



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 39^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 1 June 2011

Mercredi 1^{er} juin 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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



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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 1 June 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 1^{er} juin 2011

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

MEMBERS' EXPENDITURES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the individual members' expenditures for the year 2010-11. The members can find these located in their desks.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUPPORTING SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO BY REDUCING CONTRABAND TOBACCO ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 APPUYANT LA STRATÉGIE ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE PAR LA RÉDUCTION DU TABAC DE CONTREBANDE

Ms. Smith, on behalf of Ms. Aggelonitis, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act /
Projet de loi 186, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le
tabac.

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

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I will be sharing my time this morning with the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: In our debates on Bill 186, we have covered a number of topics. I'd like to focus, in what is really our closing debate, on some of the impacts of smoking. We're out here to try to prevent and stop people from smoking.

A very recently released report by the World Health Organization estimated that this year smoking will kill six million people, and that includes some 600,000 non-smokers. The World Health Organization also warns that governments worldwide are not doing enough to control smoking. In looking at the things that they've recommended, Ontario is doing many of the things that they've recommended. While the rest of the world is catching up, we cannot afford to be negligent and to be lax in trying to keep Ontarians from smoking.

Some 172 countries around the world, plus the European Union, have signed on to the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. That study concludes by saying that some eight million people annually, by 2030, could die from tobacco-related causes if nothing is done.

While I'm in this, I'd also like to mention that we'll be sharing some of our time as well with the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

It comes down, I think, to those of us who have lost our friends due to a cigarette. In some of my earlier remarks, I talked about some of the people whom I knew who—and I'll mention some of them again. An old friend of mine from Regina called one day. I was sitting at my desk. I looked at the telephone, and it had the Saskatchewan 306 area code, and I thought, "I wonder who that is?" It was my friend Donna. I said, "This isn't your normal home number. Where are you calling from?" She said, "I'm calling you from the hospital." I said, "Oh, are you in the hospital? What's wrong?" She allowed that she was in the hospital and she had lung cancer. I said, "What is the outlook for you?" She said, "Not good."

We spoke a few more times, and then the line went silent. I found out in an email some weeks later that she had died of lung cancer.

Another person I worked with in the 1980s, a very bright and energetic young woman, had her last cigarette in the early 1990s, and 20 years later she was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. She won't make it.

I think what we're trying to do here today is enact a series of measures that enable the province to cut off the supply of tobacco, to address contraband tobacco, to seize contraband tobacco. What it really comes down to, in the end, is that we won't be burying our friends, and our parents won't have to say to their children, "Don't do that. Don't do that." "But, Mom, Dad, I can get it cheap."

Death is death, whether it comes at a premium price in a package with a tobacco warning or whether it comes in a plain baggie that contains God only knows what inside. What it really comes down to, as I often tell students when I go and visit them in school—I'll just relate the story in my last few seconds—"Take a coin out of your pocket and flip it. All of you who flipped it, if it's heads, sit down. You didn't get cancer. But if it's tails, you did get cancer. Now flip the coin again. If it landed heads, you got cancer but you didn't die of it. If it landed tails, you're dead."

Those are pretty much the odds you face if you decide to keep smoking today, and what this bill does is enable Ontario to stop killing people with tobacco.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate? The member for Nepean–Carleton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the second-last day of this session, you got it right and I appreciate that.

I also appreciate the opportunity to speak here today. I do have a bad allergy attack, so I would ask for water.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): It isn't because you stayed up too late last night?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes, at the tributes, which I do want to speak about.

I will say that the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party will be supporting this piece of legislation; however, we do have serious concerns. That is why illegal tobacco is addressed in our Changebook.

As you know, illegal tobacco has grown over the years—very seriously in the last eight years—and that's why we think it's very important. I agree with the member from Mississauga, who said that this is one way to combat smoking. However, that is not the only thing we're fighting. It's also the illegal drug trade and the underground economy, where criminals are actually making lots of money and making money off children as young as 11 and 12 years old across our province who are smoking illegal tobacco in schoolyards. That money is going, as Chief Blair told my colleague from Thornhill, directly into guns and gangs on our streets.

That's why we think this bill does not go far enough. In fact, Tim Hudak has said that when he forms the government, the Changebook will aggressively tackle the problem—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Member, we'll start early by saying that we don't use full names; positions, please.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: That's why the Ontario PC caucus believes we need to aggressively tackle this problem by increasing enforcement efforts, including at the US border. As we know, in eastern Ontario where I reside, about an hour from my community, there is increased drug traffic across the border.

We also believe that we need to reduce the authorized volume of unmarked tobacco products on reserves. We believe we have to work with reserve police agencies and band councils to close unauthorized cigarette manufacturing facilities and prevent delivery of manufacturing materials used by illicit factories.

0910

Let me speak momentarily about this. While we had committee hearings, we did have two chiefs join us at committee who told us that they were not adequately consulted by this government, and I think that's a real shame.

Finally, we believe in increasing police search-and-seizure authority related to tobacco products. This bill addresses a little bit of that, but we think it could go further.

I'm going to split my time with my colleague from York–Simcoe. But before I close, this is likely the last bill I will address in this Parliament, and I would like, in

the few short moments I have, to say thank you to you and Speaker Peters, as well as the others who have held that chair, including my colleagues from York–Simcoe and Simcoe–Grey. I'd also like to thank all those members who are retiring for their public service. Last night was probably the most extraordinary evening that we've had in this chamber since I've been here, in my five and a half years of politics. As my colleague from Oakville said, we spend four years here beating each other up; why not spend a night lifting one another up? And we were able to do that.

On our side, I want to just say thank you to my colleague from Carleton–Mississippi Mills, who has been a great mentor and friend to me. He wasn't the first person to start talking about anti-smoking, but he was the first person in all of Canada to bring forward anti-smoking legislation. He did that in the 1980s, when it was not popular, and I think that speaks to the type of politician and public servant that my colleague from Carleton–Mississippi Mills is. If you don't mind, I beg your indulgence to use his name: Norm Sterling. Thank you, Speaker.

I'd also like to say thank you to my colleague from Cambridge, Gerry Martiniuk. Gerry has been a good friend to me. I call him Ger Bear. He sits beside me in caucus. I'm going to miss him, because ever since I've been here, he has spoken up on the rights of children. Whether that is diabetic children or children who are using an online computer at school, he has always stood up for their rights. Gerry, as a mother, I want to say thank you for everything that you've done.

My other colleague Bill Murdoch is something of a maverick, but I've got to tell you something: He's a very loyal friend. As you know, I'm still the youngest member, and after the next election I probably won't be. When I arrived here, I was 31 years old, and my dad was dying of cancer. He had not smoked for many years, probably 30 years. Bill was very good to me and from time to time would call my father, who was living in New Glasgow, because they both shared and loved hockey; they shared that passion. My father spent a lot of time in the hockey arena, organizing many national events. So Bill would call him from time to time to get a hockey sweater donated to Bill and signed.

I need to tell you a funny story about Bill Murdoch, and I'll have to tell him this one day. In 2003, my husband ran for the Ontario PC Party under Ernie Eves. Bill decided he was going to speak his mind, as he often does, and it sort of derailed the campaign at the time. I remember calling up Bill, as the wife of a candidate, not the candidate myself, and saying, "What the hell are you doing?" I left a voice message, and who called me that evening after 5 o'clock? Well, it was Bill Murdoch, and I learned a thing or two about grassroots politics. He is probably the best grassroots politician this province has ever seen. I salute Bill Murdoch, and I just want to say thank you to him for all the advice he's given me over the years.

Of course, last night I did have an opportunity to talk about Joyce Savoline, the member from Burlington, who

has become a bit of a parental figure to me in this Legislature. It's obviously a very difficult time, to see people that you love go on and do other things, but what makes me happy is that Joyce will now have more time to spend with her grandkids, more time to spend with her husband, Ron, and of course, more time to spend with her kids, Natasha and Rob.

I know that these four individuals who are leaving the Progressive Conservative caucus, who are part of our family in the Ontario PC team, will stay in touch. They won't leave us alone, and they'll continue to provide us with sage advice. That's why I think it's important, in pieces of legislation like this, that we recognize the contributions of all members who, in these last days of this Parliament, have given so much and who have contributed so much of their time.

I do notice that there are a few other departing members in here today. I just want to acknowledge Jim Brownell, who is my next-door neighbour, who would understand a little bit about this illegal drug trade because it does impact his riding so much. Last night, I enjoyed listening to my colleague from Parry Sound—Muskoka talk about the time you met with his family for one of your very important private member's bills, and I salute you for that.

I note that Mr. Hoy is here, and I do appreciate all of the work he has done in this chamber. I only had a few occasions to work with him. However, I will say that he is one of the finest chairs of a committee that this Legislature has seen in my time here, and I thank you for that.

There are two other departing members. I'm going to go to Aileen Carroll first. I know she had quite a distinguished career in municipal and federal politics before joining us here as a cabinet minister. I appreciate that she has taken the time to give back to public service this one last time, and I wish her well in retirement.

Finally, my other next-door neighbour, Jean-Marc Lalonde: He's a fine individual. Last night, he gave a tremendous speech when his family and his staff were here. Jean-Marc is known in eastern Ontario as a fighter for our community, and I want to recognize that. He is a fine gentleman who had a distinguished career in public life before he came to Queen's Park, and I know he'll continue to have a distinguished life after he decides to do whatever he wants to do in the future. I just want to say thank you to him for giving Franco-Ontarians a strong voice.

I'd like to thank all of these members for contributing so much.

Again, I would like to now cede the floor to my colleague from York Simcoe, who is not retiring, who will be back here in October. I just want to wish everyone well. Happy summer, and we'll see you on the campaign trail.

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

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: In 2004, the McGuinty government embarked on a commitment that earned On-

tario international recognition as a leader in the battle against smoking. I am pleased to speak today on this government's commitment to build on that solid foundation with a renewed smoke-free Ontario strategy.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Ontario. As it was mentioned many times, it kills 13,000 people a year—three times the combined deaths caused by alcohol, drugs, suicides, homicides and car crashes.

Our government is taking a whole-of-government approach to supporting a renewed smoke-free Ontario. We are working with other ministries to take additional actions and make new investments, and we are addressing recommendations provided in the October 2010 report by the Tobacco Strategy Advisory Group.

First on our agenda is working closely with the Ministry of Revenue to reduce the availability of cheap, illegal tobacco in Ontario. This legislation, if passed, would provide new tools to reduce the availability of illegal tobacco and help to keep it out of the hands of kids.

Specifically, it would do three things.

First, it would change the way tobacco growers are regulated and license importers to discourage all types of raw leaf tobacco from entering illegal markets.

Second, it would allow police officers to seize from individuals illegal cigarettes and other tobacco products found in plain view.

Third, it would set new fine levels for individuals caught possessing small amounts of illegal tobacco products.

In addition to this new legislation, we will continue to work with our partners to get their best advice as the government moves forward to help prevent young people from becoming addicted to tobacco, make it easier for smokers to get the help they need to quit, and reduce demand for all tobacco products, both legal and illegal.

I am very pleased to announce that our new investment of \$5 million adds to the base funding for smoke-free Ontario. Preventing young people from ever taking up this deadly habit is the core of our approach. To help smokers quit, the government is providing more ways for smokers to get the help they need. We are also exploring ways to help employers and unions to assist workers in jobs and workplaces, where smoking increases health risk.

0920

Our government is proud of what we have accomplished. Today, we are taking the next significant step toward our goal of a smoke-free Ontario. I am calling on all MPPs to join us in protecting our young people. Together we can help them make healthier choices that do not involve the use of tobacco of any kind. I look forward to working with my colleagues on these important next steps toward a smoke-free Ontario.

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

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm pleased to join the debate this morning on the contraband issue.

I think the first thing I want to say is that people in Ontario have been waiting almost eight years for the government to take action on this issue. What we see today, and from the point when the legislation was introduced, is what I think can generously be described as a rather tepid response. The issue has been on the table for several years, and it's disappointing that the government has chosen the final days in the final session of this Parliament to introduce legislation.

Our party has demanded action for a long time. Various members of our caucus have championed this particular issue. Certainly, the member for Haldimand-Norfolk has asked you to close illegal smoke shacks more times, frankly, than I can count. Again, my colleague from Nepean-Carleton, who has already spoken this morning, asked you to take action. Clearly, the response of people such as them, and me as well, is that it's disappointing to see how little action is being taken.

The issue of contraband tobacco is a problem created almost entirely by government action; specifically, the question of taxation on tobacco. In this country, taxation can range up to 72% of cost. When you look at the cost of legal tobacco today, \$50 out of \$80 is federal and provincial taxes. In contrast to that \$80 average cost, the cheapest contraband can cost as little as \$11 for the same 200 cigarettes.

We should remember that the last time contraband became a problem in the early 1990s, the response of the federal and provincial governments of the day was a huge tax cut. With that, of course, came a fall in the demand for contraband tobacco. It really is incumbent on the government to either significantly reduce the tax on tobacco, to discourage the proliferation of law-breaking, or properly enforce the law, neither of which is currently happening.

The other thing that I think people overlook is why it's really, really important to understand how contraband is worse than legally sold tobacco products. First, of course, is the issue of crime. The sale of contraband is largely run through organized crime groups that use certain opportunities to smuggle, manufacture and sell their products, both on and off reserve.

The other thing about this is the fact that, of course, the sale of legal tobacco is age-restricted and the sale of illegal tobacco is not. I know that one thing that's very clear—and the convenience store association has provided a demonstration of it—is that legal tobacco retailers are very conscious of their social responsibility in selling age-restricted items.

This week, we had the report provided to us on actually measuring the difference between the convenience stores, Brewers Retail and the LCBO. It's a very clear demonstration of what we have already known: that the convenience stores, frankly, have been better stewards of age-restricted retail goods than the alcohol-related.

I think that you can see that this is just like trying to put out a fire with a little puff of wind. It's not blowing out a candle; it's an endemic problem across this province. One of the things that we know is that it constitutes

almost 50% of the total market. Through analysis of cigarette butts, we're able to identify the point of origin or manufacture of legal and illegal ones.

It's very difficult to say to the public that they should pay \$80 instead of \$11. People feel that there's an inherent injustice with that kind of disparity, and so they tend to take this on as a personal thing, as opposed to a law-breaking issue. They don't think, because they feel the tax is so unfair, that they're doing anything wrong, whereas in fact, they are certainly doing things wrong on a number of fronts. The fact is the government loses close to \$500 million of revenue annually—

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Over.

Mrs. Julia Munro: It could easily be over that \$500 million, because of the fact that we see a continual growth in that.

We see legitimate business threatened by the contraband sales. Certainly, as the critic for small business—to think that this is a government problem that they could fix, and instead, they're prepared to allow illegal tobacco in the hands of youth. They are forfeiting significant revenue to the government. They are willing to watch legitimate business go bankrupt, go under. They are also willing to allow a significant part of the community to be involved in organized crime—and obviously only growing that particular area.

The question of all of the efforts made by health promotion on the sale of tobacco and the effect on young people makes it look pretty paltry, in the sense of the reality, when you can go to the high schools and see the consumption of illegal tobacco. It seems like a tremendous waste of money and, I would argue, even harassment on the part of convenience stores that are selling legal tobacco, that the government is spending money on making sure that these people sell age-restricted tobacco products appropriately and, at the same time, turning a blind eye while all of the illegal sales continue to flourish and grow.

I think that for us, we would view that the government has made an extremely tepid response to a very serious problem. It's a serious problem in terms of revenue, it's a serious problem in terms of youth and it's a serious problem in terms of organized crime. It is, again, something that, with more vigorous interest in this file, the government could actually have had a much better handle on.

0930

In summing up, I think that we have to continue to put pressure on the government. Certainly in our platform, which is Changebook, I know that we have committed to a much more vigorous effort in reducing contraband tobacco and the kinds of effects it has, quite frankly, throughout our community. People are becoming more and more conscious of the reality and the impact that contraband tobacco has. We are committed to using the resources of government to make sure that we do more than simply recognize the importance of reducing the number of smokers in our community.

We need to do a great deal more, and on October 6, we hope to have the opportunity to be able to, in fact,

create legitimate tobacco sales and then look at reducing tobacco use.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: I will try to use my time wisely, as I know that I only have 20 minutes to talk about this most important issue, which is contraband tobacco. It has been said, but it is worth repeating, that tobacco is the only product that, when used as directed, will kill half of its users. This makes no sense whatsoever.

What brought me here is really the desire to change health promotion in this province. I know that lots of good work can be done at the local level, but sometimes you need governments to change the laws to make it easier for people at the local level to effect change that will help keep people healthy; that will help create healthier societies and communities. That is one of the issues where it doesn't matter where you go in Ontario; we all recognize it as a serious threat to our health, to the health of our youth and to the health of our community.

I've been here for close to four years now. After asking for work on the contraband tobacco file, at the eleventh hour the government comes out with Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act. This is their timid effort at trying to deal with something this important, that has such dramatic effects on so many people in Ontario, and we do this when there are only a few days left in the sitting. So here we have this most important bill that, to me, the way it is written now, the possibility that it will be successful in curbing contraband tobacco is slim, but the possibility that it will drive a wedge between our communities and will create more harm than good is real. It is immediate and it is serious.

What do we do with this? The government puts in a time allocation motion. This is a fancy term that means, first of all, that people found out on May 18 that there were going to be public hearings on May 19. To their credit, eight groups from Toronto managed to make it under the four-hour deadline that they had to submit their names and show up. But this is not just a Toronto issue; there are people throughout Ontario who would have liked to come forward—there are best practices developing in every corner of this province when it has to do with contraband tobacco—but we never had a chance to hear from any of them. We never had a chance to hear from people in the northeast, in the northwest, in eastern Ontario; in the southwest, where the tobacco growers are, where most of the contraband trade takes place, because this thing was brought in at the eleventh hour, and then it was time-allocated. We had those truncated public hearings. As I said, four hours to put your name on the list is not really conducive to people from northeastern Ontario being full participants in this debate. Here we are on third reading, where I have no illusion that any changes will be made to that bill.

Here we will have a bill whose sole purpose is a punitive approach to a problem that cannot be solved by punishing people. You don't deal with tobacco addiction by punishing people; it is useless. As a health promotion

strategy, it rates as minus 100. It won't work. You don't deal with addiction by punishing people. There are other ways, but none of those are in the bill. You cannot see any of this forthcoming. This is the day before the House rises. I'm not going to see a well-structured tobacco strategy coming forward that would include contraband tobacco. All I see is this Bill 186, the punitive approach to dealing with addiction, to dealing with contraband.

The minute this bill was out the door, it ran into problems. I think I will quote some of the headlines that came out when the bill was first released: "Proposed Amendments to Tobacco Tax Act More Punitive than Concerned with Health," "Ontario's New Illegal Cigarette Laws Not Enough to Curb Smuggling," and the headlines keep going.

Everybody knows that, yes, this is a little step that could be perceived as going in the right direction. It's easy to stand here and quote statistics as to the number of deaths and the damage that tobacco use does to our community. We all know it. We've all seen it on the ground. We've all read the statistics. Tobacco kills people. It kills them by giving them cancer and all sorts of other diseases: heart disease, major organ disease. None of those deaths are pleasant, and the rate of it keeps going through the roof. We're looking at probably one billion deaths in this century alone. This is a lot of people.

Don't you think that you would like your government to bring forward a well-thought-out strategy that will hold water, that will give the people who have the addiction the support they need, that will give the people who are supporting this trade the time to say that cigarettes are going to be harder and harder to get? Let's get on with stopping smoking, and let's make sure that we don't encourage the next generation of smokers.

My colleague from Brant and I brought forward the cigarillo bill. Single-size flavoured cigarillos had one goal—that's it; that's all: to hook kids on tobacco so that we could grow the next generation of addicted smokers. That's all they were there for. No smoker really wants to smoke cherry-flavoured and chocolate-flavoured cigarillos. They were there at a buck apiece for kids to get hooked. After the bill received royal assent, 18 months went by before we moved ahead—18 months.

Mr. Dave Levac: Shame.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is a shame. I don't know how many kids got addicted to smoking and are now part of the ever-growing number of smokers in Ontario. Let's not fool ourselves here: The rate of smokers in Ontario has flatlined; it has not gone down.

We can say that the government has put forward one of the most aggressive tobacco controls that we should all be proud of. Sure; if you like to be proud of your laws, go ahead. I'd like to be proud of the results. I would be proud if I could see that the number of smokers in Ontario is steadily declining, but we're not seeing that. We're seeing it flatline. Frankly, where I'm coming from, we're seeing increases. What is there to be proud of? We could have all the laws in the world, but if the results are that our kids are still picking up the habit and that more

and more people in Ontario continue to smoke—which we all know will lead to more death and will lead to billions of dollars in health care spending, not to mention the human trauma, the human cost of those horrific diseases—there’s nothing to be proud of.

0940

Does it require action? Absolutely it requires action—right here, right now. But what have I got? I’ve got Bill 186. I couldn’t be more disappointed if they had tried. Bill 186 is a finance bill that deals with the tax act, that basically brings in a new punitive approach to the act. Police officers will have the ability to seize tobacco products in plain view. People who buy contraband tobacco may end up going to court or may end up having to pay fines.

But let’s be clear here: Contraband tobacco has been normalized in our province. This government has allowed it to grow and flourish for so many years that, frankly, most of the people who go and buy contraband tobacco have no idea that they’re doing something illegal. They are law-abiding citizens who would never do something to break the law if they at least knew that it was illegal. But when you see half of the smokers from the Sudbury Regional Police lining up at the smoke shack, well, that must be fine. It must be a legal thing; otherwise, police officers wouldn’t be doing it.

It is now part of the norm. It is how you buy cigarettes in Nickel Belt. This is why, when I go home at night, I see this big line of traffic trying to hang a left on regional road 55 to go into Atikameksheng Anishnawbek to go to the smoke shack. It is part of life in northern Ontario. This is how people buy cigarettes, this is where they buy it, and this is how everybody does it. Why would anybody think that they were doing something illegal when it is in plain view and when it has been going on for such a long time?

When 80-year-old Aunt Lou drives to Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, she goes and buys her two packs a day of cigarettes like she’s done for the last 10 years. She doesn’t think she’s breaking the law. All of a sudden, she may be pulled over by the cops. She won’t get a ticket; apparently, she will have to go to court. I can just imagine how many people will be quite surprised by what happens to them. How could that be?

Yet none of the education that needs to happen and none of the health promotion that needs to be tied into this is part of the bill. When I tried to bring it forward in committee—at clause-by-clause, I tried to bring changes to that bill, to say you cannot just do this; you have to let people know that they’re buying illegal tobacco, that what they are doing is illegal, and there will be consequences to this—I was told that it will be published on e-Laws. I don’t even know what e-Laws is. I certainly don’t know how to access it. And I can tell you that Aunt Lou doesn’t know about it either, but she knows where to buy smokes.

This is not going to work. We have an opportunity to do things here. We have an opportunity to pass laws that will make our province better. Why do we let those

opportunities go by? Why do we bring forward bills like Bill 186?

I have to quote from some of the First Nations. Two chiefs from the First Nations came to the committee hearings. One happened to be in Toronto; otherwise, he would never have made it. That’s the chief of the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians. He started his presentation by saying, “I have left our assembly to make this presentation, so I just want it noted that it’s on their good graces that I appear before you.”

The first thing he said when he came to the committee was that he opposed the bill. He opposed the bill because contraband tobacco is a complex issue. We all know its effects on health, but “the reality is that for First Nations engaged in the tobacco industry,” that now supports households and finances community development. There are also “legitimate, federally licensed and inspected businesses—a point that has gone ignored in this debate.” We must not forget that First Nations are under the control—very much so—of the federal government.

The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians has adamantly opposed Bill 186 as it is written, and they have opposed the process undertaken by Ontario to pass it through this Legislature. They oppose it because Bill 186 infringes upon the rights of First Nations people, straight and simple. First Nations have used and traded tobacco since time immemorial and have never surrendered this inherent right. It is an intrusion on First Nations jurisdiction and a violation of section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. First Nations have the right and the ability to transport tobacco between First Nations land.

Their second issue with the bill was jurisdiction. Under section 25 of Bill 186, we, the government of Ontario, would be introducing provincial regulation on to First Nations reserve land, which is something that has never been done and, from what this chief was saying, something that First Nations don’t want happening. They saw this as significant because under Canadian law, provincial jurisdiction on reserve land and its authority to make arrangements with First Nations is unsubstantiated, yet, in this bill, we take it as a given.

They also quoted section 91 of the Constitution, which clearly established dealing with First Nations as a federal responsibility.

Wouldn’t it have been better to sit down with First Nations to have those collaborative agreements worked out? Make no mistake: First Nations care about their children. They don’t want them picking up the habit. They don’t want members of their community to smoke, not any more than any one of us does. Do they consider tobacco as a threat to their health? Absolutely. Used in ceremonies, no, but when you start to smoke it the way white people do, it certainly is a threat; they recognize this. They welcome health promotion strategies. They welcome ways that will help First Nations to curb the habit and not pick up tobacco just as much as everybody else. Members of First Nations die of lung cancer at an alarming rate. They also have a greater rate of smokers

within their communities than we do in Ontario at large. They recognize it as a serious problem and as a complex problem that needs a well-rounded strategy.

To impose legislation on to First Nations land, when they come and tell us clearly that we have no jurisdiction, to me is looking for problems. What was more offensive of it all is that they were notified the morning of, that the bill was coming forward.

If we want this to succeed, we need partnership; we need buy-in. This is what health promotion is all about: to bring about a level of education so that people rally in, to listen to each other, to see how we can move forward together. But that's not what we did. We told the First Nations, "We're going to impose laws on your land; we're going to be able to seize tobacco in plain view; we're going to be able to stop the transfer of the tobacco between First Nations," all issues that they have raised already as saying that those are problematic.

0950

Will there be problems with that bill? Well, it is written in black and white for anybody who cares to see. We know that it will bring divisiveness, we know that it will drive a wedge between communities, and we know that it will bring us more problems than solutions yet on an issue that we all agree needs action.

When the RNAO came and presented, when the Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco came, when the chief medical officer of health came and when Toronto Public Health came, they all said the same thing: Sure, there is room for changes to taxation, but if we want to be successful in really achieving our goal, which is less and less people in Ontario smoking, then a punitive approach is not the way to go. A comprehensive health promotion strategy would be the way to go, but this is nowhere to be seen. We've seen good health promotion programs, youth peer programs, the funding being cut. This is very problematic. It is a timid step that will solve a few problems and create many more.

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

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 17, 2011, I'm now required to put the question.

Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

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

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

Third reading vote deferred.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively, and the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills put immediately without debate: Bill Pr32, An Act to revive

1518186 Ontario Inc.; Bill Pr46, An Act to revive Faradale Farms Ltd.; and Bill Pr47, An Act to revive Big A Amusements Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Do we have consent? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

1518186 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mr. Rinaldi moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive 1518186 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1518186 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mr. Rinaldi moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive 1518186 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be named as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

FARADALE FARMS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Martiniuk moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr46, An Act to revive Faradale Farms Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

FARADALE FARMS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Martiniuk moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr46, An Act to revive Faradale Farms Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

BIG A AMUSEMENTS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Delaney moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr47, An Act to revive Big A Amusements Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

BIG A AMUSEMENTS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Delaney moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr47, An Act to revive Big A Amusements Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Orders of the day?

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

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): There being no further business, this House is in recess until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 0956 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I'd like the House to give a warm welcome to a constituent of mine, Julie McLeod. She's an actor from Oakville. She's co-producing and starring in a film on Laura Secord and she is here today to study the portrait of Laura Secord that we have on the third floor. She's in the members' gallery with us today.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'd like members to join me in welcoming Annie Wang, who is a Queen's University student and, to my delight, is a summer student in our constituency office in Aurora. Welcome, Annie.

Mr. Rick Johnson: I'd like to introduce, in the west members' gallery, Debbie Brown and Ted Rodd from Lindsay. Ted just recently celebrated his 65th birthday, and we welcome him to the Legislature.

Mr. Jeff Leal: In the members' east gallery today, I'd like to welcome Brian Shury and his daughter, Lily. They won a silent auction item, having lunch with their MPP, and the fact is, it's unique because they were flying from Peterborough international airport to the island airport to be with us today.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I'd like to welcome to the House today two very good friends of mine from North Bay who, I've known since I was born. Ab and Betty Dennis are here today. They're great supporters and good corporate citizens of the city of North Bay, and we welcome them.

I'd also like to take this chance, because this seems to be the hottest ticket in town—my staff didn't get in yesterday, but they're here today: Phia Sanchez, Adrienne Guthrie, Karen Berkeley, David Palmer and, of course, Krystina Ceccarelli is here again today, my chief of staff. Last night during my tribute, I was remiss in not naming the only staff member who was actually in the House, working hard, taking pictures: Paul Tye. They're all here today with us, and we thank them.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's my pleasure to introduce and welcome and ask all members to welcome some people from Hamilton with the Jobs Action Centre: Bob

Sutton, Donna Muir, Louise Schmergea, Lynn Grant, David Chandler and Kevin Carey.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I'd like to welcome to the House Mike Frisina. He was my intern in my office last summer. He's a graduate student from McMaster, and I want to welcome him to Queen's Park.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: This is a school group visiting us—not from my riding, but their teacher is a very good friend of mine, Mr. Joe Bush. The students here are from Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Elementary School in York. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'd like to introduce Alex Millier, who is an intern here and who has come to observe question period. Welcome.

Mr. Phil McNeely: I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine from Ottawa–Orléans to the gallery today. Meghan Pugh has been a student of the professional ballet program at the National Ballet School here in Toronto since the fall of 2005, and graduates this June. She will be going to Stuttgart, Germany, to train for three weeks. She is here today with a friend, Ms. Alysha Pacheco, from the same program, and she's from the riding of Kitchener–Waterloo. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: To the last folks: If you ever get over to the national ballet, you may get to meet my son, who is the principal trumpet over there.

But that wasn't really what I stood up to say. I stood up to introduce Richard Francella, who is in the members' east gallery. Richard is the president of the Young Liberals at the University of Guelph, and he's my summer intern this year.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I'm pleased to introduce today from Thunder Bay, in the members' west gallery, the chief of emergency medical services in Thunder Bay, Norm Gale. Norm is also the president of the Association of Municipal Emergency Medical Services of Ontario. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I want to welcome Mr. Gale as well, but accompanying him is Mr. Neal Roberts, the director of emergency services for Middlesex county. Welcome, Neal and Norm.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am absolutely delighted that several members of my staff are here today. These are the people who make my job look easy. Megan Primeau, Meaghan Connolly, Sharon Navarro, Carly Foerster, Josie Verrilli, interns Brooke Auld and Yalda Paydar, and Paris Meilleur and Colin Le Fevre are all joining us today.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: I would like to welcome a good group from the far east, from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell: My lovely wife, Gisèle, is here today again. Also, I have Madame Chenier, the lady who keeps sending me all the press clippings, every day, from all the 11 weekly papers and daily papers from my area; Rhéal Filion, my accompagnateur; Jean Simon Schoenhalz; Christine Pelletier, my legislative assistant; and Lyse Desforges, my EA.

Last night, during my tribute, I forgot to mention three employees of my own from the constituency office: Lise Clark from the Rockland office, Sylvie Labrosse from the Hawkesbury office, and Martine Nadeau from Hawkesbury.

Welcome to you all.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member from Welland, to welcome Michael Aziz to the Legislature today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

On behalf of the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale, I'd like to welcome a group of political science graduates from McMaster University, who are visiting Queen's Park today. Welcome to the Legislature.

I'd like all members to join me in welcoming to the Speaker's gallery today Ray and Gloria Bliss, parents of one of our press gallery members, Paul Bliss. They are visiting from Fort Erie. Welcome to Queen's Park. I discovered that Ray is the ultimate question period junkie, and now he's finally going to see it live. Enjoy.

I'd also like to welcome to the Speaker's gallery today the Minister of Environment for British Columbia, Minister Terry Lake, and his executive assistant, Sabrina Loiacono. Welcome to Queen's Park, Minister.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAXATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. For generations, Ontario families who worked hard and played by the rules had a bright future ahead of them, and Ontario PCs believe they will once again, but something has to change in the province of Ontario and move our great province forward. Premier, our plan, Changebook, will give average families relief from the McGuinty Liberals' skyrocketing hydro bills and surprise tax increases that are taking bigger and bigger bites out of the family budgets. We will give average, middle-class families broad-based income tax relief to spend on their priorities, not the McGuinty Liberals'. Premier, why are you going the other way, with a carbon tax increase?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the energy—and perhaps it may be more properly categorized as histrionics and bombast—but I don't believe it. I don't believe it. Ultimately, I think Ontarians will be looking to our values to see who best represents their values: hard-working, “keep your sleeves rolled up, do what it takes to build a bright future for your kids and grandkids” kinds of values.

I'll give you one example. Yesterday, I visited Chrysler with the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. As a result of efforts that we made together, representing the values of Ontario families, we invested in supporting that sector. There are now 9,000 direct Chrysler jobs as a result of the support that we put in

there. The leader of the official opposition called that corporate welfare.

We don't believe that standing up for families and standing up for their jobs is corporate welfare; we call it doing the right thing.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, the Ontario Liberals' tax-and-spend values are out of date. They're out of touch, they're way before their best-before date, and that's why families want change in the province of Ontario.

1040

The Ontario PCs are the only party to put out a fully costed plan. It is called Changebook. It will provide broad, meaningful relief that families are—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): My apologies. We had an amazing four and a half hours in this chamber last night, and you could have heard a pin drop. I'm finding it very difficult to hear the Leader of the Opposition, and I would ask all members to be respectful.

Please continue.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Now I understand that New Democrats will put out their plan. Where is the McGuinty Liberals' plan? Why are you keeping it secret from the province of Ontario and the taxpayers who pay the bills? I know: because the McGuinty Liberals are going to bring in a Liberal carbon tax and increase the HST. Families can't afford it, Premier.

Will you state categorically that you will not increase taxes for the third time on hard-working Ontario families?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to just take the opportunity to thank my honourable colleague for endorsing the Ontario health premium. I want to thank him for endorsing the HST as well. He railed against both of those for a long, long time, but now he has seen at least a little bit of the light and understands the value of keeping those here.

Yesterday, we did something positive in terms of working with families, representing their values and supporting thousands of jobs in the auto sector.

Today, we did something else on behalf of Ontario families. We're absolutely committed to securing a bright future for their children and their grandchildren. We laid out the final two phases of our full-day kindergarten program. I want to say to Ontario families—because I know my honourable colleague opposite claims he stands for full-day kindergarten, but they voted against it. They called it a boondoggle; they called it a shiny new car; they called it a frill. I'd ask Ontarians to keep in mind who in their heart of hearts has stood up for this program from day one, who's prepared to drive this all the way through.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: The question, Premier, is: Who is going to raise taxes once again on Ontario families? Who is going to put hydro bills through the roof? Who is on track to doubling the provincial—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. The Minister of Infrastructure will withdraw the comment that he just made.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I withdraw, Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Research and Innovation and the honourable member from Welland: If you want to have a discussion, take it outside.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can send somebody over Niagara Falls in a barrel.

Please continue.

Mr. Tim Hudak: One thing is guaranteed, you can take it to the bank, a sure-fire bet, 100%: The McGuinty Liberals will increase taxes on Ontario families, send hydro bills through the roof and waste your money on secret backroom deals. That's why families like Changebook and want to see change here in the province of Ontario.

Premier, Changebook includes doubling the caregiver tax credit. That's compassion and relief for Ontario families struggling with McGuinty Liberal tax and hydro increases. And we will invest in 40,000 long-term-care beds: 5,000 new and 35,000 brought to modern standards. Those are our priorities. Why—

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Apparently, they're going to do it all and we don't have to worry about anything ever again. I don't believe that. I don't think Ontario families are going to believe that. We've heard that before. We saw that movie before.

They have 229 promises so far, but their numbers don't add up. We know it's going to mean cuts for Ontario families. There are just a few ways the slick book doesn't add up.

They've got a debt retirement charge, and they don't include the cost of their debt retirement charge promise. That's \$1.4 billion missing from their plan. They know that 70% of all the money we invest in program spending goes into our schools and our health care. They have a multi-billion-dollar gaping hole. There's only one way they can address that, only one way they can fill that: to cut our schools and cut our health—

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

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, just moments ago you said you haven't even read our plan, Changebook. I encourage you to do so: relief for families, setting priorities like health care and education, and ending the waste, fraud and secret deals that have become the hallmark of the McGuinty Liberal government.

Premier, with all due respect, I'd love to read your plan, but you're keeping it hidden until after the October

6 election campaign. Talk about secret deals, Premier: You have a well-worn reputation for secret, backroom deals—your Samsung deal, your 3% raise for OPSEU workers, paying prison guards bonuses to show up for work, merit pay bonuses for eHealth bureaucrats. Premier, isn't it time to end—

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: A lot of negativity, a lot of anger, a lot of resentment, but I just don't think that's in keeping with the expectations Ontario families have of their leaders. I think they want us to put forward a positive and optimistic vision.

I want to remind my honourable colleague of what Ontario families have done so well by coming together and building together. In our schools, our test scores are up by 13%; our grad rates are up by 14%. If you take a look at our adult population, we have one of the highest rates of post-secondary education in the world, and when it comes to academic results, we've now cracked the top 10 globally. That's what families—moms and dads and students—have done working with teachers in our schools alone.

In health care, because of the efforts of our doctors and nurses and everybody who is committed to our public health care system, wait times are down, we've got more hospitals, more MRIs are getting done faster, more CTs—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, you've really got to work on getting your story straight. You accuse us of negativity. You just practically accused us of everything from bringing locusts into the province of Ontario to taking away firstborns. Nobody believes you, Premier. Nobody believes you anymore, and that's why they want change here in our province.

Our plan, Changebook, is there to give families the relief they need, to end your secret deals and waste like eHealth. Where is your plan? Where is Premier McGuinty's tax book plan? One thing we know for sure: He's going to keep that hidden from the province of Ontario because he's going to bring in a carbon tax and he's going to increase the HST.

Ontario families say, "Enough is enough." They want change. They want to see Changebook. Won't you agree, Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, we're used to the railing and ranting and raving. You might call them the new three Rs of the Conservative Party. But again, when it comes to standing up for families and being informed by their values, I'll give you three specific examples where they came up short.

We said we wanted to cut our drug costs by half a billion dollars. They took another side. They wouldn't stand with families. Some 400,000 auto sector jobs were at risk and hung in the balance. They took another side; they wouldn't stand up for our families. We've now got 50,000 new job opportunities as part of our clean energy plan. They're taking another side once again.

They won't stand up for our families, and they won't stand up for our jobs. They still don't understand Ontario families. They roll up their sleeves, they work hard and they do what it takes to build a bright future for their children and their grandchildren. Those are their values. Those are our values.

1050

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Now we see the second change in Liberal talk—he puts “job opportunities” all of a sudden. Nobody believed your phony job numbers from the get-go, Premier.

Let's talk about Liberal values. This is a Premier who said he would not increase taxes, and he increased taxes over and over again on Ontario families; a Premier who said that hydro bills would go up 1%, and that wasn't true either; a Premier who said smart meters will save you money—not true either; a Premier who made sure that his Liberal friends got rich from the eHealth boondoggle. That says something about Liberal values and why people want to see change in Ontario: so our great province can lead again.

I'm asking the Premier: When will you put forward your tax book plan? Why won't you be honest with the people of Ontario about your plan to increase the—

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It's an interesting approach. I think it's already starting to wear thin, and we're not anywhere near the election.

I do want to thank my honourable colleague once again for supporting the HST in Ontario. I also want to thank him for supporting the Ontario health premium; I know he has railed against that over and over again.

Most importantly, I want to thank Ontario families. We have come so far together. We have turned our province around. We are on the right track. We have better schools today, by any objective measure. We have better health care in the province of Ontario. We have a stronger economy. Jobs are coming back to Ontario. We are leading the country when it comes to emerging from that terrible recession. All of these things have happened.

We had a plan that we couldn't possibly execute or deliver without the support of Ontario families. We're going to continue working with them. They don't want to go back. They don't want to go off track. They want better schools, they want better health care and they want a strong economy, and that comes from working together—

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

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. In uncertain times, people are hoping their government will make their needs a priority. Instead, the Premier has made life much more expensive and adopted

Conservative priorities like a \$1.8-billion corporate tax giveaway. With banks declaring record profits this week, how can the Premier say that they need any help at all?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague hopefully at some point will acknowledge some of the good things that we have done. Some of them have been informed in part by some of the thinking that has existed in that party for some time as well.

Let me just pick out the Ontario child benefit. It's benefiting 1.3 million children who are growing up in struggling families. It's the first benefit of its kind in the country. It is a considerable investment; it's over \$1 billion every year. We're doing it because we think it's in keeping with Ontario family values. They want to ensure that no family is left behind. They want to ensure that every child has the best possible start. We were informed by those values and we came up with that initiative, and I'd ask my honourable colleague to acknowledge that as an important, responsible, thoughtful, progressive and, in fact, necessary initiative to support our families.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm talking about the big bank benefit. This week, Royal Bank and Scotiabank each said they made \$1.5 billion last quarter. Profits at Bank of Montreal reached \$800 million. CIBC didn't fare too badly either at about \$675 million, thank you very much. They don't need any public help to succeed. They're doing very, very well. In tough times, why has the Premier made it his priority to give them a tax cut?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I recommend to my honourable colleague that she take a look at a number of reports that have been put out by thought groups traditionally considered on the left, like Hugh Mackenzie. They talked about our package of tax reforms, and the title of the report says it all: Not a Tax Grab After All. He points out that if you divide the families into three groups, the lower-income families come out ahead as a result of our tax reforms, the middle-income families are about the same and the upper-income families come out a little bit behind.

One of the approaches that I would recommend to my honourable colleague is that she no longer pursue this whole notion that somehow you've got to get at big business to satisfy the needs of the poor. We have found a way to ensure that we support the growth of our economy at the same time that we support low-income families. We've increased the minimum wage. We've developed the Ontario child benefit. We've put in place full-day kindergarten to make sure all our kids from all socio-economic groups—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The financial sector alone will receive \$500 million of the Premier's corporate tax giveaway. That's more than enough to take the HST off home heating or hire 5,000 nurses or fund over 10,000 new long-term-care beds for seniors who need help. Why has the Premier made this corporate tax cut—this corporate tax giveaway—his priority?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, I would say to my honourable colleague that I want to recommend to her some of the stuff that has been said by folks who are traditionally on the left. This is what the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives study said. They said the HST “is virtually revenue neutral when viewed as part of a total tax package that includes ... sales and property tax credits and a significant decrease in personal income tax rates.”

I’d ask my honourable colleague to acknowledge that we have cut income taxes permanently for 94% of Ontarians; nine out of 10 Ontarians are now getting a permanent income tax cut. If you add that to the fact that we’re reducing our electricity bills by 10%, if you add that to the fact that we keep increasing the minimum wage—we’ve increased it, I think, seven years out of seven—those are good examples of our commitment to ensuring that we bring fairness to our responsibilities as a government, making sure that we don’t compromise economic growth, at the same time that we support families, especially families who are struggling.

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier. After watching the HST drive up the cost of heating oil, hydro, gas, and diesel, Grace Jorgenson from Keewatin started a petition, on her own, that has been circulating across northwestern Ontario. On that petition she has gathered, just by herself, over 500 signatures. Why are the McGuinty Liberals putting tax giveaways to Canada’s richest corporations ahead of practical help to make Grace’s life more affordable?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think one of the things that that particular individual who has taken this initiative on her own—and I commend her for that. I’m sorry; her name escapes me. But I’m sure my honourable colleague will want to bring to her attention the energy tax credit that we’ve put in place for northerners, to make sure that she’s aware of that.

Just so we’re clear about the numbers here, over the course of the next three years, families will benefit to the tune of \$12 billion in terms of reduced taxation. For businesses, it’s about \$5 billion. It’s \$5 billion for businesses and \$12 billion for families. That gives you some sense of the balance and the thoughtfulness that we’ve brought to this.

In addition to those income tax cuts that I have referenced, there’s the Ontario child benefit, and there’s a children’s activity tax credit, which is \$50 each year to help pay for sports or art and music classes. We’re not saying it’s a huge deal, but it’s something that’s important.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Families in northern, eastern, rural and urban Ontario are really struggling. Sue Kelly from Ottawa writes this: “The cost of living is soaring and salaries are not increasing anywhere near the increased rate of basic necessities.” Do banks really need

public dollars, or should we be focusing on making Sue’s life easier and more affordable?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I don’t think it has ever been out of fashion to attack banks, and I don’t intend to stand here and defend banks, but I can tell you that one of the fastest-growing job sectors that we’ve had in the province of Ontario is in financial services. They’re employing thousands and thousands more people every year. Beyond that, we’ve also established ourselves now as being without par globally in terms of our reputation, as offering a well-regulated banking industry that ensures that we get it right and that we continue to employ more and more people.

At some point, I’d ask my honourable colleague to in fact commend the financial services sector for its continuing growth and for the ever-increasing number of moms and dads it’s hiring on an almost daily basis.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It’s sad that the Premier doesn’t know that the banks and insurance companies laid off 25,000 workers in the past year.

Natalie Beneteau from the Essex area writes, “Due to downsizing, I was forced to take early retirement and was fortunate to find part-time work ... to make ends meet. The constant increases in energy costs, gasoline hikes and soaring cost of living are a great drain to the minimal income I receive.”

My question remains: Why is the Premier helping banks and insurance companies and ignoring women like Natalie?

1100

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this.

I would recommend to my honourable colleague an evolution that was presided over by Tony Blair, which I think was very helpful to the United Kingdom. He said, “The principles of the Labour Party are its values: the belief in a fair deal for ordinary people, social justice, progress. But the way to do that is not to tax a few more people at the top,” and, “In the past, social democrats became identified with high taxes, especially on business. Modern social democrats recognize that in the right circumstances, tax reform and tax cuts can play a critical part in meeting their wider social objectives.

“For instance, corporate tax cuts raise profitability and strengthen the incentives to invest.”

I would recommend that evolution by a progressive labour party to my honourable colleague.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: For over a year now, the Ontario PC caucus has been raising with the Premier the concerns of Ontario families, who are squeezed financially and struggle to pay their hydro bills. They want to know that they have a Premier who understands them.

Sir, I ask you: How much did you pay for your hydro bill this month?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Frankly, I think what Ontario families want to know is, what is the difference between their scheme and our long-term plan? Their intention is to dismantle our clean energy programs, destroy our clean energy economy and put thousands of Ontarians out of work. I don't think Ontario families want to go there.

I think Ontario families want to keep building a stronger economy. I think Ontario families want us to keep investing in those jobs that we're providing for families right across this province. Their slick book has what I would call pretty warped priorities. We're creating jobs for Ontario families; they're creating jobs for Ontario inmates.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I asked the Premier how much he paid for his hydro last month. I checked my bill; it was \$244. I am astonished that either you don't know how much your bill is or the energy minister is paying your bill.

After eight years, Premier McGuinty is simply too tired and too out of touch with Ontario families. Every family in Ontario knows what their hydro bill is, because it's the bill they dread the most.

Families need change, and we will offer change in Tim Hudak's Changebook. Changebook shows how an Ontario PC government will help families save \$275 when we take the HST and the debt retirement charge off those bills. It's money they can spend to balance their own budget, put into their mortgage or spend on their own. But your crazy energy experiments are costing Ontario families \$310.

How can you be so out of touch with Ontario families who need relief—

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

Hon. Brad Duguid: I think the numbers the member opposite should be checking should be the numbers in her slick book, because they've got 229 reckless promises in the slick book and they've left a huge, gaping multi-billion-dollar hole that can only be made up one way, and that's by cutting things like education and health care.

Just to give you an example, they made a reckless promise to get rid of the debt retirement charge—which they created in the first place—by wishing it away. That's simply reckless. They can't wish away a \$14.8-billion stranded debt that they stuck us with. It's also reckless to hide from Ontario families their scheme to fire doctors, nurses and teachers.

Ontario families deserve better. They won't be fooled by their shifty slick book; they won't be fooled at all. They'll stand by us as we're creating jobs—

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

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My question is to the Premier. The news from Ontario schools just gets worse and

worse. Last month, we learned of the continued decline in teacher librarians in our schools and the closing of school libraries, and today, we learned from People for Education that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please. My apologies.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

Please continue.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Today, we learned from People for Education that there are deep inequities in the Ontario school system. For example, students at schools in lower-income neighbourhoods are more than twice as likely to be waiting for special education supports than students from wealthier areas.

Does the McGuinty government accept that students with special needs should wait longer for services if they are poor?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Education.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: The honourable member has identified that, yes, People for Education has issued their report today. While I've had an opportunity to look at it very quickly—I read the executive summary; I do look forward to getting into the detail—I will also say to the people of this House that the document—we very much value the input that we received from this group.

One of the quotes that I thought was an important one to share with the group here is that they have recognized that “Among OECD countries, our 15-year-olds place in the top 10 in reading, writing, science and mathematics tests, and the vast majority of Ontario students in grades 3, 6 and 9 are getting C or better.... In randomized pan-Canadian tests of 13-year-olds, Ontario students ranked first among English-language schools in mathematics, reading and writing....”

This group also recognizes that our students are—

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

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Try this quote: “Since 2005, the per-pupil amount in the” learning opportunity grant “has been reduced by 9%.” According to them, “not all Ontario students have equal access either to the educational supports or to the enrichments that are vital components of a well-rounded education.”

Students in schools with a high proportion of low-income students are less likely to get special education supports and less likely to have access to arts, technology and physical education programming. When will the government finally do something to ensure that Ontario students don't get a second-class education just because of their income level?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I would also direct the honourable member and the members of this House to another quote in the report that says, “By international standards, Ontario can congratulate itself on being one of the jurisdictions where the effect of socio-economic

status on achievement is less than in many other countries.” So we are doing some very good things. Teachers are doing very good things with students in our schools.

Our government has increased funding in our schools by 46%. In the most recent GSNs, we have spent \$2.5 billion to support students with special needs. We consult every year with our education partners to understand how we can better deliver those dollars to students in classrooms. We have made changes every year. Always we will continue to strive for excellence—

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

NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Bill Mauro: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Northern ridings were overlooked for a very long time until our government came to power in 2003. Over the past eight years, we’ve seen record levels of investment in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan and ridings right across the north. Now the opposition would like to give northerners a stronger voice and would like to focus on bringing jobs and investment to the north—or at least that’s what it says in their slick book.

When our government brought forward a significant support package for forestry in northern Ontario and auto in southern Ontario, the opposition called it corporate welfare. When our government increased the northern Ontario heritage fund from \$60 million to \$100 million every year, in stark contrast to the NDP, which that took all \$60 million away from the northern Ontario heritage fund—

Interjection.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: Withdraw.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The interjection from the Minister of Community Safety is not helpful.

Please get to your question.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Our government increased the northern Ontario heritage fund from \$60 million to \$100 million every year, in stark contrast to the NDP, who took all \$60 million away. They voted against it.

Minister, please outline some of the supports our government has brought forward for my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan and all northern ridings.

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Hon. Sandra Pupatello: It is important to note—especially today as we are walking away from a recession that none of us have seen before and recognizing the strength that is coming from the north, in particular because the Ontario government chose to partner with northern communities—when we increased that northern heritage fund from \$60 million to \$100 million, the opposition voted against that initiative. I find it pretty interesting that they are doing flip-flops of Herculean proportion now because they want to go and tell the

people of the north that somehow they support them. We know that a billion dollars to the forestry sector was necessary, as it was to the auto industry, and yet the opposition members opposed that.

Today, another flip-flop of epic proportion: They want to tell the north they’re in favour of all of these jobs—

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

Mr. Bill Mauro: It’s important to remind northern Ontario residents how the PC Party has flip-flopped on job creation and economic growth not only in northern Ontario but right across the province.

We’ve seen the members opposite publicly declare their opposition to the green energy industry, including, I would suspect, opposition to the conversion of the two coal plants in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan—plants they have committed to closing. This represents 230 jobs saved, millions in tax base to the communities of Thunder Bay and Atikokan, and about \$300 million in construction work for the building trade unions in my community. The members opposite have established the fact that they would get rid of the FIT programs and renege on a Samsung deal—\$7 billion of private sector investment.

Minister, if these statements become reality, what would this mean for those people employed within Ontario’s green energy industry?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I think it is our job to let people know that when the Leader of the Opposition makes his statement in his slim book or slick book or whatever he’s calling it, he is killing jobs today in Ontario. We are meeting investors today whom he is having an impact on because he’s telling them that that FIT rate will no longer be, that he’s going to rip up contracts. We know that manufacturers who are busy making investments today need to know that there is a stable climate for investment—not what the opposition party or parties are offering.

This is important. These jobs matter. Is it the 230 affiliated with a northern community? Is it the thousands across the green industry jobs? The Leader of the Opposition is job-killing with his slim book, and it’s our job to make sure people know about it. We cannot trust the opposition parties—

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

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: My question is to the Premier. You presented farmers as being supporters of your expensive energy experiments that are driving up hydro bills for Ontario families. In fact, you told this House, “Some of the strongest support we have for our wind turbine program comes from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.” You might have wanted to check with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture before you said that, because they’ve joined the push for a moratorium on wind turbines.

Will you apologize to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the members of this assembly for saying something that simply is not true?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: It's obvious that the member didn't check with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. He's suggesting we check with them. Well, I did check with them. We spoke last night, indeed, to the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Once again, you didn't check your facts, and you're wrong.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture's position has not changed; you're absolutely incorrect. I would suggest that the next time that you raise an issue like this that really misconstrues the position of another party, you have the courtesy to check with them first.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Premier McGuinty has said a lot of things to sell his—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please continue.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Premier McGuinty has said a lot of things to sell his expensive energy experiments that play fast and loose with the facts. He said his subsidies would only add—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I don't need the assistance of any of the other armchair Speakers. I just ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment, please.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I withdraw.

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

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: He said his subsidies would only add 1% to hydro bills, but yesterday we learned that families will pay an extra \$310 a year for the next 20 years. He said families would save money with the smart meter tax machines. He said the Ontario Federation of Agriculture was a big supporter of his industrial wind turbines when Wayne Black of the OFA is saying he is 100% in favour of the moratorium.

Ontario needs change—

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

Hon. Brad Duguid: [*Inaudible*] that the member opposite got up and asked a question today on the Green Energy Act because, indeed, I think the people in Tillsonburg are waiting very eagerly to hear where he stands. Does he stand with the McGuinty government creating 900 jobs in Tillsonburg? Does he stand with the mayor of Tillsonburg, who calls the program indeed—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member from Oxford that you just asked the question, and you've been here long enough to understand the standing orders. If you're not satisfied, you can call for a late show.

Minister.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I guess my question is, does he stand with us in creating 900 jobs in Tillsonburg through the Siemens plant, through our Green Energy Act? Does

he stand with his own mayor in Tillsonburg, who feels very strongly about what this project is doing for Tillsonburg and, indeed, for farmers right across this province? Does he stand with the farmers who are benefiting from our microFIT programs, who are benefiting from our feed-in tariff? Or does he stand with his leader, who opposes all of that? People in Tillsonburg—

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

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Minister of Labour. At a time when employers have been paid \$2 billion in experience rating rebates and have had their premiums for WSIB coverage reduced by 27%, while at the same time injured workers' benefits have been cut by 20% compared to the cost of living, I've just received information that the WSIB's unbelievably aptly named "aggravation" policy is being differently interpreted and applied. This appears to be another attempt to address the unfunded liability on the backs of injured workers.

Can this minister explain what possible justification his WSIB has for launching this new attack on injured workers?

Hon. Charles Sousa: To all members of the House, today is a very important day. We have a number of injured workers on our front lawn telling us of some of the concerns and challenges they've faced over many years.

I've heard many stories personally. I've met with a number of organizations and individuals, and their stories are heart-wrenching. They look to us to commit to more dignity, more respect and fairness.

To members across the way, we recognize that more needs to be done, and indeed, more will be done. I'll add more in my supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Paul Miller: Workers who file a claim because of a workplace injury are suddenly found to have a pre-existing condition, like a degenerative disk, which they may not even have known existed. The alleged pre-existing condition may not have caused any problems until it was affected by workplace injury, but these injured workers are having their benefits and entitlements reduced because of the WSIB's reinterpretation of the aggravation policy.

Will this minister commit to fixing this hateful new attack on injured workers rather than just showing up for a photo op today at the annual Injured Workers' Day rally?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Let's compare what that side of the House has done in the past. It was the NDP that introduced the Friedland formula, the F-word, as made by the injured workers. The other side of the House introduced a modified Friedland formula, and what did that do over those 12 years? It increased a measly 2.9% of their costs.

Since we've come to power, we've increased and adjusted their benefits by almost 8%, and we will continue to support them. It is why we've introduced the Harry Arthurs review to ensure that we find a permanent replacement to the Friedland formula. We've introduced direct deposit to also assist those who are injured workers and require those funds.

But more importantly, in respect to those injured workers, they want us to do better in providing for prevention and protecting others who are working, and we will do our utmost to continue to do just that.

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RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation. The Perimeter Institute in Waterloo region is holding their Equinox Summit beginning tonight, and next week. It brings leading researchers and scientists to Waterloo region. They'll be talking about clean technologies, drawing over 600 people. Tonight, Freeman Dyson will be speaking about quantum physics. It's a collaboration between the University of Waterloo and the Perimeter Institute; Mike Lazaridis and his work.

My question is this: What is the government doing to create high-quality jobs in clean energy technologies in Waterloo region, Kitchener–Conestoga and across the province?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: As you know, in our budget we committed an additional \$50 million to the Perimeter Institute, which is our second investment.

We believe that the research cluster in Kitchener-Waterloo is one of the leading clusters right now in the world. It has attracted, arguably, the best set of scientists. There will be, I think, some good news about that tonight.

It's unfortunate, though, because the Leader of the Opposition said he didn't believe our Premier. Well, I do believe our Premier. I also, unfortunately, believe the Leader of the Opposition, because one of our most critical policies has been the HST; some \$8.5 billion removed from these small-growth companies that are creating 50% of the jobs. I actually do believe that after two years of carping and complaining, the opposition party, if ever in power, would actually take that away and put \$8.5 billion worth of costs back into the economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: Thank you, Minister, for that. Definitely, supporting cutting-edge research is how we keep jobs in Ontario, and I'm proud that those many jobs are being created in Waterloo region thanks to this government's long-term vision and support.

Tonight I will be at the Perimeter Institute in Waterloo to recognize the great work of our researchers: advancements that will create jobs and prosperity in Ontario. My question for the minister is this: Will the minister affirm this government's commitment to moving Ontario forward through innovation by joining me and Minister

Milloy tonight at the Perimeter Institute? Will you be there, Minister?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: You know, we are so different, to my friend over there. The opposition party wants to massively subsidize and sole-source iPads. The opposition party wants to cancel the Green Energy Act and the green FIT program. This clean tech summit that I'm going to tonight—let's just go through this: That would damage 3,000 firms. It would undermine \$8 billion in investment. It would start to see an erosion of 65,000 jobs. This is the equivalent of cancelling the auto pact. And by the way, in the auto sector, you folks want to end the subsidies that we did on the auto sector. You want to tear apart the two largest, most successful sectors in Ontario. This is the equivalent of tearing apart—

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

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. As you know, the proposed application for a quarry in the township of Melancthon involves over 2,300 acres. This application is the largest in Ontario's history. Reviewing an application of this size and scope is going to take significant time and resources from your ministry. Minister, do you believe you have the staff and expertise available in MNR to review this proposed quarry application?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'm pleased to answer the question again. I want to reassure the public, and especially the citizens of the township of Melancthon, that we're only at the beginning of the licence application process. In fact, it's my job as the Minister of Natural Resources—it's my responsibility—to ensure that all concerns, whether they're environmental concerns, health concerns or safety concerns, are addressed before any licence is issued. Let me make it clear: If these concerns are not addressed, no licence will be issued and no excavation shall commence.

I understand that there has been significant local concern expressed about this aggregate licence application. While I was not legally able to extend the objection period, I made it clear that I intended to consider comments outside the initial 45 days. As a result, I extended the comment period for the environmental registry. The additional 76 days will give the community a chance to provide their opinions—

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Minister, I do appreciate the extension—I think that's an important part of the consultation process—but my question was very specific: Can you assure the residents in my riding that the Aggregate Resources Act will provide the same level of protection and scrutiny that an environmental assessment would?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I can tell you that I have been in contact with the member from Dufferin–Caledon and the Melancthon city council. I know they're concerned;

they've shared those concerns with me personally. I also spoke with Mayor Hill about this issue a number of weeks ago to let him know that my ministry was going to extend the EBR comment period.

Even before the application was submitted, I know that the proposed quarry was the subject of significant media attention. Residents are concerned about the preservation of agricultural land and the quarry's effect on the water table.

The Aggregate Resources Act has a process that gives the applicant up to two years—until March 2013—to have resolved any objections to the application. If there are still unresolved objections to the licence after that two-year period, the Ministry of Resources can refer the application to the Ontario Municipal Board.

We're still listening; we're still in that process where people can provide comments.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Some 300,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs have been lost in this province under this Premier's watch. In my hometown of Hamilton, 30% of the manufacturing jobs have been lost. For the past few years, Hamilton Jobs Action Centre has been doing an extraordinary job helping unemployed workers in the Hamilton area get back to work. But now the government has decided to shut down the centre by eliminating its funding on June 30.

My question is, will this government extend funding for this badly needed centre or will it once again turn its back on the workers of Hamilton?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon. John Milloy: We're very proud of the work that is done by Employment Ontario across the province in terms of supporting workers who have been laid off. Every year we invest over \$1 billion through Employment Ontario in a series of agencies across this province that offer job assistance to Ontarians who are facing layoff situations, who are looking to enter the workforce for the first time or who are looking to enter the workforce after an absence of many, many years.

Over the past number of years we have worked very closely with the sector, following the transfer of services from the federal government, to put together a transformation which would see that each community would have a number of providers able to offer a full range of services to anyone who is looking for a job. We have worked to focus on those individuals who are looking for a job and make sure that they have—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The centre has widespread support from across Hamilton. Representatives from the centre, from the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton and workers who have benefited from the centre are actually here today. I introduced them at the

beginning of question period. A report just released praises the centre for the excellent work that it is doing with laid-off workers.

So I ask again, will the Premier commit right here and right now to extend funding past June 30 for the Hamilton Jobs Action Centre, or will this minister and this Premier stand by while the doors close on an organization that has provided assistance and hope to thousands of laid-off Hamiltonians?

Hon. John Milloy: I'd like to remind the member that unemployment was 9.9% in September 2009, during the period of the recession. The economy is turning the corner and in the community it is now down to 5.5%. Despite the fact that it's gone down, we are still anxious to make sure that people in the community of Hamilton have access to a full range of services. I want to give a list to the honourable member: the Hamilton Help Centre, Wesley Urban Ministries, the YMCA, Mohawk College, VPI—a variety of agencies within the community of Hamilton that are offering a full range of services.

We took a look at Employment Ontario and we took a look at it from the perspective of the individual who is looking for help, for a job. They need to go to a community centre which is going to offer them a full range—

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

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Dave Levac: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, the opposition put out a document on how they think they can actually govern the province. Farmers in my riding were astonished and puzzled that the Leader of the Opposition managed to fit in all of his Timbits for agriculture on less than one page.

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Inside of that mini bit on agriculture, I noted that they included risk management programs, but I thought our government had already taken care of that permanently in our last budget.

I'd like to ask the minister if that can be confirmed. Can you provide some clarity for my local farmers on exactly what the government is doing to support the farmers in my riding and those in Ontario?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I do thank you for the question. If imitation is the highest form of flattery, then the slick book gives high praise to the McGuinty government. Unfortunately, I can say to you that if you're developing policy by looking in the rear-view mirror, it doesn't move Ontario forward. It doesn't move farmers forward. It doesn't move food processors forward, our producers, our retailers, our communities or our families.

In the list of the 229 risky promises, we have a gaping hole of \$10 billion. We've done our RMP, \$2 billion in income stabilization, and a very successful buy-Ontario plan. But I say to you, in order to predict the future, we look to the past.

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

Mr. Dave Levac: It's very clear to the constituents in my riding and those farmers across Ontario that we have come forward with a plan on risk management that they asked for and that they planned and organized. So I appreciate that. I know that you know that our farmers want and need that risk management at both levels of government, yet the federal government still refuses to participate in the program. It's a shame that the opposition has given up on the federal government supporting it. It's further an embarrassment that the opposition is taking credit for the risk management program. That's like the rooster taking credit for the sun rising.

I want to know from you, Minister, what are we going to do to continue to have the federal government support the risk management program that all the farmers in Ontario want?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I really do believe that Bette Jean Crews, the president of the OFA, encapsulates the answer to that: Without support at the federal level, the remaining burden is left for the farmers.

We on this side of the House say, that's not acceptable. The programs were developed by farmers for farmers. At the table we have the federal government, the provincial government and the farmers. There's somebody missing from that table, and I ask the members from across the way, do you stand with Ontario farmers or do you stand with your federal cousins? The farmers know the answer to that and they recognize that by their risky slick book plan.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mr. John Yakabuski: To the Minister of Natural Resources: On May 10, your ministry posted an application for a permit under section 17 of the Endangered Species Act that would allow a wind turbine developer to "kill, harm and harass" two species at risk and destroy their habitat. When asked about this application, you responded, "For the most part, we can find ways to mitigate around endangered species reasonably."

I've never heard those words from you or your ministry when talking about the forestry industry. Every time they look for relief from the Endangered Species Act that was foisted upon them without consultation, the wall goes up. When will you start treating the forestry industry with the same kind of respect?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'm pleased to answer a question on our Endangered Species Act. We know that we are the North American leader in species protection and recovery, and our government includes strong provisions to support the protection of habitat and species.

The Endangered Species Act contains a permitting system which balances the sustainable use of resources with the protection of threatened or endangered species. Recently, we introduced a five-month service guarantee for a permit because we realize there needs to be a

balance between economic development as well as protection. This five-month service guarantee will begin once a proponent has finalized a complete application with my ministry. It's going to eliminate the need for developers and landowners to be held up in their process. In fact, if they are removing trees, they're going to be—

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: I've recently met with some forestry operators in my riding who told me that it has never been tougher to earn a living and operate in the province of Ontario.

Minister, your comments on this application suggest that you're treating it cavalierly and have two standards. When it comes to forestry operators, you don't consult or look to mitigate; you impose. In fact, you had promised to use the Crown Forest Sustainability Act when dealing with forestry and then you went back on your word. Why is it that you have two standards: one for developers trying to build unwanted wind turbines and another for the forest industry? Why do you continue to impose policies that are killing, harming and harassing good forestry jobs in this province?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'm pleased to answer this question. Certainly, we acknowledge the work that the forestry sector has done to help conserve and protect species at risk in Ontario, but we don't need to take any lessons from the opposition. You have opposed any work that we've ever done to protect endangered species. You are not the protector of this sector. You've done nothing to be helpful. In fact, you have a reckless plan to jeopardize our economic recovery and take Ontario off track. You essentially have voted against endangered species protection at every turn, and you can give us no lessons on this front. We have worked very hard to get the Open for Business initiative to work on our regulatory burdens. We're proud of our record. We have a gold standard that's recognized across Canada and across Ontario. We're happy to work with our partners and we appreciate their support.

CELLPHONES

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Promotion de la santé. Given that the World Health Organization has now classified electromagnetic fields from cellphones as a possible carcinogen—that is, that it could cause cancer—will the government require cellphone companies to put warnings on cellphones sold in Ontario?

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I thank the member for her question. First of all, let me assure you that our government continues to be committed to the health of Ontarians. We have worked diligently to address the dangers associated with cigarette smoking, unhealthy eating and inactivity.

We certainly welcome the World Health Organization's report. We will continue to review all evidence,

including this report, in consultation with our experts. Let me just say that the one thing that the member says—and I agree with what she says—is that they said there is “possible”—and I think that is a very key word for her to keep in mind. I continue to talk with our Chief Medical Officer of Health, Health Canada and all our experts in monitoring the new scientific evidence that has come to us.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: This is an issue that I have addressed with this minister before in a number of ways. In rejecting our call to inform Ontarians about the health risk of cellphones, the minister said, “Based on reviews of available scientific evidence by credible public health agencies such as the World Health Organization, the RF energy from cellphones has not been demonstrated to be causally linked to adverse health effects, including cancer.” That is what she said.

Now that the World Health Organization has linked cellphones to cancer and is calling for pragmatic measures to reduce exposure, won't the minister support the pragmatic measures by putting warning labels on cellphones, or will she do nothing at all to educate Ontarians about the possible health risks for cellphone use?

Hon. Margaret R. Best: Let me reiterate for the member, in case she didn't hear me the first time: We have worked diligently to address the dangers of cigarette smoking, unhealthy eating and inactivity. As the member said before, the World Health Organization has said that there is a possible, and I quote, “possible,” and I underline that—that is why we have experts that we speak to. I do not make decisions on my own without listening to the experts. What I will do, upon reviewing this evidence and talking with our Chief Medical Officer of Health and Health Canada, is that we will continue to monitor the new scientific evidence—

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

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Jeff Leal: My question this morning is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Minister, in my riding of Peterborough, there has been a lot of discussion of the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook's schemes, tabled in a so-called slick book promise pamphlet. While the Ontario PC Party makes some mention of municipalities several times in the glorified PowerPoint presentation, they haven't made one solitary mention of the provincial-municipal service delivery review our government did a few years back.

This program reversed what was considered a tax nightmare on Ontario families. The downloading undertaken by the PC Party 10 years ago literally jacked up property taxes for seniors right across the province of Ontario. That party downloaded millions of dollars in extra costs on the tax base—and claimed it was revenue-neutral.

Minister, could you please explain to this House where the current government stands on the uploading of social services?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Let me make it abundantly clear to the member who asked the question, to you, Speaker, and to every municipality in the province of Ontario: We have made a commitment to protect the uploading which we've started in partnership, working together with our municipalities. Contrast that against the slick book promises, which simply say a lot of hot air, but not much in between.

In fact, the slick book is a slippery slope for municipalities. What it will cause is more downloading, higher taxes, less money for municipalities, more burden on municipalities and more burden on the taxpayers. On this side of the House, we're all about protecting services; on that side of the House, they're all about downloading services.

Interjections.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Extend question period.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'll honour that request.

VISITORS

Hon. Deborah Matthews: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm sure that it is a point of order that there are other people in the gallery: James Berry, Meysa Maleki, Jason Lagerquist and Lauren Ramey are here with us today.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No, that's not a point of order, but James just happening to be from St. Thomas—and I'm good friends with his mother—I'll allow it.

Lost and found time: a woman's earring.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): How's it look?

Well, I'll leave it with the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I think it's yours, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I've never had an earring.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We have a deferred vote on the motion for allocation of time on Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

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

The division bells rang from 1143 to 1148.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members please take their seats.

On May 31, Ms. Smith moved government notice of motion number 81. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Gerretsen, John	Murray, Glen R.
Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Oraziotti, David
Arthurs, Wayne	Hoskins, Eric	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Jaczek, Helena	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Best, Margaret	Johnson, Rick	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Rinaldi, Lou
Broten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Ruprecht, Tony
Brown, Michael A.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sandals, Liz
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Carroll, Aileen	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Chiarelli, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Sousa, Charles
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McGuinty, Dalton	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Wilkinson, John
Dickson, Joe	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Meilleur, Madeleine	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Milloy, John	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol	

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hillier, Randy	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Murdoch, Bill
Barrett, Toby	Klees, Frank	Prue, Michael
Chudleigh, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Savoline, Joyce
Clark, Steve	Marchese, Rosario	Shurman, Peter
Elliott, Christine	Martiniuk, Gerry	Wilson, Jim
Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Paul	Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 58; the nays are 24.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPORTING SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO
BY REDUCING CONTRABAND
TOBACCO ACT, 2011
LOI DE 2011 APPUYANT
LA STRATÉGIE ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE
PAR LA RÉDUCTION DU TABAC
DE CONTREBANDE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act / Projet de loi 186, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1151 to 1152.

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

Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 186. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Gravelle, Michael	Murdoch, Bill
Albanese, Laura	Hardeman, Ernie	Murray, Glen R.
Arnott, Ted	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Arthurs, Wayne	Hoy, Pat	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bailey, Robert	Jaczek, Helena	Phillips, Gerry

Barrett, Toby	Jeffrey, Linda	Prue, Michael
Bartolucci, Rick	Johnson, Rick	Pupatello, Sandra
Bentley, Christopher	Jones, Sylvia	Ramal, Khalil
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Klees, Frank	Ramsay, David
Best, Margaret	Kormos, Peter	Rinaldi, Lou
Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Brown, Michael A.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Savoline, Joyce
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Carroll, Aileen	Levac, Dave	Shurman, Peter
Chiarelli, Bob	Marchese, Rosario	Smith, Monique
Chudleigh, Ted	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sousa, Charles
Clark, Steve	Matthews, Deborah	Sterling, Norman W.
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McGuinty, Dalton	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Wilkinson, John
Dickson, Joe	McNeely, Phil	Wilson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Meilleur, Madeleine	Witmer, Elizabeth
Duguid, Brad	Miller, Norm	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Miller, Paul	Yakabuski, John
Gerretsen, John	Milloy, John	Zimmer, David
Gélinas, France	Mitchell, Carol	
	Munro, Julia	

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 82; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): There being no further deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1155 to 1500.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good afternoon. I would like the House to come to order. I want to thank the pages for giving me this wonderful little puppet with these Nike Chuck Taylor Converse.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Yes, I know it's a prop, but the Speaker can get away with it. Isn't that cute? Thanks to the pages. I really appreciate that.

ESTIMATES

Hon. Monique M. Smith: If I could ask my colleagues to rise, I have a message from the Honourable David C. Onley, the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 2012, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, dated May 31, 2011, Toronto.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I have a number of guests to welcome: Peter Kiatipis, Esma Trejic and Esther Levy from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services; Will Falk, the co-chair of the adoption working group of the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption; Adam Diamond

and Jade Maitland, both from YouthCan; Emily MacKenzie Strowger, Sophia Kolaroff and Sheela Sharma from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies; and Shanna Allen and James McGuirk from the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth. They are all here today in anticipation of third reading debate of Bill 179. Welcome.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I also have a number of people I'd like to introduce. I'd like to introduce Wayne and Clara Patterson, who are the parents of the late Paul Patterson, who was a paramedic; Laura Sanders, who was twin sister to Paul; Bruce Krauter, who is operations manager, Sun Parlour Emergency Services, Chatham-Kent; Tom Millard, Lambton EMS; Dwayne Purdy, Chatham-Kent EMS; Dave Desmarais, Essex-Kent EMS; Jim Sinclair, who is from Elgin-St. Thomas EMS; also Norm Gale, who is chief of EMS, Superior North Emergency Medical Services, and president of the Association of Municipal Emergency Medical Services of Ontario; Neal Roberts, who's the director of the EMS department in Middlesex; David Ralph, who's with the Toronto EMS; and last but not least, my own husband, René Van Bommel.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity to ask all members to join me as we welcome former member Ron Johnson, who represented Brantford in the 36th Parliament. Welcome back to the Legislature today.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): As we all know, since the last days of a session can be notoriously hectic and unpredictable around this place, I beg the indulgence of the House today to allow me—and I'd ask all members to join me—to thank the pages for their wonderful service to us here at the Legislature.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Speaker will entertain a motion for unanimous consent.

LEGISLATIVE USHERS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I also want to take this opportunity to thank the student ushers. They were particularly helpful last night. I'd ask all members to join me in congratulating the group of legislative student ushers who have performed their duties admirably and provided excellent service to this House: the team leader, Jordan Paolucci; Andrew Do; Claire Glossop; Teshini Harrison; Natalie Orellana; Janette Piasecki; Natasia Kalajdziovski; Maria Chung; Ryan Ko; Tracy Chen; Kristian Mandarano; Harlan Tufford; Natalija Micic; Osman Akhtar; Bedour Alagraa; Nader Mohamed; Wesley Parker; Madalina Sontrop; Tim Toong; and Cindy Yi. Some of these ushers will return for the next parliamentary session, while many are graduating and are going to be pursuing their careers or graduate studies. We wish all of them success.

Further introductions?

Mr. Dave Levac: We've already done Ron Johnson from Brant, a friend of mine?

Interjections.

Mr. Dave Levac: Oh, I see. I just wanted to make sure that it got covered off. Unfortunately, I was held up.

Interjection: Do you mean the former MPP?

Mr. Dave Levac: The former MPP for Brant.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ATHLETIC THERAPY MONTH

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I'm pleased to announce that June is Athletic Therapy Month. There are over 700 certified athletic therapists in Ontario who help to assist with and prevent musculoskeletal injuries and provide immediate care.

When attending or participating in an organized sports event, chances are an athletic therapist is on the sidelines to help if someone gets hurt. Athletic therapists are in our communities, helping Ontarians in their rehabilitation after an injury, post-surgery, or simply to help keep Ontarians active.

Canadian teams competing in international competitions such as the Olympics, the Pan Am Games and the Commonwealth Games will usually have at least one athletic therapist on staff to help ensure the well-being of our athletes.

I'm also pleased to announce that the athletic therapists' association of Ontario is holding its second annual golf tournament at Carlisle Golf and Country Club in my riding—or almost in my riding—on June 17. I look forward to participating. Part of the proceeds will go to the Canadian Paralympic Foundation to honour Dr. Robert Jackson, a strong and vocal supporter of athletic therapy and a pioneer in the field of sports medicine.

As Athletic Therapy Month commences, I would like to thank athletic therapists across Ontario for their support of our families and our athletes, and for helping to ensure that we live active and healthy lives.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Paul Miller: Today there is yet another Injured Workers' Day rally at Queen's Park. We should be celebrating a system that protects and supports all injured workers, not the system we have now that leaves them with broken homes, lost family, very reduced income, and often destitute and lonely.

Of that group, a significant number are women. This happens because non-covered areas such as office work, health care, social assistance and education are employment areas where women workers are a majority. The reason for excluding so many occupations traditionally associated with women is clear: false notions of men as breadwinners and the workplace as a man's world. All workers need compensation coverage now.

The Ontario Federation of Labour's position is that the continued failure of the government to correct this injustice cannot be justified or tolerated. The OFL also states that the long-term stability of the system depends on protecting the board's revenue base from shrinkage due to inadequate coverage, and that full coverage would increase the board's revenues by hundreds of millions of dollars per year, with a substantial portion available to enhance the board's reserves.

In short, extend full WSIB coverage to every Ontarian, ensuring all workers a minimum safety net; make the worker the focus of the system; and make the changes to the WSIB to become a workers' compensation system, not a refuse-at-first-sight insurance system.

ÉDUCATION POSTSECONDAIRE

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde: Samedi dernier, j'ai eu l'honneur de remplacer l'honorable Carol Mitchell, ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales, à la 29^e remise des diplômes au campus d'Alfred de l'Université de Guelph.

Parmi les dignitaires de marque présents : la D^{re} Renée Bergeron, directrice du campus d'Alfred; le D^r Robert Gordon, doyen du Collège agricole de l'Ontario, Université de Guelph; M^{me} Chantal Théorêt, directrice du campus de New Liskeard du Collège Boréal; et M^{me} Chan, du ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation.

1510

Le campus d'Alfred est le seul établissement postsecondaire de langue française en Ontario oeuvrant dans le secteur agroalimentaire.

Soixante et onze étudiants ont reçu des diplômes : 18 étudiants en technologie agricole; 24 étudiants en techniques de soins vétérinaires du Collège Boréal; 12 étudiants en nutrition et salubrité des aliments; six étudiants ont reçu des certificats en études du système agroalimentaire canadien; cinq étudiants ont reçu des certificats aide en alimentation cuisinier étape 1, en partenariat avec le Centre d'apprentissage et de perfectionnement et le Centre d'éducation et de formation de l'Est ontarien. Douze ont reçu des certificats bureaucratiques en tenue de livres.

Au nom du campus d'Alfred, j'aimerais remercier la ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales et aussi le ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités pour leur appui continu.

JOSEPH BRANT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: I rise in the House today to make a statement regarding the pending proposal for the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital in Burlington.

As all Burlingtonians know, the critical issue of our hospital redevelopment and expansion plan has been in limbo for far too long. Our hospital is still waiting for approval from the government for our proposed expansion and redevelopment project, at a cost of just over \$300 million for the first phase. Our hospital has not

had a major change to its physical footprint since 1970, leaving the hospital facing challenges on a daily basis. Regardless of the hurdles that the Joe Brant staff have to overcome each and every day, I am continuously amazed by the superior care that they provide. Now more than ever, Joe Brant needs a commitment from this government so that we can continue to care for our growing and aging population.

The needs of our community are unique. Burlington has a disproportionately high aging population with the number of seniors at 15.4%, significantly higher than the national average of 13.4%. This often results in a more complicated and higher level of care. In order to sustain the tremendous care our hospital's dedicated staff provides, we need proper resources and tools. It is imperative that Joseph Brant is included in the government's 10-year plan for infrastructure.

Burlington has been waiting patiently. It's our turn now.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd ask all members to join me as we welcome David Turnbull, who represented York Mills in the 35th and 36th Parliaments and Don Valley West in the 37th Parliament, to the west members' gallery. Welcome back to the Legislature today, David.

ROADS BOARDS

Mr. Bill Mauro: Last week I was pleased to make a great announcement in Thunder Bay on behalf of the ratepayers and members of the local roads boards in northern Ontario. Effective April 1 of this year, our government is doubling the amount of funding roads boards receive annually to a 2-to-1 ratio. That means our government support for local roads boards will increase from \$12.5 million to \$25 million annually.

Roads boards in my riding, like Northern Light Lake, Kabaigon Bay, Shebandowan, Rossmere and so many others all the way to Atikokan, will benefit from this funding. The chairs, trustees and secretary-treasurers of these roads boards do great work with little acknowledgment. I'm very grateful that I've been able to announce this funding to help people like Bernie Roy, Billy Pilot, Tim Niitynen, Wayne Jacques, George Hystead and so many others. I want to thank them for all the hard work that they do.

The work they do maintaining these roads is essential for local residents, for school buses and emergency vehicles. It benefits more than their ratepayers, but also everyone else who uses these roads to fish, hunt, go blueberry picking or just take a ride in the country. Many are not permanent residents but seasonal campers who maintain residences in Thunder Bay and pay taxes to support those municipal roads.

This announcement reverses a decision made in the early 1990s that reduced provincial funding for roads

boards by 50%. Local roads boards like Lybster and Dawson-Goldie—and the list goes on—will now be better able to support this important road infrastructure.

ST. MARY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, BROCKVILLE

Mr. Steve Clark: I rise today to celebrate an incredible achievement by the staff and students of St. Mary Catholic High School in Brockville.

St. Mary is well known for its unbelievable fundraising and school spirit. But they've outdone themselves by raising a phenomenal \$30,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society last week.

Their first ever Relay for Life saw some 270 students, staff and residents walking from 6:30 Thursday evening to 6:30 Friday morning. Even the persistent rain couldn't wash the smiles off their faces as they circled the track throughout the night, each lap adding more to their remarkable total.

Although there was plenty of fun to keep them motivated, this was an extremely emotional event for the St. Mary community. The school has been hit hard by cancer, losing a great teacher, Mike Daoust, and a beloved 16-year-old student, Eric Latimer.

This was their chance to fight back by raising funds to support research that's making a real difference in the lives of those who are diagnosed with cancer.

I was moved to read the report in the local newspaper, especially the words from grade 11 student and organizing committee member Carly Scott. Carly lost her mother, Lorraine, to cancer three years ago, so I can imagine how bittersweet those 12 hours were for her.

I want to congratulate Carly for her courage and add my sincere thanks to the organizers and everyone who participated or made a donation.

It's an incredible debut, but if I know St. Mary, they will be sprinting past that \$30,000 mark at next year's Relay for Life.

LABATT BREWERIES

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I rise today to recognize a significant cultural donation being made in my community of London.

In 1847, John Kinder Labatt created what would become an internationally recognized brewery. At the same time, he began an historic collection that would eventually become one of the most significant and valuable archives in Canadian brewing history.

Today, these corporate and art collections, with an appraised value of over \$8.3 million, are being donated by Labatt Breweries of Canada to the University of Western Ontario and to Museum London.

The Labatt Material Cultural Collection includes original art, artifacts and memorabilia, including works by renowned artists A.J. Casson, Jean Paul Lemieux, Harold Town, Norval Morrisseau and many other talented artists.

The collection also includes some of the very first advertisements promoting responsible consumption of alcohol. Labatt's was a pioneer in this field.

This collection embodies nearly two centuries of community investment, environmental leadership and economic contribution to the province of Ontario. Through this donation, Labatt's legacy will now be publicly accessible, providing valuable insight into the economy and industrial and labour relations of the past 164 years.

With 3,000 employees across the country and facilities throughout the province of Ontario, Labatt's remains an important contributor to our economy.

I would ask all my colleagues to join me in thanking Labatt's for their contribution to the museum and the university, and also for preserving our history in the province of Ontario.

MEMBER'S FAREWELL

Mr. Ted McMeekin: A sign above my desk reads, "We stand on the brink of the unknown, which is to say, everything is normal and still permissive of joy."

No one in this place can predict the future with any degree of certainty. Sometimes life throws us a curveball. Such was the case three years ago when, to my surprise, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. I tell you this because until that time I did not fully realize what a compassionate and even spiritual place this is.

Looking back, I will be forever grateful for the warmth, friendship and prayers offered for healing. By the way, my health has been restored and, thank God, I'm feeling great.

As we leave this place, I want to take a moment to thank you, Speaker Peters, for your friendship and consistent and visionary leadership.

And since this will be the last time I speak in this session, I want to express my appreciation for the incredible privilege of serving as an MPP.

This is a good place filled with good people doing exceptional work.

1520

Finally, I want to thank my constituency and Queen's Park staffs for their willingness to go the second mile. Bernadette Curtis, MaryAnne Quaglia, Amanda Hobbins and Lyndsay Caslick are exceptional public servants and need to be recognized as such. Thank you.

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Mr. Mario Sergio: Tomorrow is June 2, and Italians in Italy and all over the world are celebrating, joining in the 65th anniversary of Italian Republic Day.

Tomorrow, June 2, is also the Italian flag-raising on our grounds here at Queen's Park. Thanks to this wonderful, tolerant, open, accepting and free country that we live in, the community will come together in celebration, raising the flag. We have lots of entertainment, lots of food, and everyone is invited. The community does not

need any particular invitation to come and join in the celebration.

But this is only the beginning of a month full of celebration. We also celebrate, thanks to the work of the House and the approval of the House, the first June as Italian Heritage Month. On top of that, we are also celebrating the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification, so we have a lot to celebrate.

On top of that, as well, we have communities throughout Ontario raising the flag and celebrating not only the 150th anniversary, but the month of June as Italian Heritage Month. This is thanks to the members of the House, in recognition of the contribution that Italians have made to the economic and social growth of our province.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GRAND JURIES ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LES GRANDS JURYS

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 207, An Act to provide for grand juries in Ontario / Projet de loi 207, Loi prévoyant la constitution de grands jurys en Ontario.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: This bill enacts the Grand Juries Act, 2011. Judges of the Superior Court of Justice are required to convene grand juries in every county and district. Grand juries serve one-year terms. The seven members of each grand jury are selected from the jury roll, in accordance with the Juries Act. Members may be excused from jury duty on grounds of illness and hardship. Members may also be excluded from jury duty if their service would or could present a conflict of interest.

Grand juries may review the activities of public institutions specified in subsection 3(1) of the act. A review is limited to the activities within a grand jury's county or district. Grand juries may solicit suggestions from the public about which institutions to review. Grand juries may enter the premises of institutions and may make inquiries of the institution's employees. Grand juries may appoint experts for assistance. Grand juries have the right of access to records that are in the institution's custody and care, unless the record falls within an exemption under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Grand juries are required to prepare reports in respect of their reviews. Reports must be filed as public documents and be made available for public inspection. Reports must also be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

It is an offence to obstruct a review by a grand jury or any member of a grand jury, and penalties are specified in section 8 of the act.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE AMENDMENT ACT (PERMANENT PARTIAL DISABILITY SUPPLEMENTS), 2011 LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SÉCURITÉ PROFESSIONNELLE ET L'ASSURANCE CONTRE LES ACCIDENTS DU TRAVAIL (SUPPLÉMENT POUR INVALIDITÉ PARTIELLE À CARACTÈRE PERMANENT)

Mrs. Albanese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 208, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 respecting permanent partial disability supplements / Projet de loi 208, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne le supplément pour invalidité partielle à caractère permanent.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mrs. Laura Albanese: The bill amends section 110 of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 so that any pension a worker is eligible for under the Old Age Security Act does not reduce the worker's permanent partial disability benefits for pre-1985 and pre-1989 injuries under the pre-1997 act.

REDUCING AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE PREMIUMS BY ELIMINATING FRAUD ACT, 2011 LOI DE 2011 VISANT À RÉDUIRE LES PRIMES D'ASSURANCE- AUTOMOBILE PAR L'ÉLIMINATION DES ACTIVITÉS FRAUDULEUSES

Mrs. Mangat moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 209, An Act to encourage the disclosure of fraudulent activity in connection with automobile insurance claims / Projet de loi 209, Loi visant à encourager le dévoilement des activités frauduleuses en ce qui a trait aux demandes d'indemnités d'assurance-automobile.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Insurance companies estimate that about \$1.3 billion a year goes to cover insurance fraud in Ontario. This cost results in higher insurance premiums for Ontario drivers. This act, if passed, will constitute a proactive step towards reducing automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers.

WORKERS' DEATH BENEFITS
PROTECTION ACT, 2011
LOI DE 2011 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES PRESTATIONS DE DÉCÈS
DES TRAVAILLEURS

Mr. Levac moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 210, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 to protect benefits for spouses of deceased, retired workers / Projet de loi 210, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail afin de protéger les prestations versées aux conjoints des travailleurs retraités décédés.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will come to order. This is introduction of bills. We'll have an opportunity for debate later.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): You're so close to getting your gold star. You know that little happy face? You're almost there.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Dave Levac: It's a great bill.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): That's the way to introduce a bill. That's how a petition should be presented too.

PROTECTING CONTRACTORS
THROUGH PROMPT
PAYMENT ACT, 2011
LOI DE 2011 VISANT
À PROTÉGER LES ENTREPRENEURS
PAR DES PAIEMENTS RAPIDES

Mr. Levac moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 211, An Act to protect contractors by requiring prompt payment of construction contracts / Projet de loi 211, Loi visant à protéger les entrepreneurs en exigeant le paiement rapide des contrats de construction.

1530

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Dave Levac: This is a fantastic bill.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES

SENIORS' MONTH

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: Today, I rise to recognize the beginning of Seniors' Month in Ontario. Seniors' Month is a time to celebrate and honour seniors, their knowledge, experience and the contributions they make every day in communities right across our great province.

This year's theme is Live It Up, which highlights the benefits of active, engaging living at any age.

Earlier today, I was at Toronto city hall to formally kick off Seniors' Month. One of the keys to aging is to stay active and engaged. Seniors in our province are committed to active living, like taking tai chi classes, dance classes or even competing in the seniors' games.

The McGuinty government will continue to help seniors now and in the future. We took action to ensure that Ontario seniors have the support they need to lead active, safe and healthy lives.

We are the first government in Ontario's history to regulate retirement homes.

We have provided a new and enhanced tax benefit and credit system to make life a little easier for our seniors.

We are helping to combat elder abuse, and we offer programs to encourage active and engaged living.

Our government is helping seniors stay active in their communities in a number of ways. We support 273 elder persons' centres, which offer recreational and wellness programs. We help raise awareness across Ontario about the universal benefits of age-friendly communities.

We're also expanding the popular seniors' portal program that connects seniors in select communities to information about federal, provincial and local programs.

We have also partnered with Parks and Recreation Ontario to encourage municipalities to proclaim June as both Seniors' Month and Recreation and Parks Month in Ontario. This will be a great opportunity for Ontarians, and especially our seniors, to be active outdoors.

Many of us know first-hand the important role seniors play in our families and communities. They support their adult children, they help with grandchildren and they support their own aging parents.

Just as they support their families and build their communities, it is our responsibility as Ontarians to ensure that we do everything we can to help keep seniors more safe.

I am so proud that our government recently announced our commitment to develop the first Silver Advisory program in Canada. This program will establish a province-wide model to alert the public when vulnerable

seniors with Alzheimer's or other dementia go missing and may be in danger.

Also, for the first time in Ontario's history, seniors living in retirement homes will be protected under provincial legislation. The Retirement Homes Act will ensure that Ontario seniors live with dignity, respect and autonomy, and that they can make informed choices about their care options. Last month, I was pleased to announce several new measures to provide immediate protections for retirement home residents.

We're also working hard to help protect seniors from elder abuse. We have supported the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, which operates the important seniors' safety line, which is available in 154 languages, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Seniors' Month is a time to honour our seniors and to thank them for everything that they have done to help our province. I look forward to joining seniors across this province to celebrate their continued contributions.

We invite you to host or attend a Seniors' Month event and celebrate seniors in your community. A listing of Seniors' Month activities is available on the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat website at ontario.ca/seniorsmonth.

Thank you very much, and happy Seniors' Month.

PARAMEDICS

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Every day, Ontario's 7,000 paramedics respond to emergency calls in big cities and small towns in every corner of this province. Their quick and heroic actions to provide on-scene medical treatment literally save thousands of lives each and every year. They provide critical medical services en route to hospital, all while negotiating traffic and, in some cases, hazardous weather conditions.

Paramedics work in remote and difficult locations; in our homes and in our workplaces; in the service of others; to save lives and protect our families.

Ontario's paramedics perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. They provide trauma care such as spinal and wound care. They administer drugs to treat conditions such as chest pain, hypoglycemia, allergic reactions, breathing difficulties and severe nausea and vomiting. And they do all of this and more while managing crises and interacting with patients, relatives and bystanders.

Paramedics are part of Ontario's triad of first responders, including the police and firefighters. Through their professionalism and dedication, they make Ontario a safer place to live.

Earlier today, I was proud to announce that our government is creating an award to honour paramedics who have performed an act of exceptional bravery by putting their own life at risk to protect the lives of others. The Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery is to be presented to paramedics who have clearly demonstrated bravery in the course of their job or while off duty.

I would also like to commend my colleague MPP Maria Van Bommel, who has been a vigorous supporter of Ontario's paramedics. Her work in promoting the

bravery of Ontario's paramedics has brought this issue to the forefront. She has been instrumental in promoting the development of this bravery award for Ontario's paramedics.

MPP Van Bommel brought forward this issue with the support of the family of the late Paul Patterson, a paramedic who tragically died while in the line of duty. Today, Paul's parents, Wayne and Clara, and his twin sister, Laura, are here watching in the gallery.

Paul's brother, Jeff, is watching from home.

With them are Norm Gale, president of the Ontario emergency services association, together with a number of his paramedic colleagues and Bruce Krauter, operations manager of Sun Parlour EMS.

As a physician, I can tell you from a personal point of view that Ontario's paramedics are a vital part of our medical system. Throughout my career, I have witnessed the exceptional work that our paramedics do on the front lines while keeping our communities healthy and safe, and I have witnessed the way our paramedics confront emergencies with professionalism, compassion and courage. They go above and beyond every day and night in this province to save lives and protect Ontario's families.

The Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery will recognize those paramedics whose extraordinary courage brings honour to their profession and to all of us.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

1540

SENIORS' MONTH

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: It is with much pride that I rise today to pay tribute to the senior citizens of our province on behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus. I personally will celebrate Seniors' Month in my riding on Friday, when I host my annual seniors' education day with hundreds of my seniors. This event is popular with the seniors of Cambridge and North Dumfries, as it provides them with important information and helps them to improve their health and well-being and maintain their independence to remain living in the homes they worked so hard to build.

Our seniors deserve our respect and our thanks for the freedom and prosperity we enjoy. Like many young families, however, the seniors of our province are struggling to make ends meet. Electricity rates are not affordable and taxation levels are out of control. Our seniors have many needs that I fear are not being met by this government—a government that is willing to provide a \$3.5-billion top-up of an already-rich GM pension plan, at a time when 70% of our seniors get no pension at all.

Recently, a Cambridge senior wrote an open letter to me in the Cambridge Times, describing the financial stress she had experienced when forced to pay \$4,000 for dental work. She wrote: "When I receive my billing from the dentist, my credit card will be maxed out and I'll be back in debt."

The cost of dental care or lack thereof for those who cannot afford it worries me greatly. It is important to me that the needs of our seniors be met today and in the future. One of those needs is long-term-care beds for those in need. This government has frozen construction of new long-term-care beds for eight years, leaving seniors living in hospitals or, worse still, without help of any kind as there are no vacant beds. This is unacceptable.

I say that we owe it to our seniors to live their final years with dignity, comfort and respect.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Steve Clark: It's truly an honour to rise today on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus and our leader, Tim Hudak, to acknowledge the valour of Ontario's paramedics. This provincial bravery award is long-overdue recognition for the remarkable courage displayed every day by the men and women in our emergency medical services. For too long, Ontario's paramedics have had to wonder why, unlike their peers in firefighting and policing, they didn't have an honour of their own to recognize acts of heroism on the job. This award will finally do that. It will celebrate those extraordinary acts of heroism where a paramedic goes above and beyond the call of duty.

I think it's very important, when we're talking about bravery and paramedics, to understand that the very act of putting the uniform on every day takes incredible courage, because a paramedic never knows what crisis the next call will bring. Remember, they're often the first emergency personnel who arrive at a traffic accident, house fire or even a crime scene. Of course, none of us ever wants to be involved in an incident that has an ambulance speeding to our aid, but we all feel safer in society knowing that our paramedics, just like our police officers and firefighters, are ready to put their own lives on the line to protect us and our loved ones.

In my riding, the dedicated men and women watching out for our safety are the 110 paramedics with the Leeds Grenville Emergency Medical Services. Last year, they responded to more than 18,000 calls, including 9,240 emergencies from ambulance bases in Brockville, Prescott, Spencerville, Kemptville, Elgin and Gananoque.

I want to thank Chris Lloyd, the deputy chief of the Leeds Grenville EMS, who mentioned a couple of acts of heroism in my own riding. Graeme Marchand is a paramedic who jumped into the chilly waters of the St. Lawrence a few years ago to help rescue four people after a vehicle collision. Deputy Chief Lloyd also mentioned Joel Deschene, a paramedic from Kemptville who, on his day off, stopped to rescue a person trapped inside a burning vehicle from certain death.

Fortunately, Graeme and Joel and the people they saved all lived to talk about their experiences. But sadly, we know that there are too many paramedics who lose their lives in the line of duty. Indeed, it is estimated that one paramedic dies on the job every year in Canada. It's

those men and women who have sacrificed their lives in the service of others that I think we should all think about today.

To paramedics in my riding of Leeds–Grenville and throughout Ontario, I want to thank you for your service, and I'm proud that the province has at last created a bravery award that you can call your own.

SENIORS' MONTH

Mr. Paul Miller: Every year, we celebrate our seniors in the month of June. But this year, having reached the youthful age of 60, it's a little closer to my heart.

Although it's sad that on a day when we recognize the month to celebrate all that our seniors have brought to us as individuals and to our communities, the minister and her government have still refused to take the simple action of passing Bill 92, which would mandate automatic sprinkler systems—basic fire safety—for our most vulnerable seniors who live in retirement homes.

The government also failed its seniors in its new retirement home bill, which does not include automatic sprinklers and which leaves too much control with the retirement home operators and not enough with the affected, vulnerable seniors and their families. This is especially crucial when this bill leads to much more personal care, like that provided in long-term-care homes.

Next week, we're holding our second annual seniors' fair in Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. It was extremely well attended last year, providing information booths for 22 community, government and NGO organizations. Those who attended the fair found it to be very educational, providing a great venue to meet with friends, neighbours and to meet new seniors. We enjoyed a light lunch, Peruvian music and great company. This year's event looks to be every bit as good.

As I often do in my newsletters, calendar or monthly op-ed column, I encourage any of us who are still fortunate enough to have their senior families still with them to take the time to learn what it was like growing up with the daily changes to technology, education, communities and families.

Their stories should be passed down from generation to generation. They should be welcomed to all of our family events, and seniors should be thanked for everything that they've been through that has made our lives as good as they are today.

I encourage everyone to give the gift of a smile to a senior, whether you know them or not. It's a very simple and easy thing to do, but something that brings a bit of cheer to them.

To all seniors, I thank you for all that you've done, and I encourage you to keep up the example that you've been to all of us by living actively and living well.

PARAMEDICS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm very happy to be talking today about the excellent work that the 7,000 paramedics

do right here in Ontario day in and day out, and to support the new award for paramedic bravery. Doesn't that have a nice ring to it? Paramedic bravery. I like it.

Paramedics are first responders. They are often the first ones on the scene when someone falls ill, is injured or otherwise traumatized. They are there to provide medical attention and deal with crises. Whether we talk about sudden infant death, drowning, motor vehicle accidents, falls, vital sign absence—the list goes on—it is the paramedics who assess and begin treatment for the patient at the scene; who care for and treat the patient en route to hospital and who are responsible for the continuation of that care until the responsibility is transferred to the receiving hospital.

The question that must be asked of ourselves: Are we, as MPPs and as a collective, as the government, doing everything we should be doing to support Ontario's hard-working paramedics in their day-to-day lives, to assist them in carrying out their jobs to serve the people of this province, to serve us? The NDP has been working to do just that.

On March 23, 2010, the MPP from Parkdale–High Park, one of my colleagues, introduced Bill 11, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder. The bill would finally recognize the stresses faced on a daily basis by paramedics. It would recognize the positive contributions their work makes to the lives and well-being of citizens of this province, and it would recognize the burden that paramedics face as they witness the pain and the injuries of traumatized Ontarians.

We know that first responders face levels of post-traumatic stress disorder much more than anybody else. It is an emotional illness that usually develops as a result of terribly frightening, life-threatening or otherwise highly unsafe experiences. Left untreated, PTSD can have devastating, far-reaching consequences for the sufferer's medical and emotional functioning, especially in their relationships with their family and with society.

1550

We know it is the nature of the paramedic profession that exposes workers to traumatic and life-threatening events.

I look forward to celebrating the first award for paramedic bravery.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Congratulations to paramedics, and in particular those from Elgin and Middlesex county, whom I represent. Thank you for coming to Queen's Park today.

PETITIONS

POWER PLANT

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a petition signed by hundreds, maybe thousands, of people with respect to the Petawawa River and a proposed power development.

“To the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

“Please take appropriate action to ensure that the development of a power generation project at Big Eddy (site 2KB21) is stopped. I object to this development because:

“1. The project would have a severe impact on the migration of fish, including some species at risk between the Ottawa River and Algonquin Park.

“2. The project would destroy one of the premier urban kayaking locations in North America.

“3. The project represents a public safety hazard to users of the park area a few hundred metres downstream of the powerhouse.

“4. The project would have a major, negative aesthetic impact on a stretch of the river right in the middle of the town of Petawawa.

“5. The Petawawa River is the only significant, free-flowing tributary of the Ottawa River in Ontario; and

“6. The proponent of this project is not fulfilling his obligation under the class environmental assessment process to ensure open and transparent public communication and to ensure that public concerns are reflected in the design of the project.”

I table this petition and hand it to Hamza. It may be your last petition.

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA

Mr. Peter Kormos: I have a petition, and I wish people would put their BlackBerrys away so they could hear what the petition says because it's important.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas special education for the District School Board of Niagara has been historically underfunded, we would like the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to allocate funding to the District School Board of Niagara for high-needs special education comparable to the provincial average, \$508.69;

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

“The District School Board of Niagara currently has a shortfall in funding for special education of approximately \$5 million per year. School councils across our school board have started this petition to be presented to Jim Bradley, MPP, and sent to the Minister of Education Leona Dombrowsky.

“The District School Board of Niagara has the second-lowest funding for special education in the province. This issue not only impacts students with special needs but all students and educators within our board.

“Please add your name to this petition to support having an immediate review and correction of the funding we receive for special education.”

This has been certified by the Clerk and has been appropriately signed by me. I endorse its message, and it contains literally thousands of signatures.

CELLULAR TOWERS

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I've got a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

"Whereas a cellular communications tower is proposed to be built in the vicinity of Third Line and Rebecca Street in Oakville;

"Whereas Industry Canada has ultimate authority to approve the location of cellular communications towers under the federal Radiocommunication Act;

"Whereas the province of Ontario has no jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers;

"Whereas the town of Oakville has very limited jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers; and

"Whereas many area residents and local elected officials have expressed concerns with the proposed location and proximity to residential areas;

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

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada grant municipalities the right to have enhanced participation in the placement of cellular communications towers in residential areas; and

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada place a moratorium on the construction of cellular towers within 500 metres of residential homes until the implementation of an improved municipal approval process."

I agree with this, will sign it and send it down with Maggy.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGISTRY

Mr. Steve Clark: I'd like to thank Laurie Scott from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock for providing me with a petition with over a thousand signatures collected by Sharon Stewart from Kirkfield.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the farmers and landowners' request for the intervention or action that the Legislative Assembly is being asked to make, or to refrain from making, a decision regarding the Ontario environmental registry EBR number 011-2901 being implemented the comment period, April 15, 2011, to May 16, 2011, for public consultation and comments this information was recently brought to our attention, May 4, 2011. Further, we oppose the restrictions that would be placed on the farmers and landowners after the three-year grace period. This, in our opinion, would drastically affect the food chain.

"I/we, the farmers and landowners, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly:

"The McGuinty government must immediately pass legislation to protect the rights and freedoms of the farmers and landowners of this province as the effects are from the estimated 10,000 to 30,000 farmers and rural landowners quoted in the Ontario Environmental Registry."

I'll affix my signature and send it to the table with page Erica.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Mr. Michael Prue: I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to a publicly funded French-language education; and

"Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto, and French students have been prevented from having the same opportunities as their English counterparts, and provided funds to the French-language school boards so that they might build new or purchase existing schools deemed to be designated as 'surplus' from other school boards; and

"Whereas the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) inherited and still owns the bulk of school buildings and land deemed for educational use in Toronto; and

"Whereas many TDSB schools are not operating at ministerial capacity, and yet the majority of those schools are not being offered for sale to other school boards, and when they are, only a parcel of the premise is put up for sale as opposed to the entire school, thus ensuring that the French school boards must decline the offer to purchase and freeing the way for the TDSB to maximize the revenues for the benefit of TDSB alone; and

"Whereas this practice has been going on for many years and the Minister of Education continues to approve the sale of those parcelled pieces of school property knowing that the French school boards are desperate to find schools to purchase and knowing that many of the TDSB's schools are underutilized; and

"Whereas despite the urgent need and despite having the funds, the children from Toronto East, French Catholic school board, have waited for years and continue to wait for the addition of an elementary and a secondary school in their district, and see no indication of the political will to solve this impasse in the near future;

"We, the undersigned members and supporters of the francophone and francophile community of greater Toronto, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Education stop approving the lease or sale of parcelled pieces of school premises by the TDSB, as allowing this clearly goes against the spirit of the Education Act and its regulations (in particular Reg 444/98) by failing to allow school premises (that were given to the TDSB) to continue to benefit the students of Ontario, which includes French-language students."

Interjections.

Mr. Michael Prue: I am in agreement. I would sign my name to it—and it's been approved by the Clerk, despite the howls.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would say to the honourable members that there is nothing contained in

the standing orders regarding the length of a petition. That petition is about two-and-a-half minutes long; I timed it yesterday.

You know what? If you listened, if you were here in the House last night and you heard some comments that I made, I think that this would be a very appropriate issue to send to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, to take a look at petitions and a wide variety of other issues in here.

The honourable member is certainly within his right to present that petition. He has guests here who he is presenting that petition on behalf of, and the interjections certainly are unhelpful to the member and are unhelpful to the guests whom he's presenting the petition on behalf of. Those of you who are here after October 6, I would encourage you to take a hard look at a number of things within this House, including petitions.

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Speaker: I recognize the member's right, and I'm not presupposing what the situation is, but I know there are members who are here who are hoping to get petitions in prior to the end of the legislative session. If there are petitions that do need to be tabled today, I would ask for unanimous consent that we could extend the period of petitions if there are members who have petitions that have not been tabled before and are looking to get them in today.

1600

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? I heard a no.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: To that issue, and I don't want to intrude on the limited period of time for petitions, but we should recall that the 15-minute time frame for petitions in the standing orders was driven by one former member Mike Harris, who used petitions to create a dilatory intervention in the process of orders of the day. It's unfortunate that that sledgehammer was applied to deal with what was a very specific and unique problem perceived at the time.

Perhaps there could be some more creativity—first of all, members should know that they can table petitions at any time with the clerks' table, and the petition will require a response just as if it were read into the record. Secondly, of course, the standing orders indicate that you can read a summary or a précis of the plea, rather than reading the whole petition.

But I am, with respect, loath to succumb to a suggestion that the historic, centuries-old tradition of petitioning the Parliament be interfered with any more than it already has.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We will continue.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mr. Khalil Ramal: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in January 2009, Health Canada approved the medication Soliris on a priority basis for patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH); and

"Whereas PNH is an ultra-rare, progressive and life-threatening blood disorder for which there were no therapeutic options until Soliris; and

"Whereas Soliris is the first and only proven effective treatment for PNH, significantly benefiting patients around the world;

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

"To urge the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately provide Soliris as a life-saving treatment option to patients with PNH in Ontario through public funding."

I agree with this petition and give it to Jonathan to take to the table.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This will probably be my last chance to speak in the House before you, and I appreciate all you have done for us.

It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to save our jails. I'll leave the "whereases" out and go right to the bottom so we all have time:

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

"That Premier McGuinty supports the Owen Sound and Walkerton jails remaining open until such time as a new regional corrections facility can be opened."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've enjoyed my time here.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have 2,000 postcards coming from all over:

"Labour laws in Ontario are failing to protect workers' rights to free and fair collective bargaining. The growing practice of contracting replacement workers is creating longer strikes and lockouts. This imbalance means there is no incentive for companies to negotiate to end these disputes. Ontario communities and families are suffering and basic rights are being denied.

"Collective bargaining created an economic middle class that is disappearing along with workers' rights. It is time to bring balance back to the process.

"Stand up for all Ontarians." Reform labour law and "ban replacement workers."

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Caleb to bring it to the table.

IDENTITY THEFT

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I will provide you with the condensed version of this petition, which I have received from Consumer Federation Canada. It reads as follows:

The recommendation is therefore: "(1) All consumer reports should be provided in a truncated (masked-out) form....

“(2) Should a consumer reporting agency discover that there has been an unlawful disclosure of consumer information, the agency should immediately inform the affected consumer.

“(3) The consumer reporting agency shall only report credit-inquiry records resulting from actual applications for credit....

“(4) The consumer reporting agency shall investigate disputed information within 30 days and correct, supplement or automatically delete any information found unconfirmed, incomplete or inaccurate.”

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I provide this for you.

DOG OWNERSHIP

Mrs. Julia Munro: I just want to do the petition itself:

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

“To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners’ Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types.”

I’m in complete agreement with this.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: It wouldn’t feel right if I didn’t present this petition. I’ve been presenting it every day since September 2009.

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

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

“Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario ... ;

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

I support this petition and will ask Amira to bring it to the Clerk.

SICKLE CELL AND THALASSEMIC DISORDERS

Mr. Mike Colle: I have a petition in support of Bill 165 to do good things to end sickle cell and thalassemia in Ontario.

“Whereas sickle cell and thalassemic disorders are chronic genetic diseases that can cause progressive organ dysfunction...;

“Whereas an estimated 5% of” Ontario’s “population are carriers of ... sickle cell ... disorders;

“Whereas Ontario is home to over 75% of Canadians living with sickle cell disorder and the large majority of Canadians” who suffer from this disease;

“Whereas Ontario already has Canada’s only newborn screening program for sickle cell” and Sick Kids hospital treats sickle cell;

“Whereas greater public awareness of these diseases and the benefits of genetic testing are needed in ... Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, support” Bill 165, MPP Mike Colle’s bill, to fund sickle cell and thalassemic care in Ontario.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mrs. Christine Elliott: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in January 2009, Health Canada approved the medication Soliris on a priority basis for patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH); and

“Whereas PNH is an ultra-rare, progressive and life-threatening blood disorder for which there were no therapeutic options until Soliris; and

“Whereas Soliris is the first and only proven effective treatment for PNH, significantly benefiting patients around the world;

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

“To urge the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately provide Soliris as a life-saving treatment option to patients with PNH in Ontario through public funding.”

I agree with this completely. I’m pleased to sign my name and send it to the table.

TAXATION

Mr. Paul Miller: Here’s a short one for you to make you all happy:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

“Be it resolved that Dalton McGuinty take the unfair HST off of hydro and home heating bills.”

I affix my name to this. I agree with it.

CEMETERIES

Mr. Jim Brownell: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

“The government must pass Bill 126, An Act to protect Ontario’s inactive cemeteries, 2010, to prohibit the relocation of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

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

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

M^{me} France Gélinas: “Whereas serious systemic problems have continued year after year in nursing homes under the governance of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; there is no confidence in the ministry to provide effective oversight over nursing homes to ensure all residents are kept safe from harm and receive proper care;

“We, the undersigned Ontarians, therefore request legislative change to grant the Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario to have oversight authority over Ontario nursing homes....”

I’ll ask Jonathan to bring it to the Clerk.

CARTE D’IDENTIFICATION

M. Phil McNeely: Une pétition à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario:

« Attendu que plusieurs aînés, personnes avec déficience visuelle, et personnes n’ayant ou ne voulant pas de permis de conduire; et

« Attendu que plusieurs transactions journalières telles encaissement de chèques personnels; ouverture de compte bancaire dans une institution financière; retour de marchandises dans un commerce de détails; embarquement pour un vol domestique; preuve d’âge légal pour avoir accès aux casinos, clubs et bars; enregistrement à un hôtel; demande d’obtention de carte de crédit, et aussi pour la location de vidéo qui nécessite une preuve d’identité avec photo issue par le gouvernement;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Que le gouvernement de l’Ontario développe une carte d’identification avec photo, et émette, en 2011, une carte d’identification photo autorisée par l’Ontario aux résidents de la province âgés de plus de 16 ans qui ne conduisent pas ou choisissent de ne pas conduire. »

Je supporte cette pétition et y appose ma signature.

1610

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that the order for second and third reading of the following private bill shall be called consecutively and the question on the motions for second and third reading of the bill be put immediately without debate: Bill Pr48, An Act to revive 917866 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.
Motion agreed to.

917866 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mrs. Elliott moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr48, An Act to revive 917866 Ontario Inc.

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

Second reading agreed to.

917866 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mrs. Elliott moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr48, An Act to revive 917866 Ontario Inc.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

BUILDING FAMILIES AND SUPPORTING
YOUTH TO BE SUCCESSFUL ACT, 2011LOI DE 2011 FAVORISANT
LA FONDATION DE FAMILLES
ET LA RÉUSSITE CHEZ LES JEUNES

Ms. Broten moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance / Projet de loi 179, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l’enfance et à la famille en ce qui concerne l’adoption et les soins et l’entretien.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I’ll be sharing my time with the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

As this 39th Parliament moves toward its conclusion, I feel so privileged to serve in this House, to represent the community of Etobicoke–Lakeshore and to serve as Minister of Children and Youth Services and minister responsible for women’s issues, and I could not be more pleased to rise today for the third reading debate on the Building Families and Supporting Youth to be Successful Act, 2011.

Je suis ravie aujourd’hui de prendre la parole à l’occasion du débat en troisième lecture de la Loi de 2011 favorisant la fondation de familles et la réussite chez les jeunes.

This important legislation is the next step in our government’s improvements to Ontario’s adoption system. If passed, it will provide thousands more kids with the opportunity to live happy lives with stable, loving permanent families.

The proposed legislation, if passed, will also help build a brighter future for Ontario’s youth, allowing young people whose care arrangement ended at age 16 or 17 to return to their children’s aid society to receive supports up until the age of 21.

Why do we need these changes? We need these changes because, of the 9,000 crown wards in the care of children’s aid societies, 7,000 have access orders that prevent them from being eligible for adoption, and this needs to change. It needs to change because we know that kids who are adopted or provided with the permanency of a long-term home have significantly better out-

comes compared to those who are not. They are more likely to complete high school and continue school at the post-secondary level.

We also know that there are so many prospective adoptive parents in Ontario who want to bring a child into their lives to love and support. With this in mind, we can and we must make it is easier to bring children waiting to be adopted and prospective parents together. Bill 179 does just that by removing a huge barrier to the placement of so many crown wards for adoption. This critical change will make a difference for thousands of kids in Ontario who want to find their forever family.

Bill 179 has so many fingerprints on it, and I want to thank the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption for the thorough and thoughtful recommendations they provided our government. Their work presented vital insights on the barriers that kids and prospective parents can face when they set out to build a family.

I want to thank our front-line workers, experts and those who care about finding forever families for Ontario's kids. All of their collective insight and advice has culminated in the bill before us today.

In developing this legislation, we wanted to find a balance for all parties involved while keeping in mind one goal: our drive to find permanent homes for waiting kids. The proposed legislation is child-focused. It allows for a child to continue to have a beneficial contact with his or her birth family and other significant people in his or her life after being placed for adoption, while still respecting the expectations of prospective adoptive parents. The proposed legislation strikes the right balance because it is focused on what is best for the child.

The second and equally important highlight of Bill 179 is the extended support it will provide to older crown wards. While we take steps to support children's aid societies to secure permanent homes for every child in the province's care, we know that for some kids, adoption will not be in their future, but we, as their parents, want to ensure an easier transition to adult life and to a life full of potential. Currently, a youth whose CAS care or customary care is terminated at age 16 or 17 is not allowed to come back for the support he or she may need and want. This makes these young people at risk of falling through the cracks. That is why Bill 179 proposes changes that would allow youth whose care arrangement ended at age 16 or 17 to return to their CAS and receive supports until age 21, opening the door for these young people to get the supports they need to succeed.

During committee hearings, we heard from a number of people, including the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and former crown wards, that a greater safety net was needed for this vulnerable youth population. Former crown wards, in particular, spoke passionately and eloquently about the importance of helping all youth ages 16 to 20 to re-engage with their CAS to receive supports.

I'm pleased to say that we listened and we're responding to their concerns. Our strengthened legislation, if

passed, would allow these young people to voluntarily return to their CAS to receive financial and non-financial supports until age 21, no matter what. This is the right thing to do. This continued support will help these young people achieve better educational outcomes and help them become successful adults.

Given the importance and impact of this bill, I am pleased that the Standing Committee on Social Policy has reviewed our legislation thoroughly and carefully. I want to thank all of the individuals and organizations that put forward thoughtful and often passionate comments and recommendations. We know there is still more work to do. We are continuing to work on the development of targeted subsidies. We need to get this right. We will work with our CASs over the next few weeks to continue to learn more about the best ways of implementing subsidies so that more children find permanent homes. We will seek their advice and that of other experts and consider how we can best build on the experiences across the province in a fiscally neutral way.

Lastly, building upon the work undertaken during our province's first-ever aboriginal child welfare summit in Fort William First Nation and the good work being done by my aboriginal adviser John Beaucage, our government is committed to building stronger relationships with aboriginal communities, organizations and governments, and to improving the quality of life for aboriginal kids on- and off-reserve. We know it is critically important for aboriginal children and youth to remain connected to their communities, cultures and traditions. That is why, as part of the package of recently announced reforms, we are working with CASs and First Nations to encourage more frequent use of customary care arrangements, and we look forward to continuing this very important work.

I have received many letters of support over the last few weeks, and I am humbled that Ontarians share our province's vision for Ontario's kids. One prospective adoptive mom wrote, "Thank you, on behalf of all of us adoptive parents and all those children who don't have a voice." A mentor to a former crown ward wrote, "Thank you. How much better the lives of many children would be with stable families who could give them security and help them rebuild trust in people."

This is incredibly encouraging, but the greatest encouragement I take comes in knowing that the young people who stand to benefit the most have thanked us for the important steps we're taking. They have told us that every kid in Ontario deserves a family and that nothing compares to the love and support that a permanent family can provide. This legislation is an important accomplishment, one that all of us in this chamber can be proud of, one that will improve and enrich the lives of thousands of kids and families. I am reminded of something author Elizabeth Stone once said. She said that to become a parent "is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body."

I call on all members to support this important legislation so that prospective parents across the province can experience that same feeling and that thousands of

waiting kids can realize their dream of finding their forever family.

1620

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mr. Mike Colle: I want to thank the minister for her heartfelt support of this important initiative.

It is really striking for all of us who have been dealing with this legislation to see how complex this issue of adoption is, how compelling some of the cases we heard in terms of the issues that arise from family break up or attempts to adopt children. We know how complex the work was from the reports from the adoption working group and the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption and what they went through.

There are no easy answers, but we know that these children deserve all of our support, our understanding, because these are children who have gone through very difficult times, and this legislation removes an obstacle to them being adopted. The obstacle is called an access order. That is removed as a barrier to adoption. That, to me, is the most poignant part of this legislation in that hopefully, as a result of this legislation, these 9,000 boys and girls who are, as they say, wards of the province, who are the province's children, will be given a chance to be part of a family, and they won't have to wait year upon year and then lose hope.

This legislation gives hope to these children and also reaches out to all of us in Ontario who, in many cases, forget about the critically important action of adoption. It's a critically important decision.

I really take my hat off—and I think we all do—to all Ontarians who adopt children. They are brave, courageous and generous people who are doing the right thing, sometimes at great sacrifice. I hope that all members recognize that this bill attempts to help these children who are reaching out to us, asking to be part of a family.

I thank all the people who made deputations. I thank all the children's aid societies across Ontario who have a thankless job, but it's an essential job that they do. All the care workers and all the agencies that try to make life better for children, I want to thank them for the quiet work they do behind the scenes in very difficult circumstances.

I urge all members of the House to support this legislation as it is, as I said, a lifeline to over 9,000 Ontario boys and girls.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I welcome the opportunity to join in third reading debate of Bill 179, Building Families and Supporting Youth to be Successful Act.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Social Policy, I had the opportunity to participate in the public hearings, and I also want to thank all of those who presented and sent in their submissions to our committee.

There were many thoughtful suggestions that came out of those committee hearings on how we could make this

legislation stronger. I was pleased to be able to put forward amendments suggested by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, the Foster Care Council of Ontario, the Children in Limbo Task Force, the Provincial Advocate For Children and Youth, the Ontario Bar Association and the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption. That was, of course, led by our now Governor General David Johnston, and I see that one of the members is here, so thank you for participating, Mr. Falk.

The bad news is that none of those amendments were accepted by the Liberal government—just one of the amendments that our party proposed was to extend the 30-day notice of termination of access orders from 30 days to 60 days.

In the life of a child, in the life of a family, 30 days is not a long period of time, especially when you think of how important this decision is and the thought that must go into it. This places additional challenges on children's aid societies, who will be the ones trying to contact the holders of the access orders. It's a very short window for the holders of the access orders to respond. I'm supportive of extending that 30-day notice to 60 days because I believe it is necessary to give that extra window, not only to the families and the children but to the children's aid societies, who will ultimately have to do the challenging work of finding and discussing the 30-day turnaround.

Another amendment that the Progressive Conservatives proposed was to allow for parents who adopt children with special needs access to all supports and services provided by the government, things such as special services at home or the medically fragile dependent programs. I'm hearing from far too many families who have been told that, because they have adopted a child, they are not able to access some of the programs that, quite frankly, every other Ontario family would be able to if they had children with special needs. These counter-productive rules are holding back families from taking on the responsibility of adopting a special-needs child. Since the minister did not pass the amendment that the Progressive Conservatives put forward, I would like to know if the minister and her ministry have a plan for these special-needs children, to encourage the adoption of children who have special needs, who are—let's face it—the highest needs and yet currently in the lowest percentile of being adopted.

I received a letter on Monday from the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, which was concerned that the voice of aboriginal stakeholders was not being heard with Bill 179. The Progressive Conservatives put forward an amendment that required notice be provided to a child's First Nation where there is a notice of intent to place for adoption, even if there is not a specific access order in favour of the First Nations. We also put forward an amendment to allow First Nations to make an application for an openness order, but again, that was turned down by the Liberal committee members.

If this bill truly was a priority of this government, I have to think that they would have introduced it earlier in their mandate so that we didn't have to rush through

public hearings and ultimately deal with time allocation motions—and that clause-by-clause was cut short because the House is rising later on today.

I do plan on supporting this bill, and my hope is that this bill actually makes a difference and does not fall by the wayside like Bill 210 did, where nothing is changed. There is still the same amount of crown wards in Ontario waiting to be adopted. As we know, Bill 210 was supposed to remove access orders to make it easier for crown wards to be adopted. But as we also know, this didn't happen.

I can hope that this legislation will make it possible for children and families to move forward in the adoption process. I know there are children and families in Ontario waiting to be matched.

As I close my comments on this bill, I again want to thank the individuals and organizations who put their thoughtful suggestions forward on ways we could have strengthened this bill and made it better. It is unfortunate that we were unable to move forward on some of the those amendments, but as I say, I guess small steps are a small victory.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Just for the record, I'm going to share my time with the member from Beaches–East York.

I wanted to participate in this debate because I think it's indicative of what we're about to see here. There is a very strong suggestion today that this House is going to be proroguing later on this afternoon. I just want, for the record, to say that I hope that's not the case. I hope that the government is not trying to escape yet another question period. If we're actually proroguing the House today so that there is no question period tomorrow, I think it says volumes about this government and its wont to get away from the scrutiny that, quite frankly, the public deserves and that democracy calls for. I hope I'm wrong. I really hope I'm wrong. I hope that the rumours that are going around today in regard to what—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Timmins–James Bay, we're going to debate the bill? There will be something about the bill? Thank you.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I'm absolutely going to debate the bill, Mr. Speaker, because this bill is at third reading, and it's going to need royal assent. I understand that the Lieutenant Governor, thank God, will be called on to give assent to this bill in the House today, but the strong indications on all of the discussions that we've been hearing coming from the government side is that they will be proroguing the House at the end of the day. I want to say, on behalf of all citizens of this province and on behalf of Andrea Horwath and New Democrats, that we think it is despicable if the government uses an opportunity to prorogue the House to get out from one question period, because tomorrow at question period we may want to ask questions about this particular bill, we may want to ask questions about matters that are important to

the people of Ontario, and the people of Ontario have the right to have their questions asked and their questions answered.

1630

I just say to this government, if this is what the beginning of this election cycle will look like, I think that you're in for a rough ride come this fall.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Beaches–East York.

Mr. Michael Prue: At the outset, I want to state that New Democrats will be supporting this bill, because the purpose is to facilitate the adoption of crown wards, building forever families. When we talked about this bill in the House, when we talked about this bill in committee, it was very clear that there are 9,000 crown wards, children, our responsibility, the state's children, who desperately want and need to have a home of their own.

As I said during second reading, I was a member of the board of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto for a number of years while I was the mayor of the borough of East York. I know, through those meetings and my meetings with the staff, with some of the foster parents, with some of the children, that the entire issue is an emotive one. It is not easy to take children away from their parents. It's not easy to try to arrange for new families. It's not easy to go to courts and deal with judges and lawyers about the safety and all the aspects of bringing up a child.

It's not easy, I think, if you are a parent and have your child taken away from you. You know of the anger, you know of the dismay that overcomes these people, and you know that some of those families and some of those people feel that their forever families have been destroyed in the process; their reputations have been destroyed. Some of them take literally years trying to get their children reunited with them and bring them back together. It is with that in mind that I supported the second reading and awaited detailed public input and the clause-by-clause.

The expert panel, I think, put it right—and I want to read it for the record again; I did read it at second reading as well. The expert panel stated, and I quote in its entirety from the paragraph: "Former crown wards who age out of the system are less likely to finish high school, more likely to become parents themselves at a young age, more likely to be users of the mental health system, more likely to require social assistance, more likely to rely on homeless shelters, to experience poverty as adults and more likely to be in conflict with the law. The long-term costs to society when children do not have permanent homes are staggering. The human costs, in terms of personal suffering and unfulfilled potential, are heart-breaking."

It was with that in mind that I think all of us from all parties attended the committee hearings. I want to say that we had two very difficult days of hearings, which lasted many hours. People were given 10 minutes to come forward and to say what was on their heart. Of

course we had people from the children's aid society; of course we had experts and lawyers and social workers and others who came forward to give us their best advice. But we also had a great many people, angry people: parents whose children had been taken away from them by children's aid societies over the last number of years, children who had been literally taken away from their parents and from their siblings to be in the care of the children's aid society and become crown wards.

There was one young woman who came to us and told a horrific story, and when I looked around, I saw members on all sides with lumps in their throats and tears in their eyes. I do know that the member from Burlington was particularly moved by what this young woman had to say. She had been taken from her family, a family she thought was a loving family, from parents who took her weekly to church. She was taken because there was a complaint, an unfounded complaint, about her mother and how she was being treated. During the period that she was put into a foster home and then in a group home, she had a whole bunch of experiences that she had hoped she would never have to suffer in her life. She was abused in that home. The kids took drugs; she took drugs with them, although she had never done that before. When she wanted to go to church on Sunday, she was denied the opportunity because they were afraid that she would see her parents.

I asked her, in the little bit of time you're given to ask a question, what happened. She said that thankfully, at the end of four months, she was called before a judge—her parents were there, the children's aid society was there—and the judge in his wisdom determined that she should go home to her parents; and that she was thankful forever after that she had that opportunity to go home.

We heard those stories. It brought it all back to me. I asked questions of each and every person where I had the opportunity: What was the problem that they most felt? Was it with this particular bill or was it with the whole adoption procedure? Was it with the children's aid society? What they told us was that the problem is that many of them felt that this was a law unto and of itself, that people could be taken away, they could be kept in a home which was not theirs, they could be put into a group home; they would literally in many cases have to fight for years, sometimes, to get their children back. Many of them discussed that this doesn't happen to families who are well off or well-connected; this happens predominantly to poorer families. This happens to people without the resources to mount the kinds of fights that are necessary.

I think that this government, in order to assuage the fears, would have been wise last week or a couple of weeks ago to have acceded to the bill that was put forward by my colleague from Trinity-Spadina, asking for Ombudsman oversight over children's aid societies. We need to make sure that, when families are yanked apart, when processes are brought to bear, everything is done in a way that is above reproach. The law has to be seen as fair not only to the child, but to the families and

to the prospective people who may adopt them. We need to have an oversight which is not there.

I say that as a person who himself spent some five or six years on the board of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto. I do know that the meetings we held oftentimes would talk about court cases, oftentimes would talk about children who had died in care, oftentimes would talk about horrific situations or those that had found their way into the press. I wish that this could have been contained within the body of this bill, but it was not.

I told you at the beginning that we are going to support this bill. We are going to vote for it in spite of what I think were the flaws that were contained within the bill and how it not only could have been just a good bill, but a great bill, had there been any movement on the government side whatsoever.

I do know that when we listened to these people and their impassioned pleas, when we listened to lawyers, experts, Mr. Elman and all of the people who came before us, they asked for things that were not and are not and cannot be contained within this bill. Just to reiterate what some of those were and what we in the NDP tried to do, along with my colleagues from the Progressive Conservatives—there were a great many amendments that were put forward, each and every one of which was shut down, each and every one of which was not being considered at all—one of them was to allow a child who is in foster care prior to his or her 18th birthday to stay in care after their 18th birthday. We heard this from literally every person who came in front of us. Every single one who came before us said that if the child is happy in foster care, they ought to be allowed to remain there. I reminded the members opposite in the Liberal Party of how many of them as parents expect, on the 18th birthday, that their child will suddenly be told, "You can't stay here anymore"? That doesn't happen. And these are our children; these are the children of the state. Should we expect any less of those children than we would expect of our own? I think not.

1640

I do know that the issue was discussed during the committee hearings and fits into the general theme that all people who came before us wanted to talk about. I know, as well, that the second motion that was put forward by the Progressive Conservatives and by the NDP—they were identical motions—was to change the definition of "child" to 18 from the current 16. Changing the definition of "child" was requested by the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, among other stakeholders, and would ensure that the law was not in conflict with literally every other law in Ontario. Mr. Elman himself asked that we change it from 16 to 18. He said that the current age of 16 is inconsistent with other provincial legislation. Just to give the government members some of the discussion that went on, the Education Act, the Age of Majority and Accountability Act and the Children's Law Reform Act all set out 18.

You know, when opposition parties tried to point this out and tried to make the bill better and make it 18, five

hands went up on the other side that this couldn't happen. I don't know how many of you think that 16-year-olds are adults. I do think that everything we do in this province sets out, at a minimum, that a child will be 18. We know you have to be 18 to join the army. We know you have to be 19 to drink. We know you have to be 18 to vote. We know that in every other act it's 18 except when it comes to children's aid and adoptions and this bill; it's left at 16. We don't think that was a wise thing to have happen.

There was another provision that concerned us a lot. The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth recommended that there be changes to extend care maintenance to be provided to youth who were receiving care prior to their 16th birthday—regardless of whether or not it happened—until they were 18. Again, that was not accepted.

There were discussions around First Nations. I take the minister at her word when she says there are ongoing discussions, but those ongoing discussions are a very recent derivation. They only came about in the time period of this particular bill, which is only two to three weeks. I do know that we have good people within the First Nations communities who are coming forward to give some advice on how to deal with children in care who are members of First Nations communities.

But when we started to talk about how you deal with them, how this was going to unfold, and tried to put in some safeguards—I think one of the key ones was that the band itself or the community itself had to be notified when a child was going to be taken into care in order to see whether there was someone else within the extended community who might want to or could be able to do it better—that motion was not allowed. It would seem to me that that is not inconsistent with what is being recommended by the First Nations themselves.

I do know that we got letters from First Nations communities, from lawyers, from social workers in First Nations communities asking to us kill the bill for this very reason alone. I know they were very upset, and I know they remain upset.

As well, we asked about the 30-day notice. The 30-day notice does not seem to fit in very well with what may be happening in many First Nations communities. I tried to speak, during the committee hearings, about First Nations communities, particularly those in the Far North. For those of you who have had an opportunity to travel—I hope that most of you have—into areas in northern Ontario around the Ring of Fire or up on to the Hudson's or James Bay coast into Treaty 9 or Treaty 3 areas, you will know that many people live a traditional lifestyle. It is not uncommon for parents, particularly fathers, to leave for extended periods of time to go into the bush at hunting time or to go up to the coast in times of fishing or when the birds are migrating. Oftentimes they go away for 30 or 40 or 50 or 60 days in order to get the food necessary to feed their families, and it is not uncommon that they are separated from their children during that period of time, who are usually in the care of elders. We wondered why the government was so insistent upon a

30-day time frame and how that, in fact, might cause some irreparable harm to people in First Nations communities. It was but one example we gave, and yet nothing was done. All that was said by this government was, "We are in consultation." Well, I don't think that the government should have necessarily been—they should have done the consultation first. They should have had the First Nations people onside before, rather than have the bill come forward in its present form and rather than pushing it through without the safeguards that we in the New Democratic Party and my colleagues in the Progressive Conservatives were asking for.

This is a difficult bill. It's a necessary bill, but it's a difficult one. We are trying to do the best we can to build forever families for 9,000 children. We are trying to do the best we can to assuage the fears of those people who have been or believe they have been harshly dealt with by the justice system and by the children's aid society. We are trying to do all of those things to find that fine and wonderful balance that will help the majority of people. But it is difficult to do that when good ideas are not accepted, when government and the parliamentary assistant stand up and simply say, "No, we're not going to be voting for this provision," and the rationale behind the non-vote is sometimes very difficult to discern.

I am standing here to say we will vote for it. I am doing so, though, with a heavy heart, because I understand that over the course of the months and years that follow, should this pass—and I assume that it will—and should the Lieutenant Governor come here at 5:30 to grant royal assent, as has been rumoured for hours, we may find ourselves without all of the right answers. This has been rushed. This has not been done with the consent or consensus of a great many people who are being affected. This is still the subject of much ongoing discussion and it may not be right. I vote for it acknowledging all of that. I would hope that the minister would acknowledge the same—that this may be a problematic bill, and if it is, I would hope that whoever sits on the government side following the October 6 election will do whatever is necessary to fix those holes. One of the largest holes, of course, to conclude, is that, in spite of the recommendations of the committee that made the initial recommendations, there has been no money put forward, although I understand that this too is being discussed.

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

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 19, 2011, I am now required to put the question. Ms. Broten has moved third reading of Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1649 to 1654.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those in favour, please rise one at a time until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Albanese, Laura	Hampton, Howard	Murdoch, Bill
Arthurs, Wayne	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Jaczek, Helena	Prue, Michael
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Best, Margaret	Johnson, Rick	Ramsay, David
Bisson, Gilles	Jones, Sylvia	Rinaldi, Lou
Bradley, James J.	Klees, Frank	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Kormos, Peter	Sandals, Liz
Brown, Michael A.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Savoline, Joyce
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Carroll, Aileen	Levac, Dave	Shurman, Peter
Chiarelli, Bob	MacLeod, Lisa	Smith, Monique
Chudleigh, Ted	Mangat, Amrit	Sorbara, Greg
Clark, Steve	Marchese, Rosario	Sousa, Charles
Colle, Mike	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sterling, Norman W.
Dickson, Joe	Matthews, Deborah	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mauro, Bill	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Elliott, Christine	McNeely, Phil	Yakabuski, John
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Miller, Paul	
Gerretsen, John	Mitchell, Carol	

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 67; the nays are 0.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. I have something to say that you want to hear. This is my last day in the chair.

Applause.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. I just want to tell you, you'll recall that a couple of weeks ago, my daughter, our grandchildren and two friends were in the Speaker's gallery when I did question period. At some point, I was just told yesterday by my friends, our daughter leaned over when I was on my feet and said, "That's the tone of voice we used to hear as kids, and he meant business."

It has been a pleasure for seven and a half years. I want to thank you for your interjections, for your advice from time to time, and all that goes with it. It's really been a privilege and an honour, and I support you and you and the rump and you.

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN ONTARIO ELECTIONS ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 ASSURANT L'INTÉGRITÉ DES ÉLECTIONS EN ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 30, 2011, on the motion for second reading of Bill 196, An Act to

amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices / Projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manoeuvres électorales.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Now that I've said that, I'm getting anxious to get out of here.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2011, I'm now required to put the question.

On May 30, 2011, Mr. Bentley moved second reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

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

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Was there a no? I didn't hear the no.

Mr. Peter Kormos: If you didn't hear the no, you didn't hear it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Well, we'll go on the side of caution.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1700 to 1705.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members please take their seats.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): You're supposed to call me the Speaker. Last night was different.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Oh, sorry.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It's all right.

Interjections.

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

I've never been so concerned about watching my back as I am right now.

All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Gerretsen, John	Moridi, Reza
Albanese, Laura	Gélinas, France	Murdoch, Bill
Arnott, Ted	Hampton, Howard	Oraziotti, David
Arthurs, Wayne	Hoskins, Eric	Phillips, Gerry
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Bentley, Christopher	Jaczek, Helena	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Best, Margaret	Johnson, Rick	Ramsay, David
Bisson, Gilles	Jones, Sylvia	Rinaldi, Lou
Bradley, James J.	Klees, Frank	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Kormos, Peter	Sandals, Liz
Brown, Michael A.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Savoline, Joyce
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Carroll, Aileen	Levac, Dave	Shurman, Peter
Chiarelli, Bob	MacLeod, Lisa	Smith, Monique
Chudleigh, Ted	Mangat, Amrit	Sorbara, Greg
Clark, Steve	Marchese, Rosario	Sousa, Charles
Colle, Mike	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sterling, Norman W.
Crozier, Bruce	Matthews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	McMeekin, Ted	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Paul	Yakabuski, John
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol	

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 71; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2011, the bill is ordered for third reading.

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN ONTARIO
ELECTIONS ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 ASSURANT L'INTÉGRITÉ
DES ÉLECTIONS EN ONTARIO

Mr. Bentley moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices / Projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manoeuvres électorales.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2011, I am now required to put the question.

1710

Mr. Bentley has moved third reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

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

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Interjection: Same vote.

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 71; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Orders of the day? Government House leader.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Community Safety will please come to order.

Just before I put the question, there's the uncertainty of whether or not the House will be sitting tomorrow. As it stands, when this place does adjourn, we will be resuming at 9 a.m., but in the event that something happens, I just want to take this opportunity to say thank you. Thank you to each and every one of you. Thank you for the service that you have provided to your constituents, to the citizens of Ontario.

There have been times that this place has been a bit raucous, but we also got to experience some really good

things last night. It was amazing what took place last night, and I thank all the members for that.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I want to thank the Clerk, Deb Deller, all the table officers, everyone from the Sergeant at Arms and his staff to the ushers, to the pages, to Hansard, to the cleaning staff, the food services staff, the grounds staff, the security. These are all individuals who quietly, behind the scenes, support us. To each and every one of those individuals we owe a big debt of gratitude and a big round of applause for all of them. Thank you.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To all the staff who support us, whether it's in your offices or within your ministries, both the political staff and the bureaucrat staff, thank you to all of them because there's so much that goes on behind the scenes that they do day in and day out to support us, and we need to make sure that we always say thank you to them. Thank you.

With the uncertainty of whether we will be sitting or not tomorrow, the Speaker's apartment will be open following the adjournment of the House tonight, and I extend an invitation to all the members, to all the staff who are here, the staff who are watching. That invitation goes out to every staff member in this building. I don't care who you are, you are welcome to come and join us.

I just need to recognize a good friend of mine, Mark Cosens; his wife, Brigitte; and their son Aubrey, who are here. Brother Joe is racing to try and get here with nephew Nick. They may not get here—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can't address that issue.

To the media, who sit behind me, thanks for what you do.

Interjection: They're ready to dump paper on you.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I know they are. I'm trying to rag the puck as long as possible because I'm a little concerned about it. But to the media, thank you for the work that you do reporting out of this place.

In conclusion, to those of you who aren't running again, I wish you all the best in your future endeavours, in whatever you choose to do. To those of you who are running again, I wish you all the best this fall. I want to thank each and every one of you for the privilege that you have afforded me with the opportunity to serve as the 40th Speaker in the 39th Parliament. It is a job that I will never, ever forget. It has been the greatest job that I have ever been given the opportunity to do. Everyone has been so supportive, and it has been an amazing experience. I wish everyone all the best. With that—

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I've been here for I think 23 years, and you're the only Speaker who has never named me. I don't know whether that was oversight on your part or lack of it—

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

Mr. Peter Kormos: —but I thank you with great gratitude. As for the other Speakers, heck, you're head and shoulders above them.

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I've been here for eight years, not 23, and you're actually the only Speaker who has named me. And for the record, Speaker, I have to tell you that Peter Kormos—and both times have been since I was named House leader. They kind of figure that that's when you start to behave better, but anyway. Peter Kormos told me, "Yak, don't worry about it. You can't get kicked out of here unless you want to get kicked out." For the record, I have to say that I did not want to get kicked out that day. It was specifically on a day where there was this word being used—because I'm not using it for anybody else—and the word was "cover-up." It's just a word—

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, two words, or it could be used as one word. The Speaker says, "Look, the next person who uses the word 'cover-up,' I'm going to toss them"—

Mr. Jeff Leal: That was me.

Mr. John Yakabuski: And it turned out to be Jeff Leal. But about a half an hour later—I had hardly said a word—there was a question, and I said something about, "Oh, they're just trying to cover up." It had nothing to do with the conspiracy theory. In a heckle, I said, "Oh, they're just trying to cover up the fact that," and "John Yakabuski, goodbye."

You remember that? I talked to you about it and I said, "I didn't even know." I'm walking out of here and I thought—

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes. The point I'm trying to make is that I was totally innocent of that. I guess the point is that even the Speaker, in his wisdom, can sometimes hear something that wasn't really intended.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): With that, just to make the honourable member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke feel a little better, I absolve you.

The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1719 to 1720.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Ms. Smith has moved the adjournment of the House.

All those in favour will please rise and remain standing to be recorded by the Clerk.

All those opposed.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 57; the nays are 20.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1722.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC) Elliott, Christine (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB) Gélinas, France (NDP) Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Oakville Nickel Belt Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB) Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB) Jones, Sylvia (PC) Klees, Frank (PC) Kormos, Peter (NDP) Kular, Kuldip (LIB) Kwinter, Monte (LIB) Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB) Leal, Jeff (LIB) Levac, Dave (LIB) MacLeod, Lisa (PC) Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock Dufferin–Caledon Newmarket–Aurora Welland Bramalea–Gore–Malton York Centre / York-Centre Glengarry–Prescott–Russell Peterborough Brant Nepean–Carleton Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Marchese, Rosario (NDP) Martiniuk, Gerry (PC) Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina Cambridge London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB) McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB) Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP) Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
Kim Craitor, Bob Delaney
Garfield Dunlop, Phil McNeely
Yasir Naqvi, John O'Toole
Maria Van Bommel
Clerks / Greffiers: Valerie Quioc Lim, Sylwia Przewdziecki

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese
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Bob Delaney, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Pat Hoy, Helena Jaczek
Norm Miller, Leeanna Pendergast
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

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permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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Kuldip Kular, Dave Levac
Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti
Joyce Savoline
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permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Donna H. Cansfield, Aileen Carroll
Howard Hampton, Ernie Hardeman
Lisa MacLeod, Leeanna Pendergast
Jim Wilson
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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la justice**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Reza Moridi
Bas Balkissoon, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Ted Chudleigh, Mike Colle
Christine Elliott, Peter Kormos
Reza Moridi, Lou Rinaldi
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi
Bas Balkissoon, Steve Clark
Joe Dickson, Sylvia Jones
Amrit Mangat, Yasir Naqvi
Michael Prue, Mario Sergio
Maria Van Bommel
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Shurman
Wayne Arthurs, Aileen Carroll
France Gélinas, Jerry J. Ouellette
David Ramsay, Liz Sandals
Peter Shurman, Norman W. Sterling
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller
David Caplan, Kim Craitor
Jeff Leal, Gerry Martiniuk
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch
Michael Prue, Lou Rinaldi
Tony Ruprecht
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin
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