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(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 16 May 2011

Lundi 16 mai 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 16 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 16 mai 2011

The House recessed from 1756 to 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TAXATION

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 16, 2011, on the motion by Ms. Smith concerning taxation and the provincial economy.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is always a pleasure to see you in the chair, and I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on attending question period as our Speaker this morning. You did very well.

I would now like to add a few of my thoughts about motion number 74, the Ontario tax plan for jobs and growth. Basically, at the outset, I, like all of my colleagues from the New Democrats, oppose the HST and want to focus on practical solutions to make life affordable for Ontario families and to ensure public service that works for the people of Ontario.

What we can see through this motion, tabled by Minister Duncan, is that the McGuinty government is becoming more out of touch with Ontario families, who are having a hard time making ends meet. We saw that Prime Minister Harper, who is Conservative, brought in the HST. The Conservatives in this House have supported private power schemes, which can also be blamed for the sky-high bills. New Democrats want to offer a few practical changes.

If we take a look at corporate taxes—or corporate tax giveaways, as I like to call them—corporate profits have increased by 7.9% during this last quarter. This is \$66 billion. That's really good news if you happen to be a CEO or a shareholder, but it raises serious questions about the economic usefulness of the McGuinty government's multibillion-dollar corporate tax cuts.

Ontario's record on post-recession job creation isn't as strong as other provinces. If we compare ourselves to Manitoba to the left, which has put a pause on further tax cuts while their provincial budgets are in deficit, Ontario remains nearly 16,000 jobs below its pre-recession peak, while Manitoba has gained an extra 15,000 jobs since the date the recession took hold.

I get a real sense of where this corporate tax cut is going. It helps to look at one sector of Ontario's economy and see what they've done with the additional revenue.

The Ontario government says that the corporate tax cut will hand \$535 million to banks and give \$135 million to insurance companies, and that's on top of the \$520 million provided to banks through the elimination of the capital tax. In total, of the \$4 billion in corporate and capital tax cuts the government has announced, \$1.2 billion of that money will be pocketed by banks and insurance companies, the vast majority going to just eight companies which dominate Ontario's financial sector.

Put this into perspective versus the 13 million Ontarians who happen to live here. Over the last year, employment in the same sector—banking and insurance companies—has decreased by 25,000 jobs. So it doesn't matter that we are giving those big corporations massive tax cuts; it doesn't lead to job growth. It led to 25,000 fewer jobs in those two sectors. If the money didn't go to create jobs, where did it go?

1850

I will read from a table that tells the story. Profits have increased significantly. CEOs have been awarded significant compensation increases. Dividends for shareholders have been boosted, but the hiring spree has not materialized. If we take them one by one and look at Scotiabank, Scotiabank's quarterly profit increased by 19% and now stands at \$1.2 billion. For his hard work, the CEO gets \$10.6 million annually and his pay increased by 10%.

Name me any worker category in Ontario whose pay went up by 10% last year. I can't think of any. If I look at nurses, they didn't get 10%; teachers didn't get 10%; firefighters maybe didn't get 10%; EMS; people working in the mines—no workers in Ontario got a 10% increase in their wages last year, but the CEO of Scotiabank did.

Let's look at the Royal Bank. The Royal Bank quarterly profit, thanks in part to the corporate tax cut that we have given them, has increased by 23% and now stands at \$1.8 billion. What did their CEO get? Their CEO got an increase in pay of 6% and now pockets \$11 million a year in salary. This \$11 million a year is made possible in part because the McGuinty government has cut corporate taxes.

Let's go down to the TD Bank. The TD Bank quarterly profit increased by 19%. Those are phenomenal numbers. It now stands at \$1.5 billion in quarterly profit. Their CEO's salary went up 8% for the last 12 months and now stands at \$11.3 million a year, thanks in part to the corporate tax cuts we are giving these banks. You know, it's hard to make ends meet with \$11.3 million a year, I suppose. I couldn't even dream of it.

The Bank of Montreal's quarterly profit increased by 18% and now stands at \$776 million for a quarter. Their

CEO's yearly salary went up by a whopping 28%. He now makes a measly \$9.5 million a year. It's a good thing we gave them corporate tax cuts, because at \$9.5 million a year it's hard to make ends meet.

Then we have the CIBC. The CIBC's quarterly profit increased by 19% in the last quarter. Their quarterly income is now \$799 million. Their CEO's salary went up—it's a good thing you're sitting down, Madam Speaker, because you could fall off—by 50% and he or she now makes \$9.3 million a year.

Where do those numbers come from? How can anybody's pay from 2010 to 2011 go up 50%?

Mr. John Yakabuski: José Bautista.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes, yes. One of my fellow members is talking about a baseball player here.

Let's look at Sun Life Financial because it's not only banks, it's also insurance companies that we are giving these big corporate tax cuts to. Their profit increased 100%. It's a good thing we gave them that tax cut because, you know, a 100% increase now stands at \$1.79 billion, \$1.8 billion profit in a quarter. That is in a three-month period. Why do we need to give these people more money? I don't understand this at all. But they thank their CEO for this, and they thank him handsomely because they gave him a 100% increase in his salary. He now makes \$8.3 million a year.

Let's look at Manulife Financial. Their profit went up—sorry, that was Sun Life before. Their profit went up 100%, and they pay their CEO \$9.3 million a year.

Great-West Life, their profit—that's quarterly profit—is at \$508 million and went up 20% for the last quarter.

Those numbers speak for themselves. Those numbers tell us that these people have not created any jobs. In fact, we've lost 25,000 jobs in the banking and financial sectors. What this has done is it has taken money away from the provincial government to do other things.

It's rather interesting, when you read their budget. I was interested by page 206—page 206 of the French version. I don't know what page it is in the English version, but I'm sure it must be close. On page 206 of the French version, you look at how much was spent for programming. We can see that for 2010-11, for programs—that's the programs that the government offered—they have spent \$113.3 billion on programs for the people of Ontario. They now have this nifty little chart that shows us what they plan to spend for 2011-12 etc., and they go all the way to 2017-18. So when we look at this, we look at the programs that are \$113.3 billion, and their projection for the future is that it will rise to \$124.9 billion. This is how they intend to balance our budget; remember, they're saying that they are going to put forward a balanced budget and this will happen by the year 2017-18.

So between now, the numbers we have from 2010, to 2017—you know, I'm strong in math, so I did a little calculation myself and saw that basically the program expense growth that we had been told was supposed to be a 1.9% increase over that period of time really turns out to be a 1.6% increase in the program expense growth. It's

a low growth, but let's look at this in a little bit more detail.

Let's look at population growth. We know that with most of the programs that we offer, whether we look at health care or long-term care or schools or policing, the more people who live in Ontario, the more money it will cost. I don't wish any harm on anybody, but we all know if there are more people in Ontario, then more people will get sick and more people will need our health care system etc. So in this little book there, they project population growth to be at about 1.2% a year. If you take the 1.6% that they intend to increase the programming expenses by, to go from \$113 billion to \$124.9 billion, and you take that 1.6% and deduct from this the 1.2% a year growth in the population of Ontario, you are really left with a 0.4% increase that would be available for increases in programs.

If you look at what you have to take into account when you look at program expenses, in health care, the first thing you have to take into account is the impact of the aging population. I went to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' How Sustainable is Medicare? Marc Lee is the author of this report. He basically thinks that aging, right now—he did a study looking from 1975 to 2006 and published a report in 2007, and showed that aging accounts for about 0.8% of growth in health care expenditures just because we're living to be older, thank God, and living longer. He also looked at inflation just within the health care system. Inflation within the health care system has been at 2.5%, so the money we spend on health care, even if we did not do anything different from what we're doing now, is going to cost us 2.5% more just because of inflation.

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Then you look at what he calls "enrichment." Basically, enrichment is things like technologies that enable us to care for the elderly. You look at the demands for knee and hip replacement as one example. You look at new technologies, the demand for MRIs, CT scans and PET scans. You look at the price of drugs and the number of drugs that people are on. You also have to look at end-of-life treatment, which tends to be a part of our health care system.

So you see, if we do nothing else but what we're doing now in health care alone, we're looking at a total increase of 6.3% every single year. If we do nothing more—not one more MRI, not one more anything that we do now—it's going to cost us 6.3% more in program spending. I took health care because it happens that 50% of the programming expenses are in health care.

Remember, I took the chart on page 206. How much are they planning so that we can balance the budget? They're planning to increase the program expenses by 1.6% a year. They're planning a 1.2% increased growth in population. That leaves us 0.4% a year. To maintain health care the way it is now, we need 6.3%. So there's a big gap between those two.

I spent quite a bit of time reading this lengthy manual, and there's nowhere in there that explained how the

magic of 6.3% historical data from 1975 to 2006 will suddenly be changed into 0.4% a year. How you pay for new services, inflation, population aging, population growth, wait increases with the 0.4% per year once you take out population growth—we need to have a conversation here, because those numbers are not adding up. They're not adding up at all.

What will that mean? That means that this \$4.7-billion tax giveaway we're giving to the rich corporations, to those poor CEOs only making between \$8.3 million and \$11.3 million a year, those poor people there—why are we giving those people \$4.7 billion of our money when, to just balance the books by 2017—we're not even talking this year or next year, we're talking 2017, to balance the books by 2017.

We could put that money to better use. We could put that money for programs and services that will need some increases just to stay where we are now. We're not even talking about doing better. We're not even talking about having a PET scan in Sudbury or having a breast coil attached to our MRI machines so we can take advantage of those new breast screenings that are being talked about for the rest of Ontario. The women in northeastern Ontario won't get access to those because we don't have a breast coil for our MRI machine.

We have the Angels in Pink, who have done their second fundraising. They've raised \$20,000 toward the \$200,000 that it presently costs to bring a breast coil to the existing MRI machine at Sudbury Regional Hospital. I would certainly like to see the wiggle room in there to bring that kind of technology so that we have equitable access for the people of northeastern Ontario.

I was really happy when I heard that there will be an expansion of the breast screening program for the women of Ontario but very sad to think, here again, here is a new program that is available, that is proactive to help women detect cancer early, but this program won't be available to the women of the northeast because we don't have the technology, very much similar to the campaign from Sam Bruno for PET scanning for Sudbury Regional Hospital. We were all happy when the government of Ontario decided to cover PET scanning for the people of Ontario under specific rules. But then again, if it doesn't exist in Sudbury Regional Hospital, it is not available to the people of northeastern Ontario.

Am I right in thinking that I'm done? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: I'm going to share my time with the member from Ottawa—Orléans. Like the member opposite—I'm always terrible, I have to admit, for ridings. As I was listening to the member for Nickel Belt and chatting briefly with my neighbour, I was surprised as well to look at the clock and find her time had run out so quickly.

I'm going to spend the few minutes I have talking about a couple of things. Particularly, it seems to me at times of late in this place that the official opposition lives

in an alternate universe. I'm not quite sure what that universe is but I think probably their trip on Friday was the blue haze that they did in 20-odd or 60-odd ridings. As a matter of fact, I think the haze was more like smoke. And I think they were blowing some today and of late.

I want to talk a little bit about what's happening out there in the world, because it's easy for the opposition to stand up and bemoan everything we are doing even when in principle they will agree with the very policies that we are putting in place. I often hear the Premier talking about the ship of state not veering too far to the left or the right, trying to keep a centre course. Occasionally you change course a little bit because you have to adopt policy accordingly. I think sometimes, though, when I watched the opposition when they were in government, it was listing. It wasn't steering. The ship was listing to the right and the water was running over the gunnels; it was flooding in at times.

So I'm not unhappy if we at times maybe veer a little to the left to address some of the social policies that we need to address as a government—not all the social policies obviously that every member would like and maybe not to the extent that our friends from the third party would like, but that's okay. That's a policy difference. Sometimes we veer to the right a bit. And that's okay because it certainly meets the economic climate and needs, finds that balance, but not as far to the right as the opposition has had us in the past and clearly would like to take us post October of this year. And make no mistake in the direction that party is going.

We only need look at what happened in Carleton—Mississippi Mills, where the sitting member, with over 30 years in this place—as the member from Peterborough likes to say, they threw him under the bus. So it's clear where they're going. They've got a policy, I understand, a pretty open policy that they don't like to interfere with the nomination process. I don't think they interfere even to the point of supporting the dean of the Legislature. Having said that, there was a candidate in my riding. Unfortunately, he ran into some legal trouble—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Stop the clock. A point of order from the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The tenor of the gentleman's debate has nothing to do with the motion before this House whatsoever. He is in fact impugning another member or members of this House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Thank you. It's not a point of order.

The member it will continue and come back to the motion, please.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: I will, Speaker. I'm trying to be there in the context of our economic policies. I am simply drawing to the attention of the House how sometimes we move a bit to the right to address the economic climate and how our policies often will line up particularly with those of their federal cousins, our Prime Minister and the federal finance minister. We have moved in the direction, with the harmonization of our joint sales taxes, the GST and the PST, to a single sales tax.

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That's something that the Prime Minister wanted when he was in a minority government situation and now as the leader of a majority in the House in Ottawa, and certainly the former finance minister of this place was a very, very strong advocate. I recall being in a meeting where we were asking him about—not just us; there were others from across the country. I was there on behalf of our finance minister, asking about support for universities and colleges, because we see that as a priority. I recall his comments being, “So you want us back in the business of colleges and universities? You want us to be doing that for you?” We obviously have ownership for that, but part of it was, “When you guys line up on sales tax, then we can talk about some other things.” So we found ourselves moved to the right to meet our objectives in areas like post-secondary education and health and those types of things and to make the business climate better.

But I digress from where my earlier comments were, and only marginally so.

I know in my riding the official opposition now has a candidate who will certainly fill the void, if there is one, of a hard-leaning right position.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Is that Mr. Farouk?

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: No, it's not. It's a former executive director of the Ontario and federal taxpayers' coalition. He leans about as far right as you can get. He's even farther right than some of the members who are sitting over there today.

But I did say that in the little bit of time I had that I wanted to talk about some of the things that are happening that may bring some sense of reality for those people who are not in this place and don't necessarily take what we do here—I wouldn't say “seriously,” but don't take what we do here as what makes the world turn some days.

I want to just pick up on a couple of clippings in this week's paper that speak to investments and what that means. I found a couple that I found interesting as I was reading.

“Greening the Education Landscape” is from the Sunday Sun. It speaks to colleges and universities, what's happening in the education system that's preparing young people, and how they are responding to the needs of a green economy. I'm going to just quote a couple of pieces, if I can, and I'll give this to Hansard later, since I don't have extensive notes. This will be available, obviously; they may be able to access this readily anyway.

Part of the column talks about the Green Energy Act, and it says, “It promises to expedite the growth of clean, renewable sources of energy like wind, solar, hydro, biomass and biogas while also promoting a culture of conservation.” That's talking about the Green Energy Act. “Durham College”—and while Durham College is not in my riding, many of my constituent students go there. It's in Durham region. We think of it kind of as a home college, along with Centennial College in Scarborough. “Durham College is responding by launching

several new programs: energy management and sustainable building technology, construction carpentry and energy audit techniques. “They're all focused on green—green building technologies, green energy systems.”

Now, it wasn't that long ago that those programs would have had no place in the college system; no one would have envisioned those being in the college system. It's because of things like the Green Energy Act and the move to a green economy that we're finding opportunities for young people to be directly engaged in getting prepared for the new economies.

They talk a bit about new careers for a green economy, and, “‘Green programs are helping to drive the province's transition to a sustainable economy,’ says Colleges Ontario.”

That is just one outcome of our investments, part of our tax plan for growth, one outcome of our investments in education in the green economy. You know, we get the chance to read the clippings here daily in our bit of spare time we have available to us, and since part of my riding—half of my riding is in Toronto, and Toronto is not all of Ontario, but it's a pretty big chunk when you look at the population of the GTA and you look at its economic clout.

There was quite a good article on Toronto. It says, “Forget Paris—Toronto is Where It's At.” PricewaterhouseCoopers did this research on some 26 major cities internationally. They ranked them on a variety of quadrants, and Toronto is not number one in every category by any means, but when they do a composite look at Toronto, they say Toronto is probably the second best among the 26 cities in the world that they reference in which to live, work, invest, grow economies and raise families. Among the kinds of things they were commenting on—it says that Toronto tied with Mumbai on the overall sustainability list. They looked at sustainable economies, and we're the top city for tackling air pollution and rated high in waste recycling. It says Toronto was competitive but outmuscled by the likes of Singapore, Madrid, Hong Kong, New York, Paris and London in the financial sector. You know, those big players in the financial sector—we can't necessarily compete with London and Paris and Hong Kong, but we're right up there, even though a small city, in the financial sector.

Toronto was one of the top-ranked cities for its cost of living in the world.

Ease of doing business: The report says Toronto would be one of the easiest places in the world to do business if it improved its ease of hiring and firing and if Canada offered more flexibility on visa requirements. They ranked it fifth in the report.

Intellectual capital and innovation: I hope when the Minister of Research and Innovation has a chance to speak he may want to comment on what we are doing on the innovation front, but it speaks about intellectual capital and innovation and it ranks Toronto as being second.

If there's anywhere we really fall down in the report on the international front, it's in transportation and

infrastructure. It particularly says that limited transit coverage, the cost of public transit and an insufficient number of licensed taxis contribute to the low rating. We're ranked 13th out of 26 cities. It's the very reason why we are making the investments in infrastructure and in public transit in the massive ways that we have been doing. It's part of the means by which we are going to grow this economy. It's not just about the tax structure; it's about putting a tax structure in place that allows us to make investments in things like infrastructure. It allows us to make cities like Toronto—and Toronto, I think, is reflective in many ways of the rest of this province. It is not in isolation; it's not an island in and of itself. It allows us to look at our cities and say, "We've got good cities. We have good cities that are doing the right things when it comes to air quality; we have good cities when it comes to things like the cost of living, with job opportunities, with educational opportunities."

Do we have more work to do? Certainly, considerably more work, and I suggest that, on the transportation and transit front, reports like this point out the fact that we are not up to snuff with other international cities, and that's probably true in London and Ottawa and other cities throughout Ontario.

The reality is that our tax plan and our tax strategy, our growth-of-the-economy strategy, is not something that was thought up last night. It's not something that is part of one budget cycle. It has been an ongoing program for the last half-dozen or more years. I was fortunate to be in the finance area as the parliamentary assistant at a time when we managed to have—I think we had three balanced budgets in a row while I was there. The economy turned, and it changed the picture of the world, including Ontario. But the finance minister set out a strategy to get back to balance over a period of time that's achievable, and we haven't had to move those yardsticks at this point. Others have had to stretch their time frame out. We hear the federal government, our finance minister federally, saying they're going to shorten the time; they're going to get back to that four-year plan, I think they had, for balance by cutting out 90,000 federal public servants, with about a third of the federal public service gone to achieve that.

That's not the way we set out doing business here. We set out a time frame that is not only achievable, but achievable responsibly. I am optimistic—I wouldn't speak for the finance minister in any way, but I am optimistic, based on what I've heard from him and what I've seen in the context of this year's budget, that there may be a point where we say, you know, maybe that seven-year time frame to balance was just a fraction too long. He may find a way to bring us back a little bit on that, but I wouldn't want to suggest that's going to be the outcome at all at this point in time.

I'm pleased with the direction we've gone. I like the fact that we're prepared to move a bit to the left or a bit to the right, as the case might be, to meet the needs of Ontarians. I know at times it doesn't meet all of those needs. I'm glad we don't list so far over that the water

gushes over the gunnels and almost takes us under. I'm much happier with the course we have taken. This plan helps to get there.

Speaker, thank you so much for the time. I do want to share the time with the member from Ottawa—Orléans.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Member from Ottawa—Orléans.

Mr. Phil McNeely: Thank you, Madam Speaker. We were in estimates last week with the Minister of Revenue, and she clearly showed with factual information that for families—

Interjection.

Mr. Phil McNeely: —it was entered in as evidence—up to \$150,000, they were better off under the new tax program. This is factual information. This is what Jack Mintz said would happen, that we would create 600,000 additional jobs because of the tax reform package in the next 10 years, that the earning power of Ontarians would go up 10%, and there would be \$47 billion of additional investment in Ontario. This is what's happening.

I think it's Michael Smart who has reported that the net impact of the reform for most families by the end of 2010 was a gain or a very small loss in after-tax real income. So it's the right thing to do, it's working, and I'm very pleased with that.

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One of the reasons, of course, that we did it is that out of over 140 other countries, 33 of the 34 of the OECD countries—the main leaders in economic leadership—have gone to this tax harmonization. We've done it, and when you get \$4.3 billion from the federal government, from Harper and Flaherty, because they recognize how important this is for Ontario, it's extremely important. And \$4.3 billion is almost \$1,000 per family in Ontario, if you do the math.

One thing that Ontario has done: From the bad days of 2000, when we were about \$2.1 billion—I was a consulting engineer then, and I know those figures. Do you know what we're investing in infrastructure this year? Some \$15.9 billion. Sure, the jobs came back in Ontario, 115% of the jobs, because we were there. The federal government put in \$1, but for every \$1 the federal government put in, we put in about \$5, five times as much. It kept the construction industry going, it renewed our infrastructure, and this was the right thing to do. If you look at the USA, they've got 17% of their jobs back; the UK has 44%; France has 53%; Ontario has 115%. Ontario was hit the hardest by that recession, and we brought it back with good economic planning.

The test scores: We're spending a lot in education, that's true, but the test scores are up from 54% to 68%. Our objective is 75%, because we have to have our kids getting the right start in life. Our post-secondary education in 2003 was 57% who were graduating; now 64% are doing post-secondary education, and we want to get it up to 70%, because the jobs of today require post-secondary training. High school graduation—all those kids who were left behind by the Tories for years: 68% were graduating in 2003, and you know where the rest

are ending up. They're ending up without jobs, they're ending up on welfare, they're ending up in our courts. We had 81%, a 13% increase in high school graduations. Our goal is 85%, because we believe in our kids and we're going to invest in our kids.

Shorter wait times in hospitals; cancer surgery down 30 days; cataract surgery, 189 days; hip replacement, 145 days; knee replacement, 240 days. I had a knee replacement and I waited over a year. It's down 240 days from that, because we believe in providing good health care. If you look at who has doctors in Ontario, it's 1.2 million more people than when we took over in 2003.

Creating new energy jobs: In 2010, that was 20,000 jobs. In 2011, we estimate 45,000 jobs; in 2012, 60,000 jobs. In green energy, we're the leaders in North America. We've got our industries going, and that's working out.

Let's look at cleaner air. We worry about our children; we worry about the diseases that come with it, including asthma. Nitrogen dioxide is down 21% since 2003; carbon monoxide, 14% since 2003; and sulphur dioxide down 28%.

I've always been very much an environmental person, because I know the costs of dirty air and dirty water. Walkerton shows what dirty water brought us. I want to speak to something that happened today, because I was maligned in this House today. I don't like that. I want to clear the record. The Conservatives fought us on the smoke-free act; they fought us all the way. They were in there with Big Tobacco. The Conservatives fought us on the ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides. We lost that in Ottawa. Conservatives were lined up with the big chemical companies who wanted to poison our water and poison our air. Since we brought in the ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides, two of the worst chemicals are down 80% in our urban streams. This is important. I proposed an amendment, supported by Wilkinson and others, to get cigarette advertising out of retail. The McNeely amendment got the cigarettes out of retail. You guys fought it all the way. The NDP supported us; you fought us. We got here to Ontario people like Cushman, and Bob Chiarelli, people who were leading to try to improve air quality, to improve water quality. We did it in Ottawa; we got the ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides. We only got it in Ontario and we fought you people all the way, but we had the power here with the NDP to get that bill through. Our water is much cleaner now in Ontario as a result.

We fought you all the way on coal. Getting rid of 25% of coal in Ontario costs a lot of money. It is not an easy thing to do. It took a lot of courage to go ahead with that. We're down to where about 80% of the coal generation is gone, and in 2014 it will be all gone. We'll be coal-free, and that's because the Liberal government wanted to do that.

We have done many things that are necessary, and when I say that Conservatives do not have any concern for children, I mean it, because you fought us on the way of giving—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Excuse me. I would ask the member to withdraw that last comment, please. I would ask the member from Ottawa–Orléans to withdraw that last comment, please.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Withdraw, you idiot.

Mr. Phil McNeely: That guy should be thrown out of the House.

I withdraw.

Interjection.

Mr. Phil McNeely: You know what you are.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I would ask the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke to withdraw.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Withdraw.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm going to get to this motion in a minute, but first I'm going to start with that member over there. How pathetic to stand in this House and repeat himself. It wasn't good enough that he made a fool of himself once, but he wants to stand here again and malign members on this side of the House and say that we don't care about children. Well, I say to you, come over here and say it and then tell my children that. You're pathetic.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): On a point of order, the member from York West.

Mr. Mario Sergio: With all due respect, the member over there has a name and he's got a riding by which he should be addressed, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, please refer to his riding name.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I never referred to him as—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Point of order, government House leader.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I believe the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is becoming very personal in his comments, and I would note that he has hurled insults towards our members more than once in the last five minutes. I would just ask, through you, Madam Speaker, that he temper his comments.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, continue, please.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I've been here for eight years and I've never considered this a personal place, but that member has made it that way.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Could you please refer to the member's riding?

Mr. John Yakabuski: There's nothing in the standing orders—I'm pointing over there. That member. That member has made it a personal debate. He has stood here in his place and maligned members of the Progressive Conservative Party and insinuated more than once that they don't care about children. We may debate legislation and we may have different views on different points of law or how we're going to get somewhere, whether or not we take one method or another, but to stand here in this place and say that members on this side of the House

don't care about children is absolutely ridiculous. It's preposterous. It's below the dignity of this House. He should be ashamed of himself, and I'm certainly hopeful—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member from Peterborough, do you have a point of order?

Mr. Jeff Leal: Yes. I refer to the standing orders, particularly 23(b).

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Could we stop the clock for a second? I know it's late. I know tempers are rising. I know we're tired. I would ask all members, particularly the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, since he has the floor, to please come back to the motion at hand and to talk to the motion, and refrain from egregious pointing and name-calling. Thank you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I am referencing what the member said previously in this debate. How it could be out of order, I have no idea. If he was allowed to speak about it, I would suggest that it would be appropriate that I be allowed to respond to it. That only stands to reason.

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The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): To respond to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, I called the member to order and asked him to apologize. He did. So back to the motion, please. Thank you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. He withdrew; he did not apologize. There's a significant difference between a withdrawal and an apology. We don't expect an apology from him. I don't think he's capable of doing that, because he thinks he's right. But, you know, everything does happen in its time—

Mr. Bob Delaney: On a point of order, Speaker: You have called the member to order on 23(b)(i), on sticking to the topic under discussion, and he has in fact imputed motives to another member—23(i).

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Thank you. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has the floor. Continue, please. Please speak to the motion.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I rise on a point of order as well. I take it as a personal attack on myself, as a father with four children, that that member on the opposite side—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I would ask the member from Lanark—

Mr. Randy Hillier: He has absolutely no business being in this House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member from Ottawa–Orléans has already withdrawn the comment. That issue has been dealt with. It is now the floor for the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He will speak to the motion, please.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Like my colleague—we're going to get to the motion now—I want to start by reading a quote from Premier McGuinty from April 4, 2011, from Hansard. I quote: "A very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past." Now, let's talk

about Premier McGuinty's record, because it will go a long way to predicting what the future holds for Ontario if he is re-elected in October.

Before the 2003 election, Dalton McGuinty emphatically denied he would increase taxes, and on September 11, 2003, prior to that year's election, Dalton McGuinty signed a pledge. It was called the taxpayer protection promise. Let me read that pledge into the record. It reads as follows: "I, Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario, promise that if my party is elected as the next government, I will not raise taxes or implement any new taxes without the ... consent of Ontario voters...."

We all remember the commercials, the ones he ran more than 200 times during the election campaign. We all know that signing that pledge helped get Dalton McGuinty elected, and we all know what happened next. The minute he got the keys to the Premier's office—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What about being re-elected?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, I'm getting to that, Minister of Health.

The minute he got the keys to the Premier's office, Dalton McGuinty treated his word like it was nothing. He brought in the health tax. It was the single-largest income tax grab in the history of Ontario, taking \$3 billion a year out of the pockets of Ontario families. And not a penny of that was dedicated to health care; it went into general revenues.

In 2007, he did it again. Before the 2007 election, he promised he would not raise taxes, but he would not lower them, either. When told that his critics wouldn't believe him, he said, "They're wrong. They're wrong. They're wrong." But after the vote, and with no warning, he broke his promise again and brought in the \$3-billion HST tax grab. HST on hydro bills is one of the reasons they are skyrocketing. On the very same day, July 1, 2010, Dalton McGuinty tried to use his HST as cover to sneak in the eco tax on more than 9,000 items Ontario families use every day.

We already know what his next permanent tax will be. Every year since 2002, Ontario families have paid the debt retirement charge on their hydro bills. It was created to pay off \$7.8 billion of debt going back to the Peterson era and the Darlington overruns. A typical family pays \$84 a year. It was supposed to be paid off in 2012. The government's own numbers say \$7.8 billion has been collected to date, and that was at the end of 2010. Without warning or explanation, the McGuinty Liberals announced that the debt retirement charge will be on the hydro bills of Ontario families until 2018, but they won't even tell Ontario families what the balance is. We asked the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. to tell us the balance; they also refused. It's like getting a credit card bill every month and being told to pay the interest with no idea how much the principal is. It's just plain wrong and it shows absolutely no respect for the families who are getting stuck with the bills.

To top it off, the McGuinty Liberals slapped the HST on to the bill, taking another \$80 million a year out of the

pockets of Ontario families. Families are already paying too much for hydro, thanks to the HST, the debt retirement charge, hydro rates up another 6% this year, \$18 million in the legal interest charges and expensive energy experiments that Premier McGuinty himself says will hike hydro bills by 46% during the next four years—and we think that is a lowball estimate. It's quite clear that the debt retirement charge under Dalton McGuinty will be a permanent tax, and we're hearing the struggles from Ontario families each and every day.

It didn't end there. Thanks to Dalton McGuinty, Ontario families are faced with increased taxes through the tire taxes, eco taxes, electronic taxes, the diamond tax, hidden hydro taxes, destination marketing taxes and higher beer, wine and spirits taxes, just to name a few. Last week, the McGuinty Liberals voted down a motion calling on the Premier to reject a tax increase. You know why? Because they're keeping their options open. Then, on Wednesday, the finance minister tabled this motion that we're debating now and said that a McGuinty government will not raise or lower taxes. Is anybody else getting the feeling of *déjà vu*?

The people in the province of Ontario could hear from the McGuinty Liberals a thousand times—you know that “1,000 pardons”? A thousand times they could repeat the pledge that they will not raise their taxes. A thousand times they could print this ridiculous motion—they'll send it out in the mail, trust me. They'll use your tax dollars and send it out in the mail, just as they waste millions of dollars of advertising telling people that they're getting 10% off their hydro bills, like the people haven't figured that out. It's on their hydro bill; it says 10%. But they still advertise it 20 times a week. I hear it in my riding.

You're paying for it. The people are paying for it, because they are so afraid of the revolt that is coming in this province, because people are sick and tired of having Dalton McGuinty say one thing and do something else. There is not a person, when I talk to people in my riding, when I talk to people around the province—and those folks on the other side are hearing the same thing. They are hearing the same thing. But they won't stand up to their own cabinet, to their own government, because they're afraid.

Now, some of them are bailing. Some of them are saying, “That's enough. We're getting out of here.” But for the rest of them, they're just doing as they're told, just like the fellow from Ottawa–Orléans sitting in the back there, doing what he's told—except that part about children. He came up with that on his own, him and Margaret Best.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Could you please refer to the name of the riding? Thank you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The Minister of Health Promotion.

Out there in Ontario, there is nobody—nobody—who believes that this government will not raise taxes if they're elected. They're hardwired to do so; it's in their DNA. He repeatedly said that he wouldn't raise taxes; he

did exactly that. How is he going to pay for his \$17-billion deficit? He's going to raise your taxes, because he certainly has no ability to manage spending. His recent agreement with OPSEU, where they even had a secret deal in place that they went to court to defend, they went to court to keep secret, and when the terms of that deal were reached, we find out that after the election, after Dalton McGuinty gets his mandate again—if the people fall for it, but I don't think they will—then there's another 1% increase in that contract, not negotiated in good faith but behind closed doors, handed out behind closed doors on the backs of seniors and those children that Mr. McNeely likes to talk about, the backs of those children in struggling Ottawa–Orléans—

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The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Riding, please.

Mr. John Yakabuski: —the member for Ottawa–Orléans—the backs of those children in struggling families that he pretends to care so much about. But he'll foist tax increases on each and every one of them in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario.

He blabs on about coal. Where was Dalton McGuinty with his promise to close the coal plants by 2007? Where was Phil McNeely then? Where was the member then? Why wasn't he standing up in protest to protect children? Because his words are hollow. Where was he standing up to protect children and say, “Close them down”? He never said a word, because he only does what he's told to do. He sits in the backbench, and he'll sit there until he is old and grey. He is old and grey.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I'd ask the member to withdraw that last comment. Thank you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Withdraw.

Interjection: This is getting a little personal here.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, I'll tell you, if they want to open up that door, I'll walk through it.

There's not a single person in the province who believes that when this election is over and if Dalton McGuinty is re-elected—that 10% rebate on hydro? It's gone. It's gone, just like when he promised to keep the rates at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour after he got elected, and then he changed it. This 10% rebate will be gone just as quickly. As soon as he gets his mandate, he is going to be making sure that he gets every possible nickel out of the pockets of Ontario families, every possible nickel out of struggling seniors in this province. He wants it now, but he's backing off because there's an election on the horizon.

What these members should be doing is, they should actually go out to the ridings. They should go out to the ridings and actually talk to the real people, not just get their speaking notes from the corner office on the second floor. They should talk to the real people. Sit down and talk to some families; go to the coffee shops. Stop doing the drive-through so you can avoid the real people. Go into the coffee shop, sit down and ask them, “How are you doing?” Ask them how their family is doing, how they're getting by in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. Ask

them if they think they're better off, like you want to say—"Ninety three percent of the people are better off" or "All these jobs are back." Talk to the real people in the coffee shops. Talk to some people in the forestry business who are struggling to keep their companies going in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario because of hydro rates, because of overregulation, because of gas prices.

Oh, here's another one. Last week, the Minister of Finance starts talking about—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Minister of Research and Innovation.

Mr. John Yakabuski: He starts talking about how the HST has actually meant that gas prices are lower. Where else but Dalton McGuinty's Ontario could an increase be a reduction? Where else but here could an increase be a reduction?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member may continue.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's beyond the pale. How ludicrous is that, insinuating that an increase is a reduction? When they're talking about gas prices—and I'm not one of these guys who jumps on the Dan McTeague bandwagon and says that government can regulate gas prices. I'm not saying that. But I do know this: Whatever that pump says out there tonight, it is 8% more than it would have been if Dalton McGuinty didn't impose the HST on it.

They can talk about the federal government all they want, but the federal government didn't tell them to impose it on hydro, on home heating for those children—those children, Phil, who are freezing—HST on home heating, for gasoline, hydro bills—8% more because of the decisions of this government.

The federal government never told them they had to apply that tax on all of those essentials. That was the choice of this government, because they wanted the revenue to pay for their hokey schemes here in the province of Ontario, to pay for some of those ridiculous energy experiments—Samsung, a \$7-billion deal; FIT programs, up to 80 cents a kilowatt hour for power. They don't make sense. Tim Hudak will stop that. We'll have a free, open bidding process for renewables in the province that will work. They'll bring renewables to the grid in Ontario, but they'll be at prices that Ontario can live with.

Madam Speaker, I would like to amend this motion. I would like to propose an amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member will read the amendment.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move that the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "strong" in the first paragraph; deleting the second paragraph; substituting the word "it" for "and" at the beginning of the third paragraph; and deleting the words after "HST rate" in the last paragraph.

I thereby move that amendment.

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

Mr. Yakabuski has moved an amendment to the government motion—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Order, so you can hear the amendment—that the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "strong" in the first paragraph; deleting the second paragraph; substituting the word "it" for "and" at the beginning of the third paragraph; and deleting the words after "HST rate" in the last paragraph.

Further debate?

Mr. Michael Prue: I think now we are debating the amendment, are we not? I want to thank the mover of the amendment, because when I looked at this motion I couldn't believe that a government would waste an entire night in this Legislature stating something that they believe is obvious and the rest of us know cannot have even a kernel of truth within it. This is a government that continues to talk about its failures as if they were some kind of an accomplishment. They continue to talk about an HST as if it's a good thing and the people out there in Ontario like it. They continue to talk about the \$4.8 billion in tax relief for business when they're running a \$17-billion or \$18-billion deficit and the social programs are in decline and the schools don't have enough money. I don't know why we're standing here tonight and why this government is so proud of the non-accomplishment that they want to debate it over and over and over again. I would have thought this government would have been much happier to run away and hide what they're doing, rather than to try to shout it from the rooftops so that everybody knows again.

Anyway, I'm thankful to the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. I'm happy that he has deleted a whole bunch of this so that we can talk about, I guess, a little bit less. But here it is. This is a government that wants to maintain the harmonized sales tax at the current rate, and talks about that as if it's something great. This is the government that chose exactly how to deal with the harmonized sales tax. We have a government in BC, in British Columbia, that is equally detested at this time, also a Liberal government, for bringing in this same tax. But that government decided how they were going to deal with it, and they weren't going to put the sales tax on gasoline or home heating fuel or hydro. They weren't going to do it because that government, as backward as they are, knew that the people would rebel over all of that. That government, as backward as it is and as unpopular as it is, knew that they ought not to do that. But here in Ontario, we decided to do a whole bunch of things a whole lot different. I don't understand it.

If the Minister of Health Promotion was here, I would ask her why she continued to take the tax off food that is really bad for you. All this fattening fast food—they took the tax off it. That doesn't make any sense to me if you're talking about health promotion, but that was the priority of this government.

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I look at this motion that they have, and they're talking about creating 293,000 new jobs. I have to laugh.

They lost some 300,000 jobs. Some of those jobs came back. Almost all of the jobs that came back had nothing, absolutely nothing to do with this government, nothing at all. I don't blame them for the loss of the—I'm not saying the 300,000 job loss was the fault of the government, because there were a lot of factors at play. The government was part of the problem, but world situations were certainly part of the problem; the banks and the greed and Wall Street were part of the problem. But don't sit here and say in your motion that you have created 293,000 jobs, because that is just so much blarney. It's not true at all.

The jobs have been created because the world situation is changing. The economies in some places are improving a little. Things are happening. You happen to be caught up in a little bit of a wave. But it's not your policies that are doing this, it's a whole bunch of other things that are playing together in a broad economic platform.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Michael. Thank you for that.

Mr. Michael Prue: Well, it's true. It's true.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Put it on the record. Thank you.

Mr. Michael Prue: It's true: You did not create these jobs. It's absolutely true. There are lots of things at play here. But when this government tries to brag about what they're doing, they're bragging about something they had nothing to do with at all, and that's the reality.

So let's take a little look here. Let's take a look, a little bit, at this stuff. Ontario remains 16,000 jobs below where we were three years ago. Some 16,000 people in this province don't have a job who had one three years ago. Now, you can say, "You know, we did some wonderful things"—I can hear the Liberals now—"we've done wonderful things because most of the people got a job back." But you know, there are a lot more people who didn't, and if you look at the neighbouring province of Manitoba, which was and probably still is a bit more of a have-not province than we are, Manitoba has increased their jobs since the height three years ago. They have increased it by 15,000 jobs. That's a little province with a small population. It has done remarkable work that this government is totally—was and is—incapable of doing.

You ask yourself, how can a little tiny place like Manitoba get 15,000 more jobs and we lose 16,000? Look in the mirror, folks; look in the mirror. What did they do that we didn't do? What is their hydro rate? A whole lot better than ours. What is their fiscal policy? A whole lot better than ours. How do they give out money for job creation? A whole lot better than this government does, and they have some success. And you wonder why people are angry out there.

I read a little story today. I had to laugh. It was in the Ottawa paper, and it talked about the Premier going door to door with his brother in the federal campaign. I don't know how many of you saw this little story. It was rather remarkable. A gentleman came to the door, a Grit sup-

porter, a Liberal through and through, and he looked at David McGuinty and he said, "You know, I'm going to vote for you. I'm going to vote for you." And so David got a big smile. And then he told the Premier, "Get off my porch." And this is a Liberal supporter. This is a Liberal supporter in Ottawa South.

This is the story out there, folks over there. This government is not doing what people want them to do, and this government is making an awful lot of enemies out there. Part of that is because people are unemployed. People are getting crummy jobs. People are having to work in places at minimum wage or part-time. People are suffering. At the same time, this is a government that wants to give away desperately all the money you can possibly find to their corporate buddies. Every single penny you can possibly find is being shovelled out the door. You've got \$17 billion or \$18 billion in deficit, but you've still got time to hand out another \$4 billion to people you think are going to help you.

The Ontario government says that the corporate income tax cut will hand \$535 million to banks and \$135 million to insurance companies. That's what you say. That's what you say with pride. There's the Minister of Revenue holding up her little book with pride in what she's doing. She's absolutely thinking that this is the most wonderful thing, to give away two thirds or three quarters of a billion dollars of corporate income tax to banks and insurance companies. That is on top of the \$520 million provided to banks through the elimination of the capital tax. In total, of the \$4 billion in corporate and capital tax cuts the government has announced, \$1.2 billion will be pocketed by the banks and the insurance companies.

My friend from Nickel Belt had an opportunity to talk about what they're doing with some of this money. I just want to repeat those figures, because remember, all the time that they are making so much more money and all the time that their CEOs are growing portly—let me put that word, portly—with all of the increases they're getting in their salary, banks and insurance companies under the Liberal government watch have shed 25,000 jobs. You are paying them to shed 25,000 jobs. Just for the record again: Scotiabank, quarterly profit \$1.2 billion; Royal Bank, profit of \$1.8 billion in the last quarter; TD Bank, \$1.5 billion in the last quarter; Bank of Montreal, a paltry \$776 million in the last quarter; CIBC, \$799 million in the last quarter; Sun Life Financial, \$508 million in three months; Manulife Financial, \$1.79 billion in the last three months; and Great-West Life, \$508 million in just a quarter.

At the same time, you heard their CEOs' salaries. This government is paying for all of that. You're paying for all that while you're running a \$17-billion deficit. You're paying for all of that when you're saying that you don't have the money for schools, you don't have the money for the hospitals, you don't have the money for all of the social infrastructure that once made this province great. You don't have it, but you have it for them. I don't know why you have it for them and for nobody else. I'm hoping some Liberal will answer it.

Why did they deserve this money when the poor don't deserve it? Why do they deserve the money when the kids can't get it for decent educations, or when kids in university have the highest debt load of any place in the country, as the Minister of Revenue gets the high-five from the Attorney General for that? I don't know. They're pretty happy with it. But this is what it's all about.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: Do we have to listen to this all night?

Mr. Michael Prue: Yes, you do. Eight minutes and 18 seconds; you're going to listen to exactly what I think.

Since 2000, the combined federal Ontario corporate tax rate will have been reduced from 44% to 25%, yet business investment has deteriorated since then. In fact, rather than investing in productivity, machinery and equipment and creating jobs, corporations have been accumulating cash and similar liquid assets at an increasing rate. If you want to know what's happening, they're all getting bloody rich. That's what they're doing. They're not hiring anybody; they're just getting rich. They're paying themselves bigger and bigger salaries, and you're letting them do it with taxpayers' money.

Business has added some \$83 billion to its cash holdings, and that's what this government is proud of. That's what they're asking us to vote on tonight: "Vote for us. Vote for what we're doing." New Democrats aren't going to vote for that. We're not buying a pig in a poke. We're not doing any of this stuff, because this government is absolutely wrong in its fiscal and corporate policy.

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I want to talk a little bit about this government, what it's doing in terms of the TMX. I have to at the same time remind my honourable friends immediately to my right here in the official opposition that they're pretty much in agreement around all of this. It was only the New Democrats, in the hearings for the TMX, who stood alone. It was only the New Democrats who said, "We think this is a bad deal for Ontario, a bad deal for Toronto and a bad deal for Canada." We stood there and we continued to say that this was not a good deal. But you know, all the Liberal members and all the Conservative members of the committee that studied this came to the same conclusion: They wanted it to go ahead with a few certain small little safeguards.

In terms of whether this is a merger or a takeover, I think it's pretty clear this is a takeover. It's a takeover by the LSE, the London Stock Exchange. We do not see any clear benefits accruing to the people of this province, and we see a government, along with the official opposition, that is headed down the totally wrong path. We want to say for the record that we welcome any group, including those same bloated banks, coming to the rescue of Canada and coming to the rescue of the companies that trade on the Toronto Stock Exchange. We think that we should be proud, in this country, of our businesses; we should be proud, in this country, of how we manage our own financial affairs, and we don't need those financial affairs to be managed in Rome or in London or any other

place. We are self-sufficient on our own, and as Canadians we should be proud of ourselves.

Opposition to the HST—I've got to talk about this for a few minutes, because this is a biggie. This government says that the hated HST improves productivity and creates jobs. If this isn't laughable, I don't know what is. You know, they trot out a tired economist who said it was going to create 600,000 jobs, and yet can't prove that it's created a single one. They talk about Jack Mintz all the way from Alberta as the guru on this, but it hasn't created any jobs here and it hasn't created any jobs in British Columbia, either. This is not a tax policy that will create jobs. In fact, it's going to cost jobs, and if you bother to go out to small business people around this province, they will tell you that it is hurting them, hurting their business and hurting their ability to hire additional staff, that this is a killer, because ordinary people who have to pay the tax are less and less likely to buy the daily necessities that they bought in the past.

The release data from Statistics Canada, along with a number of other reports, suggests that there is little connection between lower corporate taxes and new job-creating investments. In fact, since 1999, Ontario has provided more than \$20 billion in corporate tax cuts without any appreciable job growth that goes with it—\$20 billion, and hardly a job to show for it. That's what this government is asking us to vote for and to support. We're not likely to do it. Most economists today are looking at this failed experiment that you continue to trumpet every chance you get, and saying that they prefer highly targeted employer incentives that encourage direct investment in new plant and machinery, expanded skills training and new hires. That's precisely what they do in Manitoba, to much better effect.

This is a bad tax. In our view, it penalizes low- and modest-income folks for simply paying for the basic necessities of life: things like home heating, because they have to keep themselves warm in winter; things like hydro, because they have to have the lights go on and they have to do their cooking and their laundry and I guess occasionally, if they're not too tired, watch a little television; and for the gasoline at the pumps, so that they can get to work in the first place. They simply cannot afford to pay the 8% that you targeted them with. They simply cannot afford it, and at least the government in British Columbia, for all its misgivings and wrongdoings, had the good sense not to tax that.

I want to just in the last couple of minutes talk about the energy policy of this government, which is a disaster. Every single day, I listen in this House as the numbers are trotted out as if something's actually happening. You know, a job here, a job there, jobs foreseeable in the future, in 2015, that may be created. The minister, day in and day out, stands up there and talks of things that will likely never happen. In April 1998 this all started when Ontario passed the Energy Competition Act. That was the previous government; that was the Conservatives. Ontario Hydro would continue to supply electricity to certain industrial customers at a cheaper rate, and ordinary consumers would pay for the discount.

Then they restarted Pickering A, and that was a boondoggle if ever there was—billions of dollars over budget that we're paying for, that everyone in their energy bill every month is forced to pay for, with HST added, I might add. And then the government back then set a deregulation until May 2002. I was here in the House. I remember that. It was challenged by two unions and the court and it was thrown out for being illegal, because they hadn't followed any policies in their zeal to privatize and deregulate. It was thrown out.

They had to abandon, but this government here hasn't abandoned. This government has allowed the continuation of those failed Conservative policies, electricity prices have gone through the roof, and terrible market design—the whole thing. I have to say that—

Mr. David Zimmer: It's a quarter after eight. Let's go home.

Mr. Michael Prue: No, it's almost finished. I have to say that what was begun then should have been corrected by this government, but it has not been corrected. There is a whole lot wrong with the economic and fiscal policy of this government. They seem absolutely unaware or unable to correct themselves in this late stream going down the road.

I want to say that I appreciate the amendment that has been brought forward. The amendment makes far more sense, but I know that, given the majority this government opposite has, they only want to laud themselves, even when there is nothing to laud at all. This is a shame, that we're spending all night on such a motion.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Maybe I could just start off with the member for Beaches–East York. It's amazing that people can compare apples and oranges. I would expect that even though my friend is also from Toronto, he'd know a little bit more about the geography and the economy of our country. The GTA alone, every six years, absorbs an immigrant population equivalent to the entire population of the city of Winnipeg, with which I am somewhat familiar, having been its mayor. The five major employers in Manitoba—

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: The government.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: No, it's not the government. Let me explain. New Flyer Industries, the largest bus manufacturer, has benefited through the recession through the buy-American policy, which has been the biggest subsidy of exports. The second-largest employer in the private sector there, in manufacturing—they're about 11%, as is Ontario—is StandardAero, which does recovery and repair of aircraft, and which has also benefited by some of the largest subsidies, period. Our two equivalents would be, what, Chrysler and Ford, which crashed and burned and are in major debt to governments and were the first two casualties.

Interjection.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Would the member of the fourth party have a little humility just for once?

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Talk to the Chair. Isn't that what you're supposed to be doing?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The thing that's also really entertaining is that here is a province that is a net exporter of people, has a declining population—and it's quite interesting, because I always love listening to fiscal arguments. When I was mayor in Winnipeg we cut taxes every year—we cut them by 8.4% over my two terms—and cut the debt in half, and the credit rating in my city went from A- to AA+. In the eight years I've been gone, there hasn't been a single property tax increase, while these guys who were in power here were leaving a \$5.6-billion deficit and seeing a net decline in their credit rating during the same period of time. They led the largest, most prosperous province. They couldn't manage the economy in good times. The party opposite couldn't even organize a two-car funeral.

I find it very entertaining; the member from Beaches–East York said something that I think is almost hysterically funny. It should be on Saturday Night Live. He said that the reason the recovery has happened in Ontario is because the rest of the world is recovering and pulling us along.

Well, what are our three major trading partners? That would be, oh, the United States: 14% job recovery, a GDP growth half of what Ontario's is. Number two? That would be Japan. That would be, what, 38% job recovery and a GDP that was in the tank pre-tsunami? And number three would be the United Kingdom, which has the worst job recovery in western Europe, less than a third of ours, and a GDP that's in the tank. So if these major trading partners are pulling us out, they should be dragging us into the ditch.

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You know what's really interesting? We have two economically incompetent parties opposite. They just don't understand the economy.

Mr. Randy Hillier: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: Once again—we've seen this time and time again from members opposite, who are just completely dismissive and denigrating of members of this—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member from Lanark will know that's not a point of order.

The Minister of Research and Innovation.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Madam Speaker, I would just ask that if the leader of the emerging fourth party is going to interrupt, will you at least stop my clock?

So, yes, we are investing more. We are investing \$12 billion a year in roads, infrastructure, transit and hydro when the party opposite spent only \$3 billion on infrastructure in Ontario, leaving us a \$9-billion-a-year deferred maintenance bill for our children. This is the biggest infrastructure deficit in North America. You were spending \$1 on maintenance for every \$4 bill. It's like someone who has a \$30,000 outstanding credit card bill and is making, like, \$20 payments every month. This is your idea of economic competence.

My favourite, my very favourite, is the member from Niagara West–Glanbrook. The bubble that the Leader of

the Opposition lives in is kind of extraordinary. This is The Building of Niagara's Green Economy. I don't think anyone opposite has read this. You know, I found it very entertaining. I was down there meeting with the chambers of commerce across the Niagara region, and I asked them how they felt about things like the HST. I asked them how they felt about our green energy policies. I asked them about all of these kinds of things.

So what was the consensus? Let me share: With the government's new legislation, "the confluence of demand and capacity will likely never get better. Estimates of the scope of climate-friendly opportunities range from US \$600 billion to US \$1 trillion" for Ontario companies.

Then I asked them, "So, how's it going there? What's happening?" Do you know that 80% of renewable energy in Ontario is in the Niagara region? Isn't that extraordinary? The Niagara region is the largest beneficiary. So what's happening there? "Niagara has a unique advantage on the ramp up."

Here are some of the companies that have benefited from the Green Energy Act and my ministry's clean tech: Wainfleet wind power. Walker Environmental Group: they are capturing gas from waste and turning it into power. PlanET Biogas, a Niagara-based company, is producing energy through anaerobic digestion. Nalco Mobotec, an international firm in Niagara, is developing new pellet-made biosolids and has the potential to mitigate the impact of coal burning. We know that would disappoint the folks opposite if we were mitigating coal burning, but there are actually private sector companies making money on it.

Elementa from St. Catharines are leaders in a process that converts carbon-based matter into a synthetic gas that can be used to generate energy. Fort Erie's DMI Industries is a global company in the field of wind power manufacturing. Welland's CRS Electronics specializes in the development of new energy LED lighting. COU Solar/Oneworld has just expanded into Welland to build solar energy components as part of the Samsung expansion.

I will go on; there are 17 more companies. The largest clean-tech cluster in North America, the third-largest in the world, did not exist. The vast majority of jobs is increasingly created in the Niagara region, and what does the party opposite want to do?

Mr. Dave Levac: Shut it down.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Rip up the feed-in tariff program and shut down the Samsung energy deal, where we're buying \$7 billion.

Do you know that there would be no region that would lose more jobs more quickly than the Niagara region? These are 17 companies, all of whom I've met with, all of whom the opposition members, including the member of the fourth party, have talked through and haven't listened. I'm sure if I sent them a test, they couldn't name three of the companies.

These are thousands of jobs. These are people who are struggling and coming out with new, clean technologies. General Motors in St. Catharines invested \$245 million

in electric transmissions, bringing 8,000 jobs back into the Ontario economy, and Chrysler and General Motors paid their loans back five years ahead. St. Catharines restored its auto sector.

What would they do? The leader, the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook says, "I wouldn't subsidize the auto companies. Not me." Go tell the autoworkers that in Niagara. I cannot wait to run against you guys in the next election. I will spend half my time in Niagara region knocking on doors. You guys are comical. Destroy the feed-in tariff program.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Order. Stop the clock for a minute, please.

Interjections.

Mr. David Zimmer: Oh, come on, Speaker. Throw someone out for fun.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Don't tempt me, member from Willowdale. The member from Renfrew is not in his seat. Could he please take his seat? Or the member from Bruce-Grey.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I am in my seat.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I can stand here all night. It's quieter that way.

Interjections.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Don't be difficult.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The government House leader isn't helping.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: If I keep talking, do you promise he won't get up?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I'm going to name the member from Bruce-Grey in a moment.

Minister of Research and Innovation.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Part of the perspective you get on this side of the House—my father very proudly owned a dairy farm in Alexandria, and I spent a lot of my childhood working on a dairy farm in small-town Ontario.

Je suis né à Montréal. J'ai passé ma jeunesse à Montréal. J'ai lutté contre les indépendantistes. Je suis fier d'être Canadien.

I lived one third of my life in—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Madam Speaker, thank you. We don't want to miss any of these pearls of wisdom coming from the opposition.

I was mayor of prairie city and I've lived one third of my life in Ontario, and in Toronto for a good chunk that. I'm very proud that my uncles and aunts worked in the mines in Sudbury, at times when it was very hard. Both my uncles died in their 50s. The reason we were involved in a dairy farm in eastern Ontario was because it was my father's friend's, who could barely make it.

I'm very proud, when we talk about jobs, that I, as the member for Toronto Centre, and very proudly an Ontarian and very proudly a Canadian—and I don't agree with my friend from Bruce-Grey, who thinks that we

have a Toronto mentality, or that my part of the province is lesser than his or shouldn't be part of this province. I believe that whether you live in Owen Sound or Toronto, you are no less an Ontarian. If you've lived in three parts of this country and you come from the kind of stock and the kinds of difficulties that my mother and my grandmother came from—

Interjections.

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Hon. Glen R. Murray: —which is not deserving of interruption from the folks opposite. My grandmother came here with almost nothing, arrived in Hamilton, could not speak French or English, and it was because—

Interjections.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Do you want to just keep going, Bill? Do you want to keep winding your clock all night, or what?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Speak through the Chair, and refer to ridings. Thank you.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I'm sorry, Madam Speaker.

We understand the interdependence of that, and why it's so important to me that we have a microFIT program that has solar power on 10,000 farms, that we have a risk management program for farmers. I'm probably one of the few members from Toronto who has actually milked a cow for a living in my life. We on this side of the House have a large view, a big-tent view of Ontario. We don't have to play the cynical divide-and-conquer politics.

But since you raised energy, this is what I find. It's disingenuous, I think, to say, "We sort of understand time-of-use, because, you know, as Conservatives, we don't want to have to build a whole lot more additional nuclear power and we don't want to have to do a whole lot more generation. If we could just get people to flatten out their use." I actually read your energy policy, and that part of it made sense. But what you're not telling people is that if we don't have time-of-use, then we have to build energy to peak capacity.

What you're not telling us—I think Ontarians are pretty smart—is that you have to build a heck of a lot more nuclear. As a matter of fact—I was chair of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy—you would have to increase nuclear capacity by 50% in Ontario if we can't flatten use. Now, you want to see energy bills skyrocket? All you have to do is maintain peak use at twice what baseload is, which is what you're proposing, and then you're really going to see skyrocketing prices. But you don't want to tell Ontarians that, because then they wouldn't vote for you.

So you'd have to increase nuclear generation in Ontario by about 50% over the next 25 years if you don't flatten use. If we keep having peak that's running twice as hard as—

Interjections.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: So here we are. Madam Speaker—

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It's kind of extraordinary: If you go around the world right now to any like economy, certainly anybody who has had the kinds of challenges we've had with the auto sector, you won't find a place that's had a 114% recovery in jobs. In the United States, in any like economy, you're looking at 14%, 17%. If we did what they said—destroy the green FIT program, cancel the Samsung deal, tear up the agreement with the auto companies—we would be in the same situation the US is in, with 14% job recovery.

The other thing that I find so strange and odd, that demonstrates the lack of economic confidence, is to refer to the Samsung deal as a sweetheart deal, because all you have to do is compare it to the job that was done with Toyota in Alliston, or compare it to the auto pact. It is a very modest deal. By the standards of any foreign direct investment, it is a modest deal which deals with the purchase of green energy. There are very few places that do that. What has it created?

I'm just wondering if I could get some water from somebody, Madam Speaker.

So here is a deal that relatively, as a percentage of contribution—and what also amazes me is the complete attack on foreign direct investment. You, right now, have global pools of capital in the world that are sourced by and competed for by regions. What the party opposite would do in power would be to drive foreign direct investment outside of our borders. The agreements that we have that they want to cancel—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Bruce-Grey.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Well, let me address the member who never gets a question from his leader. I feel sorry for him; someone has to answer his question. Clearly his leader won't let him ask one. I think we're going to discover why.

All you have to do is turn to the letters to the editor page of the Globe and Mail, and you'll see a letter from Samsung, and all you have to do is look at the report that came out today from the Metcalf Foundation—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Stop the clock, please. Some warning for the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: All you have to do is read the editorial page and you can see statements by the representative's corporation of the chill that has gone through the investment community since they talked about tearing up an agreement.

Where I was raised, when you make an agreement, you honour an agreement. Why would you not tear up agreements with the auto sector, which are much more generous? Why would you not tear up the agreements with Toyota, which are much more generous? Do you know how many thousands of jobs and how many small companies would collapse if the Samsung deal doesn't go forward? And to say that it's somehow contrary to the interests of Ontario companies is like saying that Ford,

General Motors and Chrysler are bad for Linamar and Magna. A supply chain like that creates a demand and a supply of goods and services critical to emerging Ontario companies.

There's a letter that was done by the Economic Club of Canada, signed by Canada's 32 leading economists, endorsing the HST, endorsing the green FIT program and saying that these are vital measures in the global economy.

These folks opposite think we still live with a production economy. They don't realize that 80% of the jobs being created in Ontario right now are innovation-based jobs. They're jobs where people think, imagine, design, discovery, engineer and finance; that's the new economy. As a matter of fact, 5% of our companies are generating 50% of our jobs. Those jobs all involve university and college education. We've added 200,000 places to our colleges and universities. When the party opposite was in power, they raised tuition 67% and they cut half a billion dollars from our post-secondary education system.

Knowledge; tax reform. I'm amazed that you can be against the HST—again, somewhat disingenuous. It seems to me that you should go and talk to the federal finance minister, the federal minister of economic development and trade. We actually have an export-based economy, and what's amazing is, this is the first time in Ontario history that Ontario has fully recovered 114% of the jobs, 3.4% GDP, without recovery in the US. It's the first time in Ontario history that we have had a full employment recovery and GDP over 3% without a recover in the US. That would not have happened if you were in power. The simple announcements last week by the leader of the party opposite would have put that in the tank and ended thousands of jobs and destroyed the recovery.

If you decided to do what you'd probably do, which is cancel the HST, you would add \$8.5 billion to the cost of doing business and erode the capacity of small businesses to compete. That's your economic policy.

You know, you had it easy when you were in power. You had one of the greatest periods of economic growth in the history of the world. We've been in power in one of the biggest global meltdowns out of the United States. You couldn't manage an improvement in productivity. You had a 65-cent dollar. You had a 45% subsidy of Ontario exports. You couldn't manage significant growth. You couldn't keep up with growth in the 1970s. We are now producing GDP growth and job creation at a rate better than what you could produce in good times. We have a deficit that is no more serious than the federal government's deficit, and we're the only ones managing it on a realistic basis, and we aren't having to change our debt retirement schedule, like the federal government, like the Alberta government, like the Manitoba government, like the Quebec government. We're the—

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

Interjections.

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

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Mr. Ted Chudleigh: It's kind of easy to tell that we've only got seven days left in this House before we go to the hustings. And I've got bad news for you, Madam Speaker: I think in the next seven days, things might get worse. But then you don't have to spend all that time in that chair, and it'll be okay. You'll get through it. We all get through it. They make up their numbers and their stories, and the opposition just simply sits here and tells the truth. We'll see what happens on October 6 as Ontarians cast their votes and decide as to whether or not that story is going to rule the day or that truth will overcome.

I think we've been debating this motion for a bit of time, and perhaps we should just revisit the motion. Government motion number 74, Mr. Duncan: "that the Legislative Assembly recognizes that to make life easier for Ontario families..."—I suppose that's a recognition that life is not easy for Ontario families right now. It's a recognition that Ontario families are indeed suffering.

But it goes on to say, "that to make life easier for Ontario families and help our economy remain strong, Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth, as reaffirmed in the 2011 budget, removes 90,000 Ontarians from the income tax rolls"—that doesn't mention the 182,000 income taxpayers that they put on the rolls in their first budget, back in 2003—"provides 93% of Ontarians with a permanent personal income tax cut..." Again, that doesn't mention the fact that the income taxes of this province have increased, one way or another, by 73% over their term of government, while the economy has only expanded 10%.

It goes on to say, "maintains the harmonized sales tax at the current rate." Now, that's an important statement in this budget, in this motion. It "maintains the harmonized sales tax at the current rate and provides \$12 billion in tax relief for families and \$4.8 billion in tax relief for businesses." It doesn't talk about the millions and billions of dollars that they have increased those taxes by.

It "recognizes that with Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth, the economy is turning the corner by creating more than 293,000 new jobs since the global recession"—and, of course, it doesn't mention the fact that the vast majority of those jobs are public sector jobs and the jobs that were lost during the recession were manufacturing jobs, good-paying manufacturing jobs that paid taxes and allowed people who had those jobs to buy homes, raise families and pay their bills.

It also goes on to say, "rejects the introduction of a carbon tax." Now, of course, that's a very important one, because the only people who are talking about a carbon tax in this place are the government people, who are musing with a carbon tax. But here they say they reject the introduction of a carbon tax, just like in 2003, when the Premier said, "I won't raise your taxes." So the introduction of a carbon tax is almost a *fait accompli*, and it's a measure that would hurt Ontario's economic growth. Of course, that has not stopped the government in the past.

It “rejects an increase to the HST rate.” Again, I remind you: The Premier has said, prior to the elections in 2003 and 2007, that he wouldn’t increase our taxes, and then he, of course, turned around and increased them by whopping rates, and I’ll speak to that a little more as we get into it. The fact that he rejects an increase to the HST, again, almost makes it a *fait accompli*, because past performance is the best judge of future performance.

“Or a decrease to the rate that would benefit the wealthiest Ontarians the most, take \$3 billion out of health care and education funding and harm Ontario’s economic recovery.”

I think that’s an interesting motion that the government introduced. For the life of me, I don’t know why they would introduce that motion because, as the Premier has talked about—he mentioned it on April 4, 2011, sitting right over there, and it’s quoted in Hansard. He said, “[A] very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past.”

He talked about not raising taxes in 2003. He talked about not raising taxes in 2007. Now he’s talking about not increasing the HST and not introducing a carbon tax. Do you see a theme here? I notice a definite theme. He denied it in 2003 and did it. He denied it in 2007 and did it. Now he’s denying it in 2011. Hello?

You know, it’s disappointing that I’m speaking here at 25 minutes to 9. It’s right in the middle of *Dancing With the Stars*, and our television audience, I’m sure, has waned from one of the most popular shows on TV. Only the most dedicated people would be watching, and, of course, that would be my wife, Sandy. She would be watching at home, I’m sure, perhaps sitting in my chair, because she likes to sit in my chair when I’m not there, but that’s all right. I know she’s very dedicated to watching the debate and how it unfolds. I know the people of Ontario will get that message: that what has been a very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past, and what has happened in the past is exactly what is happening here, tonight, in this motion.

The Premier is denying that he’s going to raise taxes, and that is a sure thing: He is going to increase taxes in those two areas that he’s denied. He’s going to increase the HST and he’s going to introduce a carbon tax. Those two things you can take to the bank because he has said that he will not do them, the same way he said that he would not do those other tax increases before.

Let’s talk about Premier McGuinty’s record, because it will go a long way to predicting what the future holds for Ontario, if he is re-elected in October. Before the 2003 election, again I say, he promised that he would not lower taxes, but he would not raise them either. On September 11, 2003, prior to that year’s election, Premier McGuinty signed a pledge—he actually signed his name to a card—and it was called the taxpayers’ protection promise. Let me read that pledge, just so that everybody understands exactly what the Premier signed up for on September 11, 2003. It says, “I, Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, promise, if my party is elected as the next government, that I will: not raise taxes

or implement any new taxes without the ... consent of Ontario voters.” We all remember the commercials that ran in 2003—at least those of us in politics certainly do. They ran over 200 times during the election campaign. We all know that signing that pledge helped get the Premier elected. He was elected by breaking his word.

We all know what happened next. As soon as he had the keys to the Premier’s office, he treated his words as if he had never said them. He brought in a health tax, and that health tax was the largest tax increase in Ontario’s history—about \$4 billion, all told. That’s what he brought in after he said that he would not raise taxes and he actually signed a pledge saying that he would not raise taxes. Yet then he brought in the largest tax increase in Ontario’s history.

The second-largest tax increase in Ontario history was brought in by Bob Rae in the budget of 1992, and that represented about a \$2.5-billion tax increase. The second-largest is \$2.5 billion; Premier McGuinty brought in a tax increase of \$4 billion. So it wasn’t just a little increase over the second-largest tax increase; it was a whopping increase over the second-largest increase, from \$2.5 billion all the way to \$4 billion.

It’s interesting: The third-largest tax increase in Ontario’s history was brought in by Bob Nixon in 1989, also a health tax. Liberals apparently like to tax health, because Bob Nixon brought in a tax increase of about \$2.1 billion in 1989. That was Ontario’s third-largest tax increase, brought in by a former Liberal government—a former Liberal government that also doubled the debt and doubled the budget of this province during their short six years in power, from 1985 to 1990.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Five.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: No, it’s six years if you count them all. The zero counts as a year, there. He’s trying to mess my mathematics up.

It’s the largest single tax grab in the history of Ontario, taking \$4 billion a year out of Ontario families.

In 2007, of course, he did it again. Before the 2007 election, Premier McGuinty emphatically denied that he would raise taxes. When told that his critics wouldn’t believe him, he said, “They’re wrong, they’re wrong, they’re wrong.” That’s a direct quote. Three times: “They’re wrong, they’re wrong, they’re wrong.” I’m sure the Premier actually believed it when he said it. I don’t believe that he’s a dishonest man; I think Premier McGuinty, Premier Dad, is a nice guy. When he said this, “They’re wrong, they’re wrong, they’re wrong,” I think he believed it, but he couldn’t help himself because he’s hard-wired. He’s hard-wired to raise taxes and spend money. He has never met a program that he hasn’t wanted to finance. But after the vote in October 2007 and with no warning, he broke his promise again and brought in the \$3-billion HST tax grab.

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This was immediately after a 30-day campaign period in which the harmonization of the PST and the GST was never mentioned once in the election campaign. Now, he had to be thinking about it at that time. He had to be

aware that this was on the table. Yet he didn't mention it during the campaign. I was very disappointed that a politician in Ontario would take that kind of action, because that kind of action casts a pall on all politicians. I was extremely disappointed that the Premier would take that action.

I would remind the people of Ontario and the people in this House that the Premier said on September 11 that a very good predictor of future behaviour is what has happened in the past. In the two elections that the Premier has run in, he has promised not to raise taxes. "They're wrong, they're wrong, they're wrong. I'll never raise your taxes." Twice he has done it, and here tonight his government is saying, "We will not increase the HST and we will not bring in a carbon tax." Yet a very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past.

Folks, we've got an increase in the HST; the only debate is whether it's going to be two or five points. And we're going to have a carbon tax if we re-elect this government. That's a fait accompli—

Interjection.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: And, yes, the government is upset about that, but it's absolute truth, because we all know that a very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past. It must be true, because the Premier said it.

The HST on hydro bills is one of the reasons hydro bills are skyrocketing. Gasoline is at record-high prices; it was at \$1.41, which I think was an Ontario record, not long ago, a week ago. It's now at \$1.32 or so around Toronto. About 12 cents of every one of these litres is thanks to the HST. The HST didn't apply to gasoline before it was introduced on July 1 of last year, and yet it does now, and that represents about 12 cents of that. Instead of being \$1.32 a litre, without the HST it would be about \$1.20. Thank you, Premier McGuinty, for sticking us with that extra 12 cents on every litre of gasoline that we buy.

On the very same day of July 1, 2010, when the HST was introduced, Premier McGuinty tried to use his HST as cover to sneak in the eco tax on more than 9,000 items Ontario families use each and every day: 9,000 items, and it was snuck in. Now, there's never been a government program in the history of Ontario that I am aware of—and I go back in this House a long time, a long time before I was elected. I used to read Hansard as a teenager.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: That's sad.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: That is sad. My grandfather was a member of the House in those days, and the Hansard was around the house and I would pick it up and see what my grandfather said in the House. That was part of my childhood. But I never, never, never remember a program being introduced by a government that wasn't accompanied by at least one press release.

The old way of doing business in government was that if you had an unpopular program, you would introduce it at the end of June or the middle of December. Those are two times of the year when people weren't paying that

much attention. At the end of June they were getting ready to go on holiday, and in the middle of December, of course, they were caught up in the Christmas rush. So those were the two times of the year that you introduced it. You put out a small press release late on a Friday afternoon, and it would slip through with maybe one story, maybe no coverage whatsoever. It was a good time to slip in an unpopular program. Of course, Premier McGuinty did just that. In late June, he got ready to introduce the eco tax, on July 1, under cover of the HST, but he forgot to put out even a small press release on that last Friday. And when he forgot to put out that small press release on that last Friday, he was trying to sneak it in. He was sneaking it in. Again, I was very disappointed that a Premier of Ontario would take that kind of action, because it casts a pall on all politicians. It was a sad day when that happened.

Now, those 9,000 items that came in on the eco tax—there they are. I'm prepared—oh, I've only got four minutes left. I guess I can't read very many of those, but there they are, and I would expect that many of you are familiar with them. If you aren't familiar with them, I would recommend their reading, because—you know, a lifetime ago, I used to run an IGA store, and in that IGA store I had about 7,500 items; different facings, as they were called. Yet here's 9,000 items that are covered by the eco tax. It's a huge number of items. It isn't a small tax that was introduced by somebody on a whim; it's a huge tax. It was poorly introduced, and most of it—some of it—was withdrawn.

We are hearing on this side of the House, and I'm sure you're hearing it on that side of the House as well, the struggles from Ontario families that they're going through each and every day trying to make ends meet. Thanks to Premier McGuinty, Ontario families are faced with increased taxes through tire taxes—a new tire tax the Premier introduced. He introduced eco taxes. He introduced electronic taxes. He introduced a diamond tax on the diamond mine—after it had opened; he changed the rules. That made him really popular in the international community. He has hidden hydro taxes. He has destination marketing taxes and higher beer taxes. He has higher wine taxes. He has higher taxes on spirits, just to name a few.

The harmonized sales tax is costing Ontarians about \$3.4 billion a year. Ontario health premiums are costing about \$3.1 billion a year. The business tax increases are costing \$1.2 billion a year. Now, the government talks about reducing business taxes, but in that reduction, it's pennies on the dollar of the increase that he put through prior to that. The debt retirement charges on Ontario Hydro: almost \$1 billion. Income tax hikes are \$900 million. Property tax hikes amount to \$450 million. There's a hidden hydro tax of \$53 million, eco fees of \$39 million, electronic taxes \$71 million, and the tire tax—a little innocuous tire tax—that is generating \$70 million to the coffers of Ontario. Do you know what Premier McGuinty says after each one? "Cha-ching. Cha-ching."

Last week, the McGuinty Liberals voted down a motion calling on the Premier to reject a tax increase. They

had an opportunity right in this House to do that, but he refused to do it.

Madam Speaker, I would like to add a second amendment to this bill: that the amendment be amended by adding the following: “or more hidden fees, or a revival of eco taxes planned by the Liberal government.”

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Mr. Chudleigh has moved a second amendment, that the amendment be amended by adding the following: “or more hidden fees, or a revival of eco taxes planned by the McGuinty Liberals.”

Further debate?

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I'm delighted to enter the debate tonight, even though it's late. It's almost 10 to 9 in the evening. I hope that people who are still watching us are not tired. Certainly, I'm tired. All of us started early in the morning and we had a lot to do during the day. But I was energized by this debate after I listened to many different speakers from both sides of the House speaking about the most important things for Ontarians: taxation, the HST and many different elements which people talk about all the time and want to discuss and explain.

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I listened to the member from the opposition speaking a few minutes ago, and he spoke about many different elements. As you know, we came into government in 2003. At that time, the economy wasn't that great. Despite all the closures—almost 28 hospitals were closed by the Conservative government, and between 10,000 and 11,000 nurses fired. There was a war on schools and teachers in the province of Ontario. It was a chaotic situation, with instability everywhere—fighting between teachers and the boards of education and the Ministry of Education and the parents. All was in chaos. Despite the price of the dollar—it was almost 64 cents back then, which means, as you know, we traded a lot with the United States, which was good for the Ontario economy, supposedly. The price of a barrel of oil was about \$50 to \$65 per barrel. All of these conditions surrounded the economy, and the Conservative government ran a deficit for the people of Ontario.

As I mentioned, the closure of 28 hospitals would save billions of dollars; firing more than 10,000 nurses would save a lot of money. They cut from all the vulnerable people and cut welfare by 25% to 35%, the least privileged people in the province of Ontario, to save some money. They sold a lot of assets of the government, including the 407. And all the selling and saving and cutting and firing and laying off and the price of oil and the price of the dollar—despite all these conditions surrounding the Conservative government back then, they ran a deficit of more than \$5 billion.

We thought they would invest in hydro and transmission stations to produce more hydro for the people of Ontario and all of us across the province. We know what happened back then: We had a blackout, and the losses were in the billions of dollars. It scared many different companies from coming to Ontario to invest. All of us know that no company wants to come if we don't have

enough of a supply of hydro, if we don't have an efficient enough infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

I love my colleague from Beaches–East York when he's talking about the corporate tax cuts and investment to attract more companies to come to Ontario. I would like to agree with him. What's happened? I've met with so many different companies that want to come to London and invest—London, Ontario, and my riding of London–Fanshawe. The first important thing for them is to see how much they have to pay in taxes, because we're not alone in the whole world. We have a neighbouring country, the United States. Many provinces will offer more incentives, more tax cuts. They'll offer more things to attract more companies to come and open and invest in their jurisdictions, so we have to be competitive.

I remember when we were negotiating with a company that wanted to come from Germany. The first thing they asked us in the city of London was, “What's the incentive? What's your tax base?” They were going to hire 1,000 people in the province of Ontario, in the London area, and they asked us about the supply of hydro and they asked us about the supply of Internet and high technology. They asked us about the supply of water and they asked us about the supply of skilled workers. We had to answer all of those questions before we told them, “Yes, come to London, Ontario; yes, come to Ontario to open. We have all that you asked for in this province.” Because as I mentioned, we're not alone on this planet. There are other states in the United States that can offer more. But most of the time they come because they know we have a good price for electricity, we have an attractive record of supply of electricity at the present time due to our investment in infrastructure, for our energy in the province of Ontario, and also because we have a great record of graduates from colleges and universities; we have the ability to supply them with what they need. Because in the end, all the factories and the companies that want to come to Ontario right now or open anywhere are looking for highly skilled workers, highly skilled people who can feed those factories, can run those companies, because all those companies are now high-tech, as I mentioned. If we don't provide them with all this stuff, they're not going to come to Ontario.

When we're talking specifically about the HST—when I was talking about the HST a long time ago, I was afraid. I wasn't a fan of the HST, because there were a lot of question marks about the HST. But when I learned about the benefits of the HST for the business community—also, the member from Beaches–East York mentioned small businesses. My brother is a small business person who runs a business in London, Ontario. Many others, from coffee shops to restaurants to variety stores to all of the small business community across the province of Ontario, benefit from the HST, because they save a lot of money. One of the savings comes as a result of combining the PST and GST. We're saving the duplication of filing papers. We save almost \$500 million for the people of Ontario, for the business community.

The incentive in hydro prices for the business community is also a big factor. I also want to say that in order

to make that transition happen, our government invested more than \$4.5 billion—and also to support families. Almost 93% of the total population of Ontario received income tax cuts. I think that speaks volumes about the benefit they get from the HST.

In the meantime, almost 90,000 people don't have to pay any personal income tax as a result of the HST, and almost the total population who make less than \$160,000 receive supplement cheques in order to get them through that transition period, in order to absorb the cost of the HST as a transitional payment.

I think the HST is a normal thing to do, because if you tour the planet, many different jurisdictions, and all the high industrial society, have only a single tax, one tax. I was wondering—you know, I was born in Lebanon. When I came to Canada, I was shocked when I saw one PST and one GST. One goes to the federal government, one goes to the provincial government, and this one has PST, that one doesn't have the PST. It was confusing, for me and for many others. I always thought, "Why don't we have one tax?" I think that tax was the HST.

I know sometimes the opposition refers to the HST as an additional tax. I want to use my time to tell the people of Ontario that it's not an additional tax. Some 83% of the total items that we buy will be the same: no effect, no changes, no increase; they will remain the same. I agree that there are some changes to almost 17% and some services will be affected by the HST, but as a result of that, to eliminate that fact and absorb it, we introduced a tax cut for almost 93% of the total population, and all the vulnerable people, according to food banks and many other specialists and economists—they said it will benefit the vulnerable people in our society, because they won't be subject to any taxation. All of this was put in place to attract more business to come to Ontario, to open more factories, to open more companies.

Two weeks ago, I had the privilege and honour to attend an opening for a factory in London–Fanshawe. That company is called Kaco. It's a German solar company. They came and opened. I was with the Honourable Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and also the Honourable Attorney General, Chris Bentley. We were at the opening, and the owner and CEO of the company stood up and made a speech. You know what he said in that speech? His name is Ralf Hoffman, the CEO of KACO. He came from Germany and he said, "Ontario is the best place to invest. If I'd known about the circumstances of the economy of Ontario, about the Green Energy Act, I wouldn't have opened at the beginning in Los Angeles, United States, I would have come to Ontario. The terms, conditions and circumstances in the province of Ontario are a lot better than Los Angeles and the United States." They come to London, they come to Ontario because we have all the elements they're looking for to have a successful business.

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Also, today, this afternoon, I had the chance to meet a company from Russia. They want to come to Ontario to invest and open, and build a high-tech robotic system.

They told me they toured many different provinces, many different nations, and they found Ontario is the best place to invest because the government of Ontario—we have paid attention to those investments through our innovation fund, our economic fund, our attractive ability to persuade them to come, our taxation system, our people who are well educated and able to supply those companies and factories, our environment, our health care, our education. All these elements create good conditions to people from the whole planet to come and invest.

Last week—it was in the news everywhere; everybody heard it—57,000 jobs being created in Canada, and the majority of those jobs were here in Ontario. They come to Ontario. We're the leading province in the whole nation. Are we going to claim victory? No. We still have a lot of work ahead of us to do in order to accommodate all the people who live in the province of Ontario; in order to create a full recovery, even though we have a 92% recovery. If we compare ourselves to the United States, we should be happy because we're on the right path, the right track. But in the meantime, we cannot claim victory because we have to continue to work harder in order to provide more for the vulnerable people among us, to continue to fix our health care, our education system, to continue to invest in our high school and post-secondary education, to continue to invest in our infrastructure. All this will create an attractive environment, an attractive province for people to come and invest in.

Not long ago when we talked about kindergarten, the opposition thought it was a waste of money. We talked about many moms, fathers and families that would benefit from that kindergarten before and after school, because we believe strongly the future of this province cannot be built on ignorant people. It has to be that the investments start from the beginning to create an educated province; that province can lead, not for one year, 10 or five, but for generations to come, for centuries to come. Our investment goes towards the kids in the province of Ontario to create an educated province, an educated community and educated forces.

We also continue to invest in health care. In health care, it's important to tell people who work hard, "You have a place to go to. You have a doctor to go to. You have a hospital where you can get treatment"—and it's the best treatment on the whole planet.

All the indications are talking about our ability to provide by creating a lot of spots across the province of Ontario for the people when they graduate from high school to have good colleges and good universities to go to.

Last week, I was part of an event with the Honourable Minister Bentley and Honourable Deb Matthews at Fanshawe College to open a transportation centre. I think the Honourable Bob Chiarelli was there not long ago in this centre. You know what? It's incredible: the most green centre in the whole nation. This centre will accommodate almost 1,500 students and all the lighting, all the technology—the best and the latest technology you can find. All this investment is due to our investment in col-

leges and universities, because we want the best students to graduate. We want to give them the best opportunity to graduate; we want to give them the best environment to be able to study and produce and be successful.

Last week, the indication about the graduation percentage and stats was that almost 82% of the total people of the province of Ontario graduate. I think it's an incredible achievement.

It doesn't matter what we talk in about here. We paint a very dark picture about the province of Ontario; as a matter of fact, I'm proud to be an Ontarian. I'm proud to be here and I'm proud to be a part of a government that leads the way in order to have a brighter future, to have a vision that can accommodate all the people in the province of Ontario, wherever they come from.

The honourable member on the opposite side was speaking a few minutes ago about the eco fee. He called it a tax. They forgot that in 2002 it was introduced by the Conservative government. We don't call it a tax; we call it a fee. And you and I and many others who went downstairs to the dining room last week were greeted by Stewardship Ontario, which manages those fees. You and I and all the people have a great and vast interest to protect our environment, not to let the tires go in the field and burn in the field. We also don't want the computers, all those electronic machines, to also go in the landfill, because it will be toxic. We don't want it to go there. We're also talking about all these toxic elements. We don't want them to go to the fields, and this was introduced by the Conservative government.

It's not a tax. It's a fee. It goes to Stewardship Ontario to manage the waste of those electronics. We supported it. We want it to be there, because we want to protect the environment. It was a good measure, a good step. That's why we support good steps. We go against bad steps.

Talking about health care, of course I'm proud of health care. We have built more than 18 hospitals across the province of Ontario. We have more than 10,000 nurses across the province of Ontario. We keep progressing in this regard because we believe the only way we can support the people of Ontario is when we keep our health care open and accessible and in the public domain—not privatized. That's what we believe in. Not closing hospitals; opening hospitals. Not firing nurses; hiring nurses. We believe in our health care system and we believe in our people.

That's why it's very important for us to do whatever we can to reform our taxation, to reform our hospitals, to reform our infrastructure, to reform our education, because we want to work. You know what? We are up to huge competition. We are only 13 million and we are competing with China, with 1.5 billion, and with India, 1.2 billion. So in order to be able to compete nationally and internationally, we have to educate our people. We also have to make sure they're healthy. We want to make sure they have a place to go.

That's why a long time ago we introduced the Open Ontario plan to attract many people to come here to study, because we have the best institutions due to our

investment. We have the best place. We can educate the whole planet, and we invite people to come.

I also hear a lot from the opposition talking about the Samsung deal, a "\$7-billion giveaway." I don't understand it. The Samsung company is coming to Ontario to invest \$7 billion. We're not giving them \$7 billion. They are coming to invest \$7 billion in our economy. They will hire almost 16,000 strong and educated people of Ontario. They want to invest here. We saw the result of that from Ingersoll, London, Windsor, Tillsonburg, Kitchener, Waterloo, Ottawa and everywhere. The investment is going to benefit every corner of the province of Ontario.

Most importantly, we're creating a wave of green energy—a tradition, a culture, that wasn't there before. Wherever you go right now you see a solar system above the roofs in hundreds of cities and towns as a great indication of our success in this regard. We've created that wave, and I believe that wave will never stop, despite what the opposition said, because the people are determined. The people of Ontario are smart and able to distinguish between what is bad and good for them. That's why I'm supporting this motion. Despite what everybody said, we are on the right track. Hopefully people will decide in the future.

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

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Mr. Randy Hillier: Let me start off by just referring to the motion that's on the floor. It's from government notice of motion number 74: "That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognizes that to make life easier for Ontario families and help our economy remain strong, Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth...." Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth. Let's just see, let's take a look at the tax plan for jobs and growth.

Here's a chart from Stats Canada. It shows the public sector job creation and the private sector job creation by the Liberal government from October 2003 to March of this year. It shows a very large column on one side and a much smaller column on the other side. The large column is public sector jobs; 300,000 net, new public sector jobs have been created. They've actually been created by this Liberal government. During the same course of time, there have been 103,000 private sector jobs that others have created in this province. So we have 103,000 new wealth-producing jobs in this province created by the private sector, and we have 300,000 new wealth-consuming jobs created by the Liberal government.

This didn't happen just by coincidence. There is a reason for it, and it does have something to do with their plan for taxes. Under the Liberal McGuinty government since 2003, they have created the harmonized sales tax, which has been a debt burden on the taxpayers of this province of \$3.1 billion per year. They have created the Ontario health tax premium, which has been a burden on Ontario taxpayers of \$3.1 billion per year; business tax increases of \$1.2 billion per year; debt retirement charges of \$931 million per year; income tax hikes of \$900 million dollars per year; property tax hikes of \$450 million

per year; the hydro tax of \$53 million per year; the eco fees of \$39.4 million per year; electronic taxes of \$71.2 million per year; and tire taxes of \$70.2 million per year, for a grand total of \$10 billion per year taken from hard-working Ontario taxpayers to fund this Liberal government's tax plan for jobs and growth.

Job growth? Some 300,000 new public sector, wealth-consuming jobs and 103,000 new wealth-creating, private sector jobs. Does anybody get the trend here?

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: The ratio's all wrong.

Mr. Randy Hillier: The ratio is a little bit wrong. We should be creating more private sector, wealth-producing jobs than public sector jobs. But that is what an additional \$10 billion per year in taxes buys the taxpayers of this province: a debt for all our children to carry, a yoke for all our children to be burdened with because of this Liberal government.

Of course, let's not forget that when the Liberals brought in and announced this HST—does everybody remember this? This HST was going to create half a million new jobs. Some 500,000 new jobs were going to be created by this Liberal government bringing in the HST. Surely we all must recognize that if that indeed was correct, if an 8% additional tax was going to create 500,000 new jobs—

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: We should have had more tax.

Mr. Randy Hillier: —why did they stop at 8%? Why didn't they go to 10% or 12%? Maybe they could have had a million new jobs. Really, why not go to 100%, and then we could have full employment? Just tax everybody and everything, and we would have full employment, right? I think there are other countries, in the past, that have tried things like that, but realized that it doesn't work. But this Liberal government doesn't recognize that it doesn't work. They just continue on and on.

I really have to make mention here: Previously, the minister of imagination and creativity was up speaking. He informed the House of the grand revelation that the Niagara region produced 80% of all our renewable energy in this province.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Amazing.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Amazing. An amazing revelation. The next thing I know, I think we're going to see—maybe he'll announce that 100% of photosynthesis comes from the sun. I'm not sure. But this is a minister of this crown, wanting to give us economic lessons.

Like my colleague before, I want to start by reading a quote from Premier McGuinty from April 4, 2011. It's from Hansard: "A very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past." Now, let's talk about Premier McGuinty's record, because it will go a long way to predicting what the future holds for Ontario should he be re-elected, which we all know is pretty slim.

Before the 2003 election, he promised he would not lower taxes but he would not raise them either. And on September 11, 2003, prior to that year's provincial election, Premier McGuinty signed a pledge that was called the taxpayer protection promise. Now, if anybody on the Liberal benches forgets that, I do have it up on my

website and I also have it up on my Facebook. It's a nice picture of the Premier signing that pledge, but I've given the members opposite a little option: I have little bubble notes that are blank above them, and you can fill in whatever you like in those bubble notes.

Let me read that pledge into the record. It says, "I, Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario, promise that if my party is elected as the next government, that I will not raise taxes or implement any new taxes without the ... consent of Ontario voters...."

We all remember that. We all remember those commercials, the ones he ran—more than 200 different commercials during that election campaign—and we all know that signing that pledge helped get Premier McGuinty get elected. And we all know what happened next: He forgot everything that he pledged. It was as if he never even signed the pledge. As soon as he got here, he signed in the biggest tax increase—the health tax, \$3.1 billion; the largest tax grab up until that time in the history of Ontario, taking over \$3 billion. This is, again, part of his tax and jobs plan.

In 2007, he did it again. Before the 2007 election, Premier McGuinty emphatically denied that he would increase taxes. When told that his critics wouldn't believe him, he said, "They're wrong. They're wrong. They're wrong." But after the election, and with no warning, he broke his promise once again and brought in the \$3-billion HST tax grab, another \$3-billion tax grab. HST on hydro bills is one of reasons why hydro costs are skyrocketing and why industry is leaving this province.

I should just go back to those jobs numbers, and those are from Stats Canada: 300,000 new public sector jobs, 103,000 private sector jobs, and a negative loss, a negative 277,000 manufacturing jobs under Premier McGuinty's watch.

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On the very same day that he brought in the HST, on July 1 of last year, 2010, Premier McGuinty tried to use his HST as a cover, as a façade, to hide and sneak in another new tax, the eco tax, on more than 9,000 new items that Ontario families use every day. It's quite a list: 9,000 new fees for things like cement concrete mix, primer cement, easy flow primer cement, concrete mix countertop, cement quick set. It even has lock sets—lock sets were included in this. How often do we recycle our doorknobs? Well, I think the doorknobs would have to answer that question for me. There are over 9,000 items in here, including—every doorknob in the province is subject to the Liberal eco tax.

We're hearing about the struggles from Ontario families each and every day. I've raised them up in this House many, many times. Many times I've stood up here and spoke on behalf of my constituents who send me their hydro bills, and they're crying out and pleading for help and assistance from the high cost. I think tomorrow—it was interesting. I got a call from a constituent in a neighbouring riding. She's pleading that somebody help her with her hydro bills. You know what was interesting? She says, "You helped my parents, and I called

my MPP, but she hung up on me.” I said, “Well, who is that?” It was the Minister of Education, the member from Hastings, who would not deal with her constituent. I’m going to bring that up in the House tomorrow so you can all see just what you’re doing to the people of this province.

But it didn’t end there. With these electronic taxes, tire taxes, diamond taxes, hydro taxes—the list is endless—over \$10 billion per year is sucked out of the pockets of hard-working Ontario families. And to pay for what? To pay for their tax plan for jobs and growth. What a load of nonsense that we’re hearing from this Liberal government. It is an absolute, absolute travesty, I think we all recognize, that this Liberal government even brought this motion forward. They must have thought that they were going to be able to pull the wool over somebody’s eyes with this motion. But nothing will happen like that. People are cognizant. People are reasonable, intelligent and can see through the nonsense of this political motion.

Of course, just last week, the McGuinty Liberals voted down one of our motions, calling on the Premier to reject any new tax increases. You know why?

Interjection.

Mr. Randy Hillier: No. Because the Liberals are keeping their options open on more taxes. That’s what their tax plan is all about—tax plan for jobs and growth; public sector jobs, wealth-consuming jobs.

Then, on Wednesday, the finance minister said that the McGuinty government will not raise or lower taxes. Now, have we not heard that story once or twice before? We’ve all heard that. That’s exactly what the Premier said back in 2003. And now we have this completely contemptible motion that’s been brought in the House today. This Liberal government is interested in taxes, taxes, taxes. That’s all this motion is about: more and more taxes. Really, they are so hard-wired and addicted to taxes, that’s what they believe the role of government is: to take money from people and provide nothing in return.

This latest promise by the Premier not to raise taxes comes at the same time that he’s more likely than ever to break his word once again. He’s already said that he isn’t going to run again after this election. Then again, maybe that’s why the finance minister moved the motion: because he’ll be the next Liberal leader to break his word about raising taxes.

But I will tell you this: It’s very comforting for ourselves and the people of Ontario to know that the Liberal word is consistent. You can’t believe it any time; you can’t believe it ever. They say one thing and they will do the opposite.

Aside from knowing that they’re going to raise taxes—because that’s just what they do; that’s what they do all the time. That’s why we have a \$17-billion deficit. That’s why we are now a have-not province. Earlier, the member for Beaches–East York mentioned how Manitoba has gained a net number of jobs after the recession—15,000—and we are still at a net loss of near 20,000 jobs since our recession. Manitoba has lifted

themselves out; Dalton McGuinty has put the thumb down, has put the heel to the people of Ontario, and he won’t stop the runaway spending that we’ve seen time and time and time again.

Now we’re going to see that he’s added new spending, tried to sneak another one in with his OPSEU deal. And of course the Minister of Finance said, “This was a great deal, but we just had to keep it secret from everybody. We just had to keep it secret because it’s such a good deal.” I heard the member from the Liberal side saying earlier that the Samsung deal is a modest deal. Well, why aren’t you opening the books and letting us see how modest that deal is?

McGuinty has grown the debt and he’s on track to completely double it. We’d like to point out that it took 23 Premiers 136 years to accumulate Ontario’s first \$148 billion in debt. Premier McGuinty will single-handedly double that number in just eight years, and what do we get for it?

Now, before the 2011 election, the Liberals and Premier McGuinty are making more promises. Let me read again from that Hansard quote that Premier McGuinty said on April 4, 2011: “A very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past.” And that is why Ontario families won’t buy your false promises, your false pledges, any longer. They want a guarantee, and the only guarantee that is solid is a guarantee from the Progressive Conservative Party and our leader, Tim Hudak.

When it comes to taxes, there’s only one guarantee that Premier McGuinty will give them, and that is that he’ll raise taxes, raise taxes and continue to raise taxes. The Ontario PC government will take a different approach. We will guarantee that there will be respect for the taxpayers of this province. We will show the people of this province that a PC Party will indeed get us back on the right track, get the number of jobs on those charts back in the right direction, and show the people of Ontario once again that growth comes with the Progressive Conservative Party.

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

Mr. Dave Levac: I’ve been listening carefully to the debate this evening and earlier this afternoon. What I want to do first is to start off slowly, by telling people what I’m going to do and what I’m going to talk about, and then make sure that we know what we’re talking about, which is the motion before us.

The Honourable Dwight Duncan, the Minister of Finance, moved “that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognizes that to make life easier for Ontario families and help our economy remain strong, Ontario’s tax plan for jobs and growth, as reaffirmed in the 2011 budget, removes”—removes—“90,000 Ontarians from the income tax rolls, provides 93% of Ontarians with a permanent personal income tax cut, maintains the harmonized sales tax at the current rate and provides \$12 billion in tax relief for families and \$4.8 billion in tax relief for businesses; and

“Recognizes that with Ontario’s tax plan for jobs and growth, the economy is turning the corner by creating more than 293,000 new jobs since the global recession; and

“Rejects the introduction of a carbon tax as a measure that would hurt Ontario’s economic growth; and

“Rejects an increase to the HST rate or a decrease to the rate that would benefit the wealthiest Ontarians the most, take \$3 billion out of health care and education funding and harm Ontario’s economic recovery.”

I don’t think that’s a problem. I think that’s a statement that we’re trying to show. The motion indicates the direction of the government.

I’m ready and prepared to do three things: I’m going to speak to the motion, I’m going to outline the government’s action to date, and provide some contrast to the Tory party’s habit of not acknowledging the history before 2003. I’m going to sit back and provide you with those opportunities.

The first thing I’m going to do is to say that leading economists from the province of Ontario and Canada say that our comprehensive tax plan will create an estimated 600,000 net new jobs. That’s not us saying that; these are leading economists.

Nine out of 10 taxpayers are now paying less income tax; 90,000 low-income Ontarians are no longer paying Ontario personal income tax. The average Ontarian family is receiving an income tax cut of approximately \$355 this year and every year going forward—\$12 billion of tax relief for Ontarians over three years.

Our tax changes are supported: The Daily Bread Food Bank and The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives have supported this tax plan.

The children’s activity tax credit provides up to \$50 per child per year and \$100 per child with a disability. The Ontario energy and property tax credit provides up to \$1,025 for seniors and \$900 for non-seniors in annual relief. There’s even more relief through the Ontario clean energy benefit, which provides a benefit equal to 10% of the total cost of electricity on residential, farm and small business bills, including the tax. That’s after you add it all up; then you take 10% off. The northern Ontario energy benefit: up to \$200 per family and \$130 per single person.

The tax package itself provides \$4.8 billion in tax cuts for businesses. The HST will save businesses more than \$500 million per year in paperwork costs in the province of Ontario alone. We’ve cut Ontario’s tax rate for new business investment by half, as acknowledged by chambers of commerce across the province.

Since taking office in 2003, we have helped more than one million more Ontarians get a family doctor, hired over 11,000 nurses, reduced wait times for health care under some areas and added 171 new drugs to the formulary, including 35 cancer-fighting drugs. We’ve added 8,000 more long-term-care beds. Almost five million Ontarians have access to electronic medical records. We’ve reduced the cost of generic drugs by at least 50% and are phasing out—phasing in, sorry; that’s the Tory

plan. We’re phasing in full-day kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds, which is really welcomed by the vast majority of Ontarians in the province of Ontario.

Test scores, on an average of 14%, have gone up in reading, writing and math. Graduation rates are now 79%: 52,500 more kids graduated than would have had the graduation rate remained at the 2003 level. There are 200,000 more students in post-secondary education now than in 2003, a 36% increase.

And something that I fought for hard, and a lot of my colleagues in rural caucus: We introduced the risk management program for farmers, liked by everybody.

So let me use the supportive quotes that are out there—not this party’s but third parties.

Michael Oliphant of the Daily Bread Food Bank in 2009 said this: “The sales tax credit is sensible and forward-looking ... and could become an important long-term piece of the economic security puzzle for poor people in the future.”

Andrew Mitchell of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, in *Not a Tax Grab After All*, said in 2009, “After looking at the numbers we find the interests of the poor are relatively well protected” with this legislation.

Roger Martin’s report: “It’s Ontario-friendly. The harmonized sales tax will increase investments by our businesses and this will create new, better paying jobs.”

Robin Boadway, the economics chair of Queen’s University, said this in October 2009: “The change will not only be good for the Ontario economy in these difficult times, it will also be done in a way that protects the most vulnerable among us. That’s why most economists favour it regardless of their political persuasion.”

The Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters’ Jason Myers said in 2011, on March 15: “Our economic recovery is extremely fragile. This is a time when we need to rely on business to sustain economic growth. The repeal of corporate tax reductions would not only stymie investment, it would raise taxes on job creation” at a time that it is most needed.

The Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters’ Ian Howcroft said on January 31, 2011: “The combination of tax measures including the corporate tax reductions and the HST will help drive economic growth and ultimately job creation in Ontario. These were bold initiatives at a time when such actions were desperately needed to avoid catastrophe.”

And the Economic Club of Canada, in a letter signed by 32 prominent economists and professors in June 2010, said this: “The HST will enhance competitiveness, encourage new investment, and create jobs. It represents sound public policy.”

Speaker, I’ve got another quote and I’m wondering if you can guess who said this: “We understand how that (single sales tax) can help the economy.” It was said in Don Valley West on March 24, 2009, at the Conservative Party annual meeting, by one Tim Hudak.

“I agree that there’s little sense in allowing two separate governments to apply two separate taxes and policies and collect two separate groups of sales taxes.”

Who said that? It was at the Economic Club of Toronto, April 23, 2009: Tim Hudak.

Oh, and the Ontario PC Party wrote in their 2009 pre-budget submission, “The official opposition calls on this government to heed the call of the federal government and take immediate action to fix Ontario’s uncompetitive tax structure.” Oh, but that was then; this is now. My goodness gracious. And our tax reform is supported by and encouraged by the cousins in Ottawa: Tilson, Clement, Baird, Flaherty and the Prime Minister, who offered a deal of over \$4 billion for us to move to this new tax that’s put on the entire country.

Over 140 countries and four of our provinces are now using this. I would think, in terms of the competitive argument, it’s not an argument anymore; it’s over. If you don’t stay with this, we’re in deep trouble. If you reduce it, you’re removing \$3 billion for every point you reduce it.

So my question is this—and watch out for the code words, the code phrases. We hear what’s being said by the opposition, and they say stuff like, “We’re going to take care of your pocket. We want to reduce your taxes.” But they don’t finish the rest of the sentence. How are they going to get there? One point off the HST is \$3 billion. The question I have that doesn’t ever get an answer in this House is, how are they going to do that? What are they going to do to find the \$3 billion?

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The next question I ask is, they’re talking about the health tax. How is the health tax going to be removed? That’s how much money? Anybody take a guess. About \$4 billion.

That’s \$7 billion we’re up to now. How are they going to find the \$7 billion?

Do you remember what happened the last time the Tories were in charge? Slash and burn, slash and burn. The jobs that they were talking about at the public sector: Guess what those jobs were. Nurses, teachers, doctors, and they’re going to sit back and say, “We don’t need them.”

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: And meat inspectors.

Mr. Dave Levac: And meat inspectors and water inspectors—those too. I saved those ones for another point. My point is, they’re classified as red tape. That’s red tape: meat inspectors, water inspectors. That’s red tape: “We’ve got to get rid of that red tape. You’re stopping business from happening, so we’ll get rid of the meat inspectors. We’ll get rid of the water inspectors.”

Let me offer you a couple of more pieces of contrast before 2003. Before 2002 was finished, over \$600 million was paid to advertise the government—\$600 million. To this point, we’ve only spent about \$300 million in eight years in advertising. What a big contrast that was. And who put the first piece of legislation that said you can’t plaster, almost like a marketing campaign, the picture of the Premier all over? We used to say “Mike Harris built this highway.” Do you remember that? You would drive down the highway and you would see, “Mike Harris built this highway.”

Interjection.

Mr. Dave Levac: That’s right. How many hospitals got closed?

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: Twenty-eight.

Mr. Dave Levac: Twenty-eight. What was said before that? They like to use that phraseology. What was said before that? “It’s not my intention to close hospitals.” They closed 28.

And nurses: How many nurses got let go?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Ten thousand.

Mr. Dave Levac: Ten thousand—so we got those numbers down.

What I’m talking about is the contrast between the two. What we’re looking at is speaking specifically to this.

Speaking specifically to this motion, I have a story to tell you about the riding. In the riding I come from, we saw the Green Energy Act, we saw the greenbelt, we saw Places to Grow and we recognized that if you drew a spot on the map, you would find, as Walter Gretzky says, the centre of the universe. The economic engine was ready to go off and we wanted to be prepared for it, so what did we do? We got together. Through the chamber of commerce, we got together with all of the local chambers of commerce. We got together with the mayor of Haldimand, the mayor of Norfolk, the mayor of Brant, the mayor of Brantford, the chief of the Six Nations, the MP for Brant—the MP for Haldimand–Norfolk refused—the MPP for Haldimand–Norfolk, and myself. We showed up for a big press release. We took a boat down the Grand River and we had local, regional and provincial news attached and said that we were the green energy hub, because all of those people recognized the value of the Green Energy Act and the green economy. Every one of those people who showed up indicated their support for the Green Energy Act and the fact that we wanted to make it the green energy hub. For those who are really interested, I could put those pictures on the website too of the member from Haldimand–Norfolk being supportive of that initiative. Isn’t that interesting? And they want to shut it all down. As a matter of fact, we’ve got a few of the Old King Coals over there. They still want to believe that coal has a way to survive.

In essence, what we’re talking about here are regions in the province of Ontario that have already stepped up and said clearly that the new economy is the green economy. The new way to create jobs in the province of Ontario—we’re not building tractors anymore. We’ve exorcised the demon of Massey Ferguson in my riding. Thirty years ago our entire community got decimated because they shut down Massey Ferguson, White Farm and Cockshutt. They had another place to build those things. That kind of economy was dying then and it’s dead now.

What did we need to do? We needed to pick ourselves up by the bootstraps and find the economy that we’re going to move towards: education, the concept of looking at the new green economy. Why did we do that? Because we needed to diversify and move away from places where we weren’t going to have jobs. We need to have

that support. We need to attract those kinds of jobs that need high skills. That's why the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is working in concert with the type of economic engine we're trying to create, by providing us with the education that's necessary and the retraining that's necessary and the new economy for our high schools, allowing them to try to look for new ways in which to educate the children, to keep them interested. They're all tied in.

For us not to support this motion, what we're basically saying is, "We're going back to the future. We're going to do the old-fashioned stuff: put the money in your pocket and hope that we don't have to tell you exactly what we're going to do to your communities when we do it." For \$7 billion and counting, how are they going to find the money? They're going to do the slash and burn.

We've got the half-truth train going on right now, and I want to make sure that everybody realizes that when you choose that half-truth train, the other half of it is what we put up with for eight years with the previous Tory government. Municipalities, teachers—everybody was fighting. Why? Because it was the chaos theory: Throw enough changes around, screw around with everybody's mind, getting them mad at each other, fighting with each other. That's not the way to build a province; that's not the way to build communities. What you do is you invite them to be participants in it, to look for the new future. When you set the table for 30-year planning for Places to Grow, you allow people to have input on what their transportation systems are going to look like in the future. You're going to allow them to take a look at their health care needs and start setting out a path of where to go. The family health teams that are now out there, and the clinics, the community health centres, and nurse-practitioner-run—I'm telling you, what we're doing is opening up the books in the opposite direction. We're saying no to the chaos theory of governance. We're say no to the chaos theory and the wedge politics of old.

What we're starting to hear again—and I say, listen carefully to the code words that are being presented to us. Those code words are telling you that we're going back to the old way. I happen to think—and somebody mentioned it on the other side and I wanted to use it in my speech, and now I feel like I might have to take a shower after I say this, because what they're talking about, to me, is trusting the fair-minded people out there who listen to this, that they see that it's not about them personally; it's about their children and their grandchildren, and building a future that says clearly, "This is the direction we want to move in. We're not going to wallow in fear, and we're not going to wallow in threats and we're not going to wallow in the accusations and the finger-pointing and the gnashing of teeth and ripping of shirts." What we talk about is sensible discussions about how health care is going to look in the future, about how our economy needs to move forward and not rely on the old ways in which we used to make our money and create our jobs.

Today we want to talk about supporting a motion that makes it clear that the policy of the government is on the

right track, that the people of the province of Ontario are fair-minded and that they look to us to say, "Yes, there's a reason why we wanted to move to a new tax plan—the reforms that we made," and, "Yes, there's a way in which our health care could improve." We have more nurses hired; we're building more hospitals; we're going to the regions and asking them for their input.

Another thing that the previous government talked about: the eco fees. They have not once told you that it was about a clean environment and getting those toxic materials away from our landfill sites. But guess who implemented that program in 2002? The Conservatives. The Conservatives introduced that plan in 2002.

Guess who spent \$400 million on putting our plans together to coordinate the IT infrastructure for our hospitals to talk to each other, our doctors to talk to each other? Who spent \$400 million doing that and nothing happened? The Tories. They want to tell you about \$1 billion spent; \$400 million of it was spent by them when they initiated the plan.

It was a good idea. I think we should be coordinated in the way we speak to all of our health care providers. It should be the doctors; it should be the pharmacists; it should be the hospitals; it should be the LHINs. It should be everybody working together to build a better province. All I have to tell my friends opposite is: Show your real proof. Show your real desire. Vote for the motion.

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

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I'll split my time with member Bob Bailey from Sarnia over here. I don't believe there's a whole lot of time now.

I just heard a member speak over there about ripping his shirt and going on. The man is crazy. I can't help it; he has gone nuts. I've never heard him speak like that.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I would ask the member to withdraw that comment.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: He's not crazy; he just may look that way. I'm not qualified to say that he's crazy, so I'll have to withdraw that, okay?

Interjections.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: We will talk about that before I'm done, but you've pretty well heard everything on this motion, all the rhetoric and everything from—I guess you could say from both sides, but all you can do—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member from Willowdale is not in his seat.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: If he gets to his seat, then we'll let him heckle if he likes. I don't mind that, if he wants to heckle. But the unfortunate party is a way over there.

We've heard all about promises and more promises and the promises that have been broken, and now we have a motion here—another broken promise. We know; there's no doubt about that. If this was so important, I can't understand why it wasn't in your budget, because stuff that you put in your budget, like closing the jail in Sarnia, closing the jail in Walkerton and closing the jail

in Owen Sound—you put those right in your budget. And what you were going to do was save about \$3 million.

Interjection: Allegedly.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: And allegedly, at that. You're going to save \$3 million over here by closing my jail, and over here you're going to spend about \$8 million transporting prisoners all the way to penitentiaries. What a total waste. You couldn't figure that out and put it in your budget, so how would you ever expect us to believe something like this? And now you're spending the week debating something like this in the House, when there are people out there without jobs. I know that you throw all of those figures out about all of these jobs. The member from Orléans over there: He worries about the children, yet you debate something like this? Why wouldn't you be bringing in a job to help children?

This is nothing but a fairy tale. I know the member from Hamilton Mountain has a little book over there, Grimm's Fairy Tales, and she expects people to believe it. I just don't understand why you would do something—there it is. There's her book of Grimm's Fairy Tales. Why would you waste the House, and then sit until—

Interjections.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: You don't want to have to get up again, Madam Speaker. You let them holler all they want. It doesn't bother me. I'm used to that, so that's okay. There's no problem.

Our good hockey team in Owen Sound just beat Mississauga, and we had a lot of trouble there with a few fans, but the fans in our area were so great. We almost ran into that Toronto mentality we talk about. Mississauga, I think, is just far enough removed from Toronto that they don't get into that mentality, and then what happened tonight—we heard it. We heard it over there. One of the ministers from downtown in Toronto here: We heard his mentality, and that's what I talk about. Boy, when the people on TV see that, they'll say, "Why would we want guys like that? What kind of mentality do they have down in that city? They have one windmill there and they expect us to put them all out in the country so they could have some power down there."

I'm telling you, they don't create enough power in Toronto to create enough energy to get to a hockey game—if they really want to go to a hockey game. I don't know whether they'd want to go to the games here in Toronto. They do still have a team, I believe. I'm not quite sure of that.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Barely.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Barely, yes. The member from Peterborough say, "Barely."

The problem is that they've come up with a solution like this. I don't know what you even call it. It's not a bill. It's a resolution, which, as you know, Madam Speaker, on resolutions—they don't live up to resolutions. I don't know of any government that lives up to the resolutions that are passed in here, and that's a problem. So now we've got one here. After the election, they don't have to live up to it anyway. We did hear all of those

promises right on the television: "I will not raise your taxes."

The whole thing stems from the fact that the leak came from the Liberals: that if they got elected, they would be raising the HST to 15% and probably up to 20%. They're so upset that that leak came out of their offices—their generals leaked it out to the people. So, "We have to come up with something to cover it." But do you think—a promise like this—that anybody is going to pay any attention to you, after what you've done out there to the people? I mean, come on, folks; where do you think they'll ever even listen to this?

You've got two weeks left in this House. Is this what you want to debate for our last two weeks in this House? I can't believe that, when there are so many other problems out there: the hydro mess you've got us into, the HST mess. I've seen what happened: Somebody brought to the attention of the media that you're going to raise the HST, if you happen to get elected in the next election, right up to 15% and maybe 20%. Because here's the problem: You've got a \$17-billion debt—a \$17-billion debt in one year. No one's done that. No one.

I was here. I was elected in the 1990s. The NDP actually were in a recession. They unfortunately put us \$10 billion in debt every year, but that was only \$10 billion; you guys have done \$17 billion in one year. What was it, \$19 billion last year? That's why you don't even have any money, so no wonder you're going to raise the HST to 15%. No wonder you may go to 20% with that HST. You'll just be hoping that the gas goes up, because look at the money you're raking off people on that. You must just be in there counting. I'm sure you guys have to help the Treasurer count all this money that he's getting in.

Then you come up, you bring in a budget and you don't even mention this in the budget. Where were your spin doctors when that came out, boys and girls over there? You should have been thinking about that back then, but you waited until some of your spin doctors released the percentage you're going to put it up, and that got you into trouble, didn't it? It's not even in Grimm's Fairy Tales. It's not in there. You forgot to put that in there. Their little fairy tale book; it's not there.

Then you come up with it now and debate it in the second last week of the House. I don't think anyone is even going to listen to it because of the promises broken in the past. We heard that wise man, the Premier, say how the future is what happens in the past. Well, boy, we're in deep trouble with you guys. Let me tell you, this is really something.

Then you come up with this: "Oh, we can save \$3 million. Let's close the jails up in Owen Sound and Walkerton and down in Sarnia." It doesn't make any sense to do that. There are no jails up there, but, "Oh, hey, we've got all kinds of them along the 401, so we're not going to worry about anybody outside of that area. Then, we're going to save \$3 million." Holy cow. We're only \$17 billion in debt. The problem is over here, you're saving \$3 million and over here, you're spending \$8 million to truck all the prisoners to Penetang. You didn't think about that.

So why weren't you thinking about something here and something about the HST before you got yourselves in a bit of a mess? Now you're in this mess and you don't know how to get out of it. So "Let's put a resolution on the table. Let's let them debate that for the final week here because we won't get caught on it." So you're going to do the dumb thing. As I've said to everybody: "A dumb thing coming out of Queen's Park."

Close some jails where there aren't any around there, in the middle of winter. That's the trouble: your mentality. We talked about the mentality here in Toronto. If you knew what it's like out in rural Ontario—and surely some of you guys that live out in rural Ontario understand that. You should understand in Peterborough. You should understand those things.

What are we going to do in the middle of winter? The roads are blocked and you've got to have courts. You build a new courthouse. You fix up the one in Walkerton. Now you're not going to have a chance to put people there because half the time over in Port Elgin, they're snowed in. So how are we going to get them?

You know what's going to happen: You're going to put them up in hotels, pay the police to stay there and you're going to lose more. We said you might spend \$8 million; it'll probably be more like \$10 million or \$12 million to save \$3 million. That's the kind of things you do on the Liberal side: Save \$3 million here, spend \$8 million or \$12 million over here. Well, that's Liberal economics. That's what we're talking about. "Who cares; we're only \$17 billion in debt anyway. We'll get that, because when we raise the HST to 15% and then up to 20%, we'll make that money up." That's exactly what you're doing; all you're trying to do is tell people that you won't.

Well, do you think anybody will believe you? Because you've heard all of those quotes. I'm not going to give them to you again; you must hear them at every doorstep. If you haven't heard them at every doorstep, you better get ready for October because you will be hearing them. I'm sure we'll see that smiling picture of your Premier on the television saying, "I will not raise your taxes." Oh, I can't wait to see those ads. They're going to be fun to watch.

2200

Folks, you just dropped the ball. You might as well admit it. You screwed up, and now you're trying to get out of it by a silly resolution like this—waste our time when there's so many other things there we could be looking after. I'm really disappointed in you; I thought you had a little more going for you than that, but obviously you haven't.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): The member from Sarnia-Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's a pleasure this evening to rise to speak to this resolution. Obviously, my remarks won't be near as colourful as my colleague from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound's.

Like my colleagues, I want to start by reading a quote from a gentleman there. On April 4, 2011, from Hansard,

the Honourable Dalton McGuinty, the Premier, said that "A very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past." Now let's talk about this same Premier's record because it will go a long way to predicting what the future holds for this province of Ontario, if—and I say if, and I think that's a remote chance—he is re-elected in October.

Before the 2003 election, Dalton McGuinty emphatically denied that he would not increase taxes, but he did. On September 11, 2003, prior to that year's election, Dalton McGuinty signed that famous pledge; it was called the taxpayer protection promise. Let me read that pledge into the record. It read: "I, Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario, promise, if my party is elected as the next government, that I will: Not raise taxes or implement any new taxes without the ... consent of Ontario voters...."

Mr. John Yakabuski: Was he telling the truth?

Mr. Robert Bailey: Well, I'll leave that to the viewers and the members of the gallery who are here this evening.

We all remember the commercials, the ones that the Liberal Party and he ran more than 200 times during that famous election campaign. We all know that signing that pledge helped to get Dalton McGuinty elected. We all know what happened next. The minute he got the keys to the Premier's office and found the washroom, Dalton McGuinty treated his word like it was nothing. He brought in the health tax, the single-largest income tax grab in the history of Ontario, taking over \$3 billion a year out of the pockets of Ontario families.

In 2007, he did it again. Before the 2007 election, this same gentleman also promised that he would not lower taxes, but he would not raise them either. When told that his critics wouldn't believe him, he said, "They're wrong, they're wrong, they're wrong." But after the vote and with no warning, he broke his promise again and brought in the \$3 billion HST tax grab.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Never mentioned it during the campaign.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Never mentioned it once. I remember that campaign very well—went door to door, never—

Mr. John Yakabuski: That's when you were elected.

Mr. Robert Bailey: That's when I was first elected. How can I forget? How could I forget that? About a hospital—it had a lot to do with a hospital down in Sarnia and a lot of others.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Now they want to close your jail.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Now they want to close my jail. Sounds like another good issue for me.

Interjection.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I can't help it. They just seem to come to me that way.

But after the vote and with no warning, the same man broke his promise again and brought in the \$3 billion HST tax grab.

The HST on hydro bills is one of the reasons those bills are skyrocketing.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: To say nothing about the cost of gas.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Gasoline—every day, a tax on a tax on a tax.

On the very same day, July 1, 2010, Dalton McGuinty, the Premier, tried to use his HST as a cover to sneak in the eco tax on more than 9,200 items Ontario families use every day. There is a number of them here. Ladies and gentlemen of the television audience, that's just some of them right there. That's just some of them. I won't bother trying to read them; they've been read into the record before.

There are 9,320 items that the McGuinty Liberal slapped those eco taxes on. My colleagues and I are going to read a number of those items into the record there through the course of the debate, and that has happened, just to remind those Ontario families that are watching this evening that the McGuinty Liberals are hard-wired, at the end of the day, to tax, tax, tax.

Mr. John Yakubuski: And break promises; they're hard-wired there, too.

Mr. Robert Bailey: And break promises.

We already know what his next permanent tax will be. Every year, since 2002, Ontario families have paid the debt retirement charge on their hydro bill. It was created to pay off \$7.8 billion of debt going back to the Peterson era and the Darlington overruns. A typical family pays about \$84 a year, and it was supposed to be paid off by 2012. The government's own numbers say \$7.8 billion has been collected to date. But without warning or explanation, the McGuinty Liberals announced that the debt retirement charge will be on the hydro bills of every Ontario family until 2018, but won't even tell families what the balance is. That's like getting a credit card bill every month with, "Just pay this amount. We don't know what your balance is." We asked the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. to tell us the balance; they also refused. We'll change that after October. It's like getting a credit card bill every month and being told to pay the interest with no idea of what the principal is.

We're hearing struggles from Ontario families each and every other day. It doesn't end there: Thanks to Dalton McGuinty, Ontario families are faced with increased taxes through tire taxes, eco taxes, electronic taxes, the diamond tax, hidden hydro taxes, destination marketing taxes and higher beer, wine and spirit taxes, and that's only to name a few of them. I'm getting hoarse.

Here's what these costs to Ontario families are. The harmonized sales tax rings in at over \$3.1 billion; the Ontario health premium, \$3.1 billion; the business tax increases, \$1.2 billion; the debt retirement charge, \$931 million; income tax hikes have totalled over \$900 million; property tax, \$450 million; the hidden hydro tax, \$53 million; eco taxes, \$40 million; electronic taxes, over \$71 million; and tire taxes, \$70 million. And you know what the Dalton McGuinty government says after each one of these? "Cha-ching."

This is just plain wrong, and it absolutely shows no respect for families who are getting stuck with those

bills. Hold up those tables; hold up that table. Where's that book?

To top it off, the McGuinty Liberals slapped the HST to the bill, taking another \$80 million a year out of the pockets of Ontario families. Families are already paying too much for hydro thanks to the HST, the debt retirement charge, the hydro rates—up another 6%—\$18 million in illegal interest charges and the expensive energy experiments that Premier McGuinty says will hike hydro bills by a minimum of 46% during the next four years, and that's just a lowball estimate.

It doesn't end there: Thanks to Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal government, Ontario families are faced with increased taxes, from tire taxes, eco taxes etc.

Last week, when the opportunity arose, the McGuinty Liberals voted down a motion calling on the Premier to reject any tax increases. Why they did that, we don't know. Because they wanted to keep their options open, Madam Speaker and viewers; anybody who's still up at this time of night and still watching. They wanted to keep their options open to increase those taxes.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: The ball game's over. We have a big audience now.

Mr. Robert Bailey: The ball game's over. I know we've got a big audience now.

Then on Wednesday the finance minister said the McGuinty government will not raise or lower taxes. Does anyone think they've seen this movie before? Déjà vu all over again?

Interjection.

Mr. Robert Bailey: You should say, because it's exactly what McGuinty said in 2003.

Now comes the motion. It should be called, "The Liberals say they won't raise your taxes, and they really, really, really mean it this time."

This latest promise by the Premier not to raise your taxes comes at a time when he is more likely than ever to break his word. With a \$17-billion deficit and with calculations that this party has already done—on the other side, the government party is saying 1% equals \$3 billion and they've got a \$17-billion gap—five times three would be 15: about a 5% increase. You're going to look at a 5% increase. He's grown the debt and he's on track to double it. Our leader, Tim Hudak, likes to point out that it took 23 premiers 136 years to accumulate that first \$148 billion in debt.

Now, before the 2011 election, the Liberals and Dalton McGuinty are making promises once again. Let me read again that quote from Dalton McGuinty on April 4, 2011, from Hansard: "A very good predictor of the future is what has happened in the past." And that's why Ontario families don't want pledges or promises this time. They just want action and they want results, and the only way that they can get those actions and results is to throw this government out on October 6 and install a new government that understands the hardships that these people have put up with.

When it comes to taxes, there's only one guarantee, and Dalton McGuinty will give it. He'll raise your taxes.

He can't help it. That's what they always do. They're hard-wired to do that.

Ladies and gentlemen, on October 6, vote for change. Vote the Ontario PC government. We'll take a different approach. We will not raise taxes, and an Ontario PC government will lower taxes across the board to give Ontario families the respect they deserve and the rates that they need.

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

2210

Mr. Jeff Leal: I know it's late. I just want to say goodnight to my wife, Karan; my son Braden; and my daughter Shanae. In Peterborough—

Hon. Monique M. Smith: They should be in bed by now.

Mr. Jeff Leal: They are in bed by now, but just on the chance they happen to be watching their dad.

I want to get on the record here about this. It's interesting about history. There's a lot of talk about history here this evening. Well, I remember, in the spring of 2003, Madam Ecker, who is really a nice person, who by the way now supports the HST—but she is a lovely lady. I met her on several occasions, and she was a wonderful finance minister. But what did she say in the spring of 2003? “The budget is balanced. The budget is balanced. The budget is balanced. The budget is balanced.”

At that particular time, the opposition party, the Liberals, and the third party started to formulate their platforms based on the information that was provided by Madam Ecker. But it is interesting enough—remember that famous speech at Magna? And I know there are some members here tonight. I remember the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, the member from Halton and the member from Wellington-Halton Hills. I remember seeing them on TV as they carried their doggy bags out of Magna with their free front bumpers after the speech that evening. They all got their souvenirs.

But Madam Ecker—very fine person that she is—kept saying that the budget is balanced, so everybody was moving forward based on the information provided by Madam Ecker. Thank God, when we became the government, we brought in legislation so that the Auditor General checks the books before an election, because we know what happened. We came into power, and we asked one of the most honourable public servants in the history of this province, Erik Peters, to look at the books. Whoopee, a \$5.6-billion deficit that Madam Ecker told us never existed.

We had made commitments during the fall of 2003 based on the premise that there would be a balanced budget. We came into power, and we told Ontarians that we would invest in improved health care in the province of Ontario; we would bring in 150 family health teams in the province of Ontario; we would improve education in the province of Ontario; we would make investments in post-secondary education in the province of Ontario. So we brought in a health premium to meet those objectives.

Well, now it's 2011. The Leader of the Opposition says, “We're not going to get rid of the health premium.”

But his colleague was at a press conference—and what's that fine lady's name?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Sylvia Jones.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Sylvia Jones, the member from Dufferin-Caledon, said, “Oh, no. I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition that we're not going to really get rid of that health premium, because we'll need those dollars to pay for things going down the road.” Whoops, that's the first person under the bus.

Now, we remember the former Leader of the Opposition, John Tory, a great guy. He just came out recently and said that the HST is good tax policy, good for the future of Ontario. Whoops, he got under the bus. That's another one under the bus.

The other day we had two more of their members: Mr. Hardeman from Oxford and the member for Newmarket-Aurora. They both came out saying, “You know, that Green Energy Act may not be so bad after all,” because from the member from Oxford's perspective, it's creating new jobs in one of his communities. Then the member from Aurora—he's got shares in it. So whoops, they're under the bus now, too.

Let me tell you, these guys over there should get a Greyhound franchise. They need all the buses because they throw so many people underneath them. And the list keeps growing.

One of Canada's great war heroes, Colonel Corrigan, who lives in Ancaster, Ontario, a hero in Bosnia, the kind of person that we should stand up for and respect for what they're doing for the men and women—whoops, there's another one under the bus. This just keeps going. Under the bus, under the bus, under the bus.

Interjection: There's one more really important guy: Norm Sterling.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I could go on about Norm Sterling, but Norm Sterling is an honourable man, and we know what his fate was.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Please refer to the member's riding.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Let me tell you about this team they have here. I want to just refer to something here—just give me one moment. Here it is right here. This is a great headline. It was in the Toronto Star on May 7:

“Ontario Hits the Jobs Jackpot....”

“Canada's employment recovery is now almost complete after a strong April added 58,300 new jobs—almost all in Ontario—and enough good jobs to finally lift full-time work back to pre-recession peaks.”

I'd like to get in a few other quotes here. During the pre-budget submission from Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters' Ian Howcroft and Paul Clipsham—here's what they had to say:

“We continue to emerge from a deep and protracted recession. Manufacturers and exporters have been impacted significantly, but there are signs of greater optimism for this sector going forward. In fact, CME's forecast for the coming year is that manufacturing investment and exports will outpace the GDP growth in 2011.”

“In fact, Canada will rely on exports and business investment to sustain the economic recovery. Export volumes are expected to expand 10%, and machinery and machine parts and equipment will increase by 16.5%. Ontario is once again leading the economic charge, based primarily on the resiliency of our industrial manufacturing base. Companies are adopting to rapidly changing circumstances, and they’re taking the necessary steps to survive and thrive in a new global economy.”

Here is the clincher: “Credit for the recovery is also owing to the Ontario government taking bold steps to address the challenges that are impacting manufacturers and exporters. In particular, CME strongly supports the HST, corporate tax reductions, the Smart program, significant infrastructure investments and measures to encourage skills training and development.”

Of course, that’s from the right wing, but let me get you one from the left wing. My good friend Ken Lewenza, national president, Canadian Auto Workers, said:

“We offer our comments and suggestions in a constructive, non-partisan spirit. We recognize the difficult and competing pressures which the current Ontario government is attempting to balance, and while we do not endorse every decision this government has made, we do wish to commend the positive initiatives that have been taken in numerous areas....

“Extensive support for the automotive industry and manufacturing in general” and “positive environmental initiatives (including the Green Energy Act and its made-in-Ontario manufacturing strategy).”

I had the delight last Friday—the member from Durham was in the riding of Peterborough talking about taxes. I had to remind the media in Peterborough that it’s a damn good thing that we provided those transition dollars for General Motors because we saved the member from Durham’s executive pension. That’s good that we looked after his executive pension. He’s a pretty good guy, so we looked after him.

The list goes on and on. There’s a lot of talk about electricity prices. Well, it’s really interesting. A couple weeks ago, I asked the research people in the Legislative Assembly to look at electricity prices in six jurisdictions. Let’s look at these prices.

Manitoba has lots of hydroelectric resources. For first 900 kilowatts a month in Manitoba, it is 6.3 cents. The remainder is 8.1 cents—very comparable to Ontario.

The province of Quebec has a residential tiered rate. The first 30 kilowatts in a day is 6.38 cents a kilowatt hour; the remainder is 8.1 cents. But in Quebec, if you look at time of use in the wintertime, during winter peak, it’s 14.78 cents a kilowatt hour, and at all other times it’s 4.46 cents.

New York state: The residential flat rate they have in New York state is 7.5 cents a kilowatt hour, and then it goes up in the evening or late in the day to 7.80 cents per kilowatt hour.

That’s from legislative research, a non-partisan group that will provide the same report that they got for me. But let’s look at this a little further.

Off-peak in New York state goes as high as 10.73 cents a kilowatt hour. In Michigan, it’s 11.93 cents at summer peak; winter peak, almost 12.6 cents a kilowatt hour.

Do you want to hear about Pennsylvania?

Interjections: Yes.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Pennsylvania: 13 cents a kilowatt hour.

Interjection: Say it ain’t so.

Mr. Jeff Leal: It is. Michigan—and I could keep going on and on.

It would be interesting in this House if we had a real debate about electricity prices, not this bunk that I think is dreamed up from time to time from the members opposite. These are the facts. You can get this from the legislative research. I’d recommend the opposition to take a look at it.

But let’s look at the Samsung deal. You know, it’s interesting.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I don’t think we have the time.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Do we have time?

Interjections.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Let’s look at the Samsung deal. It’s really interesting. When I talk to people in my riding—I even talk to Korean War vets, who have a unique bond with the people in South Korea. They think this is an excellent investment. Four plants are to be built: three on stream already; number four to be started shortly. This is a real—Madam Speaker, you’re asking me to sit down? I wish that I had six more hours, because I could keep going on and on and on.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings to announce that there has been more than six and a half hours of debate on the motion. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned, unless the government House leader indicates otherwise.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: No further debate, Madam Speaker.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Orders of the day.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: No, there’s only four of them—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Four of them?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I declare the motion carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 2222.

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Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
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Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
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Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
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McNeely, Phil (LIB) Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP)	Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
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Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

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