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Wednesday 27 October 2010

Mercredi 27 octobre 2010

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 27 October 2010

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 27 octobre 2010

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**BROADER PUBLIC SECTOR
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2010**

**LOI DE 2010 SUR
LA RESPONSABILISATION
DU SECTEUR PARAPUBLIC**

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 26, 2010, on the motion for second reading of Bill 122, An Act to increase the financial accountability of organizations in the broader public sector / Projet de loi 122, Loi visant à accroître la responsabilisation financière des organismes du secteur parapublic.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure this morning to add my voice to Bill 122. This is something I'm really passionate about: our public health care system, the need for accountability and the need for using every penny that is devoted to care toward care. I want to give the listeners this morning a little bit of a background as to how we came to have this bill in front of this House. I will be going through what happened when the Auditor General put out the report on eHealth and the lessons that were learned then about health care spending and accountability, and then the request that was made of the Auditor General to look into the use of consultants. Then, when the Auditor General tabled his report a couple of weeks ago, what did this report tell us? Then I'll go into what's in Bill 122—because all of this is linked together.

I also want to say that I'm sorry I missed the minister's lead and the parliamentary assistant's lead yesterday. I tried really hard to make it to Queen's Park, but there was fog in Sudbury for Monday and Tuesday that was just incredible. I spent a lot of time at the Sudbury airport, but no planes were coming in or taking off. Nobody was more surprised than my husband, actually, when at 10:30 Monday night I ended up back at home, because since 6 o' clock that morning no planes had come or gone. I ended up driving yesterday morning through the fog. It was a hell of a trip, but here I am. I did read

the Hansard of the comments that were made by the minister, as well as by her parliamentary assistant, and I will be referring to this in my remarks.

I want to bring us back to Ontario's Electronic Health Records Initiative, the report from the Auditor General. It was last year, at about this time of the year, actually, that this report was made public. It all started with kind of nickel-and-dime expenses. We saw things like consultants being paid \$3,000 a day but billing for a \$1.65 tea at Tim Hortons, or \$3.95 Choco Bites, or a \$30 car wash, billing for child care expenses—and the list went on and on. The eHealth report showed that we had paid \$25,000 of taxpayers' money for a speech. That's like hundreds of dollars a second for every one of those words that were said in that speech. After the eHealth scandal rolled out, we saw that the CEO was let go—not without a \$317,000 severance. But what we saw really was a long list that the Auditor General gave us of money—taxpayers' money—that was supposed to help health care, that was supposed to give us an electronic health record, that really did not give us value for money.

He talked about having 300 consultants at eHealth, versus 30 staff. This is a lot of consultants. He showed us that from 2002, the number of consultants had increased by 10,000%, to reach 328 by the time the report was done. We saw that some of the consultants had been on the payroll for six years. That looks pretty much like a job to me, if you've been doing the same thing for the same employers for six years. We saw consultants awarded \$1.3-million contracts; that was a consultant awarding contracts to his own company. We saw sole-sourcing by a consultant to hire 15 senior management positions. Millions of dollars were paid in untendered consulting contracts, and the auditor keeps showing us that there was very little to show for this; there was very little value for money.

He put down in his report a rigged bidding system where, although it looked like a bidding system was in place, they already knew whom they wanted to hire, and would hire those people no matter what. He showed us favouritism in the awarding of contracts. In one bid, a senior manager awarded a bid to a consultant whose bid was five times the amount of the next highest competitor, which was already much higher than the budget that had been allocated to this.

He showed us a revolving door between work at the ministry and work for high-priced consultants. If the rules of the ministry didn't allow you to get the money you wanted, you would simply open up your consultant

shop and be hired at the price you wanted, and you didn't have to bother with salary scales or value for money. It went on and on. We also saw a board of directors that had been hesitant because the CEO had been hand-picked by the Premier of this province.

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What do we have? We have, in Ontario, a province that is at the back of the pack when it comes to electronic health records and an auditor who is telling us that the value of this investment has not been realized—those are all quotes. Ontarians expect way more from their government. They expect way more from their health care dollars than what they have been getting at eHealth.

After all this was made public by the Auditor General for everybody to see, heads started to roll. We saw the Minister of Health lose his portfolio; the Deputy Minister of Health left; the executive director of eHealth left, although handsomely paid; the president of the board left. We saw an outcry from every Ontarian about what had been going on: The use of our taxpayers' money is not to make consultants rich. It made the headlines of the papers for weeks on end in every corner of this province. People were shocked; they were disgusted; they wanted change.

The government said they would implement the changes in the Auditor General's report. They were outraged as much as everybody else. They had done the honorable thing: The Minister of Health was gone, the deputy minister was gone, the chief of eHealth was gone and the president and half the board were gone. We were starting fresh. We had sent a clear message that the use of overpriced consultants was not to be tolerated in this province. The message was clear: "Health care providers, listen up: The money you get is for health care and nothing else."

That was last year. That was eHealth. In the midst of all this, I introduced a motion that basically asked the Auditor General to not only look at what had been happening in eHealth, but look at the use of consultants in other health care providers. It was brought in front of the public accounts committee—I happened to be a member of public accounts at the time; I still am. The motion, which passed at public accounts, asked the Auditor General to look at the use of consultants within other parts of our health care system, and the auditor went on and did his work.

He published another report, which just came out this last week, called Special Report on Consultant Use in Selected Health Care Organizations, October 2010. What do we see in it? The picture is not much better than what we saw at eHealth. We saw the use of public health care dollars that was completely unacceptable by whoever looks at it. There is no way to justify this. I will give you a few examples of what we found in the Auditor General's report.

We found that a \$275,000-a-year hospital consultant claimed \$97,000 in fees for other consultants and \$50,000 in administrative support services fees. Neither of those was in his contract. The consultant billed the hospital

twice for over \$7,000 relating to a salary bonus, foreign exchange fees and a Christmas luncheon. The consultant then expensed his accommodation cost of \$400 per night for three nights in Chicago, along with a \$500 hotel phone charge—that was a lot of phone calls. He expensed accommodation of \$510 per night on a second four-night trip to Chicago; accommodation at \$700 per night for five nights in Singapore; and dinners in the greater Toronto area, one costing \$300 for three people, including \$140 worth of alcohol, and another costing \$350 for three people, including \$215 worth of alcohol. This is all there for everybody to see. This is sickening.

How can this be happening? Those are health care dollars given to health care organizations to provide care to people who need it, and we're buying \$215 worth of alcohol through an overpriced consultant? This is mind-boggling. How could this be happening? We had eHealth. We already told the world that the use of consultants was not acceptable, that to wine and dine on the public's back was not acceptable, but it is still happening.

Another example: One sole-source consultant CEO earned a per diem of \$1,100 for an eight-hour day. The consultant billed for 250 days each year, meaning that he billed for every single weekday for the last three years, excluding statutory holidays.

"In May 2008, he received approval from the hospital for a one-week trip to Hong Kong to attend a business-related conference as an invited guest speaker. However, he added a personal one-week trip to Japan as part of the excursion. We noted that the hospital paid the consultant's airfare claim of \$7,800, which included the airfare for his personal trip to Japan, and also paid his fees billed for every work day during the month, which included the two-week trip to both Hong Kong and Japan."

How can you be paid \$1,100 a day as a consultant and yet be paid for your one-week holiday trip to Japan and bill \$1,100 a day as a consultant? This makes no sense. This is sickening. This is not acceptable.

A third example: One hospital sole-sourced a contract to a consultant without any documentation whatsoever. The total cost ended up being \$58,000 higher than the contract ceiling price, but there was no documentation to support anything.

Example number four: A hospital sole-sourced a consultant for \$398 an hour. This consultant ended up billing \$2.6 million to that hospital, with no fixed-ceiling price, and no specific project deliverables were ever established. The hospital agreed to pay \$398 per hour—this is more than people working part-time on minimum wage make in an entire week. This is what we were paying that person for one hour of work, with no deliverables and no cap on expenses.

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Example number five: One hospital didn't provide sufficient records and didn't obtain receipts because—get this—the consultant would have charged them \$3,000 to give them the receipts. Did everybody get that? He didn't submit any receipts and asked to be reimbursed, and the hospital reimbursed the consultant. When the auditor

comes in and says, “Well, you have to show receipts for all of those expenses,” the consultant says, “I will charge you \$3,000 to go get those receipts.” This is unbelievable. This is going on with taxpayers’ money right here, right now in this province under the McGuinty watch.

Another example: A hospital single-sourced a contract of over \$170,000 to a consulting firm to provide Workplace Safety and Insurance Board claims management services from June 2007 to May 2009. There was no documentation supporting the single-sourcing of the contract. Did we get value for money? We’ll never know. And at the time of the audit, the hospital could not locate a signed copy of this contract. We noted that the consulting firm continued to provide services to the hospital after the contract had expired, although nobody could find the contract. As a result, total payments to date have amounted to \$235,000, or \$65,000 over the original contract price, which was \$170,000, without any supporting documentation or proper contract renewal.

In this day and age, when the government has introduced new procurement rules after eHealth, we are still seeing sole-source contracts; we are still seeing consultants continuing to bill, with no deliverable. We are still seeing those kinds of examples.

The example of a LHIN, a local health integration network—those are new agencies in the health care spectrum—that single-sourced a \$716,000 contract, but a business case was only completed in the second year of the contract term—so basically, they started paying without having any idea of what would be the deliverable.

One hospital engaged a former management employee as a consultant within one month of the employee’s leaving the hospital at fees that total about \$240,000 annually, which was \$100,000 more than his previous salary. Can we see the old boys’ club in action here? A hospital executive leaves and then comes back and does the same thing for \$100,000 more? This is sickening. We all expect and deserve better care of our health care dollars.

The Ministry of Health gave preferential treatment to a bidder on a \$1,850-a-day contract and awarded a \$750,000 single-source contract. This is the Ministry of Health, the same ministry whose minister had to resign after eHealth and the deputy minister had to go. They all stood here in this House and said, “What happened at eHealth with the use of consultants was not acceptable.” They acted, the minister was let go, the deputy minister was let go, and then they turn around and do the exact same thing that led to the demise of the previous Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, exactly the same thing: sole-sourcing expensive contracts with no deliverable.

The list keeps on: One hospital awarded a contract based on a consultant’s proposal that skyrocketed from \$94,000 to \$210,000, even though the scope of the project, key deliverables, remuneration, ceiling price and timing were all absent. This is what I would call a pretty good gig. You sign on for a \$94,000 contract, you end up billing for \$210,000, you get paid and you have no deliverable, no ceiling price, no timing and no scope of the project. That means you pretty well get to do what you

want, when you want, at the price you want on the taxpayers’ bill; on the backs of sick people who are denied care in our hospitals. You get to do that.

A hospital prepaid a sole-source contract worth nearly \$400,000 to enhance employees’ leadership skills. Nothing wrong with investing into continuing education for your employees, but when we look at what happened with that money, it was not really getting value for the money spent. When a hospital hired three consultants as executives and paid them upward of \$300,000 annually, without a competitive process—do you know what that means? That means that they knew exactly the people they wanted to hire. Their internal policy would not allow them to pay that kind of money, so they hired them as consultants to do exactly the work of what an employee should do. And they really treat them like employees, because on their departure, one vice-president received termination pay of \$170,000 and the second one received termination pay of \$105,000. They also had access to benefits and access to what a regular employment contract would have given you at a much more reasonable salary. Let me give you another example: One hospital single-sourced a contract to a consultant, without any documentation or justification, that ended up costing \$58,000 higher than the contract’s ceiling price of \$264,000.

The whole list goes on and on. The Auditor General’s report has 32 pages. I gave you but 10 examples of what was in there, enough to give you a flavour of how we were not getting value for money; to give you the flavour that we live under a government’s watch that has allowed this culture of entitlement to bloom, to continue, to foster, to expand. It is okay to pay friends of the Liberal government to go and lobby their friends. It is okay to hand-pick consultants and give them lucrative contracts. All of this is disgusting. All of this is sickening. All of this needs to change.

The auditor makes recommendations. I want to read the recommendations because the government—I read the Hansard last night—said that they have implemented every recommendation of the Auditor General. I will show you what the Auditor General’s recommendations are and what we have in Bill 122, and to me, they are far apart. Some of the recommendations have been implemented. Some of them—frankly, it’s a stretch to think that what we have in Bill 122 meets the recommendations of our auditor. The Auditor General makes those recommendations: “To ensure that its consulting services are acquired and managed appropriately and economically, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care should make certain that its processes, decisions, and actions comply with the formal requirements as well as the spirit of the Management Board of Cabinet’s procurement directive.”

What does that mean in simple lingo? It means: Do what you’re supposed to do. We have procurement policies in place; follow them. We don’t have to reinvent them. The procurement policies that existed in Ontario before eHealth and that exist after eHealth are there.

They are good, according to our Auditor General—he knows a thing or two about accounting—but they are not being followed. All that the Auditor General is saying is, follow your own rules and things will improve dramatically.

Second recommendation: “To ensure that LHINs consistently comply with the requirements of Management Board of Cabinet’s procurement directive as it pertains to the engagement and use of consultants, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care should consider requiring each LHIN to provide its board of directors and the ministry with a comprehensive annual report on its procurement and use of consultants similar to the reports required by ministries. To help demonstrate compliance with the directive, this report should include information on the nature and timing of the assignments, the ceiling amounts of the contracts, the extent of follow-on contracts, the total amount paid, and how the consultants were procured.”

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This is clear. The Auditor General goes through and says the LHINs should report back to the ministry as to who they hire when they hire them, what did they do and how much did they cost. Give us the whole picture. You will see that in Bill 122 we kind of go in that direction with a vague statement that says, “They will be reporting,” but it falls way short of going through the detail that this reporting should have. The Auditor General took the time, effort and energy to put those down on paper because if you don’t have the whole story, then you don’t have a story at all. But what do we have in Bill 122? We have an intention of having disclosure, but we certainly do not have mandatory disclosure of the nature, the timing, the assignment, the ceiling amount, the follow-on contract, the amount paid, the procurement—we don’t have any of this. We have an intention that says, “There will be disclosure.” When, where, how, how much? Well, nobody knows.

This is where I see a bit of a disconnect. You cannot say, “We followed every recommendation of the Auditor General,” because the Auditor General’s recommendations are detailed. They are there to protect the public so that we get value for money. Then we get this bill that has one line with no details. It’s kind of aimed in the right direction, for sure, but there is room to get off target quite easily. Why not implement?

We’ve tried this before. We had eHealth. You tightened up the procurements. Even after that, we continue to see this blatant abuse of taxpayers’ money going towards consultants, going towards lobbyists, that everybody agrees should not be tolerated and should not be happening here in Ontario in 2010.

The third recommendation from the auditor: “To ensure that hospitals implement the necessary policies, procedures, and processes for the cost-effective planning, acquisition, and management of consulting services:

“—Hospital boards of directors should ensure that recent mandatory supply-chain procurement policies for goods and services are implemented and enforced, and

that open, fair, and competitive procurement processes are in place; and

“—Hospitals should track and regularly report to local health integration networks (LHINs) on their use of consultants in a manner that demonstrates their compliance with required policies and sound public-sector business practices.”

Here again, in layman’s terms, the Auditor General is saying that the hospitals will have to be accountable. They will have to show how they hire those people, who they hire, how much they pay them and what the deliverables are, and they will have to make that public and transparent so we have accountability in the system—a pretty strong recommendation. The parliamentary assistant yesterday said, and so did the minister, actually, that they are implementing each of the recommendations of the auditor—but only partially. They don’t say that part about “only partially.” All you see in the bill is that they will be reporting, but it doesn’t give the details that would allow us to have complete transparency and the accountability that every one of us desires.

Health care is such an important portfolio. It is such an important government service, and it is so big: \$22 billion for hospital services alone; \$42 billion for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. It is so big. We need transparency; we need accountability. Our Auditor General goes into great detail as to how you can have strong and robust accountability so that you get this transparency, you get value for money. In the bill, we see that they will be reporting by hospital, but it is vague; we don’t know when, we don’t know where, we don’t know how often and we don’t know what this reporting will entail. Why not implement, like you said you would? Why not implement the recommendations that were made by our Auditor General? We’ve lived through two of those reports showing us the exact same thing: the abuse of taxpayers’ money by overpriced consultants not giving us value for money.

The Auditor General is clear. He puts forward recommendations that will bring transparency, that have an opportunity to stop this process that has been allowed to flourish under the McGuinty government, but the bill only goes in that general direction. It doesn’t go far. It doesn’t give details. It allows for a lot of loopholes. The Auditor General continues and says, “The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care should discontinue the use of transfer payment funding to acquire consulting services for either its own or LHIN use and should assess the appropriateness of hospitals’ use of government funds to engage consultants to lobby the ministry and their LHINs for increased operating and capital funding.”

This is sort of the cherry on the cake, if that could ever be called a cake. I could think of other metaphors for what is happening, but let’s stick to that one for now.

The government gives money to a hospital to provide care to people who are sick. This money is used to hire lobbyists who are friends of the government so that—if they give money to friends of the McGuinty government, their friends go to the government, which gives the hos-

pital more money. No wonder they all fell over one another to hire lobbyists. It works. If you give money to friends of the McGuinty Liberals, you get money back. How could you go wrong? You give a little bit of money to their friends, and the government gives you millions of dollars.

Mr. Mike Colle: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member is impugning motive, and I think it's totally out of order for her to do that. I think she should withdraw her statement.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I think the member understands about impugning motive. Do you know what he means?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes, I do.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): We'd like you to refrain from doing that, okay?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I will be very careful.

I will stick to what the Auditor General says. He says that they "should assess the appropriateness of hospitals' use of government funds to engage consultants to lobby the ministry ... for increased operating and capital funding."

The NDP has done its own research. We have, on paper for everybody to see—go to our website—the list of 14 that disclosed to us—they don't have to; they voluntarily disclosed to us—that they paid consultants to go and lobby on their behalf. Those are hospitals that receive operating funding from this ministry; they take that money and hire consultants to go lobby on their behalf. I'm just stating the facts.

When we start to look at who the consultants are that they hired, the names that come up are names of people that we know. Why do we know those people? We know them because they used to be staff in Mr. McGuinty's office. They used to be the staff of some of the ministers. I'm guessing that if they used to work for them, it's because you get along pretty well. But I won't go there; I won't impugn motive. But the facts speak for themselves. We have 14 hospitals that have hired people who used to work for Mr. McGuinty—sorry; used to work for the Premier—or used to work for some of the ministers. They hire them, they give them money, and those people go back and talk to their old boss, because they used to work for them, and then their old boss, who happens to be the Premier or the minister, gives your agency money. This is a pretty good racket, don't you think? This is—

Interjection.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Sorry.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Withdraw it.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's withdrawn; absolutely.

Pretty good gig—is "gig" okay? It's a pretty good gig, if you can get it.

Anyway, the last part of the Auditor General's report is all about what the NDP had uncovered; that is, the use of lobbyists by hospitals, by universities and by other parts of the broader public service. This is something that I will talk about in greater detail once I get into the bill itself.

I wanted to really show the history of this bill. We had eHealth. We had the uproar that came after the Auditor General showed us a billion dollars that were spent on eHealth with very little to show for it. He showed us that, mainly through the use of consultants, we were not getting value for money. We were not getting deliverables. This is not to say that we don't need an electronic health record. I and everybody else who has ever worked in the health care system will tell you how good it would be to have a functioning electronic health record right here, right now in Ontario. Other jurisdictions have it and are reaping the benefits. We are, I would say, light-years behind them.

0940

We're just working on Bill 101 right now for the use of narcotics. If we had an electronic health record, a big part of this bill would not be needed at all. We would have a drug information system as part of our electronic health record. We would know who is prescribing narcotics, who is dispensing them, who is receiving them, how often, by whom etc., because this is what an electronic health record gives you. It gives you information. But we don't have any of this, and the billion-dollar eHealth scandal did not bring us any closer. But it rang alarm bells. It showed us that although eHealth meant well—they meant to deliver something that was going to be of use to Ontarians—they did it with no respect for the taxpayers' money. They did it in a way that allowed consultants lucrative contracts of a magnitude that is hard to wrap your head around, and all of this under this government's watch.

Then I asked the Auditor General to look at: Was it only at eHealth that consultants were misused? So he went and did a spot audit of hospitals and LHINs, and what he found was just as horrifying as what we had found under eHealth. I read a few of them. So what did the government do? They introduced Bill 122. Bill 122 is called An Act to increase the financial accountability of organizations in the broader public sector—nothing wrong with that. We all want accountability. We all want the taxpayers' dollars that go to health to actually be accounted for. As I said, a \$42-billion health care budget, \$22 billion going to hospital care alone: This is a lot of money. We want accountability, we want to know where this money is being spent, who is getting treatment for it; and if it's not for treatment, well, you have some explaining to do. This is what we have.

I talked about the value of trust. When eHealth came out, it sent a shockwave through the health care providers' community. Because of what had happened, it was shaking up people's confidence in our health care system. Our health care system is one of the cherished programs from the government in this province and all of Canada. We are all proud of our public health care system. One of the pillars of that system is trust. You have to trust your providers. What your health care providers ask you to do is often counter-intuitive. You have to trust them. But we trust them because they are part of agencies that we trust. They are part of a system that we trust that is there for us

to make us better, to help us heal in our times of sickness and to help keep us healthy. So when you shake the trust of any part of that system, you actually make our health care system vulnerable, and the health care providers reacted to this. They did not like that at all. They want accountability. They want people to have full faith, trust and comfort that their money is being used wisely to help them get better.

So, the Auditor General's report: I characterize it as an orgy of extravagant, high-flying spending on everything from exotic trips to gourmet meals to alcohol—all of this on the taxpayers' dime. I've read some of the details. If it didn't make you sick, then it's pretty hard to believe. It makes me sick and I've read the report quite a few times. This will lead more Ontarians to lose trust, and this is an awful price to pay.

We have a chance to do things better, but it is, at this point, a hard step to take. This government has been there for seven long years. All of what I read today went on under their watch. It is this culture of entitlement, as I called it, this culture of entitlement where it is okay—we see health care agencies that go into minute details when they buy a new couch. They will have three quotes, they will do the price comparison, they will be able to justify their decision-making to the last penny as to why they bought this, how they procured it and how they got value for money. But as soon as you go into the use of consultants, then all of this goes out the window: There is no more accountability; there is no more transparency. It's giving money to people whom you know because it brings—things that I'm not allowed to talk about in here, apparently, because I've been called on it.

So we have Bill 122. What is in the bill is that the broader public sector organizations—these are fancy words that mean hospitals, universities, local health integration networks: agencies that receive money from the government. They also include community care access centres, Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation, the Ontario Power Authority, the Independent Electricity System Operator, the children's aid societies, school boards, and every organization that received more than \$10 million in public funds in the previous year. We call them the broader public sector organizations. It's all of them. Those organizations will be prohibited from using public funds to hire lobbyists with that money. So if the government gives a hospital money for care, you cannot use that money to hire a lobbyist; or if it gives to a community care access centre or a local health integration network, a LHIN, or children's aid. The money that the government gives you, you won't be allowed to use to hire consultants.

It will require LHINs, local health integration networks, and hospitals to publicly report on the use of consultants. The problem is that it isn't clear what information the reports will include and whether they will be publicly available. I read for you the Auditor General's recommendations. In his recommendations, it is quite clear what should be included in that report, who should have access to it, the timing of it etc., but not in the bill.

The bill goes in that direction, but doesn't give you the details that the Auditor General has recommended should be included.

It will require LHINs, the 14 local health integration networks, and hospitals, 157 of them, to post expense claims on the website. Here again, very little detail. How agglomerated are they going to be? Are they going to be for all of the executives? Are they going to be per staff? Are they going to include the consultants who do work? The bill is very short on detail.

It will permit Management Board of Cabinet to issue directives requiring those organizations to comply with expense rules. Sounds pretty good. You will have expense rules and you will have to comply with them, but the bill gives no details, so we have no idea what those rules are going to be.

But remember recommendation number one from the Auditor General? Recommendation number one is that the procurement rules that existed before the eHealth scandal, that were tightened up after the eHealth scandal, are adequate. The Auditor General is satisfied with the procurement rules that we have. What is not adequate is that nobody follows the rules. So to say that we will now have organizations comply with expense rules, with no details provided, is a long way from answering the call of the Auditor General, who says that what we want is for everybody to follow the rules that are in place so that we have transparency and our money is used for what it's supposed to be used for.

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The bill makes it an obligation for those organizations to comply with Management Board of Cabinet procurement standards, and it allows Management Board to set guidelines for all publicly funded organizations. For the ones that are named, the ones that are bigger than \$10 million, the children's aid, community care access centres—those are the people who deal with home care—the local health integration networks or hospitals or universities, they will all have to comply. If you are smaller than \$10 million but receive government money, there will be guidelines.

There's nothing wrong with what is in those statements; the problem is, I guess, what is not in there. It's all fine and good to make rules, but the auditor tells us that we already have good rules in place, that the procurement rules that were there at eHealth were good but were not being followed, that the new procurements that were brought in after eHealth are still very good, but they're still not being followed. So we will make more rules. Will they be followed? I guess it's up to each and every one of us to decide on that.

The LHINs and the hospitals will have to prepare attestations demonstrating their compliance with the above provisions: a nice accountability step in there. There are some good things in that bill, and I have no problem pointing them out.

The bill includes the above provision in the accountability of funding agreements between organizations and the government of Ontario.

The bill allows the hospital board to reduce the compensation of senior management when the person has failed to meet a requirement under this act. In theory, that would mean that if a hospital executive does not follow the procurement rules, which means he hires sole-source consultants, hires one of his friends as a consultant, pays an amount of money that is agreed upon or not, does not follow the rules, does not sign a contract, does not go for three bidders, does not have clear, deliverable ceilings, timing, project-achievable, the board could reduce the compensation of the executive. If this ever happens in the province of Ontario, it will be a miracle.

The board signs a contract with their CEO. In that contract, the salary is included. To say that all of a sudden, boards of directors of hospitals, of universities, will be allowed to renege on a contract—we'll all be retired and our children will be retired by the time this makes its way through the courts. Because if you have a signed contract with somebody that says that you will pay him so much money to do that kind of work, and all of a sudden you reduce that compensation, you've just broken a contract. That doesn't usually fly too well, but I'll let lawyers argue that one out.

The bill includes hospitals in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act starting in 2012. This is something that I and every member of the NDP caucus have been asking for for a long time. There is so much resource—\$22 billion, remember?—that is being spent by our hospitals. What freedom of access of information means is that if you ask a question, the hospital will have to give you the answer.

Of course, this does not have anything to do with access to people's private medical records. There are laws in Ontario—PHIPA, it's called—that protect health information, and none of this would be accessible under freedom of access of information. What would be accessible, though, is: How much did they spend on consultants; how much did such a program cost; has there been an increase or decrease—any question you may have about hospitals, about universities, about community care. Sorry, this only goes for hospitals; universities are already covered.

Any question you have about a hospital, you will be allowed to ask under freedom of access to information, and they will have a duty to answer. You will only be allowed to go back to 2007, so whatever happened before 2007 will continue to be a secret for ever and ever, amen. But at least what happened after 2007 will be accessible under freedom of information, and the NDP thinks it is a good step. We certainly would have liked the step to be immediately followed by Ombudsman oversight.

Did you know that we are the only province in all of Canada, including the three territories, where our Ombudsman does not have oversight of hospitals? The people who are dissatisfied with the services happening in the hospital will go through the hospital problem resolution internally, and if that fails, it stops right there. The people are often not satisfied with the answer the hospital is giving them so they turn to the Ombudsman. The Ombuds-

man is the person who has the expertise to do that kind of investigation. He gets hundreds of complaints about our hospitals every single year, yet all he can do is tell those people that he's not allowed to investigate complaints into hospitals.

Why not? If you want true transparency, if you want true accountability, give the Ombudsman oversight of hospitals and put those issues to rest. By refusing to solve problems, you just allow them to simmer and become worse. If you would allow the Ombudsman to go to the bottom of things, to give people the answers that will bring them closure, then a lot of those complaints wouldn't even happen anymore. We would implement the changes that the people want in order to be satisfied with their hospital services. But this is not in the bill.

After 2012—it's important to note that the next election is in 2011, so it will be after the next election—we will have access to information in our hospitals from 2007 on. This is something we have been asking for and this is something that this bill will do.

Remember I mentioned that the first thing the bill will do is prohibit those organizations from using public funds to hire lobbyists? Well, there is nothing in the bill that will prohibit a hospital or a university or anybody else using non-public funds for consultants. Hospitals get 85% of their funding from the government, so in general, 15% of the budget of a hospital doesn't come from the government. To put that in perspective a little bit: 15% of \$22 billion. We're talking over \$3-billion worth of revenue that goes to our hospitals that is not covered by this law.

Three billion dollars hires a lot of lobbyists, or a very expensive one. One way or another, this bill doesn't cover a huge part of hospital budgets. In my book, \$3 billion is a lot of money, and I think in most people's books \$3 billion is a lot of money. It is not covered by this bill, so hospitals that want to hire lobbyists will continue to be able to do so. They will have \$3 billion at their disposal to do just that because the bill doesn't say that we're making the use of lobbyists illegal. We don't say that. We go kind of partly toward this in saying that, "Part of the money you get, you're not allowed to use that money to hire a lobbyist, but the rest of the money that you get, you can use as you see fit"—not exactly the robust recommendation that we had in the Auditor General's report; actually, far from it.

So you see the disconnect, where we have a minister who says, "We have implemented each and every one of the recommendations in the auditor's report," and then we have recommendations like this? A bit of a disconnect. In theory, there's a \$3-billion gap in this law that would allow the paying of a lobbyist—and a consultant, I suppose.

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What makes up that 15%? Well, in hospitals you usually have things like parking fees, you have a little bit of fundraising, you have research funds, you have pharmaceutical funds, you have money coming in through paying for private accommodations etc., the sale of every-

thing from crutches to fibreglass casts to everything else you can think of that we or insurance companies pay for when we go to a hospital. This is not considered public funds. It amounts to \$3 billion, and it is not covered in this bill.

As I said, the Auditor General recommends specific guidelines and obligations on reporting. There are no specifics in this act. There is intention of goodwill, the intention that we will have to report, but no details as to what will be reported—so same thing.

The consequences for contravening the act are weak, especially in terms of reducing hospital executive pay. That would be at the discretion of the board, because the way it works in Ontario is that our public hospitals have boards of directors. Those boards of directors are made up of people who live in the community, who support their hospitals and come together usually once a month to talk about governance. They also have one employee, and that's the executive director or the CEO—they have different titles in different hospitals—and then the chief executive officer, executive director etc. is responsible for everything else that goes on in the hospital.

So in theory, the government transfers the public money to the board, the board hires one employee, who is the CEO, the executive director, who then delegates the day-to-day operations of the hospital to that person. Here again, the employment contract that exists between the board and the CEO is just that: a contract. To say that all of a sudden you will be able to change it—I have doubts about this. As I said, there's the fact that the hospital won't be included under freedom of access until 2012. I realize it takes a little bit of time to let you know how to answer that kind of request. Maybe we could have done that a little bit faster, but apparently it's not to be.

I see that I'm running out of time. What I've really tried to do today is focus on a series of events that have happened since this government has been in power. We have seen this culture of entitlement to taxpayers' money and not getting value for money. We've seen this continue, grow and flourish to the point that it became disgusting to read report after report of lucrative contracts that you can't even wrap your head around. Those are taxpayers' monies that are supposed to be used for care, that are supposed to be used to get people better, and we see them going to rich consultants so that the rich can get richer on the backs of people needing care. The whole thing is disgusting. We've seen this with eHealth and, since the new report of the Auditor General, we've seen this in hospitals and in local health integration networks.

It has to change; we all agree it has to change. The message has to be clear. It has to be understood. It has to be acted upon. So what do we get? We get a minister who shows that she is disgusted, who says that she doesn't want to see this continue, but then puts forward some good ideas that lack details and that don't bring us the transparency that will be needed.

We need more than just a wake-up call, because the wake-up call was done with eHealth. A billion dollars? That was the wake-up call. It looks like, right after it

faded off the front page of the paper, everybody went right back at it and continued to give money to well-connected insiders to do work that did not, in the words of the auditor, bring us value for money. We didn't get our money's worth out of those people. They got paid for way more than what they worked for. This has to change. This bill, Bill 122, has some good accountability measures, but there are a lot of half-measures in it that won't bring the transparency we want.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Mauro: I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes to respond this morning.

I think it's important to remind those who are following this particular piece of legislation on television how it is in fact that we got here today and where we're at as we've discussed Bill 122 over the last little while.

We had a request from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, which asked the Auditor General if the Auditor General would look into the LHINs and the hospitals and do a value-for-money audit on those particular institutions, which the Auditor General went off and did. He provided his report. We came back and we are here now discussing it. The legislation before you is in response to that work by the Auditor General.

I think it's important to remind people in the province who have an interest in issues related to transparency and accountability that that request from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts would not have been able to have been made if our government had not, some time ago, given the Auditor General the powers and the authority to go to the hospitals and go to the LHINs and conduct those investigations. Heretofore, he couldn't have done it, but our government gave him the authority and the power to do it. That's why we have the information that's before us and that's why we're more than happy to accept his recommendations.

I've got a long list of things here that I could recite about what we've done as a government around transparency and accountability to improve it and to move the yardsticks forward, but I'll rhyme off three that aren't usually on people's lists.

One, as we go into elections now we'll never see what happened in 2003 happen again. People are going to know the state of the finances of the province before an election. We did that. Now you'll know. We won't be taxed with a hidden deficit that people say isn't there.

We brought in fixed election dates. We don't necessarily think about that as a transparency issue. Talk about giving up some authority, some control, some power so that people know when an election's coming. We brought in fixed election dates.

The third one I would mention as well in response to the member of the third party is that after the 2003 election, that party was not even officially recognized, based on the number of people that were elected. We changed that. We gave them a budget and we gave their leader a \$30,000 raise so that they could be there and shine a light on what they felt was important to their constituents.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments? The member for Ottawa–Orléans.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Nepean–Carleton.

It's a pleasure to respond to the hour-long leadoff speech from my colleague from Nickel Belt.

I want to first congratulate her, because she takes to this place a desire to do what is best for her constituents and for her political party. We may not be in the same one, we may come from different parts of the province, but I certainly appreciate your comments and the heart that you put into your job.

I share many of her concerns with the circumstances that have taken place in Ontario over the last seven years under this Liberal government, which has seen \$1 billion squandered which should have been going toward eHealth records but sadly ended up being spent predominantly on Liberal consultants and went really nowhere. Of course, now what we're talking about is a bill in reaction to eHealth 2.0, where Ontario's hospitals and local health integration networks have been essentially forced to pay for lobbyists to speak to insiders at the Ministry of Health and in the minister's own office.

Again, we've got very serious concerns in the Progressive Conservative Party, and we will not be supporting this legislation unless they adopt the Truth in Government Act, which was introduced by our party last May, within it and put forward amendments and adopt them. If you will recall, that bill would have prevented many of the abuses that the auditor had uncovered in his most recent report.

Again, in conclusion to where the Progressive Conservatives stand, there is no support for this bill unless those initiatives are adopted, and to my colleague from Nickel Belt, I want to thank her again for what she's doing here.

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The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's my pleasure to speak following my colleague from Nickel Belt, who I think surveyed the landscape that we're dealing with, a landscape in which a small number of people are going growing very wealthy off a system that we need on a daily basis to ensure the health of people in this province.

My colleague went through the abuses of eHealth, of consultants working for hospitals and the weaknesses of this bill. There's no question that eHealth was a wake-up call to the practices that are going on on the part of this government, and when that wake-up call was heard, the Premier rolled over and hit "snooze," and things went on.

I want to correct the version of history put forward by the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan. It was the member from Nickel Belt, in that standing committee, who pressed for the inquiry by the Auditor General to give us the information that we have today. Let's be very clear: She was the one who made sure that these problems were brought to light.

I want to speak about her comments on the bill itself. If you look at that bill, you'll note that public money

can't be used for lobbyists, but if a hospital has non-public money, it can use that. And if you've worked with accountants, if you've heard of fun with numbers, you know that money can be shifted around to cover a multitude of sins. The way this bill is written, it will give certain small steps forward around access to information, but in terms of curbing lobbying, this bill is not going to be adequate to do that. This bill needs to be substantially strengthened to actually deal with the abuses that we've seen.

The health care system is at risk. It needs protection. This bill needs to go much further.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments?

Mr. Mike Colle: I just want to re-emphasize that this is quite a comprehensive bill. It's going to, essentially, prohibit various activities by lobbyists in 259 classified agencies across this province, like the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, Cancer Care Ontario, community care access centres, hospitals, school boards and universities. This is quite wide-ranging. There's never been anything this wide-ranging in this Legislature. So this is unprecedented, really. That's why I urge everybody to support this legislation.

Also, in listening to the member speak, it's sort of very unnerving because I know the incredible demand on our hospitals—I've got one of the world's finest geriatric care hospitals in my riding, Baycrest hospital—the incredible pressure our hospitals are under because of our aging population.

We can't paint all hospitals and all agencies as not doing their very, very best to deal with people who are coming into their care every minute of the day, 24/7—the pressures they have to have adequate staff, support services, the facilities, the maintenance, the crunch for money, the volunteers. Baycrest has about 3,000 volunteers. The hospital administration, the hospital board of directors—the board of directors is all done pro bono. These are excellent men and women who have incredible pressures to take care of people, to find the money, to work with government. I want to put that into the perspective of all this. We can't paint all hospitals with one brush, that they are all bad.

There are too many lobbyists, but at least let's remember the incredible work done by our hospitals—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. The member for Nickel Belt, you have up to two minutes to respond.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'll start by thanking the members from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, Nepean–Carleton, my colleague from Toronto–Danforth and the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

I spent 25 years of my life as a health care provider. I believe in our public, accountable health care system. I support it. You will hear me say all the time that I am really proud of the health care system we have in Ontario. It is the envy of a huge part of the world. What we have is a jewel, a jewel that is worth protecting. But

when problems happen that shake the confidence of the people of Ontario in our health care system, then I react.

I am a politician. For the last three years, I have been a politician. I became a politician because I want to continue the work that I have done before to protect our health care system. I see this—what happened at eHealth, what happened with the latest Auditor General's report—as a wake-up call to us all. We, as politicians, have a role to play to ensure that one of the pillars of our health care system, which is the trust, the confidence, that the people put in it, is protected and maintained if we want to protect what we cherish so much, which is our health care system. We have a job to do here, and how do we do this? We do this by having transparency and accountability measures that give results.

When I read Bill 122, it is sheepish. It goes in the right direction, it talks about the right things, it is broad enough, like the member said, but it doesn't give us the foolproof accountability that we want, and this is a serious flaw.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Pursuant to standing order 8, this House is in recess until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 1016 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's my honour to welcome to the House today Jim, Keelin and Eileen Lawlor, who are the parents and family of page Kieran Lawlor, and who are, for those who follow the history of the Legislature, related to Mr. Pat Lawlor. Welcome to the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Joining us today in the Speaker's gallery will be Georgina Bencsik and one of her mentees from the University of Toronto, Megan Townsend. Welcome to Queen's Park.

There being no further introductions, it is time for oral questions.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order. You can stand down the leader's question. I'll go to your first member's question.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PREMIER'S RECORD

Mr. Norm Miller: My question today is for the Premier about his lack of leadership. Time and again, Premier McGuinty fails tests of leadership. He said nothing that stopped backroom Liberals from a nasty whisper campaign against the Ombudsman. He spent millions of dollars on consultants after he told Ontario families that he had fixed the problem. The ministry didn't listen to

him. LHINs and hospitals don't listen to you. Liberal-friendly consultants like John Ronson at Courtyard, Will Falk at Accenture and Laurie Lashbrook don't listen to you. A year later it happens again, and you refuse to name names of Liberal-friendly consultants who got rich.

How can Ontario families have confidence in your leadership when you've stopped paying attention?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: This is a matter that we've had the opportunity to speak to on a number of occasions now in this Legislature, and I'm pleased to address it once more.

I want to remind my honourable colleague of a specific finding of the Auditor General, when he said, "Party politics" did not enter "into the awarding of contracts." I would encourage my honourable colleague to carefully weigh those words. I know that we can—and it's understandable and predictable—have differences of opinion, but this was a specific finding of fact made by an objective, independent expert, a third-party House official. He's a legislative officer. I would draw that again to my colleague's attention.

There was a real issue out there with respect to LHINs and hospitals when it came to the appropriate use of taxpayer dollars. We've addressed that by putting in place new rules, which we hope will have the support of my honourable colleague.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Norm Miller: Premier McGuinty has been coasting on cruise control for a while now. A year ago he said that ministers and top agencies have to post their expenses online, but he doesn't post his own, so neither do they. He defended sex classes for six-year-olds before admitting that he hadn't even read the curriculum and didn't know what was going on. He disappeared for weeks when the police raided his government. He left the public confused about his secret G20 law.

A recent study calls you Canada's worst Premier when it comes to fiscal leadership: dead last in the country. What will it take for Premier McGuinty to start showing some real leadership?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm always open to advice, some of which I even solicit. What I can say is that it's no secret that not everyone in the country supports what we've been doing here in Ontario. There are those who oppose the fact that we've hired 10,000 more nurses. There are those who oppose the fact that we've hired 2,900 more doctors. There are those who oppose the fact that we've hired back water and meat inspectors. There are those who oppose the fact that we're building 18 new hospitals. There are those who oppose the fact that we're building 400 new schools. There are those who oppose the fact that we've hired thousands of new teachers.

There are many who oppose the kinds of investments we've made on behalf of Ontario families, but I can tell you that when I speak to Ontario families, they very much support those initiatives, which improve their quality of life.

CONSULTANTS

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le premier ministre.

The eHealth scandal should have been the last that Ontario's families saw of their precious health care dollars squandered on sweetheart consultant deals, but last week's Auditor General's report found that consultants at hospitals and LHINs were lining their pockets while families were losing front-line services. Why won't the Premier call on the Auditor General to audit the rest of the hospitals?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm very grateful for the work that was completed by the Auditor General. If my honourable colleague feels that he ought to pursue this further, then she is, of course, free to suggest that to him, but I continue to repose a tremendous amount of confidence in the Auditor General and his findings. Should he feel that his findings warrant that he take it further, then that's up to him.

We have acted on the basis of all of his recommendations. We are adopting them in full and wholeheartedly. More than that, we're taking it a few steps beyond that, to go beyond hospitals and LHINs into the broader public sector; to make sure that precious taxpayer dollars are devoted, as much as possible, to front-line services. That's what our new Broader Public Sector Accountability Act is all about.

I was very disappointed to learn this morning that the official opposition will not be supporting this legislation. I certainly hope that the third party will, in fact, be supporting it.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Accountability is what everybody wants. Transparency is what everybody wants, so that instead of paying \$275,000 in severance pay to inside consultants, families in Ottawa and families in London could have had 9,000 hours of home care for their loved ones. To make sure that health care dollars aren't being wasted on insider consultants, why won't the Premier ask the Auditor General to investigate spending at the other hospitals he didn't already look at?

1040

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I know my honourable colleague understands this, but I think it's worthy of me saying it nonetheless. The Auditor General may have confined his investigation to a specific number of hospitals, but the new law that we seek to put in place will have application to all our hospitals. It will govern the behaviour of all those who work inside those hospitals, and the LHINs, and beyond that into the broader public sector. I encourage my honourable colleague to understand that.

Again, as I say, I was disappointed to learn that the official opposition will not be supporting this latest in a series of measures to heighten accountability and transparency. I hope we can count on the third party for their support in this regard.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Let's be clear: The Auditor General discovered that health care dollars were squandered in every one of the 16 hospitals they looked at and at the three LHINs that they looked at, but there are 157 hospitals and there are 14 LHINs. Instead of sole-sourcing a contract at one hospital for \$1.1 million, we could have hired 12 more front-line nurses in Sudbury or in Hamilton.

So many questions are left unanswered. By looking at all of the hospitals, you would discover patterns; you would discover they're not all the same. Why is the Premier refusing to call in the Auditor General to investigate the other hospitals?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, just so we're clear on the record here, the reason that the Auditor General has authority in the first instance to look at hospitals is because we gave him that authority. That was opposed by the third party and it was opposed by the official opposition.

We're on this now. We are dealing with it through the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act. Again, I say to my honourable colleague, I ask for her support and the support of her party.

One thing I did want to mention, on a very happy note: This morning, I took the opportunity to celebrate the fact that one million more Ontarians now have access to a family doctor. Since 2003, if you break it down, we have found a family doctor for 16 more Ontarians every hour. That's moms and dads and their children. That's a significant step forward. I think it represents real progress, and we're proud to be able to do that.

CONSULTANTS

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est encore pour le premier ministre.

Ontario's families have a right to know whether their public health care dollars are being diverted away from front-line care. They also have a right to know which consultants benefited by those sole-source contracts and deals.

Will the Premier release the names of the consultant firms investigated by the Auditor General for everybody to know and to see?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think I've had an opportunity to speak to this on a number of occasions—just now, in fact. I do want to remind my honourable colleague of what her colleague from Timmins—James Bay argued in 1996. He said, "That the Provincial Auditor should have a duplicate role of going in after they've already been audited to do it all over again to make sure that proper policy has been followed ... I say is wrong. It is not the job of the auditor to determine what public policy should be and how it's being followed."

What he was doing is arguing against the introduction of greater authority for the Auditor General when it comes to hospitals. We've given that authority to the auditor. We've done that notwithstanding the objections

of the third party. I think he has done a great job for us, and we're acting on the basis of all his recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France G elinas: We all agree it is not the role of the Auditor General to make public policy, and it is not his role either to determine who should be fired in this last scandal.

What I'm asking the Premier to do is to make good on his word to be transparent, to be accountable. These are public dollars that were frittered away on booze, on expensive meals, on ritzy hotel rooms in Singapore. People have the right to know the names of those consultants who benefited. The money could have been spent to reopen closed emergency rooms, maybe, or get people out of the hallways at Sudbury Regional Hospital or the Thunder Bay hospital.

Why is the Premier talking transparency yet continuing to protect the identity of the consultants who squandered millions of precious health care dollars?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague says she is in favour of progress when it comes to health care for Ontario families, but their party voted against returning standards to long-term-care homes. They voted against funding to reduce wait times and hire nurses. They voted against lowering drug prices, not only for the government but for Ontario families who aren't covered by a drug plan.

We believe that having a strong health care system in place is very important to our families, and that includes, as necessarily part and parcel of that, ensuring that those precious tax dollars are translated as much as possible into front-line services, and that's what our new legislation is all about.

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

M^{me} France G elinas: What is happening right here, right now, in Ontario is important. The Premier talks the talk but refuses to act. We need to go to the bottom, we need transparency and we need accountability so that the trust we need for the health care system to survive will be there. Yet he refuses to share those names.

There is a \$3.7-million sole-source contract. That is 90 long-term-care beds that could have been provided. That would make a dent in an ER waiting room, wouldn't it? If the Premier is serious about accountability, if he is serious about transparency, then he has to walk the talk. He has the right to share with us the names of the consultants who cashed in on this latest scandal. Will he do it?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague won't take yes for an answer. We are moving ahead with the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act. We chose to act. She talks about walking the walk. We walked the walk; I think it was about a half-hour after we received the report. We introduced a new bill in this Legislature. We look forward to the support of the member opposite and her party when it comes to this.

What we're saying to Ontario families is that we completely agree that we should work as hard as we can

together to ensure that their precious health care dollars are translated as much as possible into front-line services, whether that's nurses or doctors, drugs or diagnostics, hospital beds or long-term care, whatever is needed to meet the needs of Ontario families when it comes to ensuring they have access to quality health care. That's what we've always stood for as a government and that's what we're going to continue to stand for through our new Broader Public Sector Accountability Act.

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. On February 14, 1992, you said, "When you serve as a minister of the crown, special standards apply."

Yesterday, Premier, I asked you about serious allegations made by your hand-picked Minister of Research and Innovation. Despite six opportunities, you refused to comment. I'm going to simply ask you to tell this House whether you personally believe that the minister's comments were appropriate and meet the special standard that you once said you believed in.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague knows that the minister has offered an apology. I believe it is sincere; I believe it is earnest. My honourable colleague raises a serious issue. I accept that.

I think my honourable colleague also understands, on the basis of his experience in politics, that from time to time, we, all being human beings, can slip. We can get carried away. We can say things that in hindsight we regret. The minister has acknowledged this. He has offered a full, sincere and earnest apology.

I think it's appropriate now for my honourable colleague to accept that. I think it's time for us to move on. It's time for us to find a way to work together with those who were newly elected in the municipal elections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, here's the problem: It was not an apology. The right thing would have been for the minister to offer a clear and unconditional apology. You know that was not an apology, I know it was not an apology, because we now see the minister's own response.

Instead of doing the right thing and clearly apologizing, the minister raises a new set of outrageous and baseless accusations against me and the Ontario PC Party. Premier, you know that this is beneath the dignity that families rightly expect from a minister of the crown.

Premier, I need to ask you: Did you speak directly with the minister before he released his latest statement?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'll refer this to the minister.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): That is not a point of order. The Premier has the ability—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The question concerns the conduct of a minister, The Premier has referred that question to the minister, and the minister will have the opportunity to respond to his conduct.

Minister.

1050

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I offered an apology yesterday for the word used on Twitter. I should not have used the word. I should not have used the word in reference to the Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister or the mayor-elect of the city of Toronto. I have apologized. My poor choice of words has distracted us from a substantive issue. The real issue for me is the use of homophobic smears in the final days of this week's municipal campaign.

We experienced three days of unrelenting, hateful, homophobic attacks posterizing the neighbourhoods gay and lesbian people live in; mailouts denigrating the characters of my friends, my neighbours and their children; and attacks on the radio on the legitimacy of gay and lesbian families. We have come, in some ways, in fighting for the equality of all in this province. I can only hope that all of us and all of our colleagues—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, obviously my question was to you: if you had contacted the minister before he released his latest statement, which contained unfounded, outrageous and insulting allegations about me and the Ontario PC Party.

Last night, you made a statement yourself on Twitter that said that the high road is always the best. But your minister furthered his attack with new insulting and absolutely unfounded allegations. His new statement was not in the heat of the moment; it was a carefully crafted public statement, and it was the furthest thing from the high road.

As Premier, if I had a minister who didn't apologize clearly and unconditionally and do the right thing, the minister would no longer sit in my cabinet. Premier, will you do the right thing?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: All of us in public life have an obligation to speak up when we hear or see homophobic attacks and smears. I've regretted the words that I've used. I walked the streets of my neighbourhood and I saw posters, and my family and my friends received flyers that I never have seen before. I used a word that I should not have used, and I have apologized very clearly. People do not—

Interjections.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: We should not let that distract us from the real issue. Young people are killing themselves because they are unable to deal with the homophobic experience that they go through every day in schools. We, as elected officials, should be speaking to them so that we get—in the new program it gets better. We must stand up against homophobia.

Mr. Speaker—

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

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier: The problem is that in his non-apology, your minister has basically in-

sinuated that the PC Party—members of my team—are behind this type of garbage. That is an outrageous accusation for the minister to make—

Mr. John Yakabuski: And continues to make.

Mr. Tim Hudak: —and the minister may be continuing to make it in his media interviews.

The minister, further, last night was on Twitter and talked about how he was celebrating, wining and dining with venture capitalists in Montreal. I understand it was the minister's birthday, but I think that this reflects a minister who did not learn from this experience, is hardly humbled and is not sorry.

I would ask you Premier: Could we have a clear and unconditional apology from the minister for the accusations that he continues to make about the PC Party?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think the minister has made a couple of things very clear: first of all, that he regrets—

Interjections.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think the minister has made a couple of things clear. One is that he regrets the language that he used. Secondly, he feels very strongly and very passionately about an issue that should be important to all of us. I would encourage my honourable colleagues opposite to recognize that and understand that. There is no intention—I want to make this clear—on the part of our government or any member of our caucus to in any way assign fault or blame or use innuendo or any such thing to malign, defame, slander, undermine the official opposition. I want to make that perfectly clear.

There may be an opportunity for us today to actually come together and to make a statement that I think is important to all Ontarians.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, I'm pleased that you took my question there and expressed the sentiment. The Ontario PC Party obviously condemns this type of garbage in municipal campaigns and elsewhere.

Here's the issue: Your very own minister in his non-apology basically makes allegations, sets innuendo and lowers the bar even further by daring to suggest that anybody on our team, anybody in the PC Party, would be behind this type of garbage.

Premier, the minister should have done the right thing and apologized clearly and unconditionally initially, and he should apologize for the further smear tactics and innuendo that he put out in his non-apology. Will you call for that proper, clear apology?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think I've been pretty clear in terms of articulating the view of our government. I think that my honourable colleague should take some time to consider that. I consider the matter closed.

I think it's an opportunity for all of us to reflect on how important it is to be prudent in terms of weighing in on matters of public policy. I think it's an opportunity for us as well to understand that what weighs heavily on the minds of Ontario families today are issues like their health care, their education, economic anxieties that they may be feeling. I think we need to find a way to address

those. More than that, we need to find a way to address some of the concerns that are going to be raised by our newly elected councils around the province. I think that's what Ontario families would ask us to focus on. I think that represents progress on our part, to find ways to address those kinds of issues.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, I want to bring closure to this issue. There is one way to rightly do so. If the minister had clearly and unconditionally apologized, the matter would be closed. But instead of apologizing, the minister continued to spread innuendo about our team and the Ontario PC Party.

Premier, I'm going to ask you very directly if you agree with the minister's latest accusations, that anybody on our team here across the floor was behind that garbage at the end of the Toronto municipal campaign.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think I've been pretty direct on that; I've been pretty clear on that. I just don't think it's helpful to dwell on it. We are at our best, on behalf of Ontario families, when we fully respect each other, and I think that's what we're called upon to do now.

There has been a transgression, a slip on the part of one of the members of my cabinet. There may be some people in the world who never slip and never make mistakes, but I have yet to meet any of them. I think the minister has done the right thing. He has apologized. I think our shared responsibility now is to find a way to work together on behalf of Ontario families.

TAXATION

Mr. Peter Kormos: To the Premier: Can the Premier tell us why he imposed his HST on Canadian Legions' poppies and wreaths?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In fact, it has not been imposed. I wrote to the Royal Canadian Legion last week saying that we will refund the provincial portion of it. It does require a change in federal regulation. I've had a very good discussion with the federal finance minister, and I believe the regulation will be changed so this won't occur again.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Kormos: When will the minister be writing to homeowners and apartment dwellers across Ontario and telling them that he will remove the HST from their electricity bills?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This is coming from a member who increased taxes on Ontario's people 56 times. He raised the sales tax.

His counterparts in Nova Scotia got elected saying that they would take the HST off of energy, and what did they do? They raised the HST. That member says one thing one day and does another thing when he's in government. That party has no principles, no plan for a brighter future for Ontario. We're about creating jobs—600,000 net new

jobs—for the people across Ontario, including Welland. Where do you stand and what's your plan other than to drive the recovery back into the ground because of ill-conceived and misunderstood economic priorities?

1100

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Bill Mauro: My question is to the Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. We all know that our province has come through some difficult economic times. Some people estimate that as many as 30 million to 40 million people lost jobs worldwide.

Specifically, we know that lower mineral prices have had an effect on the state of the mining industry in Ontario, and especially in the north, where most of our mines are located.

Despite some of the tough times facing the mining industry, we know that recently there was good news that happened concerning the reopening of a mine. Can you tell us a bit about why this mine may have reopened?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I thank my colleague for the question. I know he's just as happy as I am, as we all are, about this very good-news story. Indeed, the mine that my colleague is referring to is North American Palladium's Lac des Iles mine, which is about 100 kilometres northwest of Thunder Bay. I was able to attend the reopening on October 13, and let me tell you, the workers and the community are incredibly happy about this, and the company as well.

This reopening means that about 200 employees and contractors are going back to work, with a significant number of them working from Gull Bay First Nation, which has developed a very positive relationship with North American Palladium.

The president of North American Palladium, Mr. Bill Biggar, was very clear about his company believing that the life of the mine can be extended for about another 10 years. That's really in large measure because, even while they had to shut it down for a period of time, they carried on putting dollars into their exploration program, which allowed them to move the mine forward, reopen it and keep it going for another 10 years.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Mauro: Minister, thank you for that great news. I do understand that it looks like this mine has potentially another 10 years of life left in it at least and that there may be more major investment coming on the construction side of things in that mine as well.

While this is great news for the company and the community as well, I'm wondering what role our government had in ensuring that North American Palladium wanted to stay in northern Ontario to do business. The cost of doing business in the north, as everyone knows, is higher, and some companies view this as a disincentive. Will the minister please tell us a bit about how our government has created some incentives for these mining companies to stay in the north and what specifically we did to encourage North American Palladium?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you very much again for the question. He's quite right: The president of North American Palladium, Mr. Biggar, made it clear that indeed our northern industrial energy rate program that was announced in the 2010 budget was significantly helpful in terms of the reopening of the operation, as well as other incentives we've been able to provide. We've got some great good-news stories in terms of the mining sector all across northern Ontario, which we're excited about.

When we look at the northern industrial energy rate program, this is a three-year program—\$150 million a year, \$450 million over three years—which will work out to provide rebates of two cents per kilowatt hour, which in essence reduces electricity prices for these companies by up to 25%, making a substantial difference.

We had a previous program, as members will know, related to incentives for the forestry industry. The great thing about the northern industrial energy rate program is that it's now been expanded to the mining sector as well, which is making a huge difference in reemploying hundreds of thousands of northern Ontario residents.

AGENCY INVESTIGATION

Mr. Steve Clark: My question is for the Premier. It is rare for a government to be raided by the police. The McGuinty Liberals were raided at least four times as part of two criminal investigations. On July 15, police raided the offices of the Ontario Realty Corp. as part of what was reported in the media as a corruption probe. My question is, how many more criminal investigations are there against the McGuinty Liberals?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Infrastructure.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I thank the member for the question. First of all, the Ontario Realty Corp. is not under investigation. There's a private contractor who's involved in it. The Ontario Realty Corp. has been subjected, as have other ministries, to new procurement rules over the last year and a half or two years, and they are impeccable rules. A significant amount of our procurement is done through Infrastructure Ontario, which has received international recognition for the openness and technical aspects of the procurement. So the member is wrong: The Ontario Realty Corp. is not being investigated.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Steve Clark: Trying back to the Premier: It seems coincidental that just before the raid in July, ORC did a sudden and major housecleaning, including getting rid of a vice-president in June. Somewhere, someone in the ORC knew exactly what was going on before the police knocked down the door. Either they briefed the Minister of Energy, who had responsibility for ORC, or the minister was negligent in his oversight of the troubled agency.

My question: When were you and the minister made aware of allegations of corruption against the Ontario Realty Corp.?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: This is a government that respects public servants—we don't beat up on our public servants in public—and we're going to continue to do that. They were a government that embarrassed public servants. When they were in government, they did it. They're doing it in opposition. That's not the way we do business.

The investigation that they're referring to is an investigation in which they responded responsibly. They were asked to provide information for a private investigation for a private contractor. They did so, they did so professionally and they did so appropriately. We don't accept the premises of the question.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Ontarians, First Nations, environmental experts, mayors and US senators all oppose the transport of radioactive steam generators from Kincardine to Owen Sound on public roads and then across the Great Lakes to Sweden. Each generator exceeds acceptable safe standards for radioactivity shipped in one vessel. Does the Minister of Transportation support this unnecessary and dangerous plan which so many experts and community leaders oppose?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think the member opposite knows full well that the rules and regulations fall within the federal government's purview.

Obviously we have regulations and safety precautions in the province of Ontario. All of those rules will be followed, but I think the fundamental question about the transportation and the disposition of these materials has to do with federal government legislation. I think that the member opposite would do well to talk with his federal counterparts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I think the minister may have washed her hands of this far too soon. First the Minister of Energy says that the shipment is a federal issue, even though low-level nuclear waste has always been a provincial responsibility, and now the Minister of Transportation says it has nothing to do with her authority, even though the Bruce Power website states that transport permits are required from Ontario's Ministry of Transportation and discussions are already being held with your ministry. That sort of seems to me, Minister, like you have some connection to this decision.

When will the government stop covering up their involvement on this issue and start meeting with local citizens, First Nations—

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I will withdraw.

When will the government be open about this issue and start meeting with local citizens, First Nations and mayors who are so concerned about this proposed shipment of waste?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I was quite clear that we will adhere to and we will honour the rules and regulations that are in place on behalf of the provincial government. We will make sure that every single one of those is followed.

We are absolutely committed to working in collaboration with all levels of government on an important issue such as this one, but at the end of the day, the overarching concern, the overarching issue of how to deal with the disposition of waste and the safety issues concerned has to rest with the federal government. We are partners, obviously, in the transportation; the roads are our responsibility. We have some of the safest roads in North America. We will keep them that way and we will work in partnership with the federal government.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Mr. Charles Sousa: My question is to the Minister of Education. Parents in my riding have heard that there have been changes to how students can be graded in the classroom. There's been a clarification to how teachers can assess student performance. Parents are pleased that students are doing better in the classroom, but they also want to know that students have earned their success. What can I tell parents in my riding about this change and how these new policies are building towards our student success strategy?

1110

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I'm delighted that the honourable member has brought to me the concerns of parents in his riding, and I want to say that I have heard from parents in my riding as well. Of course, student success is a goal of our government. We want more students to be successful. We have made significant investments to support their learning and to support teachers in the classroom. We have also clarified, as the honourable member has indicated, how students are assessed in the province of Ontario. It had been presented in some circles that students were not able to get a zero if they didn't complete work. Well, in fact, that is the case. Students can be assigned a zero if they have not satisfactorily completed their work.

This is important. Parents do want to be sure that the grades that their children receive have been earned, and we are very happy to continue to work with families. We also thank the teachers, who have—

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

Mr. Charles Sousa: My follow-up to the Minister of Education: Parents in my riding have also heard that report cards have been changed this year. They're asking what these changes are and what these changes mean. Parents want and deserve to be fully informed of their child's work at school, as it's fundamental to ensuring that students get the support they need both at home and at school to achieve success in the classroom.

Minister, could you provide some clarity as to how these changes are going to affect parents and students in

my riding? And is it true that parents will be getting less relevant information this year by sending students home with one less report card?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Again, I think it's very important that I have the opportunity to clarify for everyone in this House that parents will receive three reports on student progress. The first report is a progress report, followed by two report cards.

The progress report is an assessment of the performance of students for the first few weeks of school. It indicates that the students are either progressing well, progressing or having some difficulty. The information that is going home to the parents is really very important. It's very clear. It provides an opportunity as well for parents, who are always interested in understanding how their children are doing in school, to go and meet with the teacher to talk about the progress of their child, the student, and to understand what strategies are in place to encourage and support the learning of that child going forward.

So there are three reports that are going—

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

ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS

Mr. Toby Barrett: My question is for the Premier about the leadership vacuum he has created. If Premier McGuinty needs a sign of what his lack of leadership accomplishes, he need not look further than Caledonia.

Don't take it from me; Christie Blatchford's new book charges that you abandoned the rule of law in Caledonia by favouring some citizens over others. While you said you don't interfere with the police, she cites examples of political meddling by your office that has hamstrung police and put abstract ideology ahead of protecting victims from intimidation, home invasion and assault. Caledonia families detail four years of suffering that you condone, with no end in sight.

What more evidence will it take for you to understand the impact that your failure of leadership has for Ontario families?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Attorney General.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: As Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, we've been working very hard with the Six Nations and with people in the surrounding communities, trying to further engage the federal government and our province to resolve the very significant underlying issue here, which is a treaty interpretation and a land claim that has been in existence for a long period of time.

We have been working very hard and will continue to work very hard, because the fact of the matter is that the people in the surrounding communities, together with those on Six Nations, have been playing together, working together and doing events and charitable causes together for centuries. They want a better future.

I'm looking forward to working with the new mayors and councils and Six Nations to find a very important resolution to this—

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: If your Premier needs another example of how lack of leadership is failing families, look no further than your inaction on the blockading by militants of a new power corridor from Niagara to Caledonia. No wires have been installed and no electricity is flowing. That's as bad as saying you have a long-term energy plan when you don't, or, as the Minister of Energy said on September 30, that you would release the new electricity price forecast analysis to Ontario families in mid-October when you didn't. Promise after promise is broken, deadlines come and go, and nothing happens. No one is accountable. It's a failure of leadership. Why does leadership mean breaking promises and breaking the law to Premier McGuinty?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: We all recognize that none of these issues are easy to resolve; otherwise, they would have been resolved many years ago. They do require a lot of understanding. They do require a lot of discussion. They do require knowledge that has not always been in abundance. And there are many different potential approaches to issues which arise around land claims.

As a result of the Ipperwash inquiry and the recommendations that were made then, we are accepting and implementing the recommendations and following the advice and the approach, as a result of that very difficult, tragic event. That is the process we'll get to which will result in a resolution: discussions and peaceful approaches, and we need the federal government to seriously help resolve a land claim that they are ultimately responsible for.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Minister of Labour. On September 30, the minister announced approval of the WSIB's request to appoint respected academic and labour expert Harry Arthurs to the chair of the WSIB's funding review committee. Four other panel members were then announced. Would the minister please clarify which of these panel members is the injured-worker representative?

Hon. Peter Fonseca: Yes, the WSIB has come forward with a plan to address the unfunded liability. Within that plan, they have put together an expert advisory panel that's being led by Professor Harry Arthurs. First off, Professor Harry Arthurs has been the dean of Osgoode Hall Law School, and he is a past president of York University.

Within that team that Professor Harry Arthurs has set up, he has some very strong people. I'll tell you, he has Buzz Hargrove speaking on behalf of labour, and with all his experience and the good work he has done with injured workers across the province and the advocacy he has brought to injured workers, I think that speaks volumes for part of that team. Also, I know that John Tory

makes up part of that team, and he is going to be giving advice and being—

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

Mr. Paul Miller: I will reiterate for the minister. The funding review panel is comprised, it's true, of well-known persons. However, not one of these panellists is an actual injured worker, is someone who has gone through the WSIB system, is someone who can therefore truly represent injured workers in Ontario. In fact, one of the panel members had spoken out against such initiatives as the inclusion of construction workers in the WSIB.

Will this minister agree today to appoint an actual injured worker as a funding review panel member?

Hon. Peter Fonseca: When I have had all the opportunities to speak with injured workers—and I just met with them last week—we did talk about the consultation process and the openness that Professor Harry Arthurs has extended to all groups, especially injured workers. Injured workers have an open door to Professor Harry Arthurs and to Buzz Hargrove. If this member is saying he does not agree that Buzz Hargrove is an advocate, someone who has done so much for injured workers, we feel differently on this side of the floor. Injured workers are the cornerstone of what this consultation is all about. It's ensuring that the WSIB is there, that it is strong, that it is stable and will provide those protections for injured workers not only for the century that it has been in place, but for the next century. That's what I say to the member opposite.

1120

MISSING CHILDREN

Mr. Pat Hoy: My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Child abduction is a serious and horrific crime. As a parent and a grandparent, I could not imagine the anguish and pain families must experience when confronted with these heartbreaking situations. My thoughts go out to all of the families that have dealt with these trying ordeals.

When combatting criminal activity such as child abduction, timely information is of the utmost importance, both to the police and to those members of the community who seek that help. Expedient access and distribution of information is one of the most important tools to combat this type of appalling crime. However, the task facing law enforcement officials is large and complex.

Can the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services explain how this province is helping Ontario's police services in their fight against child abduction?

Hon. James J. Bradley: The member is correct: These are tragic circumstances. When a child is abducted, of course every moment is crucial to their safe return. It's vital to the search and investigation that critical information about the missing child is relayed to and from the public as quickly as possible. The Amber Alert program

is a partnership between the police and the news media to communicate vital child abduction information quickly to the public.

Amber Alert is run by the Ontario Provincial Police to locate children who are abducted. Since its introduction, the Amber Alert program's communication tools have expanded to include highway Compass signs, lottery terminals and Mac's convenience stores. When a provincial Amber Alert is issued, a province-wide media release is distributed by the OPP to advise of the alert and request that critical information be broadcast immediately and regularly until further notice.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Pat Hoy: We as Ontarians are very grateful for the commendable services that are provided to us by all members of our police services. I know that in my riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex, along with the rest of Ontario, the people are proud of those men and women in uniform.

However, public safety does not begin and end with law enforcement officials. It is crucial that the community work with police to help find a missing child. With a united effort by society, criminal activities like child abduction can be more effectively combated.

In the fight against child abduction, one of the most imperative tools is information. The truth is that the faster our police services can gain access to vital information, the faster they can facilitate the safe return of an abducted child.

Ontario's police service has access to some of the best resources, but they also need help from the public. Would the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services provide us with more information about how this will help fight child—

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

Hon. James J. Bradley: On Friday, October 8, the Amber Alert program began teaming up with the social media website Facebook to broadcast Amber Alerts, and my colleague Mike Colle, my parliamentary assistant, was there to make that announcement. Facebook has more than seven million members in Ontario alone and many millions more outside the province. Through Facebook, Amber Alerts can tap into this vast pool of the public instantly.

Police believe the first three to five hours are the most important for finding victims of abduction. With the addition of Facebook to the Amber Alert program, police have a greater chance of gaining access to any information the public may have during these crucial hours.

Additionally, an agreement is in place with Canadian wireless telecommunications organizations to have a number of cellphone service carriers provide Amber Alerts via text messaging, free of charge. This expansion of the program is going to be—

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

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is for the Premier. On October 1, your WSIB raised premiums for over 100,000 struggling Ontario employers just as we were coming out of this recession. Just six weeks ago, you said, "We've got to be very careful about doing anything that acts as ... [a] spoke in the wheels of the economy that is recovering at a very modest pace."

Premier, isn't it a "spoke in the wheels" to raise WSIB premiums for auto manufacturers by 13.5% just months after you bailed them out with taxpayers' money?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Peter Fonseca: I want to thank the member for the opportunity to talk about the comprehensive plan that the WSIB has brought forward to retire the unfunded liability. When it comes to premiums, I'll let the member know—and he knows this already—that half of all companies covered under WSIB saw zero increase. Some did see a modest increase, and any company that did see an increase can lower their premium rates by getting involved in a number of incentive programs that are provided through the WSIB. Those programs allow companies to better their health and safety records so that they can lower their insurance premiums.

But the reason the WSIB needs to be there for those companies is to protect them from being sued and, if something were to happen, from it wiping that company out—

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: Premier, a month ago you said, "A hike in EI premiums at this point in time runs counter to what we need to do in order to ensure that people regain more confidence every day about a growing economy." I guess the Minister of Labour wasn't listening to that speech of yours, because on October 1, the WSIB hiked premiums for nursing homes by 17% and raised premiums for farmers by 20%.

Premier, why do you have it in for Ontario seniors and farmers? Why are you hitting them with yet another Dalton McGuinty tax grab?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd remind the honourable member about the use of names. Minister?

Hon. Peter Fonseca: The WSIB has brought forward a comprehensive plan, a prudent plan, a plan that will put the WSIB on a firm financial footing. This is what is needed. The WSIB, within this plan, has also put together a consultation that is happening with all stakeholders. It is being led by Professor Harry Arthurs.

I can see that the word "plan" is a four-letter word to that member over there, maybe because he has no plan and has never had a plan. What I can tell the member is that his colleague the member for Carleton-Mississippi Mills said this is the right thing to do, having a plan and having a consultation.

So we support the WSIB in moving forward to ensure the stability of the WSIB, for the workers of this province

as well as for the companies; to ensure that they are insured and that when someone goes to work, they know that if something were to—

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

NARCOTICS SAFETY

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le premier ministre.

A month ago the government introduced Bill 101, the Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act. Yesterday the bill was in committee, and it was obvious how poorly thought out and rushed this bill is. Somehow the government managed to forget that physicians practise in hospitals—it seems pretty obvious to me—that regulatory colleges already play an essential role in ensuring safety and that confidentiality of personal records must be maintained. There are far too many “oops” in this piece of legislation.

Given all of those oversights, can the Premier honestly tell Ontarians that he’s finally on target?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague is picking on me today; this is her third question. But I never doubt her sincerity and how hard she works on her issues.

What I can say, of course, without being an expert in the area, is that we’ve introduced a bill. It is before the committee. It is there not in a perfect form. We are always listening. It may be that my honourable colleague or others want to introduce amendments to improve the quality of the bill and ensure that it achieves its objective.

I know my honourable colleague will understand that there is a real issue. It’s important that we curb the abuse of narcotic drugs and ensure that these powerful drugs are used appropriately. There has been a 900% increase in one drug’s abuse since 1991, and that’s why we are introducing this bill, in an effort to better manage these dangerous drugs.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: In second reading, in committee and everywhere else I could, I urged the government to slow down, to get the bill right. I pushed for committee hearings in the north and in First Nation communities and was flatly denied, because the way the bill is written right now, it is a one-size-fits-all approach that won’t work for communities that are northern and rural, and it won’t work for First Nations either. But instead of listening to the many, many groups who urged the government to take the time to strengthen the bill, they are rushing it through.

People in mental health are working flat out. The one-week notice was not enough for them to respond, to come and do deputations or to send them in. They had one week. This is not reasonable.

Can the Premier explain why his government is ignoring the advice of all of these groups and is pushing through this flawed legislation?

1130

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: We make a real effort to be open to constructive criticism and advice. My colleague referenced some concerns advanced by people in the mental health sector. Well, here’s what Dr. Catherine Zahn, who’s president of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, said: “Ontario’s narcotics strategy addresses the root causes of our province’s problems with prescribed opioids and other substances.”

Dennis Darby, the CEO of the Ontario Pharmacists’ Association, said this: “This strategy marks a step towards a more comprehensive approach to ensuring narcotics are prescribed and used appropriately.”

We don’t lay claim to introducing anything in a perfect form. We will continue to keep an open mind with respect to ways to improve this legislation, but I know my honourable colleague will agree with us that it’s important that we find a way to move forward to better control these dangerous narcotics.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Mr. David Zimmer: My question is for the Minister of Labour, and it’s about an important employer-employee health issue. Musculoskeletal disorders, commonly known as repetitive strain injuries, are responsible for over 43% of all lost-time injury claims in Ontario. That’s a huge number, and it translates into huge dollars. It’s estimated that from 2003 to 2008—that’s five years—Ontario employers paid more than \$1 billion in direct and indirect costs because of musculoskeletal disorders.

I understand that the Minister of Labour is taking a very serious view of that and that you have a heightened enforcement blitz addressing these hazards. Can you give me some details about—

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

Hon. Peter Fonseca: I can give details to the member about that blitz. It started in September, and it does focus on MSDs, musculoskeletal disorders, in sectors such as retail, construction, mining and health care. This blitz is one in a series of our highly focused inspections. It’s conducted under the banner of our Safe at Work Ontario strategy, and it helps workers and employers anticipate those workplace hazards that we all want to eliminate.

Inspectors, when they’re out there, are focusing on particular tasks. These are the tasks that require lifting or pushing or carrying items, and our government is committed to ensuring that workers are protected from injuries and major health hazards on the job.

Since 2003, we’ve been able to change and are working on changing the workplace culture—

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

Mr. David Zimmer: Workplace pains and strains are very serious. They disable employees and they harm the economic efficiency of employers. The consequences are far-reaching for everyone. They’re very costly, in particular, to employers. There are a number of reasons for

lost-time claims related to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, resulting in these huge costs for Ontario employers.

Minister, what are you doing to help workers and employers prevent musculoskeletal disorders?

Hon. Peter Fonseca: When it comes to workplace safety, the starting point always must be education and awareness. That's what we're providing through the Ministry of Labour. That's why we've developed what's called a musculoskeletal disorder prevention series for employers and workers in Ontario. This helps workers and employers understand and recognize musculoskeletal disorder hazards in the workplace, as well as to control them.

MSDs are entirely preventable—we know this—and my ministry will continue to educate our workers and employers about how to reduce MSDs in the workplace. We've seen some really shining examples with companies out in the field that have seen very high incidences of MSDs and that have, in some instances, brought those injuries down in their workplaces to zero. This is good for everybody: It's good for the workers and good for the bottom line of a company.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): 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 Minister of Labour concerning the WSIB review panel. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On behalf of the member from Sarnia–Lambton, we'd like to welcome Les and Marilyn Armstrong in the west gallery today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1136 to 1500.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

BROCKVILLE FARMERS' MARKET

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm excited to rise in the House today to congratulate the Brockville Farmers' Market for being named Entrepreneur of the Year by the Leeds and Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre. The market has been a fixture on Market Street beside Brockville's historic city hall since 1832. In fact, it will mark its 178th birthday tomorrow.

For generations, the downtown market attracted people from across my riding and beyond to the shores of the St. Lawrence River to buy the fresh, local products

for which eastern Ontario is famous. Over time, as shopping habits changed, the market struggled to attract shoppers and vendors. It's not a stretch to say it faced an uncertain future.

If you know anything about the work ethic and determination in my riding, you can guess where this story is going. By using fresh ideas, recruiting unique new vendors and promoting the benefits of shopping for local produce, people such as Koren Manneck, Doug Avery and the late Peter Carter planted the seeds for an incredible turnaround. Thanks to their efforts and those of many others, the market is flourishing. In fact, it is now a key part of the economy in Brockville, as it draws thousands of shoppers to the city's historic downtown.

Although the outdoor season is ending, I urge everyone to see this success story for themselves by visiting the farmers' market inside the Brockville Museum on Sundays in November and Saturdays and Sundays in December.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The election of the new mayor of Toronto has reopened the Transit City issue. Toronto is choking on congestion. Finances are tight. The new mayor has said he wants to build subways and abandon Transit City's light rail system. Subways are very expensive.

The McGuinty Liberals chopped billions from their commitment to Transit City. The Premier says he's willing to talk. What else can he say? If he talks with the new mayor on this issue, he must remember that abandonment of Transit City and redirection of provincial funds to subway building would be a monumental mistake. Light rail would be the best value for money. Spending the same money on a subway would dramatically cut the amount of transit provided and deepen the congestion and air pollution problems of Toronto.

We need fully funded transit, and we need Transit City now.

OTTAWA GYMNASTICS CENTRE

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I'm pleased to share a special anniversary taking place this weekend in my riding of Ottawa Centre. The Ottawa Gymnastics Centre is celebrating its 50th year of providing kids in our community with a rich, healthy, athletic and artistic experience through gymnastics programs, from toddlers to competitive Olympians.

The club has been home to two athletes who were part of the Canadian team at the 2004 Athens Olympics, and the current head coach at OGC, Tobie Gorman, was the team coach in 2004. The not-for-profit club was started in 1960 by Sev Heiberg and today is a thriving hub in Westboro community in my riding of Ottawa Centre.

The 50th-anniversary celebration is taking place in two parts this weekend. An open house will take place from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. this Saturday afternoon, October

30, at the centre—and I look forward to attending that—followed by a gala evening at Tudor Hall. The special guest at both these events is Dr. Steven MacLean, chief astronaut of the Canadian Space Agency and former Ottawa Gymnastics Centre member.

I'd like to congratulate executive director Kellie Hinnells and event chair Kathleen Murphy on organizing this special occasion. I would also like to extend my best wishes to all the OGC alumni, competitors, parents and kids as they celebrate their last 50 years this weekend and look forward to much success in the next 50. Congratulations.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm glad that the Minister of the Environment is in the legislative precinct, and I hope he's listening. Today, the Guelph Mercury reports that up to 1,000 people turned out in the rain to protest a proposed wind farm in Centre Wellington township last night. I was there, too, arriving as soon as I could to hear what my constituents were saying about the wind farm proposal and about the McGuinty government's energy policies.

I listened to many constituents, and their message was a devastating indictment of this government's refusal to listen to them before permitting the installation of massive wind farms in their communities. People told me the McGuinty government has stripped away their say as average citizens. They believe this government's Green Energy Act has stripped away local decision-making authority. I believe they are right.

Again, I call upon this government to complete a comprehensive and independent study of the wind turbines' effect on human health before any new wind farm proposals go forward.

Again, I call on the Minister of the Environment to account for his contradictory statements on the role municipalities play in the approvals process. Do municipalities have the power to stop them or not? He should address this basic question right here in the Legislature.

Despite this government's apparent determination to push ahead with wind farms no matter what the cost, no matter what the opposition, there is hope, because when a community is united and when it speaks with one voice, that voice is heard and it cannot be ignored.

HUMBER RIVER REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Mr. Mario Sergio: I'm delighted to report that significant progress is being made on the new state-of-the-art hospital that will soon serve the residents within my riding of York West. Three requests for proposal have been shortlisted for the design, build and financing of the additional Humber River Regional Hospital development project. In addition to the local site located in York West, this new hospital will provide modern equipment for better diagnosis and treatment, increased

patient care with additional beds and specialized outpatient services.

I am proud that our government continues to stand by its commitment to quality health care for all Ontarians. This additional hospital will continue to reduce wait times in this province, expand services and create more jobs for nurses.

Since taking office, the McGuinty government has built 18 new hospitals, which not only provide us with better health care services but also create jobs and opportunities which benefit all Ontario families.

I'm looking forward to the positive impact that Humber River Regional Hospital will have on the local community. These economic and health benefits for local constituents help build a healthier, stronger and revitalized York West.

ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I rise today to focus the attention of the House on the ongoing problem of bullying in this province and throughout North America.

1510

I had the opportunity to meet with Mike Neuts this morning, whose son, Myles, tragically lost his life more than 10 years ago. As a result of Myles's premature and tragic death, Mr. Neuts today travels to schools throughout Canada to speak out against bullying. I'd like to thank him for his efforts in raising awareness about how serious a problem bullying is and focusing on preventing it.

The meeting was timely, since bullying awareness and prevention week in Ontario, which was established by my private member's resolution earlier this year, will take place during the third week of November.

Bullying, whether it is verbal, physical, or cyberbullying, which has the potential to be especially detrimental since it is virtually impossible to escape whether you are at home or at school, continues to be a very serious problem in our schools. We must make every effort to stop it.

I hope that the Minister of Education has given very clear direction to schools and boards throughout the province not only to recognize this week but to ensure that every school has a safe school team and that every safe school team in the province has been involved in directing the development of activities for their school during the week. Let's stop bullying.

ROTHWELL-OSNABRUCK SCHOOL

Mr. Jim Brownell: I rise in the House today to acknowledge Rothwell-Osnabruck school in my riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, eastern Ontario's only kindergarten-to-grade-12 school, whose Interact Club raised \$650 for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

The Interact Club hosted a Dining in the Dark event in April of this year, where guests were required to eat their meals in complete darkness. Tickets were sold for \$10 each and guests were served a buffet-style meal including

homemade dishes such as lasagne and scalloped potatoes. Then the lights went out.

The event was designed to encourage people to reflect on their vision health while raising critical funds and awareness for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. This was a great learning experience for the students and staff.

To thank the Interact Club for their support, Canadian National Institute for the Blind representative Nicole Gerhold visited Rothwell-Osnabruck school on September 29 and presented students with a certificate of appreciation.

I congratulate the students from Rothwell-Osnabruck school in Ingleside on going above and beyond in every respect by living the Rotary Club motto of "Service above self." Volunteerism in my riding is alive and thriving, and it is important to recognize and congratulate those who have achieved and done something that stands out, such as what these students have done with the Dining in the Dark project.

I applaud the students and teachers involved in the Interact Club at Rothwell-Osnabruck school and I encourage them to continue to support and serve their community. This is an outstanding school in the Upper Canada District School Board.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Mr. Rick Johnson: Today I rise in the House to speak on the issue of early childhood education. It is a subject that I'm proud to speak to as a member of the McGuinty government, which has not only recognized the critical importance of this issue but has followed through. Full-day kindergarten is a part of this, and the McGuinty government has invested \$200 million into this program.

Starting early, doors can be opened. We have within our hands the ability to change the lives of children in this province for the better. By investing in our children now, we're investing in their future.

It's also an investment that can create jobs now. The Second Career program has enabled many who are out of work to unlock their potential, and it will be an important path for new early childhood educators. As a result of this program, more than 700 Ontarians have been re-trained as early childhood educators: jobs today and possibilities for our children tomorrow.

We know that investing in children today is not a frill. It's not some shiny new car, as the Leader of the Opposition and his party believe. Not only does the Leader of the Opposition oppose full-day kindergarten, but he and his party have opposed Ontario's landmark Second Career program. By denying our youth opportunities to succeed, the party opposite and their leader would have denied the opportunity for new jobs to be created in this field.

This is a time for leadership, and the McGuinty government is delivering.

GREEN ENERGY

Mr. Khalil Ramal: Green energy in Ontario is already making our air safer, cleaner and easier to breathe. The McGuinty government understands that every dollar invested in green energy also creates new jobs for Ontarians and builds a new industry in this province.

Already, the Green Energy Act is attracting investment that is putting Ontarians to work. New solar module and mounting facilities are bringing 375 jobs to Windsor. Solar panel and inverter manufacturing facilities are creating up to 800 jobs in Guelph. A thousand people will be employed because of a solar manufacturing hub in Welland.

In my community of London, Canasia Power Corporation has announced plans to locate a 125,000-square-foot manufacturing plant that will start producing solar panel parts by early next year. They are bringing 300 jobs to London, plus additional opportunities through research and partnership with the University of Western Ontario.

These are just some of the 50,000 jobs that the Green Energy Act is projected, directly and indirectly, to support. That's 50,000 Ontarians who will be working in a new, growing, worldwide industry in our province—and our province is poised to be the leader in this regard—50,000 Ontarians who, if the opposition parties had their way, would remain unemployed.

I want to congratulate all the people working in this area to create jobs for Ontarians and making our air safer and cleaner and easier to breathe.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Michael Prue: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill Pr41, An Act to revive Tonum Ltd.

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

Report adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption.

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

Bill 101, An Act to provide for monitoring the prescribing and dispensing of certain controlled substances / Projet de loi 101, Loi prévoyant la

surveillance des activités liées à la prescription et à la préparation de certaines substances désignées.

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

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

CHILD CARE GARDE D'ENFANTS

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I'm pleased to stand in the House today to celebrate our province's dedicated child care workers and early childhood educators. Today marks the 10th annual Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day in Ontario. Today we recognize the important role that child care workers and early childhood educators play in the development of our children and of our communities. It is a day to show our appreciation for the countless hours they spend enriching the lives of our children. We congratulate these professionals for being true leaders in early learning.

Child care workers and early childhood educators are valued partners in our government's ongoing efforts to build a strong publicly funded education system and an accessible, high-quality child care sector.

Chaque jour, ces personnes s'attachent inlassablement à fournir des soins de qualité aux enfants de toute la province et à favoriser leur développement physique, intellectuel, social et créatif.

With passion and commitment, they work hard to give children the foundation they need to reach their full potential and contribute to our success as a province. Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day is a great opportunity to celebrate these contributions.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario, the professional association for ECEs in our province. This year, the AECEO celebrates their 60th anniversary. Thank you to the AECEO for the important work that they do in supporting Ontario's early childhood educators, and congratulations on this significant landmark anniversary.

Today, early childhood educators are also working alongside teachers in full-day kindergarten classrooms.

Ce programme pionnier est en train de donner à nos plus jeunes apprenants un excellent départ à l'école en les préparant pour la première année et la réussite future.

This year, more than 1,400 early childhood educators are working in nearly 600 full-day kindergarten classrooms across our province. At full implementation, up to 20,000 newly trained childhood educators will be an essential part of our full-day kindergarten program.

1520

To meet the growing demand for early childhood educators, our government is pleased to offer opportunities for people to enter this rewarding profession. Over the past two years, nearly 700 people have returned to school to pursue careers as early childhood educators through our Second Career program. Through their training and work experience, early childhood educators acquire in-depth knowledge of early childhood development, observation and assessment. That knowledge is critical in full-day kindergarten classrooms where they work side by side with teachers to support children as they start a lifelong journey of learning.

Ce partenariat est un élément essentiel de l'objectif de notre gouvernement, à savoir la création d'un système intégré et continu d'apprentissage et d'éducation en Ontario.

Child care is now the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Bringing child care and education together in one ministry supports better coordination between the two systems, emphasizing that learning begins long before a child steps into a classroom.

We will continue to work closely with child care workers and early child care educators as we move towards realizing our early learning vision. Today we thank the child care workers and early childhood educators in our province for their dedication and hard work with our children. Through your work, you are giving children a brighter future, giving families the support they need and building a stronger Ontario for all of us.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'm very pleased to rise today on behalf of the PC caucus to extend, on this 10th anniversary of the celebration of the child care worker and early childhood educators, our appreciation to them for the work they do.

When I was doing a little research, I came across the fact that in the United States they have been celebrating child care providers and having provider appreciation day harkening back to 1996, when it began in New Jersey. So, obviously, there are many people who have appreciated the outstanding contributions that have been made by these very hard-working child care workers.

Certainly, the individuals I know, I can tell you, have a very profound and extremely important role in the development of our children. I can attest to the fact that the people I know are very dedicated; they are very passionate professionals who every day enrich the lives of the children they serve through their steadfast commitment to embodying many of the virtues and characteristics that we would hold dear. They're very positive role models.

We know it is important to invest in our children and, of course, the child care workers and the early childhood educators in many respects are the caretakers of the investment that we make in our children. Of course, we want the best for our children, and they try to provide the best.

We actually put a huge responsibility on the shoulders of the child care workers and the ECEs. We entrust them

to care for and educate our children, to offer them leadership, tolerance of other people, understanding and knowledge. Again, we do owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

I have to add, however, that if you took a look at the newspaper today, there is some concern about the uncertain future that some of the child care workers and early childhood educators are facing in our province because of the way in which full-day kindergarten has been implemented. There is certainly some concern being expressed about whether or not we'll be able to meet the demands, and also the fact that in our daycares, many of the child care workers and early childhood educators are leaving. It's a mass exodus because they can get better-paying jobs and benefits within our schools. We have a situation right now that is certainly causing some concern, and we've heard those concerns expressed today. So I would encourage the government, as they roll out full-day kindergarten, to take into consideration the impact it's having on the long-established, highly successful child care organizations in our province that may no longer be viable in the future. I urge the government to get it right, to determine the best approach and to make sure that our child care providers, our ECEs and our children are not paying the price for the implementation, which is causing concern.

We hear today from Fred Hahn, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, who is concerned about the supply of early childhood educators. We heard today from Andrea Calver, of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, who is also concerned about where the staff is going to come from. She says the province doesn't have a plan.

I end by congratulating the outstanding child care providers and early childhood educators. They make a great contribution. They are there for our children, and we just wish them nothing but continued success, happiness and satisfaction in the job they do every day for our children.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm happy to rise today to recognize the 10th anniversary of Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. I will start by thanking all the hard-working child care workers and early childhood educators in every daycare, classroom, nursery school, after-school program, community health centre and early childhood education program for the hard work they do. I want to acknowledge some early childhood education workers and programs, specifically in my riding.

I will start with the Walden Day Care Centre, located in Lively, which does tremendous work to allow the people of Walden to go to work every day. I want to thank the workers at Teddy Bear Day Care. This is a daycare run by the First Baptist Church in Garson, in my riding. It's a non-profit, full-family centre. I want to thank the workers at Cotton Candy Day Care in Chelmsford.

J'aimerais également reconnaître toutes les éducatrices de la petite enfance ainsi que les travailleuses en garderie qui travaillent à la grandeur de l'Ontario. Merci pour le travail que vous faites.

J'aimerais plus précisément reconnaître certaines garderies et certaines places de travail dans mon comté. On regarde, entre autres, à toutes les garderies qui sont gérées par le Carrefour francophone. Un grand merci à tous ceux qui travaillent avec le Centre pivot du Triangle Magique. Merci à la Boussole des tout-petits à Azilda, à la Découverte des tout-petits à Val Caron, au Foyer des tout-petits à Hanmer, ainsi qu'au Pavillon des tout-petits à Chelmsford. Merci beaucoup pour le travail que vous faites.

Every Ontarian understands the importance of high-quality child care. Research shows the economic return of child care programs: For every \$1 we invest, we get \$2.42 back—a good return on investment, if you ask me.

Every Ontarian who has ever had a child in a child care program knows that a dedicated, well-trained child care worker or early childhood educator makes all the difference in your child's experience of this program. That is why it is so important that we take the time today to acknowledge the work these early childhood educators do, day in and day out.

It is sadly no surprise to anyone that child care workers and early childhood educators in this province continue to be undervalued and underpaid. It is a workforce that is made up mainly of women. Even after all the battles for equality and equal pay for work of equal value that we and our foremothers fought before us, women continue to make less than men. In Ontario, women make 71 cents for each dollar a man would for work of equal value.

1530

When it comes to a workforce made up largely of women, this gender imbalance is even more apparent. The NDP has been fighting alongside groups like the one we saw this morning, CUPE, the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, and many other groups who share our view that the accessibility of high-quality child care should be a right to every Ontario family. But today we are far from achieving this goal. There is lots of work left to be done.

The McGuinty government is in the process of implementing full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds. This is something that the NDP supports. But we fought for a better, more comprehensive plan that would have been in line with what Dr. Charles Pascal has put in his report. We know that Ontario full-day kindergarten requires an additional 20,000 early childhood educators within the next five years. But where are those educators going to come from when there are no plans in place for them? Early childhood educators are an essential part of the government's plan for full-day kindergarten, but the need for those workers and the profession as a whole continues to be ignored by this government.

Il est important de se rendre compte qu'on a besoin d'éducatrices de la petite enfance si on veut que les programmes de maternelle à temps plein et de garderie avant et après l'école deviennent réalité. Il est temps d'avoir un plan concret pour s'assurer d'avoir la main-d'oeuvre dont on a besoin.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Norm Miller: I have received a number of petitions from the Haliburton area supporting my private member's bill.

"Petition in Support of Bill 100 (Paved Shoulders on Provincial Highways)

"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."

It's no surprise I support this petition.

PROTECTION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Peter Kormos: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and certified by the Clerk.

"Whereas the picketing of the homes of people with intellectual disabilities alienates people from their autonomy; security; privacy; relationships with staff, neighbours and community; and also causes discrimination and harm to citizens who should be free to enjoy their homes without harassment and intimidation;

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

"To support Bill 83 and prohibit the picketing of vulnerable people's residences during a strike."

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

Mr. Kim Craitor: I want to thank Sister Heather Kelley from the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Local 171, in Fort Erie. The petition reads as follows:

"Temporary Replacement Workers

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: 97% of collective agreements are settled without a strike or lockout; and

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978; in British Columbia since 1993; and successive governments in those two provinces have never repealed these laws; and

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement worker legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

"Whereas the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short and the long term as well as the well-being of its residents;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout."

I have signed my signature in support of this.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS TREATMENT

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: "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 and universally practised procedure that is low-risk and at relatively low expense;

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

"That the Minister of Health agrees to proceed with clinical trials of the venoplasty treatment to fully explore its potential to bring relief to the thousands of Ontarians afflicted with multiple sclerosis."

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

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

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

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

"Whereas," since October 2009, "insured PET scans" are being performed "in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

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

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

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

KIDNEY DISEASE

Mr. Jeff Leal: I have a petition today from Sylvia and Helmut Gotz of Peterborough, 271 Collison Crescent. It's a petition 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;

"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 and give it to page Kieran.

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm bringing in a petition from Lynn Perrier in support of Newmarket MPP Frank Klees. The petition goes as follows:

"Petition for Provincial Oversight of the OSPCA....

"Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ... recently and unilaterally announced that it would euthanize all animals in its care at 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 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 support my constituents who signed this petition. I will affix my signature and give this to Priscile.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

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

"Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: on average, 97% of collective agreements are negotiated without disruption; and

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978; in British Columbia since 1993; and successive governments in those two provinces have never repealed these laws; and

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers' legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

"Whereas the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short and the long term as well as the well-being of its residents;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout."

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

1540

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: This is a petition from my constituents in Ottawa Centre.

"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 at 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 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 affix my signature and send it to the table via page Priscile.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS TREATMENT

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: “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 and universally practised procedure that is low-risk and at relatively low expense;

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

“That the Minister of Health agrees to proceed with clinical trials of the venoplasty treatment to fully explore its potential to bring relief to the thousands of Ontarians afflicted with multiple sclerosis.”

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

DENTAL CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from all over Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas people need teeth to stay healthy; and

“Whereas a lack of universal dental care has resulted in an epidemic of poor dental health, and many people are living and working with no teeth; and

“Whereas there is only very limited support for denture care for those on social assistance and no support at all for the working poor;

“Therefore, we call upon the government of Ontario to increase funding to assist people on social assistance and the working poor to access denture care.”

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

BRITISH HOME CHILDREN

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a petition 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.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a petition to the Legislature in support of Bill 100, paved shoulders on provincial highways.

“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.”

I support this bill, I affix my signature to it and send it down with Carina.

CHILD CUSTODY

Mr. Kim Craitor: I want to thank Joanne Hannah for submitting this petition to me. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas grandparents often become a family’s first reserves in time of crisis. Grandparents act as fun playmates for children, role models, and family historians, mentors, and help establish self-esteem and security for children;

“One potential aspect of the divorce is the disruption or severance of the grandparent-grandchild relationship;

“Also, in cases of the death of a parent,” the maternal or paternal grandparents’ child, should continue to enjoy access to the grandparent “by the living parents, as visitation and access was fully established prior to the death of the parent;

“In Canada, the issue of grandparents’ rights of access to grandchildren has not been given recognition in legislation, with the exception of the provinces of Quebec, Alberta and BC. In all other provinces, grandparents may only petition” the courts “for rights to access as interested third parties. In the absence of a specific statute providing grandparents with legal standing to access, there are continuing difficulties in obtaining contact with grandchildren;

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

“That grandparents have legal rights to access to visitation with their grandchildren in the event of parental divorce or death of a parent, and we support Bill 22,” as introduced by MPP Kim Craitor.

OPPOSITION DAY

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario call upon the McGuinty government to make the terms of the Samsung contract—known as the Korean green energy investment agreement—public, including performance indicators, penalty provisions, any dates either side can terminate the contract with or without penalty, who signed the contract, who negotiated the contract or lobbied for the contract on the government’s behalf, any subsidies included in the contract, and the total cost to ratepayers. Addressed to the Premier.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Yakabuski has moved opposition day motion number 3. Debate?

Mr. Tim Hudak: The \$7-billion Samsung contract is a sweetheart deal given to a foreign-based conglomerate and not offered to Ontario companies. It is a deal that pays foreign-based Samsung \$437 million in subsidies over and above what it receives in its multi-billion-dollar secret contract, a contract that does not contain a single job guarantee.

Sadly, Ontario ratepayers, Ontario families, know little about this deal because the important details are being kept hidden, secret from the energy industry and secret from the Ontario families who will end up paying the bill at the end of the day. It is a deal that will force Ontario ratepayers to pay a lot more for a long, long time and it is a preferential, sole-source deal that may be in violation of Ontario’s procurement rules.

Friends, I will tell you today, here and now, that an Ontario PC government will release the full details of the Samsung subsidy deal and hand it to the Auditor General for a full evaluation. We will let the Auditor General get to the bottom of this deal to see the real impact on investment, on the power sector and on Ontario families who get stuck with the bill.

When Premier McGuinty began his expensive energy experiments, he opened up the grid to allow more renewable energy projects. Ontario companies began lining up to take advantage of the offering, and then the McGuinty Liberal government let Samsung cut right to the front of the line. In fact, they politically interfered: They directed their own Ontario Power Authority to ensure that Samsung received preferential treatment when it comes to transmission capacity, prices and access. Let me reinforce that: You had Ontario companies that were able to do the work and that were ready to do the work, and the McGuinty government ensured that Samsung received preferential treatment when it comes to trans-

mission capacity, prices and access. They directed their own Ontario Power Authority to make that so.

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This preferential treatment has been roundly condemned by leaders in the energy sector, including the Association of Power Producers, the Canadian Wind Energy Association and the Canadian Solar Industries Association.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. Conversations outside.

Mr. Tim Hudak: The Society of Energy Professionals president said of the Samsung subsidy—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): If members have a conversation, they’re invited to take it outside. Thank you.

Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Tim Hudak: The Society of Energy Professionals president said of the Samsung subsidy, “This is no way to build an electricity system,” and, “This will be very, very expensive....” The Ontario PC caucus agrees.

Premier McGuinty’s energy experiments, from his smart meter tax machines to time-of-use rates to the Green Energy Act and the Samsung billions of dollars in subsidies, are causing electricity bills to skyrocket across our province.

In Ontario homes today, hydro bills are sitting on the kitchen table for days and days on end because seniors and families are afraid to see how much more those bills have gone up due to Dalton McGuinty’s expensive energy experiments, and you can’t blame them.

Electricity rates are already up 75% under this government. Add in the impact of the HST and the backdoor energy taxes and other rate hikes, and the annual cost of electricity bills for Ontario families is set to increase by an additional staggering \$732 a year by 2015.

Ontario families deserve a break. They’re looking for change. A PC government will give Ontario families the break they deserve and need.

Friends, a PC government will offer that change. We will take our province down an entirely different path than the one we’re on today. Our approach on energy will be rooted in accountability to the consumer, the family and small business, to put them at the top of energy policy.

We believe that government decision-makers should work with the energy sector to set out the policy framework and then leave it to the sector to implement and execute and get out of this day-to-day, seat-of-the-pants, to-and-fro, back-and-forth mismanagement that we’re seeing under the McGuinty government and his Minister of Energy.

Quite frankly, the Samsung deal is the complete opposite of the right approach. It is a hands-on, preferential treatment that makes foreign multinationals the winners, and Ontario businesses and families end up the losers.

An Ontario PC government would level the playing field where all companies can compete fairly and transparently.

In a very different approach to the McGuinty government, we will restore the Ontario Energy Board's ability to act in the best interests of the consumer. We will create a dedicated consumer advocate at the Ontario Energy Board to represent each and every day the rate-payers of the province and fight for them against the out-of-control policies of the McGuinty government.

We will give families a choice on whether time-of-use pricing works for them or if they want a regulated rate that will benefit seniors, families with young and school-aged children, and those who have to work nights or weekends and split shifts, because not every family conforms to Dalton McGuinty's definition of an ideal family. Somebody has to stand up for the senior whom Dalton McGuinty is lecturing to do her laundry at midnight. Somebody has to stand up for the family whom Dalton McGuinty is telling to have all the kids clothed, showered, fed and ready for school by 7 a.m. Somebody has to stand up for the shift worker who can't take a day off work to do the chores. The Ontario PC Party will stand up for those families in our province. Under a PC government, no more cutting untendered, sole-source, sweetheart, multi-billion-dollar subsidy deals with foreign-based conglomerates and then, as the Liberals did, keeping the details secret. That kind of backdoor deal-making will come to an end.

Until that time, first, we need to shine the light on this backroom Samsung subsidy deal. I urge all members of the House to listen to Ontario families, to listen to the small businesses concerned about what this deal is going to mean to them. How much will it cost them and how many jobs will be taken out of Ontario and sent overseas? I hope the members, if they actually believe in this deal—and I think many members of the government actually do not, based on media reports. I ask them to stand in their place and to support this motion so we can find out exactly what the secret Samsung subsidy will cost Ontario families. Release the details of the Samsung deal to industry stakeholders who have been denied their opportunity to compete, based on special treatment to the foreign multinational corporation.

I call on the members to stand up and be counted. Release the details to all members of this House who have been kept in the dark and, most importantly, release the details of your secret subsidy deal with Samsung to Ontario families.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate.

Mr. Howard Hampton: On behalf of New Democrats, I am pleased to be able to take part in this debate. While I will disagree with members of the Conservative Party in respect of many aspects of electricity policy, there are issues in this motion that do need to be addressed.

Ordinarily, an organization like the Ontario Power Authority could be brought before a legislative com-

mittee, the legislative committee on government agencies, and could be asked questions about this deal and other deals. But the Liberal government has worded the legislation governing the Ontario Power Authority such that, unlike the Liquor Control Board of Ontario or the Law Society of Ontario or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board of Ontario—unlike 200 other government agencies—the Liberal government will not allow the Ontario Power Authority to be brought before a committee of the Legislature to answer legitimate questions about how much people are going to have to pay on their electricity bills for deals like this. If you can't bring the Ontario Power Authority before a properly constituted legislative committee to ask and answer the kinds of questions that Ontario electricity consumers deserve to have, then we have to have a motion like this.

I don't think there's anyone in this province who is opposed to green energy. I think, again, that's a motherhood and apple pie issue. People want to see more green energy. But people also want to know what is in the deals or the deal—in this case, this particular deal—and what it is going to cost people across Ontario.

We know the big numbers: We're talking several billion dollars. We know that there are some parts of the agreement, though, that the government refuses to disclose to the public. We know, for example, that there are add-ons. We know, for example, that a special deal has been cut with respect to making transmission capacity available. How much is that going to cost? How much are the add-ons going to cost? And at the end of the day, what is this going to do to the average person's electricity bill?

1600

Just to give you some comparisons, we're told that Samsung is going to get in the range of about 13 and a half cents a kilowatt hour for any wind power that is produced. I think the average person in Ontario needs to know that, for example, wind power is being brought on stream in our sister province of Manitoba for less than six cents a kilowatt hour. I think people want to know—or ought to know—why they are going to be paying 13 and a half cents a kilowatt hour under this special deal with Samsung when, in our sister province in Manitoba, it's less than six cents a kilowatt hour. How is it that wind power can be brought on stream in Texas for six cents a kilowatt hour, yet under this special deal with Samsung, they're going to get over 13 and a half cents a kilowatt hour in Ontario? I think people who are already having trouble paying their electricity bills—people who have to choose between “Do I pay the heating bill? Do I pay the hydro bill? Or do I cut back on food on the table?”—need to know how much this is going to add to the hydro bill. What is this going to mean for them?

There are other aspects of this that are equally troubling. One of them is the fact that, as we all know, there are new companies in Ontario that want to grow, that wanted to be a part of this, that wanted to have an opportunity to bid into the so-called green energy market, and that have been told as a result of this, “Sorry, folks,

no opportunity for you.” We already know that there are other interests, other producers of green power who would like to have access to the transmission grid, but because of this special deal that basically says, “No. This space on the transmission grid is reserved for Samsung,” those companies are told, “No, there is no opportunity here for you.”

I think even more disturbing to people is this: We have companies in Ontario—one of them is called Ontario Power Generation, which has incredible expertise in terms of developing electricity resources, and Ontario Power Generation is owned by the people of Ontario. Why would a Liberal government cut Ontario Power Generation, which has historical knowledge, historic ability in this province of developing electricity generation—why would they literally say that Ontario Power Generation can have no part of this and is legislatively excluded from developing wind power or solar power? I think people need to have an answer to those questions.

There is an economic aspect to that, because we’ve already seen where water power facilities, power dams that were owned by Ontario Power Generation and were generating electricity at one or one and a half cents a kilowatt hour, were sold off to private generators, and those private generators are now getting in the range of 10 cents a kilowatt hour. Believe me, this has a huge impact on people’s electricity bills. If we were developing wind power and solar power on a not-for-profit basis through Ontario Power Generation, we would be able to save the electricity consumers of this province a lot of money on their hydro bills—an awful lot of money on their hydro bills. Is the Liberal government doing that? No. What they’re doing is literally loading up the trough for a foreign-based corporation, to the exclusion of Ontario companies and at the expense of people who are already having a hard time paying the hydro bill.

This is a government that goes on and on, in press release after press release, about openness and transparency. Well, this is a multi-billion-dollar deal that Ontarians are going to pay for through the hydro bill for not five years, not 10 years, not 15 years, but more than 20 years.

If this government believes in openness and transparency at all, it should open the books on the agreement that it has signed with Samsung, the multi-billion-dollar agreement. That’s all New Democrats want.

Ontario Power Generation has to come before a legislative committee, and they have to answer questions. If they’re digging a tunnel in Niagara Falls for more hydro power, they have to come and answer questions. If they’re doing nuclear refurbishment at Darlington, they have to come and answer questions. They have to talk about how much it’s going to cost and they have to talk about how long it’s going to take. Similarly with Hydro One: If Hydro One is going to build new transmission lines, they have to come before the government agencies committee and answer questions. How much is it going to cost? What are the future costs going to be? What would it save us if we practised more conservation and

energy efficiency such that we didn’t need this transmission line? They have to come and answer questions. Why is the Liberal government doing this deal with Samsung in the back room, without transparency, without openness, and setting it up in such a way that neither the Ontario Power Authority nor this government can be questioned as to the legitimate issues that electricity consumers in Ontario need to know about and ought to know about?

New Democrats will be voting for this resolution. We’ll be voting for it because there is no defence for this kind of backroom deal, which is going to force Ontario electricity consumers to pay through the nose for years and years to come at a time when this could have been done differently, could have saved people money and could have gotten us, New Democrats argue, an even better result.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: This is a motion that is an absolute delight to stand and speak to.

I guess if you oppose the generation of electricity unless it’s by burning fossil fuels, the best way to secure your choice—and if your choice is to kill all forms of non-polluting energy, that’s basically what this one is all about. It is in fact the “drown green energy in paper” resolution.

The PC energy harangue—it would be inaccurate indeed to call it a policy—is a confused mishmash of contradictions, platitudes and non-statements, so let’s sort it out. Let us sort out what exactly the PC energy strategy is. It actually has four pillars: (1) blame the Liberals; (2) do nothing, and run your generation and transmission infrastructure into the ground; (3) burn coal and ignore the consequences; and (4) buy electricity on the US spot market and add the bill to the stranded debt that the Conservatives created and dumped on Ontarians. Those are your four pillars of the PC energy strategy.

It’s instructive to ask where exactly Ontario was when voters, in their righteous indignation, ushered the Progressive Conservative Party out of power in 2003. We lived on the knife edge of rolling blackouts. The system held together only because the Progressive Conservative government of the day bought power on the US spot market at prices that are between 50% and 150% higher than those paid to the highest feed-in tariff contracts, those of solar power. They added \$1 billion in pointless debt to your electricity bill by just tacking it on to the stranded debt that they themselves created when they broke up the old Ontario Hydro into Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One, and they had the Ontario taxpayer assume the debt that the former Ontario Hydro used to offer in bonds, whose interest was paid mainly to Ontarians. That’s the thing that’s on your bill. Listen carefully to the debate and look at the people who created that thing on your bill.

They created Hydro One to transmit electricity and Ontario Power Generation to generate electricity and then hid them from scrutiny by the Auditor General, so that

the pledge in this resolution to have the Auditor General review the Samsung contract rings awfully, awfully hollow.

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The opposition's conduct while in government is perhaps an example of what their conduct would be in the future. Let's have a look at the past and see if it's instructive. Paul Rhodes, Leslie Noble, Tom Long and Michael Gourley shared \$5.9 million in untendered contracts from Hydro One under the former Progressive Conservative government for everything from communications advice to training programs. And these individuals were well-connected senior advisers to the Progressive Conservative government of the day. In many cases, Hydro One couldn't find any evidence of any work done for the money that they paid.

I have a very instructive booklet here, and it's called "Building Ontario's New Foundations: Energy for the Future." I believe it's a draft of the Progressive Conservative energy policy. I think it's time to have a quick look at it. I just wish there was a little more time to deal with it.

Let me quote verbatim. They claim their policy is, and I use the words in the document exactly, to "invest in demand management to shift peaks in consumption to off hours." That's time of use. If you believe in time of use, why won't you vote for it when it's offered to you? Our government has offered it. This is part of what you claim in your own document, that, as a party, you believe in in your document, but you won't vote for it in the Legislature.

I think they really owe Ontarians an explanation.

But here's why you're not going to get that explanation. I'm going to quote from the document again. It says, and here are the words exactly: "Finding the right balance of generation sources is a difficult proposition." They don't know how to do it. Ontario has got a plan to secure our energy future now and in the decades to come, and this motion here, which says, "We want to take a part of that critical component of our energy future, which is green energy, and we want to stall it in legalistic red tape; we want to drown it in paper," is typical of a party whose only solutions to Ontario's energy problems are (1) blame the Liberals, (2) do nothing, (3) burn coal, and (4) buy power on the spot market. They don't know how to do it.

Here's one that I think Ontario really ought to hear. They say, and let's use the words again exactly: "Natural gas-fired generation will play a targeted but critical role in meeting Ontario's energy needs. Gas-fired generation has a number of attractive features: It can be built quickly"—listen carefully now—"it can be located to relieve transmission bottlenecks; and it can be used for district energy and cogeneration." Hey, Oakville, guess who's bringing back the natural gas plant. Hi, Mississauga. Guess what you would be looking at if that party over there ever again assumed power. Burning natural gas—unbelievable; absolutely unbelievable.

They talk here about the subject of their own motion, wind power. They talk about wind power. I'm looking

through this document to say, "Show me, somewhere, what your plans are for wind." They talk about surveys from the Canadian Wind Energy Association, they talk about wind power becoming increasingly competitive, and then they say, "Until actual wind generation information from provincial resources is available, the capacity and energy contributions from these projects," blah, blah, blah. In other words, "We have no intention of ever building it, but until the data from having built it are available, we won't make a decision on wind power." This is the whole point and purpose of this ludicrous motion, and that's one of the reasons why this particular motion is not going to win support in this House today. Like everything in the Progressive Conservative energy platform, it is contradictory; it makes no sense whatsoever. It comes down to the same status quo, do nothing, buy power on the US market, blame the Liberals and burn coal solutions that Ontarians said no to seven years ago and will say no to next year. No sensible nation on the face of this earth has ever and will ever embrace a policy as silly as that being offered to Ontario by the Progressive Conservative Party.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate? The member for Thornhill.

Mr. Peter Shurman: Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for remembering the name of Thornhill.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Shurman: And you did.

I can refute the last eight minutes by saying this simply to open, and that is, the only reason that the government of Ontario today, the Liberal Party of Dalton McGuinty, will vote against this motion is because that government doesn't want to release details of this deal because they're covering up the details of this—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Member for Thornhill, I'd just ask that you temper the language to a parliamentary tone.

Mr. Peter Shurman: I withdraw that term.

The only reason that they don't want to vote for this motion is because they don't want the details of what they've negotiated to become public.

I am pleased to be on my feet in the House today in support of the PC caucus motion calling on the McGuinty government to open up the books on the Samsung deal. Do you know, the term "Samsung," where I come from, has become a verb? When you open your electricity bill, you look at it and you say, "Goodness me, I've been Samsunged." I've heard it, knocking on doors in Thornhill.

If the McGuinty Liberals are creating any jobs with this, they're overseas. This deal is not a real deal if its details cannot be disclosed. Ontario taxpayers are footing the bill for it. Ontario taxpayers are the people who supplied the money to fund this deal, and Ontario taxpayers have a right to know the details of this deal.

My position personally, and certainly the position of this caucus—and let's deal with this and not everything. This mega-sole-source contract—my position is well-known in this House. I was driving home—I remember

this well—from Niagara on the day that the announcement was made; I think it was in January. I listened to it on the radio and I couldn't believe my ears. We've done a sole-source deal with a company overseas that, while well-known for its computer products and televisions, has built only one wind turbine, at that point on test in a field in California, and that's what we're going to turn over our wind industry to so that the McGuinty government can have a legacy. I was shocked. A Tim Hudak government will not make any deals like this, and we will get to the bottom of this one.

To begin with, we would not have addressed renewable energy, which my friend from Mississauga—Streetsville was talking about, in this way. You want to know, sir, how we would address it. I could start with, for example, the fact that while George Smitherman was looking at wind, Quebec was signing a deal with Vermont and New Hampshire to supply 225 megawatts of hydroelectric power, the most amazing renewable source of power in the world, at six cents per kilowatt hour for 25 years—225 megawatts.

Where were we? Why weren't we spending Ontario taxpayers' money making the connection, if you will, as opposed to tilting at windmills, which we did? We instead signed up for \$7 billion with Samsung, plus the subsidies, so that Samsung could build a wind business on its behalf and we could pay for it.

If we were in the business of looking at wind, why were we not talking to other companies that had developed expertise? Siemens would be an example, General Electric would be an example. Go to Denmark, where they do so much on the wind front. But at what cost, you still have to ask?

1620

We are still in the midst of this wrong-headed Liberal policy of picking winners and losers. Samsung won and we lost.

The true role of government in the critic portfolio that I wear, economic development, should be to create conditions for success, and the conditions for success will attract unilateral corporate interest and private interest in investment in our province. That's how you do it. You put in the appropriate tax incentives, special assistance to promote particular kinds of investment you want. You don't hand off to one company the job of fulfilling what you want to create so that you can have a legacy or say that you're in the renewable energy business. You talk about not having a policy. In there, my friends, you hear the makings of a reasonable policy in developing renewable energy that is affordable.

Ontarians strongly suspect that the Samsung deal does not pass the smell test. We know that it was, for example, a huge question mark in, of all things, the Toronto mayoralty debate, where it wasn't discussed because it wasn't appropriate to the municipal discussion. People don't know where the levels of government change from one to another. But I assure you and I assure the government that this will be a major talking point as we move toward the election in October 2011. This deal

never should have happened, but at the very least you should be voting in favour of exposing it to the public here in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Kormos: The member for Kenora—Rainy River has already made it very clear that New Democrats support this resolution—we'll be supporting it in the vote later today—and are extremely troubled at the government refusing to be even dragged, kicking and screaming, into revealing what is at the heart of this deal. We know there's a whole lot of money involved. You know that, don't you? It's not just thousands; it's billions of dollars involved here—a whole lot of money. You know that when you've got millions and billions of dollars involved, you've got the prospect of corruption. The public will draw the appropriate inferences in that regard from the refusal of the government to reveal—this isn't a deal. We talk about a deal. This is an arrangement. You talk about a deal when you get a good deal. You get a deal. This isn't a good deal. It's a good deal for Samsung—no two ways about it.

This is what's frustrating. This is the problem. You do an FOI request for the arrangement and you get—I'm going to recycle this paper because, Lord knows, we paid for it. You've got to pay for freedom of information. We can put this right back in the photocopier because it's blank page after blank page.

So, we've got a couple of issues here. One, you've got a government that's making a mockery of freedom of information. You've got a Dalton McGuinty government that assured and promised voters that it was going to be more transparent, that it was going to be more accessible. Here you have a government that is stubbornly refusing to let the people of Ontario know because the people are going to pay every penny of the billions of dollars involved here. Make no mistake about it.

As if people aren't hurting bad enough already. Heck, we've got HST added to electricity bills. We've got electricity bills rising because of the not-so-smart meters and so-called time of use. Then we've got HST added to that, and you've got electricity bills just skyrocketing for family after family, and people finding it increasingly more difficult to live in their own homes.

Those rates are going to be even more shocking come the winter months when the furnace motor is turning on and off, because what we do know is that the two biggest electricity consumers in the house are the refrigerator motor for the compressor and the furnace motor. So people ain't seen nothing yet, as has been pointed out so many times during the course of question period and various comments on various pieces of legislation here in the chamber.

Heck, especially when you're up north, when you're up in northern Ontario, you have no control over the weather, over the temperature. You can't say, "Well, we'll only turn the furnace on for a couple of hours at so-called low-demand times." You've got some whacky propositions out there about telling people to save their

laundry for Saturday. You might as well save your bathing for Saturday, too. As the member for Timmins—James Bay said, “When are kids supposed to do their homework? Are they supposed to do it at 11 o’clock at night so they can do it in low-demand times? Gosh. It’s incredibly arrogant and pompous, isn’t it, on the part of this government?”

There are going to be a whole lot of folks on the government side who are going to understand viscerally the meaning of the word “hubris” in relatively short order. They’re going to be like Icarus, and they will find that plummet to be a breathtaking one on, I suspect, October 5 or 6—less than a year away; less than 12 months away.

I find it troubling that this government, when it is so incredibly unpopular with the people of Ontario—and it is—digs its heels in on this rather modest proposal. Gosh: Eighty-six per cent of Ontarians say it’s harder now to make ends meet than it was two years ago. Good grief. That means only 14% don’t think it’s harder now than it was two years ago. And gosh, if there’s a margin of error of, let’s say, four points, it could be as many as 90%—or I suppose the Liberal caucus members might take some comfort in the fact that it’s only 82%. But then, even more striking, 76% of Ontarians say they would like to see another party in power. When you’ve only got 24% of the population, you don’t get—heck, there’s going to have to be some sort of bizarre fourth-party status designed for the few Liberals who find their way back, and I hope some do. I find some of them rather delightful people. Not all of them, but some of them are rather delightful people.

So I can’t understand, for the life of me, why the government is not only digging its heels in but then engaging in this incredibly partisan attack on the official opposition, as much as saying to them, “How dare you bring this motion to the floor of this chamber? How dare you?”

Mr. Khalil Ramal: Because it doesn’t make sense.

Mr. Peter Kormos: That’s what the member from that riding says. The member from that riding who just interjected, whose interjection is now on the record, clearly doesn’t understand the issue here. He just can’t make sense of it, and I understand that. I appreciate that he has difficulty making sense of this.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Revealing things to the public and removing the veil of secrecy wouldn’t make sense to a Liberal.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Of course not. The member from Renfrew interjects.

So it’s not only a matter of simply not supporting the motion; it’s then engaging in these partisan attacks on what is a most non-partisan motion. As a matter of fact, I’m disappointed in the Conservative caucus. This is an opposition day. We have a scarce supply of opposition days. I usually see the official opposition Conservatives coming forward with far more partisan opposition day motions, calling for the fall of the government and calling for the resignation of a particular cabinet minister, the cabinet minister of the day; whoever happens to have been twittering or tweeting.

So you have the most benign of motions here, the most non-partisan of proposals, one where we could even bridge that huge gulf between the left-wing New Democrats and the right-wing Conservatives and find common ground. Who’d have thought? Who’d have thought that the Conservatives could come forward with something so benign—and I don’t want to belittle the phrase—so commonsensical that even the New Democrats join with them? The Conservatives here have bridged the gap, and somehow the Liberals want to be the fifth wheel here. They want to be the odd person out. They also want to keep Ontarians and, most importantly, Ontario’s electricity consumers in the dark.

Take a look at the little bit that we do know, and that is that Samsung—it got a deal. Make no mistake about it. The taxpayers of Ontario didn’t and the electricity consumers didn’t, but Samsung got a deal here; got the deal of a lifetime. It’s going to be paid 13.5 cents a kilowatt hour for the wind power it produces. But, heck, compare that to the real world, and we find that in Manitoba, for instance, it’s less than six cents a kilowatt hour for wind power. In Texas, down in the United States, again, less than six cents a kilowatt hour for wind power. Yet Samsung cut itself some slick sweetheart deal here with a promise of 13.5 cents per kilowatt hour for wind power.

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And then solar power—wow. Solar power: almost 45 cents per kilowatt hour. Forty-five cents per kilowatt hour: Do you know what that’s going to do to your electricity bills? Because the folks who are watching this and the folks who are paying close attention to this whole issue know darn well what has happened to their electricity bills already, never mind when they start forking out almost 45 cents per kilowatt hour. You might as well get rolls of toonies and just keep feeding them into—it will be like playing a slot machine to keep the electricity on in the house, to keep the fridge going. People are being ground to the ground by the McGuinty Liberals here at Queen’s Park, and now they find—look, I know the phrase “cover-up” is unparliamentary, which is why I’m loath—and not even just loath; I’m disinclined—to call this a cover-up. But it’s obvious that the Liberals are concealing—

Mr. John Yakabuski: The details of the deal.

Mr. Peter Kormos: —the details of this arrangement, this sweetheart deal by Samsung. The Liberals haven’t even been able to utter the notorious observation that this was not a tendered deal; this was a sweetheart deal. This deal involved an awful lot of pillow talk, but I’ll tell you who’s going to get the shaft at the end of the day: It’s going to be electricity payers, electricity consumers.

The Liberals, in the course of this afternoon’s debate or during the whole course of this scandal of the sweetheart deal with Samsung, are thoroughly disinclined to mention the name George Smitherman. Now, it seems that everywhere Mr. Smitherman has gone, the people of Ontario have had to pay out big time. Whether it’s a billion plus on an eHealth scandal or then millions and billions more on eHealth, the sequel—that’s the scandal,

of course, that's ongoing now with respect to consultant and lobbyist fees, and we're going to get around to consultants and lobbyists, because you can draw the obvious inference that there were a whole lot of consultants and lobbyists involved in this sweetheart deal with Samsung. We'll get to that in just a minute or two or three. Obviously, the people of Toronto don't trust George Smitherman with their budget, with their hard-earned tax dollars. I say that the mere fact alone that this deal was spawned by George Smitherman should cause concern.

I am amazed that Liberal backbenchers—because Liberal backbenchers don't know the details either. They've not been told. They've not been told what the blank spots are all about. They've not been told what the guarantees are in terms of revenues and profits for Samsung. They've not been told how the deal came about. They're in the dark. They're being given the mushroom treatment. And you know what that is, don't you, the mushroom treatment? The Liberal backbenchers, even as caucus members who are expected to support that government, the Liberal government, are being denied even the most basic details around the Samsung deal.

It seems to me that the Liberal backbenchers should be mad as hell. They should be outraged. They should be ticked off. I understand that they're in ill humour, because when 76% of Ontarians say they want to see another party in power, it means that, well, a whole lot of folks across the way here, Liberals, had better start preparing resumés. There are places downtown that hire daily—private manpower places where you show up at 6 in the morning and you can get hired on for the day. I don't know whether some of them will find themselves lining up at 6 in the morning, but then that would involve work, which is problematic as well. Because, again, as I've had occasion to tell people, there's not a whole lot of heavy lifting that goes on around here. It's not particularly dangerous work. The occasional paper cut and the more than occasional bruised ego are the extent of the injuries that politicians suffer on the job.

We—this Parliament, this assembly—should be able to speak as one voice calling upon the government to release details of this sweetheart deal with Samsung. The motion calls upon the government to make the terms of the Samsung contract public, again, particularly with respect to performance indicators—in other words, just how sweet was the deal? Was it just a spoonful of sugar or was it a huge dump truck full of sugar to sweeten it up?—penalty provisions, any dates either side can terminate the contract with or without penalty, who signed the contract, who negotiated the contract, and also, very importantly, who lobbied for the contract on the government's behalf.

We've got other legislation that's before this assembly that deals very specifically, the government says—they purport that it deals specifically—with the scandal around high-priced, well-connected, politically connected lobbyists and consultants. And you know darn well that a sweetheart package like this Samsung deal wasn't put together without the participation—expensive participa-

tion—of high-priced lobbyists and consultants. You just know darn well that that didn't happen. And it didn't happen without more than a few high-priced dinners and more than a few bar tabs that would shock the average Ontarian, because at these high-priced dinners, nobody's drinking the stuff out of the plastic bottles; it's the high-end stuff that's being consumed.

So you can bet your boots that lobbyists were involved here. You can bet your boots that lobbyists are still involved. You can bet your boots that—

Mr. John Yakabuski: I wonder if there was money put into the mayoralty campaign.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Oh, an interesting observation that my colleague from Renfrew makes. “Hmm,” the member for Welland says. How interesting. Because, of course, that's right: Joe Pantalone disclosed his contributors a week ago, before the election in Toronto; Rob Ford disclosed his financial supporters and contributions; but George Smitherman didn't. Hmph. I don't know how Hansard's going to do a “hmp,” but I think it's h-m-p-h, or something to that effect. Hansard understands a “hmp” when they hear one. But hmp, Smitherman didn't disclose his.

I suppose the point at which it is disclosed—that is to say, Smitherman's bankrollers, the people who were bankrolling his unsuccessful campaign—I suppose it would be interesting to see.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Spectacularly unsuccessful.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It is noted.

I suppose we'll see just how intimate the relationship was, and still is, between Samsung and the people who sold the sweetheart Samsung deal to cabinet and to the Premier's office. Because that's how it happens, right? Even if you are the Deputy Premier, or were the Deputy Premier, you don't just say, “Here it is.” You've got to sell it to the Premier's office. Sometimes that means wining and dining people in the Premier's office, the political staff there. Sometimes it means leaning on the Premier. Sometimes it means calling in chits. Sometimes it means calling in favours. Sometimes it means persuading the Premier's office that the gravy train is a long one and that it could well extend into political contributions, come the next provincial campaign. I suppose Mr. Smitherman's list of bankrollers will shed a little bit of light on whether or not there was any sense of quid pro quo—you know the old “I'll scratch your back; you scratch my back” syndrome—and find out whether there was any ongoing quid pro quo.

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Let's put it this way: Can a member of the government caucus stand up today and tell us why pages 19 and 20 of the contract, as obtained through freedom of information, are totally blank? Don't tell us what's in them, but tell us why. Or, why do pages 17 and 18 have just a couple of little brackets in “e” and brackets in “d”?

There's a phrase that's overused: a redacted document. It's a misused phrase; people should understand that. Technically it's applicable, but it's a censored document. That's more accurate: censored. Not redacted; censored.

People should be careful. “Redacted” has become a catchphrasey word. It’s not quite as irritating as “fulsome,” but almost. You don’t have a redacted document; you’ve got a censored document. So tell us why, when the people of Ontario—taxpayers and electricity consumers—are paying for every penny of this sweetheart deal, they don’t have a right to know.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It seems simple.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It seems indeed, to the folks out there.

I’ve got to caution some of my hubris-riddled colleagues here that the province of Ontario does not begin and end at the intersection of Yonge and Bloor. You know that. You come from all different parts of Ontario. I know you’re less likely and more reluctant to go home on weekends now than you ever were, and when you do, you want to roll a boulder in front of the door and put blackout curtains on the windows, and if there’s a knock at the door, you’ve got to hold the dog’s mouth so it doesn’t bark and someone knows that anybody is home.

We’ve all done it. You’ve all done it.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Park the car down at the mall and walk home.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Yes, that’s right.

You’re sitting there casually and you hear a knock at the door and you say, “Honey, turn down the TV and turn the lights off. Maybe they’ll go away.” I understand that.

Mr. John Yakabuski: What are they going to do on Hallowe’en when all the trick-and-treaters are walking around?

Mr. Peter Kormos: You want to talk about tricks and treats? There’s a whole lot of trickery in this sweetheart deal with Samsung, and it’s no treat for electricity consumers.

People already feel burned by the Liberals when it comes to electricity—burned big time. Electricity rates are climbing—skyrocketing—through the roof with their so-called smart meters; over \$1 billion worth of smart meters being installed. Who do you think pays for that? Of course, it’s Jane and Joe who pay for that: hard-working folks who have just lost their good industrial value-added manufacturing jobs, those wealth-creation jobs like the 900 John Deere employees down in Welland or the Union Carbide employees. Heck, the list goes on and on—300,000 across Ontario, and perhaps even more. The ones who have been lucky enough to find new employment are working for \$10, \$11 and \$12 an hour, and maybe that’s part-time and maybe it’s not—

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: There was an interjection coming again from the member from Renfrew. I’m not sure what he’s referring to.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Maybe the minister is tweeting.

Mr. Peter Kormos: He notes.

People already feel burned big time. It’s not just burned. It isn’t just an annoyance. It’s fearful and fear-some. You’ve heard the leader of the NDP in question period after question period talk about real folks who

have been sending us emails and letters and phone calls; people from every part of Ontario—big city, small town, rural, urban, northern, southern; people frightened to open the hydro bill. They leave it sitting on the kitchen table or on the kitchen counter. They start to open it and put it down, because they’re afraid of what they’re going to discover once they open that bill, once they pull the tab of that envelope.

People in Ontario know that it’s the McGuinty government’s not-so-smart meters that have forced hydro bills up. Add to that the HST, a brand new tax on electricity that has never existed before in the province of Ontario, and you’ve got electricity rates that are insufferable.

People have already learned, at least down where I come from, that you don’t leave lights on when you leave a room. People have already learned that you turn the thermostat down if you’re not going to be home. People have already learned that you don’t keep opening and closing the fridge door. The pages learn that. They learn that from their parents, and they learn that as much, much younger kids. How many times were the pages told—they didn’t have to be told too many times, “Quit opening the refrigerator door. What are you doing—trying to cool the outdoors?” So our youngest citizens know about preserving and conserving electricity. But there’s only just so much you can do. We’ve heard tragic stories about people on life-sustaining equipment that uses electricity, and they can’t choose to turn it off. Do you understand what I’m saying? They don’t have that choice.

As I say, as the winter months approach, don’t forget, there’s a whole chunk of Ontario—down in southern Ontario, we take natural gas for granted—a huge part of Ontario that relies on either propane, and they’ve got to deliver it; or oil, but you can’t run a kitchen stove on oil; or for heat as well as cooking—electricity.

And how many apartment dwellers are in electricity-only units, because they were cheap to build? The developers built them with electricity, and quite frankly, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, heck, hydro needed cash flow, so they were advertising, “Live better electrically.” Ontario Hydro was promoting it. At the moment, as I say, they needed the cash flow.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Hot water: People bathe and take showers; kids bathe and take showers. You have to wash dishes, and you have to cook with heated water.

For the life of me, I don’t look forward to the next several months as our constituency office is going to be burdened, because people are angry, but they’re also, more importantly, afraid. Do you understand what I’m saying? They’re scared, desperate, and the ones I talk to say that an election in October 2011 is not soon enough. They would gladly agree with the proposition that we should do it sooner rather than later, because they’re scared, and it’s not false fear; it’s legitimate fear.

The income here in this chamber is—what?—a minimum six-digit income for members, unfortunately not for

the biggest chunk of the staff, who work very, very hard. So maybe it's hard for some folks who are here in the chamber to understand what it's like to live on \$22,000 a year. Down where I come from, people live on that, and not just single people. People raise kids on less than \$22,000 a year, they do, and by God, they do a pretty good job of it too.

I'm not talking about people making \$100,000 plus, \$120,000, \$130,000—the Premier's salary, I don't know what that is—\$160,000 or \$170,000 a year. I'm talking about seniors who live on less than \$1,000 a month. They do. I'm talking about young families who work hard and do all the right things and don't break laws and still find a little bit of money to contribute to the church plate when it passes on Sunday morning, if that's when they go to church.

The Liberal government's attack on those people, by virtue of the increased electricity rates and the even higher electricity rates that are going to flow from the sweetheart deal with Samsung, is going to force people out of their homes. It's going to create homelessness. I've talked to a few city clerks, people in the treasury departments in city halls around Niagara. They've never seen a higher rate of tax default. You've got three years; you can be in arrears for three years before the city lists your property as a tax sale. These people tell me that they've never seen higher rates of tax defaults. Nobody wants to lose their home in a tax sale. People are hoping against hope that somehow, something will happen. Well, it will happen. It will be an election in October of next year.

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People are saying, "I've got one year. I will not pay taxes. I've got to pay these other bills," and they're getting further and further behind. I'm told that never have people witnessed as high a rate of unpaid property taxes. This isn't by scam artists; it isn't by people who are, by nature, defaulters.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It affects the municipality's budget.

Mr. Peter Kormos: That's right: Municipalities are then left having to borrow money instead of—bank interest rates are low for municipalities. But then, municipalities find themselves, hoping against hope, up against the debt wall.

I want to hear from more government members. As a matter of fact, I'm going to relinquish the floor so that we can hear from government members. I want them to explain why they're happy that their Premier won't let them know what's in this sweetheart deal with Samsung.

Just what about "Ignorance is bliss" do these Liberal members find so delightful? How is it that they feel they can be true to their constituencies, their voters and their electorate and not join in this call for clarity and transparency, the transparency that Premier McGuinty promised? Why, for the life of me, would Liberal backbenchers not use this opportunity to perform their role? Their role is to keep an eye on the executive of this province, an eye on the government. Just as it's the opposition's role to play

an oversight role, it's backbenchers' role to keep their Premier's office in check as well. I, for the life of me, don't know why these caucus members on the Liberal benches are believing their Premier, House leader etc. who rail at them during caucus meetings, telling them, "Don't worry; everything's going to be all right." Everything is not going to be all right, friends. Everything's very, very bad, and the news is not good; it's very, very, very bad news. Premier Dad is no longer Premier Dad; he's Premier Bad, in the views of 76% of Ontarians; 76% of Ontarians say it's time for another party to be in power. Come October 2011, I'm sure that will happen.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I'm pleased to stand up to speak to the opposition day motion and learn about the Samsung deal.

When I came to this chamber, I came with an open mind. "Yes, there are good questions. Let's go listen to them and see what they have to offer." Everyone should know. I learned, after I did a lot of research, that every person from the public, every stakeholder, the opposition party and the third party have a right to know about the details if they apply for freedom of information, and they can get the information; they can get the details. In the meantime, they came to this House talking about nonsense, trying to confuse the people out there. I know that that party, the opposition party, the party of darkness, put Ontario in the dark in 2002-03 because they didn't invest in energy; they didn't invest in new generation.

Due to the energy act, I think we're creating more than 50,000 jobs. We're allowing the people across the province of Ontario to participate: in my city of London, Windsor, Welland, Kingston, Ottawa, Guelph and the north, every spot across the province of Ontario. Many different Ontarian companies are participating in the Green Energy Act and are creating clean energy for the people of Ontario. They're giving them the chance to have clean air. They can breathe, be healthy and also save our environment.

I know the opposition party has no sense of business. That's why they're driving business away. Also, the third party, the member from Welland and the member from Kenora-Rainy River, spoke for a few minutes, talking about creating generation. When they were in power, they drove out the deal that would connect us with Manitoba to create a good energy—

Mr. Jeff Leal: The Conawapa project.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: Yes, 100%. What happened to it? They killed it. They have no interest in creating jobs. That's why, on this side of the House, we strongly believe in clean energy. We strongly believe in attracting business to this province and helping companies to come and invest in Ontario.

It's important to keep the lights on. We are the party of light; they are the party of darkness. It's clear to everyone across the province of Ontario, from the speeches in this House, who supports them, who is trying to create jobs for them, who's trying to keep the lights on for them.

We believe in seniors. We believe in working people. We believe in hard-working Ontarians who on a daily basis are working to provide for themselves and for their families. They deserve to have the lights on. They deserve to utilize our energy. They deserve to have clean energy. They deserve to go outside in the garden or walk in the street and breathe clean air. That's what we're trying to do.

I know that the opposition party doesn't like to see that. They are jealous of the creation of jobs. When I looked at the record, as a result of the clean energy act, I saw a lot of job creation, from Welland to London to Windsor to Ottawa to Guelph to Peterborough—every part of the province participating and helping us to create clean energy to provide for the people of Ontario.

That's why, when I came this afternoon to the House with an open mind to listen to the opposition party, I said, "You know, they have legitimate questions on why we don't open it up." What I discovered is that every person has the right to apply through freedom of information and get the details. They get all the information. I was shocked. What are they talking about? What are they asking about? They just want to stand up in their place and bash the government, because when they were in power, they did nothing. They put Ontario in the dark. When the third party was in power, they cancelled all the contracts; they cancelled all the deals with Manitoba to give us cheap energy. Now they're standing up in their places and telling the people of Ontario wrong information about the future of our green energy, about the future of this province. After listening to them, I am now a stronger believer in our energy act.

That's why I'm going to vote against this, because you know what? They offer nothing. They talk about nothing. There's no substance.

Interjection: No policy.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: No policy—nothing; no vision for the people of Ontario. I was hoping, when I came this afternoon, to listen to the opposition party tell me something substantial, something with some substance in the opposition motion. Do you know what? Honestly, when I come here every day, I would like to listen to the opposition, to know a little bit more about their side, about their story, to make decisions. But tonight it was clear and obvious: They didn't offer me anything. They didn't tell me anything.

Also, the opposition party, talking about openness, about being open to the people of Ontario—we learned a lot from the party in Ottawa, when they signed a \$16-billion deal to buy planes. There were no details. People didn't know what they were signing for. They paid \$16 billion, the Conservative party that governs this nation. They signed a lot of deals with no clearance, with no details.

Interjection: Was it \$16 million?

Mr. Khalil Ramal: It was \$16 billion: B, not M.

Now the opposition party comes into this place talking to us about openness and being open with the people of Ontario. We are the most open government. We are

honest with our people. We are the people who try on a daily basis to attract business to this province, to attract companies to come and help us to build this province and create good jobs. If we had listened to the opposition party, we wouldn't have 50,000 jobs in clean energy. We wouldn't see the lights today. We would be walking in the dark. That's what you'd like to do.

We are the party of light and the people; and they, the party of dark.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's a pleasure to join the debate and support PC leader Tim Hudak and my colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, who is our energy critic. As part of this motion, we have called, and I believe rightfully, on the government to provide us in the chamber, but also all Ontarians, a list of who lobbied on behalf of Samsung or other special interests as part of the green energy investment agreement.

The reason we have done this, whether you're in Nepean–Carlton or the whole city of Ottawa or anywhere else in all of Ontario, is because our constituents have several and serious questions about this deal.

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Not a single lobbyist is registered on the Ontario lobbyist registry to lobby the government on behalf of Samsung. We have a lot of questions about what this deal is, who made the deal and ultimately, why it was signed. It's simply inconceivable that a deal of this size and scope was made completely in secret without Samsung lobbying the government for this special, sole-sourced contract. PC leader Tim Hudak will often say that this is the largest sole-sourced contract in history since the pyramids were built. The Korean green energy investment agreement, the Samsung subsidy deal, is a sole-sourced \$7-billion deal that sprung up literally out of nowhere.

Our Truth in Government Act that I personally put forward in May last year and that was introduced, but voted down by the government, would have required the government to make all contracts over \$10,000 available to the public: posted online on a government website. In this case, we're talking about \$7 billion, not \$10,000, and it's \$7 billion that is being spent outside of the province of Ontario. In contrast to the \$10,000 limit we were putting forward in the opposition, this \$7-billion deal comes and we don't know who negotiated it, who pitched it or any of the other important details, including performance indicators. That's why we're asking for the Liberals today to come clean and provide us with that list of who lobbied.

It's also, we believe, a reason why—and I'll use this quote—members of the cabinet so-called "gang-tackled" former energy minister George Smitherman, according to a Toronto Star article of October 28, 2009, when they learned of the deal. The Star also reported that ministers feared that the deal would "mean billions of dollars in subsidies to Samsung." That means Ontario dollars being exported out of this province into another country

altogether. That's a shame. Even members of the Liberal caucus were shocked when the details started to emerge.

On January 23, 2010, the Toronto Star ran a story about the Samsung deal quoting several angry Liberal MPPs. We'd like to know who they are, but they were all anonymous at the time. Let me read into the record the quotes from members of the Liberal Party, many of whom are probably in this chamber today.

On January 23, they said, "We're afraid it's going to blow up in our faces—just like the HST." They said, "People were"—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): On a point of order, the member for Peterborough.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I'm told that it's correct parliamentary procedure that when you name members you have to identify ridings, not just in a general way.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Yes. I'm listening, and I didn't hear any name mentioned. If I missed it, I apologize. Continue.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm really pleased that the member for Peterborough is paying attention, because it could have been him who said, "People were"—and I can't say this word—ticked off "that there was no chance to discuss this. Zero. We didn't get to talk about the pros and the cons. (The Premier's office) basically said, 'Here are the talking points; end of story.'" End of story. That's from a Liberal MPP.

Of course, my personal favourite—and I have no idea which Liberal MPP said this, but it's a tongue twister for sure: "The morale in caucus is lower than a gutter snake ... on a back country road."

I can understand why Liberal MPPs showed up here today to continually try to cover this deal up: because they're scared—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Member for Nepean–Carleton, even the way you said it I could see it coming. So withdraw, please.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I withdraw, but the reality is, we have serious questions on this side of the House. They may not want to share them, but I am going to ask them anyway, so here they are. How can this Liberal Party say to us that not a single lobbyist registered on behalf of Samsung in the entire lobby registry? The McGuinty government must come clean today and they must release the details of this deal. The people of Ontario expect it, my constituents expect it, and they will adjudicate on your behaviour come October.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to speak on this very important issue.

It has been amusing to hear the oppositions members' journey through fantasy land through this whole debate. Let me get one fact straight, because I've heard it again and again and it's absolutely, factually incorrect: Samsung is investing \$7 billion in Ontario. Let me repeat, because this is a very important fact: Samsung is investing \$7 billion of foreign investors' money right here in Ontario to create jobs for Ontarians. That is a very

important point. If I would have told you, those who are listening from home, that a company is investing \$1 billion in Ontario, you would be saying, "Wow, that's great." If I would have said a company is investing \$2 billion in Ontario, you would have said, "That's great—creating jobs, especially in these tumultuous economic times." In this instance, Samsung, a foreign company, along with a consortium, have decided to invest \$7 billion in this province to create 16,000 jobs. That is what this agreement is about, and we, collectively, should be very happy. We should be excited. We should be applauding this great investment that is being made in our province to create new jobs for hard-working Ontarians. We should be very, very excited about that. We should not be criticizing that.

As a result of this investment, not only will Samsung be creating 16,000 jobs, they will also be creating 2,500 megawatts of wind and solar power. That is putting clean energy in our supply mix. That's what we are talking about. And it is as a result of the Green Energy Act that we are creating these jobs, that we have created such an attractive environment for investment in this province that you've got companies from around the world investing to the tune of \$7 billion. We should be very careful, other members should be very careful how they cast that money.

We can already see what these investments mean. Just yesterday—and this is an interesting fact; members may not know this. Just last night, we had the highest record of wind energy production in the province of Ontario. You know how much wind energy was produced last night in Ontario? One thousand and fifty-six megawatts of energy was produced, clean energy which we will be consuming.

Interjection.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: That's two Pickering reactors, the member from Mississauga–Streetsville tells me. That is the kind of investment that we are making.

But Samsung is not the only company that is creating jobs because of green energy. There are a lot of Canadian companies also creating jobs in communities that you and I collectively represent. Let me state some of them. Solar module and mounting facilities located in Windsor are creating 375 jobs. Solar panel inverter manufacturing facilities in Guelph are creating 800 jobs. A solar panel manufacturing facility in Kingston is creating 1,200 jobs. A solar semi-conductor plant in Oakville is creating 200 jobs. And here's my favourite one: In the great riding of Welland, represented by member Peter Kormos, solar manufacturing is helping to create 1,000 jobs. I want to know if the member for Welland is against these 1,000 good-paying jobs that have been created in his community because of the Green Energy Act. In London, 300 jobs; Sarnia–Lambton, 800 jobs; Kingsville, 300 jobs; Lakeshore, 300 jobs; Timmins–James Bay, 800 jobs; Niagara Falls, 230 jobs; Leeds–Grenville, Middlesex, Oxford, Simcoe, and Lanark, about 2,500 jobs.

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I can go on and on, and you can start adding this up. These are good jobs that are being created right here

in our province, and what we should all be doing collectively is that we should be cheering on these jobs. We should be doing the work necessary here to make sure that these jobs come to fruition and actually create green energy for our province of Ontario. This is a win-win for our province. This puts us—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I ask the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek to come to order.

Mr. Paul Miller: I just asked a question.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Well, now I've answered it. So come to order.

Mr. Paul Miller: You're always picking on me.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): You don't even know what "picking on" is, I'll tell you.

Mr. Paul Miller: Oh, I do.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Just try me.

Ottawa Centre.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I just want to say in conclusion that I think this is a win-win situation for our province, that not only will we be creating green energy, a clean source of energy for our youth while making Ontario a leader in the generation of renewable energy, but we're also creating good 21st-century jobs for good, hard-working Ontarians. Thousands of jobs have been created.

That is what the Samsung agreement is all about. It's an investment of \$7 billion in the province of Ontario. We should all agree and applaud that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'm certainly very pleased to speak to this opposition day motion today, which basically calls upon the McGuinty government to make the terms of the Samsung contract public, including performance indicators, penalty provisions, any dates either side can terminate the contract with or without penalty, who signed the contract, who negotiated the contract or lobbied for the contract on the government's behalf, and subsidies included in the contract and total cost to ratepayers.

When I consider what has happened regarding the Samsung contract, I look and I see the worst part about debating something like this Samsung subsidy deal is that we know nothing, absolutely nothing, about what's in the deal, and we have absolutely no information as to whether or not it is in the best interests of Ontario families and businesses. However, most people now would recognize and say it is probably not in the best interests of Ontario families and businesses. We know only a few things about the deal.

Number one, we know that the energy minister who signed the final deal was on the job for only three days before he put his pen to paper.

Number two, we know that the former energy minister who brokered the deal had to be, and this is how it was printed, "gang-tackled" by Dalton McGuinty's cabinet when he told them what was in the deal.

Number three, we know that the deal will pay Samsung special subsidies above and beyond what other Ontario businesses receive under the FIT program. So this raises a question for taxpayers: Who is making up the difference? Unfortunately, there's only one answer. We know the answer. It is the taxpayers, Ontario families and businesses, who will be paying this subsidy to the Korean conglomerate.

We also know that despite the government's claims, this deal will result in minuscule job creation.

What else do we know? We know it's a 20-year-long commitment that was made without any consultation. It was made completely by secret negotiations, without a single lobbyist registered in Ontario's lobbyist registry.

We know that no one—not industry professionals, not the Auditor General, not Ontario-owned wind energy companies, not even members of this House—had an opportunity to examine this deal, a 20-year deal that is going to have a significant impact on the economy of this province.

As we have said, other than the announcement and a string of ministerial directives, we have absolutely no idea of what is in this deal. The Liberals will not release their long-term energy plan, if they have one, or the impact of the bill's projections. So we have no details. There has been absolutely no transparency and no attempt to show any fairness.

What we need now is for the Samsung subsidy deal to be made public, so that Ontario families and businesses can finally judge for themselves whether or not it provides good value for money. We need to find out what the McGuinty government is hiding, we need to know what the short- and long-term implications are, and finally, we need to know—we absolutely need to know—what the impact of the Samsung subsidy deal is going to be on investment in Ontario and future economic growth.

I hope the Liberal caucus will support the opposition day motion and get to the bottom of this deal.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm pleased to be able to rise in debate on this motion. In direct response to the motion, I think we need to have a little bit of information on the table, because there's been a fair bit of hysteria here this afternoon.

First off, it's important for folks to understand that Ontario has, in fact, negotiated an agreement with the Korean consortium, which is comprised of Samsung, the Korea Electric Power Corp. and some other partners, and that this will lead to both energy generation investments and manufacturing facilities being constructed here in Ontario. The crucial piece of information that keeps getting lost in the comments across the way is that this means that Samsung and their partners will be bringing \$7 billion to Ontario and investing \$7 billion in Ontario business, not the reverse. Ontario taxpayers aren't paying Samsung \$7 billion; Samsung is bringing \$7 billion to us. The agreement stems from the opportunities created for developers and investors through Ontario's Green Energy

Act and is expected to be among the first of many major investments to result from the leadership position that Ontario has taken on green energy.

Now, the issue of people who would like to see the agreement: Anyone who wishes to see the agreement—and that obviously includes the opposition—is totally free to file a freedom-of-information request, as some folks already have, and people who have filed the freedom-of-information request have gotten the information. The reason we do it this way is because that puts it through a legal process where we can figure out what information is legally required to be retained because it's commercially sensitive and what can be made public. That is the law that the Conservatives worked under when they were the government, that the NDP worked under when they were the government and that we work under when we are the government. The law is the referee of what information is released. That's why we have laws: to sort out the rule. In this case, FIPPA, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, is the referee. The opposition is like everyone else in the province of Ontario: They can refer this question to the referee.

It's worth noting, incidentally, that when the Tories were in government, they in fact removed Hydro One from the freedom-of-information act. It was us who put electrical utilities back under the freedom-of-information act, which is the only reason you can get this information in the first place. Our government will let you have it; their government wouldn't have let you have it.

In my view, the real issue actually has more to do with the Green Energy Act and the whole attitude of our party versus their party toward renewable energy. What has happened is that the Green Energy Act created the concept of a feed-in tariff for renewable energy, it provided the right to connect to the grid for renewable energy, and it provided Ontario-content rules for forms of renewable energy.

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Why did we do that? Because, first of all, we know it's important to protect the environment. I live in a part of Ontario where, when I was growing up, there didn't used to be a lot of smog days. Over the last few decades, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, what we found was that we were having more and more smog days. Do you know why we were having more and more smog days? Obviously, air pollution. But do you know the major source of air pollution in Guelph? The Nanticoke coal-fired power plant, because on hot days—Guelph is north—southerly winds blow all that air pollution up towards my constituents, who get to breathe the dirty air from coal-fired plants.

We're getting rid of those coal-fired plants, and if you're going to get rid of the coal-fired plants, you have to replace them with something. We believe that with the coal-fired plants, a lot of that should be done by replacing them with renewable energy sources.

Secondly, we need a renewable energy supply. When that government was in power, we moved from being a

net exporter of electric power to being a net importer of electric power, because these folks across the way, the Conservative government, refused to invest in any new sources of generation. In fact, they let them go out of production. When it came to our nuclear reactors, their attitude for the most part was, "We're just not going to invest in their repair; we're going to wait for somebody else to come and do it." Nobody else came and did it; nobody saved them. The end result was (a) we had to import a lot of power, and (b) we had to turn more and more to dirty coal.

We have one serious mess to fix in this province which has to do with creating new sources of generation and so that the electricity that we're producing can get from the generator to the user—you and me and everybody else in their homes—better transmission. That's what this is all about: making sure that we have reliable energy, making sure we have clean air to breathe and making sure that we are creating jobs in Ontario.

I want to tell you that, in Guelph, the "creating jobs" is real. We've had two announcements in the last few months about solar energy jobs coming to Guelph. The first is Canadian Solar, which is a Canadian-based company but which was doing all its manufacturing of solar panels in China. When they looked at the Green Energy Act, they said, "For the first time in the history of our company, we are going to repatriate our production, our manufacturing, to Ontario, and we're going to put it in Guelph because we think Guelph is a good business environment for clean energy companies." That's going to produce up to 500 jobs—initially a few hundred, but as that business grows—and that will be up and running within a few months.

The second announcement was just in the last few weeks, when Sustainable Energy Technologies, a Calgary-based company which had actually been considering moving to California, changed its mind and said, "Instead of moving to California, because of the Ontario Green Energy Act, we're moving to Ontario." They looked around, they found a good existing company called Melitron to partner with in Guelph, and that will immediately create 80 jobs in Guelph and up to 300 direct and indirect jobs as their business grows—great jobs that offset the struggles we've had in the auto sector, because Guelph is a manufacturing town. I've got to tell you, there's a lot of excitement.

So our government believes in solar energy. As far as I can figure out, these folks don't.

The Samsung deal is about wind. We believe in wind power; they don't. This is all about not believing in wind power.

We've also brought new hydroelectric projects to Ontario. We believe that where it's possible, we should be using hydroelectric. I would have thought they believed in hydroelectric, but maybe not.

We've got another interesting project going on: the conversion of the old coal plant in Atikokan to using biomass from the forest industry, so that what we will have is a renewable energy source there. Again, we

believe in renewable biomass generation, but I don't think these folks do, because all I hear is, "You shouldn't do this. You shouldn't do this. You shouldn't do this. You shouldn't do that." Every move we make on energy, it's always negative: "No, no, no." I don't know what it is they actually like there. The only thing they seem to like is coal generation. I don't know why they want all that dirty air to breathe, but they sure do like coal generation.

To the motion: They can apply the law that everybody else applies. The freedom-of-information act is there. To the energy issue: We believe in clean, renewable energy, and we're building the economy and the jobs to do just that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: Today we, the Progressive Conservative caucus, are calling on the Premier to release critical information regarding his secret Samsung deal. As we all know, on January 21, 2010, Premier McGuinty rushed through this multi-billion-dollar deal with the foreign company Samsung. Not even the new energy minister was kept in the loop about the details of this contract when he arrived on the job two days prior to Premier McGuinty signing this deal. Not a single lobbyist is registered on the Ontario lobbyist registry on behalf of Samsung, KEPCO or any other special interest that received part of this secret deal.

The Korean green energy investment agreement, Samsung's subsidy deal, is a sole-source \$7-billion deal that sprang out of nowhere and took Ontario families and businesses completely by surprise. Under the proposed terms of this secret McGuinty Samsung deal, the government of Ontario will pay a massive multi-billion-dollar subsidy to the Korean multinational conglomerate to establish wind and solar farms in Ontario. Not only is everything about this deal secret, but this multi-billion-dollar deal was not, is not and will not be offered to Ontario-based companies that, by the way, were asked to ready their companies and prepare for the expansion of their capacity for the upcoming tsunami of contracts that was coming from this government. The Association of Power Producers of Ontario, the Canadian Wind Energy Association and the Canadian Solar Industries Association have all condemned the decision to provide preferential access to a multinational corporation with little experience in renewable energy generation in our province.

While the details of this deal are still secret, we are confident that this subsidy will likely pay Samsung anywhere from 475% to 2,000% more than the current wholesale market rate for electricity. This is absurd: a multi-billion-dollar cost that will ultimately be passed on to Ontarians in the form of higher energy rates. This government avoided telling Ontario families and businesses that they will be forced to pay some \$437 million in subsidies above and beyond the already generous multi-billion-dollar subsidy under the Green Energy Act. This works out to be, folks, \$303,000 of subsidy per

permanent new job. Wow. This is an unaffordable, unrealistic plan and just simply a bad deal for Ontarians.

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When the minister was questioned about the job creation, he confirmed that there are not any requirements for Samsung to actually create any new jobs, yet the Premier promises that this deal will create 16,000 new jobs, a very questionable commitment, considering the Liberal Green Energy Act is modelled on Spain's green energy policy, where jobs were actually lost. A study calculates that since the year 2000, Spain spent 571,000 euros to create each green job, including subsidies of more than one million euros per wind energy job. According to a March 2009 university study on the impact of Spain's green energy policy, for every job created, 2.2 jobs were lost to Spain's economy. I would love to see the math as to where the Premier is going to create 16,000 jobs.

The price of a comprehensive electricity rate in Spain, which is paid by the end consumer, would have to be increased 31% to be able to repay this historic debt.

Although the McGuinty government's Samsung deal is a secret, it is no secret that this government has a dismal record of mismanagement of Ontario's energy sector: poor-to-no planning, and ad hoc programs gone bad.

This is exactly why this government needs to make the details public. Ontario consumers must not be part of this government's energy experiment any longer. So why do the Premier and his former energy minister favour the foreign-based company? Evidently, the Premier is trying to hide something. He's keeping the details under wraps because we know that if he had nothing to hide, he would be proudly and publicly boasting about what a good deal it was. It is clear to me and Ontarians that there has been political interference that has compromised our economy and the Ontario energy consumer.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, imputing of motive, standing order 23(h).

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I'm listening very carefully, and when I hear it, I'll bring it to someone's attention.

Further debate? The member for Quinte West—
Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Northumberland–Quinte West, thank you.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I know it's getting late in the evening. That's okay.

It gives me an opportunity to speak just for a couple of minutes on this resolution today, which frankly I cannot support. I guess I'm somewhat baffled by the opposition's basic business principles. They keep on referring to the province investing \$7 billion. It's the other way around; Samsung and its consortium are investing \$7 billion.

Let me just use a couple of examples. About three or four years ago, Kellogg's built their first plant in, I think, 20 years in North America. They built it in Belleville, in

the riding of Prince Edward–Hastings. They invested some \$100 million—not quite \$100 million, somewhat less, but through programs that the province has, they got incentives for establishing that plant in Belleville.

When Toyota and Honda first moved to Ontario, there were some incentives paid to those companies. They were investing in Ontario. Kellogg's invested in Ontario; Toyota invested in Ontario; Honda invested, and the government, whatever the government of the day was, helped them along, absolutely, because we're in a very, very, competitive market. So when we incent, we create jobs.

They talk about this being a bad investment. I was on municipal council back during the days of the rolling blackouts. What did the opposition or the government of the day do? They installed diesel generators in communities without those communities even knowing about it. I know they installed one near Grafton. Hydro One installed diesel generators just outside the municipality, just to avoid a rolling blackout. They didn't consult. They didn't even talk to the local municipalities. They just did it, just in case.

I'm appalled by one of the members, the member from Nepean–Carleton, saying that some of the Liberal members were opposed to this. If she really believes that, then she should name names, because I know I didn't oppose it. Whenever we invest and create jobs, I'm all for it. If she has something that we don't know, then she should tell us or the opposition should tell us, and I'll be waiting for that.

I will not be supporting this motion. This is strictly a political ploy that they're trying to play. The people of Ontario are not going to buy it. They're looking for jobs. Are there some costs? Yes, there might be some costs. Nobody is denying that. But to do nothing, like they did for eight years when they were in power, is not an option. We're prepared to move forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate? Does any other member wish to speak?

The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakubuski: I've been looking forward to this opportunity to speak to this motion regarding the secret Samsung deal.

For seven years now, we've been watching this government stumble along, creating energy policy on an ad hoc basis. You create the OPA, grow it to a bloated bureaucracy, and then completely remove any planning authority that it has. The same goes for your treatment of the OEB and the weekly directives that the Ministry of Energy sends them.

If you're wondering why in the world this government would have these agencies with their own mandates if they were just going to be overruled by the minister's constant interference, you're not alone. The answer is that this style of governing by directive is a consequence of governing without a plan. They don't have a 20-year plan; they don't have a five-year plan; they don't even have a one-month plan.

That leads us to the debate we're having today.

The Samsung deal was perfectly in keeping with this government's and its ministries' completely irresponsible handling of Ontario's energy system. The government surprised the public, the entire energy sector and even their own cabinet by signing this secret deal with Samsung. I think it would be helpful at this time to quickly go back and look at the timetable of the Samsung deal.

On June 25, 2009, George Smitherman was awarded the World Wind Energy Award, 2009, on Jeju Island, Korea. Months later, news of an impending deal was first reported by energy analyst Tom Adams in his blog on September 24. The minister had issued a directive to the OPA that day, instructing them to create the FIT program, the feed-in tariff program, and to hold transmission capacity to accommodate new developments. Once the story was out, the government quickly slapped together a press release, which provided no details of the deal except to say that negotiations had been ongoing for months, and went on to state, "Both parties are committed to a more formal public presentation once a framework agreement has been completed." However, here we are, a year later; a framework agreement was signed over 10 months ago and this government still refuses to provide any real details of what it has committed Ontarians to.

The next day, September 27, 2009, it was reported in the Toronto Star. That article noted Samsung's complete lack of experience in developing renewables and quoted then-Minister of Energy George Smitherman as saying that Samsung would be getting the same rate for generating energy as other developers. We now know that that's not the case; that Samsung is getting a higher FIT rate than any other developer.

That brings us to September 30, 2009, when the Minister of Energy issued another directive to the OPA, instructing them to hold in reserve 500 megawatts of transmission capacity in the highly-sought-after southwestern Ontario region for Samsung. You're aware of that region, Speaker; you come from there.

For eight months, the FIT program was in place, and developers—the other developers—were applying to the program according to the published rules. Planning for projects was done in good faith and on the understanding that transmission capacity would be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Other companies have closed their doors as a result of this deal and the preferential treatment that was given Samsung. I'll quote from David Butters, the president of APPRO, the Association of Power Producers of Ontario, who said, "The government has created a crisis for Ontario's existing renewable energy sector. Everyone except Samsung is left wondering how they fit into Ontario's energy future."

The government then stayed completely silent until it was reported by the Toronto Star in October 2009 that members of Dalton McGuinty's cabinet "gang-tackled" former Minister of Energy George Smitherman—he was still the minister then—when they learned of the deal.

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The Star also reported that ministers feared that the deal would "mean billions of dollars in subsidies to Sam-

sung.” Well, they were right about that. You ministers who said that, you were right.

What happens next explains why an anonymous cabinet minister said that “morale” over there “is lower than a gutter snake ... on a back country road.” By that time, George Smitherman was already organizing a Christmas skate for this year at Nathan Phillips Square as the mayor. How did that work out for him?

He was replaced as Minister of Energy by the member for Scarborough–Agincourt, who I’ve had the pleasure of working with many times and I know him to be a man of integrity. But after all the talk of Smitherman’s gang-tackling and cabinet objections, suddenly the member for Scarborough–Agincourt was replaced by the current minister just three days before signing the framework agreement with the Korean consortium. He must have really understood it at that point.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes. If I had to wager a guess, I’d say that the change was to bring in a new minister who wasn’t so independently minded and would just do as he was told. This is the context in which we debate the motion today. We have reports of serious objections in the McGuinty cabinet about this deal, we have industry stakeholders outraged at being thrown under the bus, and we have international investors wary of your government’s choosing winners and losers.

As we have said, other than the announcement and a string of ministerial directives, we have no idea what was in their deal. To make matters worse, the Liberals will not release their long-term energy plan or the bill impact projections.

Despite all the government’s claims about job creation, the Samsung deal put all shovel-ready projects on hold and includes no job guarantees. Despite commitments from the former minister that Samsung would be paid the same FIT rate as other developers, we know that’s not the case.

I’d like to touch on another issue, and that’s the issue of cost. The government tries to present the secret Samsung deal as being private sector investment in Ontario. It’s nothing of the sort. Let’s look at the cost to the taxpayer in this deal. First of all, there’s the \$437-million “economic adder,” the details of which are erased from the FOI. Then there’s the cost of 2,500 megawatts of wind and solar power paid at exorbitant rates for 20 years. We don’t know what this will cost but we know it will be in the billions. Finally, there’s the cost of transmission. The OPA has received applications for 11,500 megawatts, counting the Samsung deal, that require connection to the grid. However, according to the OEB, at the present time Ontario can only accommodate 4,000 megawatts. That leaves over 7,000 megawatts that have no place to go.

This issue was discussed in an OEB discussion paper dated April 19, 2010. That paper concludes that billions of dollars additional will have to be invested in transmission.

As I’ve mentioned already in my comments, the government has refused to release in a timely manner, as

required by legislation, a long-term energy plan. I would suggest that this deal is a substantial reason why. We don’t know what the cost is. The party opposite does, but they refuse to say.

The motion we’re voting on this evening is one of great public interest. At a time when energy bills are skyrocketing and salaries aren’t seeing similar increases, it is particularly important to know where things are headed.

I ask the members to do the right thing. Stop toeing the party line and act in the best interests of your constituents. We will obviously be voting in favour of this motion. I ask the members on the other side of the House to do the right thing.

There have been a number things said today on this deal. We don’t know the details. We have scads of ministers’ directives to the OEB, to the OPA. We have an FOI request for the contract, which is filled with mostly blank pages.

The people of this province who pay the energy bills, who are struggling on a day-to-day basis just to get by, the 86% of them, according to the Toronto Star, who say they’re having a tougher time now than they were two years ago, have a right to know what the impact to them is going to be over the next 20 to 40 years by the terms of this deal. If Premier McGuinty cares at all about the people in this province who pay the bills, then he will stand up and do the right thing and release the terms of this deal so that everyone has the right to judge the deal on its merits, just as they should have the right to judge this government or any other government on its merits. They’ll have that chance in October 2011.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Johnson: It’s my pleasure to stand and speak to this motion today. The key point that has been discussed today is that Samsung, a foreign company, is attracted to investing in Ontario because of the climate we have created here. Ontario is open for business. Samsung saw that opportunity and has decided to invest \$7 billion in Ontario.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: How much?

Mr. Rick Johnson: Seven billion dollars. They believe that Ontario has the workforce that can do this. They believe Ontario has the abilities, and the climate has been created for that type of investment.

Much has been said today about releasing the information in the contract. The information is there. All they have to do is file a freedom-of-information request. They’re very experienced at doing that, as we know, and I look forward to hearing the results when they do file that.

But, as we know when dealing with government contracts, it’s a necessary step to file a freedom-of-information request so that legal counsel, on behalf of the government, can look into the details and make sure it can be done. I’m sure the members of the opposition will be able to read it very thoroughly and bring forward lots of information.

It's also important to remind members of the opposition that when they were in power, they removed Hydro One from the freedom-of-information laws and would have hidden such details. We have stepped forward by asking the Auditor General on numerous occasions to look into everything. This is what our government is about. It's about openness and accountability.

What exactly is the impact of the Green Energy Act or of deals like Samsung? It's about jobs. It's about creating jobs. My colleague from Ottawa Centre earlier read a detailed list where he talked about jobs that are available: 375 jobs here, 800 there. The total he spoke about when he was going through that was 9,670 jobs that have been created in Ontario.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: How many?

Mr. Rick Johnson: Nine thousand, six hundred and seventy jobs. That's huge.

My colleague from Hamilton–Stoney Creek, there are a lot of steel plants, and hopefully Hamilton steel plants will be used to—

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Mr. Rick Johnson: Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. Sorry. I've got it right now.

Do you know what? Hopefully, jobs will be created that will use Ontario steel made in Hamilton. I think it's very important, because this is going to kick-start our renewable energy manufacturing.

I've heard on CBC different mayors being interviewed, talking about how they want these companies to come to their communities. I agree. In fact, earlier this summer, working with my federal Conservative counterpart Mr. Barry Devolin, who is the rep in my area, Barry arranged for him and me to go to Ottawa to meet with the president of Samsung so we could try to convince them to locate one of their manufacturing plants in our area. We met with the president and CEO of Samsung Electronics Canada, Mr. Benjamin Lee. We had a great meeting. It was very productive. We've agreed to meet again in the future to discuss this further.

My community is just one of many in this province that is looking for jobs. If we could bring a plant to my community, just as to any of the other communities in this province, it would be a great gain for this province. Among the things that have been brought up today, I would like to thank my federal Conservative counterpart for seeing the vision of this bill.

Once again, I'd like to remind you that we're talking about \$9 billion of foreign investment in this province.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I thought it was seven.

Mr. Rick Johnson: Seven billion. Sorry. It's growing. I appreciate the correction.

Mr. John Yakabuski: You guys exaggerate everything.

Mr. Rick Johnson: It's nice that members opposite are paying so much attention and suddenly understand math in the last hour. I very much appreciate that.

One of the things that we talked about earlier is what would happen in this province if we cut off foreign

investment, if we were to take this whole idea that we don't need foreign investment. Would Ford be here? Would a Conservative government say to General Motors, "We're not interested"? What would that do to Oshawa? Would they say to Toyota, "We don't want your foreign investment"? Would they say to Chrysler, "We don't want your foreign investment"? Would they say to Honda, "We don't want your foreign investment"? We have a company that's investing \$7 billion in our province because they believe in our province. They understand that Ontario is open for business. We've got Ubisoft. We've got Starz Animation. We've got the Terrace Bay Pulp mill, which we did in partnership with other members.

Our government has created an atmosphere where foreign companies are saying, "Ontario is the place to invest." Why is Canada leading the world in the economic recovery? And why is Ontario leading Canada in that recovery? It's because of the policies that have been put in place by our government. I am happy to stir the ire—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would just call on the member to start actually representing the facts as they do present themselves in the truth.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): That is not a point of order.

Mr. Yakabuski has moved opposition day number 3.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1752 to 1802.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those in favour will stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bailey, Robert	Klees, Frank	Prue, Michael
Clark, Steve	Kormos, Peter	Savoline, Joyce
Dunlop, Garfield	MacLeod, Lisa	Wilson, Jim
Elliott, Christine	Martiniuk, Gerry	Witmer, Elizabeth
Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Hillier, Randy	Miller, Paul	

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those opposed, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Leal, Jeff	Ramal, Khalil
Brotten, Laurel C.	McMeekin, Ted	Rinaldi, Lou
Brown, Michael A.	McNeely, Phil	Sandals, Liz
Brownell, Jim	Meilleur, Madeleine	Sergio, Mario
Carrroll, Aileen	Milloy, John	Smith, Monique
Delaney, Bob	Mitchell, Carol	Sousa, Charles
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Moridi, Reza	Van Bommel, Maria
Hoy, Pat	Murray, Glen R.	Zimmer, David
Jeffrey, Linda	Naqvi, Yasir	
Johnson, Rick	Oraziotti, David	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 20; the nays are 31.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made. So if you depart, depart quietly, please.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given today by the Minister of Labour. The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek has up to five minutes to debate the matter.

Mr. Paul Miller: Let me first clarify for the House that my question this morning of the Minister of Labour was in no way a negative comment on the WSIB funding review panellists. It was actually quite simple. In addition to these panellists, there should be an actual injured worker on the panel.

The funding review panel is looking into issues that affect each and every injured worker in this province, injured workers who are quite clear that their voice should be heard as a member of that panel in the person of an injured worker who has been through the WSIB system. I venture to say that none of the current panel members have been through the system. The experience of someone like that is essential to the full review of any aspect of the WSIB. I can't understand why it isn't part of the protocol for naming panellists in every ministry that an actual affected party must be included in the dialogue.

Having had the pleasure of Dr. Arthurs's expertise through his Expert Commission on Pensions, I believe that he will give injured workers full access to the panel to make deputations, but that's not the issue here. Again, the issue is that an actual injured worker should be appointed as a full member of the WSIB funding review panel. Wasn't our system set up to protect employers from being sued in workplace injuries? In exchange for this workers' compensation system, injured workers lost a significant right to sue their negligent employer. Now, when we're going to review the sad state of the WSIB funding, there's no actual injured worker, someone living on their now-reduced income, on this funding review panel. How can this major interested party be put on the sidelines?

I have said so many times before in this House that the government shows significant disrespect for its opposition. I'm sick and tired of McGuinty's ministers avoiding answering the actual question asked—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I'd just remind the member that with the name usage it's either Premier McGuinty or the McGuinty government, but not just McGuinty.

Mr. Paul Miller: —the McGuinty government interpreting the content of the questions to suit their own agenda. Almost without fail, when asked reasonable questions often representing the wishes, views and opinions of Ontarians who have a specific and important issue to raise, the government refuses to dignify their concerns with a proper answer. Repeatedly, the government mocks the question, and rather than give the question the respect it deserves, they stoop to ridicule. They must realize that this ridicule is actually aimed at the Ontarians for whom we're asking the question. The McGuinty Liberals go into the attack mode, making allegations against the opposition that really have no bearing on the question at hand. They attack the record of the opposition on other issues, ignoring the question asked for the people of Ontario.

One of the McGuinty Liberals' more recent tacks is to yell, applaud and generally act poorly in an effort to drown out the legitimate question being asked. It seems to be their marching orders of the day and month. It's a bad display, a disgraceful performance, particularly as these are the ministers, the cabinet, who should be showing proper decorum in the Legislature. Every time that this minister is asked a question about the WSIB, he goes into a rant about their record, the Liberals' record on other issues, but he seems completely unable to actually answer the question that has been asked.

I'm putting the government on notice today that every time I ask a question that I believe is not properly answered, I'm going to consider asking for a late show. The minister has an opportunity right now to correct the shameful display from this morning's question period. He can right now agree to ensure that an actual injured worker will be included on the WSIB funding review panel.

Year after year in this House I've watched and I've asked questions, especially labour questions, to the minister, and I don't get answers. He stands up and he talks about his safety record and what they're doing and everything but what I ask. I think it's time that the people of Ontario were given the honour of hearing an answer that was actually applicable to the question. It doesn't happen. It probably won't happen. It's a sad state of affairs. Many times people in this House ask questions and don't get an answer, but I guess there are going to be a lot more late shows this year, because we certainly are not getting answers and I think the people of Ontario deserve it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Scarborough Southwest.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: Since 2003, this government has done more for injured workers than any other government, and we will continue to be committed to treating injured workers with fairness, dignity and respect. That's why we have increased injured workers'

benefits four times since 2007, and on January 1, 2011, and January 1, 2012, we will increase those benefits again by 0.5% in each of those years. This will result in a total cumulative increase of over 9% since mid-2007.

As the member stated in question period today, the WSIB has announced that it is conducting a comprehensive funding review to ensure the board's long-term financial stability.

And to answer the member's question, each one of the members on the review panel is representing injured workers. That is what this whole consultation process has been about: to ensure that the WSIB is on firm financial footing for a sustainable system of compensation.

This year-long funding review will gather expert advice and input from workers, including injured workers, labour and employers on a range of public policy issues related to the WSIB's financial future. Meetings have already been scheduled for Professor Arthurs to meet with injured workers to discuss the review and the important role that injured workers and their advocates will play throughout the process. As a matter of fact, Mr. Arthurs is not only working himself but he has other people that are on his consultation panel.

Our government has asked that the review include options for a new benefit indexation formula to replace the modified Friedland formula to support fairness for injured workers. I can appreciate the member's concern about this issue, but I'm shocked that the party that introduced the Friedland formula, otherwise known as the F-word, is asking this government about supporting injured workers. We're making improvements to a program because we know that it's the right thing to do.

As I mentioned, Professor Arthurs and his advisory committee have already started meeting with stakeholders to provide expert advice as the funding review

proceeds. Mr. Arthurs is committed to ensuring that the needs and future well-being of injured workers is weighed carefully during the review.

The committee members who are representing not only injured workers but employers and labour groups are: (1) Buzz Hargrove, former national president of the Canadian Auto Workers; (2) John Tory, former leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario; (3) Maureen Farrow, external adviser on the WSIB board of directors' investment committee; and (4) John O'Grady, chair of the Institute for Work and Health.

As the funding review continues and Professor Arthurs gathers material and submissions from people and organizations across Ontario, he may consult with committee members for context, background and technical advice to ensure clarity and a balanced approach to his work as the funding review chair.

The WSIB has a very important plan. Last spring, when talking about a fully funded system in the standing committee, Mr. Miller told Mr. David Marshall, president of the WSIB, "I'm counting on you." He said, "I think that contingency funds are important for the bad times."

This is about working together, and our government will continue to support the WSIB's effort to create a stable and sustainable system of compensation for injured workers in Ontario.

Information on the timing and scope of the review is available on the WSIB website. It is expected to conclude in November 2011. I look forward to the results of this funding review.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House is adjourned until Thursday, October 28, at 9 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1814.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

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Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
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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
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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
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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
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Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin
Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal
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