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Thursday 31 March 2011

Jeudi 31 mars 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 31 March 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 31 mars 2011

The House met at 0900.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the non-denominational prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

2011 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 30, 2011, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Orders of the day?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: As I call the order this morning, I'd like to wish the Minister of Revenue a happy birthday, and I'd like to call government order 51.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Before I begin my remarks, I guess I'll start with the one congratulatory note that I'll strike this morning and that is to also wish the Minister of Revenue a happy birthday. In terms of congratulatory notes, that will be the end for this morning, from my perspective, but I hope she has a lovely day.

It's my pleasure, my privilege, to rise on behalf of New Democrats and my colleagues here in this caucus to talk about the McGuinty government's budget, which, of course, they introduced earlier this week.

It's certainly an interesting budget, I think all would agree, but when all is said and done, I'm convinced that this budget will go down in history as much ado about nothing. It's disappointing, to say the least—extremely disappointing. I say that because families in Ontario were seeking and were expecting so much more from this budget.

If there's one thing that's extremely clear it's that Tuesday's budget shows us again that Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals are simply out of touch with the pressures that are facing recession-weary families.

Ontario families are scrambling to deal with soaring electricity bills; they're scrambling to deal with rising prices; they're scrambling to deal with increases at the gas pumps and the unfair HST, of course, which makes life so much more unaffordable for most people. They're worried about jobs, jobs that are still very difficult to

find; and they're worried about paycheques, paycheques that have not kept up with inflation.

The job losses, the destroyed savings and the overall economic anxiety of the past couple of years have put the squeeze on Ontario families, particularly middle-income families. Dalton McGuinty's answer has been a new sales tax on people's everyday essentials and multi-billion-dollar handouts to some of Ontario's biggest and richest corporations. How is that fair? How is that fair to the people of Ontario? Frankly, it's not fair. It's anything but fair.

The McGuinty government had a chance to actually turn things around this time, turn things around for families in this budget, but they chose instead to stick with the status quo that simply is not working. Despite making outrageous claims about the potential that corporate tax cuts had to create jobs, it is very, very clear from the numbers in the very budget that this government brought forward the other day that the Premier's so-called jobs strategy is not working. It is not working at all.

Mr. Paul Miller: A failure.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: As my colleague from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek indicates, it is an abject failure. In fact, the so-called jobs plan is in disarray, and with only six months before the next election, the Liberal government is scrambling.

On this side of the House, we are not at all surprised that the government in this budget has quietly reduced their jobs creation estimate by 75,000 jobs over the next three years. That's 75,000 jobs fewer that this government admits are going to be created over the next three years, a change from just last year's forecast. That's a significant climbdown—75,000 jobs. And at the same time, the government continues to hand over billions and billions of dollars to corporations—\$6 billion, to be exact—without any job guarantees; not a single job guarantee for over \$6 billion in corporate tax giveaways.

The Ontario New Democratic Party does not believe that doling out cash to corporations on a no-strings-attached basis actually works. We don't believe it works for a minute. We have not seen the evidence at all. Over decades of the same kind of program that comes from Liberals and Conservatives, we don't see the evidence that it actually creates jobs. That's been proven over and over and over again, yet this government just doesn't seem to get it.

That's why in fact my federal leader, Jack Layton, has structured his jobs package the way he has. His jobs package actually has strings attached. What a novel idea. It actually achieves something for the people of Ontario.

As Jack's jobs plan makes clear, New Democrats have no problem at all providing incentives to business, but the incentives have to be ones that reward businesses for real investments in things like plant, machinery, training and jobs. That is what I call results-based investment with business, as opposed to across-the-board tax cuts that achieve nothing whatsoever. There have to be real strings attached, and I'm going to return a little bit later to Mr. Layton's jobs package in my speech. It's something that I'm extremely proud of, so I'm going to detail it a bit more in a little while.

But of course jobs aren't the only issue that Ontarians are concerned about. It's a major concern, but it's not the only one. This government will try to hang its hat on a very few items that they have put in this budget. Let's take a minute or two to talk about what those items are.

First, I want to talk a little bit about the government's health care announcements in the budget. I find it extremely ironic—in fact, I find it bordering on insulting—the way that the budget deals with this particular issue. After closing breast cancer clinics in London and forcing patients to fight for their breast cancer treatments, this government puts something in the budget that makes people wonder, “Why should we even believe it? Why should we even believe that they care at all about the breast cancer issue after the way that they've behaved over the last several weeks and, in fact, longer than that—several months?”

And yet, they put together a “breast cancer strategy.” I'd say it looks a little bit more, and smells a little bit more, like a government-saving-its-political-bacon kind of strategy. Because they should be ashamed of the way they've behaved, not only in London, with removing those nurses from the breast-screening clinic who were supporting women who were suffering with the horrible disease of breast cancer, but then preventing Jill Anzarut from getting the medication that her oncologist had prescribed for her because her tumour was just a little too small—until, of course, the media got involved and New Democrats got involved and forced the government to back away from that callous and horrible position they were in. It's disgraceful, and it's absurd to think that a nominal investment in breast cancer screening over three years absolves this government from anything at all in terms of their behaviour over the last little while on this issue.

0910

Then there's education, specifically post-secondary education. I want to talk a little bit about that. When Ontario is the single most expensive province in which to obtain a university degree in Canada and students are carrying an average debt load of approximately \$30,000 upon graduation, why would anybody believe that this government has a plan to help families struggling with the cost of putting their kids through university? It is obvious that they have no plan whatsoever, especially when the plans that they've advanced before have been scrapped so quickly. I'll talk about that in a minute, but I want to go back to post-secondary education.

We have a government that in their budget made this announcement about 60,000 new spaces. Sixty thousand new spaces? I think that's okay. I don't have a problem with that. What I have a problem with is that people can't afford to put those kids in those spaces. Families can't afford to fill those spaces with their children, with their youth. Why? Because it's too expensive. The budget doesn't speak to the affordability of post-secondary education, which is the most pressing issue in post-secondary education right now. The government all but ignores it. How shameful is that? It's like dangling a carrot out there for young people, saying, “Oh, we're opening all these spaces, but whoops, we'll pull that carrot back. Guess what? You're not going to be able to afford to go.” It's shameful. It's absolutely shameful.

That doesn't even address some of the other issues that we know are quite embarrassing for the province of Ontario, like the fact that we have the lowest per capita investment in post-secondary education of all the provinces in this great country.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Number 10.

Mr. Paul Miller: Number 10.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Ten out of 10. It doesn't address the fact that there continue to be growing and growing numbers of students in classes, and professors are not growing at the same rate. Needless to say, the ratio between students and professors is alarming.

What does that say? That says we have an issue about the quality of post-secondary education if we continue to ignore those growing class sizes. And yet, nothing at all from this government on that very important issue. They think a shiny announcement of 60,000 new spaces some time down the road—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Over five years.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: —over five years—is the panacea, is the solution, is the answer to our post-secondary education crisis.

I think parents would disagree, and I think students—although I know students are happy about the idea of having more spaces—are still very, very concerned about access, about quality and about affordability.

I was starting to say how the government likes to make all these plans. They talk about the breast cancer strategy and the student strategy and post-secondary and all these wonderful, shiny plans, but we know that the government announces lots of plans and they don't follow through. In fact, this very budget was used to announce the rollback of previous plans that they had announced in other budgets; for example, the brand new courthouse in west-end Toronto that was supposed to be helping to deal with the massive backlog of cases in the court system. I mean, let's face it; there are cases being thrown out of the courts because people are waiting far too long to get to trial.

What does that mean? What's the implication of that? I would suggest that the implication is that in some very serious crimes that have been committed, the perpetrators of those crimes are not being held to account through our justice system because our justice system can't handle the number of trials that are on the docket. So they wait

months and months and they stretch to years and years, and guess what? The cases get thrown out of court because people have had to wait too long to go through the justice system. So congratulations to the government creating even more pressure in our justice system that is already overburdened. That's what this budget did: It scrapped that courthouse in west-end Toronto.

Why would anybody believe at all that this tired, out-of-touch McGuinty Liberal government has any real plan at all, on any front? There may be a plan somewhere there, and in fact that's one that concerns me. Because there may be a plan in there that they're not really making clear, not making obvious; it's one that's not out in the open, if you will, within the pages of the budget. It's referred to, it's suggested, it's a little murky, which is what makes it, potentially, the most dangerous thing of all.

That plan is a shift—it's a shift towards the privatization of public service delivery. That is laced throughout this budget—that concept, that idea, that prospect—in a couple of different areas.

In this budget, the government has opened the door to American-style privatization of service delivery. That has New Democrats very, very concerned. That model has not worked; it has not worked south of the border and it will not work here.

If this government thinks that it can parcel off the delivery of important public services to the private sector, it will find significant opposition from Ontario's New Democrats.

This government must reveal all of their plans, all of their intentions, all of their details before any decisions are made in that regard. Every single one of those plans, every single one of those schemes to hand over our public services to the private sector must come into this Legislature for full debate and full discussion, because I can tell you, not only will we be very, very vocal in our opposition to such a move, but I trust that many, many hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Ontarians will be speaking with the same voice as New Democrats on that issue.

It's my expectation—in fact, it's my demand—that if that is the direction that this government intends to pursue, we need to know about it and we need to know about it in all its clarity straight up front so that it can be appropriately reviewed. It's my expectation and it's my demand.

In the lead-up to this budget, New Democrats asked the McGuinty government very clearly, for weeks on end in the lead-up to the budget—asked them very, very clearly—to do one simple thing, and that was to put people first in their budget for 2011; to actually put the people of Ontario, the families of Ontario, at the front of the line when it came to their considerations about how to deal with the \$124-billion program. I think it's pretty clear that they utterly failed to meet our expectations.

They could have made life more affordable for families by taking the HST off of home heating and off of hydro. That would have helped people keep money in

their pockets, that would have helped them through what is a very, very difficult financial time for them. But did we see that in the budget?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: No.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: No, we did not, as my friend from Toronto—Danforth says; we did not see that in the budget.

The government decided to just cut families loose, cut Ontarians loose, not help out with the affordability of everyday life, which we know, which I know from going across this province and talking to people pretty much every day, is top of mind. The people of Ontario are very, very concerned.

Instead of addressing that, by taking the HST off of hydro and home heating, what does this government do? They put another \$400 million into a corporate tax giveaway. They could have ensured front-line health services were there for families who need them. That's what they could have prioritized in this budget. What do they do instead? Instead, they continue to slash important health programs and services, announcing more than \$100 million in new cuts in this budget, and refusing to put a hard cap on an outrageous situation of constantly rising CEO salaries, particularly in hospitals.

0920

It's interesting, because the government has a little phrase in their budget—I think you could call it a phrase. It says in the budget that they're going to reduce the funding of executive offices for transfer payment agencies by 10%. That's what they talk about. So I started thinking, what is that all about? And again, what that is all about is a Liberal government that's more concerned about their own political bacon and more concerned about setting up an illusion that they're actually getting at the nub of the issue by putting in this phrase that is really quite amorphous. It's quite uncertain. Nobody knows exactly what that means. What does that mean, reduce the executive office budgets of transfer payment agencies by 10%?

Does that say a hard cap on CEO salaries? Is that what it says? Does it say a hard cap on CEO salaries? CEO salaries in the public sector, by the way, in some cases are pushing seven digits. Some of those hospital CEOs are just a hair under a \$1-million pay annually, and they're getting that \$1-million pay for laying off front-line nurses. That's their achievement; that's why they get those big bucks.

There are CEOs who are getting pay increases annually that are two and three and four times what an average worker in Ontario makes—and that's just for the pay increase for the hospital CEO. There's something seriously wrong when we have a government that refuses to acknowledge the obscenity of that situation and refuses to do something serious about reining it in. That's exactly what we have with the McGuinty Liberals: a government that's prepared to maintain the obscene status quo when it comes to CEO salaries in the broader public sector, and that is quite shameful.

You know, this government could have done something to ensure that the concerns of northern Ontario

families were addressed in this budget. But what did they do instead? Instead, they slashed the budget of some of the most important ministries that connect with northern Ontario communities, some of the ministries that are most involved in northern Ontario: the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. These two ministries get slashed; this is what the government has to offer for northern Ontario. It's as if, for the McGuinty government, northern Ontario doesn't exist. That's how bad it is. I invite anyone to go to northern Ontario and talk to the folks up there, because that's certainly how they tell me they feel. They've been telling me they feel that way for an awfully long time.

I now want to discuss some of the recent Ontario economic history so that we can show why we think this budget is as inadequate as we believe that it is. Between September 2008 and May 2009, 250,000 Ontarians lost their jobs. That's a quarter of a million jobs that are gone. In 2009 alone, real GDP in this province contracted by 3.6%. The unemployment rate in cities like Windsor and Oshawa spiked well into the double digits during that time, and Toronto was not all that far behind. From retail to information technology, no sector was safe from what we now commonly refer to as the great recession.

Although there are some signs of recovery on the horizon, economists to this day continue to warn of a prolonged period of sluggish growth. Unemployment remains stubbornly high, and while other provinces have recovered to their pre-recession employment levels, Ontario is in a different situation. At least 16,000 fewer Ontarians are working today than were in 2008.

Interjections.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Some of the members across the way think that's funny, and they're chuckling over there. I don't think it's funny at all, particularly for those 16,000 families.

Meanwhile, what's happening is, real wages are stagnating. In fact, after inflation is taken into account, the average hourly wage has not changed at all since 1991. Imagine that. The average wage hasn't changed; it has flatlined since 1991. Most people are getting by with less.

But that's just most people who are getting by with less. There are some exceptions to that scenario. For example, Canada's CEOs are doing better than at any time in the history of our country. By 3 p.m. on January 1, they had already collected more in pay than the average person earns in an entire year—by 3 p.m. on their first day of work.

Instead of addressing this inequality, government after government in Ontario has sacrificed fiscal capacity for corporate tax cuts. It's a shameful, shameful recipe that leaves people behind. From 1999 to today, successive Progressive Conservative and Liberal governments have handed out more than \$20 billion in corporate tax cuts. Meanwhile, corporate profits increased 7.9% last quarter, to \$66 billion. That's good news for the CEOs and the shareholders, but it raises serious questions about the economic usefulness of the McGuinty government's multi-billion-dollar corporate tax cuts.

As I indicated earlier, Ontario's record on post-recession job creation is not as strong as other provinces. Other provinces are doing much, much better in terms of their post-recession job creation—like Manitoba; there's a good example. In that province—with an NDP government, I might add—things are quite different. They have stopped further corporate tax cuts. While Ontario remains 16,000 jobs below its pre-recession peak, Manitoba has gained 15,000 more jobs than it had before the recession.

To get a real sense of where this corporate tax money is going in Ontario, it helps to look at a sector of our economy and see what the government has done with the additional revenue. The Ontario government's own budget says the corporate income tax cut will hand \$535 million to banks and \$135 million to insurance companies. I should add that those are immensely profitable banks and immensely profitable insurance companies. They are receiving that largesse on top of \$520 million more already provided to the banks through the elimination of the capital tax—because we all know the banks just need that money; they're just suffering so bad.

In total, of the \$4 billion of corporate and capital taxes that the government has cut, a whopping \$1.2 billion of that will be pocketed by banks and insurance companies. The vast majority is going to only eight companies which dominate Ontario's financial sector. Who are these eight companies? I'll list them off for you: Scotiabank, Royal Bank, TD Bank, Bank of Montreal, CIBC, Sun Life Financial, Manulife Financial Corp. and Great-West Life.

Over the past year, and this is what adds insult to injury, while they are reaping in the largesse that is showered upon them by this government and their corporate tax cuts, employment in this very sector, the financial sector—get ready for this: Has it increased? Because that's what the government says, "Corporate tax cuts create jobs." That's their mantra.

0930

So do you think employment has done well in the financial sector? You would think so. That's what the government thinks. Well, I wonder if anybody is surprised to know that in fact that sector shed 25,000 jobs in the last year alone. The very sector that's getting all the money from the McGuinty Liberals is cutting jobs to the tune of 25,000 in a single year.

If the money didn't go to create jobs in the financial sector, then where did it go? If the very sector that gets the lion's share of the goodies doesn't create the jobs, where did it go? Where did the benefit go? Where did that money go, instead of to job creation? Of course, it went to profits. All of the money that the government gave to the banks and insurance companies—\$4 billion; \$2.2 billion every single year from here on in, mind you—all of it went into their pockets, went into their profit lines. Profits have increased significantly. CEOs have been awarded significant increases in their salaries as well—no surprise. With those increased profits come huge compensation package increases for the CEOs of those financial institutions.

I have a little chart here. I wish we had one of those functions where I could actually hold up the chart—

although it's a prop—and have it on the screen for the families at home who are watching, because it's extremely interesting. Let me just pick a couple of them off the top of my head here. Let's go for the highest one, Sun Life Financial. Their quarterly profit in the most recent quarter went up by 72%—72%. Congratulations to them. Their CEO pay went up more than 100%, to \$8.27 million for one year. So we have one person at the top of this corporation making \$8.27 million, up 100%, so he doubled his pay, and in the last quarter, that company increased their profits by 72%. I rue the fact that there isn't another line, another column in my chart, that also has in it how many jobs that particular company shed, because that would be an interesting juxtaposition as well.

Here's another one for you. Scotiabank: Their quarterly profit for the last quarter, the most recent reported quarter, was \$1.2 billion—a \$1.2-billion profit in one quarter. How many months is one quarter? It's three months, right?

Mr. Paul Miller: Yes.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Three months, \$1.2 billion. The CEO pay for Scotiabank: \$10.6 million, up 10%. Royal Bank: \$1.8 billion, up 23%. Their profit went up 23% in the last reported quarter; \$11 million in CEO pay, up 6%. Bank of Montreal: \$776 million, up 18%; \$9.5 million is the CEO salary—\$9.5 million, up 28%. CIBC: an increase of 19% in their quarterly profit, up by \$799 million; the CEO pay went up by 50%—a 50% increase in the CEO pay, up to \$9.3 million.

I wonder where they get the money for all those profits and all those salary increases. Oh, it came from Ontario families. That's where they got it from.

Dividends for shareholders have been boosted, but the hiring spree hasn't materialized; the jobs are not being created. The truth of the matter is that corporate tax rates are only one of the many, many factors that a business considers when making investments. Evidence shows very clearly that corporate tax cuts have very, very little impact on job creation, yet it's the strategy that this government stubbornly and wrongly clings to. Why is that? It's because those corporate tax cuts have almost no impact on business capital investment spending. That's the bottom line. Since 2000—so that's 11 years—the combined federal-Ontario corporate tax rate will have been reduced from 44% to 25%; that's combined federal-provincial. Yet do you think that business investment in that same time frame, now that they have all this extra cash flow because they're not paying the taxes anymore, is increasing? It's not. At the very same time, business investment has been decreasing since that time.

In fact, rather than investing in productivity, things like machinery, plant and equipment and creating jobs, corporations have been accumulating cash and similar liquid assets at an alarming rate. They are increasing their cash liquidity.

According to StatsCan, corporate holdings of cash and similar assets reached nearly half a trillion dollars by the third quarter of 2010—half a trillion dollars. Since the beginning of the recession, businesses added \$83 billion

to cash holdings. No-strings-attached corporate tax cuts will only boost already astronomically high cash holdings that these corporations have. That's the only thing that those corporate tax cuts do.

Perhaps most importantly, when compared to the industrial regions of the United States, our real competitors when it comes to jobs, we are already very, very competitive. In fact, we are already more competitive than many of those jurisdictions. Why do I say that? Because, of course, I have the numbers, another nice little chart that we've put together to illustrate the comparison, because our finance minister says, "We have to compete. We have to reduce our corporate tax rates. We have to be competitive with other jurisdictions."

Well, let me show you, Speaker—I wish I could show you but I can't because it's a prop, so I'll read it off:

Location and the combined tax rate: Michigan, tax rate 38.2%; New York—I think it's fair to say we compete with the jurisdiction of Michigan and the jurisdiction of New York—36.1%; Pennsylvania, 37.8%; Great Lakes weighted average—the jurisdictions around the Great Lakes, the states around the Great Lakes—36.6%; the US weighted average, 36.1%. So, 36%, 38%, 36.1%, 36.6%, 37.8%.

Where is Ontario? What's Ontario's combined tax rate, the tax rate that this government is going to continue to reduce over the next couple of years, based on their wonderful failing plan? It's 28.5%—28.5%. Go figure; we're already a heck of a lot lower than most of the jurisdictions with which we're competing—all of the ones on this list.

So you have to wonder: What is this finance minister talking about when he says that the reason for his corporate tax giveaways is to help Ontario be more competitive? It looks like we're already very, very competitive. In fact, I know that we are. So if across-the-board corporate tax cuts won't create jobs, which they won't, and we're already competitive in that regard, then the question is, what will create jobs? What are the alternatives to this wrong-headed direction of the McGuinty Liberal government?

What we believe in is highly targeted incentives that actually reward job creation, something that is actually beneficial to the economy of Ontario and, particularly, for Ontario families and workers who need decent jobs.

Quebec's investment tax credit is one good example of this kind of approach. Manitoba's manufacturing investment tax credit is another success story. In Manitoba, the 10% tax credit against payable income tax for investment in buildings, machinery and equipment makes a huge difference. It's partially refundable, meaning that manufacturers benefit even during the bad years when they're, perhaps, not making a profit.

This will come as no surprise to anyone, as I mentioned: The jobs package announced by my federal leader, Jack Layton, is also a terrific model, in our opinion.

0940

Here is the reader's digest version; I'm going to go over it really quickly. The federal NDP initiative is going

to cost \$2.2 billion and generate 220,000 jobs each year. The plan will be paid for by returning the corporate tax rate to the 2008 level of 19.5%, compared to the current rate of 16.5%. The restoration of rates will add \$5.9 billion to the federal government coffers, so you will still have \$3.7 billion left over to pay for other investments.

What are the specific measures? There's a job creation tax credit for businesses that would give them \$4,500 for each new employee hired. That's a job incentive program. The employer would receive the funding in the form of a rebate of employer-side Canada pension plan and employment insurance contributions for a year. There's a \$1,000 tax credit if that employee is retained for over a 12-month period. So if they get beyond one year and that employee is retained by the company, another \$1,000 tax credit. There's a reduction in the small business tax level to 9% from 11%.

The bottom line: With a plan like that, if you create jobs, you get rewarded. Sounds like a good idea: actually getting something for something. It seems like a no-brainer to me. Somehow this government just doesn't get it. How very, very different that idea is from what the McGuinty Liberals have on offer.

I want to talk a little bit about the least favourite topic of Ontarians, which started, I guess, in the middle of last summer and has seriously continued until this very day, and that is the least favourite new tax, the HST—the unfair HST, I may add. Here's a key question for the government: With household budgets facing a real strain, does harmonizing sales taxes with the federal government really make any sense?

Now, we have been saying no. But while the McGuinty and Harper governments signed their backroom deal, other provinces, like Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba, were not convinced. They were not convinced that the HST was the right thing to do. They saw the added burden on consumers, who were already feeling the pinch, as a drag on the economy. The NDP government in Manitoba looked closely at the HST and found that the benefits to business were simply not there.

Here is a brief excerpt from a comprehensive report that their government released to explain its rejection of the HST; I find it quite instructive:

“[C]ompetitiveness gains, particularly for those sectors exposed to export competition, are very modest:

“—... relative tax competitiveness ranking of Manitoba manufacturers against other competing cities would not improve with an HST.

“—A very large part of the savings to business would not directly or significantly improve the competitive position of the export sector....

“[S]ales tax harmonization is just one dimension of overall tax competitiveness and must be considered in the context of other tax measures.”

The report goes on to talk about the burden on consumers, and I'm going to quote again:

“A key conclusion of this analysis is that Manitoba consumers would face \$405 million in additional sales tax costs under an HST as the sales tax burden shifts

from businesses to consumers. The province is concerned about the potential impact that this increased sales tax burden could have on Manitobans' resilient consumer confidence....

“Manitoba does not support harmonization at this time because of the potential risk to the economic recovery and the burden it would place on Manitoba families at a time of economic uncertainty.”

Oh, woe that our provincial Liberals didn't think the same way as the New Democrats in Manitoba when they were considering the HST.

So, where are we now? Nearly a year after implementation of the HST in Ontario, Manitoba's conclusions seem very prophetic. While that province has recovered all jobs lost during the recession—in fact, 15,000 more than they had before the recession started—Ontario continues to lag behind.

What else would have been in the budget, from our perspective, to create jobs and ensure prosperity? Well, world leaders like Bombardier, for example, don't just appear out of anywhere; they were nurtured to achieve their current scale by a creative blend of public sector procurement and export-oriented financing. Of course, we can't simply replicate what Quebec has done, what Manitoba has done and what other jurisdictions do, but we can—and shame on us if we don't—draw on the lessons that governments need to play a constructive role in helping businesses grow.

Government does have a role to play. I firmly believe that—a significant role. If we're going to grow our economy, we need to understand the challenges that we're facing and we need to be very innovative about how to deal with those challenges that we face.

In Ontario, in 2011, what that means is being honest about some of our technological and productivity deficiencies. The Premier recently expressed confusion about Ontario's dismal progress in that regard, and I don't think it's all that much of a mystery. There's simply not enough business investments in plant, machinery and information technology in this province, and, just as importantly, not enough investments in people. As I've already said, we need a far better, more targeted financial incentive program for businesses to make those capital investments.

Ontario also needs to do a much better job with training—on-the-job training and training more generally. Government has a role to play here as well. If we want to create prosperity and ensure a strong economic future, people need the skills to perform the value-added jobs of the future. Tax incentives like those used in the Quebec scenario provide important lessons. Quebec's training levy means larger employers are required to invest at least 1% of their payroll into employee training. Now, if they choose not to make that investment, they can pay into a collective fund; that's used to support sectoral training projects instead. It seems pretty smart.

I'm not saying that we just pick up the Quebec model and drop it here in Ontario, but Quebec's levy not only guarantees investment in training; it ensures that everyone is investing. We need to level the playing field

between employers that train and those that simply poach the trained workers off of the ones that did the training. Again, an innovative way for government to help create the right business climate, not based on ideology but based on results—based on the proven results of what's happening in another jurisdiction.

Using government procurement for economic development is another issue that simply makes sense. We can respect our international agreements and at the same time still support Ontario businesses through procurement. Governments all over the world protect local jobs through effective buy-local policies. It simply makes sense. It makes sense to ensure that the billions of dollars that we invest in transit and other infrastructure investments create good-paying jobs right here in the province of Ontario, not somewhere else.

Talk to residents of Thunder Bay about the growth that their community experienced because the city of Toronto ensured that its streetcars and subway cars were going to be created, built and assembled at Bombardier in Thunder Bay. With that kind of commitment to good jobs, innovation and investment will come to Ontario. It's more important than ever for the province to show leadership on this file.

Finally, I want to touch on the challenges facing Ontario's electricity sector because I think the challenges we're facing are an example of what can go wrong when government abandons its role and ideology trumps common sense. For generations, reliable, affordable electricity delivered at cost was one of the pillars of Ontario's economy. In the late 1990s, Ontario's Conservative government—with the support, it should be noted, of their Liberal opposition of the day—decided it was time to deregulate and privatize Ontario's hydro system. I would put to the people of Ontario that that experiment utterly failed, so badly that we are still to this day dealing with that costly mess.

Unfortunately, the current government's obsession with stopgap solutions has left Ontario with a confusing series of hydro bureaucracies and very, very expensive power. We've been pressing for government action on industrial hydro rates for some time, and the current government has started, belatedly, to recognize the problem with a temporary northern industrial hydro rate and a new rate for large industrial users throughout the province. But we can't be satisfied with political stopgap solutions. Stopgap solutions do not provide a secure investment strategy, a secure investment future for companies. Measures that only last a year or two or three don't provide the kind of outlook that's necessary for investment to be attractive. Our challenges around energy prices are not going away in two years, so the solutions can't go away in two years either.

0950

Energy pricing is one of the big issues that we're going to be talking about over the next several months. It's a significant issue that we need to resolve in this province. It's vitally important to just about everyone who has an interest in Ontario, from corporations to individuals.

In closing, I have a few comments to make to wrap up. We live in a province that's facing some serious and enormous challenges, I think everybody would agree, but we also know that Ontarians, by and large, are very resilient. We've been through ups and downs in the past, but we always bounce back. The key is that we need a government that has a vision, that's going to actually take us to where we need to go, where we want to be. I would put to you that the McGuinty government has shown for years now that they lack that vision. This is a tired government. This is a tired, out-of-touch government. This is a tired, out-of-touch government that is out of gas. It's very clear, and I think this budget is just a reflection of that sad reality.

So, sure, they claim that they've turned the corner—I think the budget is called “turning the corner to tomorrow” or something like that. Unfortunately, they turned the corner, yes, but they left families on the side of the road as Dalton McGuinty waved goodbye. That's the problem with the budget overall. Turning the corner and leaving families behind is not a good strategy from my perspective, and never has been. Unfortunately, it has been the ongoing strategy of this government.

They claim that they've turned the corner, but when you look at the recent decisions that they've made, when you look at the budget carefully, it's really clear that, although they've turned the corner, they are on a road to nowhere, and they're trying to take the rest of the province with them. Unfortunately, as they drive along that highway to nowhere, Ontarians are the ones who are left in the dust.

It's very fortunate that the people of this province will have something to say about the vision, or lack thereof, of their provincial government because, of course, 2011 is an election year. It's a chance for people who have been observing their bills going up, who have been watching as the HST continues to take a bite out of their pocketbook each and every day, who have been frustrated by the lack of opportunity in terms of new jobs being created, particularly new jobs that replace the good jobs of the past. It's an opportunity for them to reflect on the fact that they can't afford to put their kids through post-secondary education, or for those who do, end up watching their children struggle with debt loads the size of mortgages once they graduate. They can reflect on the fact that, although the government likes to crow about its all-day learning program in Ontario, we see child care spaces closing by the day and fees in those child care spaces that remain open in Ontario going through the roof, child care becoming less and less affordable at every turn.

They can reflect on a government that, really, has spent a lot of time over the last couple of years feathering the nests of their friends, of their closest colleagues—insiders, that get their lucrative little contracts without any tendering, lobbyists that use public money to come and ask the government for more public money—a government that's focused on billions and billions, in fact over \$6 billion, in corporate tax cuts that don't create

jobs. These are the things that Ontarians will be focusing on as they continue to struggle to pay the bills which they are not able to pay because this government has yet again ignored the fundamental issue that Ontarians are grappling with.

It's pretty simple: The affordability of everyday life is on people's minds and it's been there for a while, but this out-of-touch government comes forward with a budget that completely ignores that reality. How shameful is that? Some \$6 billion out the door to the richest corporations that aren't creating jobs, and families are basically told, "You've got to make it on your own." No break on the HST on home heating and hydro, something that would have been very, very easy, to take that unfair tax off of home essentials. Did the government even consider it? No; the government didn't even consider it. It would rather just shove hundreds of millions more—\$400 million in one little program this year—to the banks and insurance companies while families get told, "Too bad, so sad; you're not important."

I really believe fundamentally that if the families of this province are strong again, that if the families of this province have hope again, that they're doing well, then the province itself is going to be doing well. I think the government's got it all backwards. They haven't figured out that strong families and strong communities create a strong province. They have it backwards; they think it's all trickle-down. Whatever happened to that? I don't understand that. I thought that trickle-down stuff was debunked a long time ago; Reaganomics—remember that?—Thatcherism, all that stuff. Yet here we are—how many years later? Three decades later?—and this government is still implementing the same tired kind of policies that make the rich richer and the poor poorer. Holy smokes; there's something wrong here.

Given the state of things, the stagnation that now marks this government, issues and concerns that I hear from Ontarians as I travel across this great province, the frustration they feel, the neglect that they feel from a government that just doesn't seem to get it; this budget is proof of that. That election that's coming at the end of this year simply cannot come fast enough. I am looking very much forward to the next couple of months because New Democrats are going to be out there on the campaign trail and we're going to be advancing ideas, ones that are responsive to what families have been telling me over the last couple of years.

I've been listening to those families. We are developing a program that responds to the issues that they're telling me that they're concerned about and that they're telling my caucus members that they're concerned about: the member from Welland, the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, the member for Nickel Belt and the member for Toronto–Danforth, as well as those others who couldn't join us because they're in committee this morning. New Democrats will be going around the province talking to the people of Ontario about a plan that actually puts them first, that puts them at the front. So that election can't come soon enough.

I've outlined some of those ideas in my speech today but we have many, many more. I can tell you that in every one of those ideas our focus is going to be the families and people of this province, the ones who have been ignored by their government for so many years. I know that New Democrats are going to be proud; we're going to be proud of what we bring forward to the people because it's not going to be something that we sit on Bay Street in a big boardroom with oak-paneled walls and talk to the bankers about. It's actually something that we are developing right now sitting in the kitchens and the community centres and the church basements of the people of Ontario, in their communities. That's what we're all about. That's what we're committed to.

I've outlined some of those strategies today and I look forward, with my caucus colleagues and our candidates, over the next several months, to talking to the people of Ontario about what we think our vision should be, what we think this province should look like and who we think should be the priority in all of the plans, all of the programs, all of the decision-making that a provincial government has before it, because that is what will make our province strong again.

I look forward to sharing these ideas with all of Ontario, and I know that my caucus colleagues are looking forward to doing that as well. Thanks very much for the opportunity.

I move adjournment of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Ms. Horwath has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Mr. Speaker, we have no further business this morning.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): There being no further business called, this House stands in recess until 10:30, at which time we will have question period.

The House recessed from 1000 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm pleased to recognize and would like the House to help me welcome the grandparents of page Riley McPhail. His grandparents Karen and Peter McPhail and Linda and Lawrance McLaughlin, and great-aunt Elizabeth Westley.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: As you know well, there are many representatives from the francophone youth federation who are here today at Queen's Park. I believe they will be taking part in a mock Parliament as well today. There are two representatives I wanted to introduce to the Legislature, both of whom are from northern Ontario: We've got Caroline Gélinault, who is the president of the francophone youth federation and who's actually from Longlac but goes to De La Salle secondary school in Ottawa; and Gerrit Wesselink, a former page here in the Legislature from Thunder Bay, who is the northern representative and goes to La Vérendrye high school in

Thunder Bay. Welcome to all of you, but welcome to those two in particular.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I'd like to introduce the grandparents of page Emma Redfearn: Lillian and William Korhonen.

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Je voudrais présenter mon bon ami Gilles Morin, qui était député ici pour la circonscription d'Ottawa—Orléans et qui est maintenant le président du conseil d'administration de l'Hôpital Montfort.

Je voudrais aussi souhaiter la bienvenue aux étudiants de ma circonscription de l'école L'Alternative et de l'école De La Salle avec leurs professeurs.

L'hon. Monique M. Smith: Je voudrais aussi souhaiter la bienvenue aux étudiants de F.J. McElligott de Mattawa et de l'Odyssée à North Bay qui sont ici parmi nous aujourd'hui, les jeunes parlementaires francophones. Bienvenue.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Now, before the full House, I'm running the risk of violating standing orders by reporting that the Minister of Revenue is in fact one year younger today.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): That means "happy birthday."

Notwithstanding the introduction, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Mr. Gilles Morin, former Deputy Speaker and MPP for Carleton East during the 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th Parliaments. Mr. Morin is here assisting with the fifth annual Parlement jeunesse francophone de l'Ontario.

In the galleries today we have students, educators and coordinators from the federation from across Ontario who have come to Queen's Park for a three-day long student Parliament. It's the only youth Parliament in Ontario that runs while the House is in session. We may very well have future MPPs amongst us today. Welcome to all of our guests in both galleries.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is to the Premier. Premier McGuinty has come up with more doom schemes to restrain spending than Wile E. Coyote has to catch the Road Runner, but no one believes his so-called restraint measures any longer. This is a Premier who doubled the debt, tripled the number of bureaucrats making over \$100,000 and turned Ontario into a have-not province.

Premier, why do you think Ontario families will believe your so-called pledge to cut executive salaries that you made on page 56 of the budget?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm delighted to take the question and welcome it from my honourable colleague. I want to begin by reminding her that we expanded the sunshine law to cover OPG and Hydro employees. That was in stark contrast to the previous government. We

also put in place a new law on the books in Ontario that prevents governments from hiding deficits. Again, that was also the result of the activity on the part of a previous government.

I'm pleased to note that this year the average OPS salary on the list dropped by 1%. I'm also pleased to note that our 400 top-earning OPS employees on the list saw their salaries decrease this year. I'm also pleased to note that the average broader public sector employee salary has also decreased this year.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: To reiterate, in seven years Premier McGuinty has doubled the debt, tripled the sunshine list and turned Ontario into a have-not province.

Ontario families know a cut to executive salaries is never going to happen because you never keep your word. You said you would get a public sector wage freeze. You failed. You said you would streamline agencies to save money. You failed.

The Premier acts as though his job is done as soon as he has finished announcing the latest doomed restraint measure. Why do you treat spending restraint like a PR scheme, Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: There's a lot of negativity. There's a lot of gloom and doom on that side. I think that is grounded, in large measure, in a psychology of not being able to take a stand, not having a plan, not being able to be forthright with the people of Ontario in terms of the kind of alternatives that you want to propose.

Let me speak about yet another announcement we made this morning. The Minister of Transportation and I made an announcement to invest \$8.4 billion in a new LRT line. It's 25 kilometres—the biggest investment of its kind. It's \$8.4 billion. It's a multi-year project.

We know that when they had the job of government, they cut all funding to public transit. So what I think Ontarians, but especially Torontonians, want to know today is: Will they respect that \$8.4-billion commitment to public transit in the city of Toronto?

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

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Things are not nearly as rosy in Ontario as the Premier would suggest. You have doubled the debt, tripled the sunshine list and turned Ontario into a have-not province—not really something to be proud of. Every dollar Ontario families have to pay toward your debt is a dollar that's not going to their priorities, like front-line health care.

Our Ontario PC leader has a plan to reduce spending on government waste and to give relief to families and seniors. His sunset review bill will have a committee of elected members review spending to save the programs that work, fix the ones that need fixing and get rid of the rest. You want to hand the control of this to a panel of high-priced, hand-picked consultants. Why is Premier McGuinty's solution for waste and bloat to create more waste and bloat?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think it is informative and telling that when my honourable colleague's leader had

the opportunity to speak to our budget—he was allocated a full hour—he only had 15 minutes to speak to this budget, and that consisted exclusively of a litany of criticism. I think the times and the office demand a bit more than that. At some point in time, you have got to put up—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order. The member from Renfrew.

New question?

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Again, my question is for the Premier. Premier McGuinty, you've doubled the debt, tripled the sunshine list and turned Ontario into a have-not province. The latest sunshine list of bureaucrats you pay over \$100,000 a year is due to be released today. The anticipation is killing us, so tell us now: How much more did the McGuinty government cost Ontario families this year?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: We'll have an opportunity to review the sunshine list together. As I indicated a moment ago, we have taken a number of steps in order to ensure that we bring more transparency, more accountability and more public scrutiny to government expenses, including putting in place an expansion of the sunshine law and a new law that prohibits the government from ever hiding a deficit in the future.

1040

I think what we really want to get on to, hopefully sooner rather than later, is where that party opposite stands on all those issues that weigh heavily on the minds of Ontarians. They're very concerned about their unwavering commitment to cut \$3 billion out of their health care. They're very concerned about their unwavering and solemn commitment to shut down full-day kindergarten in the province of Ontario. They're very concerned about where they're going to go when it comes to water inspectors and meat inspectors. That's part of their litany—

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

Interjection.

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

Mr. Robert Bailey: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I think it's really important for Ontario families to know what's happening here. Premier McGuinty has doubled the debt, tripled the sunshine list and turned Ontario into a have-not province. No—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing keeps making reference to another member in this House. There have been other members in this House who have been named for a wide variety of reasons. I just ask that you not persist in making comments.

Please continue.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Premier, no one believes that you're going to restrain spending when the sunshine list has ballooned to 60,000 bureaucrats under your watch.

The recession has forced many seniors to put off retirement. Families have had to take second jobs and make other sacrifices. But it's no wonder that you didn't do anything in the budget to help them make ends meet: You've spent everything on bloating the bureaucracy.

How did you get to be so insensitive to Ontario families and seniors who had to weather the recession so that your bureaucrats didn't have to?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think Ontarians were disappointed that we didn't get the support of the party opposite on our budget.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What about risk management for farmers?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: The risk management program, for example, is the single greatest commitment to the Ontario family farm in 30 years.

What my friends opposite don't understand is that this will not only benefit the family living on that farm; it will also benefit and strengthen the rural economy. It will benefit and strengthen the vitality of rural education and rural health care. And more important, perhaps, than any of that, it will strengthen our continuing capacity as families all around the province to have access to the best-quality locally grown food. That starts with our risk management programs. That's why it's a mystery to me that the party opposite won't support our farmers.

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

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I think the answer just shows that it takes a special kind of insensitivity to make Ontario families and seniors pay more for bloated government that they can't afford.

While families and seniors made sacrifices for you to keep spending and spending, life in the McGuinty government is recession-proof. Since taking office, Premier McGuinty has increased the number of assistant deputy ministers from 95 to 160. It's your way of getting around built-in restraint rules. Instead of bureaucrats living within a salary cap, you just create new high-paid executive positions for them to fill.

What makes you think Ontario families will believe in your latest restraint measure when you have a track record of trying to get around salary caps?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It's interesting, the pattern that develops in the party opposite. They tell us that we're spending too much money, except when it comes to matters of concern in their own ridings. I just want to review some of those things so that they're reminded of that.

The leader of the official opposition says that he wants us to invest in a development program for Flowers Canada in his riding. The MPP for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke wants money to go into Highway 7 and extend it from Arnprior to Renfrew. The MPP for Carleton–Mississippi Mills wants us to improve roads around Foy Provincial Park. The MPP for Durham wants us to spend more money on broadband Internet, extended through the

municipality of Clarington. The MPP for Aurora wants us to invest in the Buttonville Airport.

Why is it they want us to cease and desist on all spending except when it comes to matters specific to their ridings?

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Hot on the heels of this government's underwhelming budget, later this morning the sunshine list will be released. As in previous years, Ontarians can expect countless public sector CEOs receiving half-million-dollar-plus salaries. These executives work in health care, in education and in energy.

Why didn't the McGuinty government use the budget to rein in some of these outrageously excessive CEO salaries?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the question from my honourable colleague the leader of the NDP. But I'm a little surprised at her characterization of the budget presented just recently in this Legislature. She said it was "much ado about nothing."

Is that really how she chooses to describe our risk management program to support the Ontario family farm? Is that really how she chooses to describe 60,000 new post-secondary education spaces? Is that how she chooses to describe our commitment to the next 50,000 four- and five-year-olds who are going to be enrolled in full-day kindergarten? Is that how she chooses to describe our breast cancer screening program being extended to women between the ages of 30 and 49 who are at high risk? Is that how she chooses to describe our initiative for a mental health and addictions strategy, starting with children and youth? Finally, is that how she really chooses to describe the fact that we are expanding pharmacy services for seniors and social assistance recipients?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The McGuinty government's commitment to reining in public sector executives' salaries is flimsy at best. In his budget speech, the finance minister spoke of "reducing funding for executive offices at hospitals, universities and other government agencies." Well, that's hardly definitive.

Rather than play around the edges, why didn't the government come forward with a hard cap on public executive salaries? Why did he not do that?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the advice received from my honourable colleague, and I hope we will have her support, if not on the budget in its entirety, then certainly with respect to the particular provision which we are now discussing.

What we are putting in place is a provision that will require that funding to executive offices at our hospitals, universities and a number of other government agencies be reduced by 10%. You can't do that and not get at salaries; that's exactly what we're both talking about.

I express recognition of the sentiment put forward by my colleague. I would ask her for her support of this par-

ticular provision. We're going to cut those salaries by 10%.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Here's what struggling Ontario families see: hydro bills going through the roof, hospitals slashing services and cutting front-line staff, the cost of post-secondary education soaring; all the while, the very people running our energy, health care and education sectors are doing very, very well.

What will it take for the Premier to realize there's a problem here?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, I say to my honourable colleague, and I would ask for her support in this regard: We are going to reduce funding for our executive offices at hospitals, universities and government agencies by 10%.

We're also requiring of our major agencies that they deliver \$200 million in efficiencies by 2013, agencies like Ontario Lottery and Gaming and the LCBO. Those are two specific provisions.

My honourable colleague also knows that we're making efforts to reduce the size of the OPS in a way that does not compromise the quality of services that we have enhanced for the people of Ontario.

We are bringing a balanced, progressive, thoughtful, responsible approach, and I would recommend that to my honourable colleague.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier. This is a fundamental question of fairness; that's what this is. Ontario families are being squeezed for every last penny. They're being forced to pay more to receive much less; all the while, they see CEOs cashing in on the public dime, making exorbitant salaries and raking in even more when they're fired. How is that right?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We're very proud of the fact that the CEOs at Hydro One and OPG are making less than half of what they made when we came to office.

We are very proud of the initiatives we put in the budget that will, in fact, reduce the executive compensation packages for executives of the broader public sector. A good example of that is OLG, which has just announced several weeks ago that not only are they bringing it down; they're reducing the number of senior executives.

The member opposite knows that these are difficult times, and we welcome her support of this. I'm just looking forward to see if, in fact, she'll vote for this initiative in the budget when it comes to this House for a full vote at—

Interjections.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, and notwithstanding the fact that you're moving back to your seat right now: The persistence of your interjections gets to be a little over-

whelming. I'd just ask that you be a little more cognizant of your leader in her wanting to hear the answer.

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Here are some recent examples of how broken the public sector executive compensation model is: The former head of the Hotel Dieu Hospital in Windsor got \$300,000 after being fired; in Cambridge, the hospital CEO got \$650,000 in severance; in Waterloo region, the hospital CEO got almost \$750,000 for leaving. The people of Niagara, in fact, are still waiting to learn the amount a dismissed hospital CEO is going to pocket in their area.

These are all communities that have seen significant health care cuts, from staff to clinics to surgeries, while the hospital CEOs walked away with a sweetheart deal. Does the Premier really think that this is the best use of our precious health care dollars?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Every one of those communities has seen a serious increase in funding for health care, reductions in wait-lists, more long-term-care beds, better emergency treatment, more nurses and more family health teams. The leader of the third party wants to pretend that you can make the legal environment of the province and the country, the constitutional environment of the province and the country, go away. You can't. She ought to know that. Most thoughtful people do.

When these situations happen where there are terminations, we have to rely on the goodwill of boards—who serve the province well overall, in my view—to make decisions that minimize the costs associated with this that are, frankly, beyond the control of any government, regardless of political stripe.

What I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that the way she characterized health care is wrong. This party has not only—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: You know what? New Democrats have been very clear: We believe that there needs to be a hard cap on public sector executive salaries, and we'd make sure that these sweetheart severance deals are a thing of the past.

This government doesn't seem to take this issue seriously. The finance minister said they're just washing their hands of that responsibility. They may claim that they are trying to tackle the problem through their strange words in the budget, but at the end of the day it's clear this government is not prepared to rein in the sky-high salaries of their CEO friends.

When will this government finally stand up for Ontario families and actually clamp down on public sector CEO salaries?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Well, she talks a good game, but she couldn't possibly do what she says. You know what? I remember a period of time a number of years ago where we were buying forests in South America and compensating hydro CEOs probably at a higher percentage based on revenues and return than we are today.

The other thing that I think the NDP has an absolute obligation to talk about is: Does that mean severance

payouts and collective agreements will no longer apply? Our laws are designed to protect working people. The jurisprudence around these things protects far more people who make a lot less money. She wants to undermine that principle; we don't. We think severance is appropriate for working men and women.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Norm Miller: My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, your latest budget reveals that Ontario will receive \$2.3 billion in equalization payments next year, thanks to your record of mismanagement. That's a 142% increase over last year's have-not-province bailout. When asked yesterday, you claimed Ontario is not a have-not province.

Minister, are you so out of touch that you don't even recognize anymore what you've done to Ontario?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This year, the coming year, the people of Ontario will put in \$6 billion and get \$2 billion back. That is a system that doesn't work. This year, provinces with much smaller economies than ours will get more money per capita for hospital beds, for roads, for schools than Ontario will.

This is about a formula that harms Ontario. Instead of referring to the strongest economy in North America as have-not, he ought to stand up to the federal Conservatives and say, "Fix this now." You don't need to take my word for it; take the word of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. Take the word of the Mowat institute. Take the word of Queen's. Stand up for Ontario. Let us undo this injustice. Help us build a better education and health—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would just say to the honourable members of the opposition: Please don't encourage them.

Members will please come to order.

Supplementary?

Mr. Norm Miller: I must have hit a nerve; I can see that. The finance minister and Premier McGuinty have done to Ontario what Harold Ballard did to the Toronto Maple Leafs: You took Ontario, Canada's storied franchise and the leader of Confederation, and turned it into a have-not province. Fortunately, the difference between Harold Ballard and Premier McGuinty is that Ontario voters have a chance to choose change and get rid of Premier McGuinty.

When will you come to your senses, accept responsibility and apologize to Ontario families for turning Ontario into a have-not province?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The one thing I will agree on with the member opposite is that he hit a nerve, because Ontarians are proud Canadians. We're proud of the fact that we put \$50 billion in equalization over the last 10 years. What needs to be fixed is a system that takes the strongest economy in the country, the largest, most diverse, one that has a huge automotive sector, financial services and a growing sector in information technology

and intellectual property—what is wrong is a situation where we have less dollars per capita for hospitals, less dollars per capita for schools, less dollars per capita for roads, less dollars per capita for all the vital public services.

Let's stand up together for Ontario and demand, as the chamber of commerce has, that equalization be changed once and for all. Please join us in that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to remind the members from Lanark, Simcoe–Grey, Leeds–Grenville, Nepean–Carleton and Renfrew that you asked the question, and with the interjections that you were putting forth, none of you could hear the answer.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: My question is to the Premier. Four years ago, Premier McGuinty promised Toronto residents relief from long commutes on overcrowded buses. He promised a comprehensive light-rail network called Transit City. Last year, the government cut \$4 billion from Transit City. Today, the Premier effectively killed the plan. Why did the Premier so easily capitulate to Mayor Ford and abandon his promise of a comprehensive transit plan for Toronto?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It takes a—

Interjection: A New Democrat.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I didn't want to say that. I was going to say that it takes a particularly unique and idiosyncratic perspective to somehow interpret \$8.4 billion in the largest LRT project ever in the history of this country as somehow a negative.

We are very proud of what we've been able to accomplish working together with the city of Toronto. We've never lost sight of the fact that ultimately, we're working together for the people of Ontario, but more specifically, for the people of Toronto. It's the people of Toronto who have won today.

1100

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's a good thing that the Eglinton line is proceeding, but it's been cut by 13 kilometres and delayed by four years. The 17-kilometre Finch West line has been cancelled outright and the Sheppard line is completely up in the air, dependent on uncertain private funding.

Why did the Premier so willingly abandon Transit City and sign on to a scaled-down plan that will cost twice as much per kilometre and serve 250,000 fewer people?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, we're very proud of the announcement that we were able to make this morning, together with Mayor Ford. We're talking about, again, a 25-kilometre-long line that extends north from Kennedy all the way up to Scarborough Town Centre. It is nothing short of historic. We're talking about 82,000 jobs. Every one of those 130 LRT cars will be built in Thunder Bay by Bombardier, benefiting the people of the north.

My colleague opposite somehow interprets it as a negative if we find a way to work with the government of the day at city hall—any city hall. I think we have a shared responsibility at Queen's Park to find common ground, to build on that common ground and to advance a case on behalf of the people we are privileged to represent. That's exactly what has happened here today.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Rick Johnson: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, you and I have had the pleasure of sitting down with commodity groups and farmers in my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, who have told me the current programs are not meeting their needs. The economic impacts of volatile crop prices, among other challenges, have left them in a vulnerable situation. For that reason, my farmers were very happy to hear the announcement of risk management programs in yesterday's budget.

Charlie Clarke, president of the Victoria Haliburton Federation of Agriculture and a local farmer who lives just south of Lindsay, said, "This is the best announcement we've ever had from a provincial government. This is something that farmers have lobbied for for a long time. Finally, a provincial government has listened. At least now the next generation of farmers has something to come home to."

Minister, why couldn't the government have introduced this type of program sooner?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I do thank you for the question. This budget supports the years of hard work on the part of Ontario's farmers with the leadership of the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition. Commodity organizations developed their own proposals—programs by farmers for farmers. These proposals built on the pilot RMP for grain and oilseed farmers, a program that was developed by farmers for farmers.

Ontario's farm organization leaders deserve to be congratulated for a job very well done. They have worked very hard, not just for the betterment of their own sector, but also to strengthen the province's agri-food as a whole. The federal government needs to come to the table to support our Ontario farmers—

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

Mr. Rick Johnson: Minister, I appreciate you informing the House and I appreciate all the work you did on making this happen.

Our government has worked hard in helping farmers across the province. However, there is still one thing: Ontario farmers continue to express concern that the current suite of programs is not meeting their needs, and the federal government has acknowledged this position and committed to explore other options, but they haven't come to the table.

What more can be done to help?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: Ontario farmers have told the federal government that the current suite of programs is

not meeting their needs. They need predictability, bankability, stability. In an open letter to Prime Minister Harper, the ag coalition wrote, “We share a common interest in securing a sustainable future for farmers in Ontario and across Canada. But we have yet to see a tangible expression of that interest from your government in a time of great distress across rural Ontario.”

I can tell you that we have listened and we have acted, and we need support to get the federal government onside with our risk management. I ask the members from across the way to pick up the phone, call your federal cousins, and while you’re out helping them go door to door—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Oxford. The Minister of Agriculture.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Oxford will please come to order. Attorney General. Minister of Community Safety. Minister of Finance.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Oxford, I’ve just warned you. You’re interjecting so much, you can’t even hear me.

I’d just remind the honourable members again of a statement that I delivered earlier in the week and to do everything they possibly can to focus in on issues that pertain to the province of Ontario and not issues dealing with a federal election.

New question.

WORKING FAMILIES COALITION

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It looks like my colleagues opposite are all riled up to help Michael Ignatieff today.

My question is to the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I’d remind the honourable member of the statement I just made. I sat down and she jumped right in.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before the last provincial election, the former finance minister met with the Working Families Coalition. My question for the Premier today: Do you stand by the statements made by your spokesperson Christine McMillan to the Toronto Star that there are absolutely no connections between Ontario Liberals and the Working Families Coalition?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague knows that this was a matter of an independent, impartial, objective review. An assessment was made; a determination was made; a response was given. We believe that finalizes the matter.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Again to the Premier: She speaks on behalf of you and your party. Public accounts revealed last year that she made over \$100,000 off of the Liberal

caucus research bureau. So the question is very simple: Do you stand by the statement that Christine McMillan made that there are absolutely no connections between the Ontario Liberal Party and the Working Families Coalition? I’d like an answer.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think we need to get to the nub of this. My honourable colleagues opposite would like to place some constraints on freedom of speech in Ontario. When people come together and decide they want to be critical of that party and their policies, what they’ve done and what—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I just think we need to be honest about this discussion. My honourable colleagues opposite are very concerned if Ontario citizens should assemble in groups, small or large, and launch criticisms directed at that party and their policies. They are unhappy with that. Well, that is a vital characteristic of a democracy and they’re going to have to get used to that. From time to time, people are going to say that they don’t like what they stand for.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): New question. The member from Welland.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final warning to the member from Renfrew. The honourable member right next to you from the third party was about to get up and speak.

Member from Welland.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Peter Kormos: To the Premier: Why wasn’t the Ministry of Labour getting the consent of its labour inspectors before it conducted secret criminal record searches on them?

1110

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Charles Sousa: First and foremost, we have a great deal of respect for our health and safety inspectors in this province. We’ve doubled them since coming to office, after massive cuts and disrespect from the Progressive Conservative government, and that was unacceptable.

There is a process that has occurred if an inspector is going to testify in a prosecution case, and that includes background checks before they appear before the court. The crown prosecutor can request criminal record checks and, as such, in this case, it’s about balancing the rights of the defendants and the rights of the inspectors.

Working with the Ministry of Government Services, who are looking into what has happened, we’re reviewing the decision made by the Grievance Settlement Board. As such, I have no further comment on the case.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Can this government assure this House that no other government employees are being subjected to surreptitious criminal record searches?

Hon. Charles Sousa: As mentioned, through the crown attorney they do request criminal checks. I am not going to comment as to what has taken place. Obviously, they occur on occasions with consent and so forth with the others involved.

I do want to, though, talk about our Ontario public servants, especially our inspectors, who have made our food, water, communities and workplaces safer. They've educated our children, and they keep our families safe and healthy. We have doubled the number of inspectors who are operating in our province; they do outstanding work, and we value the work of our employees. We do not want a return to the Walkerton tragedy or tainted meat scandals. We will continue to support our public servants.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Phil McNeely: My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, I have a constituent whose son was diagnosed with severe autism at 17 months. In February 2010, he began the intensive behavioural intervention, or IBI, program. After several months of excellent progress in the program, my constituent was informed that her son was being transitioned out of the program and into school.

My constituent fears for her son's progress now that he has been removed from the program. She is unsure of how she can see that his needs are supported and that he continues to make progress so that he can be a productive, happy, healthy member of society.

It's clear that kids are making progress with the IBI therapy. Will the minister tell us how we can ensure they are getting the support that they need?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I want to thank the member for the question and his advocacy for this family, and I'm so pleased to know of the progress the constituent's son is making.

We've worked hard to make sure that all Ontario children will make that progress. Since 2003, we have removed the previous government's discriminatory age six cut-off and we've more than quadrupled autism investment and tripled the number of kids getting intensive behavioural intervention to over 1,400 kids, an increase of 164%.

To look for answers under the McGuinty government, we've committed more than \$15 million to autism-related research, and we've increased supports in schools, training over 13,000 educators, and made transition teams available in every publicly funded school board across the province to help kids like your constituent's son make the transition from IBI into school.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Phil McNeely: Thank you, Minister. Those investments and programs are so critical to the families. I know that our government really has made an unprecedented investment in autism therapy and research, and that is something that we should be very proud of.

The unfortunate part seems to be that more and more kids are being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, and the need for IBI services continues to grow. Kids

who have already progressed through the IBI program or whose autism is on the less severe end of the spectrum also deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential through programs that help them develop their social skills.

I have met with many parents who have told me that their children would benefit greatly from autism therapies. Can the minister tell us what our government is doing to support children who do not currently receive therapeutic interventions but who would benefit from doing so?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: We absolutely understand that parents want to know how their children are progressing and that they are receiving services to meet their needs. We are responding to the calls from parents and establishing an independent review process that will provide advice to us on these matters, and that's going to be operational this fall.

We listen to two groups when we make decisions: We listen to experts and we listen to parents. Parents and experts have told us that kids with autism, across the range of the spectrum, would benefit from a broader range of expanded services. That's why we're investing an additional \$25 million annually to deliver applied behaviour analysis, or ABA-based skill-building interventions and support, that will benefit about 8,000 additional kids each year.

These new ABA therapies and services are in addition to the IBI services that are already being provided to 1,400 kids across the province.

We're always working hard to make progress. We continue to do that important work.

TAXATION

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: My question is to the Minister of Revenue. Minister, as you know, an active lifestyle for our youth is crucially important. Some very talented youth in Burlington participate in a synchronized swim team. This team is composed of about 40 families; it's a small group. It rents the city's pool at a cost of about \$90,000 a year.

Since your government's HST, the recreational rental fees have gone up and the cost increase for these families is over \$200 a year.

Why do you continue to penalize hundreds of thousands of Ontario youth and their families with your HST?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: I thank the member for the question. We have one of the most comprehensive tax packages for the people of Ontario. We have provided to families about \$12 billion in tax cuts and tax credits. We want to make sure that all families receive the tax credits and the tax cuts they deserve. We want to make sure that families fill out their taxes this year, including families that are getting tax credits when it comes to recreation.

At the end of the day, this is all about jobs. We want to make sure we have a stronger Ontario, and that is investing in families and businesses in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: Maybe the minister needs a refresher course in basic mathematics. Let's do the math:

A \$50 tax credit does not cover an additional \$200 a year to each of these families. You know what? Unlike the swim team, your credit is not in sync.

Your government boasted that the HST would be revenue neutral. It is not. An additional \$200 due to HST, minus the \$50 tax credit, still leaves a net cost of \$150 for these families. Why do you continue to penalize Ontario families with your HST?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: I respectfully disagree with the member opposite. When it comes to our children, we have a children's activity tax credit which helps families, \$50 per child under the age of 16.

When we talk about a large, comprehensive tax package like the HST, I want to talk about some of the people who are supportive of this tax package—like someone who said, “The HST, which many people love to hate, is nonetheless good economic and tax policy if we want to create jobs in the province of Ontario. And you know what, it took some courage to do it.”—John Tory, CivicAction summit, February 10, 2011.

We're committed to the people of Ontario. We will continue to keep investing. That's \$12 billion to families—

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

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. The minister gave to her hand-picked applicant a secret \$118,000 contract to review the benchmarking process for terminating children's autism therapy.

Dr. Louise LaRose asserted that no psychological data from discharge assessments existed, as required by the ministry's guidelines for autism intervention before ending a child's IBI therapy.

Recently, the minister wrote a letter contradicting her own expert, stating that final assessments are always being done and that there is no benchmarking taking place.

If this is the case, why are so many parents reporting that benchmarks have been used to end their child's IBI therapy, and without the required and complete discharge assessments?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I'm glad that the leader of the third party has raised this question in the House, because I have to say, frankly, I was very disappointed to hear that the leader of the third party was recently distributing misinformation to parents about how kids are—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I just ask you to withdraw that comment, please.

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I withdraw.

The leader of the third party is releasing inaccurate information out into the field, and it's confusing parents.

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Let me be perfectly clear on this point: We have not implemented any of the proposed benchmarks for assessing progress, and all assessment decisions are clinical decisions. Every child who is being discharged from the IBI program must have a clinical assessment. We have reinforced this directive with our service providers.

This is the appropriate avenue. Our clinical experts should be making these decisions. We should not be playing politics with these important decisions.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It seems to me that parents are not the confused ones; the minister is.

Parents are experiencing their kids being cut off for very suspicious reasons. The minister may choose to disbelieve her hired adviser, but she can't possibly dispute the reports from affected families across Ontario.

Viano and Maria Ciaglia are here today with their son Luca, who has autism. IBI worked wonders for six-year-old Luca, but he's being discharged without a final assessment. His parents paid out of pocket for Luca's IBI while he was on the wait-list. They know that if he loses his IBI, he will begin to regress.

They are financially exhausted and they are deeply, deeply worried. If benchmarking doesn't exist and if ministry guidelines are being followed, then why can't children in Ontario like Luca receive therapy while they continue to benefit from it?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: The leader of the third party continues to play politics with this critically important issue. Our government is one that has made historic investments, significant investments in reducing the benchmark. We've removed the previous government's discriminatory age cut-off. We've more than quadrupled autism investments to over \$186.6 million. We've expanded ABA supports, where 8,000 kids with ASD will benefit annually from these services who did not receive service before. We've tripled the number of kids getting intensive behaviour intervention and we've invested more than \$15 million in autism-related research.

Transition teams are in place in every school across the province. We know that there is more work to do, but again, let me be perfectly clear: IBI assessments are done by way of clinical decisions. That's the appropriate forum to make those decisions and—

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

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: My question is for the Minister of Labour. Legislation was passed that will address the unique and specific transit needs of the city of Toronto. As members of this House know, on December 16, 2010, Toronto city council made a request through a motion, asking the province to designate public transit in Toronto as an essential service. The city motion stated: “Over one million Torontonians rely on the TTC to get to work, school and conduct their lives each day. The city of Toronto is simply not designed to function without an operating ... transit system.”

Can the minister tell this House the major factors for agreeing with the city's request?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Our government respects the right of the elected city council to speak on behalf of the people of Toronto. Our response to the city of Toronto's

request has taken into account the unique circumstances of Toronto and its public transit system.

The Toronto Transit Commission Labour Disputes Resolution Act, which prohibits strikes and lockouts at the TTC, passed yesterday in the House and addresses these unique circumstances. The TTC plays a critical role in the life of the city of Toronto and, indeed, in ensuring the health and safety of its people.

All parties in this House set a precedent on this issue five times unanimously. In 2008, the TTC strike began on a Friday night and was ended by the time Monday's rush hour began. By our actions in this House, we have responded to the TTC as an essential service.

City council has stated that TTC strikes are an economic, social—

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

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Minister, some labour activists have expressed their concern that by declaring the TTC an essential service, our government is taking away the rights of workers to freely bargain. Will the minister tell us what the legislation actually does?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Let me first say that our government firmly believes in the right of collective bargaining. We know that the best collective agreements are those reached at the bargaining table. The legislation does not take away or limit the right to bargain; it only prohibits strikes and lockouts.

Binding arbitration is a neutral means to resolve bargaining impasses. It's the same basic means of resolving impasses used by our police, firefighters and hospital workers. Some 80% of those agreements don't go to arbitration.

The essential nature of the TTC in the life of Toronto is also made evident through a report that was commissioned and published by the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 113, in March 2008. It states, "Transit provides essential transportation, accessibility and equity for commuters ... reduces the medical and environmental costs of car dependence and provides intangible additional benefits of physical activity, reduced sprawl etc."

We value the men and women who work at the TTC. We all know that—

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

TAXATION

Mr. Toby Barrett: To the Minister of the Environment: Last May, the minister told his constituents in Wellington county that if a municipality did not sign off on a wind energy application, the government would not approve the project. He later backtracked, saying the municipality must only be consulted. Then he said a letter from the municipality was as good as a consultation.

On Monday, the same minister, in media reports, said that the eco tax mess his government created will not cost \$18 million, as Stewardship Ontario indicated; rather, it

will cost \$8 million. How can the minister expect Ontario families to believe him when the story keeps changing?

Hon. John Wilkinson: I'll tell you what story hasn't changed in the province of Ontario: That party over there has a love affair with dirty coal-fired generation. That is a fact.

When it comes to green energy, we believe in the province of Ontario that for a proponent to want to have a green energy project, whether it's biogas or solar or wind, they need to consult with the public first. They need to consult with the municipalities first. That is a requirement under the law.

When it comes to our ministry, we have received some 44 applications for renewable energy approvals. We have already rejected 23 of them because they have not done the required public and municipal consultation. We'll continue to hold those companies to that new high standard, and we will take consultation from the public or the municipalities in any form that they would like to render it.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Toby Barrett: Back to the Minister of the Environment. After the Toronto Star reported Stewardship Ontario was seeking \$18 million for the failed eco tax scheme, he said the numbers were wrong. When asked if it was \$10 million, he said, "Nowhere near \$10 million," but now the McGuinty government has agreed to pay \$8 million.

The eco tax program was botched from the start. It even cost your predecessor his job. Considering the mess the McGuinty government has made of eco taxes, again, how can Ontario families believe these kinds of numbers now?

Hon. John Wilkinson: I thought that was a bit of a meandering question, but let's get back to green energy.

I wonder if the member still agrees with what he said, which is that coal is "both affordable and abundant," and that "there are significant benefits." Well, I'll tell you, with all the children who end up going to emergency rooms in this province because of asthma, because of air pollution, and that this province owns the largest source of air pollution in North America—that source of air pollution needs to be shut down, and we will do what's required to improve air quality, because our children are counting on it. The people who suffer are the people who are already ill, the elderly and children. I would ask the other party opposite: Would you please get out of the 19th century and join us here in the 21st century? Let's ensure that our children have a greener future with cleaner air to breathe. That is what's important in this province.

Again, I say to people who have concerns about green energy that we will not make a decision unless the public and the municipalities have been consulted, and we will continue to take their feedback—

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

CONSERVATION

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Premier. The city of Hamilton's recent amendment to the Stoney Creek

official plan to protect the Eramosa karst feeder lands from development so far hasn't been appealed. The city of Hamilton planning staff have cautioned that the province has left the door open for potential development of the feeder lands, and these loopholes are very concerning to me. Will the Premier, right now, commit to the city of Hamilton to close those serious loopholes that leave this land open to future development?

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

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: I want to thank the Premier for giving me the opportunity to answer this question. At the same time, I want to be able to say, very genuinely, thanks to the member from Hamilton Mountain for the excellent work she has done with this.

1130

Those lands are going to be protected. The reality is, I have never heard from the member for Hamilton East with regard to this issue, but the member from Hamilton Mountain has been very, very vocal about this issue. She has ensured that this particular government understands the sensitivity around these lands and that we do the right thing. We will continue to do the right thing, thanks to the member from Hamilton Mountain.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Paul Miller: Last week, the minister from Hamilton Mountain said that the government absolutely intends to donate the land by the Eramosa karst to the Hamilton Conservation Authority, now that it has backed off on plans for housing there, and said, "We want to protect this land. That's the bottom line."

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing accepted a new city official plan designating the 32 hectares of mostly open field to the immediate east of this national treasure as open space. This all sounds great, but to be sure, will the minister actually responsible for the lands transfer them immediately to the Hamilton Conservation Authority, no strings attached?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: It's interesting—which is so typical of the third party. They're after the fact. We're working with the Hamilton Conservation Authority to arrange for a land lease or transfer of the provincially owned lands and to determine how the lands will be used and managed over the long term.

The reality is, thanks to the member from Hamilton Mountain, who has been directly involved in this, the concerns of the people of Hamilton are being heard. I want to thank that member again for her advocacy, for making sure that we understand the importance of these lands.

I am, of course, not surprised that finally the member from Hamilton East has spoken about this issue.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Jeff Leal: My question is to the Minister of Government Services. Two days ago, the Minister of Finance delivered the government's budget for Ontario. In one of his opening lines, the minister said, "The 2011

budget identifies over 20 new initiatives to drive change and reform" in Ontario's public service.

One point that stuck with me was that our government required several government agencies in the broader public sector organizations to reduce the cost of the executive offices by 10% over two years. I know that my constituents would like to know more about this and how it will contribute to balancing the budget while maintaining a high quality of education and other crucial government services.

Would the minister tell us what the government hopes to achieve by reducing executive offices by 10% over the next number of years?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I thank the member from Peterborough for asking this question. He's absolutely right: We are moving ahead to reduce expenditures in the broader public sector. All of the organizations covered under this restraint will reduce their expenditures by 10% over a period of two years. This will help us to not only balance the budget, but more importantly, to preserve our very important services like health care and education.

The organizations covered by this initiative include the hospitals, the colleges, the universities, the LHINs, and also the community care access corporations and 21 of our largest government agencies. We are moving ahead to reduce the executive expenditures by 10% in these organizations so that we can move towards balancing the budget.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Jeff Leal: I know these measures will go a long way to help fight the deficit without recklessly taking a chainsaw to the crucial services Ontarians elected us to protect.

The Minister of Finance also mentioned that approximately 20 measures would help reduce costs and allow for investments in our future growth.

Constituents in Peterborough have praised our government's move to find savings in these difficult times, and appreciate the efforts we have made over the past seven years to replace private consultants with highly skilled and efficient full-time staff.

I recall that in the 2009 budget we committed to reducing the size of the OPS by 5%, and I'm told we're on track to achieving that goal by March 2012. Can the minister please describe for my constituents how a further reduction of 1,500 OPS employees will affect the valuable government services that millions of Ontario families and Peterborough families depend on each and every day?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I want to thank the member again for asking the question. We are on track to reduce our OPS by 5%. We also have a plan to reduce it by another 1,500 people in the OPS. These 1,500 employees are over and above the 5% target that we already achieved or that we are on target to achieve. When this is fully implemented, it will save us about \$500 million going forward.

I also want to assure Ontarians that public services will not be impacted, as we will be doing this by attrition

and also by improving the productivity and the efficiency of the public service as we move forward. We have great faith in our Ontario public service because it provides great service to all Ontarians.

PROTECTION OF MINORS

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: My question is for the Premier. "High-Risk Sex Offender to Live in City," February 5 of this year; "Cadets to Bar Sex Offenders from Working in Organization," February 23 of this year; "Multiple Child Molester Guilty Once Again," March 1 of this year; and the list goes on and on and on.

Premier, earlier this week we passed second reading of Bill 163. Earlier this month, I was asked once again to be a keynote speaker at the lacrosse Ontario annual general meeting on the bill that I'm trying to bring forward regarding protection of kids in sports.

The legislation that's being brought out in Bill 163 will have no impact on background checks for individuals in the province of Ontario to ensure that those individuals who should be working with kids are working with kids. Organizations are asking me on a regular basis to come forward to give them guidance and direction and to make sure that we, as a province, can work together.

Premier, what is it that you're willing to do to protect our kids and those organizations in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Attorney General.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: It's interesting; Ontario's sex offender legislation was and is leading legislation throughout Canada. In fact, it was legislation that finally spurred the federal government to make the recent changes that they made to make sure that extended protection was granted in their areas of jurisdiction.

We're taking further steps through this piece of legislation to make sure that there is no doubt, no question, that the protections which must be afforded to Ontarians are afforded.

I don't know what my friend is referring to, because background checks are being undertaken. People are being checked out. Ontarians are being protected. There are, in fact, thousands of checks done every year by police throughout the province of Ontario. Those who seek to work with children must undergo extended background checks for the protection of the people of this province.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I want to take this opportunity to welcome back to the Legislature, here for the model Parliament, former page Myriam Faucher, a student of Algonquin secondary school. It's a pleasure to have her back at the Legislature today.

USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: With reference to standing order 23(f), the subject of the

point of order is the increasingly frequent reflection by members on previous votes of the House. This happens most frequently during question period, and while I can see that, from time to time, opposition members have breached this standing order, the most frequent breach of the standing order is by members of the executive who, while responding to questions, would refer to votes and how particular members or caucuses voted from time to time on any number of bills passed.

I refer the Speaker to the text *The Procedure of the House of Commons: A Study of Its History and Present Form*, by Josef Redlich, volume 3, page 58:

"Another regulation having the same praiseworthy object is that a member is not allowed to speak against or reflect upon any previous determination of the House during the current session except on a motion for rescinding it. There are solid grounds for such a rule."

1140

I refer you to Bourinot, in this particular instance, the fourth edition, although there are other editions which have similar commentary, on page 329: "The latter part of the 19th rule of the House of Commons provides: 'No member may reflect upon any vote of the House except for the purpose of moving that such vote be rescinded.'"

I refer you, sir, to Beauchesne, and we'll start with the fourth edition, citation 124(3), page 113: "A member may not speak against or reflect upon any determination of the House unless he intends to conclude with a motion for rescinding it."

I refer you to Beauchesne, edition five, where at citation 319(3) it's written, "In the House of Commons a member will not be permitted by the Speaker to indulge in any reflections on the House itself ... or to reflect upon, argue against or in any manner call in question the past acts and proceedings of the House, or to speak in abusive and disrespectful terms of an act of Parliament."

As well, in the most recent edition, sixth edition of Beauchesne, citation 479 on page 141: "A member may not speak against or reflect upon any determination of the House, unless intending to conclude with a motion for rescinding it."

The Speaker will know that standing order 18 of the Standing Orders of the House of Commons contains, as the final part of that standing order, "No member may reflect upon any vote of the House, except for the purpose of moving that such vote be rescinded."

This, of course, is the same language as is used in standing order 23(f) of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. That reads, "A member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she:

"(f) Reflects upon any previous vote of the House unless it is the member's intention to move that it be rescinded."

O'Brien and Bosc, second edition, at page 617: "Members may not speak against or reflect upon any decision of the House. This stems from the well-established rule which holds that a question, once put and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again."

I then refer you, sir, to a number of rulings by the Speaker of the House of Commons. These rulings are referred to in footnote 174 on page 617 of the second edition of O'Brien and Bosc.

May 19, 1960: "Mr. Speaker: I find myself in some difficulty about this because, as I recall the practice of the House, it does not criticize its own decisions, and in effect what the honourable member is doing by raising this point as a question of privilege is reflecting on the vote which the House took yesterday with respect to the production of this document."

October 20, 1970: There was a reference by a member, Mr. Winch, to a vote that had been taken yesterday. The Acting Speaker, Mr. Laniel, says, in part, "At this time, I think I should remind the honourable member for Timmins (Mr. Roy) that he may comment on the situation and the events that have occurred, but he may not be permitted to reflect on the vote taken by this House or any position taken by members of the House." It's the latter part of that that's very specific.

And once again, further on, the Acting Speaker, Mr. Laniel, asked the honourable member from Timmins to withdraw that part of his remarks; that is the part referring or reflecting on the vote by another member or another group of members.

May 11, 1983, Acting Speaker Corbin: "Order. I must draw to the attention of the honourable member standing order 39"—as it was then—"which reads: 'No member shall speak disrespectfully—' And the last sentence of that paragraph reads: 'No member may reflect upon any vote of the House, except for the purpose of moving that such vote be rescinded.' Therefore I would ask that the honourable member choose his words very carefully with respect to a procedure which occurred in this House at an earlier time."

May 4, 1993: "Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Kamloops knows it is completely improper to question the motivation of a vote of an honourable member."

April 6, 1995: "The Speaker: Colleagues, we are all aware of the traditions of the House that we do not refer in any way to a vote that has been taken in the House. I would hope that the honourable member is not going in that direction. May I gently caution the honourable member not to mention any votes, reflect on any votes, or the way members voted in the House."

Similarly, April 6, 1995, later during that same sitting: "The Speaker: As I explained earlier, we have a tradition in the House of not referring to any votes taken in the House or how members have voted. I ask honourable members to please be cognizant of this in framing their questions and also in giving their answers."

September 24, 1996, the Acting Speaker: "Let me remind the House that we cannot reflect on a vote previously taken in the House."

May 11, 1999, the Deputy Speaker: "It is certainly contrary to the standing orders to reflect on a vote in the House."

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): You're going to get to your theme?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Yes. I want that theme to be as strong as possible because it bolsters the argument. I want the Speaker to sense a trend as well as a theme.

Finally, on September 16, 2003: "The Speaker: The honourable member knows that the rules of the House prohibit any reflection on a vote in the House. The vote has taken place so I am afraid he is out of luck."

I suspect that there are other references that could be made to Hansards, but I don't believe that they're necessary. Those references are from the House of Commons.

I put to you that the standing order is very, very clear. It is historical as a practice, as a custom, as a rule of the House. It's been codified in the standing orders of the House of Commons and in the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. I put to you that it is improper for any member to refer to another member's vote, identifying how that member voted or, even more so, to suggest their motivation for voting in that way.

I accept that the enforcement of this standing order will require the diligence of opposition members as well as government members. But I welcome your ruling and I welcome the opportunity to exercise that same diligence. It's my submission to you that you should find that it is improper and contrary to the standing orders to refer to votes made by any member of the House. As I say, I'm referring particularly to the frequent use of that tactic in the answers given to questions put by members of the opposition during question period.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke on the same point of order.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I appreciate the House leader of the third party bringing forth this very valid point of order this morning.

I, too, share his concerns. We see this increasingly being used, as the member said, particularly by members of the executive council when answering questions during the period we call question period.

I can understand completely the logic of this standing order. Let me read it again. It is that you're not allowed to reflect "upon any previous vote of the House unless it is the member's intention to move that it be rescinded." We can understand why, because the voting on every particular bill or motion in this House is a matter of public record, but it stands on its own as recorded in Hansard, not to be used as a tool by the members of the government to perhaps try to confuse the context associated with that vote. That seems to be the modis operandi of members of the cabinet when they're answering questions, to say, "And that member voted against it." I've never once heard members of the cabinet stand up and say, "And that member voted for it."

You see, the vote, as recorded in the public record, talks about the bill. It will show the vote and how each member voted on it. But when they're doing it in the context of debate here, it is so easy to try to throw that

out there in an attempt to actually confuse what may have been the intention of the member when they voted.

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That's why I think the standing order exists, or at least part of the logic, because many of those votes are portions that may have been included in a bill, maybe even an omnibus bill, where the member never, ever had the opportunity to judge the merits of that particular piece of the bill on its own, because the government chose not to deal with them on an individual basis but chose to deal with them on a collective basis. So I think the standing order exists there for very valid reasons.

I would ask, Speaker, that you would look carefully at the point of order being raised by the member from Welland and the third party House leader today, and I ask that you listen carefully as to the way that the members of the cabinet, in my opinion, take significant liberties when this standing order is being considered.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Government House leader.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this point of order today. It's been a little while since the member for Welland has brought us up to date on his view on the standing orders, so I think it only appropriate that we take the time today to look at standing order 23(f), which reads: "In debate, a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she reflects upon any previous vote of the House unless it is the member's intention to move that it be rescinded."

I think in the past, this rule has often been used in order to ensure that members do not circumvent the rule about speaking of members' attendance in the House; whether or not they attended could be reflected by how they voted on a particular issue. I'm not going to address all of the precedents, some dated far before I was born, that the member from Welland raised. I will, however, draw to your attention O'Brien, second edition, which was produced in 2009, page 617.

The member for Welland quoted from this particular text; however, he stopped when it was convenient for him. I would like to actually give a more fulsome quote from the text: "In the past, reference to prior debates of the current session were generally discouraged in order to conserve the time of the House and to prevent members from reviving a debate that had concluded, unless the remarks were relevant to the matter under discussion." I would suggest that how people have voted in the past can be directly relevant to a matter under discussion in the House if they are raising, in fact, an issue that is being discussed in the House.

However, this is the point I wanted to raise with you: "Today, the Speaker's attention is rarely, if ever, drawn to breaches of this rule. Generally, members should not quote from their former speeches or from the speeches of their colleagues made during the current session; the rule does not apply to speeches on different stages of a bill. Direct reference is permitted, however, when a member wishes to complain of something said or to clear up a misrepresentation or make a personal explanation.

"Members may not speak against or reflect upon a decision of the House. This stems from the well-established rule which holds that a question, once put and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again." However, I don't believe that in referencing how people voted, we are actually questioning the vote. We are questioning, perhaps, how that individual voted, but we're not questioning the decision of the House. I would distinguish, therefore, some of the rulings that have been made by previous Speakers.

I would, too, Mr. Speaker, just in closing, draw to your attention a doctrine in the law which I think could be somewhat drawn into our context here in the House, which is the clean hands doctrine. I think we all know that the clean hands doctrine in the law requires that we come to complaint in the courts with clean hands, not having previously violated other rules. I would draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker, that standing order 23 contains a number of subsections, not the least of which is subsection (b): "In debate, a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she directs his or her speech to matters other than the question under discussion." I think many in this House would agree with me that the member from Welland is actually notorious for speaking about issues that have in no way been brought up in this House, and continues to violate standing order 23(b), some days with impunity and sometimes very entertainingly, but in fact is violating standing order 23(b).

Standing order 23(c) requires that "a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she persists in needless repetition or raises matters that have been decided during the current session." In fact, I think there was evidence this morning, in this actual standing order, of what could be deemed as needless repetition. Again, I would note that the member from Welland is probably not lily-white on that particular standing order as well.

Finally, 23(e), where a member "anticipates any matter already on the Orders and Notices paper for consideration." Seriously, in this context, there are many issues that are on the order paper, including this morning: The member from Oshawa raised a question about a private member's bill that he has on the order paper that has not yet been up for debate, and it would be considered inappropriate, according to the standing orders, to raise that in debate here in the House.

I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that you have some latitude with respect to standing orders and how you rule in the House. We respect your rulings in this House and we defer to your judgment. I would argue that there has been a great deal of latitude shown to a number of these rules under the standing orders, especially 23(b), (c) and (e). Those are the only ones I chose to highlight today in order to contain this debate to some brevity, and I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that your rulings up to this point have been appropriate with respect to 23(f).

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

Mr. Peter Kormos: I feel compelled to take this opportunity to confess that I have, in fact, over the course of

23 years, breached every one of those requirements but for paragraph (1); I've never spoken disrespectfully of Her Majesty the Queen. But as for the others, I've been called to order frequently, expelled from the House, chastised, admonished. I rise today as somebody who is experienced as to what constitutes a breach of a standing order, and I submit to you, sir, that that ought to give my argument a little more credibility than perhaps the oh-so-innocent government House leader.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I want to thank the three House leaders for their comments: the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the member from Welland and the government House leader. I feel that it is an important point that has been raised and it's not one that I'm prepared to make a decision on today. I would like to reflect on what has been said. There have been a number of references made, and I will reserve my decision.

There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1157 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I have the great pleasure today to introduce to you some distinguished guests from the Turkish-Canadian community, and they are as follows, from left to right: Mr. Azim Shamshiev, who's the director of the Intercultural Dialogue Institute; Mr. Fatih Yegul, who's the executive director of the Anatolian Heritage Federation; Mr. Mehmet Budak, who's the director of the Turkish Canadian Chamber of Commerce; and Mr. Sukan Alkin, who's principal of the Nil Academy.

Mr. Speaker, if I might, I'd like to invite all the members of this Legislature to an important meeting today at 2:30 in committee room 2. They will be there, and they will extend a terrific invitation to all of you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

FARMLAND

Mr. Randy Hillier: In 2005, this McGuinty government introduced its provincial policy statement, which focused on protecting farmland across the province. The government argued that farmland was so invaluable to the future of this province that it needed to be protected from development. But today, the government is using the Green Energy Act to not only raise hydro prices but also to circumvent municipal zoning and planning to drop its green energy projects wherever they see fit.

In my riding, the McGuinty Liberals have approved the Little Creek solar project. This project is on land that has been approved for development and designated as class 1 and 2 prime farmland.

This government is either confused or hypocritical. Edmund Burke once wrote, "Hypocrisy can afford to be"—

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: I withdraw. I'm not sure—oh.

Edmund Burke once wrote, and I quote, "Hypocrisy can afford to be magnificent in its promises, for never intending to go beyond promise"—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment as well, notwithstanding the fact that he is quoting.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I withdraw. Burke was wrong about only one thing. The McGuinty Liberals'—"blank"—is costing Ontario families more with every passing day.

This is yet another Liberal backtrack. The McGuinty Liberals said it was crucial to protect the province's supply of prime farmland from further development. Now it seems that statement only holds true when we're talking about Liberal-held—

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

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you, Speaker. If I say anything unparliamentary, I withdraw in advance.

I'm told by my staff that as of March 2010, there are 56 electric retailer licences in the province of Ontario and 39 gas marketer licences. These operators are ripping people off left and right in every part of the province of Ontario, and our gutted, hence gutless, consumer protection ministry is doing nothing to protect Ontarians from these predators.

They are signing people up with false promises of lower electricity rates or lower natural gas rates, if that's the subject matter, and then these customers find themselves paying double what they would pay from their local hydro utility. My staff in my constituency office, and I suspect other members' staff, are similarly pre-occupied, spending far too much time writing to these foul companies and asking them to break contracts without the huge penalties that they impose on people who have been victimized by them.

One of those companies is Summit Energy Management Inc. on Milverton Drive in Mississauga. Gerry Haggarty of that company shouldn't have "CEO" after his name; he should have "Millhaven" or "Warkworth" after his name, because these guys, in view of what they're doing to Ontarians, belong in jail, not in some fancy office with thick, plush broadloom.

I call on this government to restore some of the innards to its ministry of consumer protection and start protecting consumers here in the province of Ontario.

SHOUTER BAPTISTS

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I rise today to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the

National Evangelical Spiritual Baptist faith, also known as Shouter Baptists.

Shouter Baptists were established in Trinidad and Tobago on March 26, 1945. At the time, the diocese was forbidden to practise its religion. Shouter Baptists were liberated on March 30, 1951, when Trinidad and Tobago repealed the ordinance which outlawed the practice of the Shouter Baptist faith.

Shouter Baptists have been in Toronto since 1974. The head church for Shouter Baptists is located at 63 Mack Avenue, in my riding of Scarborough Southwest. Under the leadership of Her Grace Archbishop Dr. Deloris Seiveright, the Canadian archdiocese has flourished. Today, there are eight congregations in Canada that represent the Evangelical Spiritual Baptist faith.

Shouter Baptists not only preach the word of God, but also teach members of their congregation to empower themselves both spiritually and morally by feeding the poor, visiting the sick, giving guidance to our youth and serving the needs of our community.

Please join me in commemorating the national Evangelical Spiritual Baptist faith on their 60th anniversary of liberation, and in congratulating the church and Archbishop Seiveright for contributing to the religious diversity that is ever so present in the community and riding of Scarborough Southwest.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and God bless everyone.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mr. Ted Arnott: Ambulance response times continue to be a major concern in the eastern part of Wellington county. Even the case of a woman in Erin waiting over an hour for an ambulance on a frigid January night has not moved this government to act. Repeatedly, I've called on the Minister of Health to solve this problem.

Since the city of Guelph disbanded the joint land ambulance committee, county taxpayers have not been represented when it comes to this important local service. The city of Guelph must recognize its obligation to be a good neighbour to county residents.

Once again, I urge the minister to issue a directive to the city of Guelph that they reconstitute the joint ambulance committee and allow the county of Wellington its rightful voice in the management of this important local service. The Minister of Health has the authority to broker a solution to the ambulance impasse.

Ever since this became an issue for the people of Erin and Guelph/Eramosa township, I've been writing letters, including an open letter to the Minister of Health, and speaking in the Legislature. I've even spoken directly with the minister. Exactly one year ago this week, I urged the minister to become involved in this issue and broker a solution to the ambulance impasse. Even though lives could potentially be at risk, she has refused to act. She could solve this by making a phone call. How can she possibly defend her indifference?

We need her to show leadership. We need her to tell the city of Guelph to recognize and respect its neighbour,

and return to the long-standing tradition of city/county co-operation which for so many years was the norm in our municipal relations.

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Mr. Kuldip Kular: I would like to take this opportunity to share with my colleagues the great news for the students of Bramalea–Gore–Malton that was delivered by way of the 2011 Ontario budget. The budget reiterated our announcement of the expansion of full-day kindergarten to 25 schools in Bramalea–Gore–Malton by 2012, making room for 3,300 four- and five-year-olds.

Full-day kindergarten gives our youngest students the tools needed to succeed in their school careers and helps parents find the affordable child care they need to balance their commitment to family and work.

Budget 2011 also announced 60,000 new spaces in our colleges and universities, promising that every qualified student in Ontario will have the opportunity to pursue their dreams and full potential.

In building a world-class education system, Ontario is opening the door to a brighter tomorrow. We are building a workforce that is competitive in the global knowledge-based economy and we are creating high-value jobs right here in this province called Ontario.

JOHN DRINKWATER SIBBALD III

Mrs. Julia Munro: On March 28, a very distinguished local resident of Georgina, John Drinkwater Sibbald III, received the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement. He was nominated for this award by the town of Georgina to recognize 25 years or more of exceptional contributions as a heritage volunteer.

John Sibbald is an environmentalist and a patron of the arts. He is a founding member of the Lake Simcoe Tourist Association, the York Region Tourist Board and the Lake Simcoe Arts Foundation. He was also governor of the Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain.

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Mr. Sibbald is a successful local businessman who has made a major contribution to the development of our local economy and social life, in addition to his work preserving our local heritage.

His work includes chairing fundraising for the hospital in Newmarket and serving as a member of the local school board and as a past executive director of the renowned Red Barn Theatre. He is a past officer of the Kinsmen Club and warden of St. George's Anglican Church in Sutton.

I am proud to have known John Sibbald as a friend and mentor for many years, and I offer him my sincerest congratulations and thanks on behalf of the community.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I was pleased to see that the 2011 budget contained new funding support for our farmers.

The McGuinty government is helping farmers by extending the current pilot risk management program for grains and oilseeds. We're also creating new risk management programs for cattle, hog, sheep and veal farmers, as well as a self-directed risk management program for the edible horticultural sector. These programs help farmers offset losses caused by low commodity prices. It gives them stability.

We think this is an important, necessary investment in the people who grow the good things we eat every day, and Ontario farmers agree. The Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition said, "The establishment of a risk management program was the single most important action" we could have taken in the budget.

Wilma Jeffray, chair of Ontario Pork, said, "The McGuinty government's decision to move forward on risk management programs during these tough fiscal times, and without the participation of the federal government, makes this announcement that much more significant to Ontario farmers."

The introduction of these programs continues our government's record of supporting farmers. Since coming into office, we've provided over \$2 million in farm income supports. We are proud of our farmers and the invaluable work they do, and we're proud to provide them with a program they can count on.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: The province of Ontario and the Canadian nation have prospered through the courage and industry of Canadians of Hispanic origin who have come to this land in search of freedom and opportunity. We are especially mindful today of the important contributions that our citizens of Hispanic ancestry have made to our province and country since first arriving here in Canada. That is why we voted unanimously in 2010 to proclaim every April Hispanic Heritage Month.

Hispanic Canadians trace their origins to 22 countries. They came from Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela.

This proclamation of April as Hispanic Heritage Month is an opportunity to recognize and to learn about the contributions Canadians of Hispanic heritage have made to Canada—in fact, to the world—in music, art, literature and films, in our economy, and science and medicine. That's why I'm very proud today to tell you—and if you will permit me to say just a few words in Spanish—

Remarks in Spanish.

I want to thank everyone who is of Spanish heritage for helping us to grow a better Canada.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Dave Levac: Like most Ontarians, I was very happy to see the increased commitment to children's

mental health in the budget of 2011. Our government has always been committed to creating a mental health and addictions system that provides the right supports to people when they need them, as close to home as possible.

We have increased funding by more than 74% to build capacity outside of the traditional institutional settings. We've also provided \$400 million for child and youth mental health each year.

We have commissioned a special advisory group of experts on mental health, and they stated that Ontario is on the right track, but there's more to do. Ontario's poverty reduction strategy, affordable housing strategy and full-day learning program are the types of investments that contribute to healthier, more resilient people and communities.

However, despite all these investments, the report released this summer by the all-party Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions taught us that our mental health and addictions supports need to be even better, and I agree. People, especially children, are falling through the cracks, and that is just not acceptable.

I thank the hard work of the all-party committee for their recommendations. The proposed new investment of \$257 million for children's mental health will help plug those gaps that exist in our current system, something that we're all proud of. It is the largest investment in Ontario's youngest and most vulnerable citizens in decades, according to the CEO of Children's Mental Health.

A friend of mine, Bill Sanderson, the executive director of the St. Leonard's Society of Brant, says this: "This addiction/mental health announcement is one of the best I've heard in my 37-year career."

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): First, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome a good friend of mine, David Kerr, sitting in the west gallery. David is president of the St. Thomas and District Labour Council. Welcome to Queen's Park today, David.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM TARGETED ADVERTISING OF UNHEALTHY FOOD AND DRINK), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PROTECTION DU CONSOMMATEUR (PROTECTION DES ENFANTS CONTRE LA PUBLICITÉ CIBLÉE À L'ÉGARD DES ALIMENTS ET DES BOISSONS MALSAINS)

Mr. Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 175, An Act to protect children from targeted advertising and inducements with respect to unhealthy food and drink / Projet de loi 175, Loi visant à protéger les enfants contre la publicité ciblée et les incitatifs à l'égard des aliments et des boissons malsains.

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. Rosario Marchese: The bill amends the Consumer Protection Act, 2002, to prohibit advertising of unhealthy food and drink that is directed at persons under 13 years of age.

Unhealthy food and drink is defined to include food or drinks that are prescribed by regulation as being unhealthy. Various guidelines are to be taken into consideration when prescribing what food or drink is unhealthy, and various factors are to be taken into consideration when determining whether particular advertising is directed to persons under 13 years of age.

The bill amends the act to allow the director to order a person to cease advertising if, after receiving and making inquiries about a complaint, the director believes on reasonable grounds that the person is making use of commercial advertising of unhealthy food or drink that is directed at persons under 13 years of age in contravention of the act.

Currently, a person is guilty of an offence under the act if the person fails to comply with any order or requirement under the act. The bill amends the act to specify that a person is guilty of an offence if the person fails to comply with the prohibition of commercial advertising of unhealthy food or drink that is directed at persons under 13 years of age.

ROYAL ASSENT

SANCTION ROYALE

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has assented to certain bills in his office.

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

An Act to promote good government by amending or repealing certain Acts / Loi visant à promouvoir une saine gestion publique en modifiant ou en abrogeant certaines lois.

An Act to provide for the resolution of labour disputes involving the Toronto Transit Commission / Loi prévoyant le règlement des conflits de travail à la Commission de transport de Toronto.

An Act to proclaim Ukrainian Heritage Day / Loi proclamant le Jour du patrimoine ukrainien.

An Act to proclaim May as Dutch Heritage Month / Loi proclamant le mois de mai Mois du patrimoine néerlandais.

An Act to authorize the expenditure of certain amounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2011 / Loi autorisant l'utilisation de certaines sommes pour l'exercice se terminant le 31 mars 2011.

PETITIONS

OAK RIDGES MORAINES

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present a petition on behalf of my constituents of the riding of Durham. It reads as follows:

"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

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"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" province of Ontario "take all necessary actions to prevent contamination of the Oak Ridges moraine" on Lakeridge Road or Morgans Road in my riding of Durham.

I'm pleased to sign and support it and present it to one of the pages.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that was delivered to me by Wyman MacKinnon from my riding, from the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. It reads as follows:

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

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

We petition “the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout.”

These are 1,139 signatures that I support. I will ask Sydney to bring it to the Clerk.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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

“Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978; in British Columbia since 1993; and successive governments in those two provinces have never repealed 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 agree with this petition. I shall sign it and send it to the clerks’ table.

RURAL SCHOOLS

Mr. Jim Wilson: “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 frameworks of rural schools are different from urban schools and therefore deserve 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 TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS

Mr. Michael Prue: I have a very large petition here prepared by the Toronto and York Region Labour Council. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

It’s also written in French, and I would just like to read the “therefore” in French:

« 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. »

I give it to Sydney to deliver.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

“Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

“Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

“Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

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

“Enact Bill 115, a private member’s bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery.”

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

OAK RIDGES MORaine

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly 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 other areas in Ontario; “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.”

I’m pleased to sign this petition and pass it to page Madelaine to take to the table.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a petition that has been delivered to me by B. Fowley. It reads as follows:

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

“Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws exist 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;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Jia Jia to deliver it to the Clerk.

CEMETERIES

Mr. Bob Delaney: I’m pleased, on behalf of the hard-working member for Niagara Falls, to present this petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It reads as follows:

“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 149, the Inactive Cemeteries Protection Act, 2009, to prohibit the relocation of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

It’s signed by a number of different people, mostly from the Niagara Peninsula. I’m pleased to affix my signature and to ask page Riley to carry it for me.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Jim Wilson: A petition to restore medical laboratory services in Elmvale.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the consolidation of medical laboratories in rural areas is causing people to travel further and wait longer for services; and

“Whereas it is the responsibility of the Ontario government to ensure that Ontarians have equal access to all health care services; and

“Whereas rural Ontario continues to get shortchanged when it comes to health care: doctor shortages, smaller hospitals, less pharmaceutical services, lack of transportation and now medical laboratory services; and

“Whereas the McGuinty government continues to increase taxes to make up for misspent tax dollars, collecting” over “\$15 billion over the last six years from the Liberal health tax, ultimately forcing Ontarians to pay more while receiving less;

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

“That the McGuinty government stop the erosion of public health care services and ensure equal access to medical laboratories for all Ontarians, including the people of Elmvale.”

I agree with this and I will sign it.

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DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a petition that was delivered to me by Tony Sottile, and it reads as follows:

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

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

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

“We ... 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 Kiruthika—I practised it—to bring it to the Clerk.

HOME CARE

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I have received a number of petitions from Mr. Diaz. This is addressed to the Parliament of Ontario and the minister responsible for seniors. It reads as follows:

“Whereas seniors who are disabled and/or ill are presently suffering at home; and

“Whereas the cost of a caregiver, on a monthly basis, who looks after a senior in their own home is around \$1,200 (including room and board)” per month; and

“Whereas the cost of taking care of someone at home is at least 10 times less than the cost of a hospital bed; and

“Whereas most seniors with disabilities and/or illness are crowding an already overburdened health care system;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, strongly request that a basic government subsidy be established (based on a doctor’s evaluation) which will pay at least a minimum allowance for a caregiver.

“Seniors deserve to live at home as long and as independently as possible.”

I agree with this petition, I will sign it and I’m sending it to you with page Ciaran.

OAK RIDGES MORaine

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

“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.”

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

PROTECTION OF MINORS IN AMATEUR SPORTS ACT, 2011 LOI DE 2011 SUR LA PROTECTION DES MINEURS PARTICIPANT À DES SPORTS AMATEURS

Mr. Ouellette moved second reading of the following bill:

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

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: “High-Risk Sex Offender to Live in City,” February 5 of this year; “Multiple Child Molester Guilty Once Again,” March 1 of this year; “Cadets to Bar Sex Offenders from Working in Organization,” February 23 of this year; “High-Risk Pedophile Released from Jail,” January 27; “RCMP Case with Sex Offender Sparks City Review,” March 1 of this year; “Vancouver Police Seek High-Risk Sex Offender,” February 27; “Sex Offender Charged,” February 27; “Old Rape Lands Sex Offender Seven Years,” February 24; “Teens Sexually Assaulted”; “Sex Predator Took Her Childhood,” February 24; and “Oshawa Man Jailed for Sex Abuse of Daughter, Stepdaughter,” February 22.

Before I continue on with the intent of this bill, I must say that there are thousands or tens of thousands of volunteers out there working with kids in sport, and this in no way, shape or form is to do anything but to ensure that those individuals are recognized for the great contribution that they’re making to our community and our society as a whole as a volunteer in developing kids’ lifestyles in a fashion that we, as Ontarians and Canadians, would like to see throughout our great country. The intention of the legislation is for that very small—very small—number of individuals out there who are slipping through the cracks and targeting kids.

I’m one of those individuals who volunteers with those hundreds of thousands of individuals in the province of Ontario, and millions throughout Canada, quite frankly, who spend thousands and thousands of hours giving of their time. I coach kids’ hockey and have for over a decade. Not only that, but I was also the abuse reporting officer for the Frankford Senior A and the Ontario Senior A hockey league.

Here is something this week from my own son’s school, from the Durham District School Board:

“Dear parents and guardians,

“There is nothing more important than the safety of our students. With the arrival of spring and students outside enjoying the sun, this is an opportune time to review safety guidelines. At school, we emphasize safety practices on a daily basis and we are writing to ask for your continued assistance in reinforcing good safety habits with your children. We are also writing as a result of an incident reported in the area of Simcoe Street North and Russett Avenue. You can read more about this specific incident on the Durham Regional Police website.”

March 28—just this week. These are the things that are happening and affecting our kids over generations. It’s not something that just happens, and it doesn’t end there.

I have to tell you how this came about. You see, when I was in grade 6—and one of the things that I’ve been blessed or cursed with is a memory, because you remember the good things but you also remember the bad things. I recall that in grade 6 we had a change in principal at that time, and my father said to me, “Whatever you do, you stay away from that principal. You don’t go near him. You don’t spend any time with him. You don’t be alone with him in any way, shape or form.” Now, Dad was a police officer, and for those who know police officers and their intent, when they go into cop mode, it’s a little bit of a different lifestyle. I looked down and I said, “Well, why is that, Dad?” He looked at me and said, “Because I said so.” At that point there, I knew you don’t ask any more questions.

About two years later, when I was in grade 8, I asked, “Dad, do you remember in grade 6 when you told me to stay away from that individual?” He said, “Oh, yeah.” I said, “Well, why was that?” He said because he had arrested him for sexually molesting a 14-year-old boy in Continental Massage in downtown Oshawa, and there was nothing that he could do at that time to remove him from his ability to continue on with his practice in abusing kids. Quite frankly, that individual went to prison 20 years after I left that school.

I must say that I was never one of the individuals who ever had an occurrence, because I did as Dad said and stayed away and did the things that I should have done, but there were other kids who weren’t as fortunate.

When I was first elected in 1995 and had the privilege and honour, we were told at that time, and I recall our whip, Mr. Turnbull, saying to us—and everything was critical, as I’m sure you’re aware, Mr. Speaker—that we had to report all our private members’ bills to the whip’s office to make sure there weren’t any problems. I brought forward, at that time, my private member’s bill, which was—guess what?—to deal with something that I recall that happened when I was in grade 8, when my father had told me there wasn’t anything that could be done, and I said, “That’s not right, and if I ever get a chance to do something about it, I will.” So I brought forward a bill at that time, and back and forth—badgering and posturing taking place. Eventually, guess what? The province of Ontario ended up with a sex offender registry bill to try to address this issue.

I thought that took care of many of the aspects that would cause problems or concerns in the province of Ontario until later on in life, when I was once again working with kids, coaching kids’ hockey—instructional hockey. Instructional hockey is where you have two coaches; the head coach chooses whether he’s on the bench or on the ice. I chose to be on the ice with the kids. After the game, I was walking out and one of the parents came up to me and said, “Mr. Ouellette, I need to talk to you.”

I said, “Yes?”

They said, “You see that person out there, that referee? They shouldn’t be on the ice with those kids.”

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I said, “Well, what do you mean?”

“I can’t tell you.”

“Well, I don’t understand. Why?”

“Mr. Ouellette, that individual should not be out on the ice with those kids.”

Well, in order to protect the identity of the individual, I won’t go into the details of the background, but they said that because of their position of employment they knew for a fact that that individual should in no way, shape or form be around kids.

I did my due diligence and ran through our checks and our backgrounds, as all of us elected officials have contacts, and guess what? Lo and behold, coming back from the police department was a statement that—let me put it this way: That individual would never be around my son in any way, shape or form.

So I started to check, and lo and behold, I went to the referees’ association because the person they were talking about was a referee on the ice with kids. These kids are four, five and six years old and, quite frankly, I try to instill respect in those kids; to make sure that those kids—if one of the referees said to one of my players, “Son, I want to talk to you for a sec,” that player would have marched off because of the respect that I try to instill with those kids. So I had a concern. Not only that, but kids can start refereeing at the age of 12.

So I did a background check and, lo and behold, multiple sex convictions by this individual. I went to the referees’ association and I said, “Guys, we’ve got a problem here. We have to do something about this.” I explained the individual, the background and the information; they looked at me and they said, “Jerry, what are you talking about? Don’t you know this guy is a police officer?” I looked at them and I shook my head and I said, “Guys, don’t you understand? He’s been convicted of impersonating a police officer and he’s out there with kids.” And they went, “Oh my God, we’ve got to do something about this.”

As a result of that, the Canadian Hockey League implemented processes by which anybody who works with kids—managers, trainers, coaches, referees, any of the officials—have to have a background check. What this does is it’s a vulnerable persons check, to make sure that those individuals who are out there working with kids should be out there working with kids.

Not only that; I can say that that individual has since been deported from the province of Ontario and the country of Canada and is no longer in Canada, to my knowledge—protecting kids in one more way.

I said, “We have to do something about this. How do we move forward with addressing this issue?” So I came to the great legislative researchers that we have here and my staff, and we came up with a plan to try and identify how we can protect kids from those identified individuals in sports in the province of Ontario. Hence, we came forward with a bill that essentially requires a background check or a vulnerable persons check that is submitted to the leagues for their review, so that due diligence is done, so that these leagues can look and find out, “Guess what? We have an individual who has got multiple drinking and driving offences here. Do we want that individual driving kids to hockey games?” Because my kids are playing from Kingston to Barrie, out of Oshawa. That’s a long distance, and I’m not so sure I want somebody there—or somebody who has been charged or convicted with drug trafficking. It’s not just sex offences that are looked at, but it’s whether these individuals should be around kids in any way, shape or form.

This is the third time that I’ve brought this bill forward to the Legislature. Things are happening out there, and organizations are coming to me—I know the Canadian Ski Patrol came forward after the first reading of the bill and said, “This is a good idea and we’re going to implement this to make sure that our patrollers are protected.” Because not only are you trying to eliminate the bad ones, but you’re trying to show the good ones who are out there. I know Minister Phillips has been a coach for over 30 years and participated and done a great job out there with kids. We want to make sure that those individuals aren’t painted with a bad brush; that those one-in-100,000 individuals out there aren’t giving us a bad name.

Not only that, but on March 5 of this year the Ontario Lacrosse Association asked me to be a keynote speaker at their annual general meeting. The reason for that was because they wanted to move forward with this file and they were looking for guidance and direction on how they can do it.

You see, when we started doing the research about it, we started looking at hockey, and the legislative researchers here said, “Hey, wait a sec. Why do we limit it to hockey? Why don’t we look at all the sports that are out there in the province of Ontario?” So we did. We started to do research and we found that there was a wide gamut of those who are complying and those who have no compliance at all.

In northwestern Ontario there were a number of hockey leagues that had been doing it for decades now and never had a problem. They have it set up so that once every five years, an individual has to have a background check. It’s submitted to the league, and that’s good enough. There are other leagues that have one or two years. So we put some flexibility in the bill to make sure that those individuals or leagues that are out there are moving forward.

But there were so many other leagues, like the lacrosse association, for which I’ve coached a couple of times. For those individuals, when you’re getting your vulnerable persons check—and, quite frankly, those same individuals, the ones who are volunteering for hockey, would volunteer for soccer, would volunteer for lacrosse or baseball or any of the other sports that are out there. All you need to do is ask for a number of copies of the same check—there’s no additional cost to it; and yes, there is a cost. But when you’re dealing with these issues, we have got to look at the best interests of those ones we’re trying to protect, and those are the kids in the province of Ontario.

There are so many aspects of what is happening. The big concern now is that there are fingerprinting requirements that are being brought forward by the RCMP. What is taking place there—in the time I have remaining—is that the RCMP has found that sex offenders were changing their name, so an individual who has the same birth date as a convicted sex offender is asked to submit a fingerprint to ensure that that’s not a changed name. It’s causing delays and problems within the entire process and in how to move forward. There is a cost that most of the leagues have been picking up.

In closing, I just want to say one thing. I look forward to the two-minute summary to comment on any concerns that may come forward. For these groups, organizations and individuals that are doing a great job: Keep up the great work there, and we are going to do the best that we can to protect you. But for those individuals or those organizations who have concerns: Are those the individuals you want in your organization, who will not have a background check?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Prue: Prior to my coming to this House, I was, for a period of some five years, a member of Toronto city council. One of my duties in that period was to serve as council’s member on the child abuse foundation of Toronto. It was a group that I did not know at the time of my first appointment. I had some trepidation in going to such a group because I didn’t know what to expect. But when I got there I found out really what a wonderful organization it was. It helped the victims of child abuse. It also sought to help those who committed the child abuse. It was a very good foundation, a very good charity, a very good group of men and women who worked very hard to try to heal families, to heal individuals who had found themselves the subject of child abuse or who had in fact committed it themselves.

They would often come forward with stories, as we sat around the table, of the work that had been done—the impossibility, sometimes, of dealing with certain individuals who were recidivists, who wanted to go back and do it again and again. They did have some success from time to time. But I think the hardest part of my five years’ association with that foundation was the children themselves. The healing process was enormous. The children who never recovered—it was huge. The lives that were

wasted and squandered, I think, is the stuff that no one wants to think about but also that is all too rampant in our society.

Every day, when we open up a newspaper—not every day, perhaps, but often, when we open up a newspaper—we see stories of abuse, sometimes going back generations, of people who have been ashamed, even though they were the victims, and have not come forward for a week, a month, a year, a lifetime. By the time, often, that the perpetrator has been named and the police have done their investigation, the damage has been done not only to the individual who was violated but to sometimes 10 or 15 or 20 or more others who found themselves in the same circumstance, because all of this was hidden.

We know that individuals who have been found out many years after the fact will still deny it. We know, however, that a great many of them are starting to find themselves the subject of investigations, of criminal and judicial proceedings. We know that many of them who are or who were in positions of authority have been brought to task, put in jail, and their organizations forced to pay some enormous amounts of reparation.

When I served on Toronto city council, I remember, on one occasion, with tears streaming down almost everyone's eyes in the room, there was a young man who came forward, a very brave young man who had been part of the group of abused young people at Maple Leaf Gardens. That was something that people wanted to hush up, that national icon of the Canadian hockey league just a few blocks from here. No one wanted to talk about the young men who were abused; they didn't want to talk about it themselves. And I remember that young man particularly who came forward and who told his story. It was about a year after that that I read in the newspaper that, tragically, he had committed suicide because he couldn't live with what had happened anymore.

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So I think it is not too much, what the member from Oshawa is asking. He is asking that we protect those people. He is asking that people who are in positions of authority in organized sports have to submit necessary documentation to show that they are not likely to cause harm to vulnerable youth. He is asking only—and it's pretty simple here—that “the positions affected include the positions of referee, other official, trainer or coach. A person is not allowed to hold any of those positions without consenting to have a police force release a copy of his or her criminal record to the organizer.”

It would seem to me that any organization should have that right, not just in sports. I understand the bill can't encompass everything, but I think it's a good start, and the member deserves some considerable credit for not being deterred. This is the third attempt to do so. Like so many bills in this Legislature, so many good bills that are private members' bills, they are passed, they are almost always unanimous if they are good ones, they are sent to committee, and they die. This ought not to die.

We were here last week in the Legislature, and there were two bills which received third reading and were sent

for the Lieutenant Governor's signature. This is a bill that I think probably—I understand it might need to go to committee, but this is a bill that I would feel very comfortable about, personally, in saying that it should just get third reading. I doubt very much that there is anyone in this room who is going to stand up and speak against it. I doubt if there is anyone in this room, any of the members, who is going to say that this is somehow wrong or an infringement of rights. No one has the right to put themselves in proximity to children, vulnerable young people, if part of the intent is to abuse them.

So I want to thank the member for what he is doing. I want to thank him for his persistence. And I want to ask all members to find it in their hearts not just to speak to it today—because I'm sure everyone will say what they want to say about this—but to make sure, if this should be forced to go to committee, as it undoubtedly will, that it actually proceeds.

We have committees, many of them, that have very little work left to do in this session of Parliament. We are going to be in session until approximately the end of May or the first week of June, and we have many committees that could hear this bill, could look at amendments, could possibly even call a few witnesses, and could pass this into law. Certainly, the people of Ontario, the mothers and fathers, would welcome it, and the children who will be protected would owe this Legislature a lifetime of gratitude for not having to have a sexual predator or other in a position close to them that might cause them harm. The people of Ontario expect a bill like this to pass.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Dave Levac: I deeply appreciate the opportunity to talk about Bill 86, and I commend and thank the member from Oshawa for his determination to bring this to light again. I know he knows that in private members' time, it's for us to decide, and that sometimes it takes a long time to get some bills passed. I was working on one and it took me five years.

But most importantly, I appreciate him for the topic that he's bringing to our attention. Nobody has a monopoly on what's being asked, and, quite frankly, I thank him for it, because I don't think there's a member in this place who doesn't want to say that one of their priorities, if not their top priority, is the safety and the health of our children.

I'm going to tell you this right off: I've been given a handful of notes on what government has done, and I want to say that I've done a check, and there isn't a government I've seen historically that has not talked about trying to do the best they can for children.

So I'm going to leave the notes aside and talk to him, thank him for his work in coaching and thank him for the work he has done on this particular topic. I know he actually had a lead role in some of the abuse discussions right inside of hockey, and I know he took that very seriously. He's seen and heard things that none of us want to hear. I appreciate his personal sacrifice in having to put up with some of that stuff.

Let me also say that I consider him more than a colleague, and I hope he does too; we've struck up a friendship. On this particular topic, I have to say that I agree with him, and I want to amplify his comment about the volume of volunteers we're not talking about. We want to make sure we hold up those volunteers who passionately work with children for the right reasons. I want to make sure I amplify that and say that this is not about them.

This is about those people—the insidious, sick, talented skills those predators have to infiltrate exactly where we know they go. It's like a kid in a candy shop, and I love the fact that we're going to start fighting them with fire with this legislation. What you're asking us to do, and I fully support, is to give enough people the tools to play the tricks on them. It's time for us to roll up our sleeves and get that done.

That's why I'm supporting the member's bill. I know I've spoken to him previously and said there are probably a few little glitches here and there that the legal guys need to take a look at. I hope it gets to committee. I, for one, believe it will get to committee automatically, and I do support the member from Beaches—East York, who asked us to push hard to get it further.

As an educator for 25 years and a principal for 12 or 13 years, I had to face some of those situations. I had to meet the parents, I had to deal with the children, and I had to work with the CAS and the destruction, the total annihilation this whole thing does, first to the child, then to the family and then to the community when they find this out.

We need to give the tools you're asking for to those people who are already doing a pretty good job. Those programs that are in existence now need to be amplified just as much as we need to take this bill.

I would say again: The government has done some things, and previous governments have done some things, that continue to focus a light on this. But don't forget: Not too long ago, this was not talked about; not too long ago, this was a hidden secret. Quite frankly, the public is saying, "Enough."

In that circumstance, I agree with the member. I agree with him because of his vast background and experience, but also for the stories he has shared with us about his constituents. His constituents have made it clear, as I've heard from other constituents, that these things are not acceptable.

I say again clearly: They're going to learn as fast as we try to make changes. That's another part of their skill set. We need to have a fluid motion in this. I would respectfully suggest—I did not hear the member say this, and I'm not attributing it to him—that this is not the be-all and end-all. This is a foundation for the continuation of battles that have gone on up to now, and I know he would accept the reality that we will continue to need to move in the direction to make sure that those individuals who are predators, because they have that sick skill set, will figure out ways to navigate one more time in a different direction.

I think it behooves all of us, not just as legislators but as parents, grandparents, people we coach for—in my background, I coached basketball for quite a few years when my kids were young, and bowling and a few other activities I was there for.

Today, one of the things I've learned more than I used to know from my own upbringing in the past is that parents are going to events more because they're afraid. They actually want to watch to make sure that things are okay for their kids. What an amazing concept. Would it surprise anybody that parents are scared? Would it surprise anybody to find out that we need to have rules like this? Quite frankly, it did happen historically. As I said, because it was a closed shop, and, "Oh, shh. We don't talk about things like that," we've allowed it to happen. Another reason why I'm supporting the bill is because it's one more item that shines the light on an issue that we cannot let take the back burner again.

I humbly ask all of us in this House to support this legislation, and I thank the member from Oshawa for bringing it forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

1400

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'm pleased to rise to support Bill 86, the Protection of Minors in Amateur Sports Act, which was introduced by my colleague the member from Oshawa. I want to thank him not only for presenting this bill, but I want to thank him for all the time he has spent in volunteering and working with minors in the hockey league. In particular, I've sat next to him a time or two as we were here in debate, and he was working out his program for that night's meeting with the sports teams.

I also want to thank him for his presentation talking about—and it's difficult to do that—things that happened to him when he was six years old, going all the way through, then talking about things that are happening to his children or his charges in the hockey league today. So I want to thank him for doing that.

The goal of this bill is to protect our children. I think that is something that every member of this Legislature would agree with. It would require coaches, referees, managers and officials to be subject to criminal background checks in order to participate in organized amateur sports with children under 18 years of age. I again want to commend the member for sticking with this issue.

This is the third time he has brought this bill forward. It was first introduced in April 2007, almost four years ago. After second reading, the bill was referred to committee. As we all know, once the bill is referred to committee, it has to be called for hearings, but it becomes a government bill at that point. So it gets into the process. The government has to decide to bring it to committee and then call it back for third reading. We all know that once it's referred there, they have to call it back.

In this case, it sat at the committee and, of course, it died with the 2007 election. The member from Oshawa, though, didn't give up. He reintroduced the bill in

December 2007. Again, it passed second reading unanimously. It died again when the government prorogued the Legislature. Now, for a third time, we are debating second reading of the same bill. I want to call on the government members to not only support this bill today but to encourage the government House leader to move it forward, give it committee hearings and bring it back here for third reading.

This situation seems very similar to the one I'm facing with my own private member's bill, the Hawkins Gignac Act. My bill would save lives by making carbon monoxide detectors mandatory in Ontario. I introduced the bill in 2008. It passed second reading in April 2009. It too died in committee when the House prorogued. I introduced it again and it passed second reading debate, again unanimously. Four months later, there has been no movement on the bill.

It's sad that it fails to look beyond the process and that private members' bills languish in committee and die regardless of how good they are. How many families have been put at risk since 2008 because they don't have carbon monoxide detectors in their homes? How many children have been put at risk since 2007 because police checks haven't been required? I recognize that, thankfully, these situations are rare, but isn't putting one child at risk one too many?

Coaches are often volunteers who give back to the community to ensure their kids have an opportunity to play sports. Between games, practices and tournaments, I know that it can be a large commitment in time. It means early mornings at the rink and/or going to practices after a long day's work. I don't believe that people who are willing to give that much will object to the requirements that protect our children.

Coaching young people is one of the most sincere forms of volunteering. It takes time, passion and knowledge, and many hours of commitment. We need to protect our children by ensuring that people who are spending time with them and are in a position of authority are worthy of our trust.

It's not too much to ask that we ensure that they can pass a criminal background check. Almost every organization where volunteers will come into contact with people who are vulnerable provides for that level of protection. Ensuring that all children who play organized sports have that level of safety and protection is the right thing to do. I strongly support this piece of legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: I congratulate my friend and my colleague for bringing forth this particular measure. I remember when he last proposed this measure, I supported it then and he'll have my vote today. So let's take that part off the table. We're not dealing with anything that's contentious. Let's get it done. Let's stay on the cases of our respective House leaders and let's get this one done. I would be pleased to stand up and applaud the member for having a private member's bill passed.

I agree with everything he has said, and I don't want to repeat a lot of it. I'd just like to add a little bit of per-

spective. My colleagues have done a lot of the passionate debate. I'm going to do some of the dispassionate definitions, so that in the event that in the future someone is reading this in Hansard or they're simply watching it today on television—let's define some of the things we're talking about.

There are two types of criminal records checks: the standard Canadian Police Information Centre, or CPIC, checks and the vulnerable sector checks, or the VSCs. So if you hear this language, if someone is talking to you, now you know what it means.

The standard CPIC check includes all convictions for which a pardon has not been granted; all charges, regardless of disposition; outstanding warrants and charges; and all judicial orders and other information that might be of interest in police investigations.

The vulnerable sector checks are used to protect vulnerable persons, and they include enhanced screening for individuals who work with people under 18 years of age, people with disabilities and people who work with those who have physical disabilities—for example, retirement home workers. It includes a scan of the pardoned sex offenders database which will detect all offenders who have received a conviction for a sex offence, regardless of whether they have been granted a pardon. And criminal records, finally to finish the definition part, are stored in criminal records information management services, which is a centralized database that's operated by the RCMP.

More to the point of what my colleague from Oshawa has been saying—we share a common passion. We're both hockey players. He's a pretty good player. I hope I do as well for him in goal. This is my 51st season in sports—in hockey in general. We've all acknowledged that what we're dealing with here are extremely rare circumstances. I know that in 51 years, I haven't—thank heavens—been exposed to anything such as what we've described. This is not to say that it doesn't happen, or to minimize the impact to those who do. But for perspective, we're dealing here in a very emotional debate with something whose instances are mercifully—and should remain—small and, hopefully, vanish.

To this end, among the things that Ontario has done: We now have 2,300 more police officers on Ontario streets, and in some small manner, this too will help keep the safety of our kids who are playing amateur sports. Ontario has established a first-of-its-kind \$51-million guns and gangs strategy. In some small way, this too, in its way, will keep our kids who are playing amateur sports safe.

There have been a number of other such interventions but since 2003, as a reference point, there's been a decline in crime rates across the province, and some of that has to be attributed to measures to which all of us—because most of these measures have been supported by all three parties—have contributed. I think we can all take pleasure in the fact that the crime rate has declined 17% in the past seven years, including an 11% drop in violent crime.

Ontario has invested—and again with the support of all of our parties here—some \$12.8 million in the provincial strategy to protect children from sexual exploitation on the Internet, off the Internet, in the arena or out of the arena. We're the first government to have a dedicated strategy such as this.

There are many other things that Ontario has done within and outside the realm of the law and this particular issue to protect children, including but not limited to such things as new immunizations for diseases, affordable new quality child care spaces, the Ontario child benefit and other things which, while salutary, do float outside the scope of this particular bill.

The term “amateur sports organizations” is very broadly defined so that I think in some respects one of the strengths of the bill is that it can encompass even informal sporting organizations. The member has done a lot of thinking about it and learned from each iteration as the bill has come before the House, so it's gotten a little bit better each and every time, and I thank him for that. In this respect, this bill is actually stronger for having come back a second and a third time, and I say to my colleague across: I think you've got it right now. Let's see if we can get this one through second and third reading and proclamation.

1410

As I said before, the member can count on my support on this particular bill. This is a bill that Ontario needs. This is the kind of bill that a lot of our families would look at and say to us, as members of their government, “You're doing your job. You're looking after us.”

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I would like to speak today to Bill 86, An Act to provide protection for minors participating in amateur sports. I would like to begin by commending the member for Oshawa for his perseverance. We've heard that this is the third time that he has introduced the bill. Unfortunately, each time, it has died on the order paper, but we've just heard from the member from Mississauga–Streetsville that he feels now the bill has been strengthened and he does see that it is important that we would pass it. Hopefully, we can pass it, not only second reading today, but third reading, and have it receive royal assent before the House rises at the end of this session.

I think we were all touched by the personal story that the member from Oshawa shared with us, and I do want to congratulate him for his commitment and his passion to protecting our young people, in particular our athletes. I think we all hear stories sometimes about trusted adults—they may be a family member, a coach, a teacher—who violate the trust of parents and the innocence of children, and certainly these stories are tragic and compelling.

As a parent, you often put your faith and your confidence in someone to coach, instruct, referee or teach your child, and in essence you're handing over the well-being and protection of your children to that person, so I think

it is very important that we make sure that when we do that, our children are in safe hands. His personal story indicates that is not always the case, that someone in a position of responsibility breaks that sacred bond that should have been there between either the parent and the coach or the parent and the principal or the parent and the referee, and as a result, the trust is violated and confidence is shattered.

It's important that children and young athletes can look up to those who are their coaches and that they look at these people whom we know sometimes as role models. Sometimes they look at them as mother and father figures, and they can have a profound positive impact on the lives of these athletes, or conversely, they can cause severe emotional and psychological damage to a child.

For those reasons, I believe wholeheartedly that it's in the best interest of every family and child to make sure that we pass this bill today. We know that it is important that when we drop our children off at the rink, the gym or the field we can rest assured, knowing that our coaches and referees are there for the right reasons. We know that currently there is no provincial law mandating criminal background checks for coaches and volunteers, and we just need to make sure that we protect our children. That is what is most important.

I applaud the member for Oshawa for his passionate commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young athletes. Certainly, if we pass this bill today and in third reading and it receives royal assent, Ontario will become a safer and better place for our children and young athletes to learn to love a sport, to grow into mature adults who respect their opponents, play by the rules, and who eventually will donate their own time to future generations of aspiring athletes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate? The honourable member for Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you kindly, Speaker. You've already heard the very capable submission of my NDP colleague the member for Beaches–East York and his indication that New Democrats are going to be supporting this bill. That's what I hear coming from across the way as well: that the government members are going to be supporting this bill. Well, so what, if the bill doesn't go any further than second reading.

We know—let's not kid ourselves—that, first of all, there are only eight weeks left, give or take a day or two, of this House even sitting. It's scheduled to rise on June 2, and of course, an election on October 6 means it's not coming back in September. In fact, the government may scurry out of here before June 2. One of the windows of opportunity, if they're going to go scurrying, is after the last week of April and the Easter break.

Here we've got a very important proposition, one that addresses the welfare of a big chunk of young people here in the province of Ontario, and one that can be very readily implemented. The bill has got to go to committee. We've got to hear from groups who will be impacted. We've got to hear from those policing agencies that will

be called upon to do the fingerprinting—although I'm told, as well, that there's now some private sector fingerprinting that's being done.

One of the problems, of course, as we learned just recently, is that there are huge backlogs in a whole lot of jurisdictions when it comes to criminal record checks through the local police services. That means that volunteers who are submitting to the criminal record checks and providing their fingerprints so that their criminal records can be confirmed are waiting not just weeks but months to be cleared. This will aggravate that problem unless that problem is indeed addressed, and there has been nothing coming from the government to suggest that it ought to be addressed.

If I had my druthers, I'd rather see a bill that encompassed more than just amateur sports, but the fact is that the bill is very focused on amateur sports, and the author of the bill, its sponsor, is to be commended for that, because the bill—the structure, the regime that it proposes—could become a model for all other youth activities that utilize adult supervision, whether it's Scouting or Girl Guides or the cadet movement, or local community recreation centres, for that matter.

The bill has got to go to committee, and it's only going to be dealt with in committee if the government agrees to do it, and quite frankly, at this point, that means if the Premier's office agrees to do it. It's not about the government House leader; hell's bells, I wish it were. It's about the Premier's office. The Premier is either going to give this a green light or a red light. If it gets a red light, it's going to be sent off into legislative orbit; it's going to go to that black hole where so many good private members' bills end up around here and never be seen again. But the bill is too important, the proposition is too legitimate, the evil that it addresses is too evil for this bill to be forced into that black hole of dying bills that the Premier's office so quickly diverts bills to.

Let's see how much clout government backbenchers have with their Premier's office. One can only try; one can only hope. I know there are people here on these government benches who are prepared to take on the Premier, who are prepared to confront him, poke him in the chest with their forefinger, if need be, and tell him to his face that if this bill doesn't get dealt with in committee, then they will publicly condemn their Premier, Mr. McGuinty; that they'll go to the Star or the Sun or the Globe or the Post and talk about a Premier whose intransigence is putting kids at risk.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I want to first commend the member from Oshawa, as all members have here today. It is very obvious that unanimous support is forthcoming.

I think it's important to reflect on where the member from Oshawa came from. His riding is next door to mine, and we often travel together or share events and talk about things. He is passionate about this. He has two young boys whom he's very proud of, and he's very engaged in their life. I've worked with him and learned a lot from him. He sponsored a kids' fishing day, support-

ing children who may not otherwise get to do outdoor events. He's well known for his advocacy in minor hockey and lacrosse and other activities. So he knows of what he speaks and he's passionate about it.

1420

Last night, I happened to be watching my favourite show, *The Agenda*, on TVOntario.

Laughter.

Mr. John O'Toole: No, it is my favourite show, and right after the show there was an excellent program. It was a documentary called *Chosen*. This was a fundamentally important documentary about abuse in English private residential schools. It was the testimonial of three people, young boys at the time, whose lives were permanently altered.

So the implications of this—protecting youth from molestation of any sort, or predators, as I would call them—are absolutely critical. Much has been discussed here. In fact, this past week, we passed a bill here in the House—at least, it went to committee—Bill 163, the sex offender registry, called Christopher's Law.

I spoke on that bill and I did some research; I talked about sex offenders. I'm talking about rapists and child molesters, pedophiles. The recidivism rate is quite astonishing; that is, the rate of repeating the offence. It's proven that they're non-rehabilitative. As such, some of these people, as the member from Oshawa said, applied for a pardon, because convicted sex offenders can apply for a pardon. When they get a pardon, they can go to the Ministry of Government Services, get a name change and then they can relocate somewhere in Canada or other places and continue their abuse of young children.

In summary, it's important to know that repeat perpetrations on children ruin their childhood and ruin their lives permanently. My siding on this thing is for the victims. I wouldn't give them the light of day, if the perpetrator was convicted. There would be no pardon; there would be no name change; and they should be completely under surveillance for the rest of their lives, because they have ruined someone else's life.

I think the minister, or the member—and former minister, I might say—raises a very strong point, and I would urge Premier McGuinty, in his last few hours and days as Premier, to let this go to committee. Let's consult with the coaches and the other recreation people and broaden it. In fact, he could attach it to Bill 163, which is the sex offender registry. This bill could be amended to be attached to Bill 163, which is going to committee.

I would urge the members here on the government side, the Liberal members themselves here today, to say, as the member from Brant said, that they can vote with their conscience for private members' business. I would urge them to vote with their conscience on this and vote for it to go to committee.

I look forward to the vote on this bill, because the member from Oshawa is doing the right thing for the right reasons. We all support it, and I thank him.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable member from Oshawa, Mr. Ouellette, has two minutes for his response.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I appreciate the comments from the members from Beaches–East York, Brant, Oxford, Mississauga–Streetsville, Kitchener–Waterloo, Welland and Durham.

In the time that I have remaining, I want to answer a few questions. There are some concerns coming forward about such things as the background checks. The intention, when I dealt with the Legislative Assembly, was to ensure that vulnerable persons checks were one of the key components of it.

Not only that, but sports are predominantly determined by Sport Ontario. That's an organization that regulates all of the amateur sports in the province of Ontario. I recall, during the discussions—the way it's originally worded, kids playing road hockey might have to be subject to it. No. The intention's not there at all, in any case. The intention is those organized sports that are disciplined through Sport Ontario as the governing body.

The object and the police component—there are now organizations out there providing services, as the member from Welland mentioned. I know former Deputy Chief Rod Piukkala, from the region of Durham—he was with Peel prior to Durham—is now working with an organization, and guess what? He's one of three organizations that provide background checks as a business and, quite frankly, at a substantially reduced cost. I know instead of paying \$20 or \$30, I think it was offered at about \$12 for a check, and, yes, they come up with that.

Another aspect is the concern regarding the time frames it takes. The leagues are complying with individuals by giving them an allowance in there, but we have to start somewhere. We have to allow this. Individuals could, as I stated earlier, request multiple copies of the bill in order to reduce costs at that time.

We have to start somewhere, and we as legislators in the province of Ontario need to look forward. Is it the right thing to do? I think it is. I think we have to do whatever we can to protect the kids in the province of Ontario, and this is a great place to start.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The time for debate on this ballot item has now expired. For those in the galleries and those watching at home, we'll vote on Mr. Ouellette's item in about 100 minutes.

LABOUR RELATIONS
AMENDMENT ACT
(REPLACEMENT WORKERS), 2011
LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL
(TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS)

Mme Gélinas moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 / Projet de loi 45, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Pursuant to standing order 98, the honourable member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to rise today to debate second reading of Bill 45 in the hope that the members of this chamber will agree to pass it on second reading so that it can go to debate in front of committee.

Bill 45 would ban the use of temporary replacement workers during a labour dispute. I want to thank a whole lot of people, starting with Sid Ryan from the OFL for organizing the rally; Wayne Fraser, Ontario director of the United Steelworkers, for their activists; and thanks to all of the MPPs who accepted the invitation of the activists to discuss the issue.

I want to thank Selina Clement Mikkola, president of OCARE, the Ontario Coalition Against Replacement Employees; Joann Marshall, vice-president; Peter Desilets; Nathan Aubin; Wyman MacKinnon; John Closs; and all of the members of OCARE.

I want to thank Smokey Thomas from OPSEU for the use of their website and the contribution toward the cost of the buses; CUPE for all of their support; the Sudbury labour council; the Power Workers' Union; the Ontario Professional Society of Engineers; the CAW—more specifically, Mine Mill Local 598; Bryan Neath and Don Morin from UFCW; RWDSU; SEIU; Laurentian University labour studies; Madame Louise Roy of Hearst; Madame Denise Oban of Hanmer; OSSTF; I'AEFO; ONA; the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers; the Asbestos Workers—the list goes on.

This is to show you the support we have throughout Ontario towards banning replacement workers.

I, like all of those people, strongly believe that Bill 45 is a vitally important issue for people across our province. My portfolio is health, so many people ask me, "Why a labour bill?" Well, the answer is simple. I believe in healthy communities, and Bill 45 will help us create and sustain healthy communities in Ontario.

In 2009, while the Vale strike was going on, my office was flooded, first by young families who couldn't pay their bills. Then more mature workers started to come in and then replacement workers started to come in. They were all seeking help. They were all having a really tough time. In the back of my mind, all alarms were going off. Desperate people do desperate things. What was going on? We've had strikes in Sudbury before. The difference was that they were using temporary replacement workers. There were divisions on the picket line for sure, but those divisive forces were also at play in families, in neighbourhoods and in my entire community.

So I decided to apply what I call a "determinants of health" lens to this issue: Let's see what's behind this. OCARE was formed, the Ontario Coalition Against Replacement Employees, and they have been meeting for the last year and a half. We all know that 97% to 99% of collective agreements are negotiated successfully at the bargaining table; only a small percentage go into labour disputes. Although this percentage is small, they involve thousands of workers each and every year in this province. Human Resources Canada says that in 2009 the average annual hour loss per employee due to strikes and

lockouts in Ontario was twice the average recorded in other provinces, such as British Columbia and Quebec.

I want to give the example of Engineered Coated Products in Brantford, where workers have been walking the picket line for over two and a half years. Since August 23, 2008, those people have been on the picket line while replacement workers go in and do their work.

1430

The same company has a plant in British Columbia. In British Columbia, they settled the contract. Why such a difference? Because British Columbia has a ban on replacement workers and Ontario doesn't.

I want to talk about MultiServ in Nanticoke. Since July 10, 2009, they have been walking the picket line, and temporary replacement workers are doing their work. Infinity Rubber in Toronto: Since December 1, 2009, they have been walking the picket line, and temporary replacement workers are doing their work. And the list goes on and on.

You should have seen it: At the rally today, there was worker after worker, talking about their strike, their lockout and how temporary replacement workers were doing their work.

Over the last several months, OCARE spent a ton of time reading academic papers on the effects of anti-replacement workers' laws. Let me tell you, economists are prolific. We read from Paul Duffy and Susan Johnson from Wilfrid Laurier; we looked at John Budd and Yijiang Wang from the University of Minnesota; Peter Cramton from the University of Maryland; Morley Gunderson from the University of Toronto; Joseph Tracy from the Federal Reserve Bank; Benjamin Dachis and Robert Hebdon from the C.D. Howe Institute; Mr. Singh, Ms. Zinni and Mr. Jain from West Virginia University; Larry Savage and Jonah Butovsky from Brock University, St. Catharines; Robert Michael Smith from Ohio; and J.A. Frank and Michael Kelly from the University of Ottawa.

I also read all the economists who write in French: Luc Martineau, Marcel Boyer, Marie-Ange Moreau, Gilles Trudeau, Geneviève Bonin, Denis Harrison, Pierre Verge and Luc Vaillancourt. That goes from McGill University, l'Université Laval, l'Université de Montréal and l'Institut économique de Montréal. They are all interested in talking about the economic impact of using temporary replacement workers.

Let me tell you something about economists: They can't agree in an empty room. One of them would say that temporary replacement workers make strikes longer; the other one would argue that it makes them shorter. One says it increases the frequency of strikes; the other one argues that it decreases the frequency. One says it increases the rate of investment; some say it decreases it and some say it has no effect at all. Some say that it pushes the balance toward workers; others say it doesn't.

Although those people apparently like to argue with one another, they all agree on one thing: Temporary replacement workers have a social impact on the com-

munity where they're used. The impact is real, and studies are needed.

We started to look at that also. We went to the Ministry of Labour to see how frequent replacement workers are. You'll be interested to know that our Minister of Labour does not keep track of this issue, so we had to do the work ourselves. We contacted 434 unions and found out in how many strikes and lockouts temporary replacement workers had been used.

We discovered that the use of temporary replacement workers is growing rapidly. An entire industry has flourished in Ontario, starting with security companies who will turn your plant into Fort Knox, with video cameras and all the rest, and all of the temp agencies who see a strike and a lockout as a gold mine because they can charge four times what the worker is worth for them to cross the picket line. We have HR agencies biting at the bit for a strike or a lockout to happen so that they can sell and peddle their temporary replacement workers, who are plentiful in a time of recession when 250,000 people have lost their jobs.

What's the flip side of this sad state of affairs? It has a horrific impact on the social fabric of our communities throughout Ontario. Temporary replacement workers are divisive, and I will explain to you what that does to the quality of our social environment and to the real quality of life of all of us in Ontario, whether you have been touched by a labour conflict or not.

Temporary replacement workers have a major impact on the psychological and social well-being of modern populations. Their effect is strong because they affect our social structure. They affect where we live. We are all human beings. We are vulnerable to the deterioration of our social well-being as well as the quality of our social relations and the relations of those around us.

The most important sources of stress are in society at large; they affect us most powerfully.

The use of temporary replacement workers affects people's pride, dignity and self-confidence. Ask any one of those workers in the gallery; they'll all tell you the same thing.

My background is not in labour, but I know how to measure the health of a community. When you want to see a healthy community, you look at social inclusion and cohesion; you look at the level of involvement in community life, social connectedness and civic engagement. This tells you if you have healthy people, healthy families and healthy communities.

The use of replacement workers weakens community life, reduces trust and deteriorates the quality of the social relations. It affects our ability to identify with one another. It is a loss to civil society; it is a loss of empathy for one another. It decreases the quality of life for all involved. The stress a temporary replacement worker brings into a community wears us down. It wears us out.

For those of you who are still listening now, I want you to remember five things. First, strikes and lockouts are rare, but they still affect thousands of Ontarians every year.

The use of temporary replacement workers in Ontario is on the rise. It's happening more often than you think—just check our Facebook site, if you are interested to know more—and the Ministry of Labour does not keep track.

An entire industry has developed in Ontario that encourages and supports the use of temporary replacement workers in this province, to the detriment of all of us.

The economic impacts? They're arguable, but they remain small. There's not that much of them.

The social impacts are real, they are powerful and they are long-lasting.

Les grèves et les lock-out sont rares en Ontario. On dit que 99 % des conventions collectives sont négociées sans arrêt de travail. Mais il y a quand même des milliers de travailleurs et travailleuses qui sont touchés chaque année.

L'utilisation de travailleurs de remplacement augmente dans notre province, bien que le ministre de Travail ne garde pas de statistiques à ce sujet. Il y a toute une industrie qui s'est développée qui encourage et qui soutient l'utilisation de travailleurs de remplacement. On parle ici des compagnies de sécurité et des agences de travailleurs temporaires.

Les impacts économiques des travailleurs de remplacement ont été étudiés ad nauseam par des douzaines d'économistes. Tout ce que je peux vous dire, c'est qu'il n'y a pas de consensus sur les effets économiques, mais il y a beaucoup d'arguments. Par contre, le déchirement du tissu social des communautés et les impacts sociaux sont puissants et sont ressentis longtemps dans les communautés affectées.

Pour toutes ces raisons, je demande aux membres de cette Assemblée législative d'appuyer mon projet de loi.

For all of the reasons I listed before, I would ask that members of this House support Bill 45 and vote in favour of my bill.

Interruption.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Order. Stop the clock. I would just like to say to the members in the public gallery that you're certainly welcome to be at Queen's Park today and we're happy that you're here, but we do have a very strict rule that you cannot participate in the debate, and that includes clapping. I would ask you to respect that.

Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: It is a pleasure to speak to the bill of the member from Nickel Belt, a proposal advanced by a well-meaning and hard-working member. C'est toujours un plaisir d'écouter la députée en anglais ou en français.

The proposal before the House has some strong advocates. I'd like to look at what issues this proposal does and doesn't address. I'd also like to discuss it in light of some of the 21st-century issues that define not merely labour and management but also prosperity and opportunity.

When a collective agreement has expired, a legal strike or a lockout has to meet some stringent pre-

conditions. The union and the employer must first bargain in good faith. The bargaining unit must hold a vote and receive a mandate to strike from a majority of employees in the bargaining unit. Notice of a strike or lockout has to be given to the other party and to the Ontario Labour Relations Board. If a mediator has been appointed, the mediation process must have ended and 48 hours must have passed. A strike or a lockout that does not meet these conditions constitutes a breach of the code.

During a strike, a worker can choose to work elsewhere. The proposal before this House suggests that an employer may not hire replacement workers during a strike or a lockout. Striking employees may earn temporary or full-time income elsewhere or even leave the employment of the employer, while the employer doesn't have the freedom to hire another worker unless and until the strike or the lockout has been resolved.

So might this proposal tilt the table during a labour dispute in favour of a union? I think this is a question that members need to address. This may not be what the member intended, but it may well be the outcome.

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One may wish to consider that fewer and fewer Ontarians are choosing a collective bargaining relationship with their employer each year. Yet, unions remain a vital check and balance because, as my own professor who taught us labour relations when I did my post-grad once said, and I remember his exact words, "The motives of management are not benign."

Relevance in rapidly changing times is a strong challenge to today's labour movement, and unions are facing the need to change as our world, our workforce and our business environment changes. And let's face it: It's not the bargaining unit versus the organization's management. Indeed, if one sees labour relations through this very narrow lens, it's like saying that one party plans to sink the other party's half of the only boat they will both occupy amid a storm on rough seas.

The opportunity and the available wealth to share in the upcoming years are just staggering. Firms of all sizes not only can but must see the whole world not merely as their market but as part of their supply chain, part of their source of start-up funds and part of their source of labour.

To what degree does this proposal make Ontario firms and Ontario workforces globally competitive? This is something that I, as a member, need to consider before I place my vote. We need unions to be relevant in a time when people work on a contract basis or a temporary basis. These can be vulnerable workers, but their needs and circumstances are diverse, and more flexibility than our traditional collective bargaining agreements cover is needed.

Work itself is becoming transnational in nature. It's not only possible but fairly common for such knowledge-based work as design, engineering, architecture and computer software to go on around the clock, with workers checking in and checking out of their shifts in different time zones and in different countries. The work itself is stored on servers situated who knows where?

The measure before this House doesn't show us how these knowledge-based workers might benefit. The measure before this House talks about compensation in terms of something stated specifically in the collective bargaining agreement. I think we're concerned here that today the Legislature is asked to deal with a proposed measure that affects very few collective agreements, by the member's own admission, in even fewer exceptional circumstances.

We can point to individual acts by either management or bargaining units in which one or both parties lost sight of the interests of the people employed by the organization or the customers, the users, the clients or even the suppliers—by what they can do together.

One may ask whether these specific instances should put Ontario out of step with other legislative jurisdictions in North America. Among the 10 Canadian provinces and 50 US states, only Quebec and British Columbia have enacted measures such as the member proposes. Earlier, I pointed out that the proposal may tilt the tables and increase the power of one party at the expense of the other. While I am sure this is not intended, we don't have any indication as to whether this may be the outcome.

We have discussed some of the many challenges facing the labour movement, so let's talk about a few more. Will this measure help the labour movement in the services sector? Will it help employees classified as supervisory, technical, professional or managerial? How do we address the issues of how people who are either directed or enticed to work from home are treated?

Young entrants to the job market have more choices than ever before. They're better educated than they ever have been, and they can and do go with the opportunity rather than the company or the bargaining unit. So is this proposal relevant to young people in today's changing times?

The statistics such as they are, which the member freely admitted are inconclusive, suggest that maybe replacement workers do or don't increase the length of strikes; maybe they do or don't increase the incidence of strikes. But I think a little bit more clarity might be helpful before we make a choice such as the member has asked us to make.

There are fairly few complaints submitted to the Canada industrial labour board, and those under consideration at any given time can be counted on the fingers of one hand, usually with enough fingers left over to pick up a bowling ball. So the question before the House might well be: Do we have a solution in search of a problem, or is the focus going forward to a labour movement that we need today more than ever before? Is it on the future in the 21st century instead of on the issues of the 20th century? Those are the things that I'll be thinking of.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I first want to acknowledge, and respectfully so, the member from Nickel Belt, who I believe is probably one of the most passionate people here on some issues. I have great respect for her and her

commitment, for sure. On her critic file she's quite well respected. I see this as an important statement about wanting to find solutions in the workplace, often when there are competing interests.

I always start things from where I'm from. I basically worked for General Motors for 30 years—30 or a bit more than that—and had the opportunity to work in the personnel area for some time, not just in an office environment but in a factory environment with perhaps 500 people in the group. It's always good to have harmony. I used to think that it was important for me to have worked very closely with the district committee person or one of the union heads to head off a rebellion. If there's a problem in the group and if you don't deal with it, your best partner to deal with it is the person who is duly elected by the membership. I actually know Sid Ryan very well. In fact, when I studied, I can say I had great time to spend at the University of Toronto. I studied under John Crispo, who is a highly regarded labour economist from the University of Toronto—he has since retired—and I've often spoken with Morley Gunderson and some of the people you have mentioned.

I think almost every member here, without exception, would strive to see that we have harmony in this place—often we don't, but harmony in the workplace. Even if I draw it to my own riding of Durham, this past March to, basically, July there was a situation where there was a strike at St. Marys Cement. I did visit the workers on the picket line and was quite respectful. I actually knew quite a few of them, really. It was a very important issue, a significant issue.

The company at one time was a family-owned business, St. Marys Cement. Since that time, the rules around cement and cement manufacturing—cement has become a very political issue because of the carbon. Carbon dioxide is the main emission when you melt limestone, and the chemistry is that it's carbon dioxide that goes out the smokestack. That's part of the chemistry. It's not anything to do with the fuel they use to melt the limestone.

The company, I think, saw the writing on the wall, so St. Marys was actually bought over by a Brazilian company. The Brazilian company of course uses the facility at its leisure and tried to change the rules. They changed the rules by saying they were going to eliminate the pension. As we all know, whether it's Nortel, General Motors, Inco or Stelco, pensions are a huge issue, a big-time issue. The rules have all changed around pensions, big time. That issue is one of the more contentious issues. The union leadership played a very important part in actually getting the people back to work.

The point I'm making is—it's like steel, as Paul Miller would know; they don't like to shut down the furnaces in those strikes because there's a chance of damage etc. to equipment. So you get into these situations that sometimes management is there. Sometimes they're not skilled enough to do these things—having been in that position myself, perhaps. But they did use replacement workers, which caused, as France has said, another level of tension.

The research—and I have quite a bit of research on the issue—does shift the playing field. I have a report here by Paul Duffy and Susan Johnson, and it's from Canadian Public Policy, 2009. It's fairly relevant, fairly recent, and it does show that it does tip the scales considerably.

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“The results indicate that anti-scab legislation increases the number of work stoppages”—it's anti-scab legislation; that's no replacement workers—and decreases the length of strikes. “Both these results are statistically significant at the 99% level and substantial in magnitude.”

“Opponents” of this, “often from the business community, argue that such legislation limits the right of the employer to continue to try to operate during a work stoppage, gives the union an unfair advantage at the bargaining table, reduces employment and investment,” and is detrimental in the long run to the company's survival in Canada.

We see the erosion of the manufacturing environment at a considerable rate. In fact, I'm in the midst of reading a report about the loss of manufacturing in the United States. There is a website you should look at; it's devastating. What are those families and people going to do?

I believe we should be working co-operatively. When I studied at U of T in labour economics, I had the privilege of taking part in some of this investigation into options—and there are options; there's not just one way.

For instance, the position of the power workers is a good example on the closure of coal plants: very important. They recognize that they're at the table. They recognize that those jobs could be lost. Their voice is important. It's not always confrontation between management and union; these are economic fundamentals of the future.

I also look at the relationship at Bruce Power in the Bruce Peninsula. The nuclear plant was ready to be mothballed, the whole friggling plant, technically. The power workers and the teachers' union all got together, basically, and it ended up being a shared relationship. There's still a union, there are still workplace issues, and there's a new relationship—let's put it that way.

I would say that back then there were lots of debates at the federal level on what they called tripartism, where there is a rightful role of government at the table, not just the Minister of Labour saying, “We can't interfere. We like negotiated solutions. We can't do anything. Here's the arbitrator”—whatever. It's standard blockage, standard red tape. Progressively, they should be at the table. It's about the economy. It's about the lives of families and the future for young people. We can't give our economy away to China. We all can't be doctors and lawyers and all these fancy things; we need practical resolve for families to earn a respectable living.

At the table should be government, labour and management, whether it's the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters or some leadership group like the group of John Manley, former finance minister. That's the future.

Any other resolution is nothing more than continued confrontation.

As I said, some of the leadership in the union movement today are—well, not some; all. People like Ken Lewenza are very capable, well-educated people. I remember sitting at the side table one time in negotiations. The economist for the CAW—what the heck was his name? Sam Gindin. This guy had a Ph.D. in economics. He was smarter than the guy on the other side. He happened to have a little different ideology, but he knew the numbers of what the hours per job meant in terms of job losses.

There are three natural parties, as I said. The government has a role: “It's about the economy, stupid.” The union leadership has a role: It's about the future of workers and workers' rights; we're not going to end up working like China. The third member is, of course, the investors, the capitalists.

I always say during all this debate about the union problems and the pension problems that there's one important thing: There is no Mr. General Motors. General Motors is owned by shareholders. Now, who are these shareholders? Let's look at them. Who are they? They're the pension funds. To think that “profit” is a bad word? Why are the pensions in the ditch? Because there's no return on equity; there are no dividends. Everybody's going over the cliff.

Everybody should be at the table here. Let's forget the confrontation: “There's only one solution here,” blah, blah, blah. I get the bill. I understand your compassion. This is a very sophisticated, very complex issue. I don't hear much from the other side except, “We're going to vote against it.”

One last thing—I want to make a point. There's a lot of building of relationships that I want to make very clear here. During the election in October, there are a very important series of advertisements paid for by Working Families. Who are the Working Families? Those advertisements—millions and millions of dollars—are paid for by union dues. And what is the point of those union dues? To re-elect Premier McGuinty. That's the entire purpose of the Working Families.

You're all union leaders. You know what the game is, that the Tories are bad—look, I don't think I've ever heard a perfect solution to any question in this House: not by the Liberals, not by the NDP and not by the Conservatives. I'll tell you right now, there aren't any simple solutions; we'd already be in paradise.

So if you think that this vote today is going to resolve the issues, check out the Working Families and where their money is going: for the advertisements in the next election.

Who is the government that last week eliminated the right to strike for the transit workers? The McGuinty government. This —

Mr. Bob Delaney: On a point of order, Speaker: Regarding standing order 23(b)(i) and (ii), the member opposite has directed his remarks to something other than the question under discussion or a motion or amendment other than that which is on the floor.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I certainly don't find anything out of order.

The honourable member for Durham has the floor.

Mr. John O'Toole: The bill last week that took away the right to strike for the Toronto transit workers was just the edge of the wedge. Check out the vote on Bill 150, and you'll see exactly what balance and what rights and representations are related.

This act has provisions that I find don't give enough flexibility, but I think it has the right—and it's going to be up to the Liberal government. They have the majority, and it's going to be up to them whether or not this has life breathed into it. What I'm really here for is to see just how they represent their constituents and how they vote today.

This guy right over here who just spoke, to give you an example, reads some prepared—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Order. Further debate?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm very, very pleased to rise today to speak in support of Bill 45. No bones about it, I'm very proud to speak in favour of this bill to ban the use of replacement workers, a.k.a. scabs, during strikes.

First of all, I want to applaud my colleague Madame Gélinas, the member for Nickel Belt, for bringing forward this bill. I know that she has also presented thousands upon thousands of petitions in support of the bill over the past couple of weeks and months in this House.

I also want to thank the labour leaders from across the province who have worked together to launch the province-wide campaign to support this bill. Many of them are here today in the chamber, and many of the workers who work in plants and factories and workplaces around this province are here as well. Solidarity, everyone. Thank you for being here. I very much appreciate it.

The member for Nickel Belt, of course, knows full well the damage caused when scabs are being used by companies that decide that during a strike, they want to replace the workers who are on the picket line. As she said, she comes from Sudbury, a community torn apart last year during a lengthy strike at Vale Inco. That company used scabs to try to divide and conquer the community, divide and conquer the workers. It was a horrible, horrible situation.

When men and women who have worked hard, who have sacrificed a great deal, who have played by the rules decide—and I put to you, it is never an easy decision—to withdraw their labour in an effort to gain better wages, benefits, working conditions—well, imagine what it's like when men and women walk the picket line each and every day and they have to watch as neighbours, maybe even friends, sometimes relatives, are seduced into crossing a picket line. That's what the member from Nickel Belt was talking about in her remarks introducing this bill. It is destructive, it is poisonous, and it does nothing at all to smoothly resolve labour disputes in the province of Ontario. In fact, it does the absolute opposite: It leads to longer strikes and it leads to animosity. And

yes, unfortunately, from time to time, it can even lead to violence. We've seen that here in Ontario all too many times.

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This isn't the first time that New Democrats have brought forward a bill to ban the use of scabs. When we were the government, in fact, that was the law of the land. Bob Mackenzie, a great former member of this place who passed away recently, and who served as Ontario's first minister for labour, brought that law into place. Unfortunately, it was quickly undone by the Conservative government under Mr. Harris. And for the past 15 years, New Democrats have regularly tried to bring the law back because it is the fair and the right thing to do.

Make no mistake, though: This government has had almost eight years to reverse the Conservative government's decision. Eight long years this government has been in place, and they could have, at any time, brought back anti-scab legislation in this province, but they refused.

Now, I could talk a lot about that, but I hear we actually might have some progress today, that there might actually be some members who sit on the government benches who are prepared to support this bill this time around. I'm pleased to hear that. I'm pleased to hear that that's a possibility. Because if the bill does pass today, I urge the government to stop playing games and to get serious about anti-scab legislation in this province. If we can get it passed today, we know what happens next. The bill has to go to committee, and it has to go to committee quickly. It has to go to committee, go through the process and get back in this Legislature for a speedy third reading.

Now, we all know, and we've seen it very recently, that the government can do that when they're interested in getting a bill passed and when they're interested in changing the lay of the land in the province of Ontario. I'm not going to go into details, but we all know, sitting here, the most recent example of that.

Getting the bill back for third reading and then getting it through royal assent so that it can become the law before the next election is the obligation of the governing party. We've done our jobs here in this Legislature: the members here who are going to vote on this bill, the people in the galleries, and the labour leaders who have worked hard to raise this issue again and bring it forward, to come here with their voice and their strength saying that they want this as the law of the land. Everybody has done their job. Now it's up to the Liberal government on the other side.

Please do not insult these workers, these labour leaders. Vote for this bill, yes, and I applaud those who will, but do more than just that: Commit to passing it into law at the earliest opportunity. Ontario's working women and men will be watching. If it doesn't become law, everyone will know that it's the McGuinty Liberals who are responsible for that failure.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: Thank you, Speaker, for allowing me to speak to Bill 45. First, as others have, I want to acknowledge the member from Nickel Belt in bringing Bill 45 forward.

I want to say that traditionally in private members' time often it's matters of interest to a member, but not necessarily on broad government policy. But I also respect the fact that the third party, in particular, has this as a particular window of opportunity to bring forward policy measures that they wouldn't be able to get in front of this House at another time. That's why I respect and engage in the debate in that fashion.

I think the last time I spoke to this matter was on Bill 86 from the member from Welland. The words may not have been quite the same, but the fundamental principles certainly remain intact throughout it. At that point, I was not intending to be inflammatory, but it seemed that at that time my comments did inflame to some extent the gallery, and if that occurs again, I want to apologize to the Speaker up front and give him sort of a heads-up if he has to ask for order.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: You're going to make the same mistake again; is that what you're saying?

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: I'm eternally hopeful that that won't be the case, but just in the event that it is.

I want to say just a few things in the time available. This Parliament, this Legislature, has a long history, and during that history, there was only a roughly three- to four-year period, 1992 to 1995, in which legislation that is being proposed was in place. All of the time before that—with successive governments, at the very least of two stripes and not including anything that might have been a coalition of sorts of the day, a partnership—and subsequent to that, the majority parties of two different colours, the Conservatives and the Liberals, had either not seen fit to introduce that kind of legislation prior to 1982, nor subsequently once the Mike Harris government of the day, in 1995—and members across the way were there and were a part of that decision-making. They didn't see fit in their eight years to reintroduce that legislation.

Our government, in its time, has not introduced legislation to ban replacement workers. I wouldn't expect, in my view, that the government will anticipate introducing legislation to restrict replacement workers during the balance of this mandate, and I certainly wouldn't even want to anticipate anything beyond that. I think it's fair to say that one wouldn't expect that to occur.

Most of the speakers have referenced the successes that have occurred in labour relations. In my belief, that's a principal part of what we've managed to achieve collaboratively over a long period of time. But for more recent times, the level of success that both employers and employees have had in finding a means to negotiate settlements—when we speak to the area of 97% of negotiations getting settled without a strike or lockout, I think that speaks extremely well to the labour relations in this province. Presumably, of the remainder, the other 3%, although there are always hardships—there are

hardships to strikers, their families, to some extent the employer, their customers and their supply chain, but most dramatically it would affect the workers and their families. Having said that, it's not my understanding that each of those strikes, of that 3%, resulted in replacement workers being brought on site. So I'm not even sure what those numbers would be. But those strikes found ways to find negotiated settlements after the fact.

In the country, my understanding is that there are two provinces, BC and Quebec, that have legislation of this type, and there are eight provinces, including Ontario, that have chosen not to go that particular route. Whether that is right or wrong on numbers, the reality is that the vast majority of the provinces have chosen not to have legislation of this type and a minority, at this point, have.

The members opposite referenced the fact that there have been a number of times that this ban on replacement workers, legislation or something very similar, has been brought forward, and I think there are probably eight or nine times in the past number of years in which legislation, through private members' bills, has been brought forward for consideration by this Parliament. As I said when I opened up, I think that's an opportunity, and the right opportunity for the third party in particular, to be able to use this forum, private members' hour, to bring forward policy initiatives that are important to them and that they wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to bring forward.

I, too, want to thank the stakeholders who are here, the labour groups that are here, for taking the time to come in support of the member, in support of the legislation—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm pleased to join in this debate. The NDP caucus all wanted to participate. Of course, we're allowed a scant 12 minutes on private members' public business.

I've always respected the insight that the writer Jack London—he died in 1916, but I've always respected the insight that he provided to this whole issue of just what it is to be a scab. He wrote a very short commentary called "The Scab." Let me share it with you.

"After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad, and the vampire, he had some awful substance left with which he made a scab.

"A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a water brain, a combination backbone of jelly and glue.

"Where others have hearts, he carries a tumour of rotten principles.

"When a scab comes down the street, men turn their backs and angels weep in heaven, and the devil shuts the gates of hell to keep him out.

"No man (or woman) has a right to scab so long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in, or a rope long enough to hang his body with.

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"Judas was a gentleman compared with a scab. For betraying his master, he had character enough to hang himself. A scab has not.

“Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

“Judas sold his Saviour for 30 pieces of silver.

“Benedict Arnold sold his country for a promise of a commission in the British Army.

“The scab sells his birthright, country, his wife, his children and his fellowmen for an unfulfilled promise from his employer.

“Esau was a traitor to himself; Judas was a traitor to his God; Benedict Arnold was a traitor to his country.

“A scab is a traitor to his God, his country, his family and his class.”

Down where I come from in Welland, just like up in Sudbury, or in Windsor, Hamilton or Toronto, you're either with working women and men or you're against them. And this bill, Bill 45, is all about standing shoulder to shoulder, arm in arm, hand in hand with working women and men.

As a New Democrat, I'm proud to see this bill before this chamber. I'm proud to participate in its second reading. I'm proud of the working women and men across this province, across this country who struggled over the course of generations and decades and often paid with their blood, lives and liberty to advance the rights and interests of working people in North America and the world. I'm proud of you and I know that what you did wasn't for yourselves; it was for your kids and your grandkids. Re-enacting anti-scab legislation in the province of Ontario will be one of the greatest legacies we could ever create for our children or grandchildren.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Paul Miller: I hate to be the bad-news bearer, but I'm going to be. Welcome, brothers and sisters.

I'd like to tell this exalted Legislature that I have seen many times this bill brought forward. The last time I saw it was in Ottawa when I was lobbying for the Steelworkers and Mr. Dion was the head of the Liberals. We were lobbying, trying to get this bill passed in Ottawa. The Liberals at the time came to us, met with us, socialized with us and said they'd support us. We were thrilled. We thought it was going to be national anti-scab legislation.

Well, the day of the vote came. Our Liberal friends—question mark. Not only did half of them not show up; half of them walked out with Paul Martin, a big ship-builder owner, and the rest voted against us. They stabbed us right in the back. I watched them talking the night before; I watched them promise us that they would support us.

I'll tell you and I'll tell the people who are watching and the people in these galleries: This is only second reading. Some of the members over there may support it, and I hope they do, and I hope it passes today; hard work by my colleague from the Nickel Belt and all the other members. I hope it passes. I'll be thrilled. But I certainly won't be sold until it goes to third reading and it gets royal assent. Then it becomes law in Ontario.

Will this third reading ever see the light of day? I doubt it. Will it come before the election? I doubt it. Will

it happen? I doubt it. So I'm not going to roll over and be thrilled and excited about this until I see that it passes third reading and gets royal assent and is law in Ontario, like it is in BC and Quebec.

I can tell you that my colleague from the north, Mr. Bisson, would like to say a couple of words. I'm going to sit right down now before I get really angry about this.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I stand first of all as a Steelworker, second of all as a worker and third of all as a legislator to say that I support this on all fronts.

I think we understand that we need to find some way to equalize the battlefield when there are strikes. I saw what happened in Sudbury. I was on those picket lines with France and others, and we saw the division that happened in that community. I saw it in other communities across this province, and it's something that does not have to happen.

We know that at one time in this province we had anti-scab legislation. It was something that I was proud I voted for then as a member of the New Democratic government. We finally got the kind of balance and peace that we need in this province.

So I urge members of the assembly to stand up, to stand with the workers who are not only here but those across the province, to move this bill forward to second reading and to assist us in making this the law of the land yet again. I urge all members to vote for this bill because it is the right thing to do.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable member for Nickel Belt has two minutes for her response.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I did listen intently to what my colleagues had to say, and I must say that my level of enthusiasm is fading quickly. I hope this bill will pass.

The arguments that were made by my Liberal colleagues—all the doubts they bring forward—are rather interesting to hear when their own Premier is on record as saying that he would not use replacement workers if there was a strike of Ontario public servants. I'm really happy that Ontario public servants will get this protection, but what about all the other people in Ontario? I mean, he seems to get it, because he says he won't use replacement workers, understanding the damage that would do to all the communities in Ontario that would be affected, but he's not willing to put meat on the bone, not willing to have action follow words. So those words ring rather empty to me right now.

The member talked about how it is not in all strikes that replacement workers are used. He's absolutely right. At OCARE we talked about classism. It is not the university professors who get to sit on the picket line and watch replacement workers go by. It's not them. It is everybody else. It is the people at ECP; it is the people who drive taxicabs in Toronto; it is the people in Nanticoke. It is an issue of class. Some don't get replacement workers, but many classes in this society do—it is so discriminatory in its nature by the way it is rolling out in

every one of our communities—which makes it even more an impetus, if we want a fair and just society, to pass the bill.

I hope I can count on your support. It needs to be debated further. That can only happen with a yes vote.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The time allocated for this ballot item has now expired. We will vote on the member for Nickel Belt's ballot item in about 50 minutes.

IMMIGRANTS

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I move that, in the opinion of this House, a newly elected federal government must immediately negotiate a new Canada-Ontario immigration agreement that allows Ontario to assume control of the delivery of the programs and services to help newcomers settle and succeed, and must ensure that the agreement provides newcomers in Ontario equal treatment to those in Manitoba, Quebec and British Columbia.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Honourable members will notice that the motion just read by Mr. Dhillon is different from the motion in the notice paper, so I will reread the motion for the record and make a short comment.

"In the opinion of this House, a newly elected federal government must immediately negotiate a new Canada-Ontario immigration agreement that allows Ontario to assume control of the delivery of the programs and services to help newcomers settle and succeed, and must ensure that the agreement provides newcomers in Ontario equal treatment to those in Manitoba, Quebec and British Columbia."

I draw members' attention again to the fact that Mr. Dhillon has moved a different motion than the one printed in the order paper. Notice was waived for this ballot item, and so Mr. Dhillon is entitled to this. Though differently worded than the motion on notice, the new motion is still on the broad topic of immigration to Ontario. Copies of Mr. Dhillon's new motion are available from the table officers.

Mr. Dhillon has moved this motion. Pursuant to standing order 98, the honourable member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I'm pleased to rise in the Legislature today to speak to this very important motion. As members of this House know, in 2005 the Ontario government signed a historic immigration agreement with the federal government, known as the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement, also referred to as COIA.

COIA was historic because it was Ontario's first bilateral agreement on immigration and settlement. As part of this agreement, the federal government promised to invest an additional \$920 million in immigration and settlement programs in Ontario over a five-year period from 2005 to 2010. The primary objectives of the immigration agreement included:

- improved outcomes for newcomers to support successful social and economic integration,

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- increased economic benefits of immigration to address labour market needs through a provincial nominee program and temporary foreign worker agreement; and

- engaging municipalities to build partnerships and involve municipalities in immigration and integration activities related to their interests.

Ontario's first immigration agreement with Ottawa provided an infusion of new funds to help newcomers settle and learn or improve their English- or French-language skills. The first agreement was a very good start. It is now time to apply what we've learned from that experience and find new and better ways to help newcomers settle and put their skills to work quickly.

Each year our province receives over 100,000 new immigrants—almost half of all the immigrants who arrive in Canada. As the province that receives the most immigrants each year, Ontario and Canada both have a responsibility to ensure that immigrants have the resources they need to succeed. Immigrants need to have access to employment training, language training and settlement services so that they can find a good job to support their families and contribute to our economic prosperity.

Today, Quebec receives one and a half times more funding per immigrant for training and settlement than what the federal government invests in the same services in Ontario. The government of Canada currently has agreements with Manitoba, British Columbia and Quebec that allow those provinces a greater voice in the settlement of immigrants and greater control over the delivery and administration of settlement and immigration services.

What my motion calls for is simply a similar agreement in a new COIA that recognizes Ontario as a full partner on immigration. To start, Ottawa must keep its promise to Ontario's newcomers by spending the remaining \$207 million promised under the first COIA, and Ottawa must reverse their \$44-million funding cut to settlement services agencies.

As many of my colleagues can appreciate, settlement agencies are on the front lines every day helping our newcomers get integrated and settled quickly. This is important so that they can contribute to our shared economic prosperity.

Let me be clear: The motion on the table does not ask for a special agreement. It only asks for fairness: fairness for Ontario and fairness for our newcomers.

Last year, the Honourable Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Dr. Eric Hoskins, repeatedly called on the federal government to come to the table and negotiate a new COIA. After several months of repeated requests by Minister Hoskins, the government of Canada finally agreed to sit down and negotiate with Ontario earlier this year. Ontario came to the table in good faith with a mandate to reach an agreement that would provide services that would help newcomers succeed in Ontario; maximize the flow of funds directly into the province, reducing administrative burdens and overlaps; and ensure

that newcomers are able to contribute to a stronger economy, such as going on to start their own businesses and create more jobs.

At the negotiating table, Ontario's demand for fairness was met with inflexibility. As negotiations continued, a federal election was called, and now negotiations have paused. With a federal election under way, it is a good opportunity for all Ontarians to ask their federal candidates to treat Ontario and its newcomers fairly. It's time for Ottawa, for the next federal government, to listen to the growing calls for fairness and provide Ontario with the same kind of agreement it has with other provinces.

Ontario cannot afford to look the other way when Ottawa breaks its funding promise for our newcomers. That's because, when it comes to helping Ontarians, every penny counts and it really makes a difference. When delivering important settlement services for newcomers, Ontario needs to efficiently and effectively administer its programs. Different levels of government must not duplicate their efforts, which is how programs are delivered under the current government model. To this end, the solution to benefit our newcomers is obvious. The solution is clear: The government of Ontario should control the delivery of immigration and settlement services.

The existing patchwork of settlement and integration services in Ontario, where service delivery overlaps, is simply not the best way to serve new immigrants. Language training, for example, may have different rules, depending on whether funding comes from the federal government or the Ontario government. For newcomers trying to access these services, this makes no sense whatsoever and can be a deeply frustrating experience. The duplication in funding and the administrative complexity serve no one, whether funder, service provider or new immigrant.

As I've said before, this is not an innovative new approach; it's been done before. It's been done in Quebec, British Columbia and Manitoba, and it should be done in Ontario, where most of Canada's newcomers make their home.

A new immigration agreement would mean innovative services focused on newcomers that are easy to access and produce quicker results for newcomers, services that are more responsive to changing local needs and that are easily coordinated with other provincial programs that directly affect newcomers' success—programs like educational and skills training, employment counselling and many others.

A single immigration system for our province would result in better use of resources and better access for immigrants to the services they need to begin fulfilling their dreams and contributing to our economy. It would mean enhanced access and enhanced results for newcomers in my riding of Brampton West and across Ontario. Ultimately, it would mean a stronger, more prosperous, more vibrant economy for all Ontarians.

The McGuinty government understands that immigration is key to our economy. We understand that immi-

gration is significant because our newcomers will drive our labour force growth and our economy. In fact, within this decade, Ontario's net labour force growth will be driven completely by new immigrants. They will be our engineers, lawyers, IT specialists and other highly skilled and highly educated professionals. That's because our demographics are changing. People are having fewer children, and the baby boomers who make up a large portion of our workforce are retiring. As Minister Hoskins has said—and it's worth repeating—immigration is Ontario's lifeblood. It's our demographic future and the fuel of our economic engine.

Under the first COIA, Ontario's newcomers benefited from the federal government agreement. The agreement helped support the successful social and economic integration of newcomers. While the first COIA succeeded in bringing about some improvements for newcomers, we expect the federal government to continue to work with us. The government of Ontario wants what is best for our newcomers. We want them to thrive and prosper. That means Ontario's newcomers need a new immigration agreement similar to what Ottawa has with Quebec, British Columbia and Manitoba: a new immigration system, a new partnership that helps all immigrants access the services they need, when they need them, to ease the transition to their new home.

We urgently need a new Canada-Ontario immigration agreement, and we need it now. As Ontario turns the corner to a better tomorrow, our newcomers are an important part of our economic success.

I ask all members of this Legislature to support my motion that calls on the next federal government to treat Ontario's newcomers fairly by negotiating a new COIA where Ontario can control the delivery of important newcomer services.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

Mr. Steve Clark: As the PC Party's critic for citizenship and immigration, I'm pleased to respond to the comments of the member for Brampton West, MPP Vic Dhillon, today. I want to start by saying that I'm sure everyone in this House wants to ensure that newcomers to the province of Ontario have the best chance to succeed, so I'm happy to have the opportunity to speak to the member's motion.

Immigrants take a great risk when they make that huge decision to leave life as they know it in their country of birth to pursue the opportunities for a better future for themselves and their families here in Canada. We owe it to those risk-takers, those new Canadians, who need a kind of settlement program that will give them the chance to make a contribution to the cultural and economic vibrancy of Ontario.

1530

I certainly support the spirit of the member's motion that we're debating today. I think it's also important that we talk about some of the things that were perhaps conveniently not mentioned in his remarks, and that is the reason that the government of Canada has made the

decision to direct a portion of funding for settlement programs to other provinces. I think we need to look at the facts. The facts tell us that under Premier McGuinty's government, immigrants to Canada are increasingly choosing to reside in provinces other than Ontario.

Here's the reality: Since 2005, Ontario's share of immigrants settling in this country has decreased by 21%. Back in 2005, 54% of newcomers to this country circled Ontario on the map as their province of choice. It's the place the majority of Canadians wanted to call home. Last year, that number plummeted to 42%. I hope the member heard those statistics and I hope he remembers them when he stands up and claims Ontario is being treated unfairly. The reality of the situation is that in 2010-11, Ontario received \$3,500 per immigrant while other provinces, on average, received \$2,900. The reason total federal settlement funding for Ontario is declining in the coming year is simple: Under the McGuinty government, fewer immigrants are coming to this province.

These new Canadians know what so many of us in Ontario already know: After seven years—almost eight—of this government's tax and spend ways, we've become a have-not province. Our debt has soared, taxes are up, hydro rates are through the roof and jobs are hard to keep and even harder to find. That's not the kind of environment immigrants are looking for when they're deciding where in Canada they'll settle. They want to bring their skills to a province where their hard work will be rewarded, not gobbled up in taxes by a government that's hard-wired to spend it. We talk a lot in this place about the signs that this tired government opposite has grown out of touch and out of gas, but I think the statistics that I talked about are no greater condemnation of Premier McGuinty's record than to repeat those immigrant settlement numbers: 52% came here in 2005; 42% did so last year.

It's embarrassing to say that immigrants think Ontario, under this Premier, is a bad risk. That's a shameful state of affairs. We need to turn those numbers around. We need to create an economic environment in Ontario that makes us the engine of Canada's economy, as we once were. Of course, we know this government has no idea how to accomplish that, how to clean up the mess it created. It has proved it in this week's budget.

So what do we do? What do they do? They blame the fact that immigrants are bypassing Ontario on someone else—in this case, the federal government. The member for Brampton West stands up with his motion, which basically calls on the federal government to give us more money. What his motion doesn't do is tell us how they plan to spend it. They won't say what safeguards will be put in place to ensure that these settlement programs don't turn into the latest Liberal boondoggle.

We've been down this road too many times with this government. We all know that words like "accountability" don't exist on that side of the House. I'll remind the member opposite of slushgate, which I think we all talked about, where the previous minister was forced to resign by wasting \$32 million on a program that awarded

money based on who the applicants knew within the Liberal Party. It's also important to mention the Auditor General's comments about the oversight on that program, which he called "the worst that I've ever seen."

I ask the member for Brampton West to keep that in mind when he points the finger at Ottawa and anywhere else. Of course, Ontario deserves—it deserves—equal treatment to ensure that our settlement programs can effectively support their integration into our communities, but I should tell him, and I would like to tell his caucus colleague, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, to follow the lead of Ontario PC leader Tim Hudak, who has called on the government to design a settlement program that is fully costed and contains accountability and performance measures.

You have to have those accountabilities in place. You can't just ask for a blank cheque. No responsible federal government, no matter what political stripe, is going to negotiate an agreement and hand over hundreds of millions of dollars with no plan to show how it's going to be spent and how it's even working. Sadly, that kind of accountability and respect for taxpayer dollars isn't on this government's watch. I know that our leader, Tim Hudak, has talked about accountability—it's going to be a fundamental principle—and I think that when it comes to settlement programs, we have to provide that accountability. Again, we can't just ask for a blank cheque.

I also want to mention our leader's Newcomers Employment Opportunities Act, 2010, which will provide incentives for immigrant small business entrepreneurs to invest in Ontario. The bill will help new Ontarians cut through the red tape and encourage them to establish businesses and create jobs. It will assist newcomers to this province who work hard and play by the rules, and it's the kind of environment for new investment that I think we need.

In closing, I want to tell the House about a situation that happened in my own riding just this week. It's a sad case, and I couldn't believe it when I was given the details. Last summer, officials from the city of Brockville were among a group of leaders from my riding who travelled to China as part of an economic trade mission. One of the contacts that they made overseas has since followed up with city officials, and they planned to invest \$4 million in Brockville to start up a manufacturing facility that they hoped would employ 31 people. An agent acting for these investors contacted the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration about the provincial nominee program, to start the process to bring this important investment in my riding. It should have been a slam dunk. Instead, here's what they were told by a ministry official: "Don't go to Brockville. Don't invest your money in that part of the province because some of the factories have been closed." This manager said that they were unaware of any competitive advantages that Brockville has to offer. They were told, "It's only suitable for tourism." Rather than come to Brockville, they were encouraged to make their investment in Hamilton, which is unbelievable. Officials from my riding

travelled halfway around the world to make these important contacts. Just as they were about to see an investment come back, your government steps in, shoves the city aside and tries to direct the money elsewhere. I have to ask you: Whose side are you guys on? It's little wonder that the economic development director for the city told my office that he's furious about what happened, and I am too. It may come as a surprise to someone working at a ministry office here in Toronto that there's life in Ontario beyond the city's boundaries. They should take a drive and experience it sometime.

Yes, it's true that, thanks to this government and its policies, Brockville's manufacturing sector has seen some unfortunate job losses, but they're still home to some major international companies like Procter and Gamble, 3M and Shell. Surely it's not too much to ask, by local officials in my riding, to expect the Ontario government to know this. Even if they can't offer any help, they at least shouldn't try to scuttle any deals.

What makes the situation even more ridiculous is that at the same time one government ministry is actively trying to keep newcomers out of Brockville, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is operating a pilot project designed to attract immigrants to come to our area. It's a classic example that on that side of the House, one hand doesn't know what the other is doing.

So there's just an example from this week, in my own riding, when this particular government and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration can't run their own provincial nominee program. We need accountability.

I support his motion, but I think we have to have those checks and balances so that we're not just asking for a blank cheque.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. David Ramsay: I'm very happy to rise in my place today to talk about an issue that, as a northern member, maybe many people in the province wouldn't associate our having an interest in. As you know, we just announced a northern Ontario growth plan, and one of the reasons for doing that is to attempt to revitalize the northern Ontario economy. Right now, we actually have revitalization taking place in many of the resource industries, especially gold, and we're having new allocations of wood happening up in the north that provide new opportunities to create new forest products. We have a very low cost of living up there in regard to living because we have a housing stock that's already there and we have infrastructure in our towns that needs people.

1540

We'd like to have more control in Ontario so that we could work and attract potential immigration that could come into northern Ontario. This would really help us revitalize our economy and provide incredible entrepreneurial opportunities for people from all around the world to come north and take advantage of some of the booms that are happening right now.

In two areas of my riding gold mines, in particular, are being revitalized, and some are being started up anew for

the first time. This is creating jobs in the construction phase and in the mining phase, but also all the suppliers that are required, as mining has some of the greatest spin-off of any economic activity—some economists would say, up to five jobs for every one mining job created.

So there's incredible opportunity, and we're seeing people coming up now and starting to manufacture some of the equipment that is being needed in the mining industry. We're very pleased about that. That's the type of thing we want to be able to offer, if we could have more control of immigration policy for our province.

I think it's important to note that we're 40% of the economy of this country, and that's a dynamic part of this economy. While we've had some setbacks with the great recession that happened a couple of years ago, we've now recovered 91% of our jobs. The United States, on the other hand, has only recovered 15% of their jobs. So we're making a good effort here to rebuild this economy better than anybody else in North America, for sure.

We need immigrants to come into Ontario, to take advantage of the opportunities that we have here, to bring in the skills and entrepreneurial spirit that they can offer this particular economy. We need that agreement with the federal government. We need to have more control, so that we can work with immigrants that come into Ontario and provide, specifically, the skills that they need to be able to fit into Ontario society.

I'm very pleased to be able to stand in my place and support my colleague's bill today. I hope that the other members of the House would feel fit to support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I did want to make it back here because I just want to start by saying that our member from Leeds-Grenville has a very distinct and informed opinion on the role of new Canadians. He speaks often and frequently about how important it is to the Canadian economy, but more importantly, to the Ontario economy. I think what he tries to establish, generally, is that it comes down to the issue of fairness.

This motion, the way it was crafted initially—I couldn't speak to the way it was crafted—was sort of out of order. The initial version of this particular motion could have been challenged in terms of the fact that your government has dealt with legislation on this and the minister has agreed to do something about it.

Now, if you look at the fine wording of it, it tends to blame the federal government. That's kind of the pushback on this thing; it's blaming the federal government.

Mr. Dhillon, I respect the work you do in your community. You're right. We all here, I believe, support the importance of new Canadians, people coming to Canada, the innovative people, the people that take the risks to come here and contribute to the country. What they need is opportunities to be able to contribute, to work, raise their family and have pride in community, which in most cases—90%—they do.

The fundamental thing here is that the motion requests funds from the prospective government of Canada that

were recently allocated to other provinces, due to dwindling numbers and new immigration that wanted to settle in Ontario.

Our member from Leeds–Grenville tried to establish the reasons people are choosing other destinations like Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan has the highest GDP per population of all of Canada. It's a very large province with a very small population: lots of room to grow, lots of opportunity.

We are elected to represent Ontario—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. Your time has expired.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): You'll have to negotiate that with somebody else.

Further debate?

Mr. Michael Prue: I rise to speak about this motion, as I did to the motion that was put forward by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration several months ago. In reality, the motion that was put in by my honourable friend was an identical motion, which caused some form of confusion, hence the Speaker needing to start the debate off by reading it again. There was, in fact, a one-word change in order to allow this motion to proceed again today, because this Legislature has already debated the exact same thing, save and except we're now asking a future government to do something; the last time, we asked the incumbent government to do it. But the rest of the wording is identical. This Legislature has already voted unanimously to do this, but nothing has happened. Why? Why has nothing happened? That's because this motion is making the exact same errors as the motion before.

When I stood here before with the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, as I'm going to say to the honourable member today—this motion, and I quote in part, “allows Ontario to assume control of the delivery of programs and services.”

The province has had this authority enshrined in legislation since it received royal assent in Britain on March 29, 1867. Since 1867, this province has been singularly able to assume control of the delivery of programs and services related to immigrants and, in all that time, has chosen not to do so.

To be clear, section 91 of the British North America Act, which received royal assent 144 years and two days ago, says that section 91 is all of the federal powers. Section 92 gives all of the provincial powers, and section 93 gives joint jurisdictional powers in two areas. One is agricultural, and one is immigration. In all of those 144 years, the governments of this province have never done what they can do and what they should be doing, even as this motion is being debated.

In 1978, the government of Quebec did right by all of its immigrants, its newcomers, the people who aspired to live in that province, the people who needed help in settlement arrangements or the people, most importantly, who needed to have their diplomas and the like ascertained for the equivalency of Quebec law. In 1978, the

province of Quebec unilaterally passed their own act, which is still extant. It's still in effect; it still works.

The act is entitled, and I have it here, An Act respecting immigration to Québec. It's a pretty simple document—it's a few pages long—but within the four walls of that legislation, the government of Quebec can select its own immigrants. The government of Quebec can set the selection criteria for how those immigrants are chosen, so that they can choose entrepreneurs, tradespeople, professors, nuclear scientists, janitors or anyone else that they need to help the province of Quebec. They have the laws to fully integrate their citizens, something that this is trying to do here today, I guess. They have the right to investigate fraud, under the immigration act of Quebec, if people are getting their papers illegally, wrongfully or without due intent to practise what they promised to do. They also have penal provisions set out within the act.

1550

This government can do any of those things. I have said this since I have been in this Legislature, to Conservatives when I sat on the government side, and I don't know how many times to Liberals every time this issue comes up. This is what can be done. I know of what I speak. I worked in the immigration department for 21 years. I worked in the national headquarters. I was responsible, in part, for the Quebec act. This province can do it today. We don't need this motion. We need will on the government's side to do exactly what Quebec did all those years ago. We can do wonderful things in terms of our immigration, but we have to have the guts to do it, the wherewithal and the money to spend.

The second part of this says, to “ensure that the agreement provides newcomers in Ontario equal treatment to those in Manitoba, Quebec and British Columbia.” I would be the first to say that if this government doesn't want to do what Quebec did, if this government simply wants to let the Canadian government do whatever they do under their immigration program and we accept whatever immigrants decide that they eventually want to settle here—and the member from Leeds–Grenville is absolutely right: The numbers in terms of immigration to the province of Ontario have declined each and every year since 2005.

There is a reason for that. Part of the reason is that our economy has not been as robust as what it was in the past, but secondly, there are increasing opportunities for people elsewhere in this country, increasing opportunities for francophones because of the 1978 law in Quebec and increasing opportunities with the boom in western Canada, particularly as relates to energy production. People are continuing and are seeing more and more of our immigrants go to British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and, to a lesser extent, Manitoba and Quebec. Our numbers are declining. We cannot expect to get the same amount of money today that we could have expected back in 2005.

But I don't have a problem with those portions about getting equality with Manitoba and BC—except that both

of those provinces do a whole lot more than this province is promising to do for its new and recent immigrant population. How can we expect to get the same money and provide the same services as Quebec? It's the thing that I don't understand in this whole resolution. Quebec has spent money since 1978 hiring immigration officers to work within the body of Quebec. Has Ontario? Ontario used to have immigration settlement officers when I joined the immigration department in 1973. They were at the airport. There was a thing called Welcome House on University Avenue. It was closed down in the 1970s and never reopened again. Quebec has that; we don't have that. How can we expect the same amount of money when we won't do that?

Quebec has visa officers that are posted in every francophone country from whence new citizens, new immigrants are coming. Are we going to do that? Are we asking for the same amount of money so that we can do that? I don't think so. I don't see how we can get the same amount of money unless we're going to provide the same service.

They have integration personnel who work with new immigrants, even before immigrants are given their visa. They work with them in order to ascertain what kind of education they have and do the Quebec equivalent, so that when an immigrant gets on the plane, say perhaps from Côte D'Ivoire, and they have an engineering certificate, they already know, when they get off, the equivalent in terms of Quebec. They already know whether they can start working as an engineer the next morning. Does Ontario want to do that? Ontario should do that, but you're not asking for that. You're just asking for some more money, so I don't see how you can expect, or anyone can expect, that we get the same kind of privileges or the same kind of money out of the federal government.

They have an investigations unit and they pay for that too, in case people rip off the system, and heaven knows that some people are wont to rip off this system here in Canada, I have to tell you. I've seen it myself.

Those are all costs that the Quebec government has spent for 32 years. They have spent this money and developed an immigration system of which we would be equally proud, if we had the gumption to go out and do it ourselves.

I posed the same question to the minister, and I posed the same question to the previous finance minister when the Liberals were first elected in 2003, and he came before this House with the selfsame thing.

I do not believe that there can be equality of Ontario with the other provinces unless we provide equal service. Is this government finally saying they want to provide the equality of service that people get in Manitoba, that people get in British Columbia, which have invested far more from their provinces in the integration of new immigrants? Is that what you're going to do? If that's what this government's going to do, I'm all for it, and I think the federal government may be more than willing to talk to this government, talk to the Liberals and say, "All

right. You want to provide the same kind of services that are being provided in Manitoba and British Columbia? Then we will sit down and talk about getting the same amount of money."

Or conversely, if this government chooses to set up an immigration bill for Ontario, just like Quebec did in 1978, and set up all of those things that they do, like selecting immigrants, selection criteria to choose who we want, integration of new immigrants, investigations, penal provisions and everything else that is contained within the body of that act, then I would suggest that the federal government will give Ontario—or it doesn't even have to give; we can do it unilaterally. Nobody is going to complain if Ontario wants to go down the selfsame road as Quebec has done so successfully for all of those 32 years.

People deserve a better immigration system, coming to this province. When will this government produce it? It's not just enough to ask for the money; it's to set out a program where new immigrants, who come to this land with a gleam in their eye and hope for their children, have an opportunity to fully integrate. It's not just how much money we get per capita; it is a government that is committed to doing all of the things that are necessary to provide that, just like is being done in Manitoba, just like is being done in British Columbia, and certainly which is done on a sterling level in Quebec for the last 32 years. When is this government going to do the same thing?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm pleased to join the debate this afternoon on the motion on immigration services.

I must say, I was quite offended by the remarks from the member from Leeds–Grenville, who was treating immigration services as if they were some sort of Liberal scam. I found that quite offensive, when I think about my own local immigrant services agency.

When I was first elected in 2003, the immigration services in Guelph were quite inadequate, and I'm not blaming that on any party here; it was just a fact of life. They were. But the local community worked together very hard—worked with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, worked with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration—to totally reform what was happening in Guelph. That included a lot of leadership from the Guelph Chamber of Commerce, because they recognized the economic importance to the community of making sure that we improved the settlement services and got people involved in the community.

There was a new board. There was a new CEO. There was a new governance structure. And out of that came Guelph immigrant services. They restructured so that they qualified for a lot of additional government grants. What has come out of that is vastly improved settlement services for the newcomers in Guelph. And then what happened? In December, they got a letter from the federal government saying, "You're going to lose your new grant funding again," because the feds just decided they were going to pull some of the funding.

So I think it's important for us to look at this Canada-Ontario immigration agreement which was signed by the province and the federal government in November 2005. It's a five-year agreement. When it came toward the end, it was clear that it wasn't going to be renegotiated in any sort of a timely way. So there was an agreement to extend the agreement for about a year, until April 2011, and the agreement that we have expires today. The end of that agreement is today.

1600

What we're asking for is simply that we have a new agreement which reaches the needs of Ontario, but I think it's also important to note the behaviour of the federal government. Part of that agreement was to provide new funds for immigrant services in Ontario of \$920 million over the five years of that original agreement, and I want to tell you what happened.

In 2005-06, the federal government failed to provide \$46.8 million. In 2006-07, they failed to provide \$53.7 million. In 2007-08, they failed to provide \$52 million. In 2008-09, they failed to provide \$40.5 million. In 2009-10, they failed to provide to Ontario immigrant settlement services \$14.4 million. That's over \$200 million of the money that was in that five-year-old agreement which never flowed out of a \$920-million agreement. Of course they don't want to renew the agreement. They don't want to spend the money on settlement services in Ontario, and we think that is wrong. We think we should all be supporting immigrant settlement services in this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Dave Levac: I want to thank the member from Brampton West for bringing this motion to the table. Quite frankly—I want to be very clear—not only am I going to support it, but I'm going to explain very clearly that it's an ask for negotiation. Some of the members are a little bit anxious about exactly what the details are, but that's inside of a negotiation.

I want to thank the member for simply saying that the provincial government, which, as of today, will no longer have that agreement in place, is asking for the new government—no political stripe—to negotiate. Let's get those negotiations going. They spend almost a billion dollars across the nation on immigrant settlement, and we don't have a piece of that pie. I'm just suggesting that the member is trying to bring it to the attention of Ontario and Ontarians to provide us with some of that money to do that.

I'm not going to argue with the member from Beaches–East York because, quite frankly, historically—and I defer to his expertise, obviously—every province can do it alone, but that's an awful lot of money that we're going to simply say, because we can do it alone—we're strapped for cash, and they're already spending \$1 billion—let's not go after a piece of that.

I think it's a good idea to make a motion from this Legislature that we think it would be nice for us to get a piece of that action. It's \$1 billion that they're going to spend across the nation, and if Ontario doesn't get any of

it—why wouldn't we want to sit down and ask them to do that?

If the member from Leeds–Grenville says that he's going to support the motion, I would hate to hear what he would say if he didn't support the motion. I don't think he talked very much about the concepts. I appreciate that the member from Beaches–East York talked about the various reasons why immigration is happening, but we're still talking about over 100,000 immigrants who come to Ontario out of the two hundred and some odd thousand who come from around the world, give or take—I'm just basically saying. Now we're saying, because the numbers have gone down a little bit and other reasons for them to move, that we shouldn't be looking for a piece of that action—it doesn't make sense to me.

Why I'm supporting the motion from the member from Brampton West is simply because in terms of his experience and his knowledge of the immigrant settlement concepts within his own riding and what he's seen around him, it makes sense.

I want to talk for a couple of seconds about the immigrant settlement offices in the riding of Brant. I was born and raised in Brantford. I know from many, many years ago what Brantford looked like and what it consisted of in terms of immigration. I can honestly tell you that, right now, the statistics are impressive. We've got about 120 different countries that we now know we've settled in our region—120 different countries speaking about 95 different languages. Holy mackerel, what a cosmopolitan picture from what it used to be when I was a kid. We were shocked and staggered by the fact that we saw black people: Talk about a homogenized community for the longest time, when I was a kid.

Quite frankly, it became more evident that people wanted to settle here. The settlement services people provide such a stellar supervision of getting funds to help them settle and to become quicker contributors to the community.

What the member is asking us to do, if we listen carefully, is to negotiate a new Canada-Ontario immigration agreement that allows Ontario to assume control of the delivery of the programs that they're paying for and to have some type of control of how we use that, just like we do with Quebec, British Columbia and Manitoba. I don't see that that's a bad thing, and I don't see that as legislators, we shouldn't be standing up and simply saying, "You know what? That's not a bad idea."

The agreement is finished today. As of today, the federal government needs some encouragement to get back to the table and let us get a piece of that almost \$1 billion that's being distributed around the nation that we're paying for, as an Ontario taxpayer, to the national government. Let's get a piece of that action.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable member from Brampton West has two minutes for his response.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I'd like to thank the members from Leeds–Grenville, Timiskaming–Cochrane, Durham, Beaches–East York, Guelph and Brant.

As we learned in this week's budget, we've regained 91% of all the jobs that were lost in the recent recession. In the US, only 15% of the jobs have come back. The majority of the jobs that we gained in Ontario were the well-paid type, which is very good news. This is the most prime or most opportune time for the new government that will be elected federally to provide Ontario its fair share of funds with respect to settlement agencies, settlement services and training for new immigrants. This is a huge concern to me in my riding, as a good share of the new immigrants that do come to Ontario settle in Brampton West, in Brampton-Springdale and in Mississauga South. I want them to come and be trained and be contributing members of our society so they can pay taxes and so we can have better hospitals, better roads.

The point was mentioned that new immigrants are moving to other provinces. Yes, that is the case. You know, the good news is that they move to new provinces—they come in to new provinces but they don't settle in Manitoba or Saskatchewan; they come to Ontario because of the great programs we have. I think we can do a better job with more money from the federal government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The time provided for private members' public business has now expired. It's time to vote.

PROTECTION OF MINORS
IN AMATEUR SPORTS ACT, 2011
LOI DE 2011 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES MINEURS PARTICIPANT
À DES SPORTS AMATEURS

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We will first deal with ballot item number 73, standing in the name of Mr. Ouellette.

Mr. Ouellette has moved second reading of Bill 86, An Act to provide protection for minors participating in amateur sports.

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

Second reading agreed to.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I would recommend that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Is it agreed that the bill be referred to the standing committee? Agreed. So ordered.

LABOUR RELATIONS
AMENDMENT ACT
(REPLACEMENT WORKERS), 2011
LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL
(TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We will now deal with ballot item number 74. Madame Gélinas has moved second reading of Bill 45, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will call in the members after the next vote.

IMMIGRANTS

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We'll now deal with ballot item number 75, standing in the name of Mr. Dhillon: Mr. Dhillon's motion.

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

Motion agreed to.

LABOUR RELATIONS
AMENDMENT ACT
(REPLACEMENT WORKERS), 2011
LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL
(TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1610 to 1615.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Madame Gélinas has moved second reading of Bill 45. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Bartolucci, Rick	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Bisson, Gilles	Levac, Dave	Ramsay, David
Brownell, Jim	Marchese, Rosario	Ruprecht, Tony
DiNovo, Cheri	Mauro, Bill	Tabuns, Peter
Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul	
Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David	

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Arthurs, Wayne	Dickson, Joe	Phillips, Gerry
Balkissoon, Bas	Hardeman, Ernie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bentley, Christopher	Hoskins, Eric	Rinaldi, Lou
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Sandals, Liz
Best, Margaret	Kular, Kuldip	Smith, Monique
Carroll, Aileen	Kwinter, Monte	Sorbara, Greg
Chudleigh, Ted	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Colle, Mike	Moridi, Reza	Zimmer, David
Delaney, Bob	O'Toole, John	
Dhillon, Vic	Pendergast, Leeanna	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 16; the nays are 28.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negated.

Interruption.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Order.

The minister without portfolio.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until next Monday at 10:30.

The House adjourned at 1619.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of 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	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, P.C., Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	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	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
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) Gélinas, France (NDP) Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Oakville Nickel Belt Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB) Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB) Jones, Sylvia (PC) Klees, Frank (PC) Kormos, Peter (NDP) Kular, Kuldeep (LIB) Kwinter, Monte (LIB) Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB) Leal, Jeff (LIB) Levac, Dave (LIB) MacLeod, Lisa (PC) Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock Dufferin–Caledon Newmarket–Aurora Welland Bramalea–Gore–Malton York Centre / York-Centre Glengarry–Prescott–Russell Peterborough Brant Nepean–Carleton Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Marchese, Rosario (NDP) Martiniuk, Gerry (PC) Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina Cambridge London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB) McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB) Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP)	Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
Kim Craitor, Bob Delaney
Garfield Dunlop, Peter Fonseca
Phil McNeely, John O'Toole
Maria Van Bommel
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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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**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jim Brownell
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Kuldip Kular, Dave Levac
Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti
Joyce Savoline
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permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
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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

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permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi
Bas Balkissoon, Steve Clark
Joe Dickson, Sylvia Jones
Amrit Mangat, 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
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Peter Shurman, Maria Van Bommel
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