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Second Session, 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament

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**Official Report  
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(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 2 March 2011**

**Mercredi 2 mars 2011**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

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*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 150, An Act to provide for the resolution of labour disputes involving the Toronto Transit Commission, when Bill 150 is next called as a government order the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government; and

That the vote on second reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That the Standing Committee on General Government be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 9, 2011, and Monday, March 21, 2011, during its regular meeting times for public hearings and be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 23, 2011, during its regular meeting times for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk of the committee shall be 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22, 2011. At 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 23, 2011, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment for clause-by-clause consideration on Wednesday, March 23, 2011. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession, with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Thursday, March 24, 2011. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill

shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on General Government, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

That, when the order for third reading of the bill is called, one hour shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's a pleasure this morning to be able to speak again on Bill 150. I think I've pretty well said everything I had to say on that bill, actually, but I will do the very best I can.

The reason is, I think, in a broader sense, if you look at the bill itself, what it really does is remove the right to strike from transit workers in Toronto, at the request of the new mayor of Toronto. Mayor Ford was elected overwhelmingly, with a mandate to bring some semblance of order to the city of Toronto. I think it's a complicated issue in Toronto in terms of—I know people who live here. It's a wonderful city. It's the best city in Canada, I guess, by my interpretation.

What they've got is a terrific assessment base in Toronto. They have the Hummingbird Centre and the Rogers Centre, or whatever it's called, and all these industrial-commercial taxes that really don't create students for the school system or people in the parks. People come here to go to the theatre and, as was said, some of the best universities—the University of Toronto, where I attended years ago. The point is, those institutions that provide either payments in lieu or direct taxes to the economy don't create people.

When you look on the residential tax side, this is where the issue is. This is important. Their tax assessment base is about 60% industrial-commercial—the big bank towers. They have a pretty high property and business tax base on that industrial-commercial, restaurants

etc. That pays for all the services, generally, that they have.

The residential tax, on the other hand—Mr. Speaker, you would know this, having served municipally as well—in Toronto is quite low. It is; it's actually lower than Durham's. Yet they have Handi-Transit at the door, more or less, which is appropriate; I don't disagree with it. My point is, I don't think they tax the residential side very highly in Toronto.

My son, who was working at a law firm in downtown Toronto—his wife had a very good job here as well—lived in the Beaches. It's a lovely neighbourhood: wonderful, beautiful, neighbourly, friendly etc. I remember when they moved from Nova Scotia, where they were living. He went to law school there. The house was quite small, actually.

The point I'm trying to make is this: They paid about \$400,000 or \$450,000 for it, or something like that—I think they sold it for \$700,000—but their taxes were less than those for my house in the country. You know what I mean? I'm serious. Their taxes were half of mine. I was living in the country, just outside Bowmanville, in a house on five acres. I had my own well and my own septic. My taxes were over \$7,000, my point being—

**Interjection:** Get a smaller house.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, I have five kids. It was a big house. But here's the point; the point is this—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm trying to help you through this.

Peter, you should be listening. You're a young fella; you probably don't know these things.

The issue is this: They've got to look at the tax base on the residential side in Toronto. People should pay their fair share. Then you get into the affordability issue, and I often talk about the—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Order.

0910

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Speaker, if you could—sometimes they don't want to hear the truth.

What is my point here? The city of Toronto is fighting over having essential services in transit. I understand that. They're really going out of their way to make it absolutely awkward for anybody with a car. You can't park here. They've got these bike lanes. It's just incredible; there's nobody in them. They've congested traffic so it is really uncomfortable to have a car in Toronto.

What's this bill about? It's all about turning Toronto into a highly concentrated—I missed one part; I've got to back up a little bit. How Toronto is fixing its tax base is this: They've run out of space—there are no more vacant lots—so what they're doing is knocking down a house and building 50 houses on top of each other, called a condo. Each one of those condos on that lot is going to pay around \$4,000 to \$5,000 in taxes. So rather than having one house paying \$5,000, they're going to have 50 houses on top of each other, called a condo. That is what is happening.

We're turning into an intensified redevelopment, with people jammed in, sort of like in China or in Hong Kong. They have jammers in Hong Kong to get people into the bus; they push them in. So quality of life might be at risk here; I'm not sure. But Billy Elliot: great theatre. I saw it myself. I would say it has things to offer people who can afford to live here.

But the real point of this is, I've looked through—there's a good article I'd recommend to people on how much we're going to be spending on transit. I sort of live in the rural part of Durham. I'm proud to represent Uxbridge; Scugog, which is primarily Port Perry; and Clarington, whose main cities are Bowmanville and Newcastle. We do have transit there, although I have to have a car to get to the transit. I can't get a bus to go to the GO train. I've got to take the car to the bus and the bus to the GO train. It's hardly integrated. You've got to leave for work at about 5 o'clock to get here at 8 o'clock. I'm not kidding; I commute. I didn't this morning; I stayed over last night because I was at the ROMA convention.

But my point is this: I looked at this report, and I think Premier McGuinty, with all due respect, has completely screwed up or messed up—whatever word you want to use—the transit system. What he has done is outsource it, so he can't get blamed, to a group called Metrolinx.

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** Look what you got with the 407.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Whatever. We'll get to that, Jean-Marc.

In the very little time I have to speak, I've got three major topics that I've got to get on here. One is to link Toronto's tax issues to the transit issue. Transit is not free. Transit around the world is very heavily subsidized—very heavily subsidized. That's Toronto's plan. Don't come whining all the time to Premier McGuinty, or whoever the Premier happens to be, for the extra \$100 million to balance your budget.

When I looked at it—I was transportation critic when, I think, Mr. Bradley was the minister. I met with Rob MacIsaac, who at that time was the head of Metrolinx, and Metrolinx was coming up with the Transit City plan. Then the issue became electrification versus diesel power for the transit system. In the long run it's clear, for the environment and for efficiency, that transit should be electrified, but it's a significant change in how things are done.

We started looking into the Metrolinx plan for the GTA—I think the report was called the Big Move. Listen up: Here's a really important thing that people have got to know. It's sort of like the renewable energy bill, Bill 150: Show me the money. Sometimes these are good decisions. All debt is not bad. I wouldn't own a house if I wasn't able to have a mortgage. All debt is not bad. But here's the deal: Operational spending is where the issue is. Metrolinx wants, every single year, an additional \$5 billion.

Let's put this in perspective. We already have about a \$20-billion hole in the ground, and we're going to

commit to another \$5 billion? I don't think so, unless you're going to borrow it from the children, because debt is future taxes. You have to either reduce your spending, which means you have to cut service, you have to grow your economy—the economy is as flat as water on a plate—or you have to increase taxes on people who are already almost underwater on tax: the HST, eco tax, you name it.

Now, one would just say, what are our priorities? I think we've got the priorities wrong. First of all, stop doing these things that are just popular. You know what I mean? It's like when computers first came out, but the computers that came out later are faster, better, smarter and cheaper. Solar panels is a good example. They're diving into solar power at 80 cents a kilowatt hour. It's unbelievable. These solar panels will be integrated into shingles within five years, and everybody will have them on their homes. Right now they're spending millions on photovoltaic panels. They're going too fast without thorough investigation and review.

This transit plan—I'm going to give you one example of the waste that's made by not actually planning and thinking. Eighty per cent of any job is planning it. Eighty per cent of theirs is spending it, and 20% is planning.

They screwed up the Green Energy Act. Who is opposed to renewable energy? Nobody.

**Hon. Carol Mitchell:** You are.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** See? In fact, they mislead people by telling them things that are false, lies.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** There are a couple of things here. I think, first, we should watch our language. Second, we should attempt to speak to the issue that's at hand—and I know you're trying to do that.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you, Speaker. The Minister of Agriculture should put a few solar panels in the agricultural communities.

My point is this: On the transit thing, I think, again, they've made another error. The error shows up on the tax bill. I'm going to put it out; it's an article by the *Globe and Mail*, dated February 19th—and by the way, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I'm speaking to a time allocation motion. This is shutting down debate, terminating input on this important—the galleries were full of transit workers who, respectfully, have the right to negotiate settlements. I'm completely in favour of that. Now they're just kind of putting their foot on their chest and saying, "We're going to take that right away from you." This time allocation—we're going to have an hour to speak. I've got 40 minutes this morning, because nobody else wants to speak on it.

This article says, "Revised Transit Blueprint Taking Shape

"Early signs point to Queen's Park, Metrolinx agreeing to Ford's altered plan for transit in Toronto....

"Metrolinx [is] agreeing to Mayor Rob Ford's revised plan for transit in Toronto....

"The old network's first phase—which was fully funded by the provincial and federal governments"—that's

the same taxpayer; who are we kidding? You know what I mean? It's a shell game. It's sort of like at the carnival.

It says here, "Mr. Ford campaigned on burying all new transit lines." That probably makes sense, really. There's no more space, and you're going to have trains running up and down.

"The province and Metrolinx agreed to seek a compromise on the condition they don't have to kick in more than the \$8.15 billion they'd already promised." That's the province that is promising \$8.15 billion.

"As for Eglinton, Metrolinx has awarded an \$80-million contract for concrete tunnel liners and a \$42-million contract for the design of seven stations on the 11-kilometre stretch....

"Our basis for going ahead at this point is our confidence that the tunnelled section between Jane and Laird appears to be in everybody's plan for moving forward," said Bruce McCuaig, the president of Metrolinx."

**0920**

Bruce McCuaig was an assistant deputy minister at the Ministry of Transportation: another civil servant who's probably got a pension from there and now has got an appointment to Metrolinx—I don't think so.

Here's the real key, and I'm going to read it because it's that important; it needs to be on the record. "The Metrolinx board voted Friday to spend \$53 million (U.S.) on twelve vehicles built by the American arm" of a Japanese company, "Sumitomo Corp." Actually, it's probably a division of Samsung; they gave them \$7 billion. I don't know where they're getting all the money.

"The deal includes an option to buy six more at \$22 million." So, six of them are \$22 million; figure out the numbers yourself. They got such a great deal. This was an untendered contract where they spent almost \$100 million for diesel trains. This isn't finished. This is the waste.

"Metrolinx piggybacked on a competitive tender ... by Sonoma-Marin county in California ... that knocked down the price from an earlier ... \$100 million" to the numbers I just read.

"It's given us a wonderful result in terms of the cost," said Rob Prichard. Rob Prichard is the chair of Metrolinx. He's the past president of the University of Toronto. He was also—I mean, they're all connected.

Here's the deal: Now they've promised—I'll cut this short, because it is related—to electrify. The reason they're buying these trains is for the Pan American Games in 2015. They want to have sort of clean transit. But after that, they're going to cancel those \$100-million trains and electrify them, and they've committed to electrify the GO system.

Why are they throwing good money after bad money? That's waste, and it's a lot to do with the TTC, because Bob can't connect the dots. They haven't got a plan; that's the plan.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I would say that if someone says I have no plan, they're saying something that doesn't need to be said, because I'm not the leader. Our leader does have a plan.

But I'll tell you what I am planning. This whole business, to me, of what they've messed up—I've got two meetings tomorrow. My riding is blessed to have the Oak Ridges moraine, almost right through my riding. It's beautiful: the vista of Toronto—wonderful. I do believe it should be protected; I always have. In fact, when I was a councillor, years ago, I was on the conservation authority. The NDP actually didn't recognize the Oak Ridges moraine; Mike Harris did.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Yes, he did. Anyway, we won't get into a conversation with the House leader. She should be reading up on this afternoon's business.

The point being, I'm going to have a meeting. What's happened recently is that a company is rehabilitating an abandoned pit. There are pits and quarries all over the moraine; you know that. The pit is being filled up by a company called Earthworx, and that company is being challenged in court on March 11 by the mayor and council of the township of Scugog; the new mayor, Chuck Mercier. I met with him this week at ROMA. They are going to court to resolve this issue about whether the fill that's going into the moraine is clean. The reason is, the moraine is 12 feet from the aquifer, which is the water that feeds to homes and families. I read a statement in the House yesterday about a family who are refusing to drink their water now.

The reason I bring this up is because Mayor Gerri Lynn O'Connor, from the town of Uxbridge, is convening a meeting with the Ministry of the Environment and other stakeholders to get to the roots.

What I'm doing is I'm issuing a private member's bill, which I'm sure will eventually become law. I know it will be, because it's the right thing to do. After working with various groups—agronomists and all these experts—we've come up with a plan that would mandate that provincially zoned land, like the Oak Ridges moraine and the greenbelt, has rules and regulations around the appropriate fill for these large aggregate resources that have been mined out. All the gravel has been taken out and there are these big holes in the earth that form apertures right into the aquifers of the water that's the very essence of life. It's not overbearing; it's just to make sure that we're not putting brownfield, dirty fill into these holes. Sure, we've got to move fill—I understand that—and make those grades proper so that they don't expose the aquifer. That's the one meeting.

The second meeting that I'm having is with Clarington Wind Concerns. They have Dr. Robert McMurtry, who I believe is the dean of medicine at the University of Western Ontario, who believes—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Durham, I'm sure this is going to lead to the matter that is before us.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I hope so.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** I do, too.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm trying to work it back to Bill 150.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** You're not doing a very good job.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm going to work toward that goal.

The other meeting—I hope to be taking transit to the meeting, by the way. There you go.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, I do. I take the GO train. I use the TTC all the time. I'm not one of these rich, arrogant snobs riding around in a government-paid car.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** I've asked you, just keep the language parliamentary, please.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I take transit, and we'll leave it at that, because it's the right thing to do. In fact, being a senior, I carry around carefully my little transit—on the TTC, you get one of for seniors; you get a discount rate. You get a discount rate on everything because you've got less time than everyone else.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** You can go to Zellers for breakfast. It's what my grandmother used to do.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, I think Zellers has been closed. It has been bought out—you know that—by some US firm.

My point being, though, is that there are three huge issues in my riding. Some of them are related to transit, so it does tie back, Mr. Speaker. The one I mentioned is that the Oak Ridges moraine and the greenbelt need to be protected.

The second one is the wind energy. I appreciate Premier McGuinty backtracking on the offshore wind turbines. He sort of cancelled them. They'll be sued by the companies that have invested. Hundreds of millions of dollars will be spent in court and in settlements. It's the same as when they cancelled for Kevin Flynn the gas plant in Oakville, but he's moving it—I know exactly where they're moving it—to Cambridge. TransCanada PipeLines is going to build it and drop the lawsuit against the government. If people only knew that they're not planning these things. They're wasting money, not just in court but in settlements. It's unbelievable.

Wind energy, in the appropriate place, with the appropriate setbacks, has an appropriate application for renewable energy, but I don't want one beside my house. No one does. Dr. McMurtry is an expert; none of us here are. Yes, there are three doctors here who aren't in cabinet, and they should be in cabinet. The member from Oak Ridges–Markham was a medical officer of health for York region. I can't understand why she's not the Minister of Health. It doesn't make any sense to me. But, again, Dr. McMurtry is going to be appearing in the community, and he's going to be giving his view on the health risks to the people of Ontario. I hope Premier McGuinty listens. And his minister Brad Duguid: I don't think he has a clue on the file, personally. He reads the notes well.

The third issue is the 407. Here's the deal on this one: The 407—and the member from Peterborough knows as well—is a broken promise. It's the most disturbing of all the promises. I've talked about the failure in Metrolinx.

I've talked about the Green Energy Act and the failures there. Now the third failure is this transit package.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Durham has talked about almost everything except the point that's before us today. Please, I have no choice. The standing order says I have to call you to speak to that bill. Thank you.

**0930**

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm going to tie this back to the frustration of being in opposition and not being given the chance to speak on Bill 150. Mr. Marchese gets it; he gets it. He appreciates it.

This bill here: He is sort of tying it back to the transit issue; it's the 407. Our transit is missing, okay? Our transit in rural Ontario is basically roads and cars. Not everybody lives in Toronto. We've got to start thinking about Ontario. The people in Timmins don't get it. Do you understand? They belong and they deserve the same health care, the same long-term care as people living in—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Hey, John, tell them how much you want the bill.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, the bill itself—Rosario, I'm going to save you some time.

The other part, though, that I need to finish is that during the election the 407 was promised to the region of Durham and to the cities of Oshawa, Clarington, Whitby, Ajax, Pickering, Uxbridge and Brock—promised to all of them. They designed their official plans around it. If you look at their official plans, there's this ribbon; it's called the 407. The plan was there. What did they do? They tore up the plan. That's true—the cynicism.

I am going to get back to this time allocation, because it's the very tip of the iceberg. What I'm speaking of is what's below the surface: the trouble I have, the cynicism I feel, the rejection, the lack of concern. The Premier is one of the nicest fellows I've ever met, but he has lost his way. He's somehow been beaten up by all the demands on him by the educators and the public sector wanting more money. He's been beaten up. He has given away as much as he possibly can to settle all these disputes. He has tried to write a cheque to solve every problem. What has he done? We've increased spending. We're now spending \$116 billion, and that's why this bill here—now they're in the panic mode. They're time-allocating bills; they're cancelling projects. They cancelled offshore wind. They're starting to move around in a confused fashion.

I'm quite concerned. I think that October can't come soon enough. We need to have change. I know that our leader, Tim Hudak, a young, enthusiastic, honest family man—I know in 10 years he'll be worn out. All he needs is about 10 years in that job—and that's what Premier McGuinty is doing—and he'll be handing off the reins of power to someone else. But that 407 promise: Can you imagine stopping it at Simcoe Street in Oshawa? Simcoe Street in Oshawa is right where the university is, the University of Ontario. You can't get to—Bob, you're an excellent goalie—

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm looking at standing order 23(b), that directs a member to direct his speech to the topic under discussion. While it's a very interesting discourse, it has little to do with the time allocation motion or the TTC.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** You, I believe, have a valid point of order that I've tried to call the member for Durham to. The member for Durham, please.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Okay. This is actually quite interesting, because the time allocation motion does say at the very end that when they cut off the debate on Bill 150—and now we're into the time allocation; I'll have to segue back at some point to the 407 discussion—that the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk should be 4 o'clock on March 22. The reason for that is we're here next week, then we're off for a week. If you look at your calendar—and people should pick up one of my business cards, because my business card has a calendar on the back which is very useful.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Send one over.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'll send one over.

If you're looking at it, we're off the week of the 14th, then we come back. So anybody who wants to put in amendments—I would say that transit workers, who were here, the TTC board and other players in transit—here's the deal: I'm wondering what other transit commissions are thinking. The city of Toronto is going to be an essential service. That means they don't have the right to strike. What about the city of Ottawa? What about the city of London?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What do you think?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** What I think is secondary, because what I know is that Premier McGuinty is removing their right to strike, a fundamental right. Let him explain—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What do you think about it?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** In all due respect, our vote is rather tokenistic. They have the majority—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, they have the majority. It's very frustrating in opposition. We lose every vote. It is so disheartening. After 15 years here, my voice has been quelled or—

**Interjection:** Neutered.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** —neutered. Anyway, it is frustrating. No, it's true. It's almost like being—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** In all due respect, I'm trying to talk about the time allocation motion.

There will be an all-party committee. They will move amendments, we will move amendments on this, and I know the NDP will move amendments; I know they will. At least I can trust what they say. I know they are principled. They may be wrong, but they're principled.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** And you're going to vote with us.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, stranger things have happened.

Mr. Speaker, I'm being interrupted, which disturbs my line of thinking, which is strange as well.

"The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment"—there's overtime—"for clause-by-clause consideration on Wednesday, March 23, 2011. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession, with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 129(a)...."

This thing is going to be rammed through and put to bed, never to be heard from again.

When Mike Harris was here, the front lawn was full, okay? Now Premier McGuinty does it and the galleries are empty. It's being hidden. It's being stealthily hidden below the radar screen of the Toronto Star, which is basically their cheerleader notes.

**Interjection:** I wouldn't say that.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, they have been telling more truthful commentary recently.

I guess this rolls me back to why I get so frustrated. Along with Christine Elliott, Jerry Ouellette and myself, there's been not a peep from Joe Dickson or Wayne Arthurs—pardon me, the member from—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Thank you. You got it; you got the message.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Very good. Yes, the member from—where is it? Maybe you can help me out here. Wayne Arthurs is Pickering—Scarborough East, the member from Pickering—Scarborough East. Actually, he was the mayor of Pickering; a great guy. I was on regional council in Durham with him; a good person. Why did he not stand up to how important the 407—I can tell you this: If they were to deny Hazel McCallion the 427 or something like that, a major artery of the economy, she'd be jumping up and down on Premier McGuinty's desk. Now what's happening? Durham is being denied the very artery of the economy, and not a word is being spoken by the two representatives I've referred to.

Transit is part of what I'm talking about—

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I have great respect, and I've always found my friend Mr. O'Toole a very likeable gentleman, but it seems to me, with the rules of the House, he is straying a little bit from the debate on the TTC into the 407 and others. I know you'll provide good guidance on that matter.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Peterborough has a point of order. The member for Durham is making it very difficult for the Chair, because the standing orders are very clear. I don't want to have to do anything but listen to you speak to the matter that's on the floor. I'd like to do that.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm committing now; I'm reformed. I'm actually going to stick to the topic—generally, in a general sense. I try to link it to the mismanagement of the entire economy.

Quite honestly, this transit decision is the tip of the iceberg. Pay attention. They're trying to slip it through. A fundamental right is being denied, okay? Whether I agree or disagree, the bill is being put forward by Mr. Sousa,

the Minister of Labour—an excellent young guy, who's learning. I thought Mr. Fonseca was quite good, but he's running federally, I guess. My point being, it's the tip of the iceberg. Justice delayed is justice denied in all true fashion.

**0940**

Now, we have issues with this essential service mediation/arbitration process. I worked in labour relations for General Motors for a number of years, in personnel, and my degree is basically labour economics, so I can tell you what they should be replacing in the arbitration system—and this bill could do this. I would use a process that's been passed. It's called final offer selection. Both sides put their final offer on the table. They don't want to overdo it or underdo it, because the mediator, arbitrator or judge will say, "That's absurd."

But when you get into arbitrations recently—we had one in our area, and it took three years for the arbitrator to rule. Now they're in their next contract; they're at the table negotiating. The three-year retroactive pay was about \$20,000. Wait a minute here: Where is the reflection on the ability to pay? Do you understand? It's fine for Toronto. As I told you, they're assessment-based.

See, what I was saying was really quite instructive. I was talking about the wealth of assessment and the opportunities in the Toronto assessment base versus Brockville, for example. How are they going to match Toronto? It's not happening. It's a different type of economy. There's no one size fits all; those expectations are completely unrealistic.

The transit systems around Ontario are watching this very debate, and I feel for you, because transit is basically a municipal responsibility. It gets some transfer of funds in gas, which is a whole other story. That transfer payment is screwed up, because towns that don't have transit don't get the provincial gas tax. Towns that have transit get the gas tax provincially. Federally, towns get gas tax for roads and bridges when they don't have transit. That's the federal solution, and it's the right solution.

In our areas—and I look at the member from Brant and others—respectfully, transit for disabled persons etc. should be provided. I completely agree. But when there's no density, transit doesn't work. You can't have buses that cost \$400,000 rolling around town. These are important things. Every job that's full-time, seven days a week, 24 hours a day, takes five people. Did you know that? If you have one position that runs seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, it takes five people because of vacations and time off. Three shifts per day; that's three people. It's five people, each making \$50,000. That's \$250,000 to run a bus with nobody in it. It's absurd. Toronto I understand. There are three million people there; it's bigger than most provinces.

Let's be honest: What's at stake here is the definition of the essential service and what it means to other transit systems, which will eventually say, "We want the same law in Mississauga, in York."

York region, right now, is on strike, I believe; or working to rule in transit, and it does disrupt the econ-



omy. I have no question about it. When there's a monopoly position—that is, no competition—they have you by the throat. A monopoly, by its very structure, has an unbalanced negotiating position: “You either give me what I want or you will not have the service.”

These are the tough choices. In some areas, health care being one, automatically it's an essential service. You don't want doctors competing with each other, or nurses. But most professions are differentiated now, meaning for lawyers there are paralegals and for nurses there are nursing assistants and personal support workers. There are options of providing service or scope of practice rules.

This time allocation is typical of what's happening here. It's silencing debate. Maybe these are arcane discussions or people aren't interested, but it is important because transit is the biggest push item across Canada, and maybe around the world. We've got to get rid of the cars.

I have two daughters who live in London, England. If you drive into London, England, you better be rich, because it's about \$50 dollars a day plus parking. It's a fact. They take the train; there's no choice. I guess if you want to make something mandatory, make the alternative unaffordable.

This bill, small though it is, is very, very susceptible to causing costs to rise for municipalities, and indeed, at the end of the day, for users. It's already expensive to live in Toronto. The only thing I can say is Rob Ford was elected to make it less expensive, if he could. This bill is going to make it more expensive, in my view.

Suddenly I've run out of time.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm going to do what the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services always used to do; that is, we oppose every time allocation motion presented before the House. Why? Because it strangulates debate; it ends it. I'm going to continue in that tradition, something that the honourable member used to do but no longer wishes to because he is in government. It's just the way it goes around the table.

I've got to tell you, I'm a bit surprised, and not a bit surprised, by my good friend from Durham. He spoke for 40 minutes, and I expected him to say how much he loves the Liberals on this particular bill. I expected that. Not once in 40 minutes did I hear him say, “Thank you. We agree with you.” That's why I continue to say, whenever I hear the member from Durham, you're so good in opposition. I love you there, I really do, and I want you to stay for a little longer, because you become a little more sensitive to the issues that Ontarians clearly are expressing to you. It makes you look good. It makes you look better, in my view.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm glad to be able to get up from time to time just to please her.

We find this particular bill repugnant. We find that the Liberals are becoming Conservatives in a hurry. They don't know how to please Conservatives. Why, first it

was income tax cuts and corporate tax cuts. I remember Mr. Martin killing the Reform Party by introducing corporate taxes and income tax cuts as a way to kill the Reform Party and as a way to show Conservatives that Liberals can do it just as well—and they do, and they can. There are a lot of believers in the Liberal Party.

I know that there are some amongst you who don't agree with Bill 150, but you dare not say it. You skulk away as fast as you can. You dare not enter into the debate. You hope you will not be asked by the media what your position is, and you hope, where you have unionized labour, that the issue will not come up. And when you meet those workers, you will say, “People say it's an essential service. We're not attacking you, because we know the work you do is so valuable, but we're just trying to respond to public opinion that says this is an essential service.” You hope that you will never have to answer those questions about why you introduced Bill 150. But if you do, you've got a standard answer, because you're all so ready for it: “His Excellency Mr. Ford has asked us to do it. City council has asked us to do it.”

What else could you do? If they come and ask you, “Do it,” do you say, “No, we can't”? Do you say, “No, we disagree with you”? No. In a hurry, the new Minister of Labour had the bill prepared. Before he even became a minister he had it all ready to go. Nothing against the labour minister—I like him; he's a friend of mine. He was ready to go as soon as he got into that position. God bless. Maybe the previous Minister of Labour—I like him too—had it all ready as well, and maybe before he was there the Premier's office had it all ready to go: “Here you go, Minister. It's ready for you. Do you agree? Disagree? It doesn't really matter. Here is the bill.”

**0950**

Some of you have made the argument that it's about health: If those unfortunate workers should go on strike, those poor people would have to drive their cars and, oh God, there would be so many more cars on the road and there would be so much more pollution. That's the argument some of you put forth. But remember, his lordship is the king of cars. He loves cars. During the election, he said, “We are going to end the war on cars.” Remember that? Why, his excellence loves cars, and he thinks we should have more cars on the road and nothing should impede his right and the right of car owners to be on that road and spill gas if he wants to. That's what I remember him saying. Why would you worry about his lordship and his love of cars and what those cars would do—except to spew pollution into the air? So that can't be an argument, can it? It can't be.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You guys, you're too loud. If you want to speak, could you just go out there for a second?

So it can't be the argument of cars.

What else could it be? Safety? I don't know.

Some of you put forth the problem of cost: “Good Lord, if they go on strike, the TTC management said it's

50 million bucks every day.” I really don’t know that it’s 50 million bucks, but that’s the argument you put forth.

By the way, they do not go on strike each and every year. The reason why they go on strike from time to time is because they feel that management isn’t listening and is bargaining hard to make sure that the union demands are never met. When that happens—and it’s a rare thing—they go on strike.

I believe workers are entitled to have that power to express their views and their feelings about what they believe they ought to have. What you’re doing is taking that right away. You are taking the right to strike away on the basis that when they strike, it causes a great deal of pollution because there are more cars and it’s so costly to the poor TTC.

I put to you that after this bill is passed and they go to arbitration, as indeed they will, it will cost the city more money, money they don’t have. Each and every year, as we have witnessed, when it goes to arbitration it will be more costly, and the city doesn’t have the money to deal with those extra costs. But you’re happy, even if that were to happen—and indeed it will—to say, “We’ve done it because the city of Toronto, His Excellency and a majority of the city councillors said, ‘Yes, we want you to pass this bill.’” And then you can say, “We are but the vessel for their wishes. We are only doing what they asked us to do.”

This is an attack on civil servants who work for the city and, in this particular case, work for the TTC. This is an assault on civil servants. I know most of you don’t want to admit this, but that’s what it is. In many of our communities across this province, people express hatred for civil servants. Why? Because most of them have a union and they’re well paid. They almost resent that. And I say to myself, why is it that they resent the fact that people work for government, whether it’s at a board of education, a municipality or the province—and yes, many of them have unions, and yes, many of them are well paid. Is that a bad thing, that they should belong to a union and that they should be well paid; that yes, they have benefits; and yes, that they have access to a pension at the end of their 30-year career, or less, or more?

It’s as if they resent those benefits and the pension that they have and the good salary they receive. Why do they resent it, many of them? Because they don’t have a pension, as many of the civil servants do. They don’t have access to benefits or these good salaries. So if they can’t have those things that civil servants have, then we should abolish their pension, we should take away their benefits and we should even take away their right to go on strike.

This is the beginning, and I believe some of you Liberals understand that this is the beginning of an assault against civil servants and that soon pensions will be under assault. It’s coming, and some of you know this. Intuitively you know it and you’re nervous about it but you feel, for political reasons, that this is a good thing to do in order to be as popular as the Conservatives, as His Excellency Mr. Ford, by proposing such a bill that they

have forced you to put forth. Some of you are worried but you don’t have the temerity to be able to stand up and say, “I disagree,” because there’s solidarity among caucus members.

It’s a worrying trend. We’ve seen it in the United States, we’ve seen it here in Canada, we see it in the industrialized world: Pensions are beginning to be eroded, benefits are beginning to be reduced, an assault on wages has happened for the last 10, 15 years, and we are witnessing a world of part-time work and many who are independent consultants with no pensions and no security. We are witnessing a world where we’re losing our manufacturing jobs, mostly unionized and well-paid. We are witnessing a world—in the industrialized world, at least—where the middle class is slowly disappearing and we’re going to have the majority squeeze down into the lower levels of the income scale.

We’re going to have an upper percentile of 5% or 7% of people earning over \$100,000 and the majority earning less than \$60,000, and it gets less and less as we go. That’s the world we’re facing. That’s the world that you are helping to create as you assault TTC workers, denying them the right to strike and prohibiting them from striking. It’s the beginning of an assault on many of the rights and benefits that they have gained, earned and fought for for many, many long decades.

The issue here, in part, is about funding. New Democrats in 1990 used to share the operating costs of the TTC 50-50. My friend, the city councillor from Scarborough–Rouge River, would remember that and he would remember that we used to pay 75% of capital costs for the TTC. We recognized then that the TTC is a shared responsibility between the province and the city, and that the Tories ended that arrangement in 1998-99, and the Liberals continue to this day.

Why is it a shared responsibility? Because the TTC cannot be paid for by property tax owners, by people who rent and small business that sustain the city of Toronto. It can’t be done; it can’t. People do not like paying property taxes on the single most important asset they own, which is their home. People have invested in their home, and that is about all most of them have. That’s the only capital they have. They don’t have extra money. When you increase their property taxes some of them go nuts, as some of you know. The member for Scarborough–Rouge River would know that. In my riding, every time I canvass, all they do is talk about how high their property taxes are, how high their hydro bills are going, their gas bills—

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** They want more services.

**1000**

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** They want more services, yeah.

So we say that the TTC isn’t something the city of Toronto alone is responsible for; it has always been a shared responsibility and we have ended that, just as we have ended the shared responsibility around public housing, which the Tories ended in 1998-99, and the Liberals continue in that tradition. Public housing is not some-

thing the city of Toronto is responsible for. Public housing is a shared responsibility, but particularly a provincial responsibility, not a responsibility of property owners alone and small business alone and renters alone.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What?

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** Point the finger at the other side.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I did. I pointed the finger clearly at them first, and then pointed my second finger directly at you as the party that has continued with that tradition.

These are costs that the majority of people simply cannot sustain. Property owners cannot bear the burden alone. It's wrong. Why? Because property taxes are an unfair way to raise money for services that properly belong to the provincial government. Thirty per cent of welfare costs in the city of Toronto are covered by property taxes. Between public housing, welfare costs and child care costs, we are talking about \$2.2 billion that city of Toronto property owners, renters and small business are paying, which they cannot afford.

When there are economic stresses on the city of Toronto, what do they do? You've got people like Mr. Ford—God bless him—saying “We've got to end the gravy train.” Would that we'd end the gravy train for businessmen, millionaires who are on that gravy train and have been on that gravy train for a long, long time. Would that we would start ending the gravy train with the millionaires we have in the city of Toronto and in Ontario. But he started that assault on politicians and on civil servants, and he wasn't the only one. Mon ami Mike Harris started that in 1995 with the assault on public servants. It continues with His Worship Mr. Ford, and it continues with the Liberals we have before us today.

Liberals are not strong supporters of labour—never have been. They pretend. They would love to be seen as defenders and supporters of labour. In my experience here in 20 years, they have never done much for labour—ever—not provincially, not federally. But they have a good image with labour. God knows, I just don't understand. In my view, the majority of Liberals are and have been anti-union for a long, long time, and this is but an excuse to do what His Excellency has asked them to do; that is, to end the ability of TTC workers to strike.

From time to time, Liberals introduce bills such as the one that gave part-time college teachers—remember that half of the college professors are part-time. OPSEU fought the Liberals for two and a half long years, saying it was about time that part-time college workers and other support staff had the right to collective bargaining, and indeed the right to strike. Finally, the Liberals introduced a bill two and a half years ago that would give college teachers the right to collective bargaining.

To this day, they have not been able to exercise that right, because the colleges have said, “Sorry, in spite of the fact that you have collected 10,000 signatures ready to be opened, ready for us to count those votes that would permit you to be a union, no. You need to be certain that

every single worker that has ever worked for the college system over the last many years—every single worker, whether they worked for an hour, two hours, five or 10, whoever they are, wherever they've been, whether they're still working for us or not. You've got to go and find them and you've got to ask them whether they want to be able to join the union.”

They virtually made it impossible for the college system, for OPSEU, the part-time workers and the support staff to ever find these people and get the 30%—the number required—to count those ballots and to get a count.

You understand: You introduce a bill that makes it appear like you support the college workers and the support staff, and in the end, there's no collective bargaining. But on paper, you appear as a government that supports the right of these workers to become a union. It's just a paper right; that's all it is.

I am appealing to some of the Liberal members to speak up. I appeal to the sense of justice that some of you have. I keep on making that appeal with so many different bills, and not one ever dares to vote against the government. But one continues to appeal to those who, I think, have a heart by way of issues of social justice, issues that you probably believe in. I suspect a lot of you think it's okay to have the right to strike. If some of you believe that, it would be nice to hear it from time to time.

I appeal to those watching this political program, because often I find some of the people who watch this political forum say that they like my speeches. Then I say, “Yes, but do you support the NDP?” And they say, “Well, we like your speeches, and we like what you say, but...” If some of you like our speeches and you like what we're saying, this type of bill tips the balance in a very negative direction, in a very destructive direction.

It leads us into that train wreck. It leads us into that arena where more and more people are part-time. It leads us into that arena where more and more workers haven't received a wage increase for 10 or 15 years. It leads us into the arena where 60% or 70% of the workers are in the service sector, the retail sector where the wages are \$10, \$11 or \$12 an hour.

It leads us into that arena where more and more seniors don't have the care that they deserve because we don't have the money because we're giving it away to corporations. We're cutting income tax, and we're giving away the money. We don't have any money left to take care of our seniors.

It leads into that world where we're losing our pensions. Understand, we don't have a pension either because Mike Harris took care of that. But it is a direction the world is moving in, where the corporations are saying, “We can't afford to have pensions.” What does it mean when the corporate world says we can't afford to have the defined benefit pensions we used to have? What does it mean?

It means that we will no longer be able to take care of ourselves in our retirement age. It means the majority of people—and right now 65% of people have to rely on the

CPP and old age security. If you qualify, you get approximately \$15,000 a year to survive as a pensioner. In my view, in this country, with \$15,000 you're dirt poor, and most of you know it. Sixty-five percent, 70% of people do not have a private pension.

Some of the wealthier ones who don't have access to a defined benefit package have their own pension by way of RRSPs, and God bless you, those who have money to do that. If you have a million bucks put away in an RRSP, assuming you're wealthy enough to max out with your \$22,000 a year, God bless you. If you've got that kind money at the end of 30 years, you will have a decent pension.

#### 1010

But that means you're probably one of those lucky few wealthy enough to be able to put \$22,000 away in RRSPs. The majority of workers, who are working part-time, working in the retail sector, are only earning about \$20,000, \$25,000, \$30,000, \$35,000, \$40,000 a year. They can't put aside RRSP dollars to protect themselves from a very uncertain future; they can't do that.

That means the majority are living a precarious existence as they get closer to their senior years. It means that, should they have an unfortunate and terrible disease, such as Alzheimer's, that my father had, without the benefit of money to take care of themselves, and if they don't have children who can take care of them, where do they go if there's no space for them in the long-term-care facilities? Where do they go if they can't afford to put them in a long-term-care facility? Where do they go? And even if they could afford to put them in a long-term-care facility, many of us are so profoundly worried about getting in there, because we don't know the kind of care we're going to get because there are not enough nurses to take care of us.

God, have I heard horror stories. I've seen it through my own experience with my own father. I've seen it, heard it from so many who are so profoundly worried about sending their parents to a long-term-care facility.

If you don't have the money, what do you do when you become a senior? It's a precarious life. We are all heading to that tragic senior's life that doesn't look pretty to me. We are all heading there, except for the few who happen to be wealthy enough to be able to take care of themselves in the event that they have such horrible diseases like my father's, Alzheimer's.

The future looks bleak, my friends; the future looks very bleak. If we base it on the experience of the present, 10 years from now, it's going to be a whole lot worse, when we have more and more seniors reaching that state that, God, I am ever raging against. That's what we're heading to. That's what my fear is: My fear is that we are heading into a society of the haves and the have-nots, the wealthy and the not-so-wealthy—the perpetually permanent part-time workers and people who don't have pensions anymore. It's an ugly society that, I appeal to you, those of you watching, we have to rage against.

While Bill 150 appears to be harmless to you—because you think that you're doing the right thing by

attacking TTC workers—you are the not helping yourselves. You are collaborating in the diminishment of workers' rights. There couldn't be a worse time for union workers. There couldn't be a worse time for workers in general. There couldn't be, and it's going to get worse. There could not be a better time to have unionized labour defending the rights of men and women who work in those workplaces.

In a climate where we are killing our pensions, in a climate where we are suppressing wages, in a climate where we are told that we can no longer afford certain services we used to have, in a climate where our educational system is eroding, in a climate where we don't have enough money to do an IPRC—an identification, placement and review committee—to be able to assess the needs of those kids and make sure they get the attention they deserve, in a climate where parents are privately fundraising to the tune of \$600 million a year for services for their kids, which means that poor kids, poor families, who can't do that are not going to get those programs—in a climate like that, where our health care system is eroding and our seniors are not getting the support, in that environment, we need to support each other. We need to support unions that have fought for health and safety, unions that have fought for better wages, unions that have fought for vision care, unions that have fought for pensions and the right of men and women to live a decent life in that environment. We need them more than ever. This is an assault on those workers, and that is only the beginning.

So many good Liberals are being dragged into it. It's sad, pitifully sad, that so many good men and women in the Liberal Party are just being sucked into His Worship's demand that you do this as quickly as possible and with haste. That's why you've introduced this motion that I am attacking today. That's why we as New Democrats are attacking Bill 150: because it's an assault on workers. We'll continue to fight it as long as we can.

*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 1015 to 1030.*

#### WEARING OF RIBBONS

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear their purple ribbons in recognition of Epilepsy Ontario and Epilepsy Cure Initiative.

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

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On behalf of my Leeds–Grenville page, Tyler Millson from North Grenville, I'd like to introduce his dad, Bart; Bart's sister Valerie Millson-

Jansen; her husband, Stephen; and their children, Colin and Ellen. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Please join me in welcoming, in the west members' gallery, page Brittany McCorrison's parents, from my riding; Brian and Susan McCorrison.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park today John Phair, a councillor from the township of Enniskillen, attending the Ontario Good Roads Association and ROMA conference.

**Hon. Lauro C. Broten:** I'd like to welcome some participants who are here today for Epilepsy Action Day: Margaret Maye, the president and founder of the Epilepsy Cure Initiative; Dr. McIntyre Burnham, or Mac Burnham, from the Epilepsy Ontario executive; Gary Neumann of the Epilepsy Cure Initiative; Thomas Drag of the Epilepsy Cure Initiative; and Peter Grzywacz. All of them are here today for Epilepsy Action Day. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I would like to introduce Eric Duncan, one of Ontario's youngest mayors, at the age of 23, from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry. He's a great friend to eastern Ontario.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** I'd like the members of the Legislature to join me in welcoming the mother of page Madeline, Nancy Diab from the great town of LaSalle.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'd like to welcome the member for Ottawa South to the chamber today.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would just say to the member from Simcoe-Grey that that is not helpful. The Speaker can make arrangements that the member from Simcoe-Grey not be in the chamber today.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of page Holly Rose Lorenzon and the MPP for Vaughan, to welcome her mother, Josie Lorenzon, and her father, Renato Lorenzon, to the Legislature today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

On behalf of page Simon Cook and the member for Oakville, I'd like to welcome Simon's family, his teacher Mr. Minkhorst and his grade 8 class to Queen's Park today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### HYDRO CHARGES

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is for the Premier. The Ontario government is collecting a debt retirement charge on each and every hydro bill that an Ontario family pays. I believe that respect for Ontario families means being transparent and telling them exactly where that money is going.

In November, Premier, the McGuinty Liberals voted down a PC motion that would reveal how much longer families will be paying that debt and how much debt remains to be paid. Premier, why did you vote against making that basic information public to Ontario families?

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

I want to remind my honourable colleague about the origins of this particular debt retirement charge. The previous PC government's failed privatization attempt at Ontario Hydro in 1999 left a stranded debt of \$20 billion on the books, and they stuck families with the bill. That's the origin of the debt retirement charge. The PC government then added \$1 billion more to the stranded debt and the debt retirement charge on families' hydro bills. I think it's important to understand the very origins of that particular charge.

In the supplementaries, I know that my honourable colleague the Minister of Finance is going to want to further enlighten my colleague.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, I think you know that you're conveniently leaving out a number of facts in that response, to use parliamentary language, Speaker. You know that that stranded debt goes back all the way to the 1980s, including the Liberal Peterson government overruns on nuclear.

But, Premier, back to the question: The residual stranded debt was set at \$7.8 billion. It was asked that Ontario families would pay that through their hydro bills, \$7.8 billion, and to date they've paid \$7.8 billion. Despite that, your government is saying it may stay on the bills till as late as 2018. It's hard to take the Premier at his word when he doesn't get the facts.

Why won't you do the right thing, call in a forensic auditor, and tell us where all that money went to?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The Auditor General has correctly pointed out that, from the time that party implemented the debt retirement charge to the time it left office, not only did they put it on people's bills, they didn't use it to pay down the debt—four long, painful years of ignoring the reality.

*Interjections.*

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

Honourable members, we have a number of guests who are joining us today who would like to hear both—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Halton, when the Speaker is speaking, I would very much appreciate it if you would listen, because when you're speaking, you can't hear what I'm saying.

We do have a number of guests who are here. They do want to hear the questions, and they want to hear the answers. I would just ask that the honourable members be respectful of the guests who are visiting.

Minister.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Not only did they not use—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Renfrew, I just sat down, and you started to interject. I've tried to be patient with all members of the House, and I would just ask that you be cognizant of the importance of listening as well. Thank you.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Not only did they not use the funds to pay down the debt, they added an additional \$1 billion to the stranded debt. Every year since we've taken office, we've put \$1 billion down against that stranded debt. And yes, we can report—and the Auditor General looks every year at the books, not only of the province but of the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. The debt retirement charge will come off people's bills sometime between 2015 and 2018. It depends on a number of factors, including the interest rate.

What I can tell the members opposite and tell the people of Ontario is that again this year, this government will pay more than \$1 billion dollars off that debt, instead of adding money to the debt, like that leader and his party did for the first four years they levied that charge.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** With all due respect, Premier and finance minister, we want a straight answer. Why don't you just open the books and let Ontario families see exactly where that money has gone? See, I don't think you understand: Every Ontario family is paying \$84 a year towards the debt retirement charge. That's what it means for an average Ontario family. And then you threw the HST on top of that to take even more money out of their pockets. But you won't tell them where the money is going, and now you're saying it could be as late as 2018.

Basically, Premier, you're turning a temporary debt retirement charge into a permanent tax grab on the backs of Ontario families. Do the right thing, call in a forensic auditor, and let's see what you did with all that money.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The Auditor General of Ontario has signed off on the books every year—every year. And what do we know? That party that put the debt retirement charge on people's bills, not only did they not use it the first four years, they added to the debt.

I look forward to debating this issue with the people of Ontario. The member for Simcoe–Grey wants to try to pretend that he didn't bungle the energy file, which he did. It's because of you there's a debt retirement charge. It's because of their inability to apply the money where it should have been that it grew under their watch. We're paying it down each and every year. The auditor signs off on it. The books are open and clear. They were a failure in energy policy. We're cleaning up the mess.

1040

#### HYDRO CHARGES

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I'll try the Premier again. Annual reports of the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. do not report the balance of the residual stranded debt. The minister says the Auditor General signed off on those books. The books are absent. They say nothing about how much debt is there or when it will be paid off. We asked exactly when this will be paid off. They say—now, the minister finally admits maybe as late as 2018.

Premier, this is what it means for average folks. It's like getting a credit card bill every month and asking to pay off the interest with no idea how much principle remains. That is just plain wrong, and it is absolutely showing no respect for the families who are getting stuck with the bills.

Why won't you do the right thing? Let's get the facts on the table. Call in a forensic audit and tell families straight to their face where the money went and how much more is to go.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I'll refer the member opposite to the public accounts of Ontario and remind him again that their party did in fact put the debt retirement charge on people's bills.

Just to remind people: They broke up the old Ontario Hydro. They wanted to sell off Hydro One and OPG. What they did was took all the debt off of their balance sheets; that is, they took the debt and said to the people of Ontario, "You're going to pay off this debt while we sell these assets to our friends." You know what? The people of Ontario put an end to that.

What did they do when they put on the debt retirement charge? They didn't apply a single penny of the money raised to the debt for the first four years. We have put more than a billion dollars down each and every year, audited. The balances are there—

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

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member for Simcoe–Grey, your leader is trying to ask a question, and you are interrupting your own leader.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I will express my disappointment directly to the Premier of the province that he's not answering these very straightforward and basic questions today. Instead, he's asking his finance minister to try to create a fog around the issue, to talk about anything but the essential question.

Families pay this on each and every bill and you come up with all kinds of cover stories. Your member for Northumberland–Quinte West says now the stranded debt is \$12 billion. The member from Brant threw out a figure saying it was \$19 billion. Premier, for goodness sake, you can't even get your cover stories straight.

Let's get the facts. Let's get it on the table. Will you show respect to families who pay the bills? Call in a forensic audit. Let's see where that money went.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The numbers that the Leader of the Opposition puts out on this issue—and the member for Simcoe–Grey—are simply wrong. They're designed to confuse people. They're designed to hide the fact that not only did they levy the debt retirement charge, they didn't use one penny of it for the first four years to pay down the debt. In that sense, had they used that money appropriately, maybe it would be paid off sooner.

This government, in each budget that's audited by the Auditor General, has paid down more than a billion dollars. The number is coming down each and every year.

It's audited by the Auditor General. Their voodoo numbers are just wrong. The people of Ontario remember what they did to hydro. They remember that they wasted that money and didn't—

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I'll try back to the Premier once again. Maybe I'll get two out of six questions answered and bat .333 today.

Premier, you famously said last week about Ontario families that, "We're just kind of growing up a little bit as Ontarians." I wonder if Premier Dad thinks we're old enough to find out exactly how much stranded debt is remaining and where the money went. Will you treat the families who pay the bills as adults?

With all due respect, you're trying to obscure this issue. Where did the money go? How much is left? Will you do the right thing and quit changing your cover stories? I don't know what you're trying to hide. Put the facts on the table. Call in a forensic audit today.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I have great respect for the Auditor General of Ontario, who looks at these numbers every year. I have great respect for an Auditor General who has reported in each and every year that the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** There are a number of members—if they want to be set free from this place, the Speaker can certainly arrange that.

Minister?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** They have great confidence in the Auditor General. They don't have confidence in the Leader of the Opposition because they know that that leader and his party put—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** That took, I think, maybe 15 seconds.

Minister?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** They don't have confidence in the Leader of the Opposition because they know it was his party that put this charge on their bills. Then, for the first few years, they didn't even pay down the debt with the money. They put a hidden cap on price.

We're doing the right thing. We're paying down more than a billion a year. It will be paid down, off of people's bills, sometime between 2015 and 2018. That's the honest answer—

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

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. I asked the Minister of Energy on Monday what happened to the all-party committee that was tasked to look at gasoline prices over five years ago. He didn't have an answer for me then. My question to the Premier is, does he have an answer today?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I welcome the question. My friends opposite will know that I have been on the road,

speaking to many Ontarians, and gasoline prices are a pressing issue for families and businesses alike. I was in northern Ontario yesterday, and that's a real and ongoing concern there.

I think more and more Ontarians are coming to understand that, as a result of developments in the Middle East at this point in time, there is some real insecurity associated with the future supply of oil and gas, and that's driving up the costs.

I noticed with interest this morning on CNN—I want to quote from what they said: "The national average price for a gallon of regular gasoline rose 1.2 cents Wednesday ... according to a daily survey from motorist group AAA. Prices have jumped 23.6 cents over the past eight days." This is a global phenomenon.

We are doing what we can here in Ontario—I'll speak about that in the supplementary—to help out our families.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Last night, gas prices shot up another three cents a litre in Toronto. In Sioux Lookout, some drivers are paying \$1.31 a litre today.

Why is the Premier willing to regulate the price of beer but unwilling to do anything at all about the price of gasoline?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I gather that my honourable colleague, as the leader of the NDP, is proposing that we regulate gas prices in Ontario. That is something that they actually looked at in government. It's something that they looked at in government; it's something that we've looked at in government. We've all rejected it, and I'll tell you why: Because the practical experience on the ground has been that where you regulate, prices overall tend to be higher. It tends to cost more for gasoline for families and businesses alike in those jurisdictions where you regulate your gas prices. That's why we are looking at other ways to help our families.

Ninety-three percent of Ontarians have received a permanent income tax cut. Typical Ontario families are getting a tax cut of \$355 this year and every year going forward. Those are real, meaningful, practical ways that we can help out families with their household expenses.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier isn't just ignoring the problem; he's making it worse by slapping the HST on gasoline prices and daily essentials like home heating. The Premier ignored families and their real concerns about making ends meet. Did the McGuinty Liberals really even consider, when they hit families with their unfair HST tax, that gas prices might start climbing?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I want to draw my honourable colleague's attention once again to the clean energy benefit. There was advice that we received from the NDP, saying that we should reduce the cost of our electricity bills by 8%. We considered that and we said that was inadequate. We took it two points higher. We're cutting our electricity bills by 10%, and my colleague has yet to acknowledge that.

The fact is, we are very sensitive to household expenses and the pressures they put on moms and dads. That's why we put forward things like our clean energy benefit, taking 10% off the bills for the next five years; our income tax cut of \$355 for the average Ontario household; and the children's activity tax credit—\$50 per child. As I say, those are real and practical ways that we're helping families manage their household expenses.

1050

## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also to the Premier. Yesterday, the minister claimed that the HST would protect health care and improve education. Government documents, in fact, confirm that the HST will take \$6.8 billion out of family budgets. How much of that money will Ontario's corporate sector be receiving in tax giveaways?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Our overall tax cuts will save 93% of Ontarians money overall.

The leader of the third party is trying to use documents that we were happy to release to the public by selecting numbers that are incomplete and, in fact, paint an inaccurate and incomplete picture.

The tax cuts we've provided and the various tax credits we have provided help ensure that, particularly, people of more modest means will actually come out ahead overall. What this tax plan for jobs and growth does is, it will help create some 600,000 jobs in Ontario over the next 10 years. This is an important policy that we strongly believe will not only lower taxes for most Ontarians but will create jobs and growth in the future for our children and their children.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Government memos obtained through freedom of information show very clearly where the money is going: The government will collect \$6.8 billion worth of new sales taxes from cash-strapped families and hand out \$6.8 billion in corporate tax giveaways.

Does the Premier know about some kind of magical math that the rest of us don't?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The leader of the third party conveniently ignores a number of things. I would refer her to the 2009 budget, the 2010 budget and the 2011 budget, which will be coming out shortly.

First of all, off of that money will come the most generous sales tax credit in the country for all Ontarians of modest means. I would remind her of the energy tax credits for the north, particularly for individuals and large corporate interests, to ensure that they remain competitive. She also forgot to mention the personal tax cuts; Ontario now has the lowest tax rate on the first \$37,000 of income. That's why people like Hugh Mackenzie and other anti-poverty activists have embraced our agenda—our agenda for jobs and growth—and reject this sleight of hand and incomplete and inaccurate assessment—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment that he just made.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I withdraw the comment.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Households are getting hit hard with spiking gas prices, sky-high electricity costs, and heaven help them if they have a loved one who needs long-term care in this province. But the Bank of Montreal saw their profits rise by 57%, to \$2.8 billion a year. Their CEO, Bill Downe, got a \$2-million raise. Oil giant Shell raked in \$90 billion.

Why do families that pay for gasoline have to pay more while the people making record profits still get a tax break?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** It's this simple: Alberta, British Columbia and other Canadian provinces have lower corporate taxes than Ontario. If we do not address this question, the leader of the third party's policy will be a great job creator for Alberta, for Saskatchewan, for British Columbia, for Michigan, for Indiana, for Illinois—the list goes on.

These are difficult choices, and I respect the fact that Jack Layton and the federal NDP are now taking corporate taxes off the agenda in Ottawa, because it is the right thing to do.

She's tripping over her own rhetoric. Her own staff said a couple of months ago that these tax cuts won't help businesses in Ontario because they're not making money.

This will help the auto sector and the forestry sector. It's about jobs and a better future for our children.

## ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. On Monday, Minister, you said the towers being held hostage at Caledonia were not part of the plan to transmit hydro from Big Becky, but the website of your own government agency says it is. Yesterday you got caught and were forced to admit that it was part of the plan all along. Then you dodged questions over whether these towers were critical to the Big Becky project.

Either you don't understand your file, or you attempted to mislead this House. Which one is it?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment he just made.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Withdrawn.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** In answer to that question, the member has no idea what he's talking about. Hydro One stopped work on the Niagara transmission reinforcement project in 2006 in order to remove any possible obstacle to a resolution of that process. The line being constructed is to strengthen our interconnection with the state of New York at Niagara Falls, not to transmit power from the Niagara Tunnel. At present, this situation does not impact reliability in that area or anywhere else in southern Ontario.



We'll continue to work with Six Nations and the surrounding communities at building stronger partnerships that can lead to peace and reconciliation in that community. The PC approach clearly is to try to stir things up in that community. It's irresponsible. It indicates they've learned nothing from the shame that their party brought to the people of this province as a result of Ipperwash.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Minister, you have completely bungled your own file. From the microFIT fiasco to your smart meter tax machines to your offshore wind farm backtrack, Ontario families are paying for your incompetence. The billion-dollar Big Becky project is projected to cost another \$600 million, and you've spent \$116 million to build transmission lines for it. Now you're saying you don't even know if the power Big Becky produces will go anywhere because the towers are being held hostage in Caledonia.

The Premier, in a scrum today, unbelievably said this is the first he's ever heard of that problem. Can you believe it? Is this another one of your billion-dollar boondoggles that will stick Ontario families with the bill?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I find the PCs' continual efforts to stir things up in Caledonia put on display, frankly, their true lack of moral fibre. This party left our transmission and distribution systems in a state of decay—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. The member from Renfrew is about to jump up on a point of order. I can honestly tell you that because of the interjections that were taking place I did not hear a—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I don't need help from the member from Nepean.

I didn't hear a comment because I could not hear because of the noise. Minister, if you said something that was of a nature that caused some disruption in the House, I would just ask that you withdraw it, please.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I didn't think it was offensive, but if it offended anybody I withdraw it. I'm happy to withdraw it.

That party left our transmission distribution system in a state of decay. They opposed our efforts to invest \$7 billion since 2003 and to upgrade 5,000 kilometres of transmission line. They oppose our efforts to build a line from Bruce to Milton. They oppose our plans to invest in the Pickle Lake line, the east-west tie, and strengthen the southwestern Ontario grid.

It's rather interesting, though, that there's only one transmission line in the entire province that party wants us to move on quicker, and it just happens to be a line that runs through a sensitive area in dispute with Six Nations—

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

#### DISCLOSURE OF TOXINS

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, you will know—because the

Toronto Star, myself and others have raised the issue—about the fiasco over the use of Agent Orange over the past couple of weeks. Your response up to date has been a fairly simple one: that you will put in place, as you call it, a “herbicide spraying project team” in order to investigate what happened.

My question to you is simply this: Why would you put the MNR in charge of collecting the information related to the use of Agent Orange when it was this very ministry that not only used Agent Orange but, quite frankly, kept their mouth shut when they found out it was harmful to the public?

1100

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I'm very pleased to answer another question on this issue in the House. Again, I want to reiterate our great concern over this issue. Since learning about it, as I stated earlier, I've been committed to obtaining all the facts and sharing the information. Certainly, when the individual from Tembec first approached us, he gave us some very thoughtful recommendations, and I appreciate his coming forward.

We have two priorities in our government. First of all, it's to find and identify those who were exposed back in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and possibly the 1980s, and also to work with health experts to understand fully the impact this herb spray may have on human health.

I think we were the initial ministry that was contacted and I certainly am working with my ministry officials and everyone else within the other ministries to collect that information. I think it is important for us to share and be accountable and transparent about the information we receive with the public of Ontario. Their health is on the line. We understand that.

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Minister, I don't doubt for a second that you're concerned; so am I; so is every Ontarian. That is not the issue. The issue is: Why would we put the very ministry in charge of the investigation when they are the ones, quite frankly, that withheld the information from the public in the late 1970s and early 1980s?

So I ask you again: Why was this the government's response? Why did you put the very ministry that was the culprit in charge of the investigation?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** We have created an independent fact-finding panel and they'll be able to help us collect that information. I've written to the federal Minister of Health and asked for their involvement in this. As well, my deputy, I think yesterday, sent out a letter to all the territories and provinces asking for information and to share it.

I think there's only one thing you can do at this point: collect information, share it publicly, and not be worried about who did what, but collect that information. This is an issue that has spanned decades. We need to make sure that we work with Health Canada and other provinces to share that information. And certainly the federal government has a responsibility. They regulated the use of herbicides across this country, and this particular herbicide was registered by the pesticides directorate of Agriculture

Canada. The federal department was responsible for registering those pesticides. We're going to work—

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

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. On Friday, February 11, the members opposite from Nepean–Carleton and Whitby–Oshawa appeared at the Winchester District Memorial Hospital in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for a rally to save the hospital's emergency department. Their claim was that it was this government's intention to reduce hours and services in the emergency department at that hospital.

I know of the good work that we've done in the past seven years for Winchester and for the high-quality health care that we have here in Ontario, and I know that we want to have health care in hospitals close to home, so this concerned me very much. It concerned my constituents. It concerned my mother; she's in that hospital right now.

I would appreciate it if the minister could inform my constituents of the status of Winchester's emergency department and this government's plans for it.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member for the question. Let me be clear: The Champlain LHIN has absolutely no plans to reduce hours at or close the emergency room at Winchester District Memorial Hospital.

This is exactly the kind—

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** This is exactly the kind of bizarre, drive-by smear campaign that the opposition has chosen as their tactic. Ontarians have become accustomed to this, and it is bizarre. They are fearmongering and they are seeking to undermine people's confidence in our health care system.

On this side of the House we are investing in the Winchester hospital. We've invested \$45 million to improve the hospital, including improvements to the emergency department.

Let's not forget, the PCs—

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

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** Thank you, Minister, for those reassuring words. I want to say that I know what has happened there at the hospital. I know of the consultation process that has gone on at that hospital. I attended the consultation process—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Nepean can take—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The Minister of Consumer Services.

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Nepean can take this as a final warning: One more outburst and I'll have no choice but to name her.

Please continue.

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** It concerns me that this announcement was made by the members opposite without any regard or concern for the—people worried for days about this situation. If they really wanted a photo op, they could have travelled down to Cornwall and stood outside Cornwall's general hospital that they closed. They closed that hospital.

I have advocated for Winchester hospital, and I would like the minister to inform this House of the investments that have been made by the—

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me share a quote from the Cornwall Standard Freeholder from February 17 on this issue:

“Overlooked was the fact that Jim Brownell, who represents Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, has been working diligently behind the scenes to make sure the hospital's ER's status quo is maintained.

“The Winchester hospital, as with Cornwall and Alexandria hospitals, has no bigger supporter than Brownell who has played a major role in securing funds for health care in his riding.”

The opposition has a plan to silence the local voice when it comes to health care. They want to make all decisions behind closed doors here at Queen's Park. The people of Ontario want a local voice.

I want to congratulate the member. He has done an outstanding job for his constituents.

*Interjections.*

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

New question.

#### WIND TURBINES

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. Ontario families purchased rotor components, generators, concrete, steel towers and blades in good faith. It's a shame that they were lured into the Premier's energy experiment in the first place. It is an outright lack of respect for Kingston families who made these consumer purchases and then were left unprotected from the Premier's sudden backtrack on offshore wind turbines.

Do you agree with Mayor Mark Gerretsen that the Premier's backtrack on his energy experiment in your riding was “purely political”?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I think the Minister of Energy is in a much better position to answer this question.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** We listened very carefully to that member's leader yesterday when he unequivocally said that the Green Energy Act is going to be pretty much cancelled and that these contracts won't continue. What that does is it verifies what the member for Simcoe–Grey said earlier this month: “We're not going to sign any more of these” feed-in tariff “contracts. Those days will be gone.” Then he made a threat: “Whoever gets a contract now, enjoy it while you have it.”

That's unmitigated arrogance. It shows a total disrespect for the farmers who are working hard and trying to contribute to building our clean energy economy.

They want to cancel this program altogether; we're making it work. We're working with thousands of Ontario farmers to give them an opportunity to participate.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I can appreciate that now the Minister of Consumer Services is in a conflict of interest. After all, he was the Minister of the Environment in January 2008 when the McGuinty government cleared the way for offshore wind turbines. Then, the Premier's seat-saver program kicked into gear and executed what Mayor Mark Gerretsen calls a “purely political” backtrack.

Now the Kingston Economic Development Corp. is going around saying that the backtrack is merely a suspension and to expect wind projects to come back online. Who told them the industrial wind turbine experiment will go ahead after the election: the Premier, the energy minister or you?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Once again, that party gets up and has a variety of opinions about the efforts that we're making to clean up the energy mess that they left behind. But what their leader did not say yesterday was that—he did not tell the thousands of clean energy workers across this province why he wants to kill their jobs. What he's planning to do, in wiping out the efforts we've made to build a clean energy economy, is kill thousands of jobs and scare off billions of dollars of investments. These are real workers holding good jobs, with real families, who want to keep working. I've met those workers face to face in places like Cambridge, Burlington, Fort Erie, Tillsonburg, Newmarket; the list goes on and on, and it continues to grow every day. Those workers deserve to know where that member stands and where her party stands. Are they going to kill those thousands of jobs that were—

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

1110

#### NUCLEAR ENERGY

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. Since 1999, each Ontario household has paid thousands of dollars servicing Ontario Hydro's stranded debt, most of which is the result of massive cost overruns at nuclear plants built in Ontario. Now your government is embarking on a new round of costly nuclear projects. What is the

Premier doing to protect Ontarians from having to pay off tens of billions of dollars in additional debt from its new nuclear project?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** We are looking to invest in refurbishing our nuclear units. Indeed, we're eagerly awaiting the federal government to get through their AECL process so that we can purchase two additional new units, because nuclear makes up half of our baseload capacity. It's an absolutely critical part of ensuring that we have a reliable source of power.

I would encourage the member to take a look at his own NDP energy policy. Maybe they might want to think about the importance of nuclear in ensuring that we do have a reliable-source-of-energy policy. We've said it before: The NDP has not come forward with any kind of an energy plan. We do know one thing: Nuclear is not going to be in it; other sources of energy are not likely going to be in it. The NDP nuclear plan stands for “no darned power” plan.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I am surprised that the Premier didn't answer this. The minister said that, clearly, it's a blank cheque for the nuclear industry. Whatever they want, he's going to give; it's very clear.

My question: A new report from the Ontario Clean Air Alliance indicates that OPG—Ontario Power Generation—is asking the Ontario government to guarantee repayment of money it borrows to rebuild the Darlington nuclear plant. Based on past nuclear cost overruns, the alliance says that Ontarians should expect cost overruns of \$21 billion or more. Will the Premier protect Ontarians from future debt charges and taxes by telling OPG that the Ontario government will not pay a single penny of the debt or cost overruns from the Darlington refurbishment?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The member's leader gets up day after day and talks about the importance of jobs across this province. There are 70,000 jobs in the nuclear industry. The vast majority of those jobs are in Ontario. It's very clear that the NDP does not care about those 70,000 workers. Well, we do. That's why we may be the one government left in this country that—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I've been tolerant with the member from Renfrew; final warning for the member from Renfrew.

Minister?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** We may well be the one government left in this country that is standing up for those 70,000 workers. We will not allow that nuclear industry to be the next Avro Arrow of the federal government. We're going to stand up for those workers. We're going to stand up for this very important industry. It's the backbone of our energy system. It's a very important part of our economy. You may not recognize it. You may not care about those 70,000 workers and their families—

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

## GREENBELT

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Today marks the sixth anniversary of Ontario's greenbelt, a working countryside that arches its way around the greater Golden Horseshoe and includes the southern part of my riding in Peterborough.

Nine out of 10 Ontarians support the greenbelt, which is internationally recognized as a model for the world. These supporters recognize the greenbelt's benefits as a source of local healthy food, recreation and tourism opportunities, not to mention the protection it affords to our watersheds, stream and rivers. They also recognize its importance to future generations.

Through you to the minister, could the minister please clarify for the House the importance of the greenbelt and what it means to Ontario's future?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** Today, we do celebrate. We celebrate the greenbelt: 1.8 million acres of protected countryside, roughly the size of Prince Edward Island. Our government is safeguarding it for future generations, and you're right: nine out of 10 Ontarians support this initiative.

The official opposition has signalled that it's open to the idea of getting rid of it, and if past behaviour is a predictor of future behaviour, then I must point out that the PC environment critic voted against it, the PC natural resources critic voted against it, the PC tourism critic voted against it, the PC agriculture critic voted against it, and the leader of the official opposition voted against it. Shame.

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

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** It's unbelievable that the official opposition, a party where several members have a rural background, would vote against this important measure.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Member from Oxford. Member from Durham.

Please continue.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** This government is protecting land so that farmers and our future generations can continue to benefit. The greenbelt is a busy place for farming, vine lands and recreation.

My supplementary is again to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. My constituents understand the importance of preserving green space, but I'd like to know what exactly the greenbelt provides them with. Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Could the minister please outline to this House what exactly protecting such a valuable green space accomplishes?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** The vast majority of the greenbelt is farmland. In fact, almost half of our fruit farms and one fifth of our vegetable farms are located in the greenbelt. The greenbelt also protects the headwaters of all major watersheds in the western GTA. It provides numerous recreation and tourism opportunities and is the location of numerous historical landmarks, fairs, festivals, culinary tours and wineries.

What's shocking is that the leader of the official opposition wants to get rid of this. His party voted against it. The Leader of the Opposition would rather see a Niagara mid-peninsula highway than a protected green space. The PC leader wants to pave over the riding of Burlington even though his caucus colleagues the members from Burlington and Halton are against it. We will protect the greenbelt.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. This week, Verso Economics released a study saying that for every renewable energy job created in the UK, 3.7 other jobs are lost. In Ontario, that means that if you reach your target of renewable energy jobs, Ontario will actually lose another 185,000 jobs. This confirms once again what we in the Ontario PC caucus have been saying all along. How much more evidence do you need that your expensive energy experiments are hurting Ontario families?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Once again, the PCs start quoting reports that have been very much discredited in the past and will continue to be. The fact is, when it comes to jobs, his leader made it very clear yesterday that he's not going to stand up for the thousands of Ontarians who are working in our clean energy economy; that what he is planning to do—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** Goodbye.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** That's not helpful. I'm going to warn the Minister of Children and Youth Services for that. That's not helpful.

As well, I had warned the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, and I do have to name John Yakabuski, the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

*Mr. Yakabuski was escorted from the chamber.*

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Minister of Health, a warning to you as well too. It's not helpful—maybe it was the Minister of Economic Development. I'm warning you both.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Minister, the only discredit goes to you. This is just the latest in a long list of studies that prove what we have been saying. A Spanish study says that every renewable job costs 2.2 jobs; an Italian study says that every renewable jobs costs 6.9 jobs; and this latest Verso Economics study says that every renewable jobs costs 3.7 jobs. Why should anyone believe your phony job creation numbers when everybody else says it doesn't work?

1120

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** As I said, they like to quote studies funded by big oil. That's up to them. That study was totally discredited.

What they don't want to talk about, though, is their own leader's plan for energy because they know that his plan would kill thousands of clean energy jobs—13,000

jobs created last year in this province in our clean energy economy; it will be up to 36,000 by the end of this year.

I've met those workers face to face. I challenge the member opposite to come out with me across this province in places like Windsor; like Tillsonburg; his leader's backyard of Fort Erie; in Cambridge; in Sault Ste. Marie. I challenge him to come with me and meet those workers face to face, go eyeball-to-eyeball with them and tell them you want to kill their jobs.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Why does everybody have to yell so much?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** To answer the member's question from Durham about why everyone has to yell so much: There's so much noise in this chamber, no one can hear each other.

## HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. Families in Niagara region are frustrated with their health care system, and for good reason. They've seen emergency rooms close in Fort Erie and Port Colborne and other services disappear from their communities. Last month, Niagara regional council approved a resolution calling for the independent investigation of the Niagara Health System. Is the Premier ready to listen to the residents of Niagara and call for an independent investigation?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. I share the goal of everyone in Niagara when I say that our job is to improve health care in Niagara for the people of Niagara. The NHS is doing excellent work. There is new leadership there: the very capable interim leadership of Sue Matthews. They are moving forward to implement the hospital improvement plan.

I have no plans to appoint an investigator at this time. There have been several investigations, surveys and community engagements done in that area. In fact, Dr. Jack Kitts, who is the CEO of the Ottawa Hospital, had an engagement there; over 5,000 people showed up to discuss the Niagara health improvement plan.

We are moving forward to improve health care for people in Niagara. I look forward to the supplementary.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I would guess that 5,000 people showed up because 5,000 people are just a small example of how many people are angry about what's happening in the Niagara Health System.

Niagara Falls, Welland and Fort Erie have all passed similar resolutions. People are looking for an accountable, transparent health care system that actually responds to their needs. An independent investigation into the NHS would just be a start.

As families lose health care services and feel increasingly distrustful of the decision-making process, why won't the Premier and this minister take the advice

of regional leaders and order the investigation that they have called for?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Just last week, the Niagara Health System shared with the community exactly how the changes they are making are improving health care for people. Wait times are down.

Let me share with you how far wait times have come down in Niagara since 2003: Hip replacements are less than half of what they were; we've been able to cut 200 days off hip replacements; knee replacements are down by 36%—127 days of less waiting; cataract surgery is down; MRI outpatient is down by 33%; and outpatient CT scans are cut in half.

We are getting excellent results. I know that the people of Niagara are looking forward to the opening of the St. Catharines General Hospital. For the first time, they'll be able to get cancer care much closer to home.

## AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Time and time again, I hear the Leader of the Opposition criticizing the Ontario government, stating that handouts to business under the guise of job creation are more about rewarding political friends than boosting the economy.

The member opposite has gone as far as stating, "This corporate welfare is sometimes two steps away from corruption." This is a very big accusation. I represent many constituents that, in one way or another—both directly and indirectly—are employed by the auto industry. What concerns me most is that the member opposite opposed a partnership with the auto sector, calling the government's assistance "corporate welfare."

For this reason, I want to ask the Minister of Economic Development and Trade whether or not my constituents should care about the McGuinty government's investments in the auto sector.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** We're often very disappointed in the statements by members of the opposition about a sector that's so critical to the Ontario economy. When we stepped forward to partner with the auto industry during a recession that was the worst in terms of its impact on the manufacturing sector, we did not have the support of opposition members.

We went forward without them, but we partnered with great organizations: the CAW, GM, Chrysler. Today, Ontario can say that that partnership was worth it and those jobs—not just the jobs in Scarborough with this able representation, but the jobs right across Ontario—are being picked up, retained and, in fact, growing. We are delighted to report massive investments by General Motors in St. Catharines and in Oshawa—more people, more shifts. We're delighted that—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Peterborough and the member from Durham, your comments to one another are very much of a personal nature.

I don't need to be in the crossfire, and I would much prefer that you take your differences outside this chamber.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** Minister, thank you for that response. I believe that if it hadn't been for the Ontario government's investment in the auto industry, many of my constituents would be unemployed. It's great to hear the auto sector giants have been able to rebound and continue to grow. Additional production shifts and launching new vehicles is great news for this province and my constituents.

But what about small businesses involved in the industry? They're often the backbone of economic success. Have these businesses been able to rebound just as effectively as their big brothers, or were they overlooked when the government was providing assistance to the auto sector?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** I appreciate that the opposition members don't like getting called out on their behaviour, but we're intent on doing that, not just now but especially when we go back to the people of Ontario and ask, "Who was there for you when you needed help the most?" It was this Ontario McGuinty government, and it was done in the absence of support of the opposition members.

They're prepared to show up at receptions like the one last night, held right here in the precinct, to show their big support for industry, but where were they when those very same companies were looking for assistance to keep these jobs alive? Only the McGuinty government was there, not just for the companies, but for the CAW as well.

We will be there again, not just for those assemblers but also for those auto parts suppliers that are a critical part of that supply chain. There is no one on this continent that does it as well as Ontario, and that's because of the support of the McGuinty government in the absence of the members of the opposition.

#### SCHOOL SAFETY

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** My question is for the Minister of Education. Minister, last week the Ontario Student Trustees' Association released a survey which found that 46% of students in the senior grades had been bullied. As you know, this is a most significant increase from the 29% found in a similar survey by CAMH in 2009. We've gone from 29% to 46%.

However, this survey does confirm what students, parents and teachers repeatedly say; that is, that the situation is getting worse and that this government has no coordinated plan to keep our students safe in our schools.

I ask you, when will your government take the steps to keep our students safe in school?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Certainly, student safety in our schools is a very important issue. That is why our government has made a priority of this. That is why we have established safe school teams. We have even asked these teams to work and ensure that we observe Bullying

Awareness Week, which takes place in the fall. We are also asking boards to report to us to keep track of those incidences. We are doing everything we can to ensure that students have safe places to go.

1130

Secondary schools, are very important places. I'm happy as well to report to this House that because of our investments in secondary schools, almost 80% of the students who are in those schools now are graduating. When we came to government, one in three of those students was dropping out—

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Minister, I noticed that you're avoiding the fact. The fact is that 46% of the students were identified as having been bullied. This is a serious number; it's a high number.

Unfortunately, to compound the seriousness of this issue, in 2010 the Auditor General criticized your ministry for recklessly throwing money at the bullying problem without bothering to develop performance indicators or tracking measures. This is despite the fact that your Premier says that tracking and measuring are critical for accountability. You've doled out \$150 million without requiring schools to tell you whether it's been spent on safe school initiatives or if it's been effectively spent. You wrote the cheque and you walked away.

Why has your government failed to develop a comprehensive plan to keep our students safe at school?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Actually, we do have a plan. It is the Safe Schools Act—and the honourable member and the members of the opposition voted against that piece of legislation. It is with that legislation that in 2011-12 we will be requiring school boards to actually report.

We are the government that requires reporting. We want to know these numbers. The previous government did not do that. We want those numbers because we want to continue to stream resources to schools to support them in their efforts to keep schools safe.

This is the government that has acted with legislation; they voted against that legislation. So it strikes me as very strange that they have the nerve to stand in the House today and ask what we're doing, when they voted against what we are doing to keep students safe.

#### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. The decision to buy dirty diesel trains now and electrify later will cost taxpayers an extra \$400 million for an extra track. Metrolinx has not yet signed the contract, we've learned. Will this government do the right thing and cancel the plan to purchase dirty diesel trains?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We really have to ask whether the third party is interested in transit or is not interested in transit. We have to ask whether the third

party is interested in having a world-class air-rail link from Union to Pearson or whether they are not.

We have said that we're going to have the air-rail link in place for the Pan Am Games. That is a commitment that we have made, and we are going to follow through on that.

We have said that we are going to put an EA in place in order to begin the process of electrification. We are going to do that.

We have said that we are going to have trains on that track that can be converted to electric when the corridor is ready. We are going to follow through on that.

I think the third party should be supporting us on this. This is a very, very environmentally responsible transportation solution.

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

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I believe her backbenchers are interested in knowing if the Minister of Transportation is interested in what they want. They voted unanimously to electrify by 2015, and yet, clearly, that's not what's going to happen here.

Last month, in fact, the McGuinty government announced it would conduct its own environmental assessment, just like you heard the minister say, to electrify the air-rail link. So I'd like to know one thing: Can the minister tell us when this environmental assessment is expected to be completed? Will the McGuinty government act on this issue in a timely manner, or are they planning on dragging this out until after the next election?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think the member opposite knows that it takes a number of years to do an environmental assessment. We are going to follow the rules, and we're going to make sure that all of the issues are dealt with.

The member opposite has not talked in this House about what it means to electrify a corridor. The member opposite has not talked about the overhead catenary that has to be put in place. The member opposite has not talked about the booster stations that may need to be put in place along the line. We have to make sure that safety issues are dealt with. We have to make sure that the full environmental assessment is done.

We've made a commitment to 2015. We're going to follow through on that commitment.

On the issue of backbenchers and members of our government who want to have an opinion about a particular issue, we're not interested in silencing that. We want that debate to take place. We want that conversation to take place. I welcome the member for York South-Weston and the member for Davenport having a discussion with their constituents. We're going to follow through and do this as quickly as possible—

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

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Com-

munity safety is a top priority for my constituents. It is the responsibility of the Ontario government to ensure that our communities are safe for individuals, families and, most importantly, our children. Oak Ridges–Markham is developing at such a rapid pace, the constituents in my riding are concerned about their safety due to the congestion of cars on the roads, new subdivisions being built and thousands of new residents moving in.

On behalf of my constituents and all Ontarians, I'm hoping the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services can share with this House what he's doing to ensure the safety of Ontarians.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Over the past seven years, our government has provided significant financial support. We've put more than 2,000 additional police officers on the streets since 2003. We're the only province in Canada to dedicate its entire allocation of funding under the federal police officer recruitment program to front-line police officers, resulting in another 325 new officers on the streets.

We're investing in community-based crime prevention programs, such as the safer and vital communities grant program. We have also made investments to keep our communities safe through the guns-and-gangs investments. We've invested over \$100 million in three highly successful programs: the guns and gangs task force, the Toronto anti-violence intervention strategy and provincial anti-violence intervention strategy. We announced earlier this year that we are allocating an additional \$15 million to PAVIS over the next two years. It has already contributed to several local success stories in the York region.

We have done much and there's much more to—

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

#### USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, the member for Peterborough and the member from Scarborough East–Pickering participated in question period today, and instead of raising issues that might be of concern to their constituents, they used question period today as an opportunity to attack opposition members of the House.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, you have ruled and suggested that that's an inappropriate use of question period time. I would respectfully request that you review Hansard and report back to the House as to whether or not you believe those questions were appropriate this morning.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I thank the member from Wellington–Halton Hills for the question. No, I don't intend to review Hansard, but I do intend to address the House on the very issue that he raises.

I remind the honourable member that the very issue he raises goes both ways. As part of the role of the opposition, your approach is to attack the government too. What I would like to do is find a balance, because I recognize there is an important event that is taking place

this year and we need to find the balance within this chamber of allowing for healthy debate for the opposition to do its role, to keep the government accountable, and for the government to talk about its agenda and its priorities as well.

I listened; I did. I can honestly say that the Clerk and I consulted during question period and I was listening closely to those questions. I can assure the honourable member I will be having more to say in that regard.

### VISITORS

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to introduce, now that they've arrived, my daughter, Sarah Witmer, and her friend Stephanie Courschesne from North Bay.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Welcome to Queen's Park.

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

*The House recessed from 1139 to 1500.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** We have with us today in the members' gallery the 2011 students from the University of Akron Canadian studies work experience program. They are David Eidam and Andy Karas. For the next 10 weeks David will be working in the office of Cheri DiNovo, MPP, Parkdale-High Park, and Andy will be with Jim Wilson, MPP for Simcoe-Grey. Would all members please join me in welcoming these two students from the United States?

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### EPILEPSY

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak about Epilepsy Action Day, and I welcome representatives from Epilepsy Ontario and the Epilepsy Cure Initiative to Queen's Park. I also welcome Dianne McKenzie and Deanna MacDonald from Epilepsy Durham.

I commend the work of these organizations in promoting awareness and understanding of epilepsy and advocating for policy issues of concern to the 140,000 Ontario adults and children impacted by epilepsy. These issues include developing evidence-based standards for diagnosis and treatment; ensuring that individuals have access to anti-epileptic drugs that maintain their independence, productivity and quality of life; and increasing access for individuals with epilepsy to receive ODSP benefits.

Most individuals with epilepsy receive treatment from their family physicians, who often lack specialized training and knowledge in the area of epilepsy. They may also

lack specialized diagnosis and assessment tools. There is only one epileptologist for every 4,000 epilepsy patients in Ontario. As a result, there are long wait-lists to receive specialized care.

While much has been accomplished, there is still much more to do, and I thank Epilepsy Ontario for their ongoing efforts.

#### EPILEPSY

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I add my voice to that of my colleague from Whitby-Oshawa to welcome those who are here from various organizations and witnessing epilepsy awareness. I particularly want to point out Margaret Maye and Gary Neumann from my own riding, who have been tireless advocates for this cause.

Folk may not know that one in 100 people suffers from epilepsy. Next to headaches, it's the most common neurological disorder.

Also to add to what my colleague has already said, we're looking at special needs for a special diet, particularly for those who are on ODSP. I know that the government is reviewing that right now. I would ask them to take particular care to include epileptics in that review. Also brought to my attention, again by Gary and Margaret in my own riding, is the need for a centre where people can get dietary advice and support, because diet can really be one of the best treatments for epilepsy. We need more information—it's a difficult diet to follow—and we need more support, especially for parents struggling around that issue with their children, and also for adult epileptics.

Again, welcome to Queen's Park. Certainly on March 26, I'd ask all my colleagues to wear purple and take a picture of themselves and send it to our tireless advocates. I intend on doing that.

#### ELMIRA MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL

**Ms. Leanna Pendergast:** I'm pleased to rise in the House today to talk about an event in my riding of Kitchener-Conestoga, a yearly event, the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival, a wonderful event that's been going on for over four decades.

In 1965, the first festival was organized. They expected to see about 2,500 attendees; they received that year over 10,000 people. The festival has continued to grow every year since 1965, and in 2000 it reached a capacity of 66,529 visitors. This became the world's largest maple syrup festival, according to the Guinness Book of World Records.

It's my pleasure to congratulate all of the volunteers. This is a great, fun festival. Over 2,000 volunteers make this possible in Elmira and all of Woolwich township. I thank all of the volunteers for their hard work. Last year, the festival, under organizer-chair Cheryl Peterson, saw \$50,000 donated to local non-profit and charitable organizations.



This past Friday we tapped the first tree in a 100-acre maple bush. I did that along with Fred Martin, the president of the Waterloo-Wellington Maple Syrup Producers Association, Robert Richmond and, of course, Doug Cassie and his wife, Cecilia, from the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association.

Mayor Todd Cowan of Woolwich township and I would like to welcome all of you, look forward to seeing you, and thank everyone for their hard work with the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival.

#### JEFF MAULER

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** On Tuesday, January 25, a Nepean-Carleton resident became an international star. Jeff Mauler, a DJ with one of my favourite radio stations, the new Hot 89.9 in Ottawa, became the only Canadian to stand in for Regis Philbin on the Live with Regis and Kelly show.

Mauler secured the spot as a finalist in the “men of radio co-host for a day search,” where literally hundreds of thousands of radio listeners across Ottawa and throughout the rest of North America voted for the best of the best in male radio announcers on this continent. It was no surprise to us in Nepean-Carleton that the best of the best would come from Barrhaven, edging out other radio personalities from big American stations in big American cities.

Mauler was helped by his local and loyal Ottawa fan base, affectionately known as the Hotties, a take on the station’s Hot 89.9 name. They mobilized on Twitter, and of course, as an avid tweeter myself, I was able to follow the excitement. On finding out that he was a finalist, Mauler said, “I just want to do my city and country proud on the world stage.” Indeed, Jeff Mauler certainly did. Kelly Ripa playfully said, “I know you’re a big deal in Ottawa. If you and Celine Dion were married, you’d be the king and queen of Canada.”

Congratulations, Mauler, on the honour and for putting our community on the map.

#### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Monte Kwinter:** I’d like to take this opportunity to discuss the McGuinty government’s record with respect to the hydro debt retirement charge. The hydro debt retirement charge was added to every Ontarian’s hydro bill in 1999 to pay for the \$19.4 billion in stranded debt that resulted from the previous government’s failed restructuring of the electricity sector.

From 1999 to 2003, the previous Conservative government actually added to the Hydro stranded debt. It rose by \$1 billion over four years, from \$19.4 billion to \$20.5 billion. In contrast, Mr. McGuinty’s government has reduced the hydro stranded debt by about \$1 billion in each of the last six years. As a result, the hydro stranded debt is currently \$5.7 billion lower than in 2003.

The McGuinty government has been responsibly paying down the inherited debt while also making important

investments in the energy sector. We added 8,400 megawatts of new, cleaner generation and 5,000 kilometres of transmission lines, roughly the distance from Toronto to Whitehorse, Yukon. These investments mean that Ontario will be completely coal-free by 2014. Eliminating coal-fired generation will be like taking seven million cars—almost every car in Ontario today—off the roads.

The McGuinty government has effectively managed the transformation of our energy system. We have reduced the hydro stranded debt we inherited from the previous Conservative government while also investing—

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

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. John O’Toole:** After that statement, I don’t know where to begin. However, I will start with what I have in front of me here.

There are actually two meetings in my riding tomorrow that are very important. One is about protecting the Oak Ridges moraine. It’s a round table being hosted by the mayor of Uxbridge, Gerri Lynn O’Connor, in Uxbridge. The discussion will include representatives from a number of provincial ministries as well as surrounding municipalities. I want to commend Gerri Lynn O’Connor for taking leadership on this issue. Our municipalities are taking action on this important issue. Unfortunately, we cannot say the same about Premier McGuinty.

The second meeting is hosted by the Clarington Wind Concerns. Dr. Robert McMurtry will be giving a presentation on the potential health effects of industrial wind turbines. Dr. McMurtry is the former dean of the University of Western Ontario medical school and former federal Deputy Minister of Health. Premier McGuinty won’t listen to him, unfortunately.

Dr. McMurtry will be joined by David Colling, Eric Gillespie and Clarington Wind Concerns organizer, Heather Rutherford. They are calling on the government to halt wind turbine development until proper third party medical studies can be done.

In contrast, the McGuinty government has broken their election promise to put a moratorium on wind turbines. Our leader, Tim Hudak, has committed in this Legislature to give back decision-making to local communities, where it belongs.

#### 1510

There’s another issue that’s troubling me as well, and that is the lack of extending the 407 highway. Where—

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

#### YOUTH IN YORK WEST

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** It gives me great pleasure to announce that on February 27 past, some 50 youths from the York West riding went to see a Raptors game at the

ACC, thanks to the generosity of Maurizio Gherardini, the VP and assistant GM of the Toronto Raptors.

Students from schools across the community, and who attend the Chalkfarm running and reading club, joined local 31 division police sergeant Stephen Hicks and a group from the For Kicks and Generation Change programs to see the Toronto Raptors game this past weekend against the Dallas Mavericks. Unfortunately, they lost.

These local programs, offered in York West, help improve literacy, physical fitness and social interaction amongst at-risk youth in our community. Graduates of this program are so grateful for the friendship and guidance they receive and, in return, come back to mentor the younger generations taking part in these programs.

I am delighted that professional sports organizations like the Toronto Raptors understand the need for community involvement and how important it is to reward those youth who make every effort to excel by challenging themselves and those around them.

Once again, I would like to thank the Toronto Raptors organization for providing the tickets, and the basketball players who took the time to speak to our youth, giving them an experience they will never forget.

## EPILEPSY

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** Today we are wearing purple ribbons in honour of those who are here today, because today is epilepsy action day at Queen's Park.

March is the month during which epilepsy organizations hold their celebrations of March Epilepsy Awareness Month. Specifically, March 26, Purple Day, is a global day for promoting epilepsy awareness in countries around the world. People from around the globe are asked to wear purple today and spread the word about epilepsy. Even the CN Tower in Toronto, and Niagara Falls, will illuminate their buildings in purple to showcase their support.

All of us are thrilled that today we are joined by a number of representatives who have a passion and belief in promoting that awareness for epilepsy. I'd like to introduce some of them to the House: Margaret Maye, the president of the Epilepsy Cure Initiative; Gary Neumann; and their son Thomas.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, since March 26 has never been officially declared by the government of Ontario as epilepsy awareness day, I would like all members of the House to support the resolution today, which says that March 26 should be epilepsy awareness purple day in the province of Ontario, to be celebrated annually during Epilepsy Awareness Month, with the hope that we can build greater understanding and support for people with epilepsy, reduce the stigma, find a cure for seizures and improve the quality of life for our communities in Ontario.

To all those who are here today, I say thank you very much and congratulations. Good epilepsy special day.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I want to provide a little history on the debt retirement charge. In 1999, the Conservative government tried and failed to privatize and sell off Ontario's hydro system. After their experiment failed, Ontario taxpayers were stuck with the \$19-billion tab. For the next four years, the Conservatives failed to pay off any of that debt. In fact, by 2003, the debt had risen another \$1 billion, despite the fact that every Ontarian had been paying for it on their electricity bill, since 2002, through the debt retirement charge.

On the other hand, the McGuinty government has responsibly managed the energy file. We have used the debt retirement charge as it was intended: to pay down the Ontario hydro debt. Over the past six years, we have reduced the hydro debt by \$6 billion. We've done this despite being handed a crumbling energy infrastructure badly needing repair. We've modernized the grid by adding 5,000 kilometres of new transmission lines. Gone are the days of rolling brownouts. We've added 8,400 megawatts of new, cleaner generation. The McGuinty government has been cleaning up the mess left by the previous government, while we're also preparing for the future.

The facts speak for themselves. We have paid down the debt; they added to it. We've modernized the grid and have made power reliable again; they let the infrastructure decay. That was neglected. Through our long-term energy plan, we're building a stronger electricity system for a better future for the people of Peterborough riding and all Ontarians.

## 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. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr40, An Act to revive S.L. McNally Consulting Services Inc.;

Bill Pr43, An Act respecting the Ursuline Religious of the Diocese of London in Ontario.

Your committee further recommends that the fees and the actual costs of printing at all stages be remitted on Bill Pr43, An Act respecting the Ursuline Religious of the Diocese of London in Ontario.

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

*Report adopted.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE VEHICLES), 2011

#### LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (VÉHICULES D'ASSISTANCE ROUTIÈRE)

Mr. Dunlop moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 156, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to safety precautions to take when approaching roadside assistance vehicles / Projet de loi 156, Loi modifiant le Code de la route en ce qui concerne les mesures de sécurité à prendre à l'approche de véhicules d'assistance routière.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** The bill amends the Highway Traffic Act. At present, the driver of a motor vehicle is required to slow down upon approaching an emergency vehicle that is stopped on the same side of a highway as that on which the driver is travelling. The bill extends that requirement to cover cases where a driver approaches a roadside assistance vehicle that is stopped on that side. I want to point out that there are around five million roadside assistance calls a year in Ontario, provided by 4,500 tow truck operators across the province.

If I could say, some people are in the audience today. I'd ask your permission to introduce them. The ladies and gentlemen are: Nick Parks, Tim Georgeoff, Rick Mauro, Korey Kennedy, Christine Hogarth, Henry Westenbrink, Ryan Kerr and Rick Botelho. They're all from CAA. I really appreciate your work on this—and Brian Patterson, of course, from the Ontario Safety League. Thank you very much, gentlemen, for your help on this bill.

### PESTICIDES AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

#### LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES PESTICIDES

Mr. Brownell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 157, An Act to amend the Pesticides Act / Projet de loi 157, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les pesticides.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** This amendment act requires warning signs approved by the director to be placed on vehicles used for spraying pesticides on or beside a high-

way, and requires the person who performs a land extermination in an area that is not a residential area to post signs in accordance with the regulations and provide public notice of the extermination in various ways. As well, it has other issues to deal with the promotion of public health and safety.

### EPILEPSY AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2011

#### LOI DE 2011 SUR LA JOURNÉE DE SENSIBILISATION À L'ÉPILEPSIE

Mr. Ruprecht moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 159, An Act to proclaim Epilepsy Awareness Day / Projet de loi 159, Loi proclamant la Journée de sensibilisation à l'épilepsie.

**1520**

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** March 26 has never been officially recognized as Epilepsy Awareness Day, and we all know that we would like to help out. This day will be celebrated from now on, with the hope that we can build a greater understanding, support people with epilepsy, reduce the stigma, find a cure for seizures and improve the quality of life for those in our community who have this disease.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

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

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

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item 69 be waived.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

### YVONNE O'NEILL

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I believe we have unanimous consent that up to five minutes be allotted to each party to speak in remembrance of the late Yvonne O'Neill.

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I'm very pleased to rise in the House today on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the Progressive Conservative caucus to recognize and pay tribute to the memory of a former member of this House, Yvonne O'Neill.

I would like to begin by extending my sincere condolences to her husband, Pat, who I understand is watching, and also to her three daughters, Margaret, Cheryl and Patti, as well as her dear friend Jane Dunbar, who is here today attending this tribute in the Legislature.

Yvonne was born here in the city of Toronto in 1936. She went on to graduate from the University of Toronto and the Ontario College of Education. She fulfilled her dream of becoming a teacher in 1958, leading a classroom for another six years. She ultimately took her passion for education to what is now the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic District School Board, winning election as a trustee.

Yvonne excelled, as she did in almost everything in life, as an elected official, earning a reputation as a most trustworthy and honest politician. Soon after her first election, the voters recognized her immense leadership capabilities by giving her the honour of serving as the board's chairperson. Yvonne was steadfastly committed to advancing and strengthening public education in Ontario, and for this we are all grateful.

In 1987, Yvonne turned her eye to the provincial Legislature, winning the seat in the riding of Ottawa-Rideau. Her educational knowledge and her expertise were immediately recognized by Premier David Peterson, and he appointed Yvonne to serve as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education, who at that time was Sean Conway.

It was in her role as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education that I had the pleasure of first meeting Yvonne, since at that time I was serving as chair of the Waterloo Region District School Board. Then in 1990, when I was elected to the Legislature, we had the opportunity to develop a closer friendship. We had much in common since we had both started our professional lives as teachers, both become trustees and chairpersons of our respective boards and then moved on to become MPPs.

Mr. Speaker, I want you to know how much I appreciated Yvonne's support, mentoring and guidance as I adapted to life at Queen's Park following my 1990 election. I will always be grateful to her for making the road I travelled much easier.

I got to know her as a very hard-working and most dedicated MPP, but what I will remember most about Yvonne—and I think anybody who knew her or had the privilege of working with her—is that she always had a most cheery and joyful disposition. She was a real pleasure to spend time with. She touched the lives of many, many people, including my own. She was a very caring person who always lived life to the fullest.

Upon leaving this Legislature in 1995, Yvonne never fully retired. She served as a returning officer with Elections Canada until mid-July 2010, when cancer eventually forced her to relocate to her beloved cottage in Nova Scotia.

Yvonne was a devout Catholic who immersed herself in the activities of her parish, volunteering in her archdiocese for much of her life.

As I said before, no matter where she went or who she met, she had a very positive impact on the lives of the people she touched.

Yvonne was the devoted wife of Patrick for 50 years. She is survived today by three very successful daughters: Margaret, Cheryl and Patti.

On September 6, 2010, cancer took from us a passionate, loving and hard-working public servant and a wonderful human being. Surrounded by her loved ones, Yvonne's earthly journey came to an end. But Yvonne O'Neill's memory will live on in the children she inspired, the constituents she represented, and the colleagues and friends she worked with here at Queen's Park and elsewhere.

She was a tireless advocate for her constituents and for every Ontarian. Yvonne believed very strongly in the potential of our province. She loved it dearly and she committed herself to serving it.

On behalf of Tim Hudak and our caucus, I would like to again extend at this time our sincere sympathy to her husband and her daughters, and also our heartfelt gratitude to them for allowing Yvonne to give so much to the people in the province of Ontario.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** If you detect a sense of emotion in my colleague's speech, I think it speaks to Yvonne O'Neill.

Like the member who just spoke, I was elected in 1990. I came to this place bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, not knowing much about what to expect when I got here. I think most members will recognize this in their own time here: When you first get here, you look at others to try to find out, "Are there things other people are doing that would serve me well as an MPP and as a human being, as a fellow colleague?" Yvonne was one of those people. I freely admit that some of what I've learned, I learned from Yvonne.

In my time with her from 1990 to 1995, I served on committee with her on a number of different issues, mostly around education, but also others. What I learned from Yvonne was this: At the end of the day, we're all legislators, we're all here to represent our ridings, and you don't have to be nasty. That's something that I hope I'm able to do. I know at times all of us, myself included, get in the debate and raise points with passion. But what I learned from Yvonne was, don't take it personally, respect the person who is your opponent in whatever battle you're in, and try to find some common ground so you can work with these people to move things forward.

I was a member of the government from 1990 to 1995 and she was a member of the opposition. She understood that in her constituency she had to do things in order to advance projects that were important to her and the people she represented. I can tell you all kinds of stories about things that Yvonne would come over and talk to us about. I often go to the other side and chat with the government about things. That's something I learned from Yvonne. She would constantly be advocating on behalf of her community with the government. She was not enamoured with the NDP government. I don't think she

was a New Democrat; in fact, I know she was a Liberal. But she understood we were the government of the day and that she had to work with us. I can give you plenty of examples where myself and others who had to deal with Yvonne always came away from our exchanges, either on committee or privately, when we were discussing projects, with a sense that we could trust Yvonne. When she gave her word on something, that was the word, and you never had to worry about it changing in any way, and at the end of the day she wasn't going to bushwhack you, as we see in the politics of any Legislature, let alone this one.

1530

I must say that one of the things she and I shared was a passion for making sure that young people are able to learn more than one language. I am very fortunate. I'm fluently bilingual. I speak French and English and write both. Yvonne understood that that was an important thing for her children and the people she represented, but she also saw it from beyond that. She was a tireless advocate, both in her time in government from 1987-90 and in opposition, in support of French-language education in this province. As a francophone and a member of the Ontario francophone community, I say to Yvonne on behalf of all of us, un gros remerciement pour ton dévouement à la communauté francophone.

I would also say that she understood we are a multicultural society. Sometimes we get stuck in our thing, you know—I'm a francophone; I'm an anglophone—and we tend to concentrate on those two languages. But there are many other languages out there, as we well know today, from across the world that come to this country. She understood that we need to find our way as a province, as a Legislature and as a country about how we can accommodate those who come to Canada, so that they can continue celebrating the uniqueness of where they come from and find a way to become Canadians. She was one I had some chats with over the years that quite frankly opened my eyes on some issues because of the riding she represented and her particular views.

She had a passion for her cottage. I remember on committee travel on a number of occasions—and you raised it—where she would talk about the times she had with her family, which were so few when she was elected to this place, to get to the cottage back on the east coast. I know many conversations I had with her in regard to how important that was to her, and I would imagine how important it is to her family till today.

I too share that experience. We've had a cottage in the family since the early 1960s, and our family continues going there two and three generations later as a result of that particular experience we share, which is called cottage life. I think the family will remember Yvonne through those experiences and those times they shared, not only in their home life in Ottawa but in Nova Scotia.

I would say to those members who didn't know Yvonne: You really missed knowing somebody who was truly a unique person in the sense that she really brought

passion and integrity to what she did. She was, quite frankly, a very good person to deal with.

On behalf of Andrea Horwath, the leader of the New Democratic Party, my friend Howard Hampton, Mr. Marchese, Mr. Kormos and the rest our caucus, some of us who served with her, we want to extend our condolences to Jane, who is here today, and Pat—we know you're watching back home. We just say to you, thank you for having let us share your wife, your mother and your friend for the years she was here. She was truly a friend to us as well.

**Hon. John Milloy:** It's a real honour for me to rise today, on behalf of the Liberal caucus, to pay tribute to Yvonne O'Neill and, on behalf of the entire caucus, our Premier and all the Liberal members, to extend our condolences to her family and her many friends.

I knew Yvonne quite well. I knew her from a very different perspective. I actually worked for Yvonne O'Neill. From 1987 to 1989, I had the privilege of being her legislative assistant, at the ripe old age of 22. We kept in touch over the years, and I remain grateful to her, not only for giving me my first job out of university but also for her friendship and the many valuable lessons about politics and public life that she passed on to me.

Yvonne came to Queen's Park, as we have heard, with a very impressive record in terms of community service. A teacher by training, education was certainly her passion. She had served many years, before coming here, as a trustee on the Carleton Roman Catholic Separate School Board, including a term as chair. As a result, her first assignment as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education was a bit of a dream come true for Yvonne. I know that the minister of the day relied heavily on her experience and perspective in navigating the sometimes complicated world of education. Although Yvonne was always happy to offer strategic advice and support, she never forgot that at the end of the day it was always about what was best for Ontario students.

Yvonne maintained her interest in education and social policy following her term as parliamentary assistant. She served in a number of key legislative roles, including Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, and I know a real highlight for her was her appointment to the special committee of the Legislature that studied the Charlottetown accord in the early 1990s.

As we have heard, and I certainly agree, Yvonne was a great constituency member. She spent many long hours shuttling between Queen's Park and Ottawa to attend events and meetings, and it was no surprise, therefore, when she bucked a bit of a provincial tide in 1990 and won re-election.

She was a proud member of the Liberal opposition. She served in a number of critic roles, as well as being deputy opposition whip.

What drove Yvonne O'Neill? A number of things. One was certainly her passion for education and learning. Another was a sense of pride in representing the Ottawa area in the Legislature. One of Yvonne's major concerns was that provincial matters didn't receive appropriate

attention in the nation's capital, which always seemed so obsessed with federal politics. She worked hard to correct that and was a key member of the Ottawa–Carleton caucus that arose during those years, and was quite a force to be reckoned with within the Peterson government.

Yvonne was also aware of the important example that she set for other women interested in politics. Although the role of women in the Legislature had progressed considerably by the late 1980s and early 1990s, there were still many barriers to break down. Yvonne, as we've heard, had forged many strong ties with other female members on all sides of the House and was never afraid to promote issues of equality. She often spoke about the role all women MPPs played in blazing a trail for the generation to follow. Of course, with three daughters, the next generation of women was a personal as well as a professional preoccupation for Yvonne.

Anyone who knew Yvonne O'Neill knew that family came first. Her husband of 50 years, Patrick, who I understand is watching this afternoon, had a wonderful sense of humour, as well as having one of the fastest driving times between Ottawa and Toronto. He was always there to offer the kind of support, reassurance and grounding that all of us in this Legislature recognize is crucial to do our jobs.

Her three daughters, Margaret, Cheryl and Patti, were an incredible source of pride for Yvonne, and she was always there to offer them support and advice and celebrate their many successes.

Yvonne also boasted a large circle of friends. I, too, welcome Jane Dunbar, her friend who is here in the gallery today. Yvonne was always the first to acknowledge a struggle or celebrate a success by sending a personal card or her many, many bouquets of flowers that became a bit of a signature item for her.

Yvonne's thoughtfulness and approach to life was inspired by her faith. A strong Roman Catholic, Yvonne believed that public life was a way to live her beliefs and answer a basic calling to tend to the needs of others.

The election of 1995 was a time of great change in this Legislature, and it saw the end of Yvonne O'Neill's formal political career. Yvonne continued her involvement in the community, becoming a returning officer for Elections Canada, and enjoyed her many grandchildren.

I bumped into her not that long ago at an event in Ottawa and found the elegant, gracious woman that I always remembered enjoying a busy and active retirement.

If you were to poll all members of the Legislature, past and present, and ask them the key to success in this place, I venture most would sum it up in one word: balance—the ability to balance public life and family life, to be part of the cut and thrust of politics while still maintaining your principles and values.

Yvonne O'Neill achieved that balance. She made an outstanding contribution to her community and to this Legislature, while never forgetting those closest to her and the beliefs that she so deeply held.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the honourable members for their tributes today.

Our condolences go out to the O'Neill family: to Patrick O'Neill, who, as we know, is watching today, and to the daughters and the grandchildren. On behalf of the Legislature, I will ensure that copies of Hansard and a DVD of today's proceedings will be forwarded to the family.

1540

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### GREENBELT

**Hon. Carol Mitchell:** This week marks the sixth anniversary of Ontario's greenbelt. The greenbelt is a critical part of our government's plan for building healthier communities. It is a lasting legacy for our children and for future generations.

When the McGuinty government created the greenbelt in 2005, we aimed to preserve agricultural land in the greater Golden Horseshoe as a continuing, healthy and secure supply of locally grown food; to sustain the countryside, rural and small towns; and to contribute to the economic viability of farming communities. It is a 1.8-million-acre working countryside, protected to ensure Ontarians today and tomorrow can enjoy its benefits. There are approximately 7,000 farms on the greenbelt. Those farms boast some of the most productive land in Canada.

Just yesterday, I met a farmer at OGRA/ROMA who shared with me that this year marks a milestone for him. His family began working their farm, located in the greenbelt, 200 years ago, a business they hope to keep in their family for generations to come. His story demonstrates the perseverance of a farm, the farm family and the love of their land, a precious natural resource our government thinks should be preserved, though not all members of the House agree.

With more than half of the greenbelt land being used for agricultural purposes, Ontarians should be proud of the vast diversity, the strong environmental leadership and the economic impact the land and farmers on it provide to this province. The Holland Marsh houses one fifth of Ontario's vegetable farms, growing crops such as sweet corn, pumpkins, carrots and onions. Almost half of Ontario's fruit farms are located in the greenbelt, producing cherries, grapes and peaches, to name just a few. In fact, Niagara's 2.1 million tender fruit trees produce 800,000 baskets of fruit, which if lined up, would stretch along the QEW from Kingston to Niagara Falls.

Whether it is fruit, vegetables, livestock, wines, cheeses, grains or horticultural goods, the greenbelt has it all. Agricultural products that are grown in the greenbelt are coveted, and they're celebrated both around the world and here at home, from Niagara's iconic peach and re-

owned ice wines to classic summer fare like strawberries and sweet corn.

Working together with the greenbelt fund, our broader public sector investment fund is taking our commitment to Ontario foods even further. We are helping to connect farmers, food processors and distributors to increase the amount of local food served in daycares, schools, hospitals and long-term-care facilities. For example, Cohn Farms is taking an innovative and collaborative approach to supplying the broader public sector with fresh Ontario produce. They're working with other producers to build a co-packing line and expand the diversity of the foods they supply.

The Vineland Growers co-op, Ontario's oldest co-op and largest packer and shipper of fresh tender fruit, has been added to the weekly product list of Gordon Food Service, a distributor who has recently made Ontario food a key priority. By putting more of Ontario's fresh, healthy, local food in public institutions, we are investing in a strong future for our families and for agriculture.

Many citizens, municipalities and community groups have been enthusiastic proponents for expanding the greenbelt in their communities. They recognize the greenbelt's benefits as a source of healthy local food. Farmers and urbanites are realizing that they share a future centred on food security and the ability to grow and consume fresh, nutritious foods. Demand for local food is rising rapidly. Greenbelt farmers have eight million consumers within a half day's drive.

The McGuinty government set out six years ago to permanently protect this precious asset. While some members of this House would rather pave highway over this green space, we think we got it right, and so do most of the people in the province. An Environics research poll conducted last year found that 90% of Ontarians support the greenbelt and agree that it is one of the most important contributions of our generation to the future of Ontario.

When agricultural lands are lost to development, they are gone for good.

I would like to close with the words of Eric Bowman, a third-generation greenbelt farmer. He and his wife run Gallery on the Farm, an organic beef farm. As Eric says, "Once you pave it, it's gone. You have to conserve this precious land that we're sitting on—not for ourselves, but for generations down the road."

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

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** On behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus I'm pleased to rise today to recognize the many farmers who make the Holland Marsh and the greenbelt important contributors to the agriculture that they're making. We understand how hard they work and how important they are to our province.

We all agree that protecting agricultural land and ensuring the future of our farms should be a priority for any government. But we also know that the best way to protect farmland is to implement policies and support that make it possible for farmers to be successful and profitable in farming it.

Minister, if you force all the farmers out of Ontario there will be no local food and no agriculture, not even in the greenbelt. I support local food. However, unlike the minister, I understand that we need the farmers to produce it. Since 2003, when Dalton McGuinty was elected, Ontario's beef cow herds have declined by 18.4%, and the sow herd declined by over 20% since 2007. The Ontario Cattlemen's Association has said that they expect the numbers for 2010 to be even lower when they come in.

We've heard from farmers who are going to the food bank to get food because they can't pay for it out of the returns from their farms. Under the McGuinty government's watch we lost the CanGro plant in St. Davids. This government announced with great fanfare that a fruit snack company would be taking over the plant and creating a market for fruit farmers, and yet it never happened. I guess you just forgot to send out the press release to announce that it wasn't going to happen.

As we lose farmers, we also lose spin-off industries. We risk reducing our processing capacity to a level where the agriculture industry can't recover to the same level. During the pre-budget hearings, we heard about the impact that these losses are having. At least one feed mill has already closed. There have been layoffs at the Burlington processing plant. Several transport companies have closed or been sold. Farm animal veterinarians are merging practices or switching to pet care.

We are not getting the support that other provinces are. In Ontario, 34% of agriculture support is provided by the province; 65% is provided by the federal government. In Alberta, 60% is provided by the province; 40% is provided by the federal government. In Quebec, 67% is provided by—you guessed it—the province; 33% is provided by the federal government.

If Ontario farmers get fair treatment and a level playing field, they cannot only provide great local food, they can compete with the rest of the world. Our farmers have been clear: Current programs aren't working. They need a business risk management program based on the cost of production.

Last week our leader, Tim Hudak, spoke at the Ontario Cattlemen's annual general meeting and reiterated his commitment that, if elected, we will work with farm leaders to implement business risk management programs for all commodities.

Farmers are tired of jurisdictional Ping-Pong. Grain farmers had a pilot program that was funded jointly by the farmers and the province. Now the province says it can't continue unless the federal government contributes. That's exactly the same thing that the minister said last year. They extended it for one year, but here we are waiting again. The program is not bankable and predictable if the farmers are forced to beg the government each year for its extension and are forced to make planning decisions, and applying for money to do that, without assurances that there's support there at the end of the year.

**1550**

Our farmers need a program they can count on. Eight long months ago, the ag stability coalition said, "Until the

federal, provincial and territorial ministers decide on adopting predictable and bankable programs nationally, the OASC is calling on the Ontario Minister of Agriculture ... Mitchell to step up and invest in Ontario farmers by funding the programs developed here in Ontario without waiting for the federal government....” The OFA is quoted as saying, “Because of the urgent need in Ontario, the provincial government must commit to and finance its share of the business risk management program costs regardless of whether the federal government funds the program.”

Farmers are telling you that you can’t wait for the federal government. They’re telling you that they need help now. Minister, why aren’t you listening to them? Farmers shouldn’t have to wait weeks or months or years for the politically opportune moment to announce the program.

Minister, tomorrow, Ontario Pork and Ontario Cattlemen will be here hosting a breakfast once again to tell this government how much they need a program that works and that they can count on. If you truly support Ontario’s farmers, then tomorrow morning you will announce a business risk management program based on the cost of production.

Minister, the farmers are waiting and they can’t keep waiting for the opportune moment for you to think of their needs instead of the government’s needs. They need help and they need it now.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** On behalf of Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats, I’m pleased to have the opportunity to respond today to the Minister of Agriculture.

I understand that the government wants to, over and over again, pat itself on the back for the greenbelt, but the minister should be careful about patting herself on the back and saying that farmers in the greenbelt are doing well, because the evidence is growing that they’re not doing well. In fact, the evidence is growing that there are real challenges there. Let me just list a few.

What we’ve seen over the approaching eight years now that the McGuinty Liberals have been government is the closure of one processing facility after another in the greenbelt. We’ve had farmers come here and say, “What am I supposed to do with my produce? If the processing facility is closed, where am I to go with my produce?” And the minister knows that’s the case. You have literally had farmers who had fruit rotting on the vine because there is no place to go with it to have it processed. That is not a key to success in the future, and it makes many, many farm operations in the greenbelt less and less viable. The minister knows that is the case.

Second, just a while ago, I had an opportunity to go visit with a dairy farmer who lives in the greenbelt. What he wanted to talk to me about was hydro rates, because the milking of cows and then storing the milk and processing the milk require cooling—electricity. He was embarrassed to tell me what his hydro bill was. He said, “I don’t know how I can continue to operate with my

hydro bill skyrocketing like this almost every month.” And that is the case for anybody who is trying to operate a dairy farm in the greenbelt and anywhere near the greenbelt, and virtually everywhere else in the province too. How do you pay the escalating cost of hydro-electricity, especially since dairy farms tend to be more electricity-intensive than many other forms of farming?

So far, we haven’t had an answer from this government. Yes, we’ve heard lots of press releases, but when farmers are embarrassed to show you their monthly hydro bill, it says that there’s a serious problem happening here.

The government wants to pat itself on the shoulder and say that it’s doing something in terms of ensuring that local food produce is consumed locally. But the reality is that in comparison to jurisdictions like Illinois and Nova Scotia, this government isn’t doing much at all. New Democrats have put forward an Ontario Buy Local Food Act which would require government ministries to purchase at least 20% local food by 2015, if it were passed by this Legislature. I think of all the government entities located in the greater Toronto area that should be using at least 20% local food but are not. I think of what impact that would have on farmers trying to continue to be viable in the greenbelt if that were to be pursued. Alas, that’s not happening with this government. Yes, we see a few grants here or something tabled over here in terms of some financial incentives, but I think it’s quite viable to say to colleges, universities, schools, to hospitals, homes for the aged and all of the civil service operations in the greater Toronto area, “20% of the food that you serve in your cafeteria must be from local produce.” That would be real action to help farmers who live and work in the greenbelt remain viable.

I can say to the government, we’re waiting. If Illinois can do it, if Nova Scotia can do it, why can’t Ontario do it? Rather than the government patting itself on the back, let’s get down to some action, some things that will really make a difference for farmers who are increasingly finding it difficult to remain viable while living and working in the greenbelt.

## PETITIONS

### OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ

**Mr. John O’Toole:** It’s very appropriate that I get up to speak now in the couple of minutes you afford me here, because they were championing the greenbelt.

My petition reads as follows:

“Protection of Oak Ridges Moraine,” in the greenbelt  
“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario”—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O’Toole:** This is important. Listen up.

“Whereas citizens are concerned that contaminants in materials used as fill for pits and quarries may endanger water quality and the natural environment of the Oak Ridges moraine,” in the greenbelt; and



“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment has a responsibility and a duty to protect the Oak Ridges moraine” and greenbelt; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario has the lead responsibility to provide the tools to lower-tier government to plan, protect and enforce clear, effective policies governing the application and permit process for the placement of fill in abandoned pits and quarries” in the greenbelt; and

“Whereas this process requires clarification regarding rules respecting what materials may be used to rehabilitate or fill abandoned pits and quarries;

“Therefore we, the undersigned” of John O’Toole’s riding of Durham “ask that the Minister of the Environment initiate a moratorium on the clean fill application and permit process on the Oak Ridges moraine” greenbelt “until there are clear rules; and we further ask that the provincial government take all necessary actions to prevent contamination of the Oak Ridges moraine,” in the greenbelt.

I’m pleased to sign and support that, and there is a meeting tomorrow in my riding of Durham on this very issue.

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

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

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

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

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

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens” of northeastern Ontario.

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Lakshman—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Petitions?

#### CEMETERIES

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** I have a petition signed by board members of the York Pioneer and Historical Society, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s cemeteries are an important part of our cultural heritage, and Ontario’s inactive cemeteries are constantly at risk of closure and removal; and

“Ontario’s cemeteries are an irreplaceable part of the province’s cultural heritage;

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

“The government must pass Bill 126, the Inactive Cemeteries Protection Act, 2010, to prohibit the desecration of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

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

1600

#### ONLINE LOTTERY TERMINALS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here that I’m presenting on behalf of the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London that one of his constituents, Laura MacFarlane from Shedden, presented to him. On his behalf, I’d like to read it into the record.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there are not enough lottery online terminals to provide all the retailers that should have them. To get an online terminal, a new rural retailer needs a radius of at least 25 kilometres with no online terminals, or meet an out-of-date criterion to sell instant scratch tickets in competition with city locations. This makes it nearly impossible for new rural retailers to achieve an online terminal to remain competitive. OLG now offers more appealing games online (e.g. Poker and Lotto Max) and the trend of society is more geared toward online. Please accept this as a request for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to mandate the availability of more online terminals.

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

“Request an increase in the amount of lottery online terminals made available so that Shedden Variety might be able to provide online lottery sales in our community.”

I present this petition, as I said, on behalf of the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London.

#### TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J’ai une pétition qui me vient de la Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l’Ontario et du Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud :

« Attendu que les grèves et les lock-out sont rares; en moyenne, 97 % des conventions collectives sont négociées sans arrêt de travail; et

« Attendu que des lois contre le remplacement temporaire des travailleurs existent au Québec depuis 1978 et en Colombie-Britannique depuis 1993, et les gouvernements successifs de ces deux provinces n’ont jamais abrogé ces lois; et

« Attendu que la loi contre le remplacement temporaire des travailleurs a réduit la longueur et la discorde des conflits du travail; et

« Attendu que le remplacement temporaire des travailleurs pendant une grève ou un lock-out compromet le tissu social d’une communauté à court et à long terme ainsi que le bien-être de ses résidents;

« Par conséquent, nous, soussignés, demandons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario d'adopter une loi interdisant le remplacement temporaire de travailleurs pendant une grève ou un lock-out. »

J'appuie cette pétition et je vais demander à page Tyler de l'amener aux greffiers.

#### RURAL SCHOOLS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** A petition to save Duntroon Central Public School and all other rural schools in Clearview township.

“Whereas Duntroon Central Public School is an important part of Clearview township and the surrounding area; and

“Whereas Duntroon Central Public School is widely recognized for its high educational standards and intimate learning experience; and

“Whereas the framework of rural schools is different from urban schools and therefore deserves to be governed by a separate rural school policy; and

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

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty found \$12 million to keep school swimming pools open in Toronto but hasn’t found any money to keep rural schools open in Simcoe–Grey;

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

“That Premier Dalton McGuinty and the Minister of Education support the citizens of Clearview township and suspend the Simcoe County District School Board ARC 2010:01 until the province develops a rural school policy that recognizes the value of schools in the rural communities of Ontario.”

I agree with this petition, and I will sign it.

#### REPLACEMENT WORKERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that came to me from David Lundy, the regional vice-president of region 4 for OPSEU, in Merrickville, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: 97% of collective agreements are settled without a strike or lock-out; 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 those 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 ask Tyler to bring it to the Clerk.

#### HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition that reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the province unexpectedly announced it is abandoning years of preparation, study and the signed Flow agreement that included a commitment to build the Highway 407 east extension in one phase to Highway 35/115; and

“Whereas the province, without consultation with the municipalities, and nowhere during the public process was phasing introduced, is now proceeding with a two-phased approach, stopping at Simcoe Street North in Oshawa; and

“Whereas this two-phased approach will mean significant financial, quality of life, safety and environmental setbacks for Durham region and its municipalities and hinder economic development, tourism and job creation for all of southern Ontario; and

“Whereas this two-phased approach will ultimately mean higher costs for all provincial taxpayers;

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

“We, the residents and businesses of southern Ontario, oppose any decision to terminate Highway 407 east in Oshawa or Clarington, and request that the province proceed with the 407 East extension project as planned and promised, in one phase, from Brock Road in Pickering through to Highway 35/115, with a completion date of 2013.”

I affix my name in full support.

#### CHRONIC CEREBROSPINAL VENOUS INSUFFICIENCY

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition from this lady in my riding. Her name is Rose Mary Thibeault and she lives in Cartier, Ontario, which is a tiny, weeny little village in my riding. It goes as follows:

“Whereas, even though health care institutions in Ontario have the equipment and expertise, those MS patients who have been diagnosed with blocked veins in their neck ... cannot receive the necessary treatment in Ontario; and

“Whereas many of the MS patients with CCSVI, at great personal expense, have had to seek treatment in other countries such as India, Poland, Bulgaria, Italy and the US, [and] the provincial government still has not authorized the procedure, which is angioplasty, an already approved procedure since the early 1980s; and

“Whereas not all people diagnosed with MS have been found to have CCSVI and not all people who have CCSVI will have been diagnosed with MS; CCSVI treatment should be authorized and treated on its own merits, regardless of any MS issues; and

“Whereas, [despite] numerous testimonials of exceptional post-treatment improvements in the quality of life for patients, accompanied by detailed presentations by vascular surgeons, to the Ontario government, Ontario still has not yet approved CCSVI treatment;

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

“That the government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Health, must immediately approve and fund all diagnosing and treatment of CCSVI by qualified Ontario health institutions.”

I must say that her daughter has had to seek this treatment outside of Ontario.

#### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a petition in support of Bill 100, paved shoulders on provincial highways. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

“Whereas” the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka’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” the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka’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 petition.

#### HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m reading a petition from my riding of Durham. It says:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Ramp It Up!

“We, the residents and businesses of southern Ontario, oppose any decision to terminate Highway 407 East in Oshawa or Clarington and petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to proceed with the Highway 407 East extension project as planned and promised, in one continuous phase, from Brock Road in Pickering through to Highway 35/115, with a completion date of 2013.”

Get on with it. I’m signing in support of my constituents and presenting it to Brittany, one of the pages.

#### ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

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

“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; and

“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; and

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“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 ... on June 1, 2010....”

I support this petition and will ask page Emily to bring it to the clerks.

#### OAK RIDGES MORaine

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here signed by a great number of citizens of Ontario:

“Whereas citizens are concerned that contaminants in materials used as fill for pits and quarries may endanger water quality and the natural environment of the Oak Ridges moraine; and

“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment has a responsibility and a duty to protect the Oak Ridges moraine; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario has the lead responsibility to provide the tools to lower-tier government to plan, protect and enforce clear, effective policies governing the application and permit process for the placement of fill in abandoned pits and quarries; and

“Whereas this process requires clarification regarding rules respecting what materials may be used to rehabilitate or fill abandoned pits and quarries;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask that the Minister of the Environment initiate a moratorium on the clean fill application and permit process on the Oak Ridges moraine until there are clear rules; and we further ask that the provincial government take all necessary actions to prevent contamination of the Oak Ridges moraine.”

Thank you very much for allowing me to present this petition on their behalf.

#### OPPOSITION DAY

#### HYDRO CHARGES

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I move that, although in 2002 the residual stranded debt was \$7.8 billion, and since then

Ontario families have paid \$7.8 billion in debt retirement charges, and yet the McGuinty government will continue to charge the debt retirement charge on hydro bills;

Therefore, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario calls on the McGuinty government to instruct an external firm to conduct a forensic audit into the residual stranded debt and the debt retirement charge, and make the findings of the audit public.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Miller has moved opposition day number 1.

Leader of the official opposition.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** First let me commend my colleague, the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka and our finance critic, for doing the right thing, bringing this motion forward so that Ontario families will know exactly what the McGuinty government has done with the \$7.8 billion collected to date for the debt retirement charge. Where did the money go?

Every hydro bill that Ontario families receive has something called a debt retirement charge on it. That debt retirement charge was brought in in 2002 with a clear goal: to pay down the \$7.8 billion in residual stranded debt. When that debt was paid off, it would come off Ontario families' hydro bills.

That \$7.8 billion goes back, as you know, Mr. Speaker, to some of the residual projects of the 1980s from the Peterson government, including cost overruns at Darlington. What it means for an average family: about \$84 a year. Now the McGuinty government has put the HST on top of that as well, taking in additional revenue. The goal was to have that paid off by 2012.

The government's own numbers say that, to date, \$7.8 billion have been collected. The residual stranded debt we paid off was \$7.8 billion. But without any kind of explanation, without any kind of warning, the McGuinty Liberals have announced that the debt retirement charge will stay on hydro bills for Ontario families until possibly as late as 2018, and they won't tell families what the balance is and they won't tell families what happened to the \$7.8 billion they already paid.

We asked the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp., a government agency, to tell us the balance, but they also refused to tell the opposition how much is left. This makes no sense. It is demonstrably unfair to the Ontario families who pay the bills. It's like getting a credit card bill every month with an interest charge on it but no indication of how much principal is left to pay down. This is just plain wrong and shows absolutely no respect for the Ontario families who have been stuck paying this bill. What we fear is that Premier McGuinty's intention is to turn a temporary debt repayment charge into a permanent tax grab on Ontario families. We reject that absolutely. If the debt is paid down, it should come off Ontario families' hydro bills.

I know that my colleagues opposite, the same as my colleagues here with me today in the Ontario PC caucus, members who criss-crossed the province this January and continued to do so into February and March, talking to average families, are hearing that hydro bills are sky-

rocketing; they're going through the roof. Bills have gone up—the HST now on top of that, the debt retirement charge, hydro rates going up another 6% as announced recently, \$18 million in illegal interest charges from hydro utilities that are ripping off ratepayers. The McGuinty government is allowing it to go onto the backs of families who actually pay the bills. That is absolutely wrong, and they should stop that process.

What does this mean for the average family? Well, to date, rates have gone up for an average family by 75%—100% if you have a smart meter—and Premier McGuinty says they're going to go up another 46%, but we all know he's probably lowballing that figure.

Enough is enough. Families can't handle any more. It's time for change in our province.

This is what we're asking the members opposite to do, a very simple request: Show the proper respect to Ontario's hard-working families, to seniors, to small businesses, and conduct a forensic audit and tell us how much is left owing on the residual stranded debt, and tell Ontario families who pay the bills exactly where the money went.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Open the books.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It's a very simple, reasonable request. Open up the books, as my colleague from Simcoe–Grey says.

In November, you may recall, the Ontario PCs brought forward a very simple, very fair motion here in the assembly to have the balance of the residual stranded debt put on the hydro bills; to tell families on the bills, just like with their credit cards, how much is left to pay down. Sadly, the McGuinty Liberals voted down that very simple, straightforward and justified motion.

I have asked 19 times during question period for the McGuinty government to come clean on the debt retirement charge, and they still say no.

The Ontario PC caucus has travelled the province from Windsor to Rockland, from Kingston to Kincardine, and 32 other cities and towns in between, calling for a forensic audit of the residual stranded debt. It's the right thing to do. We're not going to let it go. Ontario families deserve to know.

Every day, families across this province ask some very simple questions. They want to know why the debt retirement charge is still on their hydro bills if they paid off the \$7.8 billion, and they want to know what the McGuinty government has done with all the money. If the DRC is almost paid off, why are they planning to put it on the bills until 2018? These are simple questions. They should be answered right away. They should be answered honestly and the facts put on the table for Ontario families to judge.

If the members opposite disagree with our assessment of the debt retirement charge, why don't you just open the books? Just show us honestly what the numbers are. Have the forensic auditors tell us where the money went and have the forensic auditors tell us how much is left to pay.

That's why the Ontario PCs brought this motion forward. It's the difference between what a PC government would do—open up the books and tell the truth to Ontario families—and a Liberal government that seems to want to keep this hidden from the public who are paying the bills. Just like when the billion dollars disappeared into eHealth with no audit, the McGuinty Liberals are refusing to be transparent; they're refusing to come clean with where that money went. An Ontario PC government will show Ontario families the respect they deserve by conducting a forensic audit into the residual stranded debt, and if that debt is paid down, we will provide Ontario families with the relief they need by taking the charge off the hydro bills. It's the right thing to do.

I urge members opposite to come clean and support this outstanding PC motion before the assembly today.

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

**Ms. Leeanna Pendergast:** It's my pleasure to join in the debate here today. There's so much to say in response to what we just heard.

I think, in fairness to the people of Ontario, we should start with a couple of definitions. Specifically: What is stranded debt, and what is a debt retirement charge? We hear a lot of things being thrown around here, and blaming, so let's take a look at exactly what it is and where it comes from.

When, in 1999, the Conservatives destroyed Ontario Hydro in what was a failed privatization attempt, they left what we call a stranded debt. That was a stranded debt of about \$20 billion.

Let's take a look at what a stranded debt is.

**Interjection:** Educate us.

**Ms. Leeanna Pendergast:** Yes, as an educator and a teacher. A stranded debt or an unfunded liability—here is the exact definition: It's the net deficiency of assets over liabilities from the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. financial statements.

First of all, the Harris-Hudak government tried to deregulate and privatize Ontario's energy system. Of course, at the time that led to sharp increases or rate hikes for ratepayers.

When that privatization attempt failed, they imposed a \$1-billion rate freeze on taxpayers. When you freeze rates, it just doesn't disappear; it goes somewhere. It went on to the backs of the people of Ontario.

At the same time, amid all of this chaos, the Progressive Conservative government at the time refused to invest in energy networks. The demand grew as generation fell, and Ontario's position became one where there was no investment in our electricity systems.

At the same time, the Harris-Hudak government removed the ability to file freedom-of-information requests through Hydro One.

I just heard the leader of the Conservative Party say that—

**Interjection:** Absolutely right.

**Ms. Leeanna Pendergast:** Absolutely right? Wait till you hear what I'm telling you. The leader of the Progressive Conservative Party just said, "The Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. ... refused to tell the opposition how much is left." Well, here's a fresh idea: Go to the website; it's on the website. To say that this information is being withheld from them or that it's unavailable is not fair to the people of Ontario. This information is on the website. Anybody can go to it. They can take a look at this. For that leader to stand there and say that we should answer honestly—let's all be honest, then, and let's be clear that this information is available.

Let's take a look at this. The OEFC "inherited about \$38.1 billion in total debt and other liabilities from the former Ontario Hydro when the electricity sector was restructured on April 1, 1999." That was the Harris-Hudak government. "This amount included \$30.5 billion in total debt.

"The unfunded liability was \$14.8 billion as at March 31, 2010, a decrease of \$1.4 billion from March 31, 2009. This is the sixth consecutive annual decline in the unfunded liability....

"As at April 1, 1999, the present value of future payments-in-lieu of taxes and electricity sector dedicated income was estimated at \$13.1 billion....

"The act provides for the debt retirement charge ... to be paid by consumers until the residual stranded debt is retired. The debt repayment plan estimates residual stranded debt will likely be retired between 2015 and 2018."

It's right there. Let's remember that the Conservative government left this debt without a plan.

So, Speaker, I say to you that the McGuinty government has a plan. Unlike the previous government, we have a plan to reduce the unfunded liability, to permanently remove the debt retirement charge from all hydro bills by between 2015 and 2018.

How am I doing for time?

Through strong fiscal management, our government has steadily reduced the stranded debt by about \$6 billion since 2003. The Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. is projecting the debt to be paid down by at least an additional \$1 billion this coming year.

I think it's worth reiterating that that was rich, what we just heard. The people of Ontario deserve absolutely to have the facts, which are accessible, and they can get them themselves. If the Progressive Conservative Party is having trouble getting them, certainly they can go to the website.

I'd also like to give you a quote from Tim Hudak on October 20, 2010. This is certainly worth looking at in terms of his agreeing that the government of the day in 1999, a Progressive Conservative government, did fail in their attempts. He says, "I think we paid a price for our energy policy in the previous government. Because we went and made a 180-degree turn." In fact, it was the people of Ontario who paid the price, and it's the McGuinty government that has put us back on track, that is reducing the unfunded liability, that has a plan to make

this happen, that is doing it in a transparent fashion and making Ontario a better place for all people of Ontario to live.

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

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I think the McGuinty government is really squirming on this one. They've been caught trying to extend a temporary tax by another six to eight years.

I brought in the DRC, the debt retirement charge, when I was Minister of Energy. Briefly, for the public out there, and obviously for honourable members who do not know what they are talking about, when we created the new Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One, the old Ontario Hydro had a \$38.1-billion debt, not created by Mike Harris, as we've heard across the way, but mostly created by David Peterson in decisions around Darlington. So it was \$38 billion when we came to office. We were technically bankrupt, and that's what "residual stranded debt" means. It means that after we set up the new companies, they each took a 60-40 debt-equity ratio, as is standard in the corporate world; we put them on a business footing, and when all the liabilities were put in, and payments in lieu of taxes, in a fairly complicated formula, what was left over that the new companies couldn't service on a commercial basis was \$7.8 billion, and the figure is indisputable.

Page 5 of the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. annual report, 2010, clearly says, "As at April 1, 1999"—that's when the companies got broken up and new companies created—"the present value of future PIL"—payments in lieu—"of taxes and electricity sector dedicated income was estimated at \$13.1 billion. Subtracting the \$13.1 billion from stranded debt of \$20.9 billion"—so after all the revenues were taken into account—"resulted in a difference of \$7.8 billion, known as residual stranded debt." Page 5 of your own annual report.

We looked at this and we got thinking, "Do you know what?" When we brought that in in May 2002, not 1999, the companies were set up. The act was done in 1998 in my name and the new companies were set up in 1999, but no consumer in the province of Ontario paid a penny of debt retirement charge until May 2002. The election was just a few months later in 2003. So to say we had four years of not paying debt and we collected \$1 billion a year is simply untrue and really not doing a service in terms of providing facts for the people of Ontario.

So, lo and behold, in this same report, you go a few pages later and it shows that as of December 2010, the consumers and ratepayers of the province of Ontario have paid \$7.8 billion. But on the same page it also says that Dalton McGuinty has requested that the authority keep collecting the tax for up to another six years, until 2018. You're trying to sneak in a tax and blame the Conservatives.

This should have been a good-news story, that our generation and our parents' generation paid off \$7.8 billion of old hydro debt. Instead, you've made a mess of it. You've thrown about five other debts in there. When we

were on the road, I went to 31 communities and my colleagues went to 88 on our debt retirement charge community tours, and people are mad when they find out they're paying \$84 a year, and they're going to pay it for many more years when they've already paid off the residual stranded debt.

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It's a shame. You're scamming the people of Ontario, and we're not going to let you get away with it. I'm—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Simcoe-Grey, do you notice that I'm standing?

You can sit down now; I tried to get you to sit down before.

I think we could use better language. There was one word in there that was a little outside the legislative language, and I'd like us all to be careful.

Further debate?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** It's certainly a pleasure to enter into the debate on the motion brought forward by the member for Parry Sound-Muskoka.

I guess we're all concentrating on this assumption or assertion made by the member that the residual stranded debt was \$7.8 billion in 2002. From all the information I've been able to determine, from 1999 to 2003 the Harris-Eves government added to the stranded debt. It rose by \$1 billion over those four years, from \$19.4 billion to \$20.5 billion. Some sort of artificial reduction of that number by deducting some assets that clearly were never sold is not anything that makes any sense. The residual stranded debt was not \$7.8 billion. Our government was faced with \$20.5 billion in stranded debt and unfunded liabilities.

Since we're talking a little bit about the history here, we need to recognize what the situation was in 2003. Prior to that time, there had been no significant investments in new electricity supply and transmission infrastructure. The transmission infrastructure in this province was some 50 to 60 years old at that point. The previous government, the Harris-Eves government, had completely neglected its responsibilities to Ontario citizens during their eight years in office. There was no plan for conservation; no plan for supply to keep up with demand. Our reliance on coal almost doubled. It increased harmful emissions during that time by some 124%. Under their government, 25% of our electricity came from dirty coal. Our government is clearly committed to phasing out coal-fired generating plants, and we're on target to do so by 2014. As a physician, I can say that I'm just delighted with this move. It means that asthma rates, which are already coming down in this province in children, will be reduced significantly further.

There was also that infamous speculative venture of the previous government, an experiment in market deregulation in 2002, which saw spot market energy prices spike an average of some 30% over seven months. In fact, in retrospect, the then Premier of the day, Mr. Eves, did admit in an interview with the Toronto Star some one year later that in hindsight, the principle of competition

may have been a good one, but there was no competition in that market. It was a reckless disregard for the power needs of the people of Ontario. In fact, Premier McGuinty, the then Leader of the Opposition, on the second-to-last day that the House sat in June 2003—on Wednesday, June 25—had, in his question to Premier Eves, “Today we’ve had yet more confirmation, as if it were needed, that there exists a very real possibility of brownouts or blackouts this summer.”

How right he was. I think we all remember August 14, 2003. That was the time of the largest blackout in North America. It was 4:11 p.m. It took nine seconds for the grid to collapse. I remember it vividly because the fabulous riding association of Oak Ridges was having a golf tournament that day, and a barbecue. When the power went out, we just assumed it would come back on. It didn’t. We had many steaks to cook, but the incredible resourcefulness of my constituents meant that we went and got a couple of barbecues and cooked up the steak and had a great time. But there were many who suffered really severely during that particular blackout: 10 million people in Ontario suffered through that time. They lacked power. Some 200 industries had to shut down. Many people were stuck at the airport because flights were cancelled. It was all through their complete disregard of the situation, of power needs here in Ontario.

Obviously, we have a strong energy plan in contrast. I’m sure my colleagues will be elaborating further on how we have coped with rebuilding our system of electricity over the last seven years and how we plan to do so going forward.

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

**Mr. John O’Toole:** In the few minutes I have here, I just want to put a few things—first of all, we’re talking about different specific types of debt. One is the stranded debt, and the other is the residual stranded debt, so let’s be very clear. What Premier McGuinty and his Minister of Energy are trying to do is confuse the issue. To simplify this, our leader, Tim Hudak, is asking for a forensic audit.

Now, the Liberal speakers, respectfully, are reading the notes on a technical thing that were given to them. I would challenge any one of them—the previous speaker, Jim Wilson, was the minister and was there.

I have an audited document in front of me, notes on the financial statement, and I’m going to read them. It helps the listener today to understand. But more than this, it’s important that the consumers of Ontario are told the truth of what that seven cents on their bill is paying for. I took the time to look at my own bill. I have my own bill in front of me, and it shows on that bill from Veridian that the debt retirement charge is \$11.81 for that period, which our leader, Tim Hudak, said in his remarks is about \$100 a year per family.

As I said, in the documents I have, which are part of the public record—you can look at it—the first time that the debt retirement charge was collected, according to an audited document, we have collected about \$1 billion a

year, unlike what Mr. Duguid said, which is totally wrong. In 2002-03, the first year, it was \$889 million. In 2009-10, it’s about \$900 million to \$1 billion a year. Seven years later, we have collected, as has been said, \$7.8 billion.

Don’t be confused by all the numbers that the Liberals are using. They’re different debts, and there’s revenue attached to each one of those particular debts. It’s important only to the extent that most members, with all due respect, don’t work on this file very often. I have, and most of our caucus sees it’s very important, because it is really a tax that they’re extending.

I’m just going to finish off by saying that opening stranded debt, when the restructuring occurred, was \$20.9 billion. As of 1999, it was “was composed of \$38.1 billion in liabilities”—which is paying for nuclear plants and other capital—“from the former Ontario Hydro less the value of assets”—they still had value; they create revenue because they create energy or deliver energy—“including \$17.2 billion in notes.” These were accounts receivable that were owed. “After receipt of \$1.5 billion in loans receivable and other assets, the opening unfunded liability stood at \$19.4 billion. As at April 1, 1999, the present value of future” payments in lieu—this is taxes to municipality that utilities pay—“from stranded debt of \$20.9 billion resulted in a difference of”—here’s the important part—“\$7.8 billion, known as residual stranded debt.” That’s the debt that was not supported by assets.

I beg the Premier and his minister to look at the actual documents and try to understand. What our leader, Tim Hudak, and the previous Minister of Energy are calling for is an audited financial statement by a forensic accountant. That’s all we want. If you want to confuse people with the numbers, that’s deceptive. I think it’s not fair to this debate for the people of Ontario.

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

**1640**

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** Thank you for allowing me to stand up and speak and add some comments to the debate.

I heard the Leader of the Opposition speak, and I heard many others speak before me. I think it’s a very important topic. The people of Ontario want to know exactly what happened because so many households across the province question why we’re paying debt retirement charges. Sometimes when you get the bill, you see the cost of hydro, the delivery charges and the debt retirement charges, and the bill becomes huge. Some people have questioned why that happened and why we’re still paying until now.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, you’ve been here longer than me in this place and you have probably talked about it many different times. Your constituents and other constituents across the province of Ontario question why the debt retirement charges still apply. Everybody knows that when we got elected in 2003, we inherited more than \$20 billion in debt retirement charges, and the people of

Ontario have been paying since that time. If you look at the record, it's clear. If you go to the website, you know exactly how much has been paid: almost \$5.7 billion and also \$2.1 billion from the total charges being collected from the people of Ontario. So you know exactly where the money went.

But the most important thing is that before 2003, before we got elected to this place—everybody in the province of Ontario knows about the blackout which hit the province of Ontario. Everyone in the province of Ontario, the mainstream community and big business people, were hurt badly and lost a lot of money as a result of the blackout in the province of Ontario. The blackout came as a result of a lack of investment in transmission and transformers and hydro lines across the province of Ontario. There was no extra production of electricity in Ontario to feed and support growth in the province of Ontario. Since we got elected back then, we've tried to invest as much as we can to have sustainable hydro for companies that want to open in the province of Ontario, to attract more business and to keep the lights on.

It's also very important to tell the truth to the people of Ontario, and many people—especially with the philosophy of the Conservative Harris, Hudak and Ernie Eves government back then—“If we give the people of Ontario lower-priced hydro, we might attract more votes.”

But the whole issue is that it's very important that when you have the cost price, delivery charges and debt retirement charges, if you have an artificial price at the top, the money's going to go down to the bottom, with the debt retirement charges—because if you lower the cost and not give the true cost at the top, they're going to accumulate and increase the debt.

That's what happened over the years until 2003. When we came to office, we told the people of Ontario that what you paid for hydro wasn't the true cost; it was an artificial cost. The artificial cost increases your debt retirement charges and, in the end, you pay it. So you pay at the top and you pay at the bottom. That's why the debt retirement charges increased over the years and we accumulated more than \$20 billion.

As I said at the beginning, the people of Ontario have paid since 2003 until now more than \$7.8 billion; \$5.7 billion went to pay off the debt and \$2.1 billion paid the interest plus the deregulation of prices. Artificial prices cost Ontarians more than \$1 billion. If you go to the website, you see it clearly. It's obvious. There's no doubt about it.

I believe that the most important thing to do, as people in government at the present time, is to tell the truth to the people of Ontario and tell them exactly how much it costs them per kilowatt, not just to ask them to pay an artificial price to gain a vote. You have to be honest and up front with people. If we go straight forward toward the future, the payment and the debt retirement charges will be paid by 2015 or 2018, and no one across the province of Ontario will be paying any extra.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, as you know and as many people of this province know, we are trying to

create a culture of conservation in the province of Ontario and also to create a culture of green energy, which is very important for all of us. It's important for our communities and important for our future generations.

The party opposite talks all the time about how bad it is that you want to create that culture; green energy's not good for Ontario, they said in the morning in question period. They said we'll lose jobs and that it's not good for the environment, not good for health care and not good for our health in the province of Ontario. I don't understand how they get this logic.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** It makes no sense.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** You're right. My colleague from Guelph said it doesn't make sense.

It's very important. We care about the people of Ontario. It's very important for all of us to understand the importance of green energy and also to pay the debt, because future generations shouldn't pay a penny.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to join with my colleagues today as we discuss the McGuinty government's plan to continue making hydro customers pay the debt retirement charge.

This charge, as we know, is used to pay off hydro debts going back as far as the 1980s. The last Liberal government ran massive overruns on nuclear power construction. Even though the debt was scheduled to be paid off by 2012, the current Liberal government wants to make people pay it for another six years. I suppose they need the money to pay the debts accumulated over the last few years of their mismanaged electricity system in Ontario. Hydro deals of today will place a huge burden of debt on our children and grandchildren for years to come. Since July 1 of last year, the government has also applied the HST to the debt retirement charge, making taxpayers pay an additional \$80 million per year.

Our party brought forward a motion last November to ask the McGuinty government to tell Ontario families how much of the stranded debt was left to pay, yet the government voted to keep that amount hidden. That's why we are asking for an independent auditing firm to conduct a forensic audit into the residual stranded debt and the debt retirement charge. We need the facts.

Why does the government need to keep the charge? Because this government's obsession with expensive green energy and their continual flip-flops on energy plans will cost us a fortune. I've seen their mismanagement in action in my own riding. In 2005, the government announced that an enhanced transmission line would serve my riding. Then, because they had announced they would cancel the coal plants by 2007, they needed new power sources, so they decided to build natural gas plants across Ontario, with one in northern York region beside the Holland Marsh. Then they looked at the plant they had proposed for Oakville and decided that it would put their Oakville MPP's seat at risk, so they cancelled it, a cancellation that could cost the government untold millions if they are sued for breaking the contract, but a real seat saver.



I guess my constituents should count themselves lucky our shores are not to be covered by windmills, destroying our tourism industry. We know what was done to Wolf Island by Kingston and we know how this government cancelled offshore windmills off Kingston and Scarborough—more seat savers. Or maybe they just suspended the windmills. Who knows? Seats may be unsaved.

So now we understand why they need to keep the debt retirement charge, because their complete mismanagement of our hydro system is going to cost us billions. Ontario taxpayers will probably be paying off the McGuinty government's hydro debts for the rest of our lives.

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

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I'm very pleased to join this debate, and I'm going to take a slightly different tack than what we've heard so far.

You know, the way I look at it is that you've had electricity in the province of Ontario for well over 100 years. It started with Sir Adam Beck back in 1900-and-something. I think it's fair to say that every government of every political stripe since then has perhaps, and I think rightly so, used very low electricity prices in Ontario in order to get the manufacturing, in order to get the businesses going in the province of Ontario—every government: Conservative, Liberal, and even the NDP government way back when. That was the Ontario Hydro policy for almost 100 years.

During that period of time, I think it's fair to say, the consumers out there, whether they were businesses or whether they were individuals, were never really paying the real cost of electricity, and that's how you ended up with an amount of over \$20 billion back in 2003—over \$20 billion in what we call the stranded liability or debt—because basically over 100 years we collectively as a society during that time, whether it was in industry, institutional or through our residential rates, weren't paying enough.

Some people will say that was good, because with low electricity prices we got a lot of manufacturing and a lot of businesses going in the province of Ontario that otherwise would not have provided the good-paying jobs on which this province was founded.

**1650**

So what did we start doing in 2003 when we formed government? I'm reading from a document here that says that since that period of time, we have paid off over \$7 billion of that stranded debt, because we took the position in 2003 that this debt, against which there is no asset base as such, had to be paid off. That's what people have been paying for the last eight years. We are actually \$7 billion better off in the stranded debt liability than we were in 2003.

The opposition can spin this any way they want. Sooner or later, this outstanding stranded debt has to be paid.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I know the member from Durham is bellyaching over there, but it has to be paid.

I think that the people of Ontario will understand that one of the reasons why we are such a strong province is that for over 100 years, up until 2003, we simply didn't pay on an ongoing basis the actual cost of what it takes to produce the electricity.

We're on the right road. It's going to take another number of years to pay off the other \$13 billion. Any other connotation or any other thing anybody wants to say on a very partisan basis is just plainly wrong.

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's a real pleasure to join the debate here today on behalf of my PC caucus colleagues and, of course, our leader, Tim Hudak, in support of this motion.

For about the last 85 to 90 days, members of the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus have been travelling across the province. We've been asking people, through our deep survey of 50 questions strong, what their views are in their communities and in our own communities. We've also been conveying where we've been going and where we plan to move this province when we form government. What comes up quite frequently is: Where are their tax dollars going? That is a primary concern for the people of Ontario.

One of the tours that many of us did was on the debt retirement charge, the DRC, and the residual stranded debt. That was \$7.8 billion, and in the last few years Ontario families have paid \$7.8 billion in debt retirement charges on that residual stranded debt. The McGuinty government is going to continue to charge this debt retirement charge on the hydro bills. What's worse is not only are they going to continue to charge Ontario families for this debt retirement charge, they're actually charging HST on the hydro bill and HST on top of this DRC. This government is going to take in millions upon millions more dollars in taxes from Ontario families who are trying to heat their homes. It's shameful. We're hearing that people can't afford this government anymore and that they don't believe their tax dollars are being spent wisely.

That's why, wisely, the Ontario PC caucus, under our leader, Tim Hudak, is calling for a forensic audit: to ensure that each and every single penny that is sent to this government for that debt retirement charge is going where it ought to be going. We believe it should have been paid for and paid down already—and the people of this province, particularly those on fixed incomes, would not have to continue to pay a bill that is unnecessary and should have been, by all accounts, erased at this point in time.

I don't have a lot of time here today, but I will say this. My constituents in Nepean–Carleton and the constituents right across the rest of the province have spoken up, and I'm going to read a few of the concerns that people are actually saying.

“Why do we pay their debt and retirement regulatory charges and the HST? Most of what we pay on our hydro

bills is completely unfair. Most people in this province are having troubles just making ends meet after working 12 hours a day, seven days a week, and these goons get paid four or five times as much, with our tax money, after getting”—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Member from Nepean–Carleton, please; I got up a few minutes ago and I asked that we watch our language. The fact is that you can't say through something that someone else said something that you can't say in here. You just can't do that. So, please, keep some temperament.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thanks, Speaker. That was just a quote I was doing.

Here's a second one: "I am retired and with the combined increased prices in food, gas, fuel and hydro, I am finding it difficult to make ends meet and I would like you to explain to me your government's reason for this madness. The taxpayers of Ontario have had enough and you have taken us from being the most prosperous province in Canada to a have-not province and your leader, Dalton McGuinty, only smirks at the people of Ontario when confronted with this fact and you and your party care nothing for the devastation you have caused or put the citizens of this province through."

My final quote that comes in from folks, out of the many, because I am challenged with the time on the clock: "Headline today says that the government knew that the HST is going to cost us \$1,500 per household; \$1,500 per house, that is 5% of my disposable income. Seriously, 5% pay cut in a recession, are you kidding me? Additionally, the power is going up and so is gas, food prices are going up, and the city of Ottawa is talking rising taxes...."

The people in this province have had enough. They can't afford this government any more. They want to know: Where has their money gone? Some \$7.8 billion has been paid by them to pay off their debt. They have not shown us where it is. Let's have a forensic audit so that we can get on with business in this province and protect the taxpayers of this province.

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

**Mr. Rick Johnson:** I'm pleased to stand up today and to debate. I, too, had the, for lack of a better term, travelling comedy show come through my riding talking about these numbers that have been adjusted. We're looking at, on April 1, 1999, a debt of \$19.4 billion; it increased by \$601 million in 2000. It went down by \$18 million in 2001; it went up by \$69 million in 2002, while money was being collected. I would love to see an audit of that time period, to be honest with you, to find out where that money went. But instead, this was part of the "let's sell off the assets of Ontario."

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** A fire sale.

**Mr. Rick Johnson:** Exactly. It was a fire sale. We sold off hydro. "Let's sell off the parts that make money; keep the debt, and we'll hide it and we'll put on it top of the people of Ontario."

You know, we went through the same thing with the 407. If we still owned it, the 407 would probably be built all the way to Ottawa by now. Instead, we're still struggling over that one.

I respect the fact that the Conservative Party, the party opposite, is questioning this number. They have looked at this with their own mathematicians, I suppose.

I just want to read a very brief—yesterday, the member from Peterborough asked the Minister of Finance a question about this exact issue. The Minister of Finance's response was the following:

"This failed restructuring created an unfunded liability of \$19.4 billion.

"And, to make matters worse, from 1999 to 2003, the PC government actually added to the unfunded liability by over \$1 billion.

"In order to pay down this debt, the PC government added a debt retirement charge to hydro bills as their attempt to try to clean up their mistake.

"Another thing the official opposition doesn't want your constituents to know is that the PC government set the DRC", the debt retirement charge, "at \$7.8 billion by overestimating the value of future contracts and revenues.

"The true debt that has to be paid down is the unfunded liability which was a whopping \$20.6 billion when we took over in government."

This was a quote from the Minister of Finance, yesterday.

With respect to this House, if they don't believe the numbers, why didn't any of the members opposite challenge the veracity of the minister's statement?

**1700**

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I'm certainly pleased to rise in support of the motion that has been introduced by my colleague the member for Muskoka.

First of all, what we're debating here today, of course, is the motion put forward by the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka which calls on this government "to instruct an external firm to conduct a forensic audit into the residual stranded debt and the debt retirement charge, and make the findings of the audit public."

I think it's important to know that the Electricity Act of 1998 states that, "The Minister of Finance shall determine the stranded debt and shall from time to time determine the residual stranded debt in accordance with the regulations." In this House, we all know that the minister has never lived up to that obligation because the Minister of Finance has never determined, as it says in the Electricity Act of 1998, the amount of the residual stranded debt, apart from the original estimation of \$7.8 billion at the time of restructuring. We are certainly supported by the Electricity Act in the motion we have in front of the House today, and also we now know that the Minister of Finance has never lived up to that obligation. I would hope, combined with the terms of the act and with the motion that we've brought forward today, that this government would actually do the right thing and

recognize that the people in the province of Ontario are entitled to know what happened.

The debt was \$7.8 billion in 2002. We all know that that was to be paid off as of 2012, and this government has now come to a decision that it appears this is going to be a debt that's going to be forced on the taxpayers in this province until 2018. In fact, many people fear that this is going to become a permanent charge.

I hope you will realize that the taxpayers in this province simply can't take any more. They've seen unprecedented increases in their hydro rates. This is just one more area that I can tell you angers them greatly, and they find it very offensive that the government is not being honest with them as they experience hardship and difficulties.

I ask you today: Be honest with Ontarians. Allow for the forensic audit of the debt retirement charge to take place. Ontarians deserve to know where the money has gone, why they're being forced to pay several millions more than had originally been anticipated, and why this government is wilfully concealing what it has done with the money.

The people of Ontario deserve better than a government that is unaccountable and secretive with the money that the taxpayers have given them. I call on the government today to immediately launch a forensic audit into the debt retirement charge fiasco. Come clean. The taxpayers deserve the truth.

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

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** I'm delighted to be able to speak for two minutes on that issue.

I want to tell you that I did have some comedians down in my area, too. They went to all the places—but at least if they were to tell the truth to all the constituents.

When we talk about the debt, way back in 2003, the debt from the hydro was \$19.5 billion. Over a year, it came up to \$20.5 billion. Why? Because they collected that seven tenths of a cent per kilowatt hour and they didn't transfer that money to the proper budget.

I have to tell you that ever since the McGuinty government got elected, we've saved the taxpayers over a period of six years—six years in a row—\$408 million a year in interest. We've saved \$408 million in interest.

The member for Nepean–Carleton was saying that the people will be paying \$19,000 more in their electricity. Do you know how much that means in purchasing electricity? It would mean they would use over \$19,000 worth of electricity in the year. It is impossible.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Impossible.

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde:** Impossible. It would come to an average of about \$1,550 per month for their hydro bill. Again, trying to mislead the people of this province: I will not accept that.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words on this motion. I've been sitting here for about an hour and a half, listening to the debate so far. Let me say there's a fair bit of fog on both

sides of what I've heard so far and there's a fair bit of trying to rewrite history. In fact, I have to remark that I have heard several government spokespersons get up, and each one seems to use a different figure. If Liberals can't agree amongst themselves on what the figure is, boy, I think that illustrates just how thick the fog is on this particular issue.

But there is some history to this, and I think people need to know the history. The fact is, the former Conservative government in 1999 decided that they were going to take apart Ontario Hydro, and they began a process of trying to privatize Ontario's hydro system.

I will give them credit for one thing: They were open about it. They said what they were going to do, and they started to do that. I think they were absolutely mistaken in trying to do that, but I will give them credit: They were open about it. What we've seen from the present McGuinty government is further privatization of the hydro system through the back door while they deny that they're privatizing the hydro system.

However that all may be, the decision to take Ontario Hydro apart and, in effect, to create six different organizations—Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One, the electricity standards authority, the Independent Electricity System Operator, and the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp., also then coupled with the Ontario Energy Board—has created a large monster in Ontario.

Most other provinces—Quebec and Manitoba, for example—have only two entities running their hydro system. In Manitoba, you have Manitoba Hydro, a publicly owned, not-for-profit company; and you have the regulator, the Manitoba Public Utilities Board. It's nice and neat, only two entities; not a lot of money wasted on executive salaries, the kind of executive salaries we see in Ontario today. Quebec, very similar: Hydro Quebec and the regulator. It's nice and neat; people can see where their money is going.

That's part of the problem in Ontario today. You have a seven-headed electricity monster in the province because the Liberals have added the Ontario Power Authority, with all of the contracts they sign in the backroom. People can't believe what's happening to their hydro bills and they deserve an explanation. Unfortunately, this debate today is only going to provide a small amount of that explanation.

When the former Conservative government broke up Ontario Hydro, created Ontario Power Generation and said, "You must run as if you're a profit-driven, private corporation," that meant that some of the debt that had been guaranteed by the government in the past, when Ontario Hydro had run not as a profit-driven corporation, but as a service corporation, to the benefit of the people of Ontario—some of that debt that had been guaranteed by the government had to be put elsewhere. So the concept of unfunded liability associated with electricity generation was transferred to this new entity called the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp., and it was handed over as stranded debt or unfunded liability. The total of that at the time was \$19.4 billion, in 1999.

Now, where did that come from? The reality is most of that unfunded liability, or stranded debt, resulted from nuclear plants that were built in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and virtually every one of them went way over budget. It doesn't matter if you're talking Pickering A, Pickering B, Bruce or Darlington; they all went over budget in terms of their cost of construction.

**1710**

The people of Ontario were told, first by a Conservative government in 1984, that Darlington would only cost about \$4 billion. When it was completed under the Peterson Liberal government, the cost had gone to over \$14 billion—an \$11-billion cost overrun. That is where three quarters of the so-called stranded debt comes from, from nuclear plants that people were told, "This is only going to cost a couple of billion," and then the price comes in at \$5 billion, or people were told it's only going to cost \$4 billion, and it comes in at over \$14 billion. That's where three quarters of the \$19.4 billion of stranded debt comes from.

There have been some funny things happen since then. Some funny things have happened since then. The reality is that even after Ontario Hydro was broken up, the actual cost of operating the nuclear plants and paying the debt of the nuclear power plants still wasn't being accounted for. So in fact, Ontario actually started to see the debt increase.

Ontario's electricity consumers and taxpayers are required to pay off this stranded debt because all of its borrowings, as I said, were originally guaranteed by the government of Ontario. As a consequence, the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp., or the OEFC, actually collects revenues from a number of sources to pay down this debt. There's the debt retirement charge of 0.7 cents per kilowatt hour that's levied on the electricity bill. All of the provincial income taxes from OPG, Hydro One and Ontario's municipal electricity utilities—for example, Toronto Hydro or, in the case of my hometown, the Fort Frances Power Corp.—go to the stranded debt. All of the dividend payments from OPG and Hydro One to their sole shareholder, the government Ontario, are supposed to go to that stranded debt.

Have some games been played with the stranded debt? Yes, some games have been played. After the former Conservative government started down the road of privatization, some not-very-nice things happened. One of the not-very-nice things that happened was that people's hydro bills exploded. So Ernie Eves, then a newly minted Premier, on November 11, 2002, because hydro bills were skyrocketing and people were getting angry, decided to freeze the wholesale price of electricity at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour. How was he going to pay for that freeze? The freeze was paid for by adding it on the stranded debt. In fact, another \$918 million was added to the stranded debt in 2003 and 2004 through that attempt to, shall we say, cover up the true cost of electricity in our electricity system.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Member for Kenora-Rainy River, please, the words that you

used—"cover up"—are unparliamentary. I'd like you to tone your language down.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** But it's true.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** I don't need any help from the member for Durham either.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** Let me use the word "hide," then, Speaker, because that's what was going on here. I don't use the words "cover up" in a nasty sense. There's an attempt here to hide where the money was going.

On April 1, the price freeze was eliminated. As a result, the stranded debt in 2010 was 24% lower than its opening value in 1999, but there's still an outstanding balance of close to \$15 billion.

I think what bothers people is this: Between April 1, 1999, and March 31, 2010, Ontario electricity consumers and taxpayers have made annual payments totalling \$19.6 billion to service and pay down the stranded debt. In other words, the total debt payments made by Ontario consumers and taxpayers since 1999 have now exceeded the original value of the stranded debt, which was \$19.433 billion, and yet we still owe \$14.81 billion. I think that is what is bothering people, and it rightfully should bother people.

How does that happen? Well, part of it happens because there is something called interest payments. Unfortunately, interest payments through the period since 1999 and interest rates have not always been kind, so you end up still having to pay more.

I wish I could say that's the end of it, but it's not, because the current McGuinty Liberal government now wants to engage in another spending spree on nuclear power plants. We've already watched the shell game. We've heard different ministers of energy come out and say, "Oh, this will only cost maybe \$10 billion or \$15 billion," but as soon as you go to somebody on the outside who knows something about the construction costs of nuclear power plants, they tell you that nuclear power plants that are being built today in Finland are way over cost, billions of dollars over cost. When you look at what's happening with the Point Lepreau nuclear plant in New Brunswick and its refurbishment, it's over cost. When you look at what's happening today with the Bruce nuclear power plant and its refurbishment, it's way over cost.

So independent analysts will tell you that the McGuinty Liberals are about to go down the same road again and load up on the stranded debt, because nuclear power plants—we're already seeing this, and we see it in the United States too—for whatever reason inevitably seem to be much more expensive than people are originally told. Are the Liberals now playing games with this? Yes, they are, and the Liberals are about to engage in a process that is going to stick people with even more stranded debt because they are not giving a realistic, honest assessment of what it will cost to build new nuclear stations or even some of the refurbishments that are happening now.

I just want to add one other piece to this. The Conservatives, in 2002, put a price freeze on electricity. Now that we're headed into an election, what did the

McGuinty Liberals do just a few months ago? They said, "We're going to give you a 10% reduction on the hydro bill." But where is the money for that going to come from? That's going to be money that's borrowed too. So while Liberals point fingers at the Conservatives, the Liberals are going to do virtually the same thing the Conservatives did back in 2002: try to buy people's votes before the election and then tell them after the election, "Oh gee, there's over \$1 billion of debt here that we didn't tell you about."

Shame on both their houses. Shame on the Conservatives for not admitting that their whole experiment with endorsing the Enron privatization of our electricity system back in 1999 blew up in their faces and is still costing us money, and shame on the McGuinty Liberals for preparing to go down the same path in terms of nuclear plants that are going to cost a lot more money than they're telling the public, and shame on the McGuinty Liberals for trying to hide their debt on the hydro bill until after the election, just as the Conservatives did in 2002.

This whole process that we've seen—first the Conservatives, now the Liberals—has left people with hydro bills that are skyrocketing through the roof. People living on limited incomes or fixed incomes are having a heck of a time paying the hydro bill—many can't. We've seen plant after plant, paper mill after paper mill across the north close because they couldn't afford to pay the escalating cost of electricity. We've seen Cliffs Natural Resources, which wants to mine the Ring of Fire, release a press statement saying they'd like to build a smelter, but Ontario's hydro rates are too high right now to consider a smelter in Ontario.

1720

This has been one fiasco after another. I'll tell you, I think in the coming election, people are going to hold both the McGuinty Liberals and the Conservatives accountable for a system—the Conservatives opened privatization; the Liberals, what I call backdoor privatization. People are going to hold them both accountable for a fiasco that's been unbelievably expensive, has killed tens of thousands of good jobs and is going to cost people even more money in the future.

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

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** The reason we have this motion here before us is because the opposition does not want to talk about the fact that they have this love affair with dirty coal; anything to distract us from what they really want to do, which is just burn more coal, because coal is dirty but it's cheap. The reason we've been using it is because it's cheap.

Here's what I find quite interesting, as the first certified financial planner elected to this House, and it's very simply this: We have the Auditor General and the Auditor General is independent; he is an officer of this Legislature. Any member of our House, if they have a concern about the numbers, can write the Auditor General and say, "Auditor General, will you please look into this? There seems to be some dispute. Was the

amount \$7.8 billion? Was it \$20 billion? Was it \$19 billion, and then it went up?" We have the Auditor General, so why would they not just ask the Auditor General to come in? Why do we need to have another Auditor General? Why do we need to have somebody else? Because the Auditor General has already decided for us what the facts are. They're just trying to conveniently find somebody else to validate their position.

If you really are concerned about this, you would ask the Auditor General, but I think you're afraid of what his answer would be.

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

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm not sure what debate the Minister of the Environment was participating in. We're talking about the residual stranded debt.

In the limited time I have, I want to just get on the record an email from a constituent. It's reflective of many and it speaks to the issue today.

"Norm

"I am interested to know the status of the former Ontario Hydro debt. I have been paying the debt retirement charges on my hydro bill for years and have absolutely no understanding of where the current paid-down debt stands.

"As a budget-conscious individual, I do not usually make payments like a monkey, just because someone says I have to. I need to know what I am paying and how my payments affect the bottom line. It appears that the DRC will continue well into my grandchildren's lifetime.

"Can you tell me the current level of debt to be paid down and how much of the debt has been paid? A pointer to the right website to monitor the debt payment progress would be wonderful."

That's illustrative of what we're talking about today. The Electricity Act, 1998, states very clearly, "The Minister of Finance shall determine the stranded debt and shall from time to time determine the residual stranded debt in accordance with the regulations."

The Minister of Finance has never determined the amount of the residual stranded debt apart from the original estimation of \$7.8 billion at the time of restructuring. We heard from the member from Simcoe-Grey, who was the Minister of Energy, how that was, through an external firm, determined to be \$7.8 billion.

Today's opposition day motion highlights just another case of poor accounting by the McGuinty government of taxpayer money. The annual report from the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. debt management section clearly states that as of April 1, 1999, the residual stranded debt was \$7.8 billion. As the former minister pointed out—the member from Simcoe-Grey—the actual payments from the people in Ontario started in May 2002, unlike what the finance minister said in question period today.

In 2010 alone the McGuinty government collected \$907 million in debt retirement charges, so to date we know that \$7.8 billion has been collected in debt retirement charge revenues. But nowhere in any annual report is there a line item that shows Ontarians where the

current residual stranded debt stands at today. To me, that seems to be some pretty basic accounting. When people get their credit card statement and they're paying down their debt, there's a line that shows what they owe. There's another line that shows what they paid and there's a line to show the interest on the balance.

Finally, there's a line that shows clearly what the current balance is, and that's the one that we seem to be missing. Certainly there have been some interest charges, but interest rates have been quite low in recent years.

Ontarians have a right to know what the amount is. It shouldn't be a mystery. It shouldn't be a secret. Instead of treating Ontario's energy users as some bottomless ATM for goodness-knows-what energy experiment, it's time to come clean on what the debt retirement balance is today. If Premier McGuinty and his finance minister won't, then it's high time to have an external firm take a close look at what has been happening to the hundreds of millions of dollars collected each year from Ontario family households and have a forensic audit so we will all know where it stands.

Ontario families deserve that respect. They deserve to know, of the \$7.8 billion that has been collected, how much is left owing. That's the least they can ask for from this government.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I have to say that my colleague the member from Kenora–Rainy River covered this ground pretty well, so I will take the opportunity to speak about lessons that should have been learned from history and seem to be ignored.

I can tell you that this government is hurtling headlong towards massive investments in nuclear power that will produce the same kind of unpayable, unmanageable debt that the last headlong rush to invest in nuclear power generated.

In 2008, Mr. Gerry Phillips was Minister of Energy. The Toronto Star wrote a very interesting article entitled, "Ontario Aiming to Lead 'Nuclear Renaissance.'" At that time, Energy Minister Phillips talked about the new investment at Darlington as part of a \$26-billion investment in nuclear—\$26 billion in 2008. The long-term energy plan from November last year said "\$33 billion," so, in two years, a 20% rise in the cost estimates for nuclear power—10% a year. If this trend line continues in any way to follow historical trend lines, we're not talking about \$33 billion; we're talking more like \$80 billion or \$90 billion, costs that would leave those power plants producing power at a cost that would not be marketable in Ontario.

It's the same problem that we faced before. Plants were built, they produced power, and that power did not pay the capital cost of those investments. So this province is stuck with tens of billions in debt which it is paying off at the rate of \$1.8 billion or \$2 billion a year, but, as has been said and is quite correct, interest continues to mount. So one is constantly fighting against this headwind of interest costs. In other words, there is an unmanageable debt.

This government has ignored the history of the last 40 years in Ontario, ignored the burden, the impact of this kind of debt on households, families and people who try to make their businesses work and companies that try to make major investments. They ignore the fact that the dead weight of \$15 billion in debt for unproductive assets is one that undermines our economy. This government, blind to what has happened before, continues to make decisions that put our future and our livelihood on the line.

There's no question in my mind that the efforts to privatize the hydro system that were undertaken by the Harris-Eves government were a disaster. We were lucky that what happened in California, with the total disruption of their economy when companies like Enron had substantial control of their electricity system, didn't happen here. We were simply lucky. What we have, however, is a slow-motion version of that disruption, with prices rising not because this government is devoted to jobs, not because this government is devoted to the environment, but because this government is devoted to making sure that some people, some companies, become spectacularly wealthy out of our electricity system. That has consequences for all of us. Look at the Ontario Electricity Finance Corp., the debt we're carrying, the money that comes off your hydro bill in a way that's recognizable in the debt retirement charge and the amount that's buried in the larger hydro bill that is simply part of a payment that's also made to the government, mirroring that nuclear debt retirement charge.

**1730**

I actually am going to vote for this resolution by the Conservatives not because I think it's a particularly good resolution, but because I think it provides an opportunity to keep the nuclear debt in the limelight. It keeps the nuclear debt visible, because every time we talk about that debt you go back to where it came from, and that debt, this whole province has to understand, comes from unsustainable, foolish decisions to make investments that can't pay for themselves, investments that undermine our economy on a day-to-day basis.

Look at the cost of the Darlington new build. I was here when the discussions went around about the \$6 billion cost to build the new reactors. I was here the day George Smitherman had to announce that the plans had been put on hold because the price that had come in, the only one in a bid that had addressed the concerns of the government, was too high. The government has never revealed the price. The only number that we have is the one that's been published in the Toronto Star at \$26 billion.

I have to say, for a price that would contain any cost overruns, probably \$26 billion addresses a big chunk of that. But when I look at Bruce nuclear and the fact that it is dealing with big overruns and recently renegotiated its agreement with the government so that an extra \$50 million or \$60 million is paid to them to help them deal with their financial problems, I don't even think their fixed price of \$26 billion reflects the full cost of what we would be stuck with if they went ahead with that project.

This motion may in fact do little else but give everyone who is opposed to nuclear power an opportunity, on a regular basis, to point out the folly of going down that route, to point out the real cost of nuclear power, something ignored by this government: The cost of waste management, the cost of decommissioning, the cost of that stranded debt is never factored into the cost of nuclear power—never. If in fact that was factored in, we would be talking about the cost of that power at 15 or 20 cents a kilowatt hour. If we were talking about what a real investment would put as a burden on the people of this province, then we would be talking 15 to 20 cents a kilowatt hour, not the—what can I say?—fun-with-numbers figures that are currently being presented. A government that in two years increases the cost estimate for nuclear power from \$26 billion to \$33 billion is in no position to tell anyone that it is dealing with our electricity system in a responsible way.

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

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Let's get down to the real, hard facts of this particular resolution.

The resolution says that the residual stranded debt in 2002 was \$7.8 billion. Do you know who disagrees with that resolution? Let me quote to you from the 2010 annual report of the Auditor General of Ontario.

The Auditor General of Ontario, in a section entitled "Update on the Province's Stranded Debt," pegs the stranded debt as of April 1, 1999, at—wait for it—\$19.4 billion. Not \$7.8 billion, but \$19.4 billion. Says the Auditor General, and again, I quote, "Initially, little progress was made in reducing the stranded debt."

So that means that by the time our government took office, the stranded debt had gone in fiscal years in this way: \$19.4 billion, \$20 billion, \$20 billion, \$20.1 billion, \$20.2 billion, and finally \$20.6 billion when we took government. Says the Auditor General, "However, over the last few years, it has been steadily decreasing."

Now, sometimes people will ask, "What did we do before we had a stranded debt?" And the best way to find out is to look at Hydro-Québec or Manitoba Hydro. How do they finance the construction of their assets? They do the same thing that the old Ontario Hydro did: They issue bonds, and those Ontario Hydro bonds used to be great financial vehicles. Now, in the dark rooms late at night, perhaps through the haze of cigar smoke, as the former government was contemplating carving up the old Ontario Hydro, the purchaser said, "Well, listen, we want to buy the assets, but we sure don't want those liabilities. What are you going to do with the liabilities?" They said, "Well, it's not a problem. We'll just stick it to the taxpayer," which is what they did—\$20.8-billion worth.

So instead of being able to issue bonds as the old Ontario Hydro did, the two new entities, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation, were thus unencumbered by this taxpayer debt that was just sort of left on your electric bill and mine. That's how we came to pay it.

The Auditor General—and I'm going to again use the official auditor of the province of Ontario—shows how

the debt has gone down. I'm going to quote in billions: \$20.6 billion, \$20.4 billion, \$19.3 billion, \$18.3 billion, \$17.2 billion, \$16.2 billion and \$14.8 billion. This is the current year.

If you accept the veracity of the resolution brought forth here, the party opposite, the Progressive Conservative Party, has not merely incorrectly stated the amount of the stranded debt; they've cast aspersions on the integrity of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario. Personally, I think I'm going to side with the auditor on this one.

By the time the former Conservative government wanted to actually sell the generation and transmission assets of the old Ontario Hydro, the worldwide experience in private energy was the type that we saw in Enron and WorldCom, where people just took the money and ran. What they did is just stick the taxpayers of their countries with debt after debt after debt. So in addition to sticking the Ontario taxpayer with the worst of all possible worlds, in the end, they didn't even privatize it.

So now, what our government inherited was a situation which, after all of the Conservative tinkering, we had to fix. That's why the stranded debt has come down year after year after year. That's why our power generation assets have been improving year after year after year.

By the time they finished in government, Ontario was losing, not gaining, the ability to generate and transmit electricity. What were we doing in 2003? We were relying on expensive imports of US electricity. We were burning dirty coal. Our cities had to have backup generators. This was disgraceful. Our power grid now is stable, it's modern, and it's getting better.

I have to conclude here with something people should watch for. This is the secret Conservative energy plan. It has four points in it:

(1) Blame somebody else.

(2) Take your generation and transmission assets and run them into the ground; just do nothing.

(3) Burn dirty coal.

(4) Buy expensive US power on the spot market.

The best indicator of future behaviour is past behaviour. That's what they did in the past, that's what they're going to try and sell Ontarians on in the future, and that's why, this fall, Ontario is going to have its third straight Liberal majority government, for a solid and stable power grid here in the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Miller, Parry Sound–Muskoka, has moved opposition day number 1. Is it the pleasure of House that the motion carry?

All of 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 1741 to 1751.*

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

**Ayes**

Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Barrett, Toby  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Hudak, Tim

MacLeod, Lisa  
Martiniuk, Gerry  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
O'Toole, John  
Ouellette, Jerry J.

Savoline, Joyce  
Tabuns, Peter  
Wilson, Jim  
Witmer, Elizabeth

Caplan, David  
Carroll, Aileen  
Chan, Michael  
Chiarelli, Bob  
Colle, Mike  
Craiton, Kim  
Delaney, Bob  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad

Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Mangat, Amrit  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Moridi, Reza  
Murray, Glen R.

Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Smith, Monique  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Wilkinson, John  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Zimmer, David

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

**Nays**

Aggelonitis, Sophia  
Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bradley, James J.  
Broten, Laurel C.  
Brownell, Jim

Duncan, Dwight  
Gerretsen, John  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoy, Pat  
Jaczek, Helena  
Johnson, Rick

Oraziotti, David  
Pendergast, Leeanna  
Phillips, Gerry  
Ramal, Khalil  
Ramsay, David  
Ruprecht, Tony

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 16; the nays are 43.

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

*Motion negatived.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** This House is adjourned until 9 of the clock, Thursday, March 3.

*The House adjourned at 1753.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)</b>	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, P.C., Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (LIB)</b>	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
<b>DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)</b>	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)</b>	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC) Elliott, Christine (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB) Fonseca, Peter (LIB)	Oakville Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
<b>Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)</b>	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Moridi, Reza (LIB) <b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	Richmond Hill York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC) <b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB) O'Toole, John (PC) Oraziotti, David (LIB) Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC) Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB) <b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)</b> <b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre Durham Sault Ste. Marie Oshawa Kitchener–Conestoga Elgin–Middlesex–London Scarborough–Agincourt	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP) <b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>	Beaches–East York Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB) Ramal, Khalil (LIB) Ramsay, David (LIB) Rinaldi, Lou (LIB) Ruprecht, Tony (LIB) Sandals, Liz (LIB) Savoline, Joyce (PC) Sergio, Mario (LIB) Shurman, Peter (PC) <b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord London–Fanshawe Timiskaming–Cochrane Northumberland–Quinte West Davenport Guelph Burlington York West / York-Ouest Thornhill Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB) <b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b> Sterling, Norman W. (PC) Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Vaughan Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud Carleton–Mississippi Mills Toronto–Danforth	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail  Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB) <b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b> <b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex Perth–Wellington Simcoe–Grey	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC) <b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b> Yakabuski, John (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey  
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson  
Kim Craitor, Bob Delaney  
Garfield Dunlop, Peter Fonseca  
Phil McNeely, John O'Toole  
Maria Van Bommel  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Toby Barrett  
Bob Delaney, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Pat Hoy, Helena Jaczek  
Norm Miller, Leeanna Pendergast  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: David Oraziotti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jim Brownell  
Jim Brownell, Steve Clark  
Kuldip Kular, Dave Levac  
Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese  
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti  
Joyce Savoline  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Laura Albanese, Michael A. Brown  
Donna H. Cansfield, Aileen Carroll, P.C.  
Howard Hampton, Ernie Hardeman  
Lisa MacLeod, Leeanna Pendergast  
Jim Wilson  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Reza Moridi  
Bas Balkissoon, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Ted Chudleigh, Mike Colle  
Christine Elliott, Peter Kormos  
Reza Moridi, Lou Rinaldi  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi  
Bas Balkissoon, Joe Dickson  
Sylvia Jones, Amrit Mangat  
Norm Miller, Yasir Naqvi  
Michael Prue, Mario Sergio  
Maria Van Bommel  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Shurman  
Wayne Arthurs, Aileen Carroll, P.C.  
France Gélinas, Jerry J. Ouellette  
David Ramsay, Liz Sandals  
Peter Shurman, Norman W. Sterling  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller  
David Caplan, Kim Craitor  
Jeff Leal, Gerry Martiniuk  
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch  
Michael Prue, Lou Rinaldi  
Tony Ruprecht  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon  
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo  
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones  
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin  
Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal  
Elizabeth Witmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Select Committee on the proposed transaction of the TMX  
Group and the London Stock Exchange Group / Comité  
spécial sur la transaction proposée entre le Groupe TMX et le  
London Stock Exchange Group**

Chair / Président: Gerry Phillips  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Frank Klees  
Laura Albanese, Wayne Arthurs  
Gilles Bisson, Michael A. Brown  
Frank Klees, Gerry Phillips  
Peter Shurman, Maria Van Bommel  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day



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