made a great deal of progress through our waste reduction initiatives.

Through our tires program, over 91,000 tonnes of tires have been diverted from disposal. We are meeting our targets on used tire diversion. In just eight months, we recycled and reused over 85,000 tires. This means that those used tires did not end up in our ditches, waterways and landfills.

Residentially, we are diverting more and more each year. Last year alone, almost five million households in Ontario participated in the blue box recycling program, diverting 870,000 tonnes of waste from landfills.

Through our expansion of the blue box program over the past seven years, we are approaching a 70% diversion rate in this area. We refuse to sit back and watch our environment decay and erode. We will not shirk our responsibility, leaving our children and grandchildren to clean up the mess. Instead, we are taking action to preserve this beautiful province for generations to come. Our waste diversion initiatives support Ontario's transition to a more sustainable, green economy. They help protect the environment and lead to a better future for Ontario.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: As the winter approaches and the temperatures drop across the province, families will be turning on the heat. Devices such as gas furnaces, kerosene space heaters and fireplaces are all necessary during the cold months in Ontario but can pose a danger due to carbon monoxide.

That's why I want to remind all Ontarians to make sure that they have a working carbon monoxide detector in their homes. Carbon monoxide is a tasteless, colourless and odourless gas. It is often called the silent killer

because it gives no warning to its victims. Carbon monoxide is the number one cause of accidental poisoning deaths in North America, and an estimated 414 Canadians died of carbon monoxide poisoning between 2000 and 2007.

Almost two years ago, a young family—Richard, Laurie, Cassandra and Jordan Hawkins—tragically lost their lives due to carbon monoxide poisoning in their Oxford home.

In order to prevent future tragedies, I introduced the Hawkins Gignac Act, which would make it mandatory for all homes to have a working carbon monoxide detector. A recent study by New York City's Mount Sinai School of Medicine found that the number of severe carbon monoxide poisoning cases significantly declined after the city brought in a law making detectors mandatory.

As you prepare for the winter, I encourage everyone to test their carbon monoxide detector and make sure it's working. If it isn't or if you don't have one in your home, I encourage you to get one today. Detectors are widely available, inexpensive, and they save lives.

JAKU KONBIT

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: The 10th anniversary for the Jaku Konbit Academy based out of Ottawa Centre is in 2010. Jaku Konbit is a non-profit organization promoting African cultural identity, self-reliance, family and community development, and fostering relationships. In the Ga language of West Africa, Jaku means Africans, and in Haitian "Kreyòl" Konbit means working together and helping each other. Thus, Jaku Konbit literally means Africans helping Africans.

The organization runs three very good programs: the Jaku Konbit Academy, a summer camp and the Black Star Tutoring program. The academy is an educational and cultural program that provides stimulating and enjoyable African-centred education for children and youth of African and Caribbean descent. Their program is designed to build self-esteem, promote cultural awareness, and encourage and foster youth leadership and developmental skills as well as academic excellence and social responsibility.

Their summer camp for children and youth was launched in 2006 with a grant from the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The camp was a huge success, and now I'm proud that Jaku Konbit's Greatness is Within You summer program continues with the ongoing support of the government of Ontario.

Jaku Konbit's Black Star Tutoring is a new initiative to provide tutoring services to children and youth of African and Caribbean descent who are experiencing difficulties.

On this very special anniversary, I would like to congratulate all the board of directors and especially Ken Campbell, who is the president of the program, for all the excellent work he is doing through the Jaku Konbit Academy.

DANA'S GOLDSMITHING

Mr. John O'Toole: As we all know in this House, this is Small Business Week. The resilience and ingenuity of our homegrown entrepreneurs in this province should be respected and celebrated every day. Whether it's a small home-based business or from Main Street or agri-business, we should support and recognize their achievements.

It's my honour to recognize Dana Smith of Dana's Goldsmithing, a local jeweller located in Port Perry in my riding of Durham. They have been chosen to become one of the few selected authorized retailers to carry Ontario's new Victor diamonds. The Victor mine, as we all know, is Ontario's first diamond mine, which came into operation in 2008.

1510

Thanks to the hard work of Ms. Smith and others in our diamond industry, for the first time, a customer can purchase a local diamond whose pedigree can be detailed to the square kilometre of its birth. In an age when diamonds have increasingly become the currency of oppression and civil war, Ontarians can now purchase a diamond with the knowledge that it was mined, cut and polished right here in Ontario. Rather than funding conflict, Ontario diamonds are helping to create jobs and grow our economy.

I'd like to congratulate Dana and her staff and wish her continued success in her small business during Small Business Week. All of us should take this opportunity: Whether it's our local farm operation that's diversifying or small business on the main street, let's celebrate small business in Ontario.

ATIKOKAN GENERATING STATION

Mr. Bill Mauro: In August this year, I had an opportunity to make an announcement in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan that was truly one of the most satisfying for me in my seven-plus years in provincial office. Atikokan is a community of just over 3,000 people two hours west of Thunder Bay. It was a gratifying moment to be at the Legion in Atikokan, with around 150 people, to formally announce that the Atikokan generating station will remain open and be converted to biomass.

This plant employs roughly 90 to 100 people and represents approximately 40% of the total municipal tax base. Closure would have had a highly negative effect on the homeowners and businesses of the community. Property taxes would have increased significantly and many businesses would likely have failed. Not only have we avoided that, but as a result of the conversion, we will retain jobs at the generating station, create 200 to 300 construction jobs, and quite likely the conversion will lead to the creation of a new forest-based industry in northwestern Ontario: biomass pellet production.

Subject to the power purchase agreement being negotiated between the OPA and OPG, this project should move forward shortly. I want to thank the mayor of

Atikokan, Dennis Brown; the community of Atikokan; the Atikokan Economic Development Committee and all who supported this effort over the last six years.

With this decision now in place and intensive mining exploration activity occurring, significant employment has occurred, and there is now renewed hope and optimism in Atikokan and the surrounding area.

MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: Speaker, as you know, my first years in community politics involved the founding of the Ontario farm women's movement of the 1970s, with women like Diane Harkin and Dorothy Middleton of eastern Ontario.

Yesterday was Persons Day. Persons Day marks a very significant milestone that honours the struggle and celebrates the achievement of all Canadian women in developing true democracy. It is because of the struggles of those strong women that I stand in this chamber today. So when two members of the opposition rose in this chamber to hurl petty insults and disrespectful quips at one of our female colleagues on Persons Day, of all days, my heart sank. We are supposed to be leaders here, but it seems that some still don't get it. I was embarrassed for the women in the PC caucus, who I know have struggled, just as every woman in this chamber, to gain their rightful seat based on their own aptitude and strengths. Then I was angry: angry that there are still two parliamentarians who would so effortlessly try to take back all the progress that the women's movement has won over the past 81 years.

I fully expect that the members of this House—in fact, the women of Ontario—are waiting for the Leader of the Opposition to have the decency to apologize for the behaviour of his members, out of respect for all women legislators and for Persons Day in this House.

SMALL BUSINESS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's my pleasure to rise in honour of Small Business Week. Certainly I wish that there was more good news for small business coming from the government. I know that when I brought the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas, which represents about 30,000 businesses in the GTA, to this government to talk about their opposition to the HST, the government wouldn't even meet with them. We had a press conference here and the government wouldn't give them the time of day.

Some 85% of their members opposed the HST; they still oppose the HST. They're hurting during the recession, and this government is doing absolutely nothing to help them. In fact, with the new shuffle in cabinet, they don't even have a Minister of Small Business anymore. So, happy Small Business Week; there is no longer a Minister of Small Business. I wish the Minister of Finance had heard his own member talk about trying to silence

women in this House. I wish he had actually observed her heartfelt words there.

Here's a suggestion: Have a Minister and a Ministry of Small Business, like we used to in this place; rescind the HST, at least on hydro—give small business a break; and actually listen and meet with small business representatives when they come to this House. That would be the honourable thing to do during Small Business Week, and that's certainly what small business in my community asks for.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Mr. David Oraziotti: Our government continues to make investments we need to bring our electricity grid into the 21st century.

We're bringing added generation online and building a new industry with new jobs right across Ontario through our commitment to the green energy legislation. Our conservation initiatives and smart meters are reducing peak demands on our power grid, while allowing Ontario families to make more informed decisions about their electricity use. And yesterday, Ontarians got some good news, with a modest drop in electricity rates.

What's most important, though, is that we are building a robust and reliable energy grid so that even in a warm summer like the one we just had, Ontarians don't have to worry about the power going out.

That wasn't the case under the former Conservative government. Ensuring the most basic responsibilities—keeping the heat on and the refrigerators running across this province—was unmanageable. They deregulated our electricity sector, and then they ignored their responsibility with a reckless rate freeze cost to Ontario taxpayers of a billion dollars. They let demand for electricity skyrocket while supply steadily declined, and the result was blackouts and brownouts throughout the province.

Ontarians know our government is building an electricity system we can rely on. They don't want to turn the clock back to the summer of 2003, when the former government let the lights go out on millions of Ontarians.

I know in my riding of Sault Ste. Marie, there are some fantastic new green energy projects being built.

We're very proud of the legislation that we passed in the province.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SECURING PENSION BENEFITS NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LA PÉRENNITÉ DES PRESTATIONS DE RETRAITE

Mr. Duncan moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill 120, An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Act and the Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2010 / Projet de loi 120, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les régimes de

retraite et la Loi de 2010 modifiant la Loi sur les régimes de retraite.

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 minister for a short statement.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Ministerial statements.

G20 PUBLIC INQUIRY ACT, 2010
LOI DE 2010 CONCERNANT
LA TENUE D'UNE ENQUÊTE PUBLIQUE
SUR LE SOMMET DU G20

Mr. Kormos moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 121, An Act to require a public inquiry into government action and spending in connection with the G20 Summit / Projet de loi 121, Loi exigeant la tenue d'une enquête publique sur les mesures prises et les dépenses engagées par le gouvernement dans le cadre du Sommet du G20.

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. Peter Kormos: The bill requires the Lieutenant Governor in Council to appoint a commission under the Public Inquiries Act to inquire into and report on the decisions and actions of the government of Ontario and of Ontario's law enforcement agencies in connection with the G20 summit held in Toronto on June 26 and June 27, 2010.

Specifically, the commission is required to inquire into and report on whether the fundamental rights and freedoms of Ontarians were compromised, and how money was spent by the province in connection with the summit.

The commission is required to make recommendations on how to manage similar events that may be held in Ontario in the future and to submit an interim and final report to the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES**

PENSION REFORM

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I am pleased to stand today in the House to introduce the Securing Pension Benefits Now and for the Future Act, 2010. This bill, if passed, would move forward with commitments outlined in the 2010 budget to modernize Ontario's pension system.

1520

Bill 236, the Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2010, received royal assent on May 18. It is the most significant

package of pension reforms to be made in Ontario in more than 20 years. Bill 236 builds on the recommendations of the Expert Commission on Pensions and helps the pension system adapt to economic changes while balancing the need for benefit security. Bill 236 was the first part of a multi-step process to update and improve the employment pension system.

Today, I'm pleased to speak to another significant step in the modernization process for pensions in Ontario, the Securing Ontario's Pension Benefits Now and for the Future Act, 2010. This bill proposes to make several amendments to the Pension Benefits Act. Our proposed legislation would strengthen Ontario's pension funding rules by requiring more sustainable funding of promised benefits and stronger funding standards for benefit improvements. It would also provide a framework to permit more flexible funding rules for certain multi-employer pension plans and jointly sponsored pension plans that meet specified criteria.

The bill also proposes to clarify pension surplus rules and provide a binding dispute resolution process to allow members, retirees and sponsors to reach agreements on how surplus should be allocated on windup. It would also provide a more sustainable pension benefits guarantee fund by limiting exposure to the cost of benefit improvements that occur close to plan windup, and reduce risk to taxpayers in the future. Furthermore, this proposed legislation would strengthen regulatory oversight and improve plan administration.

The Securing Ontario's Pension Benefits Now and for the Future Act is an integral part of this government's comprehensive plan for strengthening the retirement income system for all Ontarians. With this bill, the McGuinty government's reforms to the pension system will have responded to about two thirds of the 142 recommendations in the expert commission's report addressed to the Ontario government. The remaining recommendations will be considered for inclusion in future reforms.

This proposed legislation incorporates the input of extensive consultations, conducted across the province, with groups ranging from the Ontario Bar Association to the Association of Canadian Pension Management and the Ontario Federation of Labour. In fact, I've had the pleasure of hosting several round table discussions over the past years on the retirement income system with various stakeholders as part of our government's review of the options for improving retirement income security.

As you may know, on August 24 of this year, we released a technical background paper on this bill to solicit even more input from the stakeholders. The feedback we received was particularly helpful, and we will continue to encourage stakeholders to make their views known for making a stronger, more modern pension system in Ontario.

Ontario has also been playing a leadership role in advocating for pension reform at the national level. We continue to call for modest increases to the Canada pension plan so that all Canadians have greater access to retirement savings. Furthermore, we are working closely

with governments and industry to develop new and innovative ways for Canadians to save for retirement.

As our population ages, as our workforce changes and as our economic landscape shifts, we must modernize, innovate and adapt to ensure the continued health of our retirement income system. Over the next 20 years, the portion of the population aged 65 and older will nearly double, from 13.9% in 2009 to 23.1% in 2030, and continue to increase to 26.3% in 2050. This means that the level of incomes for the older and largely retired population will have an increasing impact on the economic and social well-being of the general population. It is therefore critical that we take the necessary steps today to preserve the quality of life for our future seniors.

The proposed Securing Ontario's Pension Benefits Now and for the Future Act, 2010, will continue our efforts in modernizing Ontario's pension system to balance the concerns of workers, retirees and employers. That is why I'm asking for the support of the Legislature on this important bill.

I'd like to point out in the gallery a number of public servants from Ontario that have been very involved in this process over a number of years and, like all Ontario public servants serve us very well.

CITIZENSHIP WEEK

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm pleased to rise before this Legislature today to recognize national Citizenship Week. Citizenship Week represents an opportunity for all citizens to celebrate and reaffirm the values that unite us as Canadians.

Sixty-three years ago, Canada became the first country in the British Commonwealth to gain its own citizenship legislation. This represented a proud moment in our history as Canada matured from a nation of British subjects to a fully sovereign state. In fact, the first citizenship ceremony took place in 1947, when Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, an Ontarian, was sworn in as the first Canadian citizen under this legislation. Deeply touched while watching others become Canadian citizens, Mackenzie King wrote in his diary at that time, "Watching these different people singing the national anthem. Having in mind the background of their countries. How different their lives were in having come to Canada and seeing on the whole occasion something prophetic of the future."

Since that moment, more than six and a half million people have taken Canadian citizenship, and every year thousands of immigrants choose to become new Canadians; in doing so, they choose Ontario as their new home to start a new life, a better life.

This week, many more immigrants will take the oath of citizenship. By taking the oath of citizenship, new Canadians pledge to uphold fundamental rights such as freedom of religion; freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression; freedom of peaceful assembly; and freedom of association. They also pledge to fulfill the responsibilities of citizenship: respecting the rule of law,

participating in the democratic process, and honouring our heritage and our multicultural values.

Fulfilling the responsibilities of citizenship also means being an active citizen. An active citizen helps people in need, contributes to the community and volunteers for worthy causes. Our new Canadians embrace values especially dear to us here in Ontario, values that help build our society and enhance our quality of life.

Before I was elected to public office, I practised medicine as a humanitarian in countries around the world that were riddled with strife. Witnessing the hardship of others and their lack of human rights and freedoms gave me an even greater appreciation of Canada; nothing made me prouder than to say I was a Canadian.

We are a welcoming people. Ontario has welcomed people from over 200 different countries, speaking 130 different languages, and this diversity has become our strength. It has made Ontario one of the best places in the world in which to live, work and raise a family. Diversity has also made Ontario an example of how people of different cultures can come together in harmony as neighbours, friends and colleagues. This past Canada Day I had the privilege of attending a citizenship ceremony here at Queen's Park. It was a truly joyous and highly meaningful occasion, and I know that the citizenship ceremonies being held this week will be equally joyful.

I encourage all members of this Legislature to reach out to new Canadians and citizens to celebrate national Citizenship Week. Whether we are citizens by birth or by choice, we all have something meaningful to contribute to Ontario, to Canada and to each other. Let us never take for granted our privilege of being Canadian. Let us keep working together to make this province and our country more vibrant, more prosperous and more caring.

PENSION REFORM

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to respond to the Minister of Finance in the introduction of a new pension bill. The name of the bill is the Securing Pension Benefits Now and for the Future Act, 2010, and this is the second bill, as was mentioned by the Minister of Finance, to do with pensions. The opposition PC party did support Bill 236, the first bill. Of course, we haven't seen the bill yet—it's just been introduced—but I and my colleagues will be looking at it in detail. They tend to be of a highly technical nature, so we will be arranging for a briefing to learn about the details of the bill.

I suspect it will deal primarily with defined benefit pension plans. As the Minister of Finance pointed out, that affects roughly one third of the population. There are two thirds who don't benefit from defined benefit pension plans. But certainly where they do exist, if you're working for a company you're counting on that defined benefit pension plan. The government should have rules in place so that the plan is fully funded and so that those people who are counting on the plan will have the support from it that they expect to have.

1530

This morning, as I was getting ready to leave, CBC Radio's Michael Hlinka, the business commentator, was talking about the unrest in France, where they're changing their retirement age from 60 to 62, I believe, and there are strikes on the street. He pointed out some of the challenges here in Ontario in the public sector. He made a point of saying that the teachers' pension plan has only one and a half working teachers for each retired teacher at this point, and obviously that's a huge stress. In fact, in this year's budget there was some \$500 million that was contributed from the general taxpayers toward the Ontario teachers' pension fund.

If we're going to have defined benefit plans, then the rules should be such that they're fully funded. We'll be having a close look at this. I suspect that what's going to happen with the tighter rules is that more and more businesses will move, as they are, toward defined contribution plans as time goes on.

It's also interesting that the government just yesterday introduced a motion that seems to be mainly political in nature, which we're going to be debating tomorrow and I will speak to more about tomorrow. That seems to be a very political motion to do with pensions.

CITIZENSHIP WEEK

Mr. Peter Shurman: I rise today to respond to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on behalf of Ontario PC leader Tim Hudak, who holds the shadow portfolio post, one that I occupied for a couple of years.

I must say, in echoing the sentiments of the minister, that I have been to a couple of citizenship ceremonies, the swearing in of new citizens of Canada, and I never thought, when I went to my first one, that it would be quite as moving as it is. It's history for all of us in all of our families, and sometimes very recent history.

This is a celebration of the transition through immigration, from newcomer to Canadian citizen. In my own riding of Thornhill, there are about 150 nationalities represented, so I know whereof I speak. It is not an easy transition. Most of us know this from families, parents, sometimes brothers and sisters, and sometimes, in this Legislature, our own memories of ourselves and our own history.

Not enough is being done in Ontario now to unlock the potential of newcomers in professions and trades that are so valuable to the economic future of the province. Ontario has always been a province with a reputation of culture and opportunity, and now I'm worried that that reputation is slipping. As Ontario struggles to recover from recession, a new generation of leadership must do more than the last to tap into the education, energy, skills and experience of the people we draw to our province. We must do everything we can to help those who come to Ontario to transition from faraway dreamer to newcomer to Canadian citizen.

In May, Ontario PC leader Hudak introduced the Newcomers Employment Opportunities Act, 2010, to

help with that transition. If passed, the bill will lower the threshold for any immigrant investor who opens a business outside the GTA. It encourages better integration through tax incentives to employers who pay for English- or French-language training to newcomers. It addresses the lack of transparency in the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act and Regulated Health Professions Act preventing newcomers from pursuing careers in their field of training.

The goal of our government should be the same as that of newcomers—succeed, have fair access to the professions they are trained in, help promote and grow our province and economy, and eventually take the oath and indeed become Canadian citizens.

PENSION REFORM

Mr. Paul Miller: I'm responding to the pension legislation by the finance minister.

The government-appointed expert Harry Arthurs came up with a number of good suggestions regarding strengthening the existing pension system. Unfortunately, a number of his most important recommendations are nowhere to be seen in this legislation. Here are three that absolutely should have been in this package and aren't.

First, at only \$1,000, the level of monthly pension benefits eligible for protection by the pension benefits guarantee fund is completely inadequate. We believe that over time, the monthly guarantee covered by the PBGF should be increased to a maximum of \$2,500, as Arthurs recommended, to reflect the effect of inflation on the original maximum of \$1,000, which has been in place since 1980.

While the NDP agrees that the basis on which the levy could be paid by plan sponsors is a complex matter and that a phase-in period would be necessary, we are extremely disappointed that this key Arthurs recommendation is nowhere to be seen in this first package of pension reform legislation.

Secondly, the NDP supports the Arthurs recommendation for establishing an Ontario pension agency. We believe that pooling, administering, investing and dispersing stranded pensions could be an important role for the agency. In our opinion, an Ontario pension agency would pretty much solve the problem that Nortel pensioners face. AbitibiBowater, Canwest Global Communications: All could benefit from an Ontario pension agency.

Finally, Arthurs recommended the adoption of emergency indexation provisions. In the event of another surge in inflation, fixed pension benefits will, we know, be inadequate. At the same time, inflation may deliver high nominal returns to pension funds. High nominal returns due to inflation should not be permitted to produce high surpluses at the expense of fixed income pensioners. Now is the time to address this concern with limited indexing provisions, before inflation becomes another serious issue.

To give the government credit, there are a number of solid provisions in the legislation. Most of the constructive proposals follow closely the recommendations of Professor Arthurs. It's too bad that by ignoring the three most important recommendations, the government threw away an opportunity to pass some really landmark pension legislation.

CITIZENSHIP WEEK

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'm responding to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on the Citizenship Week. Of course, I applaud our recent citizens and have taken part in many ceremonies to welcome them.

I would ask my friend the minister, however, because he is a humanitarian, to answer a few questions on behalf of the McGuinty government, because these are questions that immigrants in my communities are asking.

Why does it take three months to get OHIP coverage for a new immigrant when they need it most, often when they first land?

Why does it take about 10 years to get accredited if you're a medically trained foreign professional, when a million Ontarians need a family doctor? I have one—Dr. Ali, let's call him—who goes back to Iran for six months to make money so he can keep his family here for the other six months. Why does it take that long?

Why do organizations like CultureLink—I went to their annual general meeting last night—have to come year after year, cap in hand? Why do they not get stable funding from this government?

Why do we live in a province where live-in nannies, caregivers and migrant workers are forbidden to unionize? Why do we deny them what is essentially, I would contest, a right of any worker?

Why do we turn a blind eye to the kind of employment standards violations that beset the immigrant community more than anyone else? In fact, in our own ministry buildings, we have cleaning contractors who hire recent immigrants who don't speak the language and don't know their rights; who are essentially paying less than minimum wage to them for cleaning their own government buildings by calling them "contractors." Why does my friend allow this, and why does the McGuinty government turn a blind eye to this?

Why have they turned a blind eye to the kinds of inspections that we've asked for from the Ministry of Labour? It's taken deaths in the construction trade to get the Ministry of Labour to go out and actually inspect the number of construction sites, many of which use illegal immigrant labour, people, again, who don't know their rights and don't know what their government should be doing for them.

All of these issues could have been addressed in the last seven years. All of these issues would put some meat to the bones of Citizenship Week. Instead of just being an empty gesture, it would actually have some meaning for the people who are bringing so much, and bring so much continually, generation after generation, to this province.

PETITIONS

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I have a petition here signed by a great number of people from the great riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London, represented by the Speaker, who is unable to read the petitions. On his behalf, I'd like to read it into the record. It's a petition to the Parliament of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) recently and unilaterally announced that it would euthanize all animals in its care in its Newmarket shelter, citing a ringworm outbreak as justification;

"Whereas the euthanasia plan was stopped in the face of repeated calls for a stay in the Legislature and by the public, but not until 99 animals had been killed;

"Whereas the Premier and Community Safety Minister Rick Bartolucci refused to act, claiming the provincial government has no jurisdiction over the OSPCA;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to immediately implement the resolution tabled at Queen's Park by Newmarket–Aurora MPP Frank Klees on June 1, 2010, which reads as follows:

1540

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislature should call on the government of Ontario to review the powers and authority granted to the OSPCA under the OSPCA Act and to make the necessary legislative changes to bring those powers under the authority of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to ensure that there is a clearly defined and effective provincial oversight of all animal shelter services in the province, and to separate the inspection and enforcement powers of the OSPCA from its functions as a charity providing animal shelter services."

I'll affix my signature.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS TREATMENT

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

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas thousands of people suffer from multiple sclerosis;

"Whereas there is a treatment for chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency, more commonly called CCSVI, which consists of a corrective angioplasty, a well-known, universally practised procedure that is low-risk and at relatively low expense;

"Whereas, while more research is needed, MS patients should not need to await such results;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario allow people with multiple sclerosis to obtain the venoplasty that so impacts their quality of life and that of their family and caregivers.”

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

EDUCATION FUNDING

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

“Whereas we are the parents, educators and friends of students in the Peel region public school system; and

“Whereas Peel students have historically received less funding per pupil per annum when compared to their peers in other district school boards and, in particular, have inadequate special education resources; and

“Whereas all students in Ontario are entitled to equal opportunities in education;

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

“To recognize and provide for the \$18-million learning opportunities grant owed to Peel students;

“Implement measures to ensure ongoing funding is based on current census data and other key demographic indicators of student needs to ensure that Peel students receive a fair share of provincial education funding.”

I support this petition and am pleased to affix my name to it and give it to page Marie-Josée.

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: This petition is for provincial oversight of the OSPCA.

“Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) recently and unilaterally announced that it would euthanize all animals in its care in its Newmarket shelter, citing a ringworm outbreak as justification;

“Whereas the euthanasia plan was stopped in the face of repeated calls for a stay in the Legislature and by the public, but not until 99 animals had been killed;

“Whereas the Premier and Community Safety Minister Rick Bartolucci refused to act, claiming the provincial government has no jurisdiction over the OSPCA;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to immediately implement the resolution tabled at Queen's Park by Newmarket–Aurora MPP Frank Klees on June 1, 2010, which reads as follows:

“That, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislature should call on the government of Ontario to review the powers and authority granted to the OSPCA under the OSPCA Act and to make the necessary legislative changes to bring those powers under the authority of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to ensure that there is a clearly defined and effective provincial oversight of all animal

shelter services in the province, and to separate the inspection and enforcement powers of the OSPCA from its functions as a charity providing animal shelter services.”

I couldn't agree more with this petition and I will give it to legislative page Ffion to be delivered to the table.

BRITISH HOME CHILDREN

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a petition and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas, between 1869 and 1939, more than 100,000 British home children arrived in Canada from group homes and orphanages in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland; and

“Whereas the story of the British home children is one of challenge, determination and perseverance; and

“Whereas due to their remarkable courage, strength and perseverance, Canada's British home children endured and went on to lead healthy and productive lives and contributed immeasurably to the development of Ontario's economy and prosperity; and

“Whereas the government of Canada has proclaimed 2010 as the Year of the British Home Child and Canada Post will recognize it with a commemorative stamp;

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

“Enact Bill 12, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Jim Brownell on March 23, 2010, an act to proclaim September 28 of each year as Ontario home child day.”

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

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Mr. Peter Shurman: I have a petition here for the provincial Legislature on provincial oversight of the OSPCA, and I owe a debt of gratitude and acknowledgement to Lynn Perrier of Thornhill for bringing this number of petitions to my office.

“Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) recently and unilaterally announced that it would euthanize all animals in its care in its Newmarket shelter, citing a ringworm outbreak as justification;

“Whereas the euthanasia plan was stopped in the face of repeated calls for a stay in the Legislature and by the public, but not until 99 animals had been killed;

“Whereas the Premier and Community Safety Minister Rick Bartolucci refused to act, claiming the provincial government has no jurisdiction over the OSPCA;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to immediately implement the resolution tabled at Queen's Park by Newmarket–Aurora MPP Frank Klees on June 1, 2010, which reads as follows:

“That, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislature should call on the government of Ontario to review the powers and authority granted to the OSPCA under the OSPCA Act and to make the necessary legislative changes to bring those powers under the authority of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to ensure that there is a clearly defined and effective provincial oversight of all animal shelter services in the province, and to separate the inspection and enforcement powers of the OSPCA from its functions as a charity providing animal shelter services.”

I agree with this petition, will affix my name to it and present it to page Anika.

HOME WARRANTY PROGRAM

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I’m going to read a petition to support extending the Ombudsman of Ontario’s jurisdiction to include the Tarion Warranty Corp.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas homeowners have purchased a newly built home in good faith and often soon find they are victims of construction defects, often including Ontario building code violations, such as faulty heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, leaking roofs, cracked foundations, etc.;

“Whereas often when homeowners seek restitution and repairs from the builder and the Tarion Warranty Corp., they encounter an unwieldy bureaucratic system that often fails to compensate them for the high cost of repairing these construction defects, while the builder often escapes with impunity;

“Whereas the Tarion Warranty Corp. is supposed to be an important part of the consumer protection system in Ontario related to newly built homes;

“Whereas the government to date has ignored calls to make its Tarion agency truly accountable to consumers;

“Be it resolved that we, the undersigned, support MPP Cheri DiNovo’s private member’s bill, which calls for the Ombudsman to be given oversight of Tarion and the power to deal with unresolved complaints;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act to provide that the Ombudsman’s powers under the Ombudsman Act in respect of any governmental organization apply to the corporation established under the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act, and to provide for necessary modifications in the application of the Ombudsman Act.”

Again, I agree wholeheartedly with this, will affix my signature and give it to Priscile to be delivered to the table.

KIDNEY DISEASE

Mr. Jeff Leal: I want to thank Deborah McCormick from 791 King Street West, Oshawa, Ontario, who has a real interest in kidney disease and ways to prevent it.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“We, the undersigned residents of Ontario, Canada, draw the attention of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to the following:

“Whereas kidney disease is a huge and growing problem in Canada; and

“Whereas real progress is being made in various ways of preventing and coping with kidney disease, in particular the development of a bio-artificial kidney;

“We, the undersigned, call on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make research funding available for the explicit purpose of conducting bio-artificial kidney research as an extension to the research being successfully conducted at several centres in the United States.”

I agree with this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to page Emmett.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mrs. Julia Munro: “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;

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“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 have affixed my signature and given it to page Marie-Josée, as I am in complete agreement.

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I have a petition:

“Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) recently and unilaterally announced that it would euthanize all animals in its care in its Newmarket shelter, citing a ringworm outbreak as justification;

“Whereas the euthanasia plan was stopped in the face of repeated calls for a stay in the Legislature and by the public, but not until 99 animals had been killed;

“Whereas the Premier and Community Safety Minister Rick Bartolucci refused to act, claiming the provincial government has no jurisdiction over the OSPCA;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to immediately implement the resolution tabled at Queen’s Park by Newmarket–Aurora MPP Frank Klees on June 1, 2010, which reads as follows:

“That, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislature should call on the government of Ontario to review the powers and authority granted to the OSPCA under the OSPCA Act and to make the necessary legislative changes to bring those powers under the authority of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to ensure that there is a clearly defined and effective provincial oversight of all animal shelter services in the province, and to separate the inspection and enforcement powers of the OSPCA from its functions as a charity providing animal shelter services.”

Thank you.

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: I have a petition provided to me by Sandra Lovell of Ayr and Lynn Perrier of Thornhill.

“To the Parliament of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) recently and unilaterally announced that it would euthanize all animals in its care in its Newmarket shelter, citing a ringworm outbreak as justification;

“Whereas the euthanasia plan was stopped in the face of repeated calls for a stay in the Legislature and by the public, but not until 99 animals had been killed;

“Whereas the Premier and Community Safety Minister Rick Bartolucci refused to act, claiming the provincial government has no jurisdiction over the OSPCA;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to immediately implement the resolution tabled at Queen’s Park by Newmarket–Aurora MPP Frank Klees on June 1, 2010, which reads as follows:

“That, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislature should call on the government of Ontario to review the powers and authority granted to the OSPCA under the OSPCA Act and to make the necessary legislative changes to bring those powers under the authority of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to ensure that there is a clearly defined and effective provincial oversight of all animal shelter services in the province, and to separate the inspection and enforcement powers of the OSPCA from its functions as a charity providing animal shelter services.”

As I agree with this petition, I affix my name thereto.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Norm Miller: I’ve received more petitions to do with paved shoulders on provincial highways. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas pedestrians and cyclists are increasingly using secondary highways to support healthy lifestyles and expand active transportation; and

“Whereas paved shoulders on highways enhance public safety for all highway users, expand tourism opportunities and support good health; and

“Whereas paved shoulders help to reduce the maintenance cost of repairs to highway surfaces; and

“Whereas Norm Miller’s private member’s Bill 100 provides for a minimum one-metre paved shoulder for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;

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

“That Norm Miller’s private member’s Bill 100, which requires a minimum one-metre paved shoulder on designated highways, receive swift passage through the legislative process.”

Of course, I support this petition.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOOD GOVERNMENT ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LA SAINE GESTION PUBLIQUE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 18, 2010, on the motion for second reading of Bill 110, An Act to promote good government by amending or repealing certain Acts / Projet de loi 110, Loi visant à promouvoir une saine gestion publique en modifiant ou en abrogeant certaines lois.

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

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I find it strange that the Liberals didn’t want to pick up the mantle on this debate.

It’s the good government bill. We had a bill of good government prior to this; we had one last year. It seems to be a regular thing that they bring in good government bills.

Mr. John O’Toole: That’s an oxymoron: good government by a bad—

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: It’s almost as the member from east of Toronto says—it’s Durham? I think it’s the member from Durham, isn’t it?

Mr. John O’Toole: Durham, yes.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: The member from Durham says that it’s lack of good government, really, that this government has been known for.

It was interesting to listen to the member from Willowdale rant on and on, and on and on, yesterday. His rant was about how the opposition did not go to the briefings for this bill. I think that it’d probably be worth clarifying something in that area. My staff was in touch

with the Attorney General's office, and we informed the Attorney General's office that we would like a briefing if we had questions after having reviewed the legislation. As you can appreciate, this legislation dealt with seven different ministries and, I think, 70 different pieces of legislation, so it did require some review even before you went to a briefing on it. After reviewing the legislation, we didn't really have a lot of questions, but we understood the changes even if they were on matters technical in nature.

I'm not sure if the member from Willowdale would like the opposition to attend a briefing even when it is unnecessary; however, I'm of the view that to waste the limited time that we have on hard-working bureaucrats is actually an example—a pretty definitive example—of bad government. In fact, it's a typical example of how this Liberal government operates: lots of red tape which leads to waste, waste and more waste. Lots of red tape. They just love red tape.

Rest assured, when necessary we have attended and will continue to attend briefings. But as the member from Beaches–East York mentioned, there are a number of times when these briefings are truncated by the Liberal government; in other words, broken up in the middle and there's an adjournment while somebody leaves or somebody comes. It takes up a lot of our valuable time. Our valid questions are quite often silenced by Liberal staff. In other words, when we're in a briefing there are also Liberal staff there from the leader's office or the minister's office, and when we ask the civil servants—the people who are technically aware of the bills—a question concerning the meaning of the bill, the Liberal staff may say, "You don't have to answer that," and they do that on the basis of government confidentiality. Of course, that kind of defeats the purpose of having a briefing on these questions in the first place. If we were discussing a bill that was truly about good government, we wouldn't see these kinds of things happening.

A great example occurred after the Good Government Act, 2009, was introduced, while we pored through that massive piece of legislation. When we got to the briefing we had question after question, because there were lots of controversial changes in that Good Government Act, but we were informed and ready for the briefing. We didn't need PowerPoint presentations regurgitating the explanatory notes; we needed a solid briefing. The bureaucrats were helpful, but a number of times our questions were silenced by the Liberal staff. That was not very helpful. The member from Willowdale may want to speak with staff in the minister's office if he is concerned about providing helpful briefings to the official opposition, and I would thank the member in advance for taking that action—not that I think it's going to happen. But if it did happen, I would thank the member in advance for that.

The Attorney General, of course, had a few words to say on this particular briefing. He began by saying that "The purpose of a good government bill, among other things, is to bring together those legislative or enabling initiatives that by themselves are not substantive enough

to form a piece of legislation—that's first...." Secondly, he said that the purpose of an omnibus bill is to bring together that which is "necessary and important for the better functioning of either other acts or society in general...." A little nebulous, but that was the second point. Thirdly, the purpose of an omnibus bill is to bring together points "that tend to be—today's debate may prove the exception—less controversial than some pieces of legislation."

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It's interesting, because if we look back to last year's Good Government Act, there were two new pieces of legislation in that bill. In fact, I spoke at length about my concerns with this government's approach in that Good Government Act.

Ironically, one of the new acts was the accountability act. That was an entire act that was included in the good government bill. This would preclude, or hold up to question, the Attorney General's first point, when he said they're "not substantive enough to form a piece of legislation" on their own. Last year's Good Government Act held two complete pieces of legislation on its own.

Ironically, one of those new acts was the accountability act. The majority of that act has not yet been proclaimed. Why they had to rush this through in an omnibus bill, purportedly for the saving of time—yet here we are, over a year later, and that act has not yet been proclaimed. I think it puts into question how well this government is organized as far as how it organizes its bills that it brings before the House. Again, in the guise of good government, it hides the reality of bad governance, bad planning and bad management.

This actually brings me to the Attorney General's third point. He said that good government acts are of a less controversial nature. That seems to be a controversial statement itself because we've seen a lot of bad government over the last six or seven years, and we've seen it in so-called good government acts.

It's true that this government likely doesn't need any more controversy than it's already created for itself over the last six or seven years. We know that the HST was an extremely controversial act. Of course, the HST was brought in this past July 1. It was brought in, having never been part of a government platform. We didn't see it in the 2007 election platform of the Liberals. They had to have known that it was part and parcel of their program going forward, yet they didn't choose to share that with the Ontario electorate.

In my mind, to bring in a massive restructuring of the sales tax act in Ontario, without extensive consultation during a campaign with the people of Ontario—there is no way that I can construe that as being good government. That is—I want to use a word that the Speaker has said isn't appropriate. I'm sure there's another word that I can think of—maybe not. But you can draw your own conclusions about a government that brings something in without first discussing it with the people of Ontario during an election. It was kind of a bushwhacking—perhaps I can use that term—of the electorate.

The smart meters are something that has been disguised. They haven't been fully discussed. A lot of the downside of the so-called smart meters wasn't available to people. With their implementation, we have seen our worst fears come true. Even those people who upset their lives, use electric power at low seasons of the year, low times of the day, are seeing vastly increased electricity bills. The so-called cheap rate or off-peak rate of 5.2 cents a kilowatt hour, I think it was—that was just approved yesterday, to move to 5.1 cents per kilowatt hour, a massive 1% decrease in price—won't affect anyone's lives. But even that rate is significantly higher, at 5.1 cents per kilowatt hour, than the 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour that our government had in place in 2003, when the Liberal government came into office.

So it was a sad thing to see that these smart meters—I think they come from a foreign manufacturer. It would be interesting for this government if they had had a decent amount of research and had had a look at where they could find smart meters that actually work—that are consistently available and work well.

There are some Ontario manufacturers of smart meters. In fact, the largest installation of smart meters in the world, I believe, is taking place in Shanghai, China, and those smart meters are being supplied and installed or implemented by an Ontario company. So the company is smart enough and good enough to work in China but apparently wasn't able to make a bid on these smart meters in Ontario.

Another example of a government action that wouldn't really qualify for good government would be the Oakville power plant. The Oakville power plant was something that we railed against for the past two years at least. I think, when it came in, that George Smitherman—I think I can use his name, because he's no longer a member of the Legislature and he doesn't have a riding to refer to him by, so I will refer to him by name as Mr. George Smitherman—was the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure at the time that the Oakville plant was approved to go onto a piece of land that was far too small; far too near to other significant populations of families and single-family homes; far too near to schools and seniors' homes; far too near to a GO rail line passing, I think it was, seven metres from the completed plant—or it would have been; and far too near to the QEW in cases where there was some danger involved.

The TransCanada company that got the approval to build the plant was ongoing in filling out their papers and getting their house in order to build this plant. They had received the contract. In a total turnaround, in a total flip-flop, the government has decided to not proceed with that plant. That, in itself, wasn't a bad decision; the bad decision took place when the plant was approved for that location. But in making that first bad decision and then, a year and a half or two years later, making the good decision to cancel it, you have chewed through something between half a billion and a billion dollars of taxpayers' money that the proponent, TransCanada Pipelines, will be asking the government to cover for their costs of breaking that contract.

The Minister of Energy has talked at length during question period about the rumoured amounts of how much money this is going to cost. A prudent manager dealing with good government would not have made that decision without knowing what the financial impact would be on the people of Ontario, whose tax dollars they represent. But apparently, this government doesn't care what the taxpayers of Ontario are going to pay in damages for this plant.

Most politicians know that when there's an absence of fact, rumours will fill the void. There's a huge lack of facts dealing with the Oakville power plant. We don't know what those discussions have been. We don't know how much money the government is willing to ante up in order to save the seat of its Oakville member. Make no mistake: The reason that the people of Ontario are paying half a billion to a billion dollars is to save one seat in the town of Oakville. The member for Oakville—we can call him the half-billion-dollar man or we can call him the billion-dollar man, but I can ask the government: If the price to save a seat in the province of Ontario is going to be half a billion dollars and we're a year out from the election, I can tell the people of Ontario that this is going to be a very, very expensive election on their tax dollars. It's going to cost the taxpayers of Ontario a lot of money, and, I would say, to no avail, because the taxpayers of Ontario understand very clearly that wasting their tax dollars is not something they want to see happen. They've seen it happen in Oakville. They will reject this government and they will reject the way in which this government operates.

We've also seen bad government operating in the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. We saw that OLG come into existence when the government spent about \$600,000 to change the name of the OLG. It used to be called the OLG, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., but the government in its wisdom changed the name to the OLG. They took off the C, and it created a new logo. The fees to the people who developed this tremendous piece of public relations, along with the reprinting of stationery and resigning all the facilities—that cost the people of Ontario about \$600,000. This was a complete waste of time and a complete waste of taxpayers' dollars.

1610

That's how this organization was born. The people who work there obviously got the impression that money was not really a top priority for this government. Good government didn't revolve around looking after taxpayers' dollars. So we saw scandal after scandal.

We saw one scandal where people had exorbitant holidays and travel. People had exorbitant cars, limousines. People had exorbitant expense accounts, expensive meals and travel. We saw all of these things happen at the OLG, and then barely a year later we saw the same thing repeat itself. This government didn't learn from its mistakes. It didn't have good oversight of these organizations, and that certainly is not good government.

We also saw another example of good government—my goodness, these examples just go on and on. I'm

surprised that the government doesn't learn from their mistakes, but it seems this government is incapable of learning from its mistakes.

Another example was the eco fees. The eco fees were not talked about during the campaign in 2007. They were not even promoted in the six months prior to their introduction. They were simply introduced on July 1 under cover of the HST introduction. People began to see them appearing in retail stores where they went to buy products that attracted this tax.

The concept of the tax isn't what bothers me. What bothers me—

Interjection.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I'm working down the list.

The concept of the tax isn't what bothers me. What bothers me is the way it was snuck in under the cover of darkness, and that certainly is not good government. The government has to realize that it's there at the pleasure and for the benefit of the people of Ontario, and to sneak these things in under cover of darkness under the HST is not what the people of Ontario expect from a duly elected government of the day.

So the eco fees, of course, were cancelled on about July 20 or so. Three weeks after they were introduced, they were cancelled with the promise that they would come back in 90 days with a better program and one which they could promote to the people of Ontario so that they would see the benefits of an eco tax.

Well, 10 days ago, the government decided that it really couldn't do that; it really didn't know how to accomplish those goals. So they announced that they were going to cancel the eco tax forever. They weren't going to bring it back. They did have a little caveat in there, if you look at the press release—a little wiggle room there. It said, "We're going to study the matter further, towards the effect that we may bring it back later."

Given the operation of this government, I can tell you that that eco tax will be back. It'll be back in a storm, and it'll be back the day after this government gets elected, if that peril should ever befall the citizens of Ontario—more taxes to come because this government has never seen a tax increase that they haven't fallen in love with.

Of course, the history of this government has shown us that to say good government acts are not controversial is in fact tremendously inaccurate. That was the third point that the Attorney General made when he said that the history is that the good government bills were brought in especially for regulations or many acts that are not controversial, and in fact that is tremendously inaccurate.

Another new act the government introduced in the Good Government Act, 2009, was filled with controversy. I'm speaking about the new Public Inquiries Act, and I spoke about my concerns that this government had snuck into this act, that Good Government Act—and the implications of those changes.

My concerns were echoed at committee when the member for Thornhill asked, "If I characterize this"—"this" being the changes to the Public Inquiries Act—"as

highly objectionable, from your perspective, that would be a good synopsis." The answer was, "That is a fair synopsis." That is a fair synopsis: That was their answer.

Funny enough, the new Public Inquiries Act hasn't been proclaimed yet either. There was a suggestion that it was put in the Good Government Act, 2009, because it was desperately needed, and this bill was going through in a non-controversial fashion—which it did not, but the government was hoping that it would—and it was desperately needed for good government in Ontario. Yet here we are, over a year later, and it hasn't been proclaimed.

When you say you desperately need something because of good government and then you don't proclaim it for a year, I wonder, what does that indicate to the people of Ontario about the government that they elected in 2007? I think it's given them some pause that perhaps this government doesn't have the same commitment to walk the walk when they have indeed talked the talk.

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: They've changed.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: They have changed dramatically, as the member from Cambridge just pointed out. They have changed dramatically, and that has been a sad day for Ontario.

So it's difficult for me to really accept this flip-flop as a genuine expression of the Attorney General's view of what good governance is in the province of Ontario.

I wouldn't be surprised, however, if this act is the exception to the rule, in light of the scandals trashing the government today. A truly good Good Government Act would be a great tactical diversion. In fact, with the majority of these changes being simple housekeeping measures, perhaps it would be more properly titled the diversion act.

The member for Welland, with the third party, commented on the Justices of the Peace Act. I want to say that the member for Welland is a very competent orator. I hate to give the opposition in either party too many compliments because it tends to end up in campaign brochures during election time, and the person from my party, whoever that might be, who is running against the member for Welland might be upset with me when he sees that I have complimented the member from Welland. But he does have a keen legal mind, and I would take his comments quite seriously, when the member for Welland brought up an interesting concern about changes to Justices of the Peace Act. Reading the act, it appears the Attorney General is currently able to request the review of applications.

However, while I support this change to the process of appointing JPs, justices of the peace, I hope we will hear more at committee about this concern. It isn't beyond this government's ability to try to sneak in their friends under the veil of a Good Government Act. I think we can look at a number of cases where this has happened, not the least of which—and perhaps the granddaddy of all—is the eHealth scandal, where Liberal-friendly consultants have made truckloads of money from the government.

Interjection.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: The member for St. Catharines asked, “What about the Tories?” I would suggest to him that the Tories, if and when anything was done of an unjust nature like that, which I would be surprised to find examples of, would be minuscule compared to \$1 billion, most of which went to consultants. That is the granddaddy of all ripoffs of the Ontario taxpayer in the history of Ontario.

1620

Another one of the good government acts that this government brought in was smart meters, and of course they're tremendously flawed. We have examples of people who have gone onto smart meters, used their electrical appliances at night through timers or getting up in the middle of the night to do their washing and drying and using off-peak-hour rates as much as possible, and yet there they are—I see the member for Peterborough counting carefully; I'm keeping track; you're okay—finding their electricity bills going up 10%, 15%, 20%. Twenty per cent is not uncommon. It is not a rarity to have a 20% increase when your smart meter kicks in. This is not the way to conserve electricity. This is a way of just gouging the consumers. It's certainly not smart government—another example where this government hasn't had the ability to use its power for the betterment of the people as opposed to gouging them with electrical rates.

Talk about gouging: I go back to the Oakville power plant. The Oakville power plant is going to cost this government and the people of Ontario many hundreds of millions of dollars in cancellation fees. That plant is worth \$1.2 billion, and I believe, legally, that Trans-Canada Pipelines—the proponent that was going to build the plant—has the ability to recapture most of that money, if not all of that money. The government has failed to tell us how much the penalty is going to be, and the government knows full well that when there are voids in facts, rumours will fill the mill.

We have consulted with lawyers who are involved with these kinds of cases and they suggest that the minimum would be half the rate or very close to it; that's half a billion dollars. This is “billion” with a “B.” That's a lot of money by anyone's count. That's almost half the entire Ontario budget gone, wasted for naught, because George Smitherman put that plant in Oakville—the second \$1 billion, perhaps, that George Smitherman wasted. The results of the election next Monday will be interesting, when George Smitherman has proven himself to be incompetent at managing huge amounts of money, having wasted so much money on the eHealth scandal, having put this plant in Oakville. The people of Toronto, I'm sure, will consider these things when casting their ballots next Monday.

The Oakville power plant is one that's very close to me; it's close to my riding. Some of the constituents in my riding would be affected by it, and therefore I was very much opposed to this plant going in this particular location in Oakville. I was pleased when it was cancelled. What upset me was that it was approved in the first place

in such a precarious position. That was certainly not good government. That was indeed very, very bad government.

This government has never met a tax increase or a fee increase that it hasn't loved. We've talked about the OLG—it used to be the OLG and now it's Ontario Lottery and Gaming, OLG—and how much it cost to change that name. This government has found that there's a way, a clever and very imaginative way, to fuel the spending habits of Ontario's gaming people, those people who play horse races or gaming or lotteries, and that is to have online gambling and now poker lotto. You not only doubled the price of the 6/49 ticket from \$1 to \$2, but you brought in the Lotto Max one for \$5. That gets people's pockets emptier quicker.

The OLG bureaucracy has ballooned to over 20,000 people. To the backbenchers over there: Did you know that there are 20,000 people working for OLG? Does that surprise you? There are 233 executives with OLG making over \$100,000 a year—233.

Mr. John O'Toole: Publish the list.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Actually, the member for Durham, we do publish the list every spring, and we'll look forward to seeing whether that number of 233 increases next spring or decreases. But I don't know how OLG hires 20,000 people after back-to-back scandals at OLG and five—count 'em, five—CEOs. Premier McGuinty can't be trusted to oversee the expansion of new gaming programs, products and revenue streams. This Premier has not earned the trust of Ontarians to oversee that kind of increase in revenue streams.

As recently as June, the Auditor General confirmed millions more were wasted on perks and entitlements by OLG bureaucrats—millions more. As of last June, it was confirmed.

The Auditor General, the people's auditor, should be the friend of government. He comes in and points out those areas of the government—the government is a massive organization. The auditor is the one who comes and points out to the government, “These areas need your attention.” All too often, those areas are ignored by this government, and they were ignored again at OLG.

Let's be clear: Premier McGuinty's government simply needs more money to pay for his reckless spending and his bloated bureaucracies. The bureaucracy has increased in this province to the point where more than a million Ontarians earn their money, one way or another, from the taxpayers of this province. Our labour pool in Ontario is something on the order of seven million people, and a million of them are paid for through the taxpayers. That ratio should be very, very concerning to any government that wants to remain competitive in the North American job pool. That is something that this government should spend a lot of time on.

There were auto insurance reforms that took place. My goodness. Again, this government took the easy road. Ontario's families have already—their budgets have been stretched to the limit by the HST, hydro costs and now auto insurance. In auto insurance, people are simply

paying more and getting less. It's clear that Ontario families cannot afford this government anymore.

Families are already paying more for the privilege of owning a car with the 8% HST tax grab on gas. They're also paying for so-called insurance reforms, which moved some words around in Ontario's auto insurance legislation but failed to address the most significant problems facing the industry—problems such as fraud, problems such as frivolous litigation, problems such as ambulance chasing and attempts to game the system.

Those are the things that would bring costs down in a very real sense while providing good coverage. Those are the things that we did in 2002, when we brought in a new insurance act that actually reduced the price of insurance by about 10%, 11% in the province of Ontario while increasing coverage—or, at the very least, leaving coverage the same.

Real savings on auto insurance premiums for Ontario families start with cracking down on those who are cheating the system and running up premiums for honest, responsible Ontario drivers. How often, in your constituency offices, have you heard somebody come in and say, "I have been driving for 30 years. I have no accidents, I have no tickets and yet I am paying over \$1,000 a year for insurance." I've heard those complaints. You've heard those complaints. I see some of the backbenchers nodding their heads. They've heard those complaints—and there's another one nodding his head.

1630

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: We're nodding off.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: The member for Sudbury says he's nodding off. Well, nod off if you will, sir, but you should be paying attention because the people of Ontario are paying attention. They're paying attention to their electrical bills. They're paying attention to their insurance costs. They're paying attention to the HST. They're paying attention to all of the things that this government has increased the cost of. They are paying attention, sir; they are paying attention extremely well and they will let you know at the appropriate time how they feel about it.

Mr. Paul Miller: How do you really feel?

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: The member for Hamilton asked me how I really feel, and I can tell you that how I really feel is that I am very, very upset. I have sat in this House since 1995 and I have seen this province lose 25% of its manufacturing sector. I have seen this province become less competitive in the Great Lakes basin against states in the United States that are—even those states which are not doing very well we can't compete with anymore because of our increased costs. I've seen industry in this province be forced out of this province and go to other provinces or to another country. Once the heartland of industrial development, once the best province in Canada, the richest province in Canada, the most progressive province in Canada has ended up at the bottom of the pack, and I can tell the member from Hamilton that I am very upset about it.

He's nodding his head. He agrees with me on this. We come from different parties and we have different ap-

proaches, but we both have the best interests of Ontarians at heart and we're sickened to see what is happening under the reign of this government.

Not to mention one of the things that creates an environment where people can live within their means, creates an environment where businesses can thrive, creates an environment of prosperity in the province, and that is controlling one's debt. All householders know, all families know that if their debts increase, their standards of living will go down. The interest will eat away at the money that they can spend to improve their lifestyle. It is no different, it is not one bit different when you're talking about provincial debt. And what has this government done with our provincial debt?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Raised it up.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Raised it up.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Doubled it.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: They have raised it; they're on their way to doubling it. It took 23 premiers 136 years to accumulate Ontario's first \$148 billion of debt—\$148 billion of debt. That's what we had in 2003 when this government took office. Today, this government is on track to double that debt in two terms, in eight years. That is typical of a Liberal government.

Let's go back and look at the Peterson government. We won't talk about the debt of the Peterson government, but let's talk about the Ontario budget. Governments of Liberal persuasion love to spend money. Larry Grossman brought in the 1984 budget, and that budget was \$24 billion and change. Bob Nixon brought in the last Liberal government budget in 1990, and that budget was \$48 billion and change. From \$24 billion to \$48 billion; Peterson doubled the budget in this province in his term of office. This government is doubling the provincial debt in their term of office.

Liberals spend. Liberals can't help themselves; they spend. They spend more than they have. They spend up to the limit of the taxpayers' ability to pay. Finally, the taxpayers revolted in 1990 and elected Bob Rae, who today is a Liberal, but he was an NDPer then. What a place to go. That's how upset the people of Ontario were.

I sense that same upset, that same feeling of anger, anguish and frustration over not knowing how to control a government that's out of control. I sense that is there today. It will be interesting, a year from now, to see how Ontarians will react when they know that the largest tax increase in Ontario's history belongs to this government, the largest sales tax increase in Ontario's history belongs to this government, the largest deficit in Ontario's history belongs to this government, and the largest increase in our long-term debt in Ontario's history belongs to this government. That's not a trifecta; that's a quadfecta. That's four times—the worst four things in an economy that you can possibly do, and you win them all in Ontario's history. That's a sad day indeed for Ontario's families who have to finance this kind of thing that your government seems absolutely determined to carry out.

According to Stats Canada, the average university tuition in Ontario was \$5,388 in 2007. With an expected

5% annual increase, Ontario's university tuition will hit \$6,249 in 2010. This represents an \$861 increase over that two-year period—I'm sorry, \$861 per year. So, you're even taxing the university student. I've heard each of you say—if not in this House, you've said it privately—that the most important thing we can do is fund education. Your Premier even says that he wants to be known as the education Premier, but he's pricing it out of range of the average Ontarian family, which is already strapped with your increase in auto insurance, your increase in hydro costs, your increase in taxes, and your increase in long-term debt which is going to put a further tax on their children and on their children's children in the future. That's a shame.

The gasoline tax increase: putting tax on a tax on a tax. Not only do you tax gasoline 14 cents a litre, you also charge the provincial portion of HST, 8%, on that tax as well, increasing the price of gasoline in this province on July 1 by 8%, or approximately eight cents a litre—because it sells for around \$1 a litre—of that price of \$1.08 per litre, I think it is this morning. Without the HST, that price would be \$1. This morning, I filled up and I paid that extra money.

The electricity costs in this province: We've talked about those, and they're out of sight.

Property taxes continue to increase in this province. I know that's a municipal responsibility, but there's—guess what?—HST on property taxes now, which adds a further \$257 increase to property taxes.

Home heating costs are also subject to the 8%, the HST tax grab on home heating fuels. Families can expect to pay almost \$200 a year more in heating costs than they did last year.

All in all, this bill doesn't seem to deal a lot with smart government or good government. As you know, we cannot propose amendments to this bill during debate, but once Bill 110 gets to committee, I'll be considering an amendment that amends section 3 of the bill, its short title, to what it is really doing. We would amend it to call it the much ado about nothing act, or perhaps we could call it the Liberals have run out of gas act, or maybe Canada's worst government wasting Ontario families' time and money act.

1640

Of course, we shouldn't have to wait until this act gets to committee. I could just bring in a motion to amend section 3 right now to make the short name Canada's worst government has run out of gas act, if the House would give its unanimous consent for such a move.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): You're asking for unanimous consent?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: She has to ask the question first.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Is there unanimous consent? I hear a no.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Sorry, Madam Speaker; you caught me with a mouthful of ice. Thank you.

It's too bad that this government wouldn't call 'em like they see 'em. You can talk the talk, but this government fails miserably to walk the walk.

Madam Speaker, I would like to share my time at this time with the member for Durham, and I thank you very much for the House's attention.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole: The member from Halton and I share many things. In fact, our ridings are often referred to as the bookends of the GTA, he being on the west side of the greater Toronto area and me being on the east side with the riding of Durham. We share many geographical features. More importantly, I think, our interest on this bill—he summarized it quite reasonably and respectfully, I think.

I do think that the trivializing of an important bill like this—I want to frame my remarks around a couple of themes. This is an omnibus bill. Some would say that it's a bill that attempts to provide some housekeeping and reorganization of a number of statutes. In fact, there are seven sections in the bill, and those seven sections cover seven different ministries. It's a very technical bill.

I would hope that it's going to hearings. When I look at the legislative agenda, this was introduced on October 5. Shortly after that, the House recessed for the week after Thanksgiving and members went to their ridings to consult with their constituents. In fact, I brought this up at a couple of meetings I was at, and a lot of people had not heard of it.

Now, when we came back to the House, we heard from the minister himself that the opposition—that's Tim Hudak—and also the other side of the House had not requested a briefing. Well, it's passing strange to me that they would not have offered us a briefing and scheduled it at a time when members would have returned, which would have been yesterday, and yet this debate started yesterday. The Attorney General and his parliamentary assistant spoke on it yesterday, and, as has been said today by the third party as well—the NDP member said it was the much ado about nothing bill, meaning you have to refer to the statutes it's amending, and in the statutes it's amending, it uses words—a lot of it is sort of downloading responsibilities from a registrar of a college or regulating agency to any public servant, basically. That's what it says in the bill.

I'm going to refer to a couple of specific parts of the bill, but I'm going to preface it, as I said in my remarks, with this: I am cautious and worried, perhaps even suspicious, of why this bill is being introduced and rushed. I can assume—a person of good will and nature here—that it will go to public hearings and there will be time—not like Bill 191, where they truncated the hearings, the public hearings were more or less squashed, or it won't be time-allocated until people are able to digest this bill.

The section that I have personal responsibility for as critic is the Ministry of Government Services in schedule 5. Now, schedule 5, really, on the surface, doesn't have much controversy in it that I can see, but again I want to preface my remarks by being cautious and potentially worried. What's the rush here? Why are they bundling up this omnibus bill? If they time-allocate it, that's an even

further signal, as they've done with another bill this morning, Bill 65—shut it off.

Schedule 5 covers the Business Corporations Act—not so bad. The act currently permits a director to delegate his or her powers under the act to any public servant in the ministry. The act is amended to allow the director to delegate these duties or powers to any public servant employed under part III of the Public Service of Ontario Act. Anybody who is free that day can deal with it. Now, that troubles me. Where's the accountability? They always talk about transparency and accountability.

Let's review this: Under the Business Corporations Act, they allow the director, who is an employee of the public sector—no criticism implied—to delegate to any public servant under part III of the act. It goes on to say, "The act is amended to transfer seven regulation-making powers from the Lieutenant Governor in Council"—these are cabinet orders—"to the minister. The act is also amended to provide the minister with regulation-making powers to prescribe documents that are required to accompany articles and applications under the act, and to prescribe requirements for the execution of certain documents filed with the director under the act. The regulation-making power of the minister to prescribe forms and provide for their use is transferred to the director."

So what they're doing is moving the deck chairs around here on the Titanic. That's what I see here. Who's responsible? We'll have to have an inquiry to find out who is responsible for changes to many of these organizations.

The Limited Partnerships Act is another part under schedule 5 of the act. It says here, "The act is amended to transfer two regulation-making powers from the Lieutenant Governor in Council"—these would be cabinet decisions—"to the minister, and to transfer the power to prescribe forms and provide for their use to the registrar."

It goes on. There are changes here to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. This morning we discussed this, Madam Speaker, you would know, at our caucus. Most of us felt the same way—cautious, concerned, suspicious when you see it affects the Community Care Access Corporations Act, which is one of the things that we have in our ridings. Community care access centres—underfunded. Long-term care is one of them—underfunded. The Health Protection and Promotion Act—underfunded. Independent health facilities—underfunded. Laboratory specimen collection centres—underfunded.

A lot of these agencies really come under the purview of the whole eHealth mandate—integrating electronically. They've wasted \$1 billion on that already, and now you can't possibly trace when they're downloading these decision-making authorities to basically—I'm looking at the Sergeant-at-Arms. He can actually execute some of these orders. That's what it says here: any public sector servant. This is a highly regarded person with an esteemed background, but I don't mean to single out any individual.

I would say that you lose control of that. You must be sure that you have the right person in the right position

with the right training to make the right decisions. They're delegating this to anybody who is sitting around the table, by the sounds of things, in some of these complex areas.

The Ontario Mental Health Foundation Act: There's just been a great review by members of all parties on the unanimous consent motion to have a select committee. They just filed a report on the disrepair that mental health in Ontario is in. The system has completely collapsed, and here they are making changes here.

The Physician Services Delivery Management Act is in the Ministry of Health, and our critic, Christine Elliott, remains concerned. That's all I got from her notes here: She remains concerned.

I heard the Attorney General speak in the Parliament yesterday. They were using their phraseology about attacking previous governments. Look forward. Lead by leading, not by criticizing the previous governments of the last 10 years. They're back to criticizing everybody as far back as John A. Macdonald, basically.

1650

There's an act coming up tomorrow on pension reform. It's the "blame Stephen Harper" act. You're in government for almost eight years, some would say seven years too long, but nonetheless you are in government, you're responsible, and you're making decisions. Ask yourself, how is it working? Ask the people of Ontario. What I heard last week is that there's a great lack of confidence, shall we say, to put it politely, in Premier McGuinty.

Now here they are with this bill. Going back to the bill itself, Bill 110, it's primarily delegating decision-making, so you can't find out who made the decision; like, nobody is responsible for the eHealth act. George Smitherman resigned but—he left for other reasons, I guess. I'm not sure why. I come back to two themes I'm driving here today. I remain cautious, concerned, arguably suspicious: a government that announced the eco tax and a week later fired the minister, Minister Gerretsen. They appointed a brand new minister, who was just the carriage on the HST. Now the minister is not responsible. Now they've cancelled the tax, or at least they say they did. But, you know, I don't trust this, this retracking all the time and changing the channel. I think the people of Ontario are suspicious, concerned, worried. We have the largest debt in the history of the province, the largest tax increases. We're on a spending binge, and you ask yourself, is it any better in our long-term-care homes? Is it any better for the children's aid societies? Is it any better for the people with MS? Is it any better for people with disabilities? Is it any better for anybody in this province with the highest levels of unemployment in the country?

I remain worried and seriously concerned. This bill weakens the decision-making process even further in a time when we need to consolidate. The mood of this House, the mood of our leader, Tim Hudak, is that we've got to work together here; we've got to lead forward with a plan.

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: In fact, we've put plans on the table here. There doesn't seem to be a plan, not in energy—electricity prices going through the roof. As the previous speaker from Halton mentioned, name one thing that's not going up in price. Auto insurance, land transfer tax, medication, delisting services: I remain concerned and suspicious, and I can only say to you that the members on the other side, rightfully, are asking, "What's the plan?" I have to remind them that after eight years, you should know the plan. I remain worried now, after the comments I'm hearing from the government side of the House. I remain worried.

This bill is promoting, it says here, good government. I think it's promoting a weaker government, a fractured, restructured government, when they're allocating decision-making responsibilities to anyone under part III, as I said, of the act, and yet some of our critics here are just so anxious to speak on this bill that I have been more or less just fit in here this afternoon, because my part, section 5, my critic file, was quite small.

The government services thing—there's another thing they did. In the few seconds that I have left, government services, what they did—ServiceOntario is the new thing. They're going to make it more customer-friendly, and it will be closer to home. Do you know what they did? They've made it customer-friendly, all right. It's from 9 till 4:30, Monday to Friday, and for anybody who is actually working in this province—anybody who still has a job, that is, and isn't working in the public sector—why aren't they open on the weekend and evenings? What's wrong with that suggestion? That's customer service. But no—less government and more taxes.

I remain concerned, worried, suspicious. This bill is just one more example of: Can you trust Premier McGuinty? That's ultimately what this is about. You won't be able to find out who made the decision about the consultants or the fees or charges for certain things. I remain concerned.

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

Mr. Paul Miller: I have to agree with the members from Halton and Durham when they state their frustration with the lack of co-operation from the government committee members and their staff when you're in committee. If any bill is unpopular, they simply push it through by limiting debate, by calling for allocation motions, thereby limiting full debate in the House as well as public input. Good governments don't do things like that. Good governments don't retract legislation time and time again because they've screwed up. Eco fees are a perfect example.

I believe, in 2003, Mr. McGuinty promised not to raise taxes. Well, we're the highest-taxed people in Canada right now, and it's getting worse by the minute. The HST—a disaster. Hydro costs, heating bills—a disaster. The list goes on and on.

Good government: Good government listens to the people. Good government in committee allows the people to have their say. Good government listens to the

opposition and the third party if they have good amendments. I was in the seniors' bill committee and I believe we put in 91 amendments.. They only agreed to one housekeeping one, and there was a lot of good stuff in those amendments from the opposition and our party, the NDP. Did we get one? No.

Good governments listen. Good governments co-operate. As I'll reiterate, when I first got to this House, Mr. McGuinty stood up and said, "We're here to work for the people of Ontario. We're here to work together." Well, that wasn't true. It's partisan politics at its best. If it isn't theirs, they don't use it.

It really is sad. I feel for the people of Ontario. It's sad. This government is not co-operative. This government does its own thing. This government doesn't listen not only to us but to the people of Ontario. That's going to change next October.

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

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: It's a privilege, of course, to speak to the Good Government Act, 2010.

I think, just to introduce a little bit of clarity, hopefully, to the discussion here, first of all, the legislation eventually seeks to streamline and bring some consistency, and ultimately efficiency, to a whole range of issues. There's something on the order of about 70 different items, 70 different clauses, paragraphs affecting seven different ministries, with of course various issues, including the appointment of justices of the peace, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission, the Ontario Energy Board Act, the Business Corporations Act, the Ontario Mental Health Foundation Act, and others. So there's a lot of different provisions. I understand that most of them really are of a technical nature, ultimately, as I said, to help to streamline and make more consistent and perhaps make more internally logical the various different acts as they affect and ramify each other.

I was also a little bit taken by some of the comments from our Conservative friends and foes opposite with reference to the education initiatives of the government of Ontario. I think the Premier does very legitimately aspire to be the education Premier, not only as the father of graduates and the son of a professor and the husband of a teacher, but on the ground, the lived reality, the lived experience. We have higher and increasing graduation rates. We have 200,000 more post-secondary spots in the province of Ontario. Surely, that's not only province- and economy- but life-altering in terms of how this province goes forward in terms of its prosperity.

Of course, I was very proud to accompany the Minister of Education, very recently, when we opened another \$12-million facility within my own riding that's going to help with full-day kindergarten and other initiatives.

So when the Premier does speak about aspiring to be the education Premier, I think you really should give credit where credit is due, because that's our lived experience in Etobicoke North.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I wanted to thank the members from Halton and from Durham for their very thoughtful comments on this Good Government Act.

I really have to say that this Bill 110, An Act to promote good government—here we have a government that has been identified in the daily newspapers of this country as Canada’s worst government. “Canada’s worst government” is the label they wear, and now they’re coming up with a Good Government Act. Isn’t the hypocrisy of this Liberal government so evident? I really think that if this government was interested in good government, they would look and understand that 76% of the people in this province don’t want them anymore; that 76% of the people in this province say it is time for change.

1700

A truly good government bill would be a bill that announces the Liberals’ resignation from this House. That would truly be a good government bill: that they recognize the people have lost confidence in this Liberal government to actually govern with any honesty, any efficacy, any openness, any transparency. This government has been mired in scandals and debts, and everybody in this province realizes it’s a time for change. A good government would recognize the people’s will and step down.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Parkdale–High Park.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Just to pick up where my fellow speaker left off in terms of good government, and just to reiterate, for those who are watching, this bill is essentially a housekeeping bill that we’re debating. It essentially just tweaks other bills. We’re going to spend, quite frankly, hours and hours and hours debating this bill, which is interesting. Meanwhile, while the G20 was going on—this is a government that is now trying to pass a good government bill, that secretly dusted off an old regulation and essentially turned our city into a police state while the House was still sitting, and there was no debate about that at all.

I would say that not since the horror of the War Measures Act—which, I want to put on the record, was only opposed by members of the New Democratic Party—has any government acted with such deliberate callousness and nefariousness as this government, the McGuinty government, during the G20, and yet there was no debate in this House. But we can spend hours debating a housekeeping bill.

I ask you, is that good government? Certainly, thousands of people who have sent me emails say, “Absolutely not.” Thousands of people in all areas of the political spectrum said that this is not democratic, transparent government—a government that would act in such a cloak-and-dagger way that even their own backbenchers were upset by the actions of the cabinet.

This is not good government, and yet we have a housekeeping bill that will take hours and hours of this Legislature’s time. That’s the way this government works.

Why do they call it “Good Government”? There’s only one reason: so that they can use it in the upcoming election to say that the opposition voted against good government. Come on.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Durham has two minutes to respond.

Mr. John O’Toole: The member from Halton and I are thankful to those who were here and listening to the input that we provided on Bill 110. More importantly, I think that we both agree to summarize this bill—it’s an omnibus bill dealing with seven different ministries. It’s very technical—delegation of authority in many of the regulatory bodies in the province of Ontario, including health authorities. It’s worrisome in this time when we find all of the hospitals suffering; we find all of the clinics suffering; we find doctors are concerned.

What we’re saying here is, take it easy. We expect and trust that you will have consultations on this legislation. I know that our members on this side want to maintain the debate on this bill. I wait for the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, as well as the member from Thornhill. These are just two of the members who expressed grave concern and wish to put their remarks on behalf of their constituents on the record.

Those on the other side, the government side—I hope they don’t skip their rotation. That will be one more signal, one more sign that emphasizes the concerns I’ve expressed. What are they not saying?

A very technical bill needs to have more openness, more accountability, and more transparency when you’re making these kinds of changes that affect the lives of the people of Ontario, especially seniors.

So I remain concerned and cautious. We want to modernize government; who wouldn’t? But when you have a government that’s in reverse mode, not just on the eco tax, but the whole electricity market is completely messed up—let’s put it that way—I remain concerned that they’ve lost their way. This government has got a bill here, and somehow it makes me worried.

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

Mr. Paul Miller: Good government: When I read that title, I wondered what province I was in. It certainly wasn’t Ontario. Then I read the bill, and a light came on: another McGuinty ominous bill. The back—

Interjections.

Mr. Paul Miller: Yes, ominous. Ominous.

Mr. John O’Toole: Ominous bill; it is ominous.

Mr. Paul Miller: You got that, did you? Ominous—the back door to implementing distasteful legislation. Some of the legislation might be good, and I might be able to support it, but the omnibus bill tells me that there will be more articles that are offensive to my constituents than are helpful to anyone. It will almost guarantee that I cannot support the bill, and what does that do? What it does is it allows the finance minister or someone like him to get up and say, “That member and his party voted against this. Blah, blah, blah.” They do it every time. But what they don’t tell you is that the bill is not broken

down paragraph by paragraph or issue by issue. You either eat it or you vote for it. That's the choice, and then they always stand up in the House and say, "Your party voted against this." Well, the public should know that you have to vote for the whole bill. Whether there's 50 things wrong with it and two things right, sometimes you have to vote for the two things that are right even though there's 48 things wrong with it, because they'll say, "You voted against it." Pretty sad, isn't it? It provides the governing group with their stock question period answers: "You voted against it."

Like so much that comes from that side of the House—there's a cloud, a smokescreen—if the government really wanted to implement good government legislation, they could start with question period. I know it's not called answer period, but it also is not called weave, bob, divert, demean, degrade, and make personal attacks period. But that's what we get. Then, to top it off, we get mindless standing ovations and clapping—that's a bonus. Let's take a step back, think about what the people of Ontario deserve from their politicians and how we can provide that. Let's look at the procedures and how we can ensure that when we ask a question for a constituency, we actually get an answer. Even if the answer is, "We don't know," that can be followed up with a commitment to get the answer to the member within a set time frame so that he can tell his constituents what's going on. And we also ensure that we actually get the answer within that time frame, not asking for extensions or simply ignoring the question, which seems to be the norm around here. But perhaps my dream of a robust, cut-and-thrust, honest exchange in question period—perhaps I'm dreaming in Technicolor.

I've had several guests visit this Legislature for question period, and without fail I've heard comments like: "If this was high school, they'd all be in the principal's office," "That's appalling," and "That question was reasonable." When I came here, I hoped not to get involved in that, but I got dragged into it, and now I find myself doing the same thing they do—which is wrong, but we all do it.

If the government record is so bad that we're asking many questions on an issue, this group across the floor will respond to anything but suggesting ways to fix the problem—they don't. They just go on the attack. They don't talk about fixing it. But, again, I'm dreaming, I guess.

Another way of implementing good government would be the contents of the bills—that's very important. As I'll reiterate, on the seniors' bill, the NDP put in 91 amendments—91—from the nursing association, from user groups, from seniors' groups, from CARP. We put in all kinds of recommendations from all these organizations. We didn't think this stuff up. We represented the people and put it in. They didn't take one. All five Liberal members shot it down, and the only thing they changed was one little housekeeping thing that they had screwed up. So 90 amendments fell on deaf ears; 90 amendments weren't implemented. They went on again

with their time allocation and their "Push it through and who cares what happens after?"

1710

Each part of the omnibus bill can easily be separated out into individual bills, each of which should be able to stand on its own merit, but that doesn't happen. We don't deal with them on an individual basis. The first advantage of this is that the real issues can be honed in on for debate, public consultation and amendments specific to the unique set of issues of the day. It will also allow the opposition members to vote for the part of the bill that reflects the wishes of their constituents. But when you do it the way they do it and the way it's done around here, the constituents can't get it because they've turned down the amendments.

Of course, that would defeat the real purpose of the omnibus bill and expose the government to tighter security specific to each minister or issue. On that, I suggest that every bill be subject to at least two days of public consultation and that one day be away from Toronto, or that we implement an easy mechanism for written comments to be heard by the committee. Ontarians in the near and far corners of our province deserve the same opportunity to speak to their elected representatives as those in and near Toronto. If we could make these kinds of rules part of the standing orders, it would prevent the government, with its majority, from keeping the public away by not allowing public consultations. That would be a good start to good government.

I understand that this is the omnibus bill. Many amendments are largely eliminating references to acts or entire acts that are either outdated or were never proclaimed. If that was the sole purpose of the omnibus bill, perhaps it might have a role in good government. This bill purports to be the second Open for Business bill. If this is the principle for Open for Business initiatives of this government, initiatives to get Ontarians back to work, this is incredibly minor. If this is all the government has to offer for Ontarians out of work and out of luck, it's a pretty sad case. The NDP believes in a good job for everyone because a good job is the best way to ensure working women and men a share of Ontario's prosperity.

Ontario lost 350,000 jobs in the last recession. We've gained maybe 140,000 of those back, and most of them are in the service industry. Ontario lost 27,000 jobs last month. There is a job crisis in Ontario, and this bill does nothing to solve that problem.

Ontario's manufacturing and resource regions remain devastated. I shouldn't have to tell the members opposite how important manufacturing and resource jobs are to this province. I don't have to tell this House how important jobs are for the community I represent in Hamilton. Siemens is leaving; Stelco is in crisis; Procter and Gamble left; CIL Paints left; Otis Elevator; Inglis; Canada Works. The list goes on and on and on: 52,000 manufacturing jobs in the last 25 years out of Hamilton, not coming back. These jobs are just as important as any other jobs in the province. In fact, they were good-paying

jobs; they were middle-class-paying jobs. You could put your kids through school. You could buy a house. You could buy a fridge, you could buy a stove, you could buy a car. But not on \$10 an hour, and that's what they're creating—a society of \$11-an-hour jobs.

Then, 20 years down the road they're going to say, "What did we do? We got all these profits for these big multinational companies. They got their money. They came in and closed our plants. They went back to their countries. They did what they had to do. But who's going to buy the product now? Because nobody in Canada makes a decent wage." I guess that's counterproductive, the way I look at it. They're not going to have the money to buy the fridge, the stove, the car, the mortgage, because they'll be making minimum wage or a little better.

In the last 15 years in Hamilton they've gone to multi-tasking in the plants that are left. Multi-tasking means that they bring employees in for two years. They don't get benefits, they don't get the wage of the guy who has been there for 20 years—they get half, if they're lucky; doing the same work and getting half, with no benefits. Do you think that person is going to go out and buy that new Cadillac after all the money you've sunk into the car industry? No, because they can't afford it.

We're headed to a disaster in this province, and the sooner we wake up, the better. We're losing good-paying jobs left, right and centre. Our hospital costs are rocketing. Our welfare is up. Our social services are up. Why is that? Because all the jobs are leaving Ontario and Canada and going elsewhere so they can get cheap labour, produce the same products, and sell them back to us, the same stuff we used to make here.

Do you know, Madam Speaker, that we don't own one major steel mill in this country? They're all under foreign control. What does a foreign-controlled place do? It shuts down the competition. How do you shut down the competition? You buy it. US Steel bought Stelco. ArcelorMittal bought Dofasco. Sault Ste. Marie's was bought by a group from India. And they're so far, so good. But if things get tough, what are they going to do? They are going to go back to their countries of origin, keep their people employed, working at cheaper rates, cheaper labour, and close ours. Then we'll be buying the same steel that we used to produce from them.

I go down to the docks in Hamilton and I see steel from Brazil, steel from Romania. I see steel from everywhere else in the world but Hamilton, and we've got the two biggest steel mills in the country there. One of them is on idle, and soon they're going to lock out the employees there too, like they did at Lake Erie. That's what US Steel is doing. They came in here and made promises to the Canadian government that they would protect jobs and maintain a certain workforce, maintain production levels. They didn't do it, and what did the good government do? They let them get away with it. "We're going to fine you." Oh, great. They're going to fine you. While I've got thousands of people out of work, they're going to fine them, and no chance—it doesn't

look good at all that that plant is going to keep going, unless they get total concessions from the workers, move them back 35 or 40 years to a wage that they can't even exist on. That's what business wants: big profits, no benefits, no money. It's a sad story.

These jobs are not just important because manufacturing jobs pay an average of \$2.50 per hour more than the average hourly wage in this province. These jobs are not just important because in addition to paying better, these jobs also come with pensions and good benefits. This Ontario government and the Canadian government have turned their back on pensioners. Oh, they're fixing all the administration of pensions and they are saying who can run it and who can't and all that, but they're not sinking any more money into the PBGF. They're not sinking money into pensions. They are closing plants, telling people, "You're out of luck." You work somewhere for 35 years, and you're out of luck—out of luck. The guarantee fund—one major company goes down in Ontario and that fund that the government has is wiped out, wiped out by one corporation, gone. And they're going to guarantee a thousand a month for the rest of our lives? I don't think so. I think it would be dead in three years, finished, no money left, and those people would lose two thirds of their pension, two thirds that they worked 40 years for. It's disgraceful.

Mr. McGuinty likes to pretend that the current jobs crisis is limited only to manufacturing and forestry, but anyone who knows anything about the Ontario economy knows that manufacturing and resources represent the foundation of Ontario; they service our economy. If you have any problems in the manufacturing and resource sector, you should eventually have problems in retail, financial services and other areas. It's a rippling effect. No middle-class jobs, no money—everything pays. Secondary industries go out the window, financial services go out the window, and retailers and small business go out the window. I'm sure some of the people who have come from small towns know what it's like to have a strike in town. You have brothers fighting brothers, cousins not talking to cousins, scab workers going into plants. It ruins communities for years. That's good government? If this government would pass anti-scab legislation like they have in Quebec, half the problems would be solved, but they won't do it.

In fact, I believe that there are fundamental changes in the economy taking place that require innovative, activist governments—not sitting on their hands, but activist governments. Due to the global financial crisis and the failed federal and provincial policies, Ontario's economic foundation is threatening to crumble before our eyes, and I believe that the government must respond quickly.

1720

The NDP believes that government has to play an active role in protecting good-paying jobs and, when those jobs can't be saved, making sure that workers who have committed a lifetime to their employer are treated fairly and given every opportunity to return to the labour force in comparable jobs, not for \$11 an hour when you

were making \$30 an hour as a welder. You want \$30 an hour.

The McGuinty government doesn't believe in an activist government. They're reactive, not activist. Mr. McGuinty has stood on the sidelines, showing absolutely no leadership, while factories and mills are downsizing and closing, costing hundreds of thousands of workers their jobs, including attacks on their pensions and benefits. He's stood by and watched this all unfold, saying, "It's a global market. I can't do anything about it. It's global. I can't do anything about it." Absolute nonsense. How about a little Canadian protectionism, like they do in the States? What do you think Obama's doing? What is Obama doing? Protectionism. That's why all our jobs are going to the States and our steel is being shipped there and being produced down there.

I repeat: Ontario's economy is bouncing along the bottom of the barrel on Dalton McGuinty's watch because, quite frankly, Liberals think that the market must always be the final arbiter of which jobs survive and how jobs disappear—not true.

Interjections.

Mr. Paul Miller: Well, I'm here to tell you—

Interjections.

Mr. Paul Miller: You want to hear? I'm here to tell you that the NDP doesn't see things that way. We believe that sometimes the market works and sometimes it doesn't, and when it doesn't—and this is one of the times that it doesn't, in Ontario's economic history—when the market definitely isn't working, the government must step in, on behalf of hard-working men and women, and set things right. Don't keep riding the disaster train.

Here are just some of the policies that we have brought forward in the last two years. Here are some of the policies we've brought forward:

- a buy-Ontario policy that would ensure that streetcars, subways and buses continue to be made right here in Ontario, resulting in the protection of thousands of good-paying jobs;

- tougher plant closure legislation that would ensure that everything is done to prevent a profitable plant or mill from closing, in addition to longer advance notice and enhanced mandated severance;

- expansion of severance eligibility and an increase in advance notice in mass layoff situations;

- pension and wage protection that would make sure workers get every penny they're owed from their employer when their company becomes insolvent or goes into bankruptcy;

- the elimination of the HST on hydro, which would allow \$500 million to be put back into the economy and put people back to work.

These are just some of the constructive ideas we've put forward in the last two years, with the Ontario jobs crisis. And when it came to committee, when it came to this House—nothing. Dead. Silence. "We don't want to listen to it. We know better." How did you make out? It's not looking too good, is it? And every last one of them has been rejected by this government—every last suggestion.

I'm not saying that these ideas are the whole story, and I want to make it clear that we in the NDP will continue to look at new and creative ideas to deal with the unprecedented economic crisis in our province.

I could go on and on and on. It's just not right; it's not fair. I can guarantee you that the NDP caucus at Queen's Park will be doing everything we can to make sure that working men and women of this province are fairly rewarded for their hard work, and to put as much pressure on those folks across there as we have to to ensure that the provincial government will lend a helping hand, defend pensioners, defend the working people of this province and stop kowtowing to major industries, foreign-owned industries, and start doing a little bit of Canadianism, a little bit of protection for the people of Ontario—our province.

We are a productive society, we are a skilled society and we're also a proud society. But over the last seven years, we've been going on a downhill slide and we are at the bottom of the barrel.

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

Mr. David Zimmer: I've listened to the member opposite's comments. What he forgets about this good government bill is that government has two responsibilities when it's managing its legislation. One, the legislation should be easy to understand and easy to work with, so that people can effectively use the legislation for what it's intended. That's why there are a number of technical amendments that relate to making the legislation clearer and easier to work with.

The other big responsibility of a government is to maintain a strong and healthy economy. What is a strong and healthy economy? A strong and healthy economy is a jurisdiction where businesses want to locate, and here in Ontario we want businesses to locate and to grow. One way to attract those businesses to this jurisdiction is to create the context in which they can operate effectively and efficiently.

There is a lot of stuff in legislation that creates excessive paperwork, undue administrative burdens and all of those sorts of things. To the extent that we can rationalize that and clarify that, it makes this jurisdiction friendly to business. It makes this jurisdiction a place where business wants to relocate. If businesses come here, that means they hire people; there are jobs. If there are businesses and if there are jobs, there are businesses paying taxes, there are workers paying taxes, and those tax dollars come into the province. What do we use them for? Hospitals, schools, universities, child care—the whole host of things that makes Ontario the place that everybody really wants to live.

But we have to be vigilant, and we have to keep our legislation modern and current. That's what this is about.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Leeds–Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: It gives me great pleasure to respond to the address by the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. I appreciate his passion on the subject.

I've been here about seven and a half months, and it seems that this government has a real fetish for omnibus pieces of legislation.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Ominous.

Mr. Steve Clark: Yes, ominous omnibus pieces of legislation. It's funny, because, when you look at this act, Bill 110, An Act to promote good government by amending or repealing certain Acts, it's just an excuse for this government to use the words "good government" in a sentence. If I went out and took some of these documents to the average constituent in our riding and said, "By amending all of these acts"—and there's a whole whack of them here—

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Seventy.

Mr. Steve Clark: —70 acts—"this is what this government deems is an act of good government," they'd laugh me right out of the room.

Let's not forget that we've been in our constituencies for the last week. I know what I've been doing. I've been talking to many, many, many constituents. I've had a number of hydro bills dropped off to my office asking me whether that is good government, the increases they're facing. We've got a number of pieces of legislation—I was speaking at our local chamber of commerce and I had a number of petitions. My seatmate, the member for Sarnia-Lambton, has a bill that is waiting to go to committee, Bill 78, which deals with food banks and a tax credit for farmers. If that was part of this bill, I would see some of my constituents who'd think that's good government. Just by putting the words "good government" in the bill—that's a farce, because we all know that this is a housekeeping bill. It's ridiculous for this government—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Parkdale-High Park.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's a pleasure to get up after the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek. He speaks not only with conviction and passion; he speaks from experience working as a steelworker. He knows, better than most, probably, in this Legislature, what it is to make a decent manufacturing salary, a salary that will actually support a family, unlike what has happened in the last seven years in this province, which is that the middle class is emptying out, the poor are increasing and the wealthy are increasing. We are losing our middle class. That should be a cause for concern for this government, but clearly it's not.

I want to go back, though, to the point that I made in my last so-called two-minute hit, which was that this so-called good government bill that we're going to be spending hours debating in this House is really just a housekeeping bill that changes some minutiae of other bills, is given due process, but when this government in cabinet, in secret, dusted off an old regulation to turn Toronto into a police state, nobody even knew about it in this Legislature. We didn't know about it in this Legislature. Even some backbench Liberals didn't know what was going on. The police in my area didn't know what was going on. Come on. Short of the War Measures

Act, this was an egregious moment in history, about which I still receive emails. Thousands of people were arrested on trumped-up charges, with almost all of them released. Come on—not a chance to debate in it this House.

1730

This government should be ashamed, absolutely horrified and ashamed. In fact, people of good conscience should be getting up from their seats on the other side of the aisle and walking across to this side of the aisle on the basis of that action alone—if there were ethicality and morality on that side of the House.

That's good government. Good government is standing for principles and morality, not standing for the kind of charade that was the G20 in Toronto.

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

Mrs. M. Aileen Carroll: I was asked to speak on the Good Government Act. I can shift over to speaking to the G20 and fake lakes, but I think I might be found out of order. I'm not sure how the segue was made from there to this act by the member of the opposition, but it was interesting rhetoric to listen to.

Coming back to what we have been asked to debate upon, which is the Good Government Act, it is to build on the Open for Business Act. It is to modernize both language and intent. It is to see a number of acts through the implementation of 70 amendments, reduce the difficult language, bring clarity to the objectives of that legislation, and make them more user-friendly. I frequently find, at home in Barrie and in other places, that constituents find it very difficult to tackle legislation filled with, dare I say—married, as I am, into the legal world—legalese. By bringing clarity, by bringing this step two to the Open for Business Act via the Good Government Act, the government is going to accomplish just that.

Sometimes we need to pass legislation that some might deem not sexy, but nevertheless—it is technical in nature, but the outcomes are excellent and will be much appreciated by those who need to deal with that legislation. I think it's very easy and very comfortable to speak on behalf of that legislation. It's good work for us to do, and we're engaged in that.

I look forward to getting a little more positive response from the other side, although the interest in diverting is forever apparent in the Legislature.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Hamilton East-Stoney Creek has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Paul Miller: I guess I can make this short. The frustration is obvious on this side of the House from the official opposition, from the third party. It continues week in and week out. The frustration I see when I sit on the committees and the lack of interest by the government members, who half the time don't even read the submissions we put in—they don't even look at them. They don't deal with good amendments that come from our sources, who are good, hard-working people: the

nurses' association, steelworkers, manufacturing workers, seniors. We deal with CARP; we deal with them all. We talk to them all, and this is what they'd like to see. So they're just as frustrated. It might be the reason the polls are showing that 80% want a change of government, because they're not listening. They don't listen to us, they don't listen to our recommendations and they don't use any of our recommendations. This has been going on since I've been here.

When Mr. McGuinty stood up that first day and said, "We're here to work for the people of Ontario. We're here to work as a team"—a load of nonsense. That's not how this House works. They don't take good ideas from other people, and if they do get good ideas from other people, they wait for six months and pretend it's their idea and then bring it out. That's what they do, and that's unfortunate.

If the people really knew what went on in this House, they'd be lifting their eyebrows, for sure. It's amazing what's gone on since I've been here. I can't believe it's so dysfunctional. We could do a lot better, and I certainly hope the next government—

Interjections.

Mr. Paul Miller: I certainly know that the next government in this province has got to do a better job or we're all in trouble.

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

Mr. Bill Mauro: I'm pleased to have a few minutes this afternoon on the Good Government Act, 2010.

Before I begin those remarks, though, I want to just make a comment, if I can, on some of the remarks that were made by other members this afternoon. I've had opportunity to be around here this afternoon for most of the remarks that were made on this particular piece of legislation.

The member from Durham, when he speaks—and hopefully we'll see him back here again before the end of the day—has a wonderful capacity for making you smile no matter what it is that he says, even if what he is saying—how shall I phrase this?—deviates, perhaps, from what might be factual in terms of whatever it is we may be debating. In his remarks earlier, when he was speaking on the good government bill, he was talking about how it would have been easier for him or other members of his particular caucus to make comments on this particular piece of legislation had they been able to have been briefed or had they had time to have been better prepared.

It's my understanding that every effort possible was made to accommodate members of all parties, both opposition parties, when it came to briefings on this matter, and in fact I would remind the member from Durham, who apparently had challenges in that regard, that the members of the third party, apparently, had no such challenges. They were able to meet and be fully briefed on the matter before us here today. So I just wanted to say to my friend the member from Durham, who does tend to make me smile no matter what it is he

is saying, that apparently it was him and his party who were the ones experiencing those challenges, and that the third party did not have a similar experience.

The member from Halton earlier today as well spoke at length; he did, I think, about 45 minutes or so of an hour leadoff, and I congratulate him for that. That's not always the easiest thing in the world to do. Before he shared his last bit of time with the member from Durham, he spent a fair bit of his time, when he was speaking on the Good Government Act, speaking on the state of the economy in Ontario and the state of the economy in a more broad context. If I can, I want to focus some of my remarks today in the same vein, at least at the beginning.

When I came to this place in 2003, in that particular provincial election, I came here with two terms of experience on municipal council in Thunder Bay. I had six years of experience, and I think in 2003 there were 38 or more first-time members who came into the Legislature, and I recall that a significant number of that 38, if I've got that number right, came with municipal experience—previous, very directly, before the provincial election, municipal experience.

The reason that many of that number were here as former municipal councillors and so many of them had put their names forward for election in 2003 was that while they were on municipal councils in the province of Ontario, they were listening and watching very closely what had gone on with the government of the day: the Mike Harris-Ernie Eves government. As a municipal councillor for six years in Thunder Bay, I had very direct, first-hand experience as to what effect the provincial government could have on the ability of myself and my group, as a municipal council, to manage the affairs of our particular communities.

So, going into 2003, many of us put our names forward. We wanted to have an ability to impact what it was the provincial government was doing and how those actions could impact, potentially negatively or positively, the goings-on within our particular communities. The member from Halton spoke at length about that and the state of the economy. I want to put a bit of context around that.

My experience started in 1997 to 2003. We remember that in 1995, going forward for eight years under that particular rule of the Conservative government of the day, we witnessed in the United States at that time a very, very strong, robust economy. Given the fact that Ontario represents about 40% of the total GDP of Canada and given the fact that 40% of Ontario's GDP is export driven, the fact that we had a very strong and robust economy in the United States—our major and by far our biggest trading partner—the fact that we had a strong American economy obviously put the government of the day in a very good position for the Ontario economy to be doing just as well, as we piggybacked on what was going on with the United States.

1740

We also had at that time, which further supported the capacity of the government of the day to have a strong

economy, a 63- or 70-cent dollar; I don't remember exactly where it was. During the eight years, it bounced around a little bit.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Sixty-four cents.

Mr. Bill Mauro: But we certainly know it was significantly lower than it is today or when we came to government, through our seven years and counting of government. We certainly know that we're around par today. It has bounced around a little bit over the last year or so. We know that during those times, it was significantly lower; as low as 64 cents, my friend from Peterborough tells me.

Obviously, currency trading at 35% or 40% lower than the value of your biggest trading partner provides you once again with a significant aid to your economy, especially when you're export-driven.

We also know that back then the price of a barrel of oil was somewhere in the order of magnitude of \$20 or \$25 a barrel. I was asking around before I got up to speak today. Somebody told me that today it was somewhere in the order of \$78 a barrel, and we know it has been higher than that since we've been in government, since 2003.

So here's my point: In spite of all of those things playing very well in favour of the government of the day from 1995 to 2003—and remember, this is a party that loves to tell you that they can take care of your pocket-book, that they are the ones who can best manage the fiscal matters in the province of Ontario. In spite of having all of those factors playing in their favour from 1995 to 2003, the result was what? When we came to government—not a government number but a number given to us and the people in the province of Ontario by the Auditor General. In spite of all that I've just said over the last seven or eight minutes, we, as a new government in 2003, were left with a \$5.3-billion deficit during some of the best economic times that you were ever able to find in the province of Ontario.

With all of those things working for them as well as they possibly could have—I mean, how much more can you have working in your favour than a 63-cent Canadian dollar, a robust American economy and a \$20 price per barrel of oil? Still, under those circumstances, we found ourselves with a \$5.3-billion deficit when we came to government. Now, that's not my number, and that's not a government number; it's a number from the Auditor General. Yet over there they want to talk about the state of the economy.

He talked about the debt in the province of Ontario today. Yeah, we've got a debt. The Conservative government federally in Canada has the biggest debt in the history of the country, right? The biggest debt. Why is that relevant? It's relevant because if we ever had a government that was ideologically predisposed against running deficits or helping industry or raising taxes, it would be this particular federal government. Yet, during the economic times that we find ourselves in, they have run up something in the neighbourhood of a \$50-billion or \$60-billion deficit.

The point is simply that, yeah, we've got a big deficit here in year in the province of Ontario. But given the

state of the economy here in the province and in the country and in the world, described by many as being the greatest recession since the Great Depression, we made some decisions, and some of those decisions were to invest heavily in infrastructure. We did that. I can rhyme off example after example in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan where those decisions to continue to make major infrastructure investments have led to incredibly significant job creation.

The members opposite may have had a different approach. They may have chosen not to make any of those investments. They may have chosen to apparently try to keep the deficit number a little bit lower. But they need to then list for you, the people who are listening to this, what it is they would not have funded.

That \$5.3-billion deficit that we inherited in 2003 had other things that it's really quite hard to imagine could have been occurring, and yet we could come to government and still find that. Let me talk to you about a few of those things.

As I said, when we were in municipal council—how many people here came to this place in 2003 with municipal council experience primarily because they went through the downloading exercise brought forward by the government of the day, the Harris-Eves government?

They want to talk to you about not raising taxes; they want to talk to you about taking care of your pocketbook. But they conducted the biggest tax shift in the history of the province of Ontario, and they did it by downloading services onto the residential property tax base at the municipal level. They hid it. They want to tell you they didn't raise taxes. They shifted the taxes down to the residential property taxpayer, just like they did when it came to energy pricing, and I'll get to that in a little while. But they hid it. They played games with it. I was there on municipal council.

But they want to tell you, and they tried to tell you for a long time, that that downloading tax shift that occurred in the province was revenue-neutral. Well, we all know that was a bunch of nonsense. I know all kinds of roadways—little communities in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan, like Oliver Paipoonge, which have minimal tax bases and roadworks that are very, very large, because their geography is large, but whose tax base is small, and which are still trying to find the capacity to pay for the roads that were downloaded onto their smaller municipalities. They'll tell you it was revenue-neutral. Those communities are going to struggle forever with finding the capacity from their property tax base to pay for that infrastructure. We'll see; we've been helping with that in a significant way. But they'll try and tell you that it was revenue-neutral.

Well, then, let's ask them why, if it was revenue-neutral, did they set up a fund called the special transition fund? I can remember as a municipal councillor the work that we did to get our share of money out of that, and in the first year after we fought to get that fund, the city of Thunder Bay received \$7 million out of the special

transition fund—so much for revenue-neutrality. They found it necessary to backpedal a little. The next year, we got \$3 million, and then that was it. The fund was gone. So that much money on an annual basis for about 10 or 12 years has been left to the residential property taxpayers in Thunder Bay and every other municipality around this province to try and find off of their property tax base. That's what they did when it came to taxes, and I tie that back to the \$5.3-billion deficit that they left us after they had shifted away that much cost that used to be under provincial purview. That's what they did.

But it wasn't the only thing that they did. To try and hide that deficit—and the member over there started this one when he went down the road of businesses and debts and taxation—one of the other things that they did when they went down that road while they were still in government was sell provincial government assets. They knew that there was an election coming up, and so they tried to hide the debt and make it seem a lot less than it really was. Remember, this is in the context of one of the best economies in years in the United States, where the economy of Ontario is benefiting from that, and still all of this is going on. So the highway was—I'm not from the Toronto area; what was the number of the highway that was sold?

Mr. Jeff Leal: The 407.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Highway 407. Now, I've heard the estimated value of Highway 407 put as high as—

Interjection: Eleven billion.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Eleven billion? I've heard the estimated value put as high as \$11 billion. Potentially, that's what that highway cost or would have cost to replace. Yet the government of the day in—I'm not sure what year that was sold.

Mr. Jeff Leal: It was 1999.

Mr. Bill Mauro: In 1999, they sold it for \$3 billion. They sold for \$3 billion an asset that was deemed to be worth or the replacement value of which might have been as high as \$11 billion. It's pretty staggering to think why anybody would do it.

Well, the reason that they did it was because they were stuck. Even though we've got a red-hot economy in the United States, even though the economy in Ontario is percolating right along, following on the heels of that red-hot economy in the US, they still found the need to sell for \$3 billion an \$11-billion asset. They still found the need to download provincial services so that they could deal with issues like trying to pay for their tax cuts, and then it still went on. It still went on.

What else did they do? They emaciated ministry after ministry.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Natural resources.

Mr. Bill Mauro: MNR? I'm not sure how many MNR offices they closed. Somebody told me as many as 30% to 50% of them were closed. I'm reluctant to put that number out there, but I know it was—how many was it?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Two thousand staff.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Some 2,000 staff at MNR gone. I forget how many offices were closed, but it was a very

significant number. I tell my friend that it was a very significant number.

But I don't want to spend too much time on the MNR offices. What I want to spend a bit more time on is the Ministry of the Environment offices. What happened when they were trying to hide their deficit, when they were trying to pay for their tax cuts after they sold the 407, after they downloaded all of those services from the province onto the residential tax base? What happened when they gutted the MOE offices—another way to try and save a few bucks to pay for your tax cuts and to hide your debt and your deficit. What else happened when the MOE got cut? Directly linked, by Justice O'Connor, to the Walkerton crisis—not by the government, but by Justice O'Connor, another result of trying to hide your debt.

You say you're good at managing an economy? This is all tied back to that. It's all tied back to it; it's all part and parcel. Justice O'Connor made a direct link to the decision by that former government to emaciate MNR offices, but more specifically on this topic, MOE offices. People died. Six or seven people passed away as a result of that direct link, made by Justice O'Connor, when it came to the emaciating of MOE offices in the province of Ontario.

1750

Mr. Steve Clark: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: What's this got to do with Bill 110?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I remind the member to frame his remarks in the context of Bill 110.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Speaker, thank you very much. I appreciate the caution, and I appreciate the point of order by the member opposite. I would have expected that the Speaker might have had a similar caution to the member from Halton, who went on for quite some time when it came to discussing the economy in the province of Ontario. That's what this is all about. The decisions made by the government of the day were to download services onto the residential property tax base, sell government assets, cut back services like crazy, and try and hide a debt from us—

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: Madam Speaker, the member knows the rules of this House and is ignoring you and the rules, and that's not right. He's been chastised once, and we'll continue to do so.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): It's not a point of order, but I would remind the member to frame his remarks within the context of Bill 110.

Mrs. M. Aileen Carroll: Madam Speaker, we're talking about a bill here in the House, a good government bill. I sat and listened to the honourable member from Parkdale-High Park rant on about a War Measures Act. How is that—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I think perhaps we've touched a nerve.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, I sat here most of the afternoon and I listened very patiently to the remarks of the members of the official opposition and of the third party. The member from Halton spent a great deal of his 45 minutes or so talking about the business environment that exists in the province of Ontario today, and I'm simply doing the same thing. I'm comparing our record to theirs. Now, that member may not want to hear it.

That's ultimately what it's about, isn't it? We're Liberals on this side of the House, we've got Conservatives over there, and we've got the NDP over here. Within the last 20 years in the province of Ontario, all three parties have had the privilege of governing, and as we go forward into next year, that's what we're going to be able to do. We're going to be able to compare records. I'm very much looking forward to that. The member from Halton spent a fair bit of his time today doing that. That's what I'm doing now. I'm not doing anything differently from what he did for 45 minutes of his one hour. It's exactly what we're doing.

We're very, very pleased to have the opportunity to talk today, and I do appreciate the comments from my friends opposite. It seems like they don't want to be reminded about what happened when they were here. We need to put in context what has gone on while we've been in government, and I think one of the best ways we can do that is by comparing records. Yes, we've got a record from 2003 going forward to 2011; they had a record from 1995 to 2003; and they had a record from 1990 to 1995. That's going to be the focus and that's the way it should be. That's what people want. They don't want to hear these folks over here. I mean, that's fine. I respect the role of the opposition. They're going to get up and criticize us, and that's fair. I don't expect them to come over here and give us a pat on the back. But by the same token, they need to understand that from time to time the members of the government are going to do the same thing. We're going to get up and remind the people of the province of Ontario, as we go forward to October 2011, that they had a record. We're going to remind them of that record, just as they see it's their role to remind the people about our record. I'm comfortable with that. Let's bring it on, let's let it happen, because that's where we're going. You've got a record of eight years, they had a record of five, we're going to have a record of eight, and so let's play. That's what it's going to be all about. That is where we're going.

The Good Government Act of 2010 is exactly—I'll go back to the point I made earlier, as I have to close. I see my time is running down. The member from Durham, who ultimately did not make it back to the chamber—it's unfortunate that he didn't make it back here today; it would have been good to see him. He made reference to the fact that the members of the official opposition did not have an opportunity to get briefed on this particular topic. I just want to remind the people of the province of Ontario who are interested in this topic that, in fact, the members of the third party had no challenge with that

particular issue. They were able to avail themselves of briefings at length so that they could be prepared for their remarks today. Unfortunately, for some reason, the members of the official opposition found that they were unable to do that.

Speaker, I want to thank you for the time this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Questions and comments.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Really, when you look at this Good Government Act and when you hear that title—I know that the people of Ontario, when they hear the words “Good Government Act,” would be expecting a lowering of the cost of living. They would be expecting a lowering of the cost of doing business. They would be expecting a reduction in taxes. Will this Good Government Act reduce the cost of living in this province? The answer is no. Will it reduce the cost of doing business in this province? The answer is no.

I know in my riding we often hear this phrase now: that this McGuinty government is nothing but a tall, thin streak of misery in this province. That's what they've been doing with this province.

This is fluff and nonsense. It has nothing to do with good governance. It has nothing to do with good government. The daily papers have labelled this as Canada's worst government. We have not seen any improvement in openness and transparency, and we see a significant delegation of authority to unelected, unaccountable people, and more and more regulations being moved out of the Legislature, out of the executive council. We know the dangers of this, but this government continues to go down the same track. It is a track, like I said, where Ontario now is the worst-performing province economically in this Confederation, and we have the worst government—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Questions and comments.

Mr. Paul Miller: I must say that the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan did his homework. He had some good material. My frustration, and it will continue to be my frustration, is that they may have good material—and he presented it well—but unfortunately they don't listen to this side of the House. When I'm in committee, there will be five members—and I do remember a couple of members who are in here who walked out during our presentation, and there were several organizations in Ontario we were representing. They were playing with their BlackBerrys, didn't listen, didn't even want to deal with it, didn't want to deal with the seniors' bill. Ninety amendments, and they took one little amendment that they had screwed up—90 amendments they didn't deal with.

So when they stand up and criticize this side of the House—that's true, they may have their opinion. But in all fairness, he can't stand up and say that they listened to us in committee, that they take our amendments, that they deal with them. They don't. It's just a rubber-stamp. They take their marching orders. They do what the

Premier tells them. They don't even listen to what we've got to present, and they've missed a lot of good things.

Maybe that's why the people of Ontario have caught on and now they're at 80% bad-listed. That tells me that even the people who don't do this on a daily basis are starting to pay attention. I'll tell you right now that next year there's going to be a rude awakening. Day in and day out, we keep hammering and hammering, and I think it's finally coming home to roost. I think the people understand now. They know what we have to deal with. They know what our frustration is.

You can present well and, with all due respect, have research that suits your side of the argument, but it certainly isn't a good argument when you don't listen to the other side.

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

Mr. Jeff Leal: I certainly appreciated the very articulate comments that were put forward this afternoon by my friend the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

We heard a lot in this House that we should be listening. Well, if we had listened to the opposition and the third party, all those subway cars would have been built by Siemens in Mexico. But this member stood up for the CAW in Thunder Bay and made sure that those subway cars were going to be built by the people in his community, and not Mexico. These were the people over here who wanted to transfer all of that work to Mexico. Well, this member did his job.

Secondly, this member stood up when they were looking for ways to convert the coal-fired plant at Atikokan, to make sure that biomass would be put in place to fire that plant. That's been accomplished.

1800

This is a member who thoroughly understands what good government is all about. He was a very distinguished member of city council in Thunder Bay. He knows first-hand about all that downloading over eight years that effectively killed municipal government in the province of Ontario.

He fundamentally understands what good government is all about. He talked to the bill in very clear-cut terms about how things are going to be changed through this bill, the amendments to various statutes—he presented the case in a very effective, honest and forthright manner. So thank goodness we have the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, who can really take the time in this House to set the record straight, as he does time and time again.

He talked about the sale of the 407. I can tell you that the good folks in Madrid today are still drinking the pina colodas with the money that they're getting from the 407 sell-off. It was the biggest sell-off in Ontario political history, and thank goodness we have the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan—

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

Mr. Steve Clark: It's a pleasure for me to provide some comments to the address made by the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

I can appreciate that he mentioned his municipal experience. Way back when, when I had long flowing locks as a young child, I was involved in municipal politics, and I certainly enjoyed that. I remember when I was first elected, it was funny, because—we have a municipal election next week—we had a 60% turnover in that council back in 1982. It was one of those things that you really understand about consultation when you're part of a sweep on a municipal council, and you really realize, especially after you're knocking on doors and going to all-candidates meetings, what the public expects.

I just came through a provincial by-election in the spring. I knocked on a lot of doors, and I understand when we use the words “good government.” I mentioned in my address before the issue about slapping the words “good government” on a housekeeping bill. Over the time that I have been here in this House, over the last seven and a half months, I have to scratch my head. Bill 191, the Far North Act: I was on committee, and I remember that just before we broke everyone was excited because they were going to go up north. In fact, there was a lot of jockeying for position to try to take that gig to go up to the Far North to take part in that consultation. It didn't happen.

I find out on Monday—I was in the riding, meeting with some MS people, and I understood that I was subbed in on the general government committee for Bill 72—another fancy name, the Water Opportunities Act. It's funny that you have a hearing that day, on Monday, in the middle of a municipal election, when that bill affects municipalities so much. I understand that there wasn't a municipal person that made a presentation on Monday. So when you talk about good government, you need to add consultation. This bill is just another housekeeping bill for this government. Good government—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I want to thank the members from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, Peterborough and Leeds–Grenville.

I will say back to the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington that it's a bit surprising for him to continue to beat that same drum about whether or not this bill or any other bill is lowering costs for people in the province of Ontario. I would say to you, sir, that you gave up that ground about eight or 10 years ago when you brought about the biggest tax shift in the history of the province of Ontario, when you downloaded significant costs that will be there annually, year over year, onto the backs of residential property taxpayers in the province of Ontario. It was a significant cost to the residences in my riding in the city of Thunder Bay.

He talked about openness as well. Freedom of information and expanding the powers of the Auditor General are two things that we have significantly expanded. Your party voted against that, yet you stand in your place and pretend like those things didn't happen. I'm not sure why, because every time you do, you know

the response is coming that you voted against that stuff. We're expanding the role of the auditor, and we're expanding the ability of more organizations to be subject to FOI.

The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, I want to thank you for your comments. It is fair to say that we all wish that perhaps from time to time this place could run a little smoother and a little better, but I did think, while you were speaking, that there have been a couple of examples of some progress being made. We have seen a few private members' bills come forward jointly now. Maybe it's small steps, maybe it's baby steps, but there's been some progress, perhaps not as far as we all wish it would go, and sometimes all of us roll our eyes at the goings-on in this place. But it's perhaps an example of a small step.

To the member from Leeds–Grenville, thank you for your comment. You talked about the Water Opportunities Act and the municipalities not being there. You should know that this piece of legislation went through the AMO MOU table that we set up when we came to government. All legislation affecting them goes to them; this did as well.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Acting Premier. This matter will be debated now. Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Paul Miller: Yesterday during question period I asked a civilized question of the Acting Premier about Hamilton's community care access centre's reported \$12 million in cuts. I informed the House that these cuts will effectively grind the home care and long-term-care systems to a halt and force our hospitals into a tailspin and a crisis of epic proportions.

My concern for vulnerable citizens, the seniors of my city, was sincere, and I think it warranted an appropriate response from this government. Rather than address the immediate concerns of Hamiltonians, the minister reverted to the Liberal mantra of attacking the questioner and suggesting that because we did not support a government piece of legislation, we're somehow not representing our constituents. The Acting Premier knows very well that many pieces of legislation contain partisan bits that cannot be supported by opposition members. To use these politically motivated pieces of legislation as an answer to a question in this House shows a contempt for the people of Ontario who are represented by opposition members.

The Acting Premier also suggested that, "When it comes time, we will be back to the people of Hamilton, as the good representatives from Hamilton are today"—I'm assuming she's referring to the MPPs for Hamilton Centre and Hamilton East–Stoney Creek—"to tell them that those great institutions offering services to their community can do so because of the infusion of funding" by this government.

What that tells me is that more money will come to Hamilton in a nice little election-vote-buying package, not because the money should have been there at the outset and this government messed up the health file almost beyond repair, but because it might buy votes in Hamilton.

When I asked, "Will this government stop the shell game and actually address the root problem and funding shortfalls in Hamilton now?" the Acting Premier went back into the same rant without addressing the actual question.

It's time that this government began to answer the questions asked by opposition members. I've noticed that when one of their caucus colleagues asks a well-crafted softball question, the responses are more of a ministerial statement, so I guess they can't even figure out how to answer their own questions. It's time for this governing group to respond to the questions being asked on behalf of all Ontarians. It's time for an answer, not an attack. It's time to listen, not applaud, yell and drown out the representatives of the people with standing ovations and clapping. It's time for this government to come clean and give the people of Ontario what they want: honest answers to the questions that they're asking.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The parliamentary assistant has up to five minutes to respond.

Mr. David Ramsay: I'm pleased to be here to address the concerns of the member opposite. I want to start by saying that we have increased the budget of the CCAC: a \$61-million increase in funding, 73%, since 2003-04. Part of this is the aging-at-home strategy. Over \$93 million in the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN has been put toward this four-year local aging-at-home strategy that they're carrying on. We're going to ensure that the clients are provided with the care suited to their medical condition.

We're absolutely committed to providing more money toward community support services. In fact, proportionately we have increased funding to the community sector at a greater rate than hospitals, and we have seen significant reductions in the alternative-level-of-care rate in the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN as a direct result of our aging-at-home programs. I know the LHIN is working very hard with the CCAC to serve more and more clients.

One of the ways the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN and its hospitals are reducing the amount of time that residents spend waiting in the emergency room is by improving the discharge process for hospital in-patients and those designated alternate level of care. Over the past year, the LHIN has significantly reduced the

ALC acute rate, from 22.5% in April 2009 to 13.3% as of May 2010. This reduction means that more people are moving into more appropriate care settings rather than staying in hospital. It also means that more people who need to be admitted to hospital now have greater access to beds.

This success is due in part to the LHIN's assess-restore initiative. Assess-restore units provide an appropriate setting for patients to regain strength and functioning, to enable them to return home or to be assessed at a level of support needed. There are 92 assess-restore beds throughout the LHIN distributed across these locations: Brantwood Lifecare Centre in Burlington; Haldimand War Memorial Hospital in Hagersville; St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton; Brant Community Health Care System; and the Niagara Health System. The assess-restore program has been successful in enabling patients to return home, and the program sites report that approximately 80% of patients discharged from this program's beds go home.

As I close, I'd like to read to the member a quote from the Hamilton Spectator from June of this year. It says:

"Kudos to our local health integration network (LHIN) for bringing together health care professionals from inside and outside hospitals to integrate the approach to foot care in our area.

"The LHIN has pumped almost \$800,000 into two programs, accessible to those who are at risk and aimed at preventing the problems that can lead to foot ulcers and amputations.

"Most average citizens don't likely know what the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN is and what it does. In a lot of ways, that doesn't really matter. What does matter is that the LHIN is doing what it was created for about four years ago."

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1812.

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Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
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Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, M. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
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Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
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Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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Gélinas, France (NDP) Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Nickel Belt Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB) Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB) Jones, Sylvia (PC) Klees, Frank (PC) Kormos, Peter (NDP) Kular, Kuldip (LIB) Kwinter, Monte (LIB) Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB) Leal, Jeff (LIB) Levac, Dave (LIB) MacLeod, Lisa (PC) Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock Dufferin–Caledon Newmarket–Aurora Welland Bramalea–Gore–Malton York Centre / York-Centre Glengarry–Prescott–Russell Peterborough Brant Nepean–Carleton Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Marchese, Rosario (NDP) Martiniuk, Gerry (PC) Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina Cambridge London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB) McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB) Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP)	Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Moridi, Reza (LIB) Munro, Julia (PC)	Richmond Hill York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC) Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R (LIB)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB) O'Toole, John (PC) Oraziotti, David (LIB) Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC) Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB) Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB) Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre Durham Sault Ste. Marie Oshawa Kitchener–Conestoga Elgin–Middlesex–London Scarborough–Agincourt	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP) Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Beaches–East York Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB) Ramal, Khalil (LIB) Ramsay, David (LIB) Rinaldi, Lou (LIB) Ruprecht, Tony (LIB) Sandals, Liz (LIB) Savoline, Joyce (PC) Sergio, Mario (LIB) Shurman, Peter (PC) Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord London–Fanshawe Timiskaming–Cochrane Northumberland–Quinte West Davenport Guelph Burlington York West / York-Ouest Thornhill Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB) Sousa, Charles (LIB) Sterling, Norman W. (PC) Tabuns, Peter (NDP) Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Vaughan Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud Carleton–Mississippi Mills Toronto–Danforth Mississauga–Erindale	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB) Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB) Wilson, Jim (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex Perth–Wellington Simcoe–Grey	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC) Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB) Yakabuski, John (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
Jim Brownell, Kim Craiton
Bob Delaney, Garfield Dunlop
Phil McNeely, John O'Toole
Maria Van Bommel
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese
Laura Albanese, Toby Barrett
Bob Delaney, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Pat Hoy, Norm Miller
Leeanna Pendergast, Charles Sousa
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Helena Jaczek
Steve Clark, Helena Jaczek
Kuldip Kular, Dave Levac
Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti
Joyce Savoline
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Laura Albanese, Michael A. Brown
Donna H. Cansfield, M. Aileen Carroll
Howard Hampton, Ernie Hardeman
Lisa MacLeod, Leeanna Pendergast
Jim Wilson
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Reza Moridi
Bas Balkissoon, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Ted Chudleigh, Mike Colle
Christine Elliott, Peter Kormos
Reza Moridi, Lou Rinaldi
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi
Bas Balkissoon, Joe Dickson
Sylvia Jones, Amrit Mangat
Norm Miller, Yasir Naqvi
Michael Prue, Mario Sergio
Maria Van Bommel
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Shurman
Wayne Arthurs, M. Aileen Carroll
France Gélinas, Jerry J. Ouellette
David Ramsay, Liz Sandals
Peter Shurman, Norman W. Sterling
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**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
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin
Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal
Elizabeth Witmer
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

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