



No. 112

N° 112

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario  
Second Session, 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario  
Deuxième session, 39<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 20 April 2011**

**Mercredi 20 avril 2011**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

---

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



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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 20 April 2011

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 20 avril 2011

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**BUILDING FAMILIES AND SUPPORTING  
YOUTH TO BE SUCCESSFUL ACT, 2011**

**LOI DE 2011 FAVORISANT  
LA FONDATION DE FAMILLES  
ET LA RÉUSSITE CHEZ LES JEUNES**

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 19, 2011, on the motion for second reading of Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance / Projet de loi 179, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille en ce qui concerne l'adoption et les soins et l'entretien.

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

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm very pleased to rise today for second reading debate on the Building Families and Supporting Youth to Be Successful Act. This legislation is the next step in our improvements to Ontario's adoption system and will, if passed, allow thousands more kids the opportunity to live happy lives in stable, loving, permanent families.

We know that 7,000 crown wards currently have access orders which prevent them from being eligible for adoption. This legislation proposes to remove those barriers. This legislation will also help build a brighter future for Ontario's crown wards. These changes would allow youth whose care arrangements ended at age 16 or 17 to return to their CAS to receive supports until age 21. We need to ensure that the door is wide open for Ontario's most vulnerable children and youth, so they have the tools they need to succeed.

Yesterday my parliamentary assistant, Mike Colle, introduced second reading of this important piece of legislation. I want to thank him; the member for Nipissing, Ms. Smith; and the member from Peterborough, Mr. Leal, as well as my colleagues on the other side of the House, for rising to speak to this bill.

I understand how personal and touching the issue of adoption is for so many people. I thank all of my col-

leagues for speaking to this legislation, and many of them for highlighting how this legislation, if passed, will improve our current adoption system. Ms. Smith and the member from Dufferin-Caledon both spoke about how their own families have been touched by and shaped through adoption.

I'm hopeful that in this particular debate, as we stand to speak to this bill, raise questions and discuss its principles, we continue to keep one thing in mind; that is, the kids and the families who will be affected by these important measures. We don't always have the opportunity to put politics aside in this House, but this particular legislation deserves our best efforts in this regard.

Yesterday I truly wanted to be in this House with my colleagues; however, over the last few days I've been hosting the first aboriginal child welfare summit in Ontario, which was held at Fort William First Nation. The summit brought together approximately 200 representatives from political-territorial organizations, independent First Nations, aboriginal service delivery organizations and so many others to continue the conversation about how we can best meet the unique needs of aboriginal children and their families. It was an incredible opportunity to learn about successful practices and innovative approaches that will help us work together to transform the future for aboriginal kids and their families.

The traditional model of foster care or adoption is not necessarily the right path to permanency for these children. That is why the Child and Family Services Act also recognizes customary care as a way for children to find permanent homes. Customary care is the care and supervision of an aboriginal child by a person who is not the child's parent, according to the customs of the child's band or native community. Each community defines its own traditions, and discussions at the aboriginal child welfare summit solidified our commitment to work with CASs and First Nations to increase the use of these arrangements so that more aboriginal children and youth are able to stay connected to their communities, cultures and traditions, and in permanent homes.

I understand that the need to respect the aboriginal models of care was raised in debate yesterday, and I'm pleased to hear that. Also discussed within the context of yesterday's debate were some questions with respect to openness orders, notice provisions, the implementation of subsidies, supporting our kids with special needs and other work that needs to be done to modernize the child welfare sector. I'm pleased to hear that these thoughtful questions were raised on the floor of this Legislature, and I'm very happy to speak to some of them this morning.

In developing this legislation, we sought to ensure that it reflected a balanced approach for all parties, while keeping in mind one goal: our drive to find permanent homes for waiting kids. The proposed legislation is very child-focused. It allows for contact with birth families while still respecting the expectations of prospective parents. The proposed legislation strikes the right balance, because it is focused on what is best for the child.

In so many instances across the province, I have been told that an access order may exist yet no one is actively making use of that access. We don't want to limit a child's potential for a permanent family because of this. On the other hand, in cases where it would be in the child's best interest to maintain some contact with their birth family, the court can make an openness order under these new provisions.

At the same time, we must also keep in mind the wishes of those prospective parents who want to understand the nature of the relationship between the child and the people who may have access for openness orders. To balance this, the proposed legislation requires the judge who may be granting an openness order to consider the ability of the prospective parents to fulfill those terms. Again, all of these provisions have a common goal when trying to achieve this balance: What is in the best interest of the child.

I want to spend a few moments with respect to notice within the legislation. When a children's aid society intends to place a child for adoption, prior to placing the child in the adoptive home, the society must provide notice to any individual who has an access order with respect to the child. The notice will contain the following information: that the CAS intends to place the child for adoption, that the access order that person has will automatically end when the child is placed for adoption, and that the person whose access will terminate upon adoption may apply to the court for an openness order.

A 30-day notice period to bring an application for an openness order is consistent with many notice periods in the Family Law Act and is intended to balance the need to minimize the length of time before a child can be placed with an adoptive family and, at the same time, provide sufficient time for the person whose access will terminate to apply to the court for the openness order.

The package of reforms announced last week was not the first improvements we've made to our adoption system. Since establishing the expert panel, our government has taken a number of steps to increase the number of kids who have the opportunity to grow up in healthy, stable and permanent homes, while reducing the number of kids who come into CAS care. Last year alone, we increased the number of adoptions by 21%.

We made important changes to the funding model, which provided an 8% increase to CAS adoption funding. We established standardized home study and parent training programs. We asked the Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare to look at ways to strengthen and build on our successes in permanency, including adoption, to improve our child welfare system and achieve the best outcomes for kids.

#### 0910

In 2006, we did make some changes that allowed for judges to use openness orders as another tool to increase permanency. An effective government takes action, waits for results, assesses those results and then takes further action if the attendant results are not being achieved. While we did introduce the openness order as a tool in 2006, we have not seen the level of uptake we would consider to be significant, and that is why we are proposing this legislation, which would fully remove a barrier to permanency for over 7,000 crown wards.

In addition to this, we will implement an education strategy targeted to the family law bench and bar, as well as CASs, to increase the use of existing openness mechanisms. We will do so because we are committed to ensuring that these changes deliver measurable results for thousands of Ontario kids and families.

Yesterday, the Legislature heard about the work our government is doing to modernize the child welfare system. It's important to note that funding for CASs has increased by over 30% since 2003. In the last decade, funding has gone from \$500 million to over \$1.5 billion, and this year 72% of CASs are receiving more funding than last year.

Our government knows that our child welfare system must be modernized, and that is why we established the Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare. The commission has made recommendations to reduce administrative burden and has taken the first steps to initiate the amalgamation of some CASs so they become more sustainable. As part of their work, there will also be advice given with respect to the current funding formula, and the priorities described within our package of adoption reforms will be of paramount consideration during those deliberations.

It is very important to be clear on the issue of subsidies, as it seems there may have been some concern that this is not mapped out in the legislation. We know that many CASs are already providing targeted subsidies to make it possible for families to adopt children in care, and for this, no legislative amendments are required. We know that 46 CASs are currently administering over 2,000 subsidy agreements across the province, and we need to understand what that looks like on the ground. Our first step will be to seek their advice and that of other experts and better understand how we can build on these experiences across the province.

Another important subject that was raised during debate yesterday was kids in care who have special needs. We know that 82% of crown wards have special needs, and it goes without saying that our package of legislative and policy reforms will connect directly with those kids who need our supports the most.

Our government is confident that our package of legislative changes and other supports will help young people in the care of children's aid societies and prospective adoptive parents build the lives they've always dreamed of.

I am heartened that Ontario's adoption and child protection stakeholders share our confidence. I have re-

ceived many letters of support from Ontarians over the last week. One prospective adoptive mom wrote, "Thank you on behalf of all of us adoptive parents and all those children who don't have a voice." A mentor to a former crown ward wrote, "Thank you ... how much better the lives of many children would be with stable families who could give them security and help them rebuild trust in people." This is incredibly encouraging. But the greatest encouragement I take comes in knowing that the young people who stand to benefit the most have thanked us for the important steps we are taking. They have told us that every kid in Ontario deserves a family and that nothing compares to the love and support that a permanent family can provide.

One week ago today, we introduced our exciting package of adoption and crown ward support reforms. Attending that announcement was Oakville author Deborah Brennan. Ms. Brennan is a member of the Adoption Council of Canada and has written and published a book entitled *Labours of Love*. It chronicles the journeys of Canadians who have opened their hearts and their lives to give a child a forever family.

Ms. Brennan gave me a copy of her book when she was here last week, and I want to leave you with a quote from the book. "Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one." And so today I call on all members to support this important legislation, which will give that gift of a forever family to thousands of waiting kids across the province.

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** This is an important subject. In fact, I thought yesterday our critic made some very supportive remarks which, and in that sense, would imply to us that our caucus is supportive of this.

I think putting kids in care at the very centre of this whole discussion is a very important position to take. Just a couple of things: You're saying that the subsidies could be targeted by, as you said in your remarks, the 46 children's aid societies that are in fact exercising 2,000 of those subsidy agreements. That's important. I think that, for instance, grandparents or other members of the child's immediate relatives have first right, I believe, and they may need support. In the case of grandparents being the adoptive parents, in the case of where the child's parents have separated and all these things weren't resolvable, I'd be supportive of that.

In the case of grandparents—I am a grandparent. I want to put on the record here, with a little diversion, if I can, that last Friday, April 15, at about 7 o'clock in the evening, my son Andrew and his wife, Alison, had a little baby girl. They've named her Alexandra Lee. She was seven pounds, six ounces. She was born in Cobourg, and the proud grandparents now are Ed and Brenda Wielgos, who live in Whitby, and my wife, Peggy, and I. That's really putting important priorities first. That's just my own public service announcement.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Congratulations.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I promised them I'd get it on the Hansard record. But it just shows how important grandparents are, because we were all there Friday night at the Cobourg hospital. This is an important way of recognizing that in the adoption arena it's just as important to grandparents in this overall equation to look at it and make sure they have the supports in place, so I'd be supportive of that provision.

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** A Chatham grandmother, Wendy O'Riley, wonders how many more grandparents caring for their grandchildren will have their financial support terminated by this government and local welfare officials. She had to go to a tribunal to get reinstated. She makes \$15,000 a year and has brought up her 13-year-old granddaughter off and on since she was three years old.

This government still hasn't changed the directives on the temporary care assistance. I brought a bill forward to change it so that these grandparents wouldn't have to struggle on fixed incomes and wouldn't have to come to Toronto to tribunals and wouldn't have extreme problems when they are cut off.

The government will give away billions and billions of dollars to big business, but they'll cut off a grandmother of \$262 a month to bring up her grandchild. Then they've got the nerve and audacity to tell them to go on to foster care, which costs the government \$900 to \$1,100 per month per child, and here is a grandmother trying to bring up her grandchild and keep the family together for \$260; and I think it's \$186 for every additional child.

I've got grandmothers in Hamilton who are bringing up two or three of their grandchildren for various reasons, and they're getting less than \$700 a month. If they were in the system, those kids would be covered for almost \$4,000 to \$5,000, counting their dental and glasses. It doesn't make sense from a fiscal point of view; it doesn't make sense as a moral situation. This government, to date, has not changed the directives. My bill would have changed the directives to support these grandparents who are doing yeoman service for our province and are being neglected by this government.

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

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I want to again commend the minister for going up to Thunder Bay with the First Nations who are concerned about the accommodation of their special needs in this new legislation. I think it was critically important to be there, because they have special challenges, and this legislation recognizes that.

The other thing is that this is about removing barriers to adoption. Right now, 75% of the children who are crown wards cannot be adopted because there are these technical access orders that prevent adoption. The CASs can't even contemplate adoption, because these access orders are in place. This legislation removes that barrier.

I also want to say that this also starts to remind people of how critically vital these adoptive families are.

**0920**

Those of us who have children, grandchildren, know how challenging it is to raise the family, to pay the bills, to nurture children, to be there at the hospital—as the member for Durham said—when your grandchildren are sick. But I really think it’s about time we started to take our hats off to parents who have the courage and the determination to adopt children. These people are heroes, because we know how difficult it is already with your natural birth children, but as for Ontarians who will come forward and adopt children, we should recognize the critical role they play, especially children that, in many cases—as the minister said, 80% of the children who are crown wards have some special-needs requirements. Whatever we can do to encourage, remove barriers and to support adoptive parents so they can create this new family for these children is something that is very, very worthwhile.

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I’m pleased to see that in the minister’s comments, she reacted to a number of the questions that I talked about in my speech yesterday. I’ll focus on the 82% of kids in care who have special needs. I think it’s very important that we start to try to deal with offering the supports and services and, quite frankly, the continuity that parents need who wish to adopt and bring children with special needs into their family.

I raised, very briefly, during my comments that one particular family is trying to deal with the right hand and the left hand arguing over whether they should get assistance for children with severe disabilities, which is a program operated out of children and youth services, which the minister would know, and the two different children’s aid societies that have been offering a permanency funding subsidy for three adoptive children that the parents have brought into their family. They’re now in a situation where, a year after the permanency funding has been pulled, they have to go to a tribunal. They’ve been getting this funding for 12 years. The children’s aid societies understand the importance of the funding, and yet we have a case where the children’s aid society is essentially fighting with children and youth services. I would really like to see, perhaps in committee, perhaps with amendments, some way to deal with those families and those situations, because it is simply unacceptable for the family to have to deal with those challenges when they are already trying to deal with other challenges of children with special needs.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The Minister for Children and Youth Services has up to two minutes to respond.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I want to acknowledge the members for Durham, Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, Eglinton–Lawrence and Dufferin–Caledon for their comments. The thread through all of those comments was very much the importance of family. I congratulate the member from Durham on the new addition to his family. The kick-off of his comments on this piece of legislation,

I think, brings to focus for all of us why this legislation is so important: because it is the opening of a pathway to the creation of a family, a forever family for so many youths and young people in our province.

For me, one of the critical pieces was, from seeking the advice of some of the experts in the field, knowing that we would be making a difference. I just want to comment on someone like Cheryl Appell. She’s the co-chair of the adoption working group on the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption and a well-known counsel in the city of Toronto who has expertise in these areas. She said, “These changes have been advocated for many years, and it is wonderful to see that, finally, there has been the courage to put this plan forward. This legislative change will be a powerful and welcomed tool in the hands of children’s aid societies, who bear responsibility for finding a permanent home for children who cannot return to their family of origin, and it introduces new judicial responsibility, which I believe will also be welcomed.”

When individuals with the knowledge and expertise, such as Cheryl Appell, make those kinds of comments, it really gives me a lot of hope that we will make significant change, and we’re committed to doing that. We have continued to make efforts and build on the work that we’ve done.

In the last remaining seconds that I have in this response, I’ll continue to advance my call to all Ontario families to look within their homes and their hearts and make a determination of whether they might be able to be the forever family for one of these young people in our province. When these legislative changes come through, we will have removed that barrier for 7,000 kids, and we will have 7,000 kids waiting for forever families. I hope that Ontarians will meet that call.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I’m pleased to be able to rise today and speak on this bill.

There are two things that I first of all want to focus on, and they are what I consider to be the essence of the bill: the question of access orders and the opportunities for 16- to 18-year-olds under this piece of proposed legislation.

Access orders, I think, have to be understood in the greater context of what has historically been the challenge for those children who found themselves as crown wards. In the preceding piece of legislation and prior to that, the issue of being a crown ward was that it signified that there was still a relationship with either a birth parent, a family member or some designated person, and that created a blockage in the ability of people to go ahead with adoption procedures.

I think of some of my friends and neighbours who have been foster parents and, for them, the frustration of seeing children passed from one place to another in the foster care process because they had, through no fault of their own, a sort of stigma in being a crown ward. I know that in more than one case, people—the foster parents,

that is—would have entertained the idea of being the adopting parents but for those legal restrictions. So I can't say enough about the importance of this process of access orders and putting a time limit on them.

One is always caught in the balance of being fair. I think that previously, with court orders in place, people thought that this was the most fair way to deal with it. But when you look at the experience that children have in the foster system as crown wards, they're just sitting there, waiting. They're in limbo. While I don't want to take away at all from the good work done by foster parents, everyone knows that the permanency is missing. So to be able to bring a conclusion to this limbo process of being a crown ward, I think, is a very, very important step that is encompassed in this bill.

The second area that I think is also very, very important is the question of recognizing the ability of 16- to 18-year-olds to make a decision and then reverse it, and have the opportunity to remain in the system until the age of 21.

I remember very vividly a phone call that I received a few years ago from a young constituent of mine who had, for the first time in his life, in his own words, stability and support—emotional, physical and intellectual support—in the home that he was in. He was someone who, through the instability of his own life, had been definitely in the category of a difficult person to foster. This couple who had him had obviously accomplished miracles, in the words of my young constituent, who saw that these people were able to change his life. It was just heart-breaking to have to talk to him and hear his story and know that I had no tools to be able to do anything. There was nothing that I or anyone else at that point could do. I did, of course, talk to his caseworker, but the facts were the facts.

**0930**

I think that this was a particularly vulnerable part of the age group of crown wards. It's worth it when you know that you are successful. You know you can't be successful in every instance, but one is one too many, so I think that providing this kind of opportunity for the 16- to 18-year-olds is extremely important.

I also want to talk about the children's aid society realities as I see them. I'm constantly drawn to the fact that they have a mandated responsibility, mandated obligations, but their financial support is not sustainable; it does not cover in an appropriate way that for which they are mandated.

As a member for York region, I'm acutely conscious of the underfunding, both historic and otherwise, for social services in York region, including, obviously, the children's aid. One of my friends was one of those people who had to be laid off last year. I think it's just wrong on so many levels, wrong because the young people, the children who are the clients, if we might use that term, are the people who are most affected by those kinds of changes, redirections, new people and things like that.

We know from the conversations that have taken place already, from the debate that has taken place already with

this bill, that home study only accounts for 2% of the budget. Certainly, I've had conversations with people on waiting and waiting and waiting and then the waiting list gets so long that they're the people who don't get on a waiting list. They're the people who pay for their own home studies. Clearly, this in itself is an impediment to being able to have a better flow of people from crown wardship to adoption. There are some of these systemic issues which, obviously, the bill does not reflect.

I also want to take observers back to Bill 210. At the time, I was the critic for the children and youth file, so there are some things I remember about this bill and the kinds of discussions and issues that were raised at the time.

I want to quote from two parts; one is where I'm speaking on second reading, and the second is where I'm speaking on third reading. The first quote, then, is from my remarks with regard to second reading. Here I'm discussing the importance of the openness agreements:

"I think we just have to make sure that those options are understood and that we are going to ensure that the process does what its stated goal is, and that, of course, is to increase the number of adoptions.

"The other interesting thing about the openness agreements is that when you look at the part of the bill that deals with them, they are done primarily through the courts. So I would just point out that they revert to a court process. Again I have to say rhetorically, does this create issues around timeliness and cost if openness orders are going to be done by the courts?

"I think it's clear that we, as a group of legislators, are very conscious of the need to be able to provide ongoing support for the agencies that are providing the service and child protection, and we have to be able to find the best methods for children, because the goal is clearly to make a process where a child's life is ... better."

I go on to mention that since the courts are a very expensive part of the process that children's aid deals with, obviously my concern then is captured here, where I say, "... ensure that not only is there going to be the process that will work in the best interest, but also that we're not going to be looking at the cost being a driver of the whole process."

As a result of the passage of the bill, we had the opportunity to hear a number of experts in the public hearings. I have two that I would like to refer to. The first one is Dr. Brenda Nutter of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. She made what I think is a comment that should be an echo at this point, and that is that "this legislation will require a substantial commitment by the government to the education of the public and of those in the field who will be charged with the implementation of Bill 210." She goes on: "It changes the face of public adoption. It is true that more children will receive better service through permanency initiatives. In addition, in-care costs will be reduced. But as this process moves ahead, it is important that the needs of adoptive families be recognized and fully supported as they manage the everchanging needs of their older and

special-needs children. In the public sector, we believe that the expansion of post-adoption services is a critical part of the infrastructure that will allow the openness provisions of Bill 210 to be successfully implemented.”

James Dubray of the Durham Children’s Aid Society told the committee about that children’s aid society’s experience with openness, as follows: “In the past year, we have been piloting open adoptions. Our experiences generally have not been positive. We have learned that in the making of and having agreements in place for adoption placement, the natural family sometimes have changed their minds with regard to the adoption placement, and have sought to have it overturned by using the provisions of the Children’s Law Reform Act.”

I want to finish my comments on Bill 210 with one final comment from my third reading speech in 2006. “In committee, in clause-by-clause, I offered an amendment that would have required the government and the societies to be accountable for increasing the rate of adoption.

“My amendment would have required a three-year review of the effectiveness of openness agreements and whether or not the rates of adoption have increased. Unfortunately, the government members chose to vote down my amendment.

“Obviously, I wish they had accepted it, as it would have mandated this specific area of accountability for increasing the adoption of crown wards.

“As we know, there is a process for a five-year review, but when you’re looking at stepping into what in many ways are uncharted waters, I think it’s important that the government look at specifically how effective this process has been.”

Just think: If the Liberal members had voted through our PC amendment five years ago, we could have reviewed this legislation two years ago and made a change. I have to wonder how many crown wards have lost out at a chance of a loving adoptive family over the last five years because of the failure of Bill 210.

I would just like to finish with a few comments going back to Bill 179. It’s very clear from this debate and from the comments made by many others that there is much more to do. Obviously, the fact that we know that 82% of all crown wards are special-needs children cries out for some recognition, particularly from the results of the all-party standing committee recommendations. The other problem that I think is not being addressed here and that the bill is obviously silent on is the fact that as children are crown wards, they have access to more programming that is paid for than those who are adopted.

**0940**

Again, I go back to one of my friends who had fostered three children. The most heart-wrenching part of the process for her was giving up these children. She had to give them up because she couldn’t afford to raise them. It’s that simple. When you are talking about the need for obviously those kinds of unique people in our community who are prepared to open their homes to be foster parents, I think that at the same time we need to be

looking at how we are going to encourage and support—one of the deputants on Bill 210 referred to post-adoption support. I think, probably, that would fit with my concern about the fact that there is a huge problem when you have, on the one hand, 82% of crown wards who are special-needs children. You want to encourage adoption, and yet, literally, the buck stops. I think that that will continue to be a huge obstacle for many, many families who would be able to otherwise, as the minister said, open their hearts. They will also have to open their wallets.

I just want to finish on a quote that my daughter actually sent to me. It says—and I think it encompasses the spirit in which we ultimately find ourselves in supporting the bill: “Not born of my mother’s tummy but from her heart.”

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Thank you to the member from York–Simcoe. She has done her research, and it was a good presentation.

The expert panel reports that the problems in the system are well documented and the impacts of these problems are staggering. The expert panel reported, “Former crown wards who age out of the system are less likely to finish high school, more likely to become parents themselves at a young age, more likely to be users of the mental health system, more likely to require social assistance, more likely to rely on homeless shelters, to experience poverty as adults and more likely to be in conflict with the law. The long-term costs to society when children do not have permanent homes are staggering. The human costs, in terms of personal suffering and unfulfilled potential, are heartbreaking.”

It seems that this bill is taking a step forward in terms of increasing the number of crown wards who could be eligible for adoption. This is good and positive, but does it do enough? Will it address the underlying issues, and perhaps, most fundamentally, will it increase the likelihood that these children and youth are adopted?

There is nothing in the bill to increase the number of prospective adoptive parents. This is one step of many that experts, practitioners, parents and children have called for when it comes to improving adoption in our province. Even more so, why such a small step when the government has had ample opportunity to move forward on easy-to-implement and cost-neutral solutions?

The other question, which surely we will be better equipped to answer following committee hearings: Are we balancing the rights of all the parties involved correctly? Are the rights of the children, birth parents and adoptive parents, as well as aboriginal communities, being treated fairly?—frustrating for the NDP and surely for the stakeholders who have given countless hours of work to reforming Ontario’s adoption system. The expert panel report is evidence of this. We see well-articulated and well-reasoned suggestions that are nowhere to be found in this bill. However, we congratulate the members of the expert panel who have worked hard to get us where we are today.

It is worth taking some time to review what is missing from this bill.

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

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I want to thank the member for York–Simcoe for her comments and, in particular, for the lovely last quote that she ended her submission with.

I want to spend just a couple of minutes talking about how the provisions in this legislation are a new approach and do add to the previous provisions with respect to openness. It is absolutely critical, yes, that we will undertake an education campaign for the judiciary, for children's aid societies and for lawyers to understand what is changing, because the removal of a provision that has, for more than 30 years, prevented a child with any kind of access order from even being eligible for adoption, who couldn't plan for adoption, is a very big change in the adoption world.

I want to spend a couple of moments, if I can, providing some information with respect to the detail of the test that will be used by the court in determining whether this new type of openness order should be issued on application. The first thing will be: Is it in the best interests of the child? The second thing will be that, if the child is 12 years of age or older, they will have to consent to that order, and that will be a determining factor in whether they want a continued relationship or whether they do have a relationship.

The courts will also have to consider two other factors in deciding whether to make an openness order: whether the order would permit the continuation of a relationship with a person that is beneficial and meaningful to the child—and again, our focus is always on what is best for the child; is it an important and meaningful relationship to them?—and secondly, the ability of the prospective adoptive parents to comply with that arrangement after the adoption order, because they will be the family of the child at that point. We want to make sure that those adoptive families who come forward, who open their hearts and homes to children, would be able to comply with the provisions, always focusing on the best interests of the child.

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'm pleased to respond to the comments made by my caucus colleague from York–Simcoe. I found it very helpful that she spent a good deal of her time talking about the previous legislation from five years ago—Bill 210, I believe it was. I was not a member here at the time, so I appreciate her bringing her expertise and history to that debate.

I think she raised some excellent points about how we are in fact reviewing and trying to improve what initially was attempted to be solved five years ago. To me, it reinforces the value of a sunshine review act, something where we can reflect on what we have brought forward: Is it passing what we attempted to solve? Is it making positive changes for Ontario families and Ontario children? To me, this is a beautiful example of the importance of those

reviews, whether it's legislation or policies that we bring forward collectively.

As the member from York–Simcoe pointed out, if her amendment from Bill 210 had been passed, then we would have been having this discussion two years ago and trying to solve some of the issues for more adoptions and encouraging more adoptions instead of having to wait five years. So I'm pleased that she was able to bring those issues forward with her discussions of Bill 179, and I'll have to discuss it further with her, because it sounds like it's a good amendment to bring forward for Bill 179 as well.

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

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** This is very close to home for me, because I'm both adopted—when I was about two years old, I was very fortunate to find a home at a point in my life when I didn't think I was going to—and I'm also an adoptive parent, which was a very hard struggle for me, because for most of my life, being gay in Canada made it impossible. You couldn't pass the threshold. Partly because I valued my family so much—because I almost went through my life without one, and have often thought of the consequences of what my life would have been like had I not done that. Some of the human characteristics that God gave me when I came into this world made my relationship with my parents particularly challenging as I discovered this.

My son, whom I fostered after several years—it was extremely difficult. I remember the political fights. One of the reasons I became a Liberal was because the Liberal Party was the most accepting party of my family. I had some rather long, protracted fights with politicians from other parties who were very opposed to people like me being parents, and who also wanted to criminalize my child, who has fetal alcohol syndrome. If you've ever worked with or raised children who have FAS, it's extremely challenging, because these children don't have a lot of restraint and are easily suggestible.

**0950**

I always get a little nervous when I hear about law and order and treating children in adult court, because when I worked on the streets with kids, 80% of the kids that I met were abused by their parents or by other family members, which is what led to that, which is why I think the screening process and the exchanges are important.

I also had a very clean start with my new family, so I think that removing the access orders in allowing children to be adopted is critical.

To me, this may be one of the most important pieces of legislation I get to vote on, and I want to thank the minister and other members who have spoken so positively.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I wish to thank the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, the Minister of Children and Youth Services, the Minister of Research and Innovation, and the member for Dufferin–Caledon.

I appreciate the comments that have been made. I would agree with the minister that this is a big change, and I think that's why people on all sides of the House take it very seriously.

I think, in responding to the Minister of Research and Innovation, there aren't many of us who haven't been touched one way or the other by friends, immediate family—I think most people have some experience with this and understand, therefore, the fragility of the relationships and the importance of those relationships.

The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek talked about the details around the stats for children who age out. I think about it, as a parent myself, and think about how important the role is, to be able to provide the appropriate supports and stability for children growing up. Even when they're 18, you discover that your job really isn't over. That's when you think you've become the empty nester, and then, in a few years, boom, they're back.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** With friends.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Yeah, with friends. We can joke about that, but what we're really saying is that there are those children who never have had that opportunity. That is what verges on criminal, and that is why I think we all agree that we have to do a better job.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It is a pleasure to speak to Bill 179. I want to say from the outset how much I enjoyed the comments from the members from Dufferin–Caledon and York–Simcoe, because their remarks are very sincere and they are trying, as indeed all members here are trying, to help with this legislation, help to improve it and do the best that we can to make adoption easier and to make it easier for foster parents to do that.

I was particularly struck by the member from Toronto Centre and the description of his situation and the adoption of his child who has fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. That's a tough one. Most people don't know how complicated that is. Teachers understand the problems, but they don't understand how to identify the problem, because even doctors don't know how to identify that particular problem. So you're suffering with a particular issue, and the adoptive parents don't quite understand what it is, don't quite know what to do, until finally a diagnosis is given that allows adoptive parents to deal with it. It's really intense and it's complicated, and I say God bless those foster parents who take that job on, because it is a full-time emotional and economic responsibility. Many of us would take on that job, but with a great deal of thought, would take it on with much pain, and most of us don't take it on. So those that do, I have a great deal of respect for them.

I think the minister is genuinely trying to improve the system, and I support the efforts.

The two points—the member from Dufferin–Caledon and our member from Beaches–East York raised these issues as well. The two efforts are that Bill 179 amends the Child and Family Services Act to state that a society can plan for adoption of a crown ward who has an access

order. We know that currently less than 10% of Ontario's approximately 9,000 crown wards are adopted every year, and of those, 7,000 of them have a special need, as has been mentioned by many. If they have that kind of a special need, we as a state have to worry about how we facilitate the adoption so that it can happen and how we facilitate it so that the adoptive parents can indeed take that on with supports, because if we don't provide the supports, I'm not sure that adoption, no matter how much easier we're making it, will happen.

The member from Dufferin–Caledon, as did our member from Beaches–East York, raised this yesterday: where we say that we have a perverse incentive in the system. If you are a foster parent, you have access to funding that will ensure that the child in care has access to the services they need, but upon adoption, you lose access to that, and that doesn't seem to make any sense. If we're indeed trying to encourage people to adopt, but we give very few incentives, we're not going to enable adoption, we're not going to facilitate it, and it's likely not to happen. Our adoption process has flatlined, in spite of the changes the government has made, for the last four years, and so the question to us as legislators is, can we make that better, and if we can, why aren't we doing it? If we're not doing it, well, it's not going to make the job easier. We hope that these changes will make it easier, but I don't know.

The other thing that is major here, and which I support, is the number of changes that help to support crown wards, including the ability of crown wards who leave care at or above the age of 16 but under 18 to return to the care. We think this is good. We thought it illogical and not reasonable that someone who leaves the care of a children's aid society at 16 loses supports. We are happy that the government is dealing with that particular problem, because these young men and women need help and need support.

These are the two main measures that are included in this bill that we think are good. They will help; there's no doubt about it.

We know that the minister talked about aboriginal people and issues connected to adoption as it relates to aboriginal people. I know that she had a meeting with them. I'm not sure that the meeting was talking about adoption. It may have happened; I'm not sure. I know it was about something else, but hopefully aboriginal people raised these issues. I don't know whether the minister and/or the ministry consulted with aboriginal people, and if they haven't, that would be a serious, serious oversight, given the history of residential schools and the removal of aboriginal kids from their homes—taken away in such a brutal manner that caused devastation in those communities for a long, long time. This is something that we need to be careful about, and this is something that we need to move carefully on. So I am hoping that the minister has indeed done consultations with aboriginal people, and if not, before the passage of this bill, I'm hoping that she does that, so that as we move this bill into committee, we will hopefully get their point of view and hopefully

get amendments that they believe might be needed in order to make this bill reflect aboriginal communities in particular.

**1000**

We know that children's aid societies have struggled to stay afloat for a long time, that they have not managed to manage their responsibilities with the shortage of funding that they have experienced over the years. We know the government has made an effort to deal with that; whether it solved the problem, I really don't know. But we know that historically there have been funding issues and funding problems that I suspect have not been fully addressed. That's something to deal with.

We want to thank the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption, the Raising Expectations group that has dealt with this. We know that they have made many recommendations that are not in this bill. I suppose, and I suspect the government has reasons for not dealing with them; I don't know why. But when I read from their report in terms of what they recommend, it seems reasonable. Given that the minister is here today and she's answering a lot of questions, I'm hoping that she will deal with it.

One of the recommendations the panel made is in the section on system standardization and coordination. It says: "The central problem is the current 'patchwork quilt' nature of adoption services in Ontario. Services are not structured in a way that makes sense for children or families—or even service providers. In fact, there is really no 'system' at all. Service providers tend to operate in relative isolation, often with few connections between them. Adoption policies, legislation, guidelines and standards are not based on current research or best practices, are inconsistent across services and, in many cases, do not reflect the current realities of adoption—or the diversity of this province. Furthermore, insufficient information is collected about services and outcomes for children and families. Without evidence-based research, it is difficult to plan a comprehensive range of adoption services that anticipate and fully respond to children's, families' and service providers' needs."

The expert panel recommends the creation of a provincial adoption agency. I'm not sure whether the minister might want to comment as to why it is they haven't thought about implementing that. The panel provides necessary details of what this would look like, and they say, "Create a provincial adoption agency."

"We urge the government to create a new, centralized provincial adoption agency ... with a local service presence to:

—provide all interested families with the information they need to explore their potential to adopt;

—work with CASs to make appropriate and timely adoption plans for children in care;

—focus on finding families for older crown wards and crown wards with special needs;

—match and place crown wards with families;

—provide birth families and adoptive families support to negotiate and maintain openness when in the best interests of the child;

—support families throughout the public adoption process and help families after the adoption is finalized."

Of all these recommendations, what is the government moving on? And if not, why haven't they adopted some of these very reasonable recommendations that I think all three political parties would support? We can see that virtually nothing recommended in terms of coordinating adoption services is in the bill. There is, and there will continue to be, a serious problem in terms of finding enough families to be adoptive parents to all of the children needing adoption in Ontario. We know that there are, I think, 1,500 parents who are ready to adopt. We need to deal with that. We need to find a way to increase that number; otherwise, the majority of these children that we are hoping would be adopted may not be adopted.

It seems to me that if we want more children to be adopted, particularly the 82% who have special needs, we're going to have to do something more than what the minister recommends in Bill 179.

We don't want to be critical of the efforts the minister is making; we want to talk about how we make it better. Because otherwise, the lives of these 9,000 young men and women who are in crown wards—they may not be adopted, and they may continue to suffer the problem as adults, in addition to having been in crown wards for a long, long time and/or in foster homes for a long, long time, and face perpetual problems that can never be dealt with.

Clearly, we want to support you, Minister. Whatever it is that you want to make by way of amendments based on what the expert panel has identified, I think all three political parties, particularly the opposition parties, are willing to help you. If you are ready to move on some other amendments, we say God bless. We want to help.

The whole point of having hearings—and I know you wanted to rush this, because there is some urgency on the one hand. On the other hand, because there is so much to be done and because so much has been recommended by way of what ought to be done, we want to make sure that there are enough hearings that we can get the best possible recommendations and suggestions that can be made by a range of people, to make sure that improvements are made.

I know, Minister, that there are a few other points that the member from Toronto–Danforth made yesterday, and you may have covered some. But you might want to respond to some of these other issues that I don't think you've had an opportunity to speak to. I hope that, in your two minutes, you might just do that.

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

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I do thank the member for Trinity–Spadina for his comments, and I will try to speak to a few of the issues that he raised.

I'll certainly start with the first one, which is with respect to the two-day summit that was held in Fort William First Nation over the last couple of days. The focus of that summit was a variety of issues, but the heart of it was about customary care, which is the model and the

pathway to permanency for aboriginal children and youth. We look to that as the pathway for children to remain connected with their communities, connected with their family and connected with their traditions. This piece of legislation is a parallel pathway to permanency—and we are talking about adoptions and customary care as a pathway—and those provisions are already within the context of the Child and Family Services Act.

I do want to also speak to the issue of subsidies. As the member from Trinity–Spadina said, there are 2,000 active subsidy agreements being administered by CASs right across the province. The funding for the child welfare envelope has increased to almost \$1.5 billion annually. Each year, we determine how best to focus our efforts on improvements to the system. I would suggest to him that in the conversation that we’re having here and in the context of this legislation, subsidies are one of those priorities.

These supports can be targeted, and in some instances they are, for a family adopting a child with special needs. We know that 82% of crown wards have special needs and may require enhanced support. Our interest is in developing a system-wide approach that’s best for kids and is the best use of public dollars. That ties to the work under way by the commission to promote sustainable child welfare and its focus on outcomes, children and permanency for children.

We know that subsidies will increase the number of children and youth who can be adopted, and we look to doing that work in the weeks ahead.

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I’m pleased to respond to the comments made by the member from Trinity–Spadina. We started talking about the children’s aid society’s funding issues, and the minister very briefly talked in her response about the fact that there are some subsidies out there.

**1010**

I think this is the challenge. They are a patchwork. There is no line item in children’s aid societies’ budgets that says, “This is available to you to assist families who wish to adopt children, who wish to take on the additional challenges of children with special needs,” and that is raised in no way in Bill 179, although it was certainly raised in the recommendations made by the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption. That report, as we all know, is almost two years old. It was led by our now Governor General, David Johnston, and even when he accepted the role of Governor General, in his first public speaking as the GG he talked about the challenges of families and the desire to have more families have the ability to adopt children within their families. Yet we see nothing in Bill 179 that talks about this.

I understand that in the minister’s press conference she was asked about it, and she said that she hopes the discussion continues. I guess my comment would be that after 23 months, we’re probably past the point of discussion. That should have been happening as Bill 179 was

being drafted and being discussed, and I think it actually is a glaring error—or omission. I take back “error”; it’s an omission in what we have before us in Bill 179.

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I’d like to thank my colleague from Trinity–Spadina for his informed presentation.

The government knows that there are problems in encouraging adoption. The expert panel stated, “And we repeatedly heard from families pursuing public adoption that, instead of being treated as a valued resource for waiting children, agencies worked to screen them out of—rather than into—the adoption process. Many families told us they that were not welcomed nor provided with the opportunity to explore whether or not public adoption was the right choice for them. This approach could be due to a lack of resources within the CASs to embrace all prospective adoptive families and it could also be because many families initially inquire about adopting healthy infants. Some CASs told us that, at first contact with prospective adoptive families, they try to describe the realities of the needs of many of the children in their care.

“This may well have the unintended result of ‘scaring off’ families calling about healthy infants but who, with more complete information, might be more than willing to adopt a toddler, an older child or a child with special needs. The ‘screening out’ approach might be a natural outcome of the child protection orientation: approaching adoption using a child protection lens is completely understandable given how much child protection work CASs are engaged in on a daily basis.”

The above quote raises some very big concerns, and none of that has figured into the bill we see in front of us today. Why?

The expert panel says this: “Despite this trend” of openness in adoption, “we learned that openness and how it may be implemented is not yet widely understood by some adoption workers and many adoptive families. We have heard that many CASs find the current tools, including openness orders and agreements, to be very complex—so complex, in fact, that some have established a policy not to use them. The complicated tools, coupled with concern about safety for children and fears about how openness may infringe on the ‘right to parent,’ make some CASs and adoptive families reluctant to consider openness in public adoptions.” This certainly has to be addressed.

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

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It’s a pleasure to join the debate this morning to pass comment on the member from Trinity–Spadina’s comments, which I think for the most part were constructive, as they relate to Bill 179.

It’s interesting, some of the things that bring us to this place. We come from a variety of backgrounds. I spent 12 years as a board member with the Halton Children’s Aid Society, and three of those years as president of the society. Certainly, there were times that you saw where

the legislation was getting in the way of doing the right thing. That's not unusual, I don't think. Unfortunately, you could look at a number of jurisdictions and legislation that was put in place in the past for the very best of reasons but often ends up not doing the right thing. I think that when you see those things, when an expert panel brings forward that information to you, it's incumbent upon us as legislators to make the changes that are being recommended.

My thanks to the expert panel. I think Bill 179 is a good step forward. I get advice in my own community from a number of people—certainly from the adoption council. I've got a wonderful constituent by the name of Deborah Brennan. Deborah wrote a great book called *Labours of Love*, which outlines some of the personal stories of some fairly high-profile people and some ordinary people as well who have been through the adoption process, and what it has meant to them. It really paints a human face on the issue.

I also, from time to time, bump into Les Horne. I served with Les on the board of the children's aid society for a number of years. Les is a strong advocate for children in general but especially for those children who find themselves in vulnerable situations. He was the first child advocate for the province of Ontario, and I know that Les would see Bill 179 as a constructive step forward. Is it everything that everybody wants? Probably not; most bills aren't. Is it a good step forward for the province of Ontario and its kids? I think it is, and we should support it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member for Trinity–Spadina has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I appreciate the comments made by all members. I particularly want to focus on the comments made by the member from Dufferin–Caledon, because while the minister talked generally about all the money that she is putting into this sector, unless we specifically address the issue of 82% of the kids who have serious special-needs problems, if we don't find a way—the member from Dufferin–Caledon talked about a dedicated line that just addresses that. If we do not do that, my sense is that we're not going to get many parents who are willing to adopt, particularly when and if they know that the kids they're adopting have these special needs that bring on incredible emotional problems for the family that adopts and bring on incredible economic burdens that some cannot afford. If we don't deal with that, we've got a problem. I know that it costs money, but it costs more money not to deal with it. It costs more money for society in general and the individual in particular if we don't address it when we can.

If we don't set aside sufficient funds to deal with this specific issue, I think that we are not going to get a whole number of parents who are willing to adopt. That's what I want to encourage the minister to look at, including moving in on some of the recommendations made by the expert panel that I believe we could adopt today instead of waiting for another election.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** It being just past 10:15, I declare that this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1017 to 1030.*

#### WEARING OF PINS

**Mr. Rick Johnson:** I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear pins in recognition of the Make-A-Wish Foundation's World Wish Day.

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

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I would like to introduce Mr. Jeff Mole. He's the founder of Ontario's first public benefit community power co-operative. He's in the east members' gallery. I also remind people that there is an Ontario co-op reception this afternoon between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. in room 228. Please welcome Jeff.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce and welcome to Queen's Park today Mr. and Mrs. Russell and Audrey Moore from the great riding of Peterborough.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'd like to recognize Jack Graves from the great town of Tillsonburg in the riding of Oxford county. I'd like to welcome him to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** It's a delight for me to introduce two guests in the east members' gallery: David and Nancy Nichols, from, interesting enough, the riding of Northumberland–Quinte West. But something more: Over the years, Mr. Nichols, of course, has been listed in Canada's business directory of Canada's Who's Who, a former president of DeLaval Canada and a former president of DeLaval North America, a very distinguished businessman from our area.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I would like to welcome Mr. Dalton Hicks, who, among many other things, is a successful entrepreneur, the owner of Cardinal Golf Club and country club. He's here today to talk to us about golf. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

**Mr. David Zimmer:** I'd like to introduce three guests from Willowdale: Christina Yoo and her two nieces Katarina Yoo and Ariana Yoo.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Today we are very blessed to have many people who are served by our community health centres joining us in the Legislature. We've got representatives from the Anne Johnston Health Station in Toronto, the Rexdale Community Health Centre, the Youth Centre in Ajax, the Black Creek Community Health Centre and LAMP Community Health Centre. They're all here today to help celebrate Community Health Week, which starts next week.

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

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of page Devon Jones and the MPP from Don Valley East, to welcome her mother, Cindy Ewins, her father, Terry Jones, her grandmother, Barbara Ewins, and her uncle, Fred Ewins. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ACCESS TO INFORMATION

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, Ontario families are shocked to learn that hospitals have received legal advice to shred certain records before the public gets the right, in January, to ask for them. When did you learn that hospitals are looking to shred records to avoid embarrassing themselves and you?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** First of all, I thank the member for the question. I want to make very clear: We passed legislation to bring hospitals under freedom of information because we think the public has the right to know what's going on in our hospitals. I fully expect hospitals to abide not only by the letter of the law but the spirit of the law as well. The spirit of the law includes giving the public access to information, information that the public has in fact paid for. So I in no way condone this initiative or this recommendation from lawyers. I know hospitals are going to abide both by the spirit and the letter of the law.

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

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** The advice that has been given goes against any so-called attempts at transparency in this respect. Minister, you're supposed to be in charge. What exactly have you done with respect to this issue? Have you ordered the hospitals to stop following this advice and to immediately avoid any attempts at shredding of any hospital records?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What have we done? We have brought hospitals under freedom of information. This is a big step forward and a step that the party opposite, when they had the chance, refused to take. We do believe in transparency. We do think the public has the right to know. That's why we're bringing hospitals under freedom of information.

I said in the first question that hospitals will embrace the spirit and the letter of this law. I look forward to hospitals being under the kind of scrutiny that we think they should be under. We have a responsibility to our health care system. We think the public has a right to know, and that's why we've introduced this legislation.

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

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** You can't just hope that hospitals are going to follow this legislation; you actually have to do something to ensure that they do.

This is a very serious matter, and we're not the only ones saying this. Ann Cavoukian, Ontario's Information

and Privacy Commissioner, had this to say: "I was astounded at the language. Just using the word 'cleansing' is highly inappropriate. It suggests shredding, eliminating, hiding—getting rid of material before the end of the year."

Minister, you're supposed to be in charge. You're supposed to be about transparency. This suggests exactly the opposite. When did you first learn about this advice being given to hospitals? What investigations have you conducted into this? What determinations have you attempted to make to see whether any material has, in fact, been shredded to date?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I was very, very pleased yesterday that Tom Closson, the president of the Ontario Hospital Association, released a statement on this very issue. What he said was, "The first principle for the OHA and for the law firms that are actually assisting us in preparing hospitals for FIPPA—is that the spirit and the letter of FIPPA be adhered to at all times, period. To do otherwise would undermine public confidence in hospitals and our health care system."

I completely agree with Tom Closson.

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Premier. At a time when Ontario families have to pay Michigan, New York and Quebec to take power off our hands, the hydro rates that Ontario families pay for their own power are going up again to pay for your expensive green energy experiments with Samsung and the like. Rates have gone up 150% since you took office. You can stop signing these unaffordable contracts that force Ontario families to pay 80 cents for five-cent power. Why won't you stop signing these unaffordable, expensive energy experiments that are driving up Ontario families' hydro bills?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I'm delighted to take the question from my honourable colleague. I'm not sure where his figures come from, but there are, from time to time, reliable figures that are made available to us. I would recommend to my honourable colleague the information produced yesterday by the Ontario Energy Board, which compares, on an apples-to-apples basis, a typical household bill, comparing May of last year to May of this year. It shows, by and large, that it's a wash. It shows, by and large, that the overall bill is not changing much at all, and that speaks to the fact that, for one thing, we've put in place a new clean energy benefit which is reducing the bill, overall, by 10% over the course of the next five years.

So I would recommend to my honourable colleague opposite that, rather than pulling those numbers out of the air, he actually make reference to the information produced yesterday by the Ontario Energy Board.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** If you think that Ontario families think their hydro bills were pleasing them last May, you'd be sorely mistaken.

Here's what the Ontario Energy Board actually says. Paul Crawford, an executive at the OEB, says that the

reason Ontario families are paying 150% more for hydro since you took office is that “electricity is costing more to produce. How we’re producing it and the types of generation we’re using are costing more.” He’s talking about your expensive energy experiments.

**1040**

You can do something here and now. You can stop signing these unaffordable contracts that drive up the cost of hydro bills for Ontario families. You can stop making Ontario families pay for generous subsidies to Samsung. Premier, they’re asking you: Why won’t you stop?

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The Ontario Energy Board has confirmed that, indeed, the Ontario clean energy benefit is keeping prices flat for Ontario families. That’s good news for Ontario families, but it’s bad news for the opposition, because they can’t keep making it up anymore. Soon enough, Ontario families will indeed have to choose between the PC plan, which they’re afraid to show Ontario families, and our plan. A lot is at stake: a choice between dirty coal and cleaner air; a choice between a legacy of increased respiratory illnesses for future generations and a clean, healthy future for our kids; a choice between a neglected and failing energy infrastructure and a modern, upgraded energy infrastructure.

I am confident that Ontario families are going to see right through that party opposite. They’re going to—

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** When the Premier came to office, energy rates were 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour. They’re now as high as 10.7. Perhaps the Premier hasn’t seen a hydro bill lately.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. Ministers. Member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

Please continue.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** If you think bills are the same this year as last, you would be the CEO of fantasyland. You’ve grown that much out of touch.

At a time when Ontario families pay millions of dollars to keep the lights on in New York and Quebec, here in Ontario, hydro bills are going through the roof because of your expensive energy experiments. You said that Ontario families would pay only 1% more per year because of your Green Energy Act. Then you conceded that it’s actually now up to 46% more. We always knew that you were not being straight with Ontarians. How much more will they have to pay to pay for your expensive energy experiments? How much more, Premier? Tell us, how much more?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** As I said earlier, there’s no question—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Dufferin–Caledon should be in her seat. Member from Leeds.

Minister?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** As I said earlier, there’s no question that the Ontario Energy Board’s regulated price plan released yesterday is bad news for the opposition, because they just can’t keep making it up anymore like they’re doing again today. The facts are now in, and the opposition can’t do that anymore.

The Ontario Energy Board released the regulated price plan yesterday, and it confirms what we’ve been saying for many months now: The Ontario clean energy benefit is having the intended effect of saving families money and keeping bills flat.

But if the member opposite doesn’t want to believe what I’m saying today, then let me quote directly from the Ontario Energy Board. They’re the province’s independent regulator. This is what they said: “A comparison of May 2010 and May 2011 shows overall the total bill has remained relatively flat as a result of the introduction of the Ontario clean”—

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

## HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. Ontarians are already feeling the hydro bill pinch, but it’s about to get even more painful. With so many Ontario families having trouble making ends meet, why is this government just sitting back and allowing hydro rates to go up another 3.8%, effective May 1?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, I’m pleased to take the question, and I want to recommend to my honourable colleague the leader of the NDP the information provided by the Ontario Energy Board just yesterday. It is independent, it is articulate, it is authoritative and it stands out like a bright light in the context of a lot of misinformation that’s been kind of floating around out there.

It’s telling us that, year over year, Ontario electricity bills have basically flatlined. That’s what they’re telling us. It also confirms that the clean energy benefit that we have put in place, specifically designed to lend support to our families, our small businesses and our farmers, is having the intended effect. It’s taking 10% off the electricity bills and it’s making sure that, year over year, they’re paying about the same thing. We think that’s pretty good news.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Everywhere I travel across Ontario, I hear the same thing. At a seniors’ event in west Toronto just earlier this week, participants were telling me about their crushing bills. They simply cannot keep up with increase after increase.

How can the Premier allow this to continue? How can he and his government allow yet another hydro increase?

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I think the problem for the leader of the third party is that the facts, as released by the Ontario Energy Board yesterday, are now getting in the way of her story. The Ontario Energy Board has confirmed that, when compared to last year, energy bills in Ontario

have stabilized and are flat as a result of our clean energy benefit. The NDP can try to spin and torque that report any way it wants, but the facts are the facts, and bills are now stable in the province of Ontario.

What Ontario families deserve to know, though, is where the NDP stands on the important energy choices that we need to make. We're for replacing dirty coal with clean energy. Is she with us or is she against us? We're for moving forward with North America-leading targets for conservation. Is she with us or is she against us? We're for making Ontario a global clean energy leader. Are the NDP with us—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This Premier and his minister can try to skirt around the issue, but the decisions he and his government have made are what are actually directly leading to the price increases in hydro. They are the ones who have blown more than \$1 billion on not-so-smart meters, and they're about to blow tens of billions of dollars more on nuclear expansion instead of on conservation.

How much more in increases can Ontarians expect because of this government's disastrous hydro policies?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Frankly, I think we've been giving the NDP a free ride on this issue for way too long. We've focused on the Tories' fear of sharing their energy plan with Ontario families and we've been letting the NDP off the hook.

We've noted that the Leader of the Opposition has been in his place for 660 days, and to date, he's still hiding his plan from Ontario families. But the leader of the NDP has been leader of her party now for 770 days, and this is all we know: She has opposed investments that we're making to improve our transmission system; she has opposed investments we're making to replace dirty coal with renewable energy; she has opposed investments we've made in conservation; she has opposed investments we're making in modernizing our energy system—and, judging by her question, she remains opposed to that. They appear to be opposed to everything and in favour of nothing.

Ontario families really deserve to know where—

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

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I can tell you that I'm opposed to a government that cripples people with bills that they can't afford.

My question is to the Premier. Maybe the Premier's bubble prevents him from seeing what Ontarians are seeing. The cost of just about everything is going up. The latest consumer price index came out yesterday: In Ontario, prices rose by 3.6%. A significant portion of that increase can be attributed to rising energy prices.

How is the latest hydro rate increase going to make things any better for Ontarians?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, I want to impress upon my honourable colleague that, in fact, bills have flatlined year over year. I recommend that she actually sit down and read the Ontario Energy Board report, which speaks to that specifically.

I think a really important question that we need to answer is, why is it that we are making such tremendous efforts to restore vitality to our electricity system? I want to remind you of what the IESO—that's the Independent Electricity System Operator—said back in 2002: There are "significant strains on the power system. A large amount of electricity is being imported, but we still face possible shortages. Unless there is an immediate drop in consumption, we may be required to take protective actions, which could include voltage reductions, or rotating cuts to supply without any additional notice."

That was the state of affairs we found ourselves in. Obviously, that was intolerable; it was unacceptable. We are working together with Ontarians to rebuild our electricity systems so we have all the power we need to power our schools and our homes—

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

1050

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier just doesn't get it. He's been trapped in his bubble for far too long. Meanwhile, Ontarians have reached their breaking point. They're being forced to shell out more for daily essentials like hydro while big corporations get hefty tax giveaways and public sector executives get fat salaries. How is it that, under this Premier's watch, things in Ontario have gotten so far out of whack?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We talked a little bit about where we were originally with respect to the lack of electricity capacity we had in the province. Let's take a look at where we've come.

This is what the IESO said in November of just last year: "Our short-term supply picture is very positive ... in fact, I can't recall it ever being this good. To date this year, Ontario has been self-sufficient in meeting its own needs even with demands ... that were higher than they had been in three years. We met those demands without the need for imports, a far cry from a few years ago when we were reliant on neighbours."

So we've gotten into a position now where we have a reliable electricity system. On top of that, we're cleaning up our air and we've created over 20,000 new jobs. If nothing else, I thought the leader of the NDP would be in support of those 20,000 new clean energy jobs.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** We need to restore some balance here. That means giving Ontario families a break with a permanent HST exemption on hydro and home heating. It also means ending the corporate tax giveaways and reining in bloated public sector salaries for executives. That's my plan—a plan that puts people and families first. Why does this Premier stick to a plan that puts them last?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** In addition to the fact that we've now stabilized electricity prices and the fact that we've introduced income tax cuts—\$355 for the average Ontario family—we are also delivering, I would argue, some of the best public education anywhere on the planet. We are delivering some of the best publicly funded, universally accessible health care anywhere in the world. We've got some of the strongest environmental protections anywhere in the world.

I would put our whole picture up against any other place in the world in terms of how far we've come together in our schools, in our health care and in environmental protection, and now we are exploiting great new opportunities when it comes to energy from renewables. I'm proud of the accomplishments that we've achieved on behalf of Ontario families, and we look forward to doing so much more.

#### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** My question is also to the Premier. There is something very wrong with a government that makes Ontario families pay 150% more to turn on their lights. What's even worse, you make them pay more when they don't turn on their lights. You say bills have flatlined? I opened mine and I flatlined.

Now your high-priced energy experiments are being exported to Michigan and New York and Quebec. Let's face it, Premier: Ontario families can't use power as fast as your expensive wind turbine experiments produce it. Because of the contracts you signed, some have estimated that Ontario families paid \$4 million in subsidies over 36 hours for power they never used. How much more did Ontario families pay in subsidies for families in Michigan, New York and Ontario to take that expensive power off your hands?

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** As I said earlier, the report—*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd remind the honourable members that your member just asked a question. I know he wants to hear an answer, and the moment the minister stood up, you started to interject. I would just ask that you would be considerate to your member from Thornhill.

Minister?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I know the opposition don't want to hear this. I know the opposition don't want to hear what the Ontario Energy Board said yesterday, because it gets in the way of their story. But it's the facts, and Ontario families deserve to know the facts. They deserve to know what's happened to their energy bills year over year, from last May to this May.

This is not just what we're saying. This is what the Ontario Energy Board said yesterday, and I'm going to quote them directly: "A comparison of May 2010 and May 2011 shows overall the total bill has remained ... flat as a result of the introduction of the Ontario clean energy benefit."

I don't know why the opposition don't want to accept that. Actually, I do: It gets in the way of their story. I'm sorry if the facts get in the way of your story, but—

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

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** The facts are that Premier McGuinty has made a mess of Ontario's energy system—and by the way, you paid \$1.4 million to ship that power out of the province.

Ontario families are paying more for the power they use: \$75 more this year, and the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters say it will go up \$732 more over the next five years. Ontario families pay more when they don't use power, and it's exported to our neighbours.

Ontario's manufacturers cannot afford to keep up with your expensive energy experiments and massive subsidies to Samsung. Many of them have closed their doors, taking about 300,000 jobs with them. I recently met with a heavy industry manufacturer, and they alluded to the fact that, as a 7/24 energy consumer, your high energy prices could be a make-or-break for them in Ontario.

Why can't you stop yourself from—

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The Ontario Energy Board has confirmed that, indeed, our Ontario clean energy benefit is having the desired effect, which is: keeping prices flat for Ontario families. I know you don't want to believe that, I know you don't want to accept it, but that comes from the Ontario Energy Board. They're the independent regulator of energy prices in this province.

But soon enough, Ontario families will have to choose between their approach and our approach. Pretty soon, they're going to have to choose between dirty coal and cleaner air. Pretty soon, they're going to have to choose between a legacy of increased respiratory illness in the province of Ontario and a clean and healthy future for their kids. Pretty soon, they're going to have to choose between price uncertainty over there and moderated, stabilized prices here.

Pretty soon, they're going to have important choices to make. I'm confident they're going—

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

#### STOCK EXCHANGE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. We know that the London Stock Exchange wants to merge into the Toronto Stock Exchange—I should say that it's a takeover—and what's interesting is that your finance minister, at the beginning of this whole episode, was opposed. He was concerned that "it will lead to a loss of influence for Canada, and a loss of control over the country's capital markets." But recently, the minister seems to have changed his mind. He seems to be stuck on, does he have the authority and does your government have the authority to be able to stop this deal, if they so choose?

I remind you that you're the government of Ontario, and there's a bill that's called the Ontario Securities Act. It clearly says in section 16, "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make a regulation relating to any matter governed by Ontario securities law, despite any other provision of this act."

My question is, what happened on the road to Damascus? Why did he change his mind? And why do you think you don't have the authority?

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

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** First of all, I want to thank the select committee of the Legislature for their outstanding work.

When news of the proposed deal first broke, what I said, very publicly, was that there were a number of serious questions that needed to be responded to. I'm pleased that the legislative committee, again, reinforced those challenges and came up with some very specific recommendations.

I would further add that I did not say yesterday that the cabinet did not have the authority; what I said was that we have had conflicting legal advice. A former chair of the Ontario Securities Commission says that cabinet does, in fact, have that. We have had conflicting advice.

What this government will do is continue to work to ensure the best interests of all Canadians as we move forward in a rapidly evolving world. I thank the committee for its work. It will form part of the body of evidence—

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Minister, it is clear that the government of Ontario has the authority, legislatively, to deal with it through the Ontario Securities Act.

I suggest the following has happened: The reason that the minister has decided to soften his approach on this whole issue is that it conflicts with the Open Ontario aspect of this government bringing forward this initiative. All that they're trying to do is to punt the ball from the provincial arena to the federal government, and let them take the ball.

I say to you, Minister: You're the Minister of Finance, you're the government in charge of the Ontario Securities Commission. The fact that you're trying to punt the ball off to the federal government says that you should not be the government of Ontario.

1100

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** One government appointed a select committee to look at this matter: It was this government. One government has met with and has spoken with all the key stakeholders: It was this government. One government has raised serious questions about the deal that deserve an answer: It is this government. One government has given the public an opportunity to have a say in these matters: It was this government.

Now, if the member opposite is suggesting that Investment Canada doesn't have a role to play, I think he's crazy. Investment Canada has an important role—

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Order. This is directed at all of you. I remind all members that, yes, I realize in the heat of debate, in the cut and thrust of debate, comments can get made, but far too often things get brought to a personal level. I would just ask all members to be cognizant of that, and I will ask the Minister of Finance to withdraw the comment.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I will withdraw and apologize to my colleague for that comment.

To conclude, he's misguided in his view that Investment Canada ought not to have a role to play in this. In fact, it is important legislation. It is one of a number of authorities that will be asked for their position. Ontario will make a full submission to Investment Canada. The Ontario Securities Commission will have something to say on the regulatory basket of issues, and this government will continue to protect the best interests of all Canadians.

#### COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, community health centres play a very significant role in providing primary care and outreach services in my riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan. In many instances, the CHC provides services to hard-to-reach populations, including health-related services on an outreach basis to communities as far away as Shebandowan—60 miles away—for people who might not otherwise be able to get into Thunder Bay for regular primary care.

Minister, you know next week is Community Health Week, and we will recognize the importance that these centres play in Ontario's health care system. Can you please tell the House why health centres are an integral part of the health care system in many of Ontario's communities, especially those in rural and northern Ontario?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the great member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan for that question.

Community health centres are non-profit organizations. They're made up of teams. They've got doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, counsellors, community workers and dietitians. They provide excellent care, and I'm delighted that we're joined today by so many people who benefit from the work of community health centres. They are now serving over 300,000 Ontarians across the province—101 centres and satellites, especially in northern, rural and underserved areas.

We have a duty to ensure that every Ontarian has access to the best possible health care, no matter where they live. That's why we have embarked on the largest-ever expansion of community health centres to provide even more care to more people.

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

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Many of the health services and programs at community health centres are based on community input and need. I'm aware of the great work done by my NorWest Community Health Centres under the

leadership of their executive director, Wendy Talbot. Many of the programs at her CHC directly respond to the needs of our community.

These community-based services are planned for by the local health integration network in collaboration with local community health centres in a way that fits the local need. It's unfortunate that the Leader of the Opposition continues to talk about dismantling LHINs because, apparently, Toronto knows best what's better for northern Ontario and Thunder Bay than the LHIN.

Can the minister explain how local health integration networks are involved in the planning and delivering of these community centres instead of recentralizing that decision-making back here in Toronto?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The local health integration networks, the LHINs, are responsible for funding, planning and integrating health care at the community level. This includes guiding the programs that the community health centres offer. The planning means that health care is responsive to the needs of the community. Ontario is a wonderfully diverse place. The needs in different communities are different, and the LHINs respond to that.

We know that healthy, strong communities are at the heart of a healthy, strong Ontario. I've had the privilege of visiting many community health centres across the province. Each one is different. Each one responds to the needs of the community. I look forward to continuing to support the remarkable work that goes on in community health centres.

#### CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, when you first announced the closure of the Sarnia jail in your budget, you said that it was because it was underutilized. In fact, that jail is actually at 105% capacity. Then you said that it made economic sense to close the Sarnia jail, but Sarnia is the only jail in the province that actually runs on a balanced budget. Now, the latest news is your scheme to ship prisoners to a super-jail in your riding at a cost of \$500,000 a year, according to the paper this morning.

Minister, when will you come clean and admit that the reason to ship those prisoners and jobs from Sarnia to Windsor is because of your seat-saver program?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock, because I've heard some comments from this side about this as well. We need to be conscious within this House of imputing motives and alleging that certain actions were taken in exchange for some sort of gain. I have to admit that I'm increasingly uncomfortable with this "seat-saver" comment that is being made. I'm going to ask members to refrain from using that term, because, in my mind, it is imputing a motive. I will be interjecting when that term is used.

Minister?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** To the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The member will know that the officials in the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services did an analysis of a number of institutions in the province to determine whether money could be saved by closing some of these institutions, just as your government closed, I think, about 25 institutions in the province. No doubt there were people on this side who would have opposed it at that time. I know what the role of the opposition is and I know the role of the member. But I can tell you that the decision was based on—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** No, you were busy closing 28 hospitals. That's what you were doing. This is jails; it's not hospitals we're talking about now.

What I say to the member is that we took into consideration all of the information provided by ministry officials and acted—

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

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Back to the Minister of Finance: When asked by the media and others why you were shutting down the Sarnia jail, you said the decision was made over three years ago. That was in the media this morning—the Toronto Sun. Your decision would make Sarnia the only major border community in Ontario without a jail. We know that your decision was made without consulting the RCMP, the OPP, the legal community, the judiciary, Mayor Bradley from Sarnia or the local police services. Did you at least speak to Canada Border Services to tell them that they would now be responsible for transferring prisoners nearly three hours away to the new super-jail? Or was this pork-barrelling patronage program too important to allow for community consultations?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. Minister of Agriculture, that's not helpful. Comments from the member from Sarnia-Lambton are not helpful. Comments from the member from Cambridge aren't helpful. Comments from the Minister of Community Safety, leading off in other directions when answering a question, are not helpful.

I recognize that members are eagerly watching a calendar with 17 question periods left in it, and I would just say to all members that it is helpful to the proceedings within this House that we uphold the decorum that I know you are all able to demonstrate to the people of Ontario.

Minister of Community Safety?

1110

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The decision was based on the information provided by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services to those who had to make the final decisions. As you know, there were four different sites that would be closed, two of which were in government ridings and two in opposition ridings, so that wasn't a consideration.

I think that when the comment was made generally, we said that some of the buildings were very old build-

ings and some would be under capacity, and for others, it was because of the age of the building and whether there would have to be capital works undertaken at those particular buildings. They took into consideration all the costs and all the savings.

I know that in the first half of question period, people over there ask us to save money. When we find a way to save money, you say you don't want us to save money. You cannot have it both ways. It's a difficult decision, but you cannot have it both ways.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. In 2008, the McGuinty government announced the launch of cap-and-trade agreements. Cap-and-trade was supposed to be in place by 2010. Then it was delayed to 2012. Now the Minister of the Environment says that it won't even meet its 2012 target. Why has the Ontario government lost all sense of urgency on climate change?

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

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** I want to thank my friend for the question. The McGuinty government is committed to cap-and-trade, and we are a proud partner in the western climate change initiative with the state of California, the province of British Columbia, the province of Manitoba and the province of Quebec. But it is important that, if we have cap-and-trade, we get it right, and we have to get it right for the environment and for our economy.

A cap-and-trade system means that we have to have robust data in regard to the emissions of carbon dioxide by our major emitters. I'm pleased to announce to the House that because of a regulation that was passed by this government, companies, for the first time, are reporting that data starting this month. That information will be coming in over the next few months. By next year, that information will be audited and verified. That will form the basis for us to make the appropriate allocations so that we can cap our emissions of carbon dioxide and reduce—

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I would have thought the minister would have known that in 2008. The Premier once called climate change the defining challenge of our time. Now climate change has fallen off this government's agenda. Ontario's environment commissioner says, "Any delay in the implementation of a cap-and-trade regime will likely further hinder the government's ability to meet its 2020 greenhouse gas agreements." Is that why the government is almost six months late releasing its annual progress report on climate change—because it now has no hope whatsoever of meeting its 2012 and 2020 climate change targets?

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** I look forward eagerly to the release of our annual report in regard to climate change, and I can tell the member that we are well on our way to meeting all of our targets. I know that we're looking

forward to announcing our very first government-wide climate change adaptation report: the strategy and the plan that now will guide all of the efforts of our government and again lead in North America in regard to that.

I wonder why the member of the NDP is asking us about climate change when at every opportunity they block our efforts at energy conservation and at every opportunity they block our efforts as we reduce our reliance on dirty coal-fired generation. You can't have it both ways in this place. It's important for the NDP to come clean. You're either for energy conservation and cleaner sources of energy or you're not.

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** I have a question for the Minister of Energy. With Ontario's economy turning the corner, the NDP's energy plan, which involves massively increasing taxes on northern Ontario's employers, is something that recklessly puts tens of thousands of jobs at risk across the north. The government's long-term energy plan indicates that industrial electricity prices are expected to increase about 2.7% each year over 20 years. While electricity is certainly not the only commodity whose price is increasing around the world, northern Ontario's employers can use any advantage to stay competitive and to continue investing in good northern jobs. While the NDP plans to raise taxes on the north's employers, can those industries count on the government's continued support through its long-term energy plan?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I really want to thank the member for Algoma-Manitoulin for that question. He is indeed absolutely right: We're helping large employers in the north stay competitive through our northern industrial electricity rate program. That's taking 25% off their costs of power. That's very, very significant. Our industrial conservation initiative, which came into effect January 1—and incidentally was something that industry brought forward to us as a better way to do energy for industry in northern Ontario and across this province—is helping those companies cut their costs by millions and reinvest in their operations. Plain and simple, that's great news for workers in the north.

Let me give you an example. A recent RBC Capital Markets research memo noted, "The future of" Tembec's "newsprint mill is looking brighter with a change in Ontario's electricity rules...." Tembec's Kapuskasing operations involve 1,000 direct jobs that are benefiting from this—

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

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** It's reassuring to know that our plan is working and that employers across the north are benefiting from this government's energy plan.

There is no doubt that in terms of energy policy and investment, northern Ontario has been given the attention it lacked. For example, the \$2.6-billion Lower Mattagami hydroelectric project has been the largest hydro project in

the north for many, many years. It will supply clean, green energy to the north and is a shining example of the government's commitment to northern investment and co-operation with First Nations.

Will the government commit to supporting this kind of investment and energy infrastructure renewal that create and sustain jobs in northern Ontario?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Without a doubt, this entire government is exceptionally proud of the progress we've made on the energy file in the north. The member mentioned the Lower Mattagami hydro project. That's just another great example of that.

I think the Lower Mattagami project is a great example of what we can achieve together, working with northern partners, First Nations, and having the fortitude to see these big clean energy projects through. We announced the conversions of the Thunder Bay coal generating station that's now going to be powered by natural gas, and Atikokan generating station, to be powered by biomass. Two of our major priority transmission lines, the east-west tie north of Lake Superior and the new line to Pickle Lake, are perfect examples of how our energy plan invests in the north's future by moving forward on investments—important infrastructure today that is creating jobs in the north, today and well into the future.

## FIREFIGHTERS

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question today is for the Minister of Labour. As you know, prior to the last election, this House unanimously supported and passed presumptive legislation for professional firefighters. Last year, after constant questioning from the PC caucus, your previous minister finally agreed to add a regulation that now includes volunteer firefighters.

These firefighters are all employees of our municipalities. However, to this day, our own Ministry of Natural Resources forestry firefighters are not included in the presumptive legislation. When can we expect you to take the appropriate steps to make sure that our dedicated forestry firefighters are treated as equals?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Firefighters, including our volunteers, are indeed vital to our communities in doing what they do in life-threatening situations. We appreciate and respect all the work they do. Our government recognizes the very important, life-threatening work they do, and that's why we've made it easier for all firefighters, fire investigators and volunteer firefighters who suffer from fire-related illnesses to qualify for workplace insurance benefits with regard to presumption issues. We want to ensure that their families are treated fairly and receive the respect that they deserve during those times of personal crisis.

Our regulations now presume that eight types of cancer, as well as certain heart injuries, are included when suffering from work-related—otherwise proven. We can appreciate the work they do, and I'll continue to look into the matters as they proceed.

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

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Minister, with us in the members' gallery today is Mrs. Kim Leblanc and her brother, Rowley Ramey. Mrs. Leblanc's husband passed away last October with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Tom had served this province for over 30 years as a forestry firefighter and, in fact, had fought forest fires all over North America on behalf of our Ministry of Natural Resources. Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma is a form of cancer and is included as a disease covered under the legislation.

Can you tell Kim today when she can expect the same benefits, as the widow of an Ontario MNR employee, as those families who have lost a loved one who was a firefighter with a municipality in Ontario? When can she be treated as an equal in this province?

1120

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Let me express our deep sympathy to the family as it relates to the passing of your loved ones. Certainly, all of us in this House appreciate the tremendous work that our volunteers have done.

As I've mentioned, we've lifted the burden of proof off the backs of those hard-working firefighters and their families. While we've taken steps, we want to ensure that all firefighters and their families are treated with dignity and compassion in the event of these illnesses and, even worse, their deaths.

Our government values that work. We believe firefighters should be afforded this level of protection in our workplace safety and insurance system. Our system wants to treat all firefighters and their families fairly.

I'll undertake to speak with the families after this question period. Thank you for the question.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. Ontario hospitals such as London Health Sciences Centre are receiving legal advice to shred anything that might be embarrassing to the government. The health minister claims to be alarmed, stating she doesn't "condone that approach at all" and expects hospitals "to embrace the spirit of the legislation." Will the Premier immediately order hospitals to cease shredding any documents?

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I don't know what I can add to what I said earlier. This is completely unacceptable. The Ontario Hospital Association and the government of Ontario are in complete agreement that hospitals must comply with both the letter and the spirit of the law.

Bringing hospitals under freedom of information was, I think, a pretty bold move, a courageous move, on the part of government. We know that whenever we open organizations to freedom of information, we find things that might be embarrassing at the moment. However, it does result in better governance over time.

It was an important step we took. I am very pleased that the hospitals are embracing both the spirit and the letter. I cannot speak to legal advice that may or may not—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This government has no intention of ensuring transparency and accountability. Instead, they're more concerned with covering up potential scandals like the eHealth fiasco. The Premier can—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I withdraw.

Instead, they're more concerned with avoiding scandals like the eHealth fiasco. The Premier can claim shock at what's going on; the health minister can claim shock at what's going on. But the reality is that the government buried an amendment in the budget bill that blocks public access to freedom-of-information requests in hospitals. That's the bare fact. How can they expect hospitals to be transparent and accountable when it's clear that this government is prepared to do just about everything to prevent that from actually happening?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** With the greatest respect, that is just an absurd allegation. We are bringing hospitals under freedom of information. That's a big deal and a big change. The amendment that the member opposite speaks about is one that we carefully considered.

Our highest priority in our hospital sector now is improving quality of care. It is vitally important for the future of our health care system that quality in our hospitals continues to improve. Under our Excellent Care for All legislation, hospitals are now required to publicly report on quality indicators and quality improvement plans.

Part of the work of improving quality requires an open, frank discussion within a hospital about why quality is not as high as it could and should be. We listened to advice. We found a middle ground—

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

## FOREST INDUSTRY

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** My question is to the Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. As this government knows, the forest industry is of crucial importance to the economic viability of northern Ontario. More than 260 communities throughout Ontario rely on the forest industry to sustain their economies.

This government continues to do everything it can to help revive this industry after it was hit so hard by the recession, most recently with the wood supply competition that was able to return jobs to the north, as well as some newly introduced legislation which proposes to modernize the forest tenure and pricing system.

Could the minister please explain why it is so important to modernize our system and how we have listened to what representatives from the north have had to say about the proposed legislation thus far?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I appreciate the question from the member. I know how important forestry is to his riding.

Certainly, our government is very conscious of the challenges facing the forestry sector, which is why we're so proud to bring forward a number of programs, providing hundreds of millions of dollars in support. But we also recognize how important it was to take a longer-term view of how we can revitalize the industry. We came forward with a modernization of our forest tenure system, the forest pricing and allocation process, and brought that forward to northerners.

In 2009, when we started this process, we thought we'd travel, and we travelled across the province—not just the north, but everywhere forestry was important. One hundred and sixteen consultations later, with community leaders, representatives of the forest industry as well as aboriginal communities, we drafted our legislation, which we brought forward to the House, bringing forward two new governance models: pilot local forest management corporations and enhanced shareholder sustainable forest licences, which industry is supporting. We look forward to the—

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

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** Minister, it sounds like tenure modernization will make the licensing of crown forests more efficient by opening them up to new business and generating fresh investment in Ontario's forestry industry.

Aside from the northern local input that you have received on the legislation, be it in the consultations throughout the north, the industry working group or the public hearings at committee, you structured the proposed legislation to nurture local input.

Could the minister please explain how he plans to continue including northerners in improving the forest tenure modernization and pricing system?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Indeed, we carried our consultation process all the way up through the public hearings that have taken place. We are now at clause-by-clause in the committee, and we have tabled some amendments that we know will address some of the concerns that have been expressed that we've been listening to, amendments related to the two pilot local forest management corporations. We want to set up an amendment that will ensure that there is a review before we move into more of those local forest management corporations. We also want to have an amendment that supports the holders of the enhanced shareholder SFLs, who use their wood in a consistent and an optimal manner. We recognize there are some concerns relating to providing ample notification and communication when we are reviewing a licensee's use of wood. Other amendments are coming forward.

The long and the short is, this is going to allow for far more local, regional and aboriginal participation in our forestry sector, something that everybody in this House has been calling for—

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

## UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE FUNDING

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. In Oshawa, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology is attempting to split the facilities and IT departments, as of July 1, from Durham College. Minister, what would this mean to the staff and students at Durham College and UOIT?

**Hon. John Milloy:** We very much appreciate the good work that goes on between UOIT and Durham College, and we certainly appreciate the fact that UOIT has faced some financial challenges. The government has taken steps to help put UOIT on a solid financial footing by providing additional financial support towards repayment of UOIT's debentures.

Starting this year, the government will be providing UOIT with a new debenture grant totalling \$13.5 million annually. A condition of the debenture funding is that UOIT and Durham College reach a shared services agreement, as required by UOIT's legislation, and I want to assure the member that the government is working closely with both institutions to ensure an agreement is met.

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

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** Minister, the land that the college and university are situated on was originally owned by Durham College; it is now shared by both, as everyone would know. Many of the services, such as the athletic facilities, dorms, residences, libraries, cafeterias, parking and even the classrooms, are also jointly shared by Durham College and UOIT and mandated through legislation, as you mentioned.

What exactly would a split mean to the governance of UOIT and Durham College and to these facilities and the staff that are employed by them?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, I'm not sure if the member can take yes for an answer with this question. The simple fact is that UOIT needs to focus on education and not on debentures. I would remind members that the reason why they have a debenture is because of the plan that was put in place by the previous government, which was unworkable.

We've come to the table with \$13.5 million. We have also, under the legislation, asked UOIT and Durham College to reach a shared-services agreement. We are working very closely with both institutions to make sure that that is a reality.

1130

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION  
ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Premier. There are some 5,000 children in Toronto attending French public schools. These schools are overcrowded, some are not permanent, and children are forced to travel great distances to attend. It is a right under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms for qualified children to receive an education in their own language.

There is a high concentration of French-speaking families in my riding, among them the Cyrs. Their daughter is entering high school in the fall this year, but the family has no idea where that is going to be. The Premier has a duty to explain to the Cyr family and many others why the Ministry of Education has failed to guarantee the rights of French-speaking students.

Why is the government not stepping in so that the conseil scolaire can find a permanent home for them?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** En premier, j'aimerais féliciter tous ceux et celles qui gèrent nos écoles de langue française.

Some of the most significant improvement we've had in student achievement in the province of Ontario is found in our French-language schools. I want to thank the teachers, parents, students and all those who apply themselves to that important segment of our publicly funded education system here in Ontario.

I can say that we continue in discussions on the matter that my honourable colleague raised. We can also say that we have increased funding in our schools since 2003 by 63%. That's \$5,676 more per student. Again, on the matter of student achievement: It has gone up. Seventy-seven per cent of students in French-language boards are now achieving at or above the provincial standard in EQAO tests. That's the highest—

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's hard for students to achieve when they don't have a school to go to.

We have communicated with the Conseil scolaire de district du Centre-Sud-Ouest and found out that they have been patiently waiting for assistance from the Ministry of Education for nearly 13 years. The French-language public school board is growing each year. This year, enrolment has increased by 7.3%.

The TDSB has surplus schools available. The ministry is stalling on its obligation to assist the conseil scolaire in securing permanent buildings to accommodate its growing student population.

Will the government make good on its commitment to the conseil scolaire and produce the financing that it so badly needs in order to purchase surplus schools from the Toronto District School Board? Yes or no?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We recognize that there are some geographical challenges that French-language schools have faced in helping their students succeed. For example, the 12 French-language school boards cover the same geographic area as the 60 English-language boards. That can present some real challenges. As I say, we are working with all of our boards.

I'd also recommend, of course, that our French-language boards reach out to their counterparts that would be found around the province and see what it is they can do by way of finding accommodation and working together to uphold the interests of the students.

Again, I want to commend our French-language schools for the remarkable progress they've made when it comes to student achievement. I want to remind my

honourable colleague that we have dramatically increased funding levels for our French-language schools, as we have for all of our schools, and we look forward to continuing to work with them.

### HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** My question is for the Attorney General. Human trafficking is a reprehensible crime that preys on the most vulnerable members of our society. It robs its victims of their most basic rights: their freedom, dignity and self-esteem. There is no question that putting an end to human trafficking in our province should be a priority.

I was pleased to hear that our government is investing in many different organizations to support to fight the human trafficking in the province of Ontario. I was also pleased when I learned that the London Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition is receiving some funding to establish materials to fight human trafficking.

Minister, can you tell us and tell the people of Ontario what you are doing to help those organizations to continue the fight against human trafficking?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** My colleague from London–Fanshawe is absolutely right. We’ve had discussions about this before. The scourge of human trafficking appalls all Ontarians. It often preys on the most vulnerable, often on children. It is a modern form of slavery.

That’s why this government—my colleague the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services—together are leading a coordinated, comprehensive government effort to add to the work we’ve done against gangs, to add to the work we’ve done in support of victims of crime—a special, focused, additional effort to support victims, to support the investigation, to support the prosecution and make sure we can put an end to the scourge of human trafficking in the province of Ontario.

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

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I want to thank the minister for his effort to support many organizations and groups in the province of Ontario to fight human trafficking, because it’s important for all of us in the province of Ontario. This initiative is important, and you have taken a great step in the right direction, but the most important thing is to continue to support the police services and community groups in the province of Ontario, to give them the ability and the support to continue their fight.

I think it is very important, too, to create a mechanism and also a coordinated and comprehensive approach to fight this movement in the province of Ontario. Minister, can you tell me and tell the people of Ontario and this House what you are going to do to put all these resources together and coordinate it in order to continue the fight and be successful in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** Well, again, my colleague the member for London–Fanshawe is absolutely right. You need a coordinated and comprehensive effort.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** So to support the police investigative efforts and to support the excellent work that’s being done in terms of the guns and gangs task force, to further support the specialized investigations unit, and especially the work of the Peel region police, who have been leading the way in many ways here, we also have a specialized crown.

Victims’ services has been leading the way here, so a Hamilton area group—Timea Nagy, head of the group, a victim herself—Walk With Me, is receiving support through this initiative. It’s just one of a number of ways we’re supporting a comprehensive approach to end human trafficking, to support the victims of sexual slavery. We would wish that all parties in the House would support rather than make fun of—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. The time for question period has ended.

### NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Sarnia–Lambton has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services concerning the closure of the Sarnia jail. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I want to remind the members that the Ontario Allied Golf Association’s golf awareness day reception is taking place today from 5 to 7 in the dining room. All members are cordially invited.

I also want to take this opportunity to welcome Carole Shurman, the wife of our colleague from Thornhill, and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Stoll of Montreal, who are visiting Queen’s Park today. Welcome to the Legislature.

There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1138 to 1500.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I’m very pleased to be able to introduce some folks from Guelph. From the Ontario Co-operative Association, whose head office is located in Guelph: Peter Cameron, Jeremy Wittet and Denyse Guy. From Co-operators Insurance, which also has their head office located in Guelph: Frank Lowery. I’m very pleased to present the co-op representatives.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** First of all, Speaker, I appreciate your own hospitality today for welcoming a very special delegation from the National Defence University of Pakistan, who are touring not only Ottawa but Ontario. They are, of course, very ably accompanied by His

Excellency the Consul General of Pakistan, Sahebzada Khan.

With your permission, I'd like to introduce the entire delegation and ask them to please stand and be recognized: Commodore Khalid Saeed, Commodore Irfan Mahmood Khan, Brigadier Azhar Abbas, Brigadier Faiz Hamid, Brigadier Syed Qaiser Abbas Shah, Colonel Imran Munawar, Colonel Syed Waqar Hasnain, Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Shafiq Khan, Lieutenant Colonel Mukhtar Ahmed, Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Aleem Anwar, Lieutenant Colonel Kashif Nazir, Lieutenant Colonel Abdul Waheed, Lieutenant Colonel Shahid Nazir, Captain Ilyas ur Rehman Bhatti, Captain Mehboob Elahi Malik, Group Captain Abdul Moeed Khan, Mr. Arshad Ahmad, Mr. Abdul Akbar Sharifzada, Air Commodore Alester Mohan De Zoysa, who I understand is accompanying us from Sri Lanka, and also accompanied by Consul Asim Ali Khan, et aussi, finalement, Captain Laura Kissmann, the liaison from foreign affairs in Ottawa.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Consul General and guests, welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Rick Johnson:** I'd like to welcome some very special guests from Make-A-Wish Canada. Joining us today are Kristy Switzer, administrator in development; Whitney Gillen, communications coordinator; and Krista Bussey, manager of marketing and communications; plus two very important women in my life: my lovely wife, Terri, and my equally lovely daughter, Trish.

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** I would like to introduce Jeff Mole, who is the founder of Trillium Energy Alliance. Mr. Mole is actually working on a project to ensure that the citizens of Ontario can have community power. He hopes that all the members will make time to attend the Ontario Co-op reception this afternoon between 5 and 7 p.m. in committee room 228.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I want to draw to the attention of all members a notice of motion I tabled on April 13. It reads as follows: "That, in the opinion of this House, the standing orders should be amended to require that any private member's bill having been referred to a standing committee be considered by that committee and reported back to the House no later than 12 sessional days following its referral; and further, that any private member's bill ordered for third reading shall be called for third reading no later than 12 sessional days following the order."

My reason for putting this resolution forward is that politics and partisanship have reduced what is intended to be a meaningful opportunity for individual MPPs to bring forward legislation to a horse-trading exercise by House leaders at the end of a legislative session. Under the current practice, even though MPPs vote in favour of

private members' bills, they seldom see the light of day because the government refuses to schedule them for further consideration.

The proposed amendment would ensure that all private members' bills that pass second reading would be scheduled for committee hearings and would receive third reading votes.

The role of individual MPPs has been steadily eroded by successive governments of all political stripes. This is an opportunity to take back an important legislative responsibility that legislators have lost over time.

### MAKE-A-WISH CANADA

**Mr. Rick Johnson:** Speaker, you may be aware that there is a cause for celebration on April 29. Across the pond, a certain young woman will marry a certain young prince. She'll become a princess and the whole world will smile upon her.

How many little girls dream of this real-life fairy tale? Once upon a time, this was even my own little girl's wish. So it's fitting that April 29 marks not only a royal wedding but a global celebration of wish-granting. For Make-A-Wish Canada and its chapters and affiliates around the world, April 29 is World Wish Day, a day meant to inspire people everywhere to share the power of a wish.

Make-A-Wish is an international wish-granting organization with affiliates in 36 countries. Make-A-Wish Canada was founded in 1983 and, since then, has granted over 3,900 wishes to Canadian children with life-threatening medical conditions.

Make-A-Wish Canada's success is due to the financial support of individuals, corporation grants and bequests and, of course, the dedication of its staff and volunteers.

I thank the party and House leaders for their support in wearing these lapel pins that we all have today as we formally recognize World Wish Day in the Ontario Legislature.

I offer this wish for my guests and everyone at Make-A-Wish Canada: May the hope, strength and joy that belongs in every child's eyes continue to drive the outstanding work that you do. With that, I remain wishfully yours.

### SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise today to ask why the McGuinty government continues its practice of decimating small Ontario businesses.

Last month, I highlighted Ontario boat builders who are being shut out of the government procurement process. The McGuinty government's response was, "We are driving Ontario companies into the supply chain of multinational companies around the world." Well, the only place the McGuinty government is driving Ontario businesses is out of business.

Now we have another example that proves the point: the RFP process for small independent school bus operators. This is a flawed process and provides an inherent

advantage to large, multinational companies. The government's school bus transportation policy ignores the contributions that have been made for generations by independent, family-owned companies like Hammond Transportation and Bell's Transportation in my own riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka. These businesses have invested millions of dollars in our local communities, property and facilities and provided many local jobs, only to be shut out of the bidding process now because the McGuinty government is handing over the contracts to large, multinational companies.

This is a short-sighted approach that will eventually limit competition. Large, multinational companies may underbid in the short term, but when small and medium-sized businesses are put out of business by this government, they will be gone forever. Then where will rates go?

I call on the McGuinty government to put a hold on this new school bus procurement system before we lose all our fine independent—

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

#### CO-OPERATIVES

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I would like to recognize the Ontario Co-operative Association, which is hosting their annual Queen's Park reception today to meet with members and discuss the important role that co-operatives play in our economy.

Co-ops are owned and operated by their members to build sustainable communities by fostering local economic development. There are currently 1,300 incorporated co-ops, credit unions and caisses populaires operating in 1,900 locations in 400 communities across Ontario, serving 1.4 million members. In terms of economic impact, the co-op sector in Ontario has more than \$30 billion in assets and employs more than 16,000 people. In Guelph alone, there are more than 40 co-operatives providing services such as housing and insurance, as well as dairy processors, credit unions and daycare.

This House passed a motion by the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale on December 14, 2006, supporting the co-operative model of business. On December 18, 2009, the United Nations proclaimed 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives, and the sector is planning Ontario events for 2012.

Please join the co-op association this afternoon in room 228 and meet with them, and they can tell you more of their good-news story.

1510

#### MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to welcome the co-operatives. I think they're a great inspiration for Ontario.

This past Sunday, residents of Bowmanville, in my riding of Durham, took part in the 12th annual MS Walk. I was invited but unfortunately unable to attend the MS Walk in Uxbridge.

The Bowmanville walk is a charity event which raises money and awareness to find a cure for multiple

sclerosis. MS damages the nerves in the brain and spinal cord, making it harder for the brain to effectively communicate with the rest of the body.

I want to recognize my constituent Bonnie Crawford, who promoted this year's walk. Bonnie is a remarkable individual who has lived with MS for over 25 years. Earlier this month, Bonnie and her husband, Darrell, with the help of the Bowmanville Zoo, paraded through the streets of Bowmanville with two camels, Titan and Felix, to help raise awareness of the event. I want to thank Michael Hackenberger from the Bowmanville Zoo for his support.

I also want to thank Durham MS society board members Elaine McDade, Mike Roche, David Reid, Jim Marsh, John Daley and Jennifer Heynen. Thanks also to Kevin Anyon and Mayor Adrian Foster for supporting the event that day.

Congratulations to last year's top individual fundraisers, Katharine McMurdo, Elizabeth Gilroy and Nicola Dunning, as well as team captain Laura Scott—that's not Laurie Scott—whose team, the MonSters, raised \$8,680. Captains of Bowmanville's top teams included Crystal Neilsen and Linda Vanderlinde.

As the honorary co-chair for the past number of years, I'm always proud to support and promote this event because it helps families who would otherwise go unattended to.

#### DUTY-FREE STORES

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** Businesses and the economy in Ontario towns that border the United States are hurting, and hurting badly. The depreciation of the American dollar has enticed Ontario consumers to shop across the border in the US and enticed American consumers to stay home. Add in the lower cost of gasoline in the United States and the punishing nature of the McGuinty Liberals' HST, and the problem has been made even worse.

But there is something the McGuinty government could do to try to help this situation. Earlier this week, the Ontario duty-free association was here—they have a number of stores located in Ontario communities along the US border. They pointed out that if they were given a somewhat better deal by the Ontario liquor control board, they could do something to help reverse this sorry situation, help sustain jobs in Ontario communities and increase the amount of shopping by both American consumers and Ontario consumers in these border communities.

All the government has to do is reduce from 50% to 30% the liquor control board markup on any liquor that is sold by these duty-free stores, and it would make a huge difference. I ask the—

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

#### ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** Last Saturday, April 16, I had the pleasure of attending the fifth annual Think Global, Act

Local: Greening our Community Forum in London along with my colleague Minister Chris Bentley.

The event featured more than 40 exhibitors who were set up throughout White Oaks Mall. Each of the exhibitors was there to showcase their energy conservation and sustainable development initiatives and share information with the people of London on what they can do to help the environmental issues concerning our city.

The event highlighted what local organizations are doing to respond to environmental concerns. Organizations gave out compact fluorescent light bulbs as well as low-flow bathroom kits to help people reduce their energy and water consumption.

In addition to the exhibitors, the event featured a talk on environmental issues by University of Western Ontario professor and Nobel Prize winner Dr. Gordon McBean. One of Canada's top climatologists, Dr. McBean has been a vocal advocate for whatever we need in order to conserve and protect our environment and also keep and preserve it for the next generation.

I would like to congratulate the event organizers for a job well done and encourage all Ontarians to think about what they can do in their own communities to reduce their environmental impact.

#### OTTAWA MUSLIM WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to take this opportunity today to recognize a very special organization, the Ottawa Muslim Women's Organization, which will be celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. The OMWO came into existence after the tragic events of 9/11. A lot of Muslim and non-Muslim ladies in Ottawa got together and wanted to make sure that they had an organization where women could foster positive interfaith relationships after the tragedy that took place in New York City.

That organization, in the last 10 years, has flourished. This year, on May 1, they will be hosting their 10th annual Festival of Friendship dinner. This dinner has become an annual tradition, attended by a lot of the members of Parliament, provincial Parliament, city councillors and other dignitaries, who come together with the broader community to foster peace and positive interfaith dialogue within the community.

This year, the guest speaker will be retired police chief Armand La Barge from York region. They've had many other notable speakers in the past, including former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson in 2004.

I want to congratulate all the volunteers within the organization, especially Nazira Tareen, who is the founder; Shano Bejkosalaj, the president; Shawana Durrani, the secretary; Ilham Abdo; and Nigar Islam for all the great work they do in our community.

#### PASSOVER

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I rise today in celebration of Passover, known to the Jewish community as Pesach. I've

asked a constituent of mine, Monty Mazin, who resides at the Reuben Cipin centre at Baycrest, to share with all Ontarians what Passover means to him. Monty Mazin is an extraordinary Ontarian who's known as the king of the kettles for all the money he raises for the Salvation Army every year in their kettle campaign. Monty has won many volunteer awards, including the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award. Here's Monty, in his own words:

"For me, personally, the meaning of Passover is liberation and freedom, and this was taught to me since childhood by a very wise grandmother, my bubbe Bessie, an Orthodox Jew and a social activist, who put her prayers into practice. She has been my role model throughout my lifetime of service as a community volunteer.

"Today, at the age of 84, as I sit at the Seder table and joyously celebrate with family and friends, I am reminded of the importance Passover places on conveying the story and meaning to the next generation.

"For it is the children's role to ask the four questions (written in the Haggadah), and it is our role as adults to impress upon them the significance of the answers. For we understand fully what our children do not: that the future of the Jewish people lies with them.

"In this way, each new generation can take its place in the chain of the Jewish people leading down from Exodus to the present."

The uniqueness of Passover is also encapsulated in the following passage: "In every generation, each person should feel as though he or she were redeemed from Egypt, and it is said: 'You shall tell your children on that day, "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I went free out of Egypt." For the Holy One redeemed not only our ancestors; he redeemed us with them.'"

I want to wish everyone a happy Passover. Chag Sameach to everyone.

#### MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

**Mr. Rick Johnson:** It has come to the attention of the members in this area that the member from Guelph is celebrating a birthday today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Yes, we all wish you a happy 29th birthday.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### BRITISH HOME CHILD DAY ACT, 2011

##### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DES PETITS IMMIGRÉS BRITANNIQUES

Mr. Brownell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 185, An Act to proclaim British Home Child Day / Projet de loi 185, Loi proclamant le Jour des petits immigrants britanniques.

1520

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** The British Home Child Day Act will set aside September 28 of each year to recognize and honour the contributions made to the province of Ontario by the more than 100,000 British home children who came from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland to settle in Canada and here in Ontario from the orphanages and industrial schools of those countries. Between 1869 and 1939, they came here to work as domestics and farm labourers and certainly made valuable contributions to the social and economic fibre of Ontario.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

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

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

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item number 10 be waived.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding committee membership.

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

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I move that the following change be made to the membership of the following committee: on the Standing Committee on Estimates, Mr. Naqvi be added.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### JOUR DE LA TERRE EARTH DAY

**L'hon. John Wilkinson:** Monsieur le Président, c'est ce vendredi le Jour de la Terre. Cette journée est consacrée au respect et à la préservation de notre planète.

C'est un moment idéal pour prendre conscience que nous sommes tous interconnectés, comme les maillons de la chaîne de la vie qui assure notre subsistance.

This Friday is Earth Day. Earth Day is about respecting and caring for our planet and our environment. It's about recognizing that we are all interconnected in this web of life that sustains and supports us.

This concept of sustainability must guide us if we want to ensure a healthy future for our children and our grandchildren. That's why our government has been actively working for the past seven years to protect and enhance our environment, to ensure our children and grandchildren continue to have clean air to breathe and access to an abundance of clean, safe drinking water, and to support healthy forests, ecosystems and the land our farmers cultivate to grow healthy foods.

I was at Allen Gardens Conservatory this morning to celebrate the second anniversary of the changes put in place to discontinue the sale and use of cosmetic pesticides, to make lawns and gardens, parks and schoolyards safer for our children. This change went into effect on Earth Day two years ago. It's already showing positive results. Water quality monitoring in 10 urban streams across Ontario shows that levels of three chemicals now banned for sale have decreased by almost 80%.

This Earth Day, we are taking another step forward. Some pesticides can be used on plants poisonous to human touch, such as poison ivy. Starting Friday, Earth Day, these products will no longer be readily accessible on store shelves but rather will be behind the counter. Customers can request them from a salesperson but will receive information on their allowable uses before being able to buy them.

Ontario is becoming a green and clean leader and protecting the health of our families.

Our internationally acclaimed greenbelt is protecting a swath of green space, farms and forests close in size to that of Prince Edward Island. We are protecting 250,000 square kilometres of our northern boreal forests. We've made significant progress on waste diversion by introducing new programs for used tires, waste electronics and household hazardous waste to go with the highly successful blue box program.

Our Lake Simcoe protection plan is setting the gold standard of sustainability in protecting and restoring the ecological health of Lake Simcoe and its watershed.

We are the only jurisdiction in North America to phase out dirty coal-fired electricity plants that pollute our air, contribute to greenhouse gases and harm children's, parents' and seniors' health.

Air quality is improving in Ontario. We are making Ontario a hub for clean renewable energy through our landmark Green Energy Act and creating 50,000 new jobs for Ontarians in the new low-carbon economy.

Under our Open Ontario plan, we are attracting new investment and developing opportunities for Ontario's businesses to thrive and succeed in tomorrow's clean, green marketplace. And in just over a decade, we have gone from having people get sick from their drinking

water to being the North American leader in providing safe drinking water. Our new forward-thinking Water Opportunities Act will foster growth in the growing water tech sector, helping develop and promote our water technology both at home and abroad, so that we can create good jobs here at home and so that our friends and partners throughout the world can deliver clean water to their people too.

Vendredi, lors du Jour de la Terre, j'encourage chacun à réfléchir à comment il peut faire la différence et à passer à l'action. Trouvez des raisons de laisser la voiture de côté, faites du vélo et économisez l'énergie et l'eau au quotidien. Cultivez des plantes indigènes dans votre jardin et utilisez des produits naturels. Plantez un arbre dans votre quartier. Les arbres nous protègent. Ils atténuent les effets du changement climatique et nettoient notre air.

Friday, on Earth Day, I encourage everyone to think about how they can make a difference and then act on it. Find reasons to drive less, bike more and use less energy and water in your daily lives. Tend your gardens using native plants and natural products. Get out in your community and plant a tree. Trees protect us, heal the climate and clean our air. Earlier today, the Minister of Natural Resources, along with Trees Ontario, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and a group of local schoolchildren, planted the eight-millionth tree under Ontario's 50 million tree program in Oak Ridges.

Cette planète est notre seule maison. Il faut en prendre soin demain, et chaque jour. Nos enfants et nos petits-enfants vont nous en remercier.

This Earth is our only home. Let's be good housekeepers, tomorrow and every day. Our children and grandchildren will thank us for it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Statement by ministries? The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** One of the main objectives of the McGuinty government has been to make health care in Ontario more accessible. That is because—

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** This is not ministerial statements—

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Am I not doing this?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** No, not yet.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I apologize. I'm told that I'm not speaking at the right time.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The Speaker needs to know these things.

Statements by ministries? Responses? The member from Haldimand-Norfolk.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** As environment critic for the official opposition, we welcome the opportunity to recognize Earth Week and Earth Day, as I did yesterday as well. Before I continue on the woeful record of this government, I'd like to first commend all who ensure that initiatives such as Earth Day are more than merely a feel-good public relations or media exercise—referring to those who roll up their sleeves and lend a hand. They provide action by planting trees, in addition to some

well-intentioned words. These are the people who really get it.

On that note, a few days ago I and my staff joined the Toronto-Dominion Bank's Simcoe branch in cleaning up Wellington Park in the town of Simcoe.

A question: Where are the 50 million trees Mr. McGuinty promised to plant? You've got about another 42 million to plant this spring. Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller called for a billion trees. The St. Williams tree nursery in my riding, since its inception, has put out a billion trees alone. That's just one tree nursery.

Over eight years this government has delivered eight pieces of environmental legislation, along with the associated costs with which business and industry are struggling to comply. There's a cumulative effect: It piles costs on top of costs, paperwork on top of paperwork—considerable red tape to suffocate those in business. I think of the duplication of the Toxics Reduction Act, the duplication of the aforementioned Pesticides Act, the draconian spills bill legislation—all stick, no carrot. Governments utilized each of these opportunities to grab the media.

**1530**

The truth is, eight successive environmental bills—it smothers economic activity, it's costly, and for all the cost, we see results that are lacklustre at best. For example, waste management, waste diversion: An issue prompted Mr. McGuinty's first attempt, with the Adams Mine Lake Act. I've yet to see that lake on a map anywhere. But there is evidence over eight years—certainly in the past year—that this government has lost control of that issue, a government that promised 60% waste diversion by 2008, originally by 2005. You failed. You divert something like 22%, and that's three years after your most recent target date.

Ontario Electronic Stewardship: You failed again. Taxpayers paid the full fare. The program has collected 2% of its promise.

Last Earth Day you promised new legislation, a waste diversion act. You promised that within four or five weeks; on Friday, it will be one year. Where's this legislation?

Of course, the eco fiasco: too costly, too unwieldy, underhanded; the irreparable damage to concepts you just talked about, like stewardship and diversion.

What about air? Constantly, we see environment minister after environment minister courting the media, talking tough on climate change despite pushing an ill-conceived cap-and-trade approach. Last week it was reported, "Ontario also signalled on Tuesday that it would not meet the January 1" western climate initiative "start-up date...." A further quote: "We are not ready to join the market in 2012." This was Minister Wilkinson. "We need the time to get it right and that means getting it right both for the environment and our economy." We do agree: Now is not the time for your cap-and-trade approach.

The same old story with the people across the way: It's talk, little substance. The minister opposite can't

open his mouth without uttering the phrase “dirty coal.” Last year, coal-generated electricity went up 29% over 2009. As they say, BS baffles brains.

Just to wrap up, I’d remind government—I’d remind all of the people across Ontario—to celebrate Earth Day. Remain steadfast in your actions. Consider Earth Day as every day of the year.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** In the course of the member’s response, there was a comment that he made that I do find unparliamentary and would just ask him to withdraw it, please.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** It was probably “BS”—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No, an unequivocal, sincere withdrawal.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I think I know the phrase you’re referring to. I withdraw.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It’s my honour to speak today, on behalf of the Ontario New Democratic Party, marking Earth Day. Speaker, as you’re well aware, as Earth Day has gone along over the decades, an event that started out as a very profound challenge to the way governments and corporations acted has more and more been co-opted, turned into a day for expression of good feelings and goodwill, and less and less for actually calling governments and corporations to account for what they’ve done, or not done, to the world around them.

The most critical issue that our generation faces is the question of climate change. I want to just quote from the Liberal government’s 2009 report on climate change action: “Climate change is not a future threat. It is changing our weather today, threatening our communities and quality of life. What we are only starting to witness is going to get worse if government, industry and citizens fail to act. Even under the most optimistic scenarios for tackling greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the effects are expected to persist beyond the end of this century, affecting generations long into the future.”

This quote from the 2009 annual report by the McGuinty government on climate change is substantially accurate. I would quote the 2010 report, but none has been published. There is no report following that, no update on what has been done.

This morning the Minister of the Environment, who told me he looks forward to publication of that report, didn’t give a date for its publication. He claimed that Ontario is well on its way to meeting its targets. Without doubt, it will be interesting to see how he plans to do that, because, in the previous report, we were told that Ontario would fall short of its 2014 target by 30% unless substantial further action was taken.

You were here, Speaker, for the presentation of the budget. If you heard the words “climate change” in that budget, I would like you to stand up and correct me now. I searched that budget. I couldn’t find any reference to climate change and allocation of funds to improve Ontario’s actions on climate change.

Along with many others, I would be very interested to know what the McGuinty government is going to do to

avoid breaking another environmental promise; in this case, the promise of meeting its reduction targets for 2014. What is it going to do to avoid breaking that promise, that trust, with this generation and the ones to come, in actually taking substantial action on climate change?

In honour of Earth Day, I ask this government to provide its climate action report this week and present its proposals to actually make the targets it promised to meet.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH WEEK

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** I believe we have unanimous consent that up to five minutes be allocated for each party to speak in recognition of Community Health Week.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Agreed? Agreed. Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** One of the main objectives of the McGuinty government has been to make health care in Ontario more accessible. That’s because we have a duty to ensure that the physical, geographical, cultural, social or language barriers that many Ontarians face in no way translate into a barrier into receiving high-quality health care.

One of the best ways to accomplish this is to bring health services as close to home as possible. That’s why we launched the largest expansion of community health centres in Ontario’s history: We’ve almost doubled the number of community health centres and satellites across this province.

In 2004, the McGuinty government invested in 10 new satellite CHCs across the province. We followed that in 2005 with an announcement of an additional \$74.6 million to create 22 new community health centres and 17 new satellite CHCs across the province. Overall, funding for Ontario’s community health centres has risen 80% since 2003. That means 318,000 Ontarians are now being served at the 101 centres and satellites across this province.

Next week, during Community Health Week, several centres will celebrate their grand openings right across Ontario. In fact, I’m getting a head start; tomorrow, I’m going to the opening of the new CHC in Trenton, where I’ll be joined by my colleagues the members from Prince Edward–Hastings and Northumberland–Quinte West.

Next week, I’ll be going to the opening of the new Chigamik Community Health Centre in Midland. This CHC will deliver care to people, including those from Christian Island, Midland, Penetanguishene, and it will specifically focus on serving First Nations, francophones, Inuit, Métis and aboriginal people.

Community health centres are a vital piece of our health care system. Teams of physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, counsellors, community workers and dietitians work tirelessly every day, as a team, to deliver primary health services and social services to individuals, families and communities.

Community health centres are critical in the more remote rural and northern regions of Ontario, parts of our

province where access to health services has been difficult for people in the past. And they are providing so much more than health care. They offer programs and services to address factors such as education, employment, income, social support and housing.

**1540**

I've had the honour of seeing many community health centres in action. I've seen the extraordinary impact that they have on the lives of the people they serve. I see this in my own riding of London North Centre at the Inter-Community Health Centre, and this past January, I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the Jane Street Hub here in Toronto. This remarkable centre is one of many hubs opening. They serve the needs of at-risk communities. In addition to health services, the Jane Street Hub has an employment resource centre, an early years centre, and community services like settlement services for new Ontarians. The Yorktown Child and Family Centre offers counselling for youth and parenting programs, and the North York Community House offers multilingual women's programming.

Not only is a community hub a great tool for improving health outcomes, but in my work developing the poverty reduction strategy, I learned of many other great benefits of a community hub. They help us to better coordinate services, taking a truly person-centred approach to service and program delivery. They can act as a great mobilizer for community energy. They're a place where people gather, interact and connect with one another and the services available in the community. They bring people and communities together.

I am enormously proud of the work that we have done with our health care partners and the work we continue to do to bring greater access to the individuals, families and communities that need it the most. That's why I'm very proud to celebrate Community Health Week, to celebrate the great improvements in access and quality of care that Ontario's community health centres provide Ontarians right across this great province.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I am pleased to bring the attention of the House to Community Health Week, which will be taking place across the province next week in Ontario's community health centres, aboriginal health access centres and family health teams. Throughout the week, these centres will demonstrate how they are improving community health by delivering high-quality care to individuals, families and their communities.

This year's theme for Community Health Week is "Every One Matters." CHCs will hold events throughout the week that recognize that every individual, regardless of who they are or where they live, has the right to enjoy good health. The objective is to highlight that although the health of Ontarians is generally improving, not every Ontarian is experiencing these improvements.

The Association of Ontario Health Centres has recognized Ontario's great health divide as an urgent issue. A "health divide" refers to discrepancies in the health status of Ontarians. Many populations face geographic, linguistic, cultural or socioeconomic barriers to accessing

care. This leaves certain groups of Ontarians more vulnerable to illness than others. The following statistics from the Ontario community health centres' report evidence some of the inequities:

Ontarians who live in northern regions lose more years to premature death than the national average.

Francophones rate their overall health lower than the rest of Ontarians. They have a higher rate of heart disease and are less likely to visit a health care facility.

Immigrant women find it more difficult than Canadian-born women to access resources they need in order to stay healthy.

These are just a few facts that evidence a troubling reality. While the health of some people in Ontario improves, the health of others does not. Ontario's network of CHCs is mandated to focus on the social determinants of health: the social, economic, environmental and cultural factors that have an impact on our well-being.

Gaining access to a CHC is a great way for a community to improve its health care. Currently, over 400,000 people in 110 communities have access to a centre. Community health centres promote higher quality and greater efficiency of health care. They use a bottom-up approach that allows for greater local input into how health services are delivered in local communities. Boards are composed of community members who make decisions on how to tailor services to respond to the specific and pressing needs of their communities.

Community health centres are especially valuable in rural and northern Ontario. They break down barriers to good health that people experience in these regions by delivering care in remote and isolated communities.

CHCs tailor services to achieve best possible health outcomes for populations with high health care needs, such as seniors, youth and newcomers to Canada. Community health centres also serve people in Ontario with physical and mental limitations or disabilities.

The Vaughan Community Health Centre offers an example of one such program. This CHC runs a mindful eating and active learning program that offers type 2 diabetes education and self-management lessons for members of the Italian community experiencing mental health issues and type 2 diabetes.

Another excellent example is the Oshawa Community Health Centre, which serves constituents in my riding. Recently, the Oshawa CHC received the Durham Region Health Department Friend of Health Award. The award was received for the CHC's collaborative partnership with the Durham Region Health Department's oral health division. The Oshawa CHC is working to reduce oral health inequities within the community by offering oral health screening days and working toward implementing a permanent oral health program at the centre.

Focusing on health promotion helps people stay healthier for longer, delaying or preventing admission to facility-based care. This assists government in managing health care expenditures, especially in the face of an oncoming demographic of seniors within the baby boom population.

I would also note, in closing, that community health centres came into being under a Progressive Conservative government. It was the Conservative government under Premier Bill Davis that initiated experimental pilot programs. In 1982, it was PC Health Minister Larry Grossman who made community health centres a component of the province's mainstream health care system.

On behalf of the PC caucus, I would like to thank the entire team of professionals who work at community health centres for the excellent and valuable work they do in improving the health and well-being of all Ontarians.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It is indeed my privilege, my pleasure and my honour to rise today and speak about community health centres. In my riding of Beaches–East York, the East End Community Health Centre provides primary care, health promotion and disease prevention services to the southeast quadrant of central Toronto. A unique aspect of its mandate is to reach out to people in our community who may have difficulty accessing health care due to factors such as language, culture, poverty or the lack of health insurance, which happens to all too many of them.

The East End CHC focuses on the whole person in its approach, and recognizes that factors such as income, education, relationships and housing play a role in physical and mental health. A satellite CHC has begun to operate in Crescent Town, serving the residents of that vibrant multicultural neighbourhood at Victoria Park and Danforth which the United Way has also said is one of Toronto's 13 neediest neighbourhoods.

There are 73 CHCs across the province and 10 aboriginal health access centres serving over 300,000 Ontarians. CHCs are unique, in that they serve people who experience barriers to accessing health care they need through a variety of factors.

CHCs go beyond clinical care, and pay attention to the social determinants of health, with an emphasis on keeping people well, not just patching them up when they become sick. Not only are there teams of nurses, doctors and nurse practitioners; there are outreach workers, health promoters, mental health and addiction workers, dietitians, social workers, and others, who work together to promote wellness in our communities.

I'm a boy from Regent Park, and it behooves me to talk about the Regent Park CHC as well. Health care providers there decided that it would be great if the next generation of providers to the health care centre were from Regent Park itself, and to that end they began the Pathways to Education program. In just a few years, gang memberships were reduced, teen pregnancies plummeted and high school completion rates doubled. In fact, today people going on to post-secondary education from the Regent Park area have reached the levels of many much more affluent communities. As well, many high school graduates became the first in their families to go on to post-secondary education.

**1550**

This is the kind of life-changing care that happens in CHCs across the province. CHCs serve our neighbours

who are newcomers, low-income, parts of minorities, racialized communities; in other words, those who are in the greatest need. Clients don't just get their surface conditions looked after and then they're out the door. They receive the kind of wraparound care that turns them into agents of change in their communities. When they get the care, they in return make sure that it goes back to others.

The role that CHCs play and their mission and mandates really mirror this year's Community Health Week's theme: Every One Matters. This highlights the message that everyone, no matter who they are or where they live, has the right to enjoy good health.

I'm very proud of all the work that the East End Community Health Centre does every day in my riding. I know I'm very proud as well of all the CHCs and what they accomplish across this province, because for every one of them, they are doing work that otherwise would not be done. In every single case, they are providing medical expertise which people might not otherwise get. In every single case, there is a multidisciplinary approach to make sure that the whole person is looked after. This is an idea whose time has definitely come. In my view, the money spent in CHCs is as wisely spent as in any other field of medicine or any other field of health in this entire province.

I commend the CHCs for the groundbreaking work. I ask that they continue to do this work and to push governments to make this the health care future for Ontario. All Ontarians deserve the kind of care that they can provide. Certainly, the care that they are providing in far northern communities among our First Nations people, among newcomers who are new to Canada, even those who have not yet filled the three months to have an OHIP card, is legendary. We salute them and, in fact, everyone does matter to them and to the people of Ontario.

## PETITIONS

### PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition signed by a group of very concerned seniors. It reads as follows and is addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas many seniors, visually impaired persons and other non-drivers do not need or are not eligible for a driver's licence; and

"Whereas many day-to-day transactions such as cashing of cheques; opening a new bank account at a financial institution; returning merchandise to a retail store; boarding a domestic flight; gaining admittance to bars, clubs and casinos; checking in at a hotel; obtaining a credit card, and even renting a video require government-issued photo identification; and

"Whereas Ontario's Photo Card Act, 2008, sets the legislative framework required to deliver a non-licence photo identification;

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

“That the province of Ontario develop a government-issued photo identification card and deliver, in 2011, an Ontario photo card identification for residents of the province over the age of 16 who cannot or choose not to drive.”

I support this petition, I'm pleased to affix my signature and to ask page Devon to bring it to the table for me.

#### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

“Breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

“Problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

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

“To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and to implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types.”

As I am in agreement, I have affixed my signature to give it to page Jimmy.

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

##### SERVICES DIAGNOSTIQUES

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I have a petition here and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario government is making”—that's a misspell. Oh no, that's right—“positron emission tomography scanning ... a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients under conditions where PET scans have been proven to be clinically effective; and

“Whereas by October 2009, insured PET scans will be performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay;

« Attendu que d'ici octobre 2009, des TEP assurées seront effectuées à Ottawa, à London, à Toronto, à Hamilton ainsi qu'à Thunder Bay; et

“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;

« Attendu que la ville du Grand Sudbury est une plaque tournante pour la santé dans le Nord-Est, qui compte l'Hôpital régional de Sudbury et son programme régional de cancer, de même que l'École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario;

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

Je signe cette pétition.

#### ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas agriculture plays an important role in Ontario's economy, and strong, prosperous farms mean a strong, prosperous Ontario; and

“Whereas the establishment of a risk management program was the single most important action the provincial government could have done to help ensure the economic success of Ontario's non-supply-managed commodities; and

“Whereas agriculture is a federal and provincial responsibility, and yet the federal government has refused to act and come to the table with their support;

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

“We applaud the Ontario government's support of risk management programs and encourage the federal government to partner with the province and its farmers to support the risk management programs put in place by the province to bring much-needed stability, predictability and bankability to Ontario's agricultural sector.”

I will sign this one.

#### ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I have a petition today from the Singh family—I believe, sheep farmers in the Peterborough area.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas agriculture plays an important role in Ontario's economy, and strong, prosperous farms mean a strong, prosperous Ontario; and

“Whereas the establishment of a risk management program was the single most important action the provincial government could have done to help ensure the economic success of Ontario's non-supply-managed commodities; and

“Whereas agriculture is a federal and provincial responsibility, and yet the federal government has refused to act and come to the table with their support;

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

“We applaud the Ontario government's support of risk management programs and encourage the federal government to partner with the province and its farmers to support the risk management programs put in place by the province to bring much-needed stability, predictability and bankability to Ontario's agricultural sector.”

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

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I have just been given these petitions from my riding of Durham. They were presented by Sherry Ibbotson, Doug Ibbotson, Beatrice Ibbotson and Jim Ibbotson. They're basically from Newcastle at Morgans Road. The petition 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 greenbelt;"—I should interrupt here. This is different than the previous ones I've been reading; it's updated.

"Whereas the Ministry of the Environment has a responsibility and a duty to protect the sensitive areas of the greenbelt and provincially sensitive wetlands;

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

"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"—I see the Minister of the Environment is listening—"ask the Minister of the Environment"—I'm doing it in person here—"to initiate a moratorium on the clean fill application and permit process on the greenbelt until there are clear rules; and we further ask that the provincial government take all necessary actions to protect our water and prevent contamination of the greenbelt, specifically at" 4148 Regional Road 2, Newcastle—they want to correct that legal description of the property—"and Lakeridge Road in Durham."

I'm pleased to sign and support it on behalf of many of my constituents and present it to Daniel, one of the pages on their second-last day.

## PARAMEDICS

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

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

**1600**

"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."

I will send this to the table with Jia Jia.

## WIND TURBINES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I just received this group of petitions, too—actually from my desk, but anyway. It reads as follows:

"Whereas industrial wind turbine developments have raised concerns among citizens over health, safety and property values;

"Whereas the Green Energy Act allows wind turbine developments to bypass meaningful public input and municipal approvals;

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

"That the Minister of the Environment"—who's here—"revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments and that a moratorium on wind development be declared until an independent, epidemiological study is completed into the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines" on people.

This is important. I sign it and present it to Jimmy, one of the pages here.

## KIDNEY DISEASE

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I just received a petition from Gordon Mather from 459 Arndon Avenue in the beautiful city of Peterborough.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

## ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas agriculture plays an important role in Ontario's economy, and strong, prosperous farms mean a strong, prosperous Ontario; and

"Whereas the establishment of a risk management program was the single most important action the provincial

government could have done to help ensure the economic success of Ontario's non-supply-managed commodities; and

"Whereas agriculture is a federal and provincial responsibility, and yet the federal government has refused to act and come to the table with their support;

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

"We applaud the Ontario government's support of risk management programs and encourage the federal government to partner with the province and its farmers to support the risk management programs put in place by the province to bring much-needed stability, predictability and bankability to Ontario's agricultural sector."

I agree with this, so I will affix my signature.

### TAXATION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** This is petition day, that's for sure. This one here is also from my riding of Durham. It reads as follows:

"Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty is increasing taxes yet again"—

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Premier McGuinty—that's the proper title. Former Premier? No.

Premier McGuinty "is increasing taxes yet again with his new 13% combined sales tax, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it;

"Whereas, by 2010, Dalton McGuinty's new tax will increase the cost of goods and services that families and businesses buy"—and use—"every day. A few examples include: coffee, newspapers and magazines; gas for the car, home heating oil and electricity; haircuts, dry cleaning and personal grooming"—physical fitness classes, golf—"home renovations and home services; veterinary care and pet care; legal services, the sale of resale homes, and funeral arrangements"—the list goes on;

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised he wouldn't raise taxes in the 2003"—

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I apologize.

I may have to start at the beginning. I'll start at the beginning.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Okay, I'll just start there.

"Whereas" Premier "McGuinty promised he wouldn't raise taxes in the 2003 election. However, in 2004, he brought in" the dreaded "health tax, which costs upwards of \$600 to \$900 per individual. And now he is raising our taxes again;

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

"That ... Dalton McGuinty ... wake up to Ontario's ... economic"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is there another petition?

### KIDNEY DISEASE

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I do have another petition today, and it's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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

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

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

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

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

### ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I have another one. This one here hasn't got any faulty language in it that I know of.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government is cutting front-line health care at pharmacies, which could mean higher prices, less service and even store closures for us;

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

"Stop the cuts to front-line health care"—especially in our pharmacies—"now."

I'm pleased to present this on behalf of Yvonne Johnson, Jaclyn Smith, Victoria Kay, Jack Dubois, Don Dew—most of these people live in my riding and I want their names—Rachel Jagger, and Jeannine Closs from Bobcaygeon. I'm pleased to sign it and support it and present it to Kiruthika, one of the pages here. I finally got her name right.

### OPPOSITION DAY

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty government has failed to adequately consult northern Ontarians, their communities, industries and First Nations on issues of critical importance to the region's future. The decision not to hold public hearings on Bill 151 in the north and the same lack of consultation on the part of the McGuinty government, in co-operation with the Harper government, to impose the HST demonstrates a lack of respect for northern Ontario. We call on the McGuinty government to commit to a consultation process that ensures that decisions about northern Ontario are made in the north and not dictated by Queen's Park.

Addressed to the Premier.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day number 4.

Further debate?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Today, New Democrats, in this motion, are asking for something pretty basic. We're asking for all Ontario MPPs to commit to a consultation process so that decisions about northern Ontario are made in the north.

Why are we bringing this motion forward? We're bringing it forward because the McGuinty Liberals think that they know best and don't need to consult with the north when making decisions that affect the north.

The government's attitude towards the north is just plain wrong. Northern Ontario has natural wealth that makes it one of the leading regions in the entire world. It also has the talent and population to build a prosperous future. But the north will not succeed if the provincial government sticks to the same status quo that has been letting the north down for years: a status quo that says that the north has nothing to offer, as evidenced by this government's mismanaged policies and lack of consultation for the past eight years; a status quo that says that decisions about the north should be made in the back-rooms of Queen's Park instead of in northern Ontario; a status quo where the best hope for the young generation is to move elsewhere instead of staying in the north.

Wood and mineral resources can be used to create jobs and opportunity in northern Ontario. Resources should not be shipped away to be processed somewhere else, but that is precisely what has been happening in the north under this government's watch.

**1610**

The wealth that the north generates can stay in the north, so that it can be used to upgrade and build new hard and soft infrastructure, which is needed and will help the north to prosper. The green hydroelectricity that the north generates can become an economic advantage, not just a source of frustration every time northerners open their hydro bills.

We need a north where good jobs provide a good future for everyone. And for policies to work, we need to consult those who know best, which is northerners. Private enterprises will create jobs, but government has a key role to play in protecting and building the province we want. The McGuinty government has so far failed to protect and build the province we want. This government has definitely not put the people of this province, and especially northern Ontario, at the forefront of its plans.

The recession hit the north long before it hit the rest of this province—long before it hit the rest of Canada. Since the economic downturn started in northern Ontario, 40,000 people have lost their jobs. Over 30 mills have closed across the north during the recession. We're turning into a province with a small group of haves and many, many have-nots.

The difference between the very, very rich and the rest of us is growing at an alarming rate. By 3 p.m. on January 1, Canada's CEOs had already collected more in pay than the average person earns in an entire year. A smaller

and smaller handful of people are doing very, very well, but they're not the people in northern Ontario.

What's happened in the north isn't an accident. Northern Ontario is going down an all-too-familiar path right now with the government's change to the forest tenure regime. Bill 151, the Ontario Forest Tenure Modernization Act, is a bill that will have significant effect in the north. If this bill passes, not only will it fundamentally change the way we price crown timber in this province, but it will also change how we license our forests.

Any forest tenure policy that results in Ontario's publicly owned crown forests being sold off to the highest bidder outside Ontario and being used to sustain jobs there, rather than in northern Ontario, is simply bad policy. We've already seen this; we've seen it happen to mining. Xstrata and Inco shut down smelters in Ontario and shipped unprocessed ore out of the province.

Northern communities have asked for consultation on Bill 151—they've asked for it loud and clear—but this government refuses to bring these consultations to the north. Our member Gilles Bisson, who is a member of the committee, moved a motion to allow the committee to travel to the north. You would think the government would see this as a basic no-brainer. Here is a bill that affects the north, and it only makes sense that the committee hearings go to the north to see what northerners have to say about this bill. But the Liberals used their majority on the general government committee to quash the subcommittee decision to hold public hearings in the north and instead, as a replacement, hold two days of hearings in Toronto.

The subcommittee did the right thing, I would submit. The subcommittee knew what the right thing to do with this bill was, which was to take the hearings to northern Ontario where people could pore over the details at public hearings and make recommendations for change. Instead, this government quashed that decision of the subcommittee and used its power—its majority—to overturn what was the right decision; another decision being made at Queen's Park that will have severe consequences for the north without consultation with the north.

Bill 191, the Far North Act: Here is a bill that was only going to affect the Far North. You would think the government would take time to actually listen to communities in the Far North. No. What did they do? Instead, they pushed the bill through. Well, Speaker, you can imagine how the communities of the Far North felt about that.

First Nations leaders, mayors and reeves of many communities in the north, chambers of commerce and many, many others from the north told the government to put the brakes on the Far North planning act, put the brakes on that bill. Every voice in the north said loudly and clearly that they would not support the act. They said that the government had the bill wrong. And what did this government do? They ignored every single one of those voices. And of course, because of their majority, the bill passed, with the consequence being conflict.

Development won't happen in the north without First Nations at the table, and they won't come to the table if this bill, the government's Far North Act, is on it. Once again, decisions being made at Queen's Park mean lost opportunities for northern Ontario.

Between 2003 and 2011, the price of electricity in this province has effectively doubled. That's had a serious impact across all of Ontario, but it has been devastating to the north. In the late 1990s, Ontario's Conservative government, with the support of the McGuinty Liberals, decided to regulate and privatize Ontario's hydro system.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** Deregulate.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Deregulate. Did I say regulate? They decided to deregulate and privatize Ontario's electricity system. They experimented, and that experiment failed. It failed miserably, and this government continues to experiment with private power.

A household in Kenora pays \$50 more a month for electricity than they would across the border—in fact, right next door, in Winnipeg. A large industrial operation pays \$1.1 million more a month for electricity. That's twice the amount that that same operation would pay in a province like Manitoba or Quebec. Northern Ontario has fallen victim to energy policies that are made somewhere else, and the results are higher bills in every single household, as well as companies that are being forced to relocate somewhere else where the hydro, the electricity, is more affordable.

The ultimate example of the government ignoring the north was the McGuinty government's decision, along with the Harper government in Ottawa, to slap a new and unfair tax on everyday necessities like gasoline, like home heating, like electricity. For northern families who are already struggling with significant job loss, with paycheques that are not keeping up—families who have to drive much, much further and have to heat their homes for much, much longer with a much harsher winter season, and generally have daily expenses that are higher than families in most other parts of the province—the HST is just like salt in a wound, and it's not creating any jobs. It's another decision that hits northern Ontario hard, and it's been made by people, both the McGuinty Liberals and the Harper Conservatives, who don't think about northern Ontario.

So what needs to be done? This government's policies have left the north losing jobs, losing people and losing opportunities. We need to create a new relationship of respect.

Due to the distance involved, it's a little harder to actually live in northern Ontario. It's a tough place to get through everyday life. It's harder to get to a doctor. It's harder to get to a specialist when you need one. It means there's a need for more investments in roads and bridges, for example. It means that daily essentials, like gas for the car or home heating, are much, much more expensive.

Under the McGuinty Liberals, the north has not been consulted about these kinds of issues that affect them every day. Bill 151, the Far North Act, wood reallocation

processes, the northern growth plan and the HST: They have not been consulted on any of these fronts. Instead of facilitating northern economic recovery, the government is making it harder and harder for the north to bounce back, and this government is doing all of that from their cozy little offices here at Queen's Park, without having the decency to go to the communities and ask them what is best.

**1620**

Every time I go to northern Ontario and the northern communities talking to northerners—whether it's in their coffee shops, their hockey arenas or community centres—every single time I go there, they are telling me that they feel that they have been ignored by this government, that they are sick and tired of a government that simply shunts them aside and develops policies down here in Toronto without consulting with them, without giving them the dignity and respect of saying, "We think you actually know something about what your communities need, about what can help your economy, about how to start pulling things to the positive, more, in northern Ontario."

They are frustrated with a government that has ignored them time and time again, that has closed its eyes to the great opportunity there; that has, in fact, stymied their opportunity, that has actually done things, made decisions and enacted legislation that does the opposite of what they want to see, that actually makes it harder for northerners to take advantage of the great wealth that they have. It's shameful that, after eight long years, the government still doesn't get it and is continuing on this same wrong path that doesn't listen to the voices of northern Ontario and refuses to consult with them in an appropriate way.

This motion is a very simple one, and I ask all members in this Legislature, all MPPs, to think long and hard about what the right thing to do is for northern Ontario, and that is to give them the respect they deserve. Northern Ontario has mineral wealth that's caught the world's attention, but it does not have its own government's attention. We need to give northerners the power to control their own destiny, and I urge members of this Legislature to support this motion and do exactly that.

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

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm very glad to have an opportunity to participate in this debate, and certainly many of my northern colleagues will be, on this side of the House. I guess when you're in opposition you can certainly say what you want, even if it isn't true.

In terms of the consultation process, I look forward to having an opportunity to breaking down what consultation process has taken place, certainly with Bill 151—an extraordinary level; two levels of consultation—and the growth plan as well, which is truly a document that was designed by northerners for northerners—let alone the work we did on the Mining Act modernization.

But I just can't resist starting by saying that this is a motion, a resolution, that speaks about respect for north-

erners, yet this is the party, when they were in power, that stole \$60 million out of the northern Ontario heritage fund in their last year of office.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Excuse me. Did I hear the member say “stole”? Could you withdraw that, please?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I withdraw that. They themselves will acknowledge that they removed, under the cover of darkness, \$60 million from the northern Ontario heritage fund in their last year in office, and certainly did not in any way apologize to northerners for that. That certainly wasn't showing any real respect for northerners. It's something that we do talk about in the north a fair amount of the time.

Having said that, I think the important thing that certainly I want to address—and my colleagues all have various issues—is that we absolutely believe in consultation being a crucial element and that, indeed, northerners have got to play a very significant role in decisions, particularly in issues that are as important as the forest tenure modernization process, Bill 151. Indeed, it is a significant piece of legislation, which is why, when we first brought it down in August 2009, we recognized that there obviously were extraordinary challenges in the forestry sector.

Part of our response to that, certainly, was a number of support programs and incentives that have flowed about \$750 million to the forestry sector. But we also recognized there was a need for a longer-term look at it, which we felt could be assisted by looking at the forest tenure allocation and pricing system.

We began consultations in the fall of 2009, went to a number of northern communities—but may I say, more than northern communities, because forestry is not just in northern Ontario—brought forward a draft proposal in April 2010, and went right back out again and consulted extensively with a number of communities across the province. In fact, we had 116 tenure consultations in all; 45 in the northeast, 45 in the northwest, 15 other public sessions—63 meetings with aboriginal communities and organizations across Ontario. Certainly, I could go through all the communities that we went to.

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** Do it.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Well, I haven't got time, but there were 63; there were a lot of them.

The long and the short is that we were very keen to hear from northerners, and we certainly did hear from them. We heard from the forest sector. We heard from municipalities. We heard from First Nations. What we heard was that the legislation needed some adjustments. As a result of that, we brought forward public hearings. The public hearings and public committees took place, and we heard a great deal in the public hearings from northerners. We heard from northerners, and as a result of that, we're bringing forward amendments that we think will meet some of the concerns that are being addressed by industry. We've got support from St. Marys Paper; it's very true. We've got support from Tembec. To be fair, they'd want to see some amendments go forward

which we have brought forward to the committee, and we're happy to do so.

The bottom line for us has always been that we want to get this legislation right. We recognize that a significant change like this, which I think was long overdue—and, may I say, this is legislation and policy that we heard from the opposition was overdue as well. They recognized that we needed to look at the system. Yes, we want to protect existing industry, but we want to allow new entrants the opportunity to be able to come out with a good business plan and begin to use some of Ontario's crown fibre. So that's exactly what we've done.

Certainly, the consultation process has been extensive. We have continued to consult, and if we are successful in getting through clause-by-clause and through third reading, we will continue to be consulting with the forestry sector, with northern municipal leaders, with the chambers of commerce; something that I do well.

I'm probably running out of time or getting close, but let me reference the growth plan. The growth plan is a level of consultation unlike we've ever seen before. The member for Timmins—James Bay brought it up the other day in the House; the leader of the third party brought it up today. The fact is, to suggest for one second that northerners were not the architects of the northern Ontario growth plan is absolutely absurd. Some 2,400 northerners, more than 80 meetings, 300 submissions, 10 public meetings, 40 workshops, First Nations' extraordinary level of involvement—consultation for two and a half years. In fact, as some will recall, there were those who said, “Gee, why aren't you getting the growth plan out more quickly?” We wanted to get that right as well. As a result, we released the growth plan document by northerners, for northerners in March of this year. We've got some tremendous initiatives. We're moving forward with the implementation of the northern Ontario growth plan, a vision for northern Ontario for the next 25 years.

Let me just reference the Mining Act modernization as well. Prior to drafting the legislation, we went out and consulted, had public presentations all across northern Ontario. After the legislation was passed in September 2009, we've also continued to consult in terms of the regulatory process with our aboriginal partners, with communities, with the mining sectors, with all kinds of people across the north, recognizing just how important that is.

There's no doubt that we recognize that this is a piece of legislation that will have an impact in the forestry sector. It's one that we have asked northerners about in an extraordinarily consultative fashion, and we're going to continue to do so. We are grateful to have the kind of support that we have from industry. Although we recognize that there are still those who are expressing some concerns, the amendments that are being brought forward—and we hope you'll look at them closely; we hope you support them, in fact. We want to be able to make sure that this legislation is the right legislation.

Certainly, in terms of the amendments that are going forward, one of the things that we've heard most

frequently relates to the local forest management corporations. It's been misunderstood and consistently misinterpreted by the third party. These are two pilot projects. We want to be able to test the principles of a new tenure model. We recognize it will take time to test those principles. We're going to bring forward an amendment to provide some comfort, may I say, to industry that, in addition to the enhanced shareholder SFLs, which industry strongly supports—indeed, they've come up with the concept of that and wanted to help expand on the co-op model. We want to make sure that with the amendment we bring forward, the two pilot LFMCS that we want to move forward on, we will not move forward with more of them until we have a full review—before we move ahead with further LFMCS. That comfort appears to be required by industry. I understand that. As a northerner, I understand that, my colleagues understand that, so I am hoping against hope that the opposition will support that.

**1630**

The long and the short is that we have consulted in an extraordinarily expansive way. It is something that we consider very, very important, so to listen to a resolution such as the one that the leader spoke on, and I'm sure other members will speak on, is actually offensive to northerners. You're offending northerners; you're insulting them. They're the ones who have come forward with the recommendation for how we should move forward with that. They're the ones who told us we needed changes in how we look at our allocation and pricing and licensing system for the tenure system in the province of Ontario. They're the ones who have helped us, obviously, mould this legislation in a fashion that is going to bring forward a piece of legislation that will help revitalize the forestry sector in the years ahead.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to say a few words. We're very proud of the hard work that has been done. We would like to enlist the support of all three parties as we move forward to revitalize the forestry sector in Ontario.

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

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I appreciate the opportunity to speak. The member from Kingston and the Islands may not realize that my father was born and raised in Sault Ste. Marie and has a lot of relatives in the Soo. As well, he spent a considerable amount of time as chief of police in Thunder Bay.

First of all, I very much appreciate the leader of the third party bringing this forward for debate. The real reason that it has happened is because of what has taken place with the forest tenure act, in that there was a request to take it on hearings throughout the north so that individuals in northern Ontario could express what the impact is going to be.

The minister spoke and gave some indication of the support that was there, yet as I look forward, the communities that were demanding consultations in the north—whether it's Timmins; Thunder Bay; Ignace; Cochrane; the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce; the

OFIA with Jamie Lim; Chief Angus Toulouse; Kenora; the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation; Grand Chief Stan Beardy asking for hearings to take place in the north; Espanola; Sioux Lookout; or Iroquois Falls. I know the mayor from Kapuskasing was in town as well and very much expressed to me the desire to have these move forward.

Part of it is the consultation process. One of the difficulties is—and I think what's taken place here, in trying to understand as a viewer watching what the reasoning behind it would be—all one has to do is look at what's taken place with the Far North Act. During consideration of the Far North Act, there was some consultation that took place and, quite frankly, there was a huge opposition to it. While in Sioux Lookout, I believe it was the chief from Cat Lake, if I remember correctly, who came forward right in committee—it's all in Hansard—and said, over the Far North Act, that he was willing to go to war over the legislation that was before it, simply expressing the fact that these individuals were not satisfied with the process.

You see, what had taken place in the past—when I spoke to Dave at NAN, the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, they very specifically expressed that the information process in the past was not a consultation process; it was a briefing. These individuals were briefed as to what was going to happen and how it was going to unfold. It wasn't a matter of them coming forward and getting the opportunity to express concern about how it was going to impact. Essentially, what was taking place is that they were being told what was going to happen.

So myself and other committee members tried to move forward so that we could have committee hearings in the north to give these individuals direct ability in their communities, on behalf of their individuals, to show their communities that they're standing up and believing in what's happening taking place.

We need to look back on some of the other consultation processes that didn't happen. I mean, past performance is a future predictor. All one needs to look at is what took place in Attawapiskat. Think of the mine in Attawapiskat after De Beers, according to them, invested over \$900 million in that mine and, lo and behold, no consultation; the government just arbitrarily tripled the taxation rate at that mine. And right here in this building, on the very basement floor during the miners at Queen's Park day, the president of De Beers Canada stood up and said that this equated to something that could only be expected in a Third World country, something absolutely foreign that they had no idea would take place, and they stated the fact that these individuals would now deter them from investing in further mines in the province of Ontario, hence causing more problems.

Yes, the leader of the third party was absolutely right about Xstrata in Timmins and what has taken place there, with those individuals.

Quite frankly, the lifeblood of the north is the forestry and mining sector, as one would say that the lifeblood at one point would be the automotive sector in Oshawa. Those things are very dependent on those very things that happen.

Some of the things that have taken place that haven't been brought forward and that I want to enlighten some of the other individuals about as well are regarding, for example, the changes to forestry practice. First of all, it was quite shocking to those individuals in the north—and I have to say that when you were in northern Ontario, once upon a time, it didn't matter if you were standing in a hospital or a school or anywhere, in any aspect of government at all; it didn't matter if you were buying your driver's licence or your licence plates. If somebody looked at you and said, "Where do you work?" and you looked at them and said, "I work for the ministry," everybody knew at that particular time that you were working at MNR, the Ministry of Natural Resources. Yet, lo and behold, it's being brought down again with no consultation at all, moving the forestry file out of MNR over to Northern Development and Mines. The wondering is: Why would such an aspect take place? Is MNR not handling the file correctly? You only have to talk to the individuals in the north, and they're asking the same questions: Why is this taking place, and what is the sense in it?

When you deal with that as well, the forestry sector has changed its forest harvest planning. Once upon a time, moose management practices were implemented within the MNR, the ministry handling the forestry sector. Without any consultation, it's now being done under a caribou management plan. What that has done is infuriated the outfitters and the First Nations communities that I have spoken with, because now it has decreased the moose population, at the expense of or in the hope to allow an increase in the caribou population when they have no real, specific figures as to the number of caribou throughout the province of Ontario. This causes a lot of individuals—biologists in the north, individuals working in those sectors—great concern because, without consultation, the ministry has just done an arbitrary change with what they believe is the best interests of the north. Hence, once again, southern Ontario is telling the north how it's going to be good for them.

Lo and behold, we only have to look at the number of mills that are shut down in northern Ontario to see that it's just not working out. We need that consultation out there. When you get to the point in the Far North Act when individuals came forward and they protested and demonstrated the way they handled that—how does the government respond? "We're going to have consultations, but they're going to be right here at Queen's Park."

I think that if the government had listened to the people and gone forward with an honest consultation in a fashion where they could take input and bring forward changes, the municipalities in the north would be far more accepting of the things that are happening.

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

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** I want to speak to this motion because it speaks to the injustice that people across northern Ontario feel, and feel deeply.

I want to refer to just one aspect of it. There are literally dozens of communities across northern Ontario

that are dependent upon the forest sector for people's livelihoods. Whether it be a sawmill or an oriented strandboard mill or a paper mill or a pulp mill, they are all almost totally dependent upon access to the crown forest. That is where you get the wood fibre to run the sawmill, the OSB mill, the paper mill and the pulp mill. Imagine if someone sitting in an office in Toronto, with the stroke of a pen, says, "This large area of land where the wood fibre comes from: You can't have that anymore," and knowing that that's going to put 500 or 600 people out of work, 500 or 600 people who've had good jobs, who've been able to raise their family, who've paid their taxes, who have contributed to the community. But with the stroke of a pen in a backroom in Toronto, it's gone. Imagine if the people doing this don't even have the common decency to come to your community and talk to people, talk to the people who are going to lose their jobs, lose their livelihoods, lose their homes and, in some cases, lose their families. They don't even have the common decency to come and talk to you. They do it in the backroom with the stroke of a pen. I think that just about everybody across Ontario, if they had this happen to them, would be angry, would be upset. But this hasn't happened just once; this has happened repeatedly over the last six or seven months under this government.

**1640**

I just read today in the *Globe and Mail Report on Business* that the oriented strand board market is improving, that oriented strand board mills that have been shut down for a year, two years are now reopening. But there's an oriented strand board mill in Wawa—a relatively modern oriented strand board mill in Wawa—and the community of Wawa is very dependent upon it for employment. This government took away their wood supply allocation with the stroke of a pen and didn't have the decency to go to Wawa and look the people in the eye and say to them, "We're taking your jobs. We're taking away your economic viability. We're taking away an economic base of your community." They didn't even have the decency to go and talk to people.

Or Dubreuilville, a community that is almost totally based on sawmilling: This government went into the backroom and, with the stroke of a pen, took away their wood supply allocation. They didn't even have the decency to go to the community and say, "Sorry, we took away your jobs. Sorry, we took away your economic future. Sorry, we took away the economic base of your community."

Or McKenzie Forest Products in Sioux Lookout: That sawmill is a rather unique place, because there are a lot of First Nations people who work at that sawmill. Imagine 600 good jobs. This government, with the stroke of a pen, says, "We're taking away your wood supply allocation." They didn't even have the decency to go to the community and talk to people. They didn't even have the decency to go to them and say, "What effect is this going to have on your life? What effect is this going to have on your future? What effect is this going to have on your community?" No consultation, no consideration

whatsoever. With the stroke of a pen, just do away with it.

Then this government has the audacity, the arrogance, to say that it's consulting people in northern Ontario. I've heard of bait and switch. I've heard of double-talk before. But what I've witnessed in the last six or eight months from this government, in terms of its dismissal of the people of northern Ontario, the communities of northern Ontario, the workers of northern Ontario and the First Nations of northern Ontario, is something I have never seen before in my experience in public life.

I couldn't believe it when I heard the Minister of Natural Resources stand in this House and say that she had consulted First Nations about the Far North Act, when we had dozens of representatives of First Nations here in the gallery who said over and over every day, "We have not been consulted. The minister flew into our community, spent half an hour, did the photo op and then left." That is not consultation. I can think of a number of things I would call it—a whistle stop, a superficial media strategy—but it is not consultation, and that is something this government has got to realize.

I have never in my life seen the kind of anger that I see in northern Ontario communities today. I have never seen people so upset about a government that believes it is okay to go into the backroom in Toronto and write regulations and laws that affect people's lives, their jobs, their livelihoods and the future of their communities with no consultation and no respect for those communities or those people. But that is what people across the north have been subjected to by this government over and over again. That is why this motion is here today, and that is why I urge all members to vote for this motion. Vote for it before you create a situation that all of us—all of us—would find intolerable.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate? The member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I'm pleased today to welcome my son Christian Mauro to the Legislature here, sitting in the east members' gallery. He's down here to watch democracy in action.

I guess the first thing I'll say in regards to this opposition day motion, to the people in northern Ontario: So the campaign has begun. Clearly, if there has ever been an opposition day motion that was clearly and 100% focused on starting a political campaign—and that starts this fall. We're ready. They're ready. This is what they bring forward. The campaign has begun.

Thankfully, every day in my experience in northern Ontario there are fewer and fewer people who are buying into this rhetoric. It hasn't changed for six or seven years. It is exactly the same kind of rhetoric that's been coming from that party for seven years. Nothing's changed. If there was ever an opposition day motion that was more patently, obviously shallow and political than this one, I haven't seen it, and I've been here seven and a half years now. I'm still waiting to see it.

The issue here today—I'll get to the consultation part in a second—is the legislation. As the Minister of North-

ern Development, Mines and Forestry already said, our government has, coming forward to committee, amendments to this particular legislation. We'll be watching closely to see if the NDP members in fact do support the amendments that are coming forward.

I know the minister has work very hard on this particular piece. The issue is the legislation, not this ridiculous argument that's being made about the consultation. If there was ever a government that raised the bar when it came to consulting on just about any piece of legislation, I would say that this government has moved the yardsticks forward and raised the bar, as compared to any other one at any other time. But, of course, they don't want to talk about that. So we'll be watching closely to see if they vote for our amendments and whether, at the end of the day, this closely reflects what the people in the province are looking for.

They want to talk about consulting, and the member from Kenora–Rainy River, who just spoke, said he's never seen people in northern Ontario this mad, he's never seen them this up in arms, he's never seen so many backroom deals, and, with the stroke of a pen, anything being done in southern Ontario that affects people—you know what? You know what jumped into my mind? The social contract. Have you ever seen a piece of legislation more egregious, more of an affront to what would be considered to be your core constituency, like it was for the NDP? Have you ever seen anything more egregious? Basic collective, freely bargained—

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** The members opposite are laughing. They think it's funny.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Stop the clock, please. Can we take it down a notch and listen to the member? Thank you.

Continue.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** They think it's funny. They're laughing over there. But there are people in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan who still talk about the social contract. I'll tell you when people were mad: when that piece of legislation was brought in here. You want to talk about a backroom deal? You want to talk about "with the stroke of a pen"? We'll go back and check the Hansard from the early 1990s to see how many of these members were on their feet speaking out against the social contract. That's what we'll do. We'll see if we can find them in Hansard telling the people in northern Ontario what a bad idea they thought the social contract was.

Did they consult with northern Ontario people when they took \$60 million out of the northern Ontario heritage fund, during what were difficult times, I acknowledge, but not as difficult as the times we have now? What did we do? They took \$60 million out. We took the \$60 million and we made it \$100 million. We took a slightly different approach.

What did they do with medical school spaces? Who did they consult with when they decided to slash medical

school enrolments all across the province, which led to more people in this province not being able to find a primary care provider for the longest period of time? Who did they consult with when it came to those kinds of decisions? What a bunch of nonsense.

They still want to try and blame the forestry crisis on this government. Speaker, I wish I had an hour to speak today, but as you can imagine, northerners are clamouring over each other to try to speak.

Who did you consult with when the Abitibi Thunder Bay mill division closed in 1991 and put 450 people permanently out of work—450 people? I just flew down this week with a guy who used to work there, and I'll tell you, he had a very interesting idea and commentary on what the NDP did or didn't do in 1991 when it came to him, as one of those 450 people who lost their jobs at the Abitibi Thunder Bay mill in 1991.

But, of course, they'll tell you that every lost forestry job is the fault of this government. What an absolute bunch of nonsense. We don't have time today to get into as much detail as we would like to, but I wish I had more.

**1650**

I want to talk to you about this oddly worded resolution that somehow throws this bit in here about the HST. I want to just talk about that a little bit. I've said before here in this Legislature that at the federal level, the Bloc, the Liberals and the Conservatives supported the HST. At the provincial level—I apologize to my Conservative friends; you don't have any credibility on this matter—the only people really opposing it are the third party, the NDP. They're the only ones who are opposing it, federally and provincially. They're the only ones. They get it. The rest of us don't get it; just the NDP get it.

I want to read something that was in the Toronto Star not too long ago. The headline says this: "Layton Sees HST Differently in the East and the West." I want to read this for you:

"NDP Leader Jack Layton is singing a different tune on the HST at opposite ends of the country, saying it's bad in British Columbia because the Liberal government introduced it while saying it's progressive in Nova Scotia where the NDP is in power." This is Jack Layton.

"Layton is desperately hoping to tap into the anger in BC over the introduction of the blended sales tax...."

"Here in British Columbia the Premier ... promised not to bring" it in, and then he took a bribe from the federal Conservative government. That's what Layton is saying in BC.

Here's where it even gets funnier: "Layton says not only should the HST be scrapped in BC but the province should also be able to keep the federal money as well." He's saying to scrap it and let them keep the federal money as well.

"Yet earlier in the campaign in Halifax, Layton remarked on NDP Premier Darrell Dexter's innovative approach to the 15% HST there when the government removed it from home heating."

Here's what he said: "'The thing about what happened here was, under Darrell Dexter'"—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Stop the clock, please. I would remind the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek to return to his seat.

Continue.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** "'The thing about what happened here was, under Darrell Dexter'"—the NDP Premier in Nova Scotia—"there was a whole program of rebates and specific reductions to the HST, so that for many people, especially those most in need, they actually ended up ahead of the game."

It sounds a little bit familiar—like what's gone on here in Ontario, I would say. It sounds close to what has happened here in Ontario. It is remarkable.

As I said, this is actually a bit of fun. The NDP have brought forward a motion that is intentioned—I think we're probably seeing at least 30% to 50% of what will be their campaign: HST and electricity. I don't know what else they're bringing forward. They haven't told us their electricity plan yet. I don't know what they're going to pay for or what they support. They don't support nuclear; they don't support our green energy program—

**Mr. David Oraziotti:** They don't support coal.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** They don't support coal. I don't know what it is that they support when it comes to their energy or how they're going to pay for it. I haven't yet heard them explain to me how energy prices went up by 40% in the five years they were in power and yet, we got no new generation or transmission infrastructure while they were there—but a 40% increase over five years.

The campaign has started; that's all this is about. We welcome it. We look forward to it and we look forward to the people of northern Ontario having an opportunity, in the days and months ahead, to really stand and look closely and analyze the rhetoric that has been coming from this party for the last six or seven years, because absolutely nothing has changed.

I'm excited about the opportunity to dissect and to debate those members as we move forward. As I said, I wish I had more time. We have two other northern members clamouring here to speak on this. I thank you for my time. I'm happy my son was here to see this with us today.

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

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's too bad that the member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan allowed himself to be subbed in at general government. We didn't hear him on the record at that committee.

I'm pleased to speak to the opposition day motion by the third party. There are a number of things in this motion that I certainly agree with, and there are some that I don't, and I'll get to those after. But I was a member of the general government committee, with the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, when we discussed this item.

I'll turn to the March 30 Hansard for that committee. Originally, the subcommittee came and proposed that there would be some consultation in the north—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Could you stop the clock for a second, please? I would ask that the government side now come to order to listen to the other side. Thank you.

Continue, please.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** The original subcommittee report did talk about northern hearings. In fact, the report, as listed in Hansard, talks about the committee going to Pembroke, Timmins, Thunder Bay—the fact that clause-by-clause wouldn't be on May 2. However, the parliamentary assistant, the member for Algoma–Manitoulin, moved a motion to take out those northern days. In fact, when we pressed him about the fact that he would take those out and we wouldn't have northern hearings, he made some interesting comments. Those were comments in committee where they decided that we'd just have the two days in Toronto, and he made comments. It was interesting because he said—and I'll quote the member for Algoma–Manitoulin, Mr. Brown, saying:

“We are about to hear, hopefully, two full days of public presentations to us. People can do this. This is 2011. Hopefully, we can do some of these things by audiovisual means, some of them perhaps just by audio. Many will want to come here. Many of the companies that are involved here are not unacquainted with the city of Toronto and the environs. These are very large companies.”

So, when he was pressed, because I asked him whether he thought there was enough consultation, he said, “I've said what I needed to say. We need to move on. Northerners have had ample opportunity to comment on this.”

However, when he gets back home, the *Mid-North Monitor*—I'll give you another quote, Madam Speaker. This is Mr. Brown, the member for Algoma–Manitoulin: “I don't want to see consultations in the cities, that is what I said, because that is not where the people directly affected by this legislation live,” explained Brown. “I want to see the hearings go to the communities directly affected by this legislation, places like Espanola.”

Well, you know what? He didn't move that they go to Espanola. There was no motion at the committee to go to Espanola or any of those other communities. So I don't know if the member is going to stand up and give as a third story today or what he's going to do.

But I'll tell you, the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington and I in committee had lots of support for the third party. Mr. Bisson, the member for Timmins–James Bay, placed a motion expressing the third party's discontent with Bill 151. The motion: three in favour, Mr. Bisson, Mr. Hillier and myself. The five Liberals voted against it.

I have an issue that day because the member for Timmins–James Bay said that there would be a similar motion for opposition day. This motion that we supported is not the same motion that you've presented. It's not the same one. However, Mr. Bisson, the member for Timmins–James Bay, also presented a motion basically

saying that we would adjourn our meetings—in fact, I'll read it. He said, “I move that the Standing Committee on General Government immediately adjourn clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 151, the Ontario Forest Tenure Modernization Act, 2011, and convene a meeting of the subcommittee for the purpose of scheduling public hearings in northern Ontario for input on the original draft of Bill 151 and the government amendments as tabled.”

Three in favour, the two Conservatives and the New Democrat; all the Liberals voted against it. The reason we did that is because the people who came to the hearings—it was obvious, and Mr. Bisson, Mr. Hillier and I heard it, that some people knew the amendments; others did not—some of the municipalities. People who asked for public hearings: We asked them, and they weren't aware of the amendments. So we joined with the third party. We supported Mr. Bisson on that motion, and it was lost. Again, in the end, because of the short time, there was another motion that all members supported, putting this on the shelf until May 4 for clause-by-clause.

You know what we did after that? Mr. Hillier is now in the north. He left after Monday's hearing, and he has been in the north. He's been in Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay. Our leader, Tim Hudak, has been in North Bay, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. That's where Progressive Conservatives decided to go after Monday's meeting, after the five motions that government put forward.

So we've put our money where our mouth is. We've supported what you've said, and our member now is up north consulting about those amendments.

However, as I said, this isn't the same motion that we supported in committee, that the Progressive Conservatives supported. There are two commas and six words—I'm not happy with this wedge that they put in the motion, because they talk about the federal government. I thought you guys were better than that. That's exactly what the Libs would do. They would try to drive that wedge.

We supported you in committee. We supported you. We were right there beside you. Now you end up putting that federal-government reference in about the HST. When we brought up the HST, you'd stand up and rhyme off all the federal Conservative politicians—you'd always deflect and deny when we talked about our opposition. But do you know what? That motion—those six words and those two commas—you're letting the Liberals off the hook. It's their decision on the HST. They were the architects of the HST, and now you're no better than they are by doing that.

**1700**

You're doing it for one reason: for us not to support the motion. Well, do you know what? With those two commas and six words mentioning the federal Conservatives, you've accomplished it, because I'm not supportive of that motion. I was supportive of your motions in committee. I was supportive of having consultations in the north. Our critic, the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, is in the north consulting on Bill

151. He's doing what these members opposite and the parliamentary assistant opposite haven't done since those amendments were tabled, and that's to go to the north and talk to northern Ontarians.

I'm very disappointed with that wedge. I'm very disappointed. I felt you were better than that. So we're not going to support the motion as presently written. Shame on you for including those six words. Again, it's not right.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to add my perspective, from the view of the people of Nickel Belt, to the motion my leader has tabled today.

I want to bring us back a little bit to the Far North Act. When this act was going through the House, the divide was obvious. We would go to the north side of the building and see all the First Nations, all the reeves, some clergy from the north and some councillors from the north. They were all there. They were all opposed. They wanted their voice to be heard. They didn't have an opportunity to be heard. Then, on the front lawn you had the environmentalists, who were applauding. It was like the great divide. On this bill, the north lost. The voice of the north didn't have an opportunity to be heard. There was no vehicle for them to basically bring their concerns, and we saw what happened.

J'aimerais mentionner un éditorial qui est passé dans le journal français de Sudbury, *Le Voyageur*, qui décrit la loi sur le Grand Nord comme « de la bouillie pour les chats ». Je n'ai aucune idée comment traduire ça en anglais, mais en français c'est très clair : ça ne vaut pas grand-chose.

We'll now talk about Bill 151. I'd like to quote from Grand Chief Stan Beardy of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, who said that the province's wood tenure reform bill isn't worth the paper it's printed on, because it won't put First Nations in control of forests on their traditional land: "The best approach is to implement a community forestry tenure system putting First Nations in charge of managing forests on their homelands." They too would like an opportunity to be heard, and this is repeated all the time.

I was on the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. That committee did travel. We went to the north. We came out with 23 recommendations. As the recommendations got tabled, the Ministry of Health tabled a bill that specifically addressed one of our recommendations, recommendation 13, about narcotics, and brought forward changes to the way narcotics are dispensed in this province.

We asked for that committee to travel. We asked for them to come to the north and see. The bill, as it is written, is written to fit perfectly well in big urban centres where you have a physician who prescribes you narcotics, where you shop it around to different pharmacies and where you go on and get addicted and all the other problems. In the north, it doesn't work like this. We wait for two months to see a physician, if we see one. Shopping around for different physicians? Who are they

kidding? If we can get one within a two-month period, we're happy. We don't shop around for physicians; we can't get access to one.

Yet they refuse to hold hearings in the north. We have this bill that will do some good, but that won't be appropriate to solve the problem in the north. Yet when we go into First Nations communities, one out of three people has an addiction to narcotic painkillers. The bill we passed will help people in the south and help people in big urban centres. It won't help the people of Nickel Belt.

Why is it that when this government brings bills forward, they don't take the time to realize that Ontario is vast, the north is different, it is beautiful, but we need to have our voices heard and this is not happening? So I'm happy to bring my voice to this, and I wish other northerners would have an opportunity to be heard also.

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

**Mr. David Oraziotti:** I'm pleased to join this debate this afternoon on this bizarre motion. I'm a bit surprised, and the information here is overwhelming. There's a lot to say in a very little amount of time, so I'm going to do what I can. I know the member from Algoma-Manitoulin also wants to make comment on this.

First of all, let's talk a little bit about what's happened at committee. I want to raise an issue that the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington raised in my local media in Sault Ste. Marie. He said that the Chair, myself, the member of that committee, cut off debate at general government. That is an outright—well, the word starts with an L and I can't use it, right?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Could you withdraw that comment, please?

**Mr. David Oraziotti:** Okay, withdraw.

The member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington tells the media in my community that the Chair, who didn't vote on the matter, adjourned committee debate yesterday. That's absolutely untrue. Quite frankly, the member from Timmins-James Bay brought forward a motion to adjourn committee, and all members voted for that motion.

In fact, then the member goes to Sault Ste. Marie and he shows up at a gun registry rally. Here in the Sault Star it says that Mr. Hillier attended a gun registry rally at the campaign office of the federal Conservative candidate in Sault Ste. Marie. I'm not sure whether or not the taxpayers are paying for the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington to attend gun rallies across the province of Ontario, but I think it's a fair question that we ask. I don't know if the Leader of the Opposition—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker: What's that got to do with the motion?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** I hear your point of order, thank you.

The member will continue.

**Mr. David Oraziotti:** That's not a point of order; that's right, Speaker. I agree with your ruling. The member protests too much across the way.

Then he shows up in Mr. Boniferro's hardwood lumber mill, and what does Mr. Boniferro say? He says that "he had not been contacted prior to the event and Hillier was not welcome on the property." How do you like that, Speaker?

I'm getting really tired of the opposition here who suggests that the government is not having adequate consultation, is not taking our legislation out to the people of Ontario, when we as a government are more than happy to put our record up against your record when it comes to consultations and public debate on bills any day of the week. This is quite frustrating.

First of all, the member from Lanark suggests to my community that I cut off debate; that's absolutely untrue. The member from Timmins-James Bay introduced a motion and adjourned the debate on the committee.

The other point—and there are a couple of others to make here, but right now, I think the most important thing that we can add is that there have been consultations on this bill. We've had 116 consultations on Bill 151. We have had these consultations for two years.

I hear members across the way saying that we need to support the forestry sector, that we need to move more quickly to do that. While the members across the way would like to suggest that our government has somehow created the demise or challenges in the forestry sector, let's talk about the Canadian dollar for a moment, because I can tell you that at St. Marys Paper in Sault Ste. Marie, they will tell you that when the dollar moved from 65 cents, every cent along the way they lost \$1.5 million.

The energy costs: We are dealing with those. We've got the northern industrial energy rate. The member across the way forgets that they voted against that when they had the opportunity to do something about that. St. Marys also has a power purchase agreement to support—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Please stop the clock for a second. Member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, please take it down a notch.

**Mr. David Oraziatti:** When members have no concept of what's going on in northern Ontario, no idea of what's going on at the mills and the industries, they often protest too much, right? And off-message and off-base.

On the issue of the dollar, every cent the dollar moves up, the company in my community lost \$1.5 million—over \$40 million.

1710

Do you want to talk about energy? The northern Ontario energy program: a \$150-million response. A \$1-billion forestry aid package that was brought in by the McGuinty government and that you guys voted against: It was the largest aid package in the country for the forestry sector. The power purchase agreement that has been signed with OPA and St. Marys Paper, which you do not support: a \$175-million project that will come to life in Sault Ste. Marie to help reduce energy costs for our local mill.

I'm very disappointed in the opposition. When we had the opportunity to move forward on a number of these

issues, they voted against them. We don't want to go back to the days when the NDP passed and imposed the social contract, took \$60 million out of the northern Ontario Heritage fund—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Stop the clock, please. I know emotions are running high. It's 10 past 5. We want to hear from everyone. Please take it down a notch; it's difficult even for me to hear. Thank you.

Continue.

**Mr. David Oraziatti:** I'm really excited about this debate, and I think there's important information that we need on the record here, because quite frankly, we can't afford to go back to the nonsense that took place in northern Ontario under the NDP. You talk about respect for northerners? You took \$60 million out of the northern Ontario heritage fund. That sounds like respect for northerners? We increased that fund—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Speak through the Speaker, please, member for Sault Ste. Marie.

**Mr. David Oraziatti:** —from \$60 million to \$100 million.

I'm really excited about the bill, Bill 151, because I think it's important for the forestry industry in northern Ontario. It's important that we modernize the forest sector act. It's important that we modernize the industry so that we can have more job opportunities in the north for northerners, for new businesses to start, to be able to create opportunities in the north. We know that members across the way are married to the status quo; they are mired in a history that is not productive in today's economy, in today's forestry model, in today's environment, and we need to move on.

This bill has been discussed for years. Northerners can't wait anymore. These folks across the way would like to say, "You know what? We need to talk about it some more." We've talked about it, 116 consultations. We've had hearings here. We've had Tembec out saying this is good and we need to move forward. We've got St. Marys Paper saying we need to move forward. Folks out there in the sector want to see growth and opportunity, and we cannot continue with the same status quo that has gone on in the sector.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek. We were doing well there.

**Mr. David Oraziatti:** Now, if the members opposite would like to say that the forest sector doesn't have challenges today and it doesn't need to be modernized, and if they want to head down that road, I think northerners are going to tell them that the reality is much, much different. We've had two years of discussions on this. We need to move on. This is an important piece of legislation that will bring growth and prosperity to a sector where it is sorely needed.

While we address challenges around energy and other challenges around wood supply, we cannot affect the

Canadian dollar as much as we would obviously like to on this issue, and that has been the key factor in challenges for the forestry sector. But if we sit here today and get mired down in the old way and the old status quo when it comes to the forestry sector and the backward thinking of the NDP and the opposition, we are not going to bring new jobs to northern Ontario; we are not going to bring new opportunities to the forest sector, the bio-forestry economy, and the economy that is anxiously awaiting the opportunity to be modernized and to grow.

I'm very pleased with the work and the leadership of the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry and our minister, and also my colleague the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, who speaks passionately about this. And I know my colleague the member from Algoma–Manitoulin who wants to speak to this bill is going to have that opportunity. But I'm excited about this bill moving forward because this is important for northern Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate? The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I didn't know if I was ever going to get the chance to get up there. Maybe I could have a glass of water too, please.

It's interesting that the member for Sault Ste. Marie said we've been talking about this bill for years. The bill had first reading on February 23 of this year. Now, I'm sure he probably meant that the issue has been around, but, you know, there is an issue—the issue has been discussed. It was discussed in my riding, but it wasn't a consultation; it was the minister coming into town and telling the folks at the meeting, "This is what we plan to do." It wasn't about, "What do you think we should do?" No. That's a consultation. A consultation is when you actually sit down with people and say, "We'd like to have your input. We'd like to have your input as to how we could take this issue and make the circumstances that govern it better." That was not what happened at those hearings. I was there. The minister came in and said, "This is what we're going to do." No one had a chance to say, "Well, we don't think that's a good idea," or, "We do think that's a good idea."

Anyway, interestingly enough, I just received from the table—which speaks to the government's whole position on this bill or when it comes to issues affecting the north—a motion for time allocation on Bill 151. We're now being told that the very bill that has acted to serve as the genesis for the NDP opposition day motion, the very bill that was the reason they brought forward this opposition day motion, is going to be time-allocated. On May 4, the day after we return from the Easter constituency week, the general government committee will be meeting for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. It will then be ordered for third reading. Do you know how much debate is going to be allowed for third reading? Do you know how much debate is going to be allowed for third reading on a bill that has a significant

impact on the history of northern Ontario and its people? Do you know how much time is going to be allowed for debate? One hour—one hour. That's the total debate. The total length of debate on third reading is going to be one hour.

I understand why the New Democrats brought forth this opposition day motion. For the most part, I support this motion. There is an issue in there that I'm going to talk about a little later, which is the reason why I'm not going to be able to support the motion as it stands, but I don't have the opportunity to amend the motion. I'll speak to that in a few minutes.

I heard the member from Kenora–Rainy River earlier. I heard the leader of the third party. I heard the member from Nickel Belt. One thing resonates almost on a repeated basis, and that's the concern that members of this House continue to exhibit regarding the habit of this government—it's almost like it has just said that nothing outside of Toronto matters anymore. That's what they're saying to us, and I have grave concerns about that.

I have a small part of northern Ontario in my riding. It's a small part, but it's a part nevertheless. Every time we see this government act, it seems that, as my friend from Kenora–Rainy River said, the decisions are made in a backroom somewhere in Toronto; it may even be in this building. It's a backroom somewhere, where the people of the province of Ontario don't seem to be a part of the conversation.

I've certainly spoken. I had the opportunity to speak to the bill on second reading, and I was glad to have that opportunity. I reminded the members how this is not the answer. People across the province, in my riding, have told them so; people across northern Ontario have told them so. But they asked for an opportunity; they asked for an opportunity not as part of, as the member for Sault Ste. Marie talked about, the pre-consultation process, as they like to think of it. No. They asked for the opportunity to speak to this bill once it was tabled in this Legislature, and for the most part, they have been denied. They have been denied that opportunity because the government said, notwithstanding what the member for Algoma–Manitoulin said—as my friend from Leeds–Grenville said, he had two different stories: one in front of the committee when he was doing his job, doing what he was told to do by the Premier's office, following orders; and then another story when he was speaking to the local media.

**1720**

If those committee hearings were held up north, then that committee would have been open to those people in northern Ontario who might want to come before that committee and have their say. But there were no committee hearings. It's really sad, but that's the way this government has gotten. As sure as the sun is going to rise in the east, you can almost be assured that where there's a contentious bill before this House, we'll be getting a sheet—myself and the other government House leader will be getting a sheet—that says, "Uh-oh, it's time allocation time here in the Legislative Assembly." That's the way they do business here.

I don't want to use all the time because my friend from Durham wants to speak to this bill as well. But I do want to say that my friends in the third party almost had me. I was that close to being prepared to vote for this motion, and then something slipped in here and caught my eye, and I have to say, I'm not going to be able to do it, friends. You had a great motion here. It stuck to the bill and it stuck to the issue of northern Ontario, but then, I suspect, there was a call from Jack Layton's office. They wanted to insert this thing that really has nothing to do with the bill but has something to do with the federal election.

We want to be clear on what it says. They're talking about the HST. "In co-operation with the Harper government," it says here. We want to be perfectly clear: The Harper government, at the request of the McGuinty government, passed legislation that allows the McGuinty government to do what they want to do with respect to a harmonized sales tax. The request came from the provincial government, and the request came for one reason and one reason alone: because Premier McGuinty believed that there was some money left in people's pockets that he hadn't gotten his hands on yet. So they brought in the HST, and he believes now—he's almost there. He's almost there with his HST, but mark my words, if this government is re-elected, if this McGuinty government is re-elected, you're not going to see a 13% HST. Mark my words, folks: This government will raise that rate, because they are addicted to those taxes. If they get even the slightest inclination that there is something left in the pockets of struggling families, struggling seniors and hard-working small businesses in this province, they'll want a cut of it—mark my words. Watch out if those folks are re-elected. That Premier right there will impose a hefty increase on the HST in this province.

Having said that, I'm going to pass it on to my friend from Durham. He has some wise advice on this motion as well. But as a result of the overly partisan way that they brought the federal government into this, unfortunately, I won't be able to support the motion. Every other part of it, though, is bang on; it's right on. It's right for northerners, and it's about time those folks on the other side started to stand up for northern Ontario as well.

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

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** This does give me the opportunity to get on the record this afternoon about this motion. In fact, interestingly enough, in the northern part of the Peterborough riding we have the protected Peterborough county forest, and above that we do have some forest operations, not as significant, of course, as in northern Ontario, but we do have a small forestry industry supplying well-known businesses such as Monaghan Lumber. You've probably seen the ad on TV: "King of the Woods." So they do—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Andy Frost, King of the Woods.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** King of the Woods—Andy Frost does that impersonation. He also does the afterplay for The

Toronto Maple Leafs, but I won't talk about them and their problems with success over the last 45 years.

We do have a small forestry business in the northern end of the Peterborough riding. It is interesting that when you read all the reports over the last number of years—and I have taken the opportunity in the business sections of the Globe and Mail, Toronto Star, National Post, Canadian Business magazine and all the rest—and what they have consistently said is that the great impact on the forestry business in the province of Ontario was the exchange rate. For the longest period of time, there was a 63-cent dollar, which gave Ontario businesses a 45% discount on every product they were selling in their largest market, which was the United States. Over the last little while we have seen a significant appreciation in the exchange rate. Just today, the loonie is now at an all-time high, almost \$1.05, in terms of exchange rate with the United States.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's not an all-time high.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I tell my friend from Barry's Bay that that was on the business network this afternoon, the loonie hitting an all-time high. So I recommend that he take the opportunity to review the business results of this day. That has had a tremendous impact.

Secondly, of course, was the decline of the new home industry in the United States. Madam Speaker, you and I are well aware of the destruction that was brought about through the shenanigans on Wall Street—the lack of regulation on Wall Street. The American financial system was on the verge of collapse because of the sub-prime mortgages that were being traded 50 to 20 times over, and at the end of the day, of course, that had a tremendous impact on the American housing industry. One of the largest areas of export for the Ontario forestry industry from northern Ontario into the United States was the American housing industry.

I think it's important that we look at these circumstances in an objective way to really get an appreciation of where we're at today.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** When did you guys agree to raise the HST?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** But with regards to the HST—I hear my friend from Barry's Bay—it is interesting: The Honourable Jim Flaherty, the federal finance minister, is on the record in several publications, including the Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star—all the major newspapers across Canada—indicating that the HST was good tax policy.

With those few words, I've gone on the record this afternoon.

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** First, as a courtesy, listening to the debate today were some friends that I know that would have liked to have stayed, but it got a little rowdy here, so they left. One fellow was named Dalt Hicks, and he's the owner and president of the Cardinal Golf Club. He's a great friend and it's a great golf course. They were here as part of lobby day with the Ontario Allied Golf

Associations. I would say that there were other members that I met with as well in that group.

Others who just left here a few minutes ago were a couple of very good friends from Durham who listened to the member from Oshawa speaking. Dave Sitaram—he lives in my riding now—is a director for the Co-operators. He’s one of the people hosting the Ontario Co-op reception when all of the wrangling is done here this afternoon. With him was Don Nicholls, who’s the manager for the Auto Workers Community Credit Union in my riding.

With that, I’ll refer to the order of the day, the opposition day motion. It’s been a kind of enthusiastic and, some would say, entertaining debate. It is true, if you look at the details of this particular opposition day motion, it has really received a fair amount of support from our members who participated in the general government committee that dealt with Bill 151. On that committee, I can only attest that the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington—who, by the way, is up north travelling to listen to the voices of northern Ontario, and, really, he’s been widely received, because he does stand for the fundamentals that northern Ontario is a self-reliant part of Ontario that should be recognized.

**1730**

I’ve followed some of this. I want to commend not just the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington there, I want to commend the member from Timmins–James Bay. He’s been consistent on this part of what we’re talking about today, on Bill 151, about the lack—in fact, the complete disregard for the voice of northern Ontario. If it wasn’t for him and a few others—the McGuinty government has centralized their whole thing on just getting elected in urban Ontario. I hate to say it. It’s so cynical that, even in my riding of Durham, which is a very large part and a very proud part of Ontario—and the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke the same: We have communities, but we have a large part of rural Ontario.

I would only say this: I think our members on the committee, with Mr. Clark, of course, from Leeds–Grenville, worked very hard as well. But I did have the chance to read—I thought this was quite objective. It’s called the Working Forest. This is the edition for winter 2011. It’s a very good paper. In fact, I’d to have say that the member from Kenora–Rainy River—pardon me; Mike Brown, rather. He’s here.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Algoma–Manitoulin. Pardon me. That’s Mr. Brown, right? Okay, very good.

He says that he knows the owner of this. Well, he should pay attention to it. I hope, if he gets to say a few things later on here, that he’s going to make reference to this. I’m reading right here from page 2, and it says, “Wood supply”—and they’re talking about it. It goes on:

“Atikokan Renewable Fuels acquired the idled FibrTech plant two years ago, after the latter firm went into receivership”—one more casualty of the McGuinty

government. “The company is now in the process of converting the plant into a pellet-making operation.”

Here’s the important part: “The province announced the allocation to Atikokan Renewable Fuels on January 31.

“A spokeswoman for Northern Development, Mines and Forestry Minister Michael Gravelle said more announcements from the wood supply competition will be made in the coming weeks.

“While the community of Atikokan rejoices in their success another northwestern Ontario community, Ignace, is trying to understand the Ontario government’s rationale for awarding new wood supply agreements.

“‘Two local companies have put in proposals to use the forest resource—one was rejected, the other company hasn’t heard anything,’ said Ignace mayor, Lee Kennard in a recent media statement.

It goes on to say, “‘Ignace still has a skilled work force,’ Kennard said. ‘We’ve lost workers who continue to maintain a house in Ignace and a house in Thunder Bay or in other parts of the country. We need the provincial government to make a decision,’ says Kennard.”

It says, “Many people in the existing or potential biomass sector are frustrated with how slowly the provincial government is releasing the results of the wood supply ... process.”

This is very controversial all throughout northern Ontario, and it’s an important part of the economy. Why wouldn’t you go up and listen to the real people? That’s all we’re asking. In fact, you can count on Tim Hudak and the opposition. We’ve talked about this. We’ve represented it at the general government hearings. We’ve supported the NDP. We’ve done everything we possibly can to encourage, respectfully, and encourage in a positive way, the minister, Mr. Gravelle, to go up there and listen to the people, to at least have the courtesy of showing up. That’s all this is about: It’s courtesy more than anything else.

The passion that I’ve heard around this sometimes seemed a bit feigned. I would say to the member who spoke earlier and loudly, the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, Mr. Mauro—he was very loud and very adamant about it. He should be standing up and telling Premier McGuinty. He should be standing up this day—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Rise up.

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Rise up, exactly, is what I’m hearing—to pull that famous line.

The member from Sault Ste. Marie, Mr. Oraziotti, also spoke in a similarly passionate tone. I would expect him to be calling on the Premier in his remarks. I anticipated that he’d be calling on him to go to northern Ontario. At least have some respect.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O’Toole:** No, they’re not. They’re only listening to the Toronto voices, the people in the rich condos. That’s all they’re listening to now. They’ve stopped listening.

How’s your energy bill? How’s your car insurance? How’s the tuition? They’ve stopped listening. Actually, they’ve lost their way.

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** There's a lot of shouting here, but they've lost their way.

Premier McGuinty is living in Rosedale, I think, and has a chauffeured car. After so long on the job, it's hard to keep them focused on representing people, and that's all this whole discussion this afternoon is about. But the poison pill of the debate that's causing most of the outrage and most of the anxiety—it's the unfortunate plant of the poison pill, the poison pestle, or whatever they call it—there's a famous quote there from a movie, but I won't go there.

What has happened here is, they've—Jack Layton has called—I'd hate to say it. I don't think he spoke to Andrea personally, but I'm sure the message—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Would you please refer to the member's riding or status?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The leader of the third party, a wonderful speaker: She spoke very passionately, and not insincerely, either.

Here's the issue: They put a little thing here, acquiescing, because of the federal election, to Jack Layton, who's in trouble; he's probably going over the cliff. But the only thing is, here's what's happening: The way I see it is, he said, "In BC, I'm for the HST"—no, he's against it in BC, and he's for it in Nova Scotia. He's duplicitous, at best, if not an outright—"ambivalent" would be a better word, perhaps.

But my point is that they've been called into this—and it's shameful, really, unfortunately, but I understand. Duty calls. Party loyalty falls into line. I can see that. But it really is this. They're trying to wedge everybody because really, Premier McGuinty made a direct call to Jim Flaherty. In fact, it was probably Greg Sorbara who called, because he runs things, pretty well. He called Flaherty—because they're pretty good friends—and he said, "If you'll give us \$4 billion, we'll hike this HST. We'll stuff it in their ear." And that's what they're doing. Premier McGuinty said, "My goodness, I'm going to get \$3 billion more in revenue for every point in the HST? Wow, this is a jackpot. And I can blame it on you." So that's what they're doing. The Liberals are continually blaming this move, their own policy decision, on Stephen Harper.

The NDP have fallen into line here. I don't understand it, because we think they have it right. We want Premier McGuinty to go up north with Tim Hudak and Randy Hillier to listen to the people of Ontario, show some respect and get it right.

As far as this opposition day motion goes, I'm kind of divided, because I know how important the north is. It's like any region of Ontario; it needs to be heard. In that respect, in spirit, I'm for the motion. But in fact, I'm going to have to say that that one indication that somehow this is Stephen Harper's fault just doesn't settle very well.

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Normally, the party that moves the motion would get the last word, but Mr. Brown wants the last word, so we'll give it to him.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Maybe he's not going to speak at all. Who knows?

I want to, first of all, congratulate Andrea Horwath for having brought forward this motion. We've had much discussion within our caucus as a result of discussions we've had with people in northern Ontario. The people of the north have been quite clear. They're saying, "Here's a government that thinks it can do things and not talk to northern Ontario about it." What this motion says, if passed, is that the government of Ontario cannot do the type of things that we've seen under Bill 151, that we've seen under Bill 191, that we've seen under the HST and that we've seen under the deregulation and the continuing privatization of electricity in northern Ontario; that they would not be able to do those things without a real consultation and discussion with northerners. I can tell you, we as New Democrats will be speaking to that in the next election for sure.

Let's speak specifically to Bill 151. The government's argument is this: "We went to"—how many communities, Mike? Two hundred communities, 300 communities, 1,000; I don't care what it was—"and we went out and we consulted across the north and we talked about what was going to be inside this bill." That is true; the government did go out and consult prior to the bill being introduced. But the problem is, when the bill came back to the House and was actually drafted—when it came back from the ministry and was drafted and tabled in this House—those people who were consulted in Hearst, in Timmins, in Sioux Lookout, in Sault Ste. Marie, in Kenora and in various communities said, "What does this have to do with what they talked to us about? The bill looks different than what they told us in the preconsultation."

**1740**

People said, "Listen, we want to talk about community forests." For example, the community of Hearst did a lot of work, along with Constance Lake, to talk about how you really create a community forest. They looked at these LFMCs that you're creating and they said, "That's not a community forest. It's a step in the right direction, but it's a very small baby step, and what's worse is that you're moving to a competitive wood pricing system that quite frankly is going to disadvantage northern Ontario."

People understand that if there's a keen demand for wood and you have a competition system in an LFMC, whoever bids the highest number on the wood is going to be the one to get it. So what happens when you're in eastern Ontario and a mill on the other side of the border in Quebec says, "You know what? I need that wood so badly that I'm prepared to outbid whoever wants it." How do I know that? Because it already happens with private wood. We have a competitive bidding system when it comes to private lands in Ontario where we cut wood, and by and large that wood ends up in the province of Quebec.

Here you are: You're going to be in Hearst, Kapuskasing, Timmins, Kirkland Lake and Mattawa, and they're going to be cutting down trees under an LFMC, if it's created there, and the wood is basically going to be bid on by somebody in Quebec and you're going to see your wood leave—no value added in the province of Ontario. People said, "This doesn't look like what you had said it was going to look like when you started our consultation."

Then on the issue of the larger forest companies, you basically took those licences and put them at risk. Companies like Tembec, Domtar, OFIA and others said, "Listen, you can't muck around with the licensing system and put the wood we have on licence at risk, because that's how we finance our mills." Rightfully so, those companies are concerned.

The government says, "Well, don't worry. We now have amendments. We've got five amendments." Here we are in committee. We got the amendments at 10 o'clock in the morning. We're sitting in committee at the time, and here we are, trying to struggle with how this amendment is going to work; we hadn't had a chance to clear those amendments with the stakeholders. So I put forward a number of motions. I don't have enough time to go through them, but one motion was: At least adjourn the committee so that we, as opposition members, as critics, can take your five amendments, go back to the stakeholders and say, "How does this meet with what you were asking for?" so that we'd at least have a sense if the amendments are acceptable to the stakeholders.

The government—I give them some credit—decided, "Okay, let's allow that to happen," because quite frankly, we would have just kept moving motions all day, and you would have never got your amendments on that day. The government understood that and, rather than sit there and allow that to happen, they voted for my motion.

Here's the kicker. Now, we're going out and currently talking to those people who had concerns about this issue and talking about those five amendments, and a little while ago we get slipped under the door of the Legislature to the clerks' table, as they might say, a time allocation motion that shuts down all debate, that doesn't give any opportunity for northerners to really get a say in what's going to happen with this bill in its final prospect.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Maybe Brown can talk about that.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, I'm hoping Mr. Brown can talk about that. Mr. Brown, I'm going to talk about another issue in a second—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Excuse me. Could the member mention Algoma-Manitoulin, his riding?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Algoma-Manitoulin. It's not Kapuskasing; that would be Carol Hughes. I would have that wrong.

My point is this: The government time-allocated this bill, and it doesn't matter a heck now if you like the amendments, if you don't like the amendments or if you think there need to be new amendments. This whole

thing is going to die on Wednesday, May 4, when we come back and go into committee. It's time-allocated. If things are not done by a certain time and we don't get to the section of the bill that needs to be amended, all government motions will be deemed to be passed. That is not consultation.

What northern Ontarians—FONOM; the municipalities of Hearst, Kapuskasing, Espanola and a whole bunch of other communities—said very clearly was that this government had not consulted on Bill 151, that this bill did not look anything like it was supposed to, according to the preconsultations, and they wanted to have public hearings—something they were refused.

Now, here's the fun part. The member from Algoma-Manitoulin goes back to his riding. There is a lot of pressure on, because the mayors across the north and industry are out there. They're asking people to put some pressure on the government so that we can have some public hearings. So the media in his riding come up to him in Espanola or Manitoulin—I forget where—and they say, "Mr. Brown, why is it that you're opposed to having public hearings in northern Ontario?"

What does he say? "Oh, I want them in Espanola. I want this bill to go to every community in northern Ontario, and I don't believe it should be the cities that should be the ones having public hearings on those bills." If I was a journalist, I would believe that the member from Algoma-Manitoulin was basically saying that he was in favour of public hearings.

He says one thing to his constituents when he's asked by the media, then he comes down here, and what does he do? He's the guy who's basically running gunshot so that we can't have public hearings. He's the guy who led the charge on the part of the Liberal government at the general government that quashed the opposition sub-committee report that would have allowed for travel in northern Ontario. Mr. Brown, the member from Algoma-Manitoulin, is the same member who did everything that his House leader told him, everything that his minister told him and everything that his Premier told him in order to not give northern Ontario a say when it came to these particular hearings.

So I say to the member from Algoma-Manitoulin: You can't have it both ways. Yes, I know that Liberals like to try that. They tell you one thing and they do the opposite, but I can tell you, the people of this province, and specifically the people of northern Ontario, will remember that when it came to standing up for them, what you did was say one thing to your constituents through the media, and you did quite differently when you came down here.

We as New Democrats, under the leadership of our leader, Andrea Horwath, are saying that the people of northern Ontario count. The people of northern Ontario must be consulted. You cannot continue down the route that you have, where you put in place bills like Bill 151, the Far North planning act and the implementation of the HST, without having some form of consultation with people in northern Ontario. This government was wrong

not to allow that bill to travel, and this government will pay the price for not having done so at the next election.

I say, on behalf of the New Democratic Party of Ontario, that we stand with you, the fellow northerners in this province.

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

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** Full of sound and fury, but signifying absolutely nothing. What we've heard here is no debate on Bill 151, no debate on what is good for northerners, and I think that's truly unfortunate. It's truly unfortunate.

I represent many of the small forestry communities across northern Ontario. They would prefer members to speak to bills that affect them in a way that is respectful of northern Ontario communities, respectful of what their members are talking about and respectful of the facts. Respect is what this is about, and just because—

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** The member just admitted on Monday, at committee, that they would not talk about anything. All they would do is ask for 20-minute adjournment after 20-minute adjournment. After close to two hours of that, the government supported the member for Timmins–James Bay's motion to adjourn because he did not want to talk about the bill. He did not want to talk about amendments to the bill.

And you know what? We needed to file our amendments so that everyone could see the amendments that were proposed to the bill. The government proposed five; we proposed five amendments to the bill.

I have in my hand what the NDP thinks needs to be changed in the bill. Here it is: They have one amendment. That's what they decided needed to be changed in this bill.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** One amendment?

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** One amendment that, frankly, the government will not support because it's already in the bill. One thing is what the NDP thought should happen to change this bill.

We have, over time—well over two years—talked about Bill 151. Somewhere here I have the list of communities we've gone to, and it is extensive.

That's not the one. It's here somewhere.

It doesn't matter. It's 116 communities all across northern Ontario, 45 in southern Ontario, and we've heard what people had to say.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Right at the bottom, Mike; right at the bottom.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Member from Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** Right at the bottom here we have Beardmore, Bower, Cochrane, Chapleau, Fox Lake reserve, Constance Lake First Nation, Dryden, Fort Frances, Hearst, Hornepayne, Huntsville, Gogama, Kapuskasing, Macdiarmid, Marathon, Midland, Parry

Sound, Nipigon, North Bay, Pembroke, Sault Ste. Marie, Sioux Lookout, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Toronto and White River. That is consultation. That's taking the concept across the province, finding out what northerners really think.

We were out there for over two years. It is time at some point we realize that the forest communities, the forest workers and the forest companies come out of this recession with an ability to move into the future, to have jobs that will be sustained over time by the forests that the people of Ontario own.

So as we went through this, we were hoping that the opposition parties would co-operate and we could talk about what we needed to do in a reasonable fashion, but what we got was the normal bluster from the opposition, no real solutions, lots of talk of consultation but no real ideas.

I'm with the Minister of Natural Resources, who just said in Timmins on Thursday, "If two years isn't enough, what is?"

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Order. Could the members please take their seats. Thank you.

Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day number 4. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1752 to 1802.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day number 4. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Prue, Michael
Gélinas, France	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
Hampton, Howard	Miller, Paul	

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Albanese, Laura	Hoskins, Eric	Naqvi, Yasir
Arnott, Ted	Hoy, Pat	Oraziotti, David
Bailey, Robert	Jaczek, Helena	Phillips, Gerry
Balkissoon, Bas	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Bentley, Christopher	Johnson, Rick	Rinaldi, Lou
Broten, Laurel C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Brown, Michael A.	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Brownell, Jim	Mangat, Amrit	Sergio, Mario
Chan, Michael	Martiniuk, Gerry	Smith, Monique
Chiarelli, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Sousa, Charles
Clark, Steve	Miller, Norm	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Milloy, John	Wilkinson, John
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Moridi, Reza	Witmer, Elizabeth
Gerretsen, John	Munro, Julia	Yakabuski, John
Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 8; the nays are 44.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** I declare the motion defeated.

*Motion negatived.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

## ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member for Beaches–East York has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given on Wednesday, April 13, 2011, by the Minister of Health. This member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the minister or parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** On April 6, 2011, I asked a question of the Premier. The budget had \$35 billion in it in infrastructure money to be spent across the province on good works. I asked the Premier if the redevelopment of Toronto East General Hospital was part of that \$35 billion in expenditure. The Premier chose not to answer the question but instead bounced it to the Minister of Health, who congratulated me and the CEO of Toronto East General Hospital, Rob Devitt. I have nothing to say to her except that I concur with the praise, but she did not answer the question.

We know that under Mr. Devitt's leadership, Toronto East General Hospital has balanced 10 yearly budgets in a row. We know that Rob Devitt is a health care leader, and he has, in fact, been lent out to other hospitals to get them in line when they couldn't meet what they were supposed to do and they couldn't balance their budget. We know that Toronto East General Hospital has excellent staff. We know that it's a good teaching hospital. We also know that they've spent the last six years trying to convince this government to give them some funding to redevelop the hospital, which is very old and in some places in a very sorry state of repair. I outlined how six people are living in a room, which is not good disease control, because they share one washroom. I talked about the sewage leaks and everything else that is taking place in a hospital that is 70 years old in parts.

I went on. I talked about how the plans had been submitted to build a new wing and tear down an old part and put up a new part. I talked about the public hearings that have already been held to redevelop Toronto East General Hospital—public hearings mandated under the Municipal Act. I talked about the financing from the province of Ontario and that the hospital is anxious to start as soon as possible because everything else is in place. I also spoke about the fear that the government will make them wait until the lead-up to the election. The hospital people have told me and I've told this House that what we expect is that sometime in September this great, big, fake cheque, along with the local Liberal candidate,

will show up at the hospital and the money will be there. But the hospital doesn't want to wait that long. They don't want to be part of the circus that is used as a backdrop to a Liberal election rollout in the two ridings of Beaches–East York and Toronto–Danforth, because the hospital is right on Coxwell Avenue, on the border.

The Minister of Infrastructure, who had been bounced the question by the Minister of Health, at that stage refused to answer it again—because it had been passed to him. He spoke about the perceived failures of the previous Harris–Eves governments. I don't know what that had to do with the question. It had nothing at all to do with the question. Whether the Harris–Eves governments failed in hospital funding or not was totally irrelevant to whether Toronto East General is going to get part of this \$35 billion that has been earmarked for good works across Ontario. It had nothing to do with the question.

The questions I asked then and the questions I begged to ask again today, because they remain unanswered after all these weeks, are simple ones. Firstly, is Toronto East General on the infrastructure list to receive part of the \$35 billion so that they can continue and carry out the redevelopment of the hospital that has been their intention and that they've been asking for for the last six years? Secondly, if they are in fact on that list, when will the money flow—before or during the next election? Mr. Devitt, who is an acknowledged leader in the field, wants to know. The people of East York, the Beach and Scarborough want to know. They want to develop the hospital now. They don't want to be some sideshow to this government producing the cheque in September in advance of the election with all the fanfare we expect.

**1810**

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I'm delighted to be able to speak on behalf of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and respond to the member from Toronto–Beaches.

Let me just begin by saying that the ministry does recognize the service that Toronto East General Hospital has provided to its community and the need that Toronto East General has to maintain a viable infrastructure to continue to provide these health care services.

We recognize, as the member has said, that this is an older hospital that does need redevelopment, although unfortunately it is not in the current five-year infrastructure plan, as the member knows. But we do understand that it does need redevelopment, and because the Ministry of Health and our government understand that it requires redevelopment, we have actually previously given Toronto East General a capital planning grant of \$3.3 million on April 20—fortuitously, also my birthday—2007, along with an increase to the grant of an additional \$5.2 million on May 29, 2008, for a total planning grant of up to \$8.5 million to assist the hospital to develop the first two stages of capital planning, which are known as stage 1—proposal—and stage 2—functional program. The ministry has received the hospital's updated stage 1 proposal and the functional proposal.

Now, when the ministry initially looked at those two proposals, the stage 1 and stage 2, there were actually substantial changes and mismatches from the proposal to the functional program stage submissions. Since this submission of the stage 2 proposal, the hospital, the ministry and the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network have all been working together to reach agreement on what the scope of the project should be, because, as I say, those two proposals were somewhat out of sync.

However, recognizing that they're continuing to work on getting those two phases in sync in terms of what's being proposed, what's generally being proposed is that phase 1 of the redevelopment, and there are three proposed phases, has been planned—and this would mean something to the people in East York—to address the highest priorities for redevelopment and consists of demolishing a parking lot and the E and F wings to build an eight-storey building with ambulatory services accommodated on the first two levels; third floor, administration and mechanical; fourth floor, children and youth; fifth floor, adult mental health and complex continuing care; and then above that, three floors of in-patient units; plus underground parking. A two-and-a-half storey podium building is proposed beside the eight-storey building and adjacent to the G and H wings, and will be occupied by ambulatory services, as well as admitting. Within the existing portion of the hospital that's to be kept, the emergency department would be reconfigured and expanded, and eventually, as the phases proceed, wings A, B, D and F will be—"decanted" is the official wording, but it means taken out of service to prepare for demolition.

That's the proposal that is on the table at the moment. As the member mentioned, there is currently money in the budget for major capital projects, but the stage we are at—and this is why the Minister of Infrastructure would have been involved in the conversation—is that we're working right now on preparing a new, long-term capital plan. This project, along with hundreds of other projects from an assortment of ministries, is on the table for inclusion in that long-term capital plan. This is very actively a project that the Ministry of Health is supporting, and it has been put forward as a project that should be considered as part of the government's long-term capital plan.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member for Nickel Belt has also given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given on Wednesday, April 20, 2011, by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** This week I told the Minister of Health that people in my riding and in Sudbury have been waiting up to five years for spousal reunification because they are stuck in different long-term-care beds,

and I asked her why spousal reunification was not a priority. She answered that I was wrong, that spousal reunification is a priority. I guess the part that she didn't realize is that Sudbury Regional Hospital, the hospital serving the people of Sudbury in my riding, has been under a crisis situation for seven years. That means that for the last seven years, thousands of people have been assigned the first bed available. That means it doesn't matter that you want to go to the nursing home where your wife or husband is or you want to go to the nursing home where the rest of your family—your sisters and brothers—is; you have to go to the first available bed.

But it doesn't stop there. Then those people are lied to. We tell those people, "Take the first available bed and then we'll put you on a waiting list to transfer." Well, those people are on waiting lists to transfer to nowhere. I have, since I have become an MPP, had the opportunity to hear dozens of families that have come to me. Before this I had never seen grown men cry, but because of what's going on in Sudbury, I see this now, families that are torn apart, just ragged because of the situation we are putting them through, because all they want is for their mom and dad to be together in the same room for their last years, but they can't.

There's this man at Extencicare Falconbridge who called the CCAC. He was put into the first available bed at Extencicare Falconbridge. His wife is at Pioneer Manor. Every day he called the CCAC and said, "Where am I on the list? I'm worried about my wife. I want to go see my wife." Every day he called. He never got to see his wife. She died. When that happened, it had been two years. For two years, this man called every day and never got to see his wife.

I have many couples like this. I have a couple in my riding. I'm not allowed to use their names; we'll call them Alphonse and Alice. It's the same idea: They have been married for a very, very long time. They both have their papers to go to a long-term-care facility. It doesn't matter what we do. I've met with Richard Joly, who's the head of the CCAC, and Kim Morris, who's in charge of—we've tried every trick in the book to try to get those two people in the same room in the same nursing home in Sudbury. It is impossible. What have we got? I've got a family that is run ragged. Those two people live at home with their daughter. The daughter is at the end of her wits. She can't handle two heavy-care persons in her own home. The brothers are at the end of their wits. They pay for home care out of their own money, up to \$6,000 a month to keep their mom and dad together. This is how important it is for them to keep their mom and dad together. All they want is to be in the same room, in the same nursing home, but I can't get this.

Jeanette Lacroix, who made the front page of the Sudbury Star, in 2008 reluctantly agreed to go to Extencicare York with this big lie: "You will be on the waiting list to transfer." She wants to go to Pioneer Manor to be with her family. Since 2008, Jeanette has called. Her children have called. She wants to transfer. We're now in 2011. She is still stuck at Extencicare York and her family is

still at Pioneer Manor. Then, I have the minister who stands there and says, "Oh, reunification is a priority." Doesn't a priority happen closer than three years?

Should I keep on? I think I'm running out of time.

**1820**

We have a beautiful seniors campus; it's called Finlandia-Koti. They have a residential home; they have a nursing home; they have supported housing. He is in supported housing. She is in a nursing home, and she has lived in the village of Finlandia-Koti for years. She took the first bed available; she's at the other end of town. The rest of the people are at Finlandia-Koti; her husband is there. She wants to be reunified while she can.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Once again, I'm pleased to respond on behalf of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I think, perhaps, it would be helpful if I were to start at the beginning in explaining this.

The system, as it currently exists, is that all residents of Ontario's long-term-care homes pay for the cost of living—because, in the original question, the member from Nickel Belt did raise issues around cost as well as priority. All residents of Ontario's long-term-care homes pay for the cost of living in their long-term-care home; that is, the cost of things like food, heat, water and lodging that they would otherwise pay for if they lived independently. The maximum rate for that—maximum rate—is \$1,619 for basic accommodation, and there are government subsidies available for low-income individuals who qualify.

In addition, the government provides funding to long-term-care homes, and that includes the funding which pays for health care costs in the long-term-care homes. That amounts to about \$48,000 per year, per resident. However, no Ontarian will be turned away from a long-term-care home because of an inability to pay.

Where things get a little bit confusing is that the meaning of "basic accommodation" differs between older long-term-care homes and newer long-term-care homes. In a newer home, it tends to mean that two residents share a room, because that's the most who are ever in a room together in a newer long-term-care home, so it makes reunification easier in a newer home.

In some of the older homes, "basic accommodation" can mean that three or four residents of the same gender share a room. In these older homes, a couple who want to share a room would have to pay a premium, which is about \$16 a couple per day, for an upgrade from basic accommodation, because that takes some other beds offline to get two into a semi-private room. Because they're paying the premium, they don't currently qualify for any of the subsidies.

In 2010, the government did introduce new regulations that enable residents who live in different long-term-care homes to switch places if that move is mutually desirable. The government did give high priority to residents who were seeking to be reunited with a spouse or partner.

The member from Nickel Belt may be skeptical about that, but I know that, in my own riding, I began to get calls complaining as to, "Why did Mr. So-and-so get to move in with his wife instead of my mother getting to move into a bed?" So I know that, in my riding, those reunifications are getting high priority, because I've heard from my constituents, in one way or another, that it's happening.

We are making some further changes. As I said, currently, married couples living in older long-term-care homes have to pay a premium to stay together in the same room. The government has announced its intent to make changes to ensure that married couples who want to live together will be charged the basic accommodation rate of \$1,619 each for a room with two beds, regardless of whether it's in an old home or a new home, and they will also be eligible for subsidies if they were previously individually eligible for subsidies, so they will be able to get the subsidies.

But just to reiterate: For spouses who have been placed in separate long-term-care homes and who want to be reunited, our policy does state that the reunification of spouses, with the exception of a crisis designation for placement, is in the top-priority category for placement.

Because the member for Nickel Belt suggested that it seems to her that this is not happening, the ministry has committed to looking into the specific issues in Sudbury and ensuring that the policy is being followed. But we can assure you that in July 2010, CCACs all over the province were provided with training to make sure that they understood the new rules around priority placements for spousal reunification—

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

## CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The member for Sarnia-Lambton has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given today by the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** My question, as I earlier directed it to the minister—the minister surprised the community of Sarnia-Lambton with the announcement of the closure of the Sarnia jail in their budget. He said it was because it was underutilized, when in fact the community proved that this jail is actually at 105% of capacity. If the minister had done his homework, he would also know that the media has been reporting for over two years now that the Sarnia jail has too many inmates and not enough room, and that leads to the 105% occupancy.

The minister also stated that it made economic sense to close the Sarnia jail, but Sarnia is one of the few jails in the province that is running almost on a balanced budget. When I asked the minister to show me the numbers, he refused. Then today, Finance Minister Dwight

Duncan was quoted in the *Toronto Sun* that the decision to close the Sarnia jail and build the new facility in Windsor was made three years ago, and no one from my community was consulted. I feel that the minister knew that when he made that decision, he should have consulted with the RCMP, the Ontario Provincial Police, the legal community, the judiciary, Mayor Bradley, and other local community groups such as the chamber of commerce, plus many others.

One would only assume that they also did not inform Canada border services. I've been in contact with them, and they also have not been informed or consulted on this. They would have to transport their prisoners a total of three hours away to this new super-jail.

Last Thursday, a delegation led by the mayor of Sarnia, with myself, met with the minister to discuss this surprise budget announcement to close the Sarnia jail. At that meeting, the ministry, according to people who were at that meeting with myself—it's not myself saying this—felt that their courthouse was threatened as well.

This government said that they always believed that local leaders and families should be shown respect. But now they have used, according to members from the community, bully tactics and veiled threats like those made to the mayor of Sarnia, Mayor Bradley, and the other community representatives at that meeting: "If things don't go our way, then other things could happen."

I'd like to say to the minister that the Sarnia jail employs over 76 hard-working, dedicated employees. The jail in the finance minister's riding is over two and a half hours away. So when the Sarnia jail closes its doors, that's 76 jobs lost to the local community, along with their spouses, who are probably employed locally as well. That's 76 families who will be out of work or have to move away from home so that the finance minister can once again feather his nest.

The minister was quoted in the *Sarnia Observer* as saying that you can't say how much the government will save by closing Sarnia's jail and that you can't attach a price tag to shuttling prisoners back and forth to Windsor for court appearances. The minister is also quoted as saying that he doesn't "have the dollar figure right now."

My question would be: If not now, when? And I'd like to have those figures. Mayor Bradley has asked for them. I've filed freedom-of-information requests. I will get those answers. I'd like to say to the minister: Where did you get your numbers to support your statement that the Sarnia jail is underutilized, which I proved is not the case? How is my community to believe that the ministry can make an informed decision to close Sarnia's jail if you can't even supply us with the numbers and the cost-benefit analysis that anybody in business would make?

I was in private industry before I came here, and I know that if I went to my boss with an idea to make something for it, I'd have to make a business case and it would have to go before a number of other people in areas of responsibility who would agree with that.

**1830**

I'd like to ask, why was the decision to close the Sarnia jail made three years ago and yet no one from the

government bothered to consult with the Sarnia-Lambton community as a whole?

Lastly, I'd like to ask the minister, when will you accept responsibility and apologize for the threats made to Mayor Bradley and the delegation from Sarnia-Lambton by the ministry staff, when they were told to back off or risk losing their courthouse as well?

Again, where are the numbers?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** I'm delighted to respond on behalf of Minister Bradley, the minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, to the question by the member from Sarnia-Lambton. I'd like to say to the member that I appreciate him rising in the House and posing the question on behalf of his constituents. But I would like to address the member as well and look at the entire situation, not only Sarnia itself but the other facilities—not only from his perspective of the riding of Sarnia-Lambton, but from that of the minister and the government, who have the responsibility to look at the correctional system throughout the province of Ontario.

Let me say to the member, and to the members of his own riding as well and throughout Ontario, that the responsibility of the minister and the government is to provide a correctional system that is safe, that is secure and that is effective, and at the same time to have a system that modernizes as we move along. That is part of the responsibility of this government. That is why I would say to the honourable member that I appreciate you looking after the residents of Sarnia-Lambton, but from this side we have the responsibility of looking at this major sector of our province, and of our economy as well, if you will, Madam Speaker, from a wider provincial view.

He does mention closing the jail in Sarnia. With Sarnia, I think he knows very well that the decision has been taken into consideration—and also the Walkerton and Owen Sound facilities. I'd like to tell the member that the Sarnia facility itself is over 50 years old. And while it's costing us—I can see that he agrees—about \$180 a day, it is to maintain our inmates in perhaps a better, modern facility at about \$125 a day. There is a 30% savings.

Speaking of Owen Sound, this is a facility that was built in 1869, just immediately after Confederation. We have there 36 inmates. The cost there is \$293 a day, versus \$123 a day in a better, newer, more modern facility. The same goes for Walkerton, where this facility was built prior to Confederation, in 1866. It has 34 occupants at the moment, at about \$280 per day, versus \$125 in another, modern facility. The fact is that at all of these facilities the government is faced with a major renovation investment to bring them to certain standards. But that wouldn't mean that we would be lowering the cost for accommodating inmates at those facilities.

The facility in Windsor, for example, which I think the member has mentioned, is modern, newer, and the

occupants can be housed in that facility at 30% less. I don't have to tell the member that nowadays 30% is a lot of money that can be used for health care, which we hear so much about, education and other areas as well.

I don't have to tell the member either that under the previous government, if my recollection serves me well, they had closed between 16 and 25 facilities. Why? In the name of restructuring. I think we want to do the same thing, but we have to give consideration that we are protecting those 76 jobs as well. The minister has ad-

dressed that. It is the intent of the government to see, indeed, that those jobs are offered to those 76 employees in other facilities in Ontario.

I do hope that the member understands, and we can move on with restructuring our modern facilities.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1835.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)</b>	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (LIB)</b>	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
<b>DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)</b>	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)</b>	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC) Elliott, Christine (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB) Gélinas, France (NDP) <b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Oakville Nickel Belt Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires 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) <b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	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) <b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	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) <b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	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) <b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
<b>Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)</b>	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)</b>	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Perth–Wellington	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
<b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey  
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson  
Kim Craitor, Bob Delaney  
Garfield Dunlop, Phil McNeely  
Yasir Naqvi, John O'Toole  
Maria Van Bommel  
Clerks / Greffiers: Valerie Quioc Lim, Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Toby Barrett  
Bob Delaney, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Pat Hoy, Helena Jaczek  
Norm Miller, Leeanna Pendergast  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: David Oraziotti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jim Brownell  
Jim Brownell, Steve Clark  
Kuldip Kular, Dave Levac  
Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese  
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti  
Joyce Savoline  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Laura Albanese, Michael A. Brown  
Donna H. Cansfield, Aileen Carroll  
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: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
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  
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 / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon  
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo  
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones  
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin  
Shafiq Qadri, Khalil Ramal  
Elizabeth Witmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 20 April 2011 / Mercredi 20 avril 2011

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### **Building Families and Supporting Youth to be Successful Act, 2011, Bill 179, Ms. Broten / Loi de 2011 favorisant la fondation de familles et la réussite chez les jeunes, projet de loi 179, Mme Broten**

Hon. Laurel C. Broten.....	5511
Mr. John O'Toole.....	5513
Mr. Paul Miller.....	5513
Mr. Mike Colle.....	5513
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	5514
Hon. Laurel C. Broten.....	5514
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	5514
Mr. Paul Miller.....	5516
Hon. Laurel C. Broten.....	5517
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	5517
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	5517
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	5517
Mr. Rosario Marchese.....	5518
Hon. Laurel C. Broten.....	5519
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	5520
Mr. Paul Miller.....	5520
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	5520
Mr. Rosario Marchese.....	5521
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	5521

#### **Wearing of pins**

Mr. Rick Johnson .....	5521
------------------------	------

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Norm Miller .....	5521
Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	5521
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	5521
Mr. Jeff Leal.....	5521
Mr. Frank Klees .....	5521
Mr. David Zimmer .....	5521
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	5521
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	5521

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### **Access to information**

Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	5522
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	5522

#### **Hydro rates**

Mr. John Yakabuski.....	5522
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	5522
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	5523

#### **Hydro rates**

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	5523
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	5523
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	5523

#### **Government's record**

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	5524
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	5524

#### **Energy policies**

Mr. Peter Shurman .....	5525
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	5525

#### **Stock exchange**

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	5525
Hon. Dwight Duncan.....	5526

#### **Community health centres**

Mr. Bill Mauro .....	5526
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	5526

#### **Correctional facilities**

Mr. Robert Bailey.....	5527
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	5527

#### **Climate change**

Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	5528
Hon. John Wilkinson.....	5528

#### **Energy policies**

Mr. Michael A. Brown .....	5528
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	5528

#### **Firefighters**

Mr. Garfield Dunlop.....	5529
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	5529

#### **Access to information**

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	5529
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	5529

#### **Forest industry**

Mr. Jim Brownell .....	5530
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	5530

#### **University and college funding**

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....	5531
Hon. John Milloy.....	5531

#### **French-language education / Éducation en français**

Mr. Michael Prue .....	5531
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	5531

*Continued on inside back cover*

Continued from back cover

<b>Human trafficking</b>	
Mr. Khalil Ramal .....	5532
Hon. Christopher Bentley.....	5532
<b>Notice of dissatisfaction</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	5532
<b>Visitors</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	5532

#### **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mrs. Liz Sandals .....	5532
Mr. Shafiq Qadri .....	5532
Mr. Rick Johnson .....	5533
Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield .....	5533

#### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

<b>Private members' public business</b>	
Mr. Frank Klees .....	5533
<b>Make-A-Wish Canada</b>	
Mr. Rick Johnson .....	5533
<b>School transportation</b>	
Mr. Norm Miller .....	5533
<b>Co-operatives</b>	
Mrs. Liz Sandals .....	5534
<b>Multiple sclerosis</b>	
Mr. John O'Toole.....	5534
<b>Duty-free stores</b>	
Mr. Howard Hampton .....	5534
<b>Environmental forum</b>	
Mr. Khalil Ramal .....	5534
<b>Ottawa Muslim Women's Organization</b>	
Mr. Yasir Naqvi .....	5535
<b>Passover</b>	
Mr. Mike Colle.....	5535
<b>Member's birthday</b>	
Mr. Rick Johnson .....	5535

#### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

<b>British Home Child Day Act, 2011, Bill 185, Mr. Brownell; Ms. DiNovo; Mr. Clark / Loi de 2011 sur le Jour des petits immigrants britanniques, projet de loi 185, M. Brownell; Mme DiNovo; M. Clark</b>	
First reading agreed to.....	5535
Mr. Jim Brownell .....	5536

#### **MOTIONS**

<b>Private members' public business</b>	
Hon. Gerry Phillips .....	5536
Motion agreed to .....	5536
<b>Committee membership</b>	
Hon. Gerry Phillips .....	5536
Motion agreed to .....	5536

#### **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

<b>Jour de la Terre / Earth Day</b>	
L'hon. John Wilkinson.....	5536
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	5537
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	5538
<b>Community Health Week</b>	
Hon. Gerry Phillips .....	5538
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	5538
Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	5539
Mr. Michael Prue .....	5540

#### **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

<b>Photo identification</b>	
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	5540
<b>Dog ownership</b>	
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	5541
<b>Diagnostic services / Services diagnostiques</b>	
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	5541
<b>Assistance to farmers</b>	
Mrs. Maria Van Bommel .....	5541
<b>Assistance to farmers</b>	
Mr. Jeff Leal.....	5541
<b>Environmental protection</b>	
Mr. John O'Toole.....	5542
<b>Paramedics</b>	
Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	5542
<b>Wind turbines</b>	
Mr. John O'Toole .....	5542
<b>Kidney disease</b>	
Mr. Jeff Leal.....	5542
<b>Assistance to farmers</b>	
Mrs. Liz Sandals.....	5542
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. John O'Toole .....	5543
<b>Kidney disease</b>	
Mr. Jeff Leal.....	5543
<b>Ontario pharmacists</b>	
Mr. John O'Toole .....	5543

## **OPPOSITION DAY / JOUR DE L'OPPOSITION**

### **Northern Ontario**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	5543
Hon. Michael Gravelle.....	5545
Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette .....	5547
Mr. Howard Hampton.....	5548
Mr. Bill Mauro.....	5549
Mr. Steve Clark.....	5550
Mme France G�linas.....	5552
Mr. David Oraziotti.....	5552
Mr. John Yakabuski.....	5554
Mr. Jeff Leal .....	5555
Mr. John O'Toole .....	5555
Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	5557
Mr. Michael A. Brown.....	5559
Motion negatived.....	5560

## **ADJOURNMENT DEBATE / D BAT SUR LA MOTION D'AJOURNEMENT**

### **Hospital funding**

Mr. Michael Prue .....	5560
Mrs. Liz Sandals .....	5560

### **Long-term care**

Mme France G�linas.....	5561
Mrs. Liz Sandals .....	5562

### **Correctional facilities**

Mr. Robert Bailey .....	5562
Mr. Mario Sergio .....	5563