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Thursday 26 April 2012

Jeudi 26 avril 2012

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

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Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
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The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

WEARING OF PINS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The chief government whip on a point of order.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would move unanimous consent that we can all wear our daffodils in honour of the Canadian Cancer Society and the event that they are holding here today at Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Unanimous consent has been requested. Do we agree? Agreed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ACCEPTING SCHOOLS ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 POUR
DES ÉCOLES TOLÉRANTES

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 25, 2012, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 13, An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to bullying and other matters / Projet de loi 13, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation en ce qui a trait à l'intimidation et à d'autres questions.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Questions and comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm very pleased to respond to the member from Wellington–Halton Hills, Mr. Arnott. I wasn't here for all of his remarks, but I'm quite confident in saying that he felt that the emphasis should be placed on Bill 14. Bill 14 was the initial bill that was introduced by our member from Kitchener–Waterloo, Ms. Witmer. Ms. Witmer had worked for over two years to bring together some clear definitions. I believe that the member from Wellington–Halton Hills was, in his remarks, respecting that. We know that Bill 14 is before the committee now, and I think it's in some kind of procedural—but what we want here is to end bullying. We don't need to be bullying each other in this process of Bill 13 and Bill 14. What we need to do is find consensus. Initially, it was my impression that they would work together, the minister and Ms. Witmer, and try to get it right. Most of the comments I've heard from the public—they see it in a

balanced way of not prioritizing any form of bullying, but respecting that all students need to be protected from any form of bullying.

The member from Wellington–Halton Hills, I believe, made a very good point: The ideal solution here is to put Bill 13 into committee with Bill 14. I know there will be further remarks this morning on this, because everyone in this Legislature wants to have a role in ending bullying and making our schools a safer place for all—not just these students, but for all people, whatever exposure they have. I think if you clarify it, there's no agenda in Bill 14 at all that I'm aware of, other than protecting children from bullying and setting up a process of accountability and a reporting mechanism for the school boards to clarify that that would happen. With that respect, I look for others' remarks on Bill 13 and ask them to look at Bill 14. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It is really my great desire to believe the sincerity of the party opposite, but it's hard to, sometimes. I was very proudly standing here with all of my colleagues on this side to vote for Bill 14, their party bill—no fuss, no muss, right to committee; we said this was important. When it got to committee—I haven't been here as long as the member for Durham, but it didn't take me long to figure out how to read the rule book. And when you go to committee, if the same matter in substance is before the House—

Mr. Jim Wilson: You could have done it through the subcommittee.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I didn't interrupt you, sir, and I would like the same courtesy, especially coming from you, Jim.

They cannot have it. Rather than dealing with the substance of the matter, which is more important in getting this bill to committee—that would also be extremely helpful.

Second, Bill 14 is a very good bill. You have not heard people on this side criticize it. Bill 13 is a very good bill. As a matter of fact, they're complementary bills. I have heard the opposition with some of the most ridiculous pieces.

The member for Durham also made the comment—which, quite frankly, I find quite disturbing. The biggest cause of bullying is the impression that kids are gay or lesbian or transgendered or in fact that they are—overwhelming statistics. The suicide rates among gay and lesbian youth are running 30% higher.

When I was in school, I played football, I was president of student council. I didn't get bullied because I

figured out that the most common thing I ever heard was, "That's so gay." My poor friend Geoff Creighton, who was not gay, got beaten up. He was tall, he had red hair, he was a straight young kid, grew up to have a family, but he was a little awkward-looking, a little effeminate, so he was the one who was sort of the gay kid in class.

The other thing is, we're not prioritizing gays. There are people out there who said, "You can't have a gay-straight alliance." They don't say you can't have a straight alliance. No one's saying you can't have a black kids' alliance. Not—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Questions and comments?

The member from Wellington–Halton Hills has two minutes for a response.

Mr. Ted Arnott: It's an interesting process we have here, when a member speaks to an issue the day before and, if the House adjourns, we then have questions and comments the next day. I'm not sure the member for Durham had an opportunity to hear what I did say yesterday, but I appreciate his comments. I'm not sure if the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities was here for my speech yesterday, but I appreciate his comments as well. But it is always interesting to have these kinds of things. Again, I would thank the members for their responses to my comments yesterday.

The fact is that Bill 14, the bill that was brought forward by the member for Kitchener–Waterloo, was passed by this House on March 29. I spoke in favour of it. It has been languishing in the Standing Committee on Social Policy since that time. I realize there are some procedural issues but, again, I would encourage the government to get moving on Bill 14. I think there have been a number of expressions of confidence in that bill on both sides of the House, obviously, including the Premier's public statement in the newspaper a few weeks ago.

I would commend the member for Kitchener–Waterloo, former Minister of Education, former Deputy Premier, former school board trustee, a long-serving member of this House. She studied this issue for many, many months, if not years, to bring forward a comprehensive bill that covers off the whole issue. I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is a superior bill and would in fact address the issues that are of concern to all of us. I would suggest that it should be the bill that is passed by this Legislature in its current form.

But at the same time, there is debate on Bill 13, and the government is continuing to call it for debate. There has been, I believe, 15 hours of debate. The government accuses us of delaying it, but the fact is, we're doing our job in opposition and there's a significant number of members of our caucus who wish to speak to this important issue so that we make sure we get it right.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your indulgence this morning in terms of listening to my follow-up remarks and I look forward to the continued debate on Bill 13 and Bill 14. Thank you very much.

0910

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member from York–Simcoe.

Mrs. Julia Munro: It's my pleasure to be able to join the debate this morning. I think that one of the things that has happened in the development of Bill 13 and Bill 14 is, sadly, a huge growth in awareness of the extent of the problem. We know that people have been dealing with this in isolation and on their own through a mixed bag of resources and protocols and things like that, but it's very clear from the two bills, Bill 13 and Bill 14, that the time has come for it to be much more organized.

I want to just step back a bit and think about how did we get to this point, and when does it start? I remember asking my mother about the question of kids fighting in the schoolyard—nothing is new. I said, "But what is different? Why is it that it seems to be such a more difficult issue, and frankly more damaging?" Her answer was quite interesting. She said, "Well, there were always kids who would get into fisticuffs with each other, usually boys," but I'm not going to go there. But she said, "What was different was that everybody would stand around and watch, and the idea that you would need someone else to come in on your behalf, so it was two against one or five against one, was absolutely wrong. It was a demonstration of your cowardliness, and you would not want anybody to think that you couldn't stand up for yourself." I sort of tucked that away for a while, because I started to think about it in terms of what has now become a much more serious issue of numbers, in terms of involvement.

I want to tell another little story that I think demonstrates how these things can start. A friend of my daughter's in public school was about six feet tall. You can imagine that to be six feet in grade 7 certainly made you stand out in the group, and some of the kids started calling her Tree. She was very unhappy about this, because obviously it brought attention to something about which she already felt very self-conscious.

My daughter happened to mention one time about her friend Tree. I said, "Whose idea was it to call her Tree? Was it hers?" "Well, no." My daughter is quite short and was very self-conscious about being short, and I said to her, "So it will be okay if Tree calls you Stump." That put an entirely different focus on what, quite frankly, wasn't meant in a particularly malicious way. This was her friend, and this was her nickname. But it obviously had an impact on her and was something about which she felt very self-conscious. Let me assure you that Tree and Stump are both friends now, but neither refers to the other in that pejorative way.

I think that over time what has happened is that, at the risk of opening up another can of worms, we seem to see more of a kind of group think. So if somebody comes up with a decision about someone, whether they're too fat or too thin or they have red hair or they have a funny name or any number of things people could find that distinguish that person, then you have the escalation of group think. The other part of it is that we have the problem of this escalation, as people then become more marginalized by whatever has been the initial act.

So it's everyone's responsibility, I would argue, to look for opportunities. I realize, as I think back on it, that

the innocence of my daughter telling me the story about Tree gave me a really good defining moment in which to throw it back on her as to her size, which she liked to be identified by. So it is everyone's responsibility. It certainly is parents, the daycares and the schools, but it's the schools that we're looking at here and the importance of providing a mechanism for assisting—and I want to emphasize—both the perpetrator and the victim.

A final story on the importance of the perpetrator and the kind of need that they may have: I had a student who had the reputation, justifiably, of beating up other kids. She was warned by the school that the next time she did that she would face consequences in the legal system. You just can't go around even threatening, and certainly not beating up, anyone.

So I had a reasonably good relationship with her and I said, "What are you doing? Come on, you're too big. That's something kids do maybe in kindergarten, but you're in grade 10. What are you doing beating up?" And she turned on me and she said, "Well, what do you do when you're mad?" And I thought, "Uh-oh, this is the problem." Of course, in conversation with her it turned out that in her family experience everyone who was bigger than anyone else got a chance to beat up whoever was smaller. That was the way you solved problems and established your hierarchy.

When I think back on her story I think this was certainly a time when help was required. Her experiences then were something that, clearly, gave her the opportunity to express herself. She had no suite of options as to what to say when she was mad; all she knew was to beat up whoever happened to be handy.

There are a number of things, then, that I think are really important. There's been much conversation about the merits of Bills 13 and 14, and I want to make sure that I have time to do that. But the bigger issue for us as parliamentarians is the importance of having a select committee on Ornge, and I want to move adjournment of the debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from York–Simcoe has moved adjournment of the debate. Agreed? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those against, say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 0918 to 0948.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Would all members please take their seats.

Ms. Munro has moved adjournment of the debate. All in favour, please stand and remain standing until counted by the Clerk.

Those against, please stand and remain standing.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 20; the nays are 33.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I declare the motion lost.

Ms. Munro.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I want to use the time remaining just to talk very briefly about the role of Karen Sebben, who is a constituent of mine in York–Simcoe and the founder of the York Region Anti-Bullying Coalition. In advocating for Bill 14, she says, "My son's three years of bullying took the form of homophobia. But as parents, it didn't matter to us what form the bullying took. The fact remains that aggression and assault were taking place regardless of the reason. This is the focus of any anti-bullying legislation, and the PCs' Elizabeth Witmer got it right with Bill 14."

I also want to, in the moment that remains, refer to a part of Bill 14 that I think is an important omission in Bill 13, and that's the question of cyberbullying. This takes bullying to new heights. This means that it's 24/7, that it is relentless, and it is in that spirit that we have to look at the merits of Bill 14 as well as Bill 13.

I would just conclude by saying that it's important that we get it right, it's important that we get the best piece of legislation, because we owe our children, at the very least, a safe environment.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm very pleased to stand and rise and support the member from York–Simcoe, a former teacher. I was quite impressed how she related it in a personal way to her daughter and her friend. I think they should refer to them, that story, Tree and Stump, one being tall, one being short.

It's in that vein when we can relate this to our lives, our own personal lives. I was always called tall because I was so short. No, we won't go into that self-deprecating mode but I think that's what this is about: showing respect for our differences. That's really a theme that I think we can all agree on, and that's what I'd like to leave—I think Mrs. Munro's remarks were in that vein. Trying to find more things that we could agree on in this House, in this Legislature, is a good signal to the pages who are here, to the youth or the educators that might be listening or watching and trying to understand.

What I do have a problem with, though, is the fact that we have been trying to establish a select committee to deal with scandalous waste. Mr. Klees, the member from Newmarket–Aurora, made a very impassioned speech yesterday. I would refer people to the Hansard of yesterday with respect to Bill 50, which is a bill from the Ministry of Health dealing with ambulances. In that, he was refuting a lot of stuff that the bill was artificially putting on the table. What we've been calling for, procedurally, is a select committee of this Legislature of all parties to deal with the—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member to direct his comments to the previous speaker.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you very much. I'll get to that as well—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Actually, get to it right away.

Mr. John O'Toole:—get to deal with the fact that this Bill 13 is—

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole:—Bill 13, I've said it twice now—a select committee to deal with Ornge—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to respond to the comments by the member from York–Simcoe on Bill 13, the anti-bullying bill. I was very pleased to hear the member's comments because I think she recognized that what we need to do is take the bill, Bill 14, from the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, who the members on this side of the House supported. I know that the Minister of Education and the member from Kitchener–Waterloo have been working very closely on how to merge Bill 13 and Bill 14, and I thank the member for York–Simcoe for recognizing that the two bills really need to be merged.

But the problem is, we can't merge these two bills at committee if every time we try to have a debate and actually get Bill 13 passed, what we have is bells ringing, because time after time after time, when Bill 13 has been called for debate, what we've ended up with is 30 minutes of bells ringing about something that has absolutely nothing to do with Bill 13. Although I must say, what I'm really beginning to understand is that the members opposite in the official opposition actually can't agree that we need to compromise, so as a front they're ringing bells. We want to compromise on this. Please pass Bill 13 and get both bills into committee so we can actually compromise. We can't compromise if you keep ringing bells.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mr. Rob Leone: I would like to congratulate the member for York–Simcoe on her remarks on Bill 13. I think that she made some passionate points that reflect some of her background on the issue, and experience and discussions with actual students who have been bullied. Those are important stories that I think all members have, at some point, experienced or seen, and I think it's important that we acknowledge those ideas.

I also want to reference, since the member for Guelph referenced proceeding and moving forward—you know, I think it's just a simple request. The reason why these bells have been ringing has absolutely nothing to do with Bill 13. What it has to do with is that we have to seek some co-operation on seeing through what the will of the House actually has been, which is that we had a motion on this floor that wants to see a select committee on Ornge, which we simply haven't seen to date—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member to restrict his comments to the previous speaker.

Mr. Rob Leone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just referring to, in reference to the comments from the member for Guelph—I think we need to, to the greatest extent possible, set politics aside. Bullying is about the kids, it's about the children, and certainly in my comments on this bill that we've talked about—

Hon. Ted McMeekin: So they're just collateral damage, right? You ring the bells and they're collateral damage.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Minister of Agriculture, would you come to order, please.

Mr. Rob Leone: The heckling that we're seeing from that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, is exemplary of the kind of bullying that we've seen from that side. All I would ask is that we seek a little bit of co-operation in terms of trying to get these things moved forward. Certainly they have no interest in that co-operation, Mr. Speaker. I think that exemplifies the kind of bullying that we've been seeing since last October.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I only have two minutes to make comments. I think the opposition, by ringing the bells—it is a form of bullying. A bully wants to get their way. I remember that in school. We had bullies like everyone else would have, and the bullies wanted their way. I have nephews and nieces, and they tell me about the environment now in schools. Someone will steal someone's iPod or iPhone because they want it themselves. They want to have it for themselves. Or they'll steal someone's lunch because they don't have a lunch or they know that the lunch of the person being bullied is better than their lunch.

I remember in school so many incidents. I remember someone who came into the same classroom that I was in. People knew that he was gay. The teacher stepped out for a bit, and what happened was that a textbook was thrown from the back of the room and hit this person who was gay right in the back of the head. He got up, picked up his binders, left the room and never came back again. We were studying King Lear at that time; I remember it very well. It was a King Lear textbook, hardcover, and it was just thrown right into the back of the head. The person, unfortunately, had to leave. So what we're trying to do is eliminate that in this bill, so that people can live in a free and just society, without having people attack—verbally, physically or by any other means—someone that may be vulnerable.

The world has changed a lot. The United States is discussing the same issue, the very same issue. Society is advancing, becoming more aware of these issues. That's why this bill's important. We all have the right to an education, we all have the right to move freely, and we're addressing that in this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The member for York–Simcoe, you have two minutes for a response.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I wish to thank the members for Durham, Guelph, Cambridge and Scarborough South-west.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask for your indulgence. In fact, in the comments and questions, there seem to be mixed messages here between the use of bells and the actual piece of legislation, so I'm going to respond to

those as well. I think, perhaps, that it is what I said: a mixed message.

1000

We have a very serious issue on the floor of this chamber: the question of Bill 13 and the question of Bill 14. No one, I think, misunderstands that we also have a very serious issue in the need for a select committee. The bells are simply an opportunity to demonstrate the dissatisfaction of the opposition, and serve as a reminder of the need to look at the issue of Ornge. I certainly don't think that I mixed those messages in my remarks.

The important thing, I think, is how I left my comments, which were on the value of a safe environment. We spend a great deal of money and time on various other methods of making sure our children have a safe environment. We have what are notionally referred to as "the helicopter parents." Well, I think that it's time to look at the issue of those children who are identified, for whatever reason, as outsiders, as being different. That's what this bill is all about—both of them—and it is an opportunity for us to move forward on something that is so important.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I appreciate the opportunity to speak on Bill 13 in the time that I have. There are a number of issues that I wish to bring forward that I hope the government will be able to pay attention to. There are some issues I want to bring to their attention, as there are a number of questions that haven't been answered as of yet.

I can recall, and each of us has mentioned, many aspects of our lives that have come forward that have actually been part of our building blocks in order to make us individuals and stronger. I can recall being in grade 9, walking home, and I happened to see an individual I knew who was in grade 9 being picked on by two older kids in grade 12. He was walking away as best he could, and these kids picked on him and just punched him. I didn't know what to do. I have to tell you, he just continued to walk, and he was almost in tears doing the very best he could. I never, ever forgot that moment. As a matter of fact, it was about a year and a half ago when I met the individual again, and I apologized to him for not standing up for him at that time.

Although I was intimidated by the bullies that were picking on the individual, I didn't have the courage or the understanding of what process to go by which to assist in the situation. But what took place, though, Mr. Speaker, was that I brought it upon myself that I wouldn't allow it to happen to other children or other kids if it was ever in my presence again.

As a result of that, later on while in high school, I was working, believe it or not, as a chicken picker on a chicken farm. There was one tough guy that was picking on all the little kids in there, because they brought everybody in of any age. What we'd do is load chickens in the bins to be carried off to—this particular place was Colonel Sanders. Anyway, one kid was picking on one of the

young guys there, and he thought it was great fun and all the other kids were laughing at him. I told myself, as I did when I saw the individual in grade 9 being picked on, that I wouldn't let it happen. I went over, I picked him up and I held him up against the ceiling of the top floor of that chicken barn and I said, "You ever pick on that kid again and you're going to deal with me." He stopped. Nobody ever did, and nobody ever picked on anybody while I was in there ever again.

Not only that, but later on while I was playing hockey, I can recall we were playing some pick-up shinny hockey and there was one guy that was a pretty good skater. He felt great pride in checking and flattening every single kid that he could there, because he was a big, tough guy. The next shift, I went out and I warned him. I said, "Don't ever do it again." He went out and continued on, he thought, in defiance. Well, the next time I had a chance, I completely levelled him, and he said, "What did you do that for?" I said, "How do you think he likes it and he likes it? Don't ever do it again." He was doing it to intimidate the other kids.

What happened, though, Mr. Speaker, is what I'm trying to express here: that as a result of the bullying actions, it builds stronger characters in those individuals who are willing to stand up for those individuals being bullied. Quite frankly, probably every one of us in here is standing up for beliefs that we have, and that's one of the reasons we came to Queen's Park.

Now, I want to go into some of the aspects in regard to the specifics of the bill. I'm going to read a couple things that I'll specifically reference: "All Canadians are ... on an equal footing; whether they are Quebeckers, Albertans, French, English, Jewish, Hindu, they all have the same rights. No one is special. All Canadians are equal, and that equality flows from the charter."

It goes on to mention a number of other aspects where it specifically says, "In my philosophy the community, an institution itself, has no rights. It has rights by delegation from the individuals. You give equality to the individuals and you give rights to the individuals. Then they will organize in societies to make sure that these rights are respected."

The individual goes on to talk about a hierarchy of rights, whereby the recognition of single entities or aspects that are mentioned in legislation are given a perceived hierarchy of rights, and that's one of the concerns here in Bill 13, that a hierarchy of rights is being established because one single aspect is mentioned where there are other aspects that are not mentioned.

Quite frankly, it's important for the individuals to know who it was who spoke that, because that was Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the Prime Minister of Canada at that time, who went into great depth and spoke about ensuring that all rights are equal.

Now, in this Bill 13, one of the aspects was—in my own riding, my old alma mater, R.S. McLaughlin Collegiate and Vocational Institute, in which I have great pride and which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, denied allowing to have a faith organization in the school because, according to the principal at that time,

religion was the basis of all wars in the world. That principal would not allow anything that promoted war in her school, and that organization was denied. So by mentioning certain organizations and others, there's a perceived hierarchy of rights that is being established within the legislation, and that's where a lot of individuals or groups have concerns about that.

Not only that. I met with senior officials from one of the largest, if not—well, quite frankly, it will be the largest implementer of the legislation in Bill 13, because there are certain aspects that already have it in place. The statement that was quite shocking was that, for the first time ever, they had never been consulted prior to the actual introduction of the legislation. The first time they ever heard anything about it was after it was introduced in the Legislature, and they had no ability to have comment or input on a consultation basis, which is the normal practice within this Legislature.

Quite frankly, they were very concerned and didn't know how to handle it, so they contacted me and asked, "What do we do and how do we go about this?" As a result of that action, a document was brought forward by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association called *Respecting Difference*. When you're respecting difference, it's the ability to come forward and ensure that the contents of it are reflective of all aspects being brought forward. It's an attempt to reach out, to say, "Look, we'll find an understanding on how we can work together and move forward." Quite frankly, they were very concerned about the whole thing in that they'd never had any ability to influence or been given an opportunity to have input on that.

Also, I should say that I, as many members do here, have met with principals in my riding. Quite frankly, I asked them when they came forward in regard to Bill 13 about the aspects of implementing it. Their comments were quite surprising to me. I found it rather interesting that they stated to me that they already had the authority to do what was taking place and being implemented in Bill 13. So I asked, then, why they would be bringing Bill 13 forward? They didn't have an answer. Quite possibly, the lack of consultation with the implementation organizations may be part of the reason. However, that's not for me to decide. It's for the implementers or the government who have moved the aspects forward.

I looked up under the Education Act and, according to section 306(1), it specifically states, "A principal shall consider whether to suspend a pupil if he or she believes that the pupil has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate...." What they stated to me was that that section allowed them to make sure that anything that took place regarding bullying could be dealt with at the school level.

Some of the aspects mentioned were:

"1. Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person.

"2. Possessing alcohol or illegal drugs.

"3. Being under the influence of alcohol.

"4. Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority.

"5. Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school.

"6. Bullying."

So, under section 306 of the legislation, it already states that bullying is already enacted and that the principals of the schools have the authority, whether it's on or off school property, to enact the legislation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I realize there's a very limited amount of time here. There's another couple of things I wanted to mention. I was invited to a constitutional briefing at U of T on the legislation, and there was a significant number of concerns that were brought forward in regard to this. One of them, very specifically, was that, should Bill 13 be enacted in the way it is, it will effectively stop what's taking place in the riding of Oshawa, as in other locations. Pastor Jarret of the Affinity Church preaches at Norman G. Powers School—and this is one of the questions I am hoping the government will be able to answer and answer to these individuals. Bill 13, the way it has come out now, will disallow that church from practising in that school, at Norman G. Powers, as is the practice in many churches. They need to hear these answers to give them some security that they know they can continue on with this aspect, because they are very concerned about that.

Another aspect that was brought forward in that constitutional briefing at U of T was very specifically that under subsection 2(1), paragraph 29.1 of subsection 8(1) of the act is repealed. They give the example that the Toronto District School Board's EIE policy explicitly states that parents shall not be provided with advance notification of what material is being taught to their children, and that the parents shall not be permitted to withdraw their children from classes covering material which conflicts with their religious or moral beliefs.

Now, I understand that there is a potential court case in Hamilton—if it has not been brought forward—about to take place dealing with this because a parent tried to remove their child from the classes that they didn't believe were appropriate in accordance with their beliefs. I also understand that there is a Quebec precedent that was set in regard to this that had taken place. However, according to the constitutional lawyers who potentially will be dealing with this or are dealing with it now, they are substantially different in that the parent was completely denied and disallowed from removing their child from there.

There is a significant number of questions that need to be answered. Unfortunately, I only have a few seconds left. I appreciate the opportunity. I look forward to the bill moving forward to committee so that these issues can be brought forward and these people have the ability to come forward and get their questions answered about a serious aspect of our society.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1012 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Peter Shurman: I'd like to take a moment to recognize a young man, Will White, from Akron University in Ohio, in the west members' gallery. Will has been an intern in my office here at Queen's Park for the past couple of months and he leaves Queen's Park tomorrow. Will's major project was working on a private member's bill, which I will look forward to introducing later in the term.

Based on our experience in working with Will, I can confidently say that he has a very bright and exciting future ahead of him. So on behalf of myself and my staff and, I hope, all of you at Queen's Park, I'd like to say great good luck to Will White.

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'd like to welcome Kevin Maloney. He's an individual who bid at a recent Rotary Club of Brampton-Heart Lake auction for charity, and he's having lunch with me today.

Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent for all members to wear ribbons in recognition of the National Day of Mourning.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I believe we have a unanimous consent request for wearing the ribbon for national mourning. Do we agree? Agreed.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I would like to welcome today to Queen's Park Kathy Kennedy, representative of the Canadian Cancer Society in my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, and thank her for the great work she does and the great work the society does there and elsewhere.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I am so pleased to introduce a huge delegation from the cancer society: John Atkinson, Julie Datta, Sharon Chandler, Mary Ransom; Cathy Burns, from Sudbury; Janice Hodgson, Lori Synes-Taraba, Joanne Di Nardo, Kate Neale; Diana Barclay-Neale, who happens to be Kate's mother; Mary Hobbs, Janice Cunningham, Linda Constant, Elizabeth Holmes, Lera Ryan, Maureen Tourangeau, and Lynne O'Neil. We also have Rowena Pinto, Sherri Cicirello, Shadi Mousavi Nia, Dave Nidumolu, Diana Barclay—sorry, introduced her already—Daniel Paquette, and I have Dr. Cheryl Rosen, and Martin Kabat, the CEO of the cancer society, Ontario division. They are all here today to support my private member's bill banning tanning beds.

Mr. Kim Craitor: I, too, want to recognize some individuals from my riding of Niagara Falls who are here on behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society for MPP education week. In the east gallery we have Lori Taraba—thank you, Lori—and we have Angela Daley. I want to simply say, Mr. Speaker, as a survivor of cancer, thank you so much to the Canadian Cancer Society for all the good work that you do.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'd like to introduce to you a friend of mine, Paul Howe from the community of Penetanguishene. Paul's here with the Canadian Cancer Society, and he's also a member of the Ontario Trillium Foundation and I think about 12 other community organizations in our area. Thank you very much for being here, Paul.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Of course, we're very fortunate to have Sarah McPherson here, page for the Thunder Bay-Atikokan riding. Today we also have her mother, Tracy Shields. I'd like you to welcome her. She's in the east gallery. Welcome, Tracy.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: I'm thrilled to welcome Sharon Burns. She's the manager of the Halton Canadian Cancer Society and she's also a Burlingtonian.

Mr. Michael Coteau: I'd like to welcome Margaret Eaton, the president and CEO of ABC Life Literacy, who's joining us in the members' gallery today, and I'd like to recognize the great work that their organization is doing to help the literacy cause in Canada.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm so happy to introduce a great friend of mine and a great friend to fighting cancer in this province. Maureen Tourangeau is here. She has been a lifelong volunteer with the Ottawa cancer society, which I used to be a board member with. I'm very happy she's at Queen's Park today.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I would like to welcome to the Ontario Legislature today Mary Ransom of the Canadian Cancer Society in Niagara.

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's a great pleasure for me today to welcome Helen Cole, president of the Sarnia Canadian Cancer Society. Accompanying her is Kilby McGarry, a recent volunteer to the Canadian Cancer Society. We welcome them to Queen's Park today.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I'd like to welcome Anita Record and Will Camm from the Peterborough branch of the Canadian Cancer Society, who are with us today.

Mr. Peter Shurman: In the west members' gallery, I would like to welcome my lovely wife, Carole, and our friends Eva and Andrew Kordysz. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd like to welcome Janis Cunningham to the Legislature. She's a hard-working member of the Canadian Cancer Society in my riding.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'd ask all members to help me welcome Janice Hodgson, who is here representing the Holland River unit of the Canadian Cancer Society.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On behalf of the member from Thunder Bay-Atikokan, supporting page Sarah McPherson is mother Tracy Shields—thank you very much—in the members' gallery.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO'S CREDIT RATING

Mr. Peter Shurman: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Two days ago our leader, Tim Hudak, and the

Ontario PC caucus voted against a budget that did nothing to save Ontario from a \$30-billion deficit, from further debt and more unemployment. We took that stand because we are worried about the future of our province. We took that stand because you did not take the urgent action that our province needs.

Yesterday's S&P negative outlook throws your government's incompetence in managing our province into high relief, Deputy Premier. In fact, Kevin O'Leary on The Lang and O'Leary Exchange yesterday had this to say regarding the downgrading: "This is further evidence that this government is probably past its shelf life."

With all indications to the contrary, can you still stand up here and claim that you and your budget are what Ontario needs?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: First of all, Standard and Poor's affirmed the credit rating and put Ontario on a negative outlook, and they cited the challenge of meeting our deficit targets, which this government is prepared to embrace, and we want to meet those targets, obviously.

We welcome the independent analysis which cited, among other factors, a number of great strengths that this economy has, Mr. Speaker, and a number of challenges we have, including the global economy and including, in their words, the fact that we are in a minority Parliament. That's why we hope that we can work together on issues in the future to continue to meet those targets.

We adopted a number of initiatives in the budget which I think are certainly consistent with Conservative points of view. I look forward to hearing from other agencies. These are not easy things, but I think Ontarians are prepared to embrace the challenge in front of us. We've laid out a plan to get us back to balance, Mr. Speaker. The expense challenges are real, but we will—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Shurman: I think the Deputy Premier may get his wish in hearing from other agencies. The Standard and Poor's negative outlook on Ontario is an indictment of this government's performance and of its fiscal plan.

On April 4 this year, this finance minister himself said, "'We're worried about costs when we have a proposal to raise taxes and expenditures.' Duncan told reporters.

"That's one thing that in my view, given what the demands of the credit agencies are, we have to be very cautious about. That's not what credit agencies are looking for."

Really? Our party and our leader have repeatedly called on your government to correct your course. You refused because you just didn't get it, Deputy Premier.

Do you get it now? Or are you going to wait until we get downgraded and interest rates make your budget completely obsolete?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In fact, Standard and Poor's affirmed the rating for the next two years, and they are looking to this Legislature to meet those challenges. They cited a number of great strengths in the Ontario economy, which we concur with, and they quite correctly cited the

challenges that we are faced with. So we welcome their unbiased, balanced perspective on what is happening. We will likely hear from other agencies in the near future. We will welcome their advice as well.

1040

I'm pleased to report that Ontario's debt continues to be among the most in-demand debt in the world because it's seen as strong debt. There are real challenges on the expenditure side, and this government is committed to dealing with those challenges. We're doing that, and we will meet the challenges.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound will come to order.

Question?

Mr. Peter Shurman: Let's review, Deputy Premier, what Standard and Poor's actually had to say yesterday, and I'm quoting again: "We believe the province's main credit challenges include its continuing weak budgetary ... metrics and its challenging cost-containment plan required to achieve budgetary balance by fiscal 2018."

Deputy Premier, this is the second credit rating agency in four months to put you on negative credit watch. If we want to get our economy moving again to create jobs, you must get our fiscal House in order.

You responded to the last negative credit outlook by stubbornly doubling down on the same failed path. How do you intend to respond this time?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Mr. Speaker, by implementing the budget and the fiscal plan we have laid out, by attempting to work in this Legislature in a minority parliament to address the very real challenges that face this economy that have built up over many years. One simply has to look at the history of debt accumulation in Ontario to see where and when it happened. These numbers are all well understood.

I will remind you that the Globe and Mail reminds us this morning—they called the Leader of the Opposition the forgotten man of Queen's Park because of the very wrong response to the need for this Legislature to work together in challenging times.

The plan we've laid out is the right plan, Mr. Speaker. Standard and Poor's quite properly says we have to meet the spending targets. We will do that with or without the help of the opposition.

ONTARIO'S CREDIT RATING

Mr. Peter Shurman: Back to the Deputy Premier: This is not the first time that Standard and Poor's has issued a very direct warning to your government. In the summer of 2009, Standard and Poor's put us on negative watch. In the fall of 2009, they downgraded Ontario. Now, in the spring of 2012, they put Ontario on negative watch again.

In their move yesterday, they issued a stern warning to the Premier: "The negative outlook reflects our view that there is at least a one-in-three likelihood that we could lower the long-term rating one notch...." We warned you

last week that a 1% increase in interest rates means \$500 million wiped away to service a \$280-billion debt.

Will the Deputy Premier finally listen? What are you prepared to do to make sure we avoid a further downgrade to Ontario's credit rating?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Mr. Speaker, again, I want to remind the people of Ontario that Standard and Poor's affirmed our credit rating. They did not affirm the credit rating of the United States. They did not affirm the credit rating of France. There's a variety of other jurisdictions they did not affirm the credit rating. We take their advice very seriously.

The member is right. At the depth of the most recent recession, they did put us on negative outlook, as they did with virtually every jurisdiction in North America that doesn't have oil, doesn't have natural gas and doesn't have potash.

The challenges to our economy are real. I think the people of Ontario expect the members of this Legislature to work together in a minority situation, not to play games, not to ring bells, not to not show up, and do the people's business. We look forward to working with both parties in this Legislature as we move—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Shurman: Yesterday, and I see again today, this finance minister was quick to do what he always does. He points the blame anywhere else. But there is no one left to blame, Speaker. Standard and Poor's was clear. This is your responsibility, sir: "Ontario's large budgetary deficits since the recession have significantly boosted the debt burden."

It's black and white, Deputy Premier. Your uncontrollable spending, your debt, is what got us into this mess. Will your government continue to invent excuses, or are you finally ready to accept responsibility?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I accept responsibility that we stepped in and helped save General Motors and Chrysler. I accept responsibility that we accelerated capital projects across the province to build more hospitals that needed to be built, to build new roads that needed to be built, to build municipal infrastructure, to put people to work at a time when jobs were scarce.

It is now time to get that deficit back. We have brought it down. We have exceeded our targets, as Standard and Poor's pointed out, in each of the first three years. I welcome their advice. We embrace it. We're prepared to continue to make the right choices for the best future for Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

Mr. Peter Shurman: Well, you do have to get the deficit under control. We've been telling you that. Now they're telling you that. When are you going to listen? Without a doubt, yesterday's decision is an indictment of your government's fiscal policy. The verdict is in, Deputy Premier. Tax hikes and irresponsible spending will not get Ontario moving out of this economic downturn. Now more than ever, you need to change your

ways. You need to show that you're willing to do the right thing.

Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus are committed to taking this province on a different path, a path that leads to jobs, a path that leads to a strong economy, to stability. The question is, are you? If so, then the time is now. If you refuse to listen to us, will you please, please listen to Moody's, listen to Standard and Poor's, and change your course?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Finance.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please.

Deputy Premier.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We've taken the deficit from just over \$19 billion to \$15 billion. That's going to continue to go down, according to the path we've laid out. We laid out in 2010 the path back to balance. We've overachieved in each year so far.

There is no doubt that there are expenditure challenges. I think, working together, this Legislature can address these challenges. I think the official opposition ought to follow the advice of this morning's Globe and Mail and say, "Don't be irrelevant." Please come to the table and work with this government. We do need to get back to balance. I think Ontarians expect that of us. I think a number of Conservatives expect that of us.

I'm reminded that some Tories remain puzzled that the Leader of the Opposition came out against the budget as soon as it was introduced. "Tim's position has left him out of being any relevant part" of the news. I just wonder which Tory it was. Was it you? Was it her? Was it him? I don't know, Mr. Speaker. We're prepared to get this—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

JOB CREATION

Mr. Michael Prue: My question is to the Minister of Finance. Over the past month, New Democrats have brought the issues of real, everyday people to this Legislature, and I'm happy to say that over the course of this last month, we've been able to get real results for them. By doing our best to make this Legislature work, we've put a little fairness into this budget and avoided an election.

But there's a lot more work that needs to be done. This morning we learned about more job losses in Mississauga. When will we see a real jobs plan from this government?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I'll refer the member opposite to the budget. We have created a jobs and prosperity task force. The Minister of Economic Development will be announcing the membership of that.

I would remind the member that since the bottom of the recession, we've had more than 340,000 net new jobs in Ontario. I'll remind the member opposite that in the month of March this year we had 46,000 net new jobs in

Ontario, full-time jobs that will contribute to the future growth of this province.

There's more work to do; we remain committed to that. We remain committed to working with all parties in this Legislature, not just to get Ontario's deficit under control, which we believe is one of the most important things we can do to create jobs, but indeed to take the funds that we have available and make better use of them to create more jobs still.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Prue: The people of Ontario are looking for action, not more task force studies. This government is finally and grudgingly conceding that corporate tax giveaways and the HST are not creating the 600,000 jobs that they were supposed to.

We've put forward a simple idea: that companies that aren't creating jobs shouldn't be getting tax breaks. The government says it's ready to consider constructive ideas like this. What we want to know is, when is this going to happen?

1050

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The third party is trying to have it both ways. On the one hand, they say, "Don't give corporate tax cuts." On the other hand, they stand up and say, "Create a new corporate tax cut." That's what he's proposing, and it's a worthy idea; I don't deny that. I think it is worthy of looking at, but you can't have it both ways. Leave the rhetoric at home. Come to the Legislature and let's work together.

Mr. Drummond pointed out that a number of our existing tax credits don't work well. Most economists say that. But don't stand up and say, "No more corporate tax cuts," and then look the other way and say, "Create a new corporate tax cut." Let's have some consistency. Let's hear some real ideas. Let's leave the rhetoric at the door, and let's work together for a better future for Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

Mr. Michael Prue: I hardly think this is rhetoric. What we are saying is to reward those that do the right thing.

This week, we saw the United Kingdom head back into recession, thanks to an unbalanced and reckless plan for them to balance their books. We need to do better here in Ontario. On this side of the House, we plan to work hard, not just to make this minority work but to make it work for ordinary, everyday people who sent us here.

The question: Is the government ready to get to work on a jobs plan that actually creates work for the people who need it, people like those in Mississauga who lost their jobs yesterday?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I just remind the member opposite of last month: 46,000 net new jobs. The unemployment rate fell to 7.4%, the lowest in three years. There's still more to do. We've got to get that lower.

Employment has increased by 348,000 net new jobs from the low in May 2009, recovering all of the jobs lost. The member referred to the UK. He's right. We've

recovered more than 100% of the lost jobs; the United Kingdom, only 38% of the lost jobs. Last year, 121,000 net new jobs in Ontario and 45.7% of all the new jobs created in Canada, which is larger than our share of the gross domestic product.

We have a plan. We're implementing it. We look forward to working with the third party to build on that and still build a better province for all of our families.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

M^{me} France G  linas: Merci, monsieur le Pr  sident. Ma question sera pour le premier ministre par int  rim. The Premier has talked a lot in the past few days about making a minority government work. I think by working together, we made some good progress on making the budget a bit more fair for everyday Ontarians, but that's only one part of making a minority government work. Making it work means listening to the will of the Legislature. When will the Premier and Deputy Premier listen to the will of the Legislature and strike a select committee on Ornge?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. John Milloy: I think the member is well aware, considering she sits on the public accounts committee, that right now we have hearings into the Ornge matter that are taking place here in the Ontario Legislature. It's the public accounts committee, a standing committee of the Legislature, which is undergoing a thorough review of the Ornge situation. They also have a robust list of witnesses that are coming forward and a list of witnesses moving forward. It's an opportunity for them, with the guidance of the Auditor General and guidance I know, too, of counsel because of the current OPP situation, to do a thorough examination of Ornge and move forward.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France G  linas: Back to the Deputy Premier: The story goes that, after the fall election, the Premier called Bill Davis to get advice as to how you make a minority government work. We hadn't had one in Ontario for a long time. If the story is true, Bill Davis told the Premier to work with other parties in the Legislature, to be ready to compromise.

Premier, we have heard a lot of flowery language about working together, but I think it's time to get down to brass tacks. Will the Premier agree to respect the will of the majority in this House and strike a select committee for Ornge?

Hon. John Milloy: I take a very different perspective when it comes to co-operation in this House. I'm very proud of the good work that was done by the government and the New Democratic Party to reach a compromise on the recent budget that has come forward.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the honourable member who has raised this question has served for a number of years here in the Legislature, and I know that she would never want to leave the wrong impression, with this Legislature or with individuals watching on TV, that somehow there

is a difference in the powers of a standing committee or a select committee. We have nine standing committees of the Legislature, including public accounts, which are given all the tools they need to look into matters like Ornge. Public accounts is currently seized with the matter. They have a robust list of witnesses, and they are continuing to undertake the type of investigation that she's asking for.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Back to the deputy: Earlier this week, the Premier talked about a perfect marriage. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? New Democrats want to stay single. I don't know too many women who are looking for a spouse who doesn't listen. Not too many women are looking for a spouse who ignores the rules whenever he or she feels like it. Working together means compromising on the things you want to work together on, but it also means compromising on the things you don't want to work together on, and the Premier is not doing that.

Will the Premier respect the will of the majority of the House and strike a select committee to look into Ornge?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, once again, I'm proud of the very good work that we did with the New Democratic Party and what we accomplished in terms of the budget. Our government is open to working with both opposition parties, but when I look across the aisle at the Progressive Conservative Party—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, when I look across at the official opposition—not the NDP but the official opposition—I see a party that has gone to great lengths to obstruct the business of this Legislature through their bell ringing.

We right now have the Accepting Schools Act, Bill 13, which is being obstructed by the official opposition. We have the rent increase guideline, Bill 19, which is being obstructed by the Conservative Party. We have the healthy homes renovation tax credit, which is right now being held up in committee because of the Conservative Party. Mr. Speaker, that is not—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, my question is to the government House leader. What I want to do is, I want to point out—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Your own member wants to ask the question.

Mr. Frank Klees: —I want to point out to the people who are observing the proceedings here that there's only

one party here, one caucus, that is obstructing the will of the Legislature, and that is the government caucus.

What we're seeing is that every committee hearing that we have, witnesses are coming forward. We have eight minutes per witness to question these people on a very serious issue. Even witnesses say that the eight minutes that they have is not enough. We have called for a select committee for that very reason. Why is this government obstructing the will of this Legislature that will allow us to get to the bottom of this issue?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, again, I know the honourable member who stands up is a parliamentarian of some experience. He would never want to leave the impression with this House or with the viewers watching that there is a difference between the powers of a select committee or a standing committee. He talks about the amount of time that a witness has in front of a standing committee of the Legislature. That is a decision of the committee itself, Mr. Speaker. It has nothing to do with the nature of it.

Mr. Speaker, the public accounts committee is seized with this matter. They have all the tools that any committee of this Legislature would have, select, standing or otherwise. They are undertaking a very thorough review of the Ornge situation, including the testimony of the Minister of Health and the good work that she is doing. But the real question, the final piece of the puzzle, is Bill 50, and I ask the member, in his supplementary, to commit right now to passing that piece of legislation.

1100

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Speaker, I heard the government House leader very clearly. I now want to ask the government House leader to agree to this: If he does not want to give us a select committee, will he agree that we adopt within the public accounts committee the terms of reference that we proposed for a select committee, so that we could get on with the business of properly getting witnesses forward with the appropriate whistle-blower protection? We're going to ask for a very simple commitment today. Will the government House leader agree to give us those terms of reference? If he will do that, we will co-operate and we'll move forward and we'll get to the bottom of this issue.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I've already mentioned the names of some people here. I will continue to do that, and if I have to do it a second time, I'll get close to the naming situation that I told you before: warning, then naming.

Answer?

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I think the public accounts committee is doing outstanding work. In fact,

do you know what we learned yesterday? We learned that two of Canada's best-connected Conservatives—Guy Giorno, the former chief of staff to Mike Harris, and Lynne Golding, a prominent PC Party activist—were the ones responsible for providing advice to Chris Mazza, advice to not put his salary on the sunshine list, which he didn't; that they didn't have to co-operate with the Auditor General, which he didn't; and how to create the web of for-profit entities which are right now being examined by that committee.

I have confidence in the public accounts committee. I have confidence in the members and their questioning of the witnesses, and I believe they are doing a great job in terms of getting to the bottom of Ornge and bringing to light some of these issues which my friend across the way doesn't seem to want to talk about very much.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Acting Premier. Minister, there's a disturbing pattern at Ornge of well-connected insiders lining their pockets with limited health care dollars. First we learned of former Liberal Party president Alfred Apps, whose firm billed Ornge and the public over \$9 million. Now we hear of the Premier's former chief of staff and head strategist, Don Guy, whose "professional services" earned him a cool \$107,000. Why is this government, time and time again, putting well-connected insiders ahead of front-line care to people in Ontario?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. John Milloy: As I've said, the public accounts committee is doing an excellent job in terms of meeting with witnesses, questioning witnesses and getting to the bottom of Ornge. But if the honourable members of the opposition, as I say, want to hold hearings during the course of question period, then again I talk about what we found out yesterday about two prominent Conservatives: Guy Giorno, a former chief of staff to Mike Harris; Lynne Golding, a very prominent PC Party lawyer. We found out that they billed Ornge some \$11 million to give them the type of advice which is in fact under question right now. They told Dr. Chris Mazza that it was fine to refuse to put his \$1.4-million salary on the sunshine list, and he hid that salary. They told him that they didn't have to co-operate with the Auditor General, and they did not. They told him how to create a web of for-profit entities, which they did, and it's the subject of investigation right now.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Speaker, Don Guy's relationship to the Premier has been described in newspaper articles as "joined at the hip." Some say that despite leaving the Premier's office years ago, he still has a say on how things are run there. Mr. Guy's last bill, for \$16,950, was to one of Ornge's for-profit companies, Ornge Global Holdings Ltd., on December 17, 2011, right when the news about Ornge's high-flying execu-

tives hit the news. He didn't take the cash. Was that because the Liberal Party's campaign chair knew that what the government was doing was completely wrong and ill-advised?

Hon. John Milloy: As I said, these are all matters that the committee is seized with in terms of Ornge, in terms of the various billings that went on, and there are going to be opportunities to question witnesses. But if the member insists upon holding these types of hearings during question period, then again, let's talk about Guy Giorno and Lynne Golding and the fact that these lawyers with intimate links to the PC Party—I don't think you can get any more intimate than being Mike Harris's chief of staff—billed 22,000 hours of work to Ornge. That's 916 days, working around the clock, or 2.5 years every day around the clock.

We're learning about disturbing things that went on there with these PC-connected lawyers. We're looking forward to the testimony of Mr. Kelly Mitchell, another well-connected Conservative, who was paid \$400,000 to schmooze and lobby opposition members across the way.

ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

Mr. David Oraziotti: My question is for the Minister of Education. Minister, this past November you introduced the Accepting Schools Act, legislation that would help make our schools safer and create a more welcoming environment for all students.

As a former educator and a parent, I'm disappointed that five months later, the bill is still stuck in second reading. When it comes to the welfare of our kids in the province, we need to put politics aside and do what's right.

Now, the MPP for Kitchener-Waterloo introduced a similar bill on anti-bullying, which government members supported because we believe in doing everything we can to help protect students. Unfortunately, Conservative members are continuing to obstruct what is good public policy.

Minister, what are you doing to make sure this important legislation is passed?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: The member from Sault Ste. Marie is right: Taking steps in our schools to eradicate bullying is critically important to families and children in this province. There have been many times where this Legislature has come together to help kids. Unfortunately, this is not one of those times.

Liberal members, as the member from Sault Ste. Marie has said, did not play games with the member for Kitchener-Waterloo's bill. I have publicly and repeatedly said I want to incorporate over half of that bill. The goal is to make Bill 13 the strongest possible bill that we can have. Let's take good ideas from all sides of the House. Let's get this bill to committee. I call on the opposition: Stop delaying. Stop playing politics. Put kids first.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I am going to comment on my concern that we stick with government

policy in the questioning. I would ask the member to make sure that you don't try to slip a sentence in there that doesn't.

Supplementary.

Mr. David Oraziotti: Thank you, Speaker. Minister, I appreciate your commitment to moving this legislation forward. I think it's important that we focus on good education policy and what Bill 13 does to protect students across the province. Members of the Legislature all agree that bullying in our schools is wrong and we need to do more to prevent it, yet the opposition have chosen to disrupt debate on this issue 10 times. They've decided to put procedural games ahead of good public policy.

Bill 13 needs to move forward. Minister, can you tell us how we're going to continue to move this legislation forward?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: Let me be very clear: We want to make Bill 13, our government bill, the best possible bill to protect students. That's why I've provided the member for Kitchener–Waterloo with amendments to our Accepting Schools Act, Bill 13, drafted in legislative language, which include more than one half of the provisions in Bill 14. We did this because we can only fight bullying in Ontario schools if this House stands together.

But the opposition stands in the way. Tim Hudak, the leader of the PC Party, hasn't shown leadership. He needs to put aside partisan politics. He needs to put aside—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I remind the member to refer to people in this place either by their riding or their ministry.

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: Thank you, Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition needs to support the movement of Bill 13 to committee. We need to put aside partisan politics and ideology. We need to work across party lines for our kids—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

New question.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Frank Klees: To the government House leader: The government House leader knows full well that we only have five more days left between now and the recess. That's five more days of hearings with witnesses who are given only eight minutes of questioning per caucus. What we want to do now—I'm going to take at his word the government House leader, who said that he trusts the committee to do the work. I will do this: I will present to the subcommittee the proposal that we adopt the terms of reference that had been adopted and proposed for the select committee. I want to know from the government House leader, will you support a motion

from the subcommittee that we adopt the terms of reference for the select committee?

1110

Hon. John Milloy: As I said, the public accounts committee is doing an excellent job. It's a standing committee of the Legislature and it's appropriate that it's looking into the Ornge situation, as there was a report from the Auditor General that came forward. But if the member wants to talk about the procedures here, I have a question for him. Bill 50 is before this House. Bill 50 is the most important piece, the final piece of the puzzle, in terms of addressing the Ornge issue, which the Minister of Health has taken leadership on in putting forward a number of measures. My question to him and to his opposition colleagues is, are they going to continue to obstruct this Legislature and obstruct this important bill which would allow the Ornge situation to evolve and address the concerns that were raised by the Auditor General?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, it's very clear that the House leader knows nothing about this issue. I spoke in our lead-off debate yesterday on Bill 50. He should read the transcript. He'll find out that that legislation is nothing more than smoke and mirrors.

What we need to do is get to the bottom of the scandal itself. What has been proven is that the minister's two major objections as to why the government did not act were taken out from under her by testimony at the committee yesterday. The fact that it's federally incorporated, the fact of the performance agreement—neither of those issues is real.

I want to ask this: Rather than continue to obstruct, all we're asking is that you agree to allow that public accounts committee to adopt the broad terms of reference. When that motion comes forward, will you—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, as I've pointed out, the public accounts committee is a committee of this Legislature which has the full powers to investigate these matters and come up with the rules and administration of how it goes forward.

But you know what, Mr. Speaker? I am not going to stand here and listen to that member undermine the very, very important work of the Auditor General. I will take the word of the Auditor General over a lawyer who advised Chris Mazza on how to hide his salary any day of the week. You know what the Auditor General said? I quote: "The performance agreement was weak and it was not adequate. It needed to be significantly strengthened. The additional corporate entities that Ornge unilaterally created were not covered by the performance agreement. The performance agreement does not allow the ministry"—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. The Auditor General pointed out the flaws in the Ornge

agreement. I will take his word any day rather than a group of Conservative lawyers who billed for thousands and thousands of hours and advised them on how to go around many of the issues that are before the House right now.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: My question is to the Acting Premier. The Minister of Health has blamed the performance agreement for her government's inaction with Ornge. But yesterday in committee it was very clear: Ms. Lynne Golding, one of Ornge's legal advisors, said that the performance agreement that was in place while the executives at Ornge were lining their pockets gave the Ministry of Health the power it needed to keep Ornge in line. Why did the minister mislead Ontarians by stating—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm standing.

The member will withdraw.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Withdrawn.

Why did the minister indicate that the previous performance agreement made her powerless to control Ornge?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. John Milloy: The very direct answer is, because the Auditor General confirmed what the minister said. As I just indicated to the Conservatives, I will take the word of the Auditor General, a respected officer of this House—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Oxford, come to order. Member from Simcoe South, come to order. The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, come to order—second time.

Hon. John Milloy:—over the word of two prominent Conservatives who admitted yesterday that they advised Chris Mazza on how to hide his \$1.4 million salary, something that he did; they advised Chris Mazza that he did not have to co-operate with the Auditor General, and he didn't; they advised how to create the web of for-profit entities which are right now the subject of committee and OPP investigations—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. My frustration is the arguments that are taking place across the aisle, with no relationship whatsoever to what is being questioned or answered. First of all, knock that off. Second, when I ask you for your attention and you give it to me and then you proceed to start up again, it's only going to get under my skin, and you're not going to like that.

Supplementary?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Speaker, again to the Acting Premier: Just yesterday in this House, the Minister of Health said, "The original performance agreement with Ornge did not give us the tools we needed to address these concerns." But it became very clear in the committee that Ornge's legal adviser says that's not true, and that the province had great moral suasion over Ornge—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Attorney General, come to order.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh:—not to mention pages of legal covenants, but didn't choose to use it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Guelph, take your seat.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Was blaming the performance agreement just an easy way for this government and this Minister of Health to hide her failure to do her job?

Hon. John Milloy: I'm quite frankly a little disappointed that the NDP is falling into the trap of defending PC lawyers. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General, a very respected officer of this Legislature, outlined in his report the problems with the performance agreement. Here's what he said: "The additional corporate entities that Ornge unilaterally created were not covered by the performance agreement...." The performance agreement "does not allow the ministry to recover any unspent air ambulance funding...." The performance agreement "does not entitle the Ministry to access the books and records of any of the entities that Ornge ... controls...." The performance agreement "has only two specific and measurable response-time requirements relating to requests for air ambulance services." The Minister of Health and the government is taking action to clean up the mess that was created with the advice of these well-connected PC lawyers, and we ask the NDP to join us.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: This question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The western Mississauga neighbourhoods are known for single-family houses. Thousands of households in Meadowvale and Streetsville rent their accommodation. Many people struggle to pay their monthly rent. Ontarians need affordable rents, and tenants do not need to suffer from unjustified rent increases. Legislation stands before this House that, if passed, will help provide a more balanced and transparent approach to rent increases for both tenants and landlords. Will the minister describe this legislation and how it will assist tenants in Ontario in finding stable housing costs?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to thank my colleague for the question. We've consistently demonstrated our commitment to protecting tenants across Ontario. In fact, as further evidence of that commitment, I tabled Bill 19, legislation which, if passed, will further strengthen the Residential Tenancies Act. What it will do is ensure that the annual rent increase guideline falls between 1% and 2.5%, and that will allow some stability and predictability for Ontarians who are renters—those hundreds of thousands of people across the province who are watching this Legislature and are interested in this legislation because they know it will provide some stability.

My concern is that the party opposite apparently doesn't agree with this, apparently doesn't think this is a

concern and, in fact, is disrupting and delaying the debate so it's impossible for us to move forward with this legislation. I think the people of Ontario need to understand that we owe it to the landlords and tenants of this province to have an intelligent debate on this legislation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Minister, western Mississauga tenants need the security proposed in Bill 19. We have our struggles with the recent recession, just like so many other Ontarians, and people need to know what annual rent increases they're planning for. Western Mississauga tenants were happy to learn of this legislation last fall. My neighbours in Meadowvale and Streetsville expect its swift implementation.

1120

I've sat in this legislative chamber with my MPP colleagues anticipating the debate on this and other important legislation, only to see these important measures bogged down by such procedural delays as the needless ringing of division bells.

Minister, my constituents want results on rent increases and not tired, right-wing excuses. What are the long-term consequences of the delay in this Legislature in the debate and the passage of Bill 19?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I really want to thank the member for his concern, and I am honestly concerned about this, because many of us on this side of the House ran in 2003 because of our concerns for tenants. We changed the Residential Tenancies Act, we've introduced changes, and we continue to modify the legislation to fix some of the damage that was done under the previous government.

We need to ensure that the amendments are in place to affect the 2013 rent increase guideline, but those changes need to be approved by the Legislature prior to September 1. That means that Bill 19 has to make its way through the legislative process this session.

I am asking the party opposite, in the name of all of the tenants in this province—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Some of you have already been mentioned by riding.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm asking the party opposite to rise above itself and to listen to the tenants across the province, of whom you have many in your ridings, and to move this—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. New question.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Bill Walker: My question is for the Minister of Finance. The Ornge scandal is a tale of greed, corruption and incompetence. While the true story continues to unfold, yesterday the plot thickened. Not only did

witnesses refute and flatly reject each and every one of Minister Matthews' excuses, we learned that the Ornge scandal has also entangled senior cabinet ministers.

Minister Duncan and Sandra Papatello attended a private dinner with Rainer Beltzner and executives from AgustaWestland. Ontarians deserve to know what the nature of this dinner was. Specifically, did they discuss the \$300-million bond offering, the \$6.7-million kick-back, or maybe the scheme to defraud taxpayers? Perhaps they discussed Agusta's long history of bribery and crooked dealings.

So I ask the minister, will he share with this House the exact nature and topic of conversation at this private dinner?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The testimony given yesterday was accurate, Mr. Speaker. We were invited to meet with them. In fact, they had organized a meeting with a helicopter supplier who was interested in getting a federal government contract to supply the defence industry. They wanted to advise Ontario about that because there was a potential at the time for jobs to be created in Ontario.

I did attend that meeting. There were a number of people at that meeting and there was no follow-up done on it. At the time it was a very short dinner about purchasing helicopters—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Walker: Again to the finance minister: The Ornge scandal is knocking at the Premier's door. The list of Liberal insiders directly connected to the Ornge scandal is growing: Liberal Party president Alf Apps; the Premier's right-hand man, Jamison Steeve; Liberal campaign manager, Don Guy; senior Liberal staffer Jennifer Tracey; Warren Kinsella's girlfriend, Lisa Kirbie; Minister Matthews' former chief of staff, Mary Lowe; and the actual architect of the whole eHealth boondoggle, George Smitherman, again; Minister Matthews herself; Sandra Papatello; and now Minister Duncan.

Speaker, will the finance minister come clean and admit that he and his government knew full well what was happening at Ornge but chose to look away?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. John Milloy: You know, Mr. Speaker, I wish that we would let the committee do its work and not engage in these drive-by smears. The fact of the matter is, what we learned yesterday is that that Guy Giorno and Lynne Golding, two of the most prominent Conservative—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Prince Edward-Hastings has now been warned.

Hon. John Milloy: —join the ranks of—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Peterborough has now been warned.

Hon. John Milloy:—join the ranks of Kelly Mitchell, a very prominent PC loyalist and lobbyist who was paid \$400,000 to schmooze members. Mr. Speaker, what we heard yesterday is that two of the most prominent members of the Progressive Conservative Party, people with long ties to that party across the way, were the ones who advised Chris Mazza how to hide his salary—and he did. They advised him how to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Ms. Cindy Forster: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Families whose livelihoods are connected to the horse racing industry are still feeling burned by this government's decision, made without any consultation, to end the horse racing revenue-sharing program. New Democrats earlier this week forced the government to come to the table with the horse racing industry and to commit to support. Given the dire predicaments that these families and people find themselves in, they're looking for more details. Will the Minister of Finance tell those in the horse racing community when he plans to meet with them and what shape this support will take?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: First of all, let me set the record straight. In fact, the industry was consulted extensively as part of the land-based gaming review. Second of all, at the end of the day, the NDP did not make anything in the agreement conditional upon that. Third, I said, the day of the announcement, that we would discuss opportunities for mitigation with the industry at an appropriate time.

There will continue to be a horse racing industry in Ontario. I'm advised that five, possibly six, tracks will survive and that, indeed, the industry will still be there. We have a year; we're continuing the program for another year. I believe probably the Ministry of Agriculture will work with them in some fashion to deal with this.

But I wish you would have forced harder to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I would actually say to the Deputy Premier that that's not our understanding about the agreement.

For families in Fort Erie, Essex, Sudbury, Kingston and countless other communities, the Liberal decision to end the revenue-sharing program has put people's jobs and livelihoods at risk. When is the minister planning to sit down with the horse racing industry and get to work on a plan that retains jobs in hard-hit communities?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: At the beginning of question period, the NDP said, "Don't subsidize business." Now they're saying, "Subsidize the horse racing industry." You know, I would refer the member opposite to a very good piece of work that appeared in the Windsor Star last week that pointed out how much of that subsidy not only is not coming to Ontario, it's leaving the country.

They're trying to have it both ways. At the beginning, they get up and the critic for finance talked about, "Don't subsidize business." Now they stand up at the end of the day and they say, "Subsidize the horse racing industry." You can't have it both ways. We've made our choices. We're investing in health and education so that we have better schools and health care.

FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

Mr. David Zimmer: Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, on December 8, you introduced legislation, Bill 30, the Family Caregiver Leave Act, that would provide up to eight weeks of unpaid job leave for employees to provide care and support for their sick and injured family members. This is important legislation. It protects the jobs of working Ontarians who need to care for their loved ones. Minister, it's now April 26. The bill is only at second reading. This is legislation that helps Ontario families. My constituents are asking and asking about the delay. Minister, why hasn't the bill gone to committee? What is going on here? My constituents want this done. They want the bill passed. They want to be able to look after their loved ones in their time of need.

1130

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: Speaker, I want to thank this member. This is a very important question. Whether it's a child who has to spend time in the hospital or an elderly parent who is suffering a broken hip, caregivers should be able to focus on what matters most when your family is in crisis: providing care to support their loved ones without fear of losing their jobs.

I'm very disappointed that this bill is only at second reading, and I'm even more disappointed by the delaying tactics the PC Party has been using. This legislation is something that caregivers across Ontario have been asking us for. We're at 11 hours of debate, and the official opposition has rung the bells six times. Ontario families who need this support unfortunately will continue to have to wait.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. David Zimmer: Minister, I know these delays are holding up other important legislation. I see it around here every day. There's huge support for Bill 30 outside of this place—organizations like the Canadian Cancer Society and the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. They want the time to care for their loved ones who are sick and dying. They don't want to be victims of petty Conservative politics, the games, the obstruction and the bell ringing.

Minister, what can we do to see that the Family Caregiver Leave Act actually gets to committee, in spite of this Tory obstructionism?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: Family caregiver leave is a matter of compassion, and we believe it's the right thing to do for Ontario families. This piece of legislation is too important to play games with. Bill 30 is a critical part of our government's commitment to ensure families across

Ontario have the support they need when they need it the most. It's distressing to me that the PC Party fails to participate or offer constructive ideas.

You know, it's an important piece of legislation that we introduced. We think it has the gravity that requires that kind of participation. It seems that they're taking every opportunity to disrupt or obstruct or delay the work of the legislature. This issue isn't about partisan politics; it's about an opportunity for all parties to come together and make the right decision for Ontarians. I will continue to reach out to the PC Party and ask them to help get this bill passed.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. New question.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Toby Barrett: Speaker, to the Deputy Premier: Last week, the day after I asked in this House about former chief of staff Don Guy's involvement in the Ornge scandal, someone had his lawyer send me an intimidating letter referencing a lawsuit. It seems someone over there is finally listening, so I'll try again.

Yesterday, in the public accounts committee, Lynne Golding, of Fasken Martineau, tabled a series of invoices totalling close to \$125,000 paid out to Don Guy's Artisan Research and Communications firm for professional services with respect to Ornge, dating back to 2007.

Deputy Premier, I'll ask again: Can you confirm for this House with certainty that Don Guy was abiding by all the requirements of the lobbyist act?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. John Milloy: Again, there are committee hearings that are taking place, and I think these kinds of drive-by smears on the part of the opposition are unnecessary.

What we found out yesterday, though, if the honourable member wants to talk about billing and if he wants, as I say, to hold hearings here during question period, is that lawyers Guy Giorno and Lynne Golding, who were brought forward by Ornge, two of the most prominent Conservative lawyers in the country, billed Ornge for 22,000 hours of work. That's 916 days if you were working around the clock, or 2.5 years, if you were working every day.

What's interesting is what advice these two prominent Conservatives gave.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Lanark, come to order.

Hon. John Milloy: Well, they advised Dr. Chris Mazza on how to hide his salary, and he did. They advised him on how not to co-operate with the Auditor General—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Toby Barrett: I'll go back, earlier this week, to the lobbyist registrar's opinion on federal Liberal leader Alf Apps's lobbying efforts on behalf of Ornge, despite his denials in committee. Now we learn that just months after leaving as the Premier's most senior adviser and election guru, Don Guy is courted by the federal Liberal president to lobby on behalf of Ornge to the tune of \$125,000. It seems your Premier's former chief of staff was providing advice on Ornge, he was being paid to run the Liberal campaign, he was advising other companies on how to lobby the McGuinty government—this Guy really gets around.

Deputy Premier, will you commit today to produce and table any and all correspondence and emails that were sent or received relating to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: This is getting a little bit beyond the pale. We have a committee of the Legislature, the public accounts committee, which in fact is chaired by a Conservative member, which is right now seized with the issue of Ornge. We have a robust list of witnesses who are coming forward, and the member has an opportunity, he and other colleagues in his party, to ask questions.

But the more important question is, when the Minister of Health went forward and outlined the plans that she is taking in order to correct the problems at Ornge, the key missing piece of the puzzle was legislation. I want to know, why did that member stand here in the House yesterday and admit that he was going to block, through childish bell-ringing, the passage of a very important bill which would address the issues related to Ornge?

ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Mr. Gilles Bisson: To the Minister of Northern Development and Mines: Can you tell me why it's okay to subsidize transportation in southern Ontario and not with the ONTC?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: The reality is, over the years, we have been subsidizing the ONTC. Now, to use the example you used in the House earlier on when you compared it to GO Transit, GO Transit has 57 million riders and a subsidy of approximately \$2 per ride. The ONTC has a ridership of 320,000, on average, a year, with a subsidy of \$403—

Interjection.

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: A year. That's a \$2 subsidy compared to a \$403 subsidy. The reality is, we cannot afford a subsidy of \$100 million any longer per year. So what we are going to do is, we're going to divest the ONTC, we're going to ensure that we have in place—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Minister, people in northern Ontario are disappointed with you. You know as well as everybody else that it costs more money to deliver services in northern Ontario. Why? Because it's a large

geography with a small population base. Running an ambulance in northern Ontario costs as much as 10 times as much as running the ambulance in Toronto, but do we stop running ambulances? Hospitals in northern Ontario cost more money to run. Do we shut down our hospitals? Highways in northern Ontario cost more money. Why? Because there's more miles. Do we stop spending money? No, because it's part of the infrastructure.

So I say again, why is it that we can subsidize something in Toronto but we can't subsidize it in northern Ontario?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Minister?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: You know, the bluster doesn't impress anybody. The bluster from the member, I guess, is clouding his memory, because let's see what happened when they were in power. They reduced bus service, losing jobs from Timmins to Chapleau to Wawa; docked a new ferry in Tobermory, scratching jobs; cut northern Ontario services from 21 to six communities; and sold off Star Transfer immediately. It wasn't a divestment with them; it was a foreclosure.

Ours is a far more reasonable approach. We will divest, and we will have in place a much stronger transportation system, a much more effective transportation system, a much more realistic transportation system, and we will do it without having to have a subsidy of \$403 per rider.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We were to have in the Speaker's gallery today two parties: from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Sheldon Goodman, Howard English, Stephen Adler and Jordan Kerbel; and from B'nai Brith Canada, Dr. Leon Genesove, Ruth Klein and Anita Bromberg. They're here for the Israeli flag-raising on the front lawn today at noon. So there's a flag-raising ceremony at noon today outside of the Legislature.

Point of order, the member for—

Ms. Tracy MacCharles: Speaker, I have a question.

Interjection.

Ms. Tracy MacCharles: We're done, out of time?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Oh, no.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1140 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Michael Coteau: It gives me great pleasure today to introduce Anton Peiris, who's the operational coordinator of the Rouge Valley Naturalists. Welcome to the House.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'd like to welcome again the people from the Canadian Cancer Society. Certainly anyone here from Durham or Durham region, I'm happy

to acknowledge. But I also met Paul Howe—he's from Penetanguishene—who's here again this afternoon. I hope he's enjoying the entertainment here today at Queen's Park.

Mr. Ted Arnott: Speaker, I know that you'll appreciate that I've had the chance to attend the Grand River Conservation Authority reception, and you did a great job helping to organize it. I think that we should express our appreciation to the members of the Grand River Conservation Authority who are here today and welcome them to the Ontario Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I wholeheartedly agree.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to welcome to this House, and they're arriving as I speak, a huge delegation—actually lots of them are there already—from the Canadian Cancer Society. I will start with Joanne Di Nardo, senior manager at the Cancer Society; Florentina Stancu-Soare, also with the Canadian Cancer Society; Elizabeth Rovichaud, Lindsey Collins, Michael Sheiner, all from the Canadian Cancer Society; as well as their CEO, Mr. Martin Kabat.

I want to welcome Kate Neale, a very brave young woman. I want to thank Lera Ryan; Elizabeth Holmes; Linda Constant; Janice Cunningham; Mary Hobbs; Diane Barclay-Neale, the mother of the very brave young woman; Lori Synes-Taraba; Janice Hodgson; Cathy Burns from my riding of Nickel Belt, from Sudbury; Mary Ransom; Sharon Chandler; Julie Datta; John Atkinson, and many more who have made the trip down to Queen's Park with the Canadian Cancer Society and in support of the bill I'll be introducing in a few minutes.

Mr. Jonah Schein: Yesterday marked the 38th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution in Portugal, a non-violent uprising of the country against a fascist dictatorship. This last weekend, Carlos Morgadinho came to our office and helped us recognize that event. He's here today with guests Mr. Aniceto Afonso, Mrs. Marilia Afonso, Mr. Francisco Sousa Mendes and his wife, Fernanda Sousa Mendes. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature. Thank you for coming here.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. We welcome our guests.

Further introductions? The member from Stormont-Dundas—

Mr. Jim McDonell: South Glengarry.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): —South Glengarry. I used to call it Charlottenburgh.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I used to, too.

It's a great privilege as I rise today to introduce Rose Spero and Carolyn Bourassa from the Canadian Cancer Society in our riding. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to introduce Lera Ryan and Mr. Van Geem from the Canadian Cancer Society in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I would like to introduce to the House and welcome to the Legislative Assembly Mary Ransom from the Canadian Cancer Society in Niagara.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: I did, this morning, speak about Sharon Burns, but I do see her here right now so I wanted to welcome her. She's a Burlingtonian and she is the manager for Halton Canadian Cancer Society.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CASINOS

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Speaker, later today I will introduce my private member's bill, a bill entitled the Ensuring Local Voices in New Casino Gambling Development Act.

As you know, new casino development provides opportunities, but it also raises great debate amongst portions of the population. With recent plans to modernize the OLG, it is widely expected that there will be additional casino site development proposed throughout Ontario.

In response to this, we have heard from residents throughout the province that they would like to have a direct voice as to the potential development of new casinos in their community. My bill would legislate that a mandatory municipal referendum be completed and passed before any new casino development is allowed to proceed. We believe that, collectively, local communities and residents are best suited to make important decisions on issues like these.

It has long been our party's position to ensure local decision-making before casinos move forward. My bill will ensure that local communities are willing partners and hosts for all new casino development.

I would ask all of my honourable colleagues to stand up for their local communities and support this important piece of legislation.

ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Mr. John Vanthof: The Ontario Northland Transportation Commission provides passenger and freight rail service, motor coach lines, communication and ferry services to the north. They also operate a railcar refurbishment division. The ONTC was created to provide vital services which private companies would not provide in the north. That's why we're shocked that the government would, without warning, abandon the ONTC.

In the budget negotiations, the Liberals refused to move on the ONR. They were willing to force an election on this issue, knowing full well that the people outside the north would blame the NDP for causing the election. Not only are the Liberals trying to eliminate public service in the north, but they're also willing to use northerners as pawns in their election strategy.

The Conservatives voted against the budget, and are attacking the NDP because we did not. But if an election had been called, would the Conservatives, if they formed government, save the ONTC? Well, they tried to kill it

once already, and the current member for Nipissing is on record as wanting to privatize it. So they, like the Liberals, are willing to use northerners as election pawns.

The NDP let the budget motion pass because we negotiated concessions that made it more fair to all Ontarians, but the ONTC was not part of that package. Northerners are frustrated and angry—justifiably so. But the fight for the ONTC is not over. The NDP will continue to work alongside northern councils, unions and others so that we have access to public transportation. Northerners can win this fight if we stand together.

TREE PLANTING

Mr. Michael Coteau: Many members in the House may know that this year's Earth Day theme is Mobilize the Earth. As part of the many Earth Day events that are taking place throughout this great province, I'd like to recognize the tremendous efforts of the students in my riding of Don Valley East, who have played and continue to play a significant role in protecting our environment.

As a former school board trustee, I've witnessed first-hand thousands of students in our riding trek to the Rouge Valley conservation area to plant nearly 50,000 trees in partnership with the Rouge Valley Naturalists. The Rouge Valley Naturalists, a not-for-profit organization, continues to implement curriculum-based outdoor education programs for schools and communities in order to protect, preserve and restore the natural heritage of the Rouge Valley.

This year, once again, I'll be joining students who will be participating in our annual tree planting event, which will be held on May 4. In addition, residents and families from my riding will be heading to the Rouge Valley on Saturday, May 5, to play their part in preserving that natural heritage.

We all must continue to mobilize our efforts in order to increase awareness and appreciation of the natural environment. Future generations depend on our actions to preserve and sustain our environment.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Mr. Rod Jackson: Today I'd like to make a statement about a practice that was implemented in the Simcoe County District School Board in the fall of 2010. The use of large foam blocker pads on children with special needs unequivocally compromises their dignity and the progress made in the integration of these students into our school in the first place.

Adverse effects are already emerging. Advocates are telling me school board trustees are calling children with special needs "the SEAC kids," or rather the kids of the special education advisory committee. Some teachers are reporting fear towards children with special needs because these students are being managed with riot gear. A group of self-advocates with disabilities themselves write, "We want to be safe and supported in school and to be able to make friends ... now you have separated [us] apart even more."

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The only thing these mats are actually accomplishing is the undoing of community integration, the labelling and public humiliation of our most vulnerable students, and the creation of a culture of fear in our classrooms.

These blocker mats are generally out of practice countrywide for their ill effects on dignity, lessons learned over a decade ago. In 1998, a child with special needs was accidentally smothered with a blocker mat at a Hamilton group home. This is why insurance companies require special training for their use. Yet training itself can also prevent their use by equipping professionals with a host of other tools instead, just like in other school boards.

Blocker mats are not an acceptable management system for children with special needs, full stop. They're a violation of their human rights.

ONTARIO PLACE

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The debate over a casino at Ontario Place gets more and more intense. The public has spoken out against placing a casino at Ontario Place. Torontonians were clear in the 1997 referendum: "No casino," they said.

Now MGM would like to turn Ontario Place into a Las Vegas-style beachfront. I fully oppose this proposal and any other that would bring gambling to Toronto's public spaces.

Ontario Place has been an affordable, family-friendly destination for over 40 years, and the tradition is worth preserving. Rather than encourage our youth to take up gambling to pay off our deficit, we should be saving public spaces like this one.

The younger someone begins gambling, the more likely they are to develop an addiction later on. Our youth already have higher rates of problem gambling—it's about 7%—without a waterfront casino.

We keep hearing that this government won't impose a casino on an unwilling community. If it takes a referendum for the province to listen to the people, fine, let's have one, but let's not make the city pay the full cost. This is a provincially driven idea, so the province should either take responsibility by sharing the cost of a referendum, or they could just listen to what we've been saying all along: no casino.

Let's keep Ontario Place a public space for children and families, not megamalls, Ferris wheels or casinos.

LAFLECHE FAMILY FOUNDATION**FONDATION FAMILLE LAFLÈCHE**

Mr. Grant Crack: I'd like to take this moment to introduce to this House a special family from eastern Ontario, the Laflèche family.

Recently, the Laflèche Family Foundation donated \$300,000 to the Cornwall Community Hospital Foundation's To Your Health campaign in their efforts to purchase a new MRI scanner and digital urology table.

The foundation hopes to raise \$3.5 million by the end of the year in order to equip an expanded and renovated McConnell Avenue site of the Cornwall Community Hospital.

I've known Mr. André Laflèche personally and professionally for 25 years. He's a successful businessman in eastern Ontario, and he wants to recognize his extensive family roots that extend right into my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

Mr. Laflèche continues to say that he wishes to share some of the values embraced by his family, which are respect for all, dignity, inclusivity and understanding, all contributing toward a strong and healthy community.

I agree with Mr. Laflèche, and I would like to acknowledge the Laflèche family's humble appreciation of the values of Ontarians in all matters of life, and particularly toward the importance of quality public health care for all, in both official languages.

Les valeurs estimées par la famille Laflèche sont les mêmes que celles qui sont importantes pour le gouvernement de l'Ontario. Nous remercions très sincèrement la famille Laflèche pour leur don généreux. Thank you to the Laflèche family.

BASKETBALL

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I may need some glasses. I think I see Carole Watson here from the Canadian Cancer Society. Welcome, Carole.

Last month, I made a statement regarding the London Lightning winning the National Basketball League of Canada. Well, we have something just as important occurring: The St. Thomas Shock under-13 girls' basketball team won the provincials this past week.

The Shock headed into the finals to face Scarborough, a team they had lost to earlier by one point. The team worked well but trailed Scarborough by four points throughout the game.

Finally, with three minutes remaining, team veterans Faith Bisson and Emily Deven stepped up, using their experience under pressure to drop some crucial baskets, giving the girls a one-point lead, which they maintained. Leading up to the provincials, this team had taken home a bronze and two silver medals.

I congratulate team members Emily Deven, Faith Bisson, Abby Waterhouse, Breena Struthers, Kacey Pallister, Callista Tryon, Abigail Leslie, Taylor Bogart, Caitlin Douglass, Miranda Gowdey and Ally Carr.

I'd like to congratulate the coaches who volunteer their time: Steve Bogart, Chris Deven and Kevin Gowdey.

ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

Mr. Jeff Leal: Like parents across Ontario, our government understands that creating a safe and positive learning environment is essential to helping students succeed. That's why we introduced legislation that, if passed, would help end bullying in our schools for all children.

I'm proud to support Bill 13 and, like my colleagues on this side of the House, I want to see it pass quickly so that due protections can get into schools in time for September 2012. That's why I'm dismayed that, despite every effort to work with the official opposition, the PCs are engaging in shameful delaying tactics and refusing to debate. It's clear the Conservatives were absent without leadership during the budget. Now they're absent without leadership in the Legislature and they're playing games with important issues to protect all vulnerable children. On this bill alone they've delayed 15 hours and 37 minutes with nine bells. That could mean that kids getting bullied might not get the help they need come this September.

I was elected by the families in my riding to work hard and tackle very important issues; so is every other member in this House. With many challenges facing our province today, it's time for the members of the opposition to stop playing games and do the right thing for the families and kids they were elected to serve.

HUCK FINN YOUTH FISHING DAY

Mr. John O'Toole: Each year, my community of Uxbridge in my riding of Durham welcomes spring with the Huck Finn Youth Fishing Day. This Saturday, April 28, marks the 10th anniversary of this outstanding family event at Elgin Pond in Uxbridge.

I'd like to commend Pat Higgins and his team from the Canadian Tire store in Uxbridge for hosting the day. The many sponsors and volunteers will ensure that children and teens have fun while learning about conservation and our natural environment. Proud fishing day supporters include the Uxbridge Legion, the Optimist Club, the Uxbridge Times Journal, the Uxbridge Standard, Durham Regional Police, the Police Association of Ontario, the Pickering Rod and Gun Club, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Toronto Sportsmen's Show, and Zehrs.

Amanda Ferraro from the municipality of Uxbridge and Bob Izumi of Fishing Forever are also among the fishing day organizers.

Local youth aged 15 and under will be invited to try their luck in catching one of the hundreds of brook trout that have been stocked in the Elgin Pond. There's a parade, prizes, gift bags, food, and experienced anglers ready to help the next generation learn how to fish.

This is an outstanding community event. I would encourage everyone to support youth and outdoor activities, and I would welcome everyone to kids' fishing day in Uxbridge this Saturday.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Nipissing on a point of order.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I stand on a point of order, Speaker. Thank you. The member from Timiskaming—Cochrane recently spoke of my record on Ontario Northland, and I want to remind—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member will take his seat, please. The member knows that correcting

the record is only the purview of the member herself. That is not a point of order.

I do want to make a point, and the point that I would like to make now is, I'm becoming a little dismayed at how statements could be used for other purposes than to announce what's going on in your riding or to announce something that is satisfactory in terms of policy or procedure of the House. I would ask all of us to reconsider, when making statements, that it's about how good things are happening in the province.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

What I'll also say is, that was a statement for all members.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SKIN CANCER PREVENTION ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LA PRÉVENTION DU CANCER DE LA PEAU

M^{me} Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 74, An Act to help prevent skin cancer / Projet de loi 74, Loi aidant à prévenir le cancer de la peau.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

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M^{me} France Gélinas: The bill prohibits marketing and selling tanning services to persons under the age of 18. The bill also requires the establishment and maintenance of a registry relating to the use of tanning equipment. Persons who own or operate an establishment at which tanning services are provided are required to ensure that persons involved in providing the service or treatment receive training and that signage respecting the health effects of the service or treatment are posted at the establishment where the services or treatment are provided. The bill also makes it an offence to contravene certain provisions.

La loi est très simple : pas de marketing ou de lit de bronzage pour les moins de 18 ans; enregistrement de tous ceux qui ont de l'équipement de bronzage; de la formation pour ceux qui offrent des sessions de bronzage; et des enseignes claires qui démontrent le lien entre les lits de bronzage et le cancer. Merci, monsieur le Président.

ONTARIO ELECTRICITY SYSTEM OPERATOR ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ D'EXPLOITATION DU RÉSEAU D'ÉLECTRICITÉ DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Bentley moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 75, An Act to amend the Electricity Act, 1998 to amalgamate the Independent Electricity System Operator and the Ontario Power Authority, to amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 and to make complementary amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 75, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité pour fusionner la Société indépendante d'exploitation du réseau d'électricité et l'Office de l'électricité de l'Ontario, modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario et apportant des modifications complémentaires à d'autres lois.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister for a short statement.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: During ministerial statements.

ENSURING LOCAL VOICES
IN NEW CASINO GAMBLING
DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 VISANT
À GARANTIR LA CONSULTATION
DES POPULATIONS LOCALES
AVANT LA CRÉATION
DE NOUVEAUX CASINOS

Mr. McNaughton moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 76, An Act to amend the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation Act, 1999 / Projet de loi 76, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1999 sur la Société des loteries et des jeux de l'Ontario.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Since the government announced the modernization of the OLG, we have heard from hundreds of residents throughout Ontario expressing their interest in having a direct voice as to the location of any new or proposed casino development within their own local community.

As a former three-term municipal councillor, I understand the importance of working with our local and municipal partners. Accordingly, this bill amends the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation Act, 1999, to adopt by reference the rule set out in the current regulations made under the act that a casino or charity casino cannot be established in a municipality or on a First Nation reserve unless the electors in the municipality or the members of the council, as the case may be, approve of the establishment by way of a referendum.

I encourage all honourable members to support this important piece of legislation.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. James J. Bradley: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Unanimous consent required: agreed? Agreed.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item 32 be waived.

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

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ELECTRICITY RESTRUCTURING RESTRUCTURATION DU SECTEUR DE L'ÉLECTRICITÉ

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I rise to speak to the introduction of the Ontario Electricity System Operator Act, 2012. This act proposes to merge the Ontario Power Authority with the Independent Electricity System Operator.

Elle améliorerait l'efficacité et entraînerait des économies en supprimant les chevauchements de fonctions, et tirerait parti de l'expertise présente dans chaque organisme. La fusion des organismes ferait économiser jusqu'à 25 millions de dollars aux contribuables chaque année.

It would create efficiencies and savings by removing overlapping functions and take advantage of the expert skills within each agency. Merging the agencies would save up to \$25 million annually for taxpayers.

The electricity system has changed a great deal in the past eight years. We're rebuilding and modernizing our energy system, using cleaner sources of power instead of dirty coal, saving billions of dollars in future costs, such as health care costs, while at the same time creating new jobs. As we modernize, we're looking at every aspect to provide the best value for Ontarians, and this includes finding efficiencies within our electricity system.

Through our modernization efforts, the electricity sector in Ontario looks very different than it did a decade ago, and it is in this context that I introduce today's legislation. Increasing efficiency will help make the system more affordable for ratepayers across the province. We've been working with the NDP, and they specifically asked us to consider electricity agency consolidation.

The new entity would play a key role in electricity planning and help streamline the system, making it more responsive to changing conditions. A single new entity would allow for a more seamless, coordinated approach to planning as we integrate new renewable energy

projects into the mix and replace the last coal-fired plants by the end of 2014.

Their proposed amalgamation offers many advantages by creating opportunities for more integrated electricity system planning by bringing real-time, medium-term and long-term planning under the same roof. It would create efficiencies and savings by removing overlapping functions and take advantage of the expertise and skills within each agency.

This legislation recognizes the importance of establishing a functional separation to ensure the independence and integrity of market operations while providing the amalgamated entity with an ability to find efficiencies and savings.

This merger is in addition to a number of important steps that we've taken to reduce costs in the energy sector. We asked our agencies last year to find savings and they responded, finding nearly \$1 billion in efficiencies. We launched our Ontario Distribution Sector Panel just a few weeks ago, whose goal is to find efficiencies within our LDC sector.

As we modernize our system, eliminate dirty coal and kick-start our new clean energy revolution in Ontario, we know that we need to take all measures we can to keep rates as low as possible for Ontarians. The measures I discussed above, plus our clean energy benefit, which takes 10% off people's bills, will help Ontarians through this important transition.

I want to emphasize that the Ontario Power Authority and the Independent Electricity System Operator have provided excellent service to the people of Ontario. The time, though, is right for us to examine whether we're providing all of the services in the most efficient way possible. We must keep our focus on the interests of families and businesses.

We are committed to building a clean, modern and reliable electricity system. We're investing in infrastructure renewal and clean energy generation, as well as new smart grid and other emerging technologies. We are North American clean energy leaders, and we're working to positively transform the province today, laying the groundwork for a better tomorrow.

CANCER CARE

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I'd like to begin by welcoming the people from the Canadian Cancer Society who are with us in the Legislature right now and were here for breakfast this morning.

April is Daffodil Month in Canada. It's a time when we have a chance to show people living with cancer that we stand with them in their fight.

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April is the time to fight back, because every three minutes, another Canadian is getting the news that they have been diagnosed with cancer.

Not too long ago, a diagnosis of cancer was the worst news anyone could imagine. But today, thanks to tremen-

dous strides in detection and treatment, many types of cancer are manageable and indeed curable.

Our government is working hard to improve the provincial cancer system because the number of people in Ontario living with cancer is expected to rise by 40% over the next 10 years. That's why we're investing in things like colorectal, breast and cervical cancer screening, because early detection is key. We're investing in regional cancer centres that provide radiation and chemotherapy. We're investing in more cancer surgeries to reduce wait times and improve patient outcomes. And, of course, we're investing in new cancer drugs.

When it comes to fighting cancer, one of the best things we can do is fight tobacco. We have to continue the war on tobacco so Ontarians can lead healthier lives. Cigarettes are the number one cause of preventable cancer, and tobacco-related disease costs Ontario's health care system about \$1.6 billion every year.

We've already come a long way—accomplished a great deal with smoke-free Ontario. We renewed that strategy last April. With the help of partners like Cancer Care Ontario, we're working to modernize health care delivery and direct a clearer focus on quality for patients and value for our health care dollars.

That focus is evident in our action plan for health care, which starts with keeping Ontario healthy, and detecting disease like cancer early is an important part of our plan. That's why we will step up our cancer screening efforts, including online personalized cancer risk profiles. This tool will use patients' personal, medical and family history to measure their risk of cancer and then match people at higher risk to screening programs and prevention supports or genetic testing.

In March 2011, we announced a \$15-million investment over three years to expand the Ontario breast screening program, the OBSP, to high-risk women aged 30 to 69 years of age. This program provides funding for an additional 90,000 breast screens to women at high risk for breast cancer.

Our goal is to reduce the number of deaths from breast cancer through early detection. Our target is to screen 71% of women aged 50 to 69 every two years by 2012-13. We started at 66% in 2008; by the fall, we expect to be at 68%, but our target is 71%. We will continue to work towards our goal to provide better screening for all women.

Since the program was launched in 1990, the OBSP has provided over 4.1 million screens to over 1.2 million women aged 50 and older across Ontario, and it has detected 22,000 cancers, the majority in the early stages, which of course improves survival rates.

Speaker, I'm particularly proud of our colorectal cancer screening program, the first province-wide population-based program in Canada. Colorectal cancer is highly curable if detected early, so this screening program is crucial.

Our investments in additional cancer surgeries have reduced wait times for these vital services, and all that great progress is thanks to our significant investment in

the wait time strategy: \$1.7 billion for 2.9 million key procedures since 2003-04.

I know how important Ontario's regional cancer centres are and what a tremendous difference they make in the lives of patients and their families. I've seen first-hand the high-quality care the regional cancer centre in London provides to my constituents and many families from across southwestern Ontario. Beyond treatments and procedures, they give patients peace of mind in what must be one of the most trying health experiences a family will face. They're not only providing the right care, but these centres help keep patients close to home and close to loved ones, and that, Speaker, is the right place.

Earlier this month, I was delighted to be in Kingston for the grand opening of the expanded cancer centre at Kingston General Hospital, and I look forward to the opening in St. Catharines of the cancer centre there. The cancer centre in Kingston has two new radiation bunkers, which will support the approximately 130 radiation treatment patients per day. The expansion is 50% more space for chemotherapy treatment, which provides care to over 60 more patients per day. The space, I can tell you, is beautiful and spacious, overlooking Lake Ontario.

When it comes to cancer drugs, the new funding program ensures access to new high-cost intravenous cancer drugs. Over 23,000 patients benefit annually from this program. In November 2011, we introduced the case-by-case review program, which considers funding of cancer drugs for patients with rare situations that are life-threatening and require treatment with a drug that is not funded or does not meet the criteria for funding.

I want to show my support for people living with cancer and their families by wearing a daffodil and raising awareness of this disease, and I encourage all my colleagues in the House to do the same.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Responses?

ELECTRICITY RESTRUCTURING

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I rise to make comment on the introduction of the Ontario Electricity System Operator Act, 2012, which amends the Electricity Act to allow for the merger of the Independent Electricity System Operator and the Ontario Power Authority.

Last week, the minister announced the consolidation of the agencies and claimed that it would save up to \$25 million a year, but we know that this merger to create the OESO will simply not realize any real savings for taxpayers and ratepayers.

Our party believes that the Ontario Power Authority should not be merged but be scrapped altogether. It was formed seven years ago as a 15-person transitional body created by this government to manage Ontario's energy supply. Today, it's a 235-person permanent entity where 87 people earn over \$100,000 a year and the CEO earns over \$570,000 a year. In just seven years, it has burned through over \$375 million in expenditures, and its expenses have risen from \$14 million in 2005 to \$76.4 million today.

By shuffling the bureaucrats down the hall and creating one super agency, this move proves that the government still doesn't recognize the severity of Ontario's debt crisis. The government has claimed it will save money but has yet to show us how it plans to do so.

This legislation also addresses how the minister is to go about submitting an energy plan for the province's long-term energy needs. However, it does not set out any time frames as to how often, or when, the minister is required to do this.

It is my hope that the minister will soon explain in detail how he plans to achieve the savings he claims with regard to this move, but moreover, he needs to revisit his government's other energy policies, which the Auditor General tells us will send electricity prices for Ontario families skyrocketing by 46% by 2015.

There was nothing in the budget that brought relief to families. For the record, I'm the only member north of Highway 17 who stood up and voted against that budget and against the selling of Ontario Northland, no matter how hard the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane attempted to spin it.

CANCER CARE

Mr. Bill Walker: Again, welcome to the members of the Canadian Cancer Society who are with us today in the House.

Tomorrow is Daffodil Day, and on this special day we ask Ontarians, and in fact all Canadians, to take a moment to reflect upon the thousands of people who are living with cancer and to support those who are courageously fighting against this disease.

Daffodils are the first flower in spring. After having survived a long and treacherous winter, daffodils are the first sign of hope as they blossom with vigour. The daffodil pin shows support to Canadians living with cancer, letting them know that no one has to face cancer alone. You can also wear a virtual daffodil through Twitter and Facebook using twibbons. I encourage everyone to participate in this awareness campaign.

1340

The Canadian Cancer Society's ads aptly convey its message on cancer: Every three minutes, cancer picks a fight with another Canadian. In 2011, there were over 25,000 deaths and 63,000 new cases of cancer reported. This is a very serious concern. But we are not letting cancer win easily. Collaboration among patients and their families, researchers, schools, hospitals, government and society at large shows that we are picking our very own fight with this disease. For cancer patients and families who are on this arduous journey, I say to you again that you are not alone.

This fight against cancer involves increasing awareness. The Canadian Cancer Society is here today bringing education to Queen's Park on this devastating disease, and in particular on melanoma. I want to extend a special thanks for your invaluable services in raising awareness

and your advocacy on banning indoor tanning for minors, which France Gélinas will speak about later.

I believe cancer is a multipartisan issue. No one group or party can tackle this disease on their own. I am pleased to say that Ontarians are living longer and more productive lives because of the work accomplished by all of us here today.

Again, thank you to the Canadian Cancer Society, and especially to the valued volunteers, for all of your incredible work. I encourage all Canadians to do something special for those living with cancer or to contribute in some way to the fight against this disease on Daffodil Day.

Thank you, Speaker.

ELECTRICITY RESTRUCTURING

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I rise to respond to the Minister of Energy. The Minister of Energy has brought forward a bill today. He claims that there will be savings in the range of \$25 million a year. Frankly, it remains to be seen. There's a lot of material that has to be put on the table before I think we can accept that claim.

But more importantly to the people of Ontario, outside of this chamber a privatization panel is moving forward and looking at the privatization of local utilities across this province. Speaker, already people who buy private power contracts sold on a door-to-door basis are paying 15% to 65% more for their electricity than they would otherwise pay. We have to keep our eyes on the ball. If that privatization panel goes forward with those recommendations, we are looking at those companies that go door to door taking over our local distribution utility, putting on the backs of Ontarians the cost of the profits that they will be shipping out of Ontario.

Whenever we get into the question of electricity, we're talking about the future stability and sustainability of this province. The minister is touching on a small part of what we have to address. We have to make sure that people in Ontario know there's a lot more going on than this bill.

Thank you, Speaker.

CANCER CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to respond to the minister, who I'm really happy understands the importance of not only cancer treatment and support for those who have cancer, but also the importance of prevention. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we took more concrete steps here in this Legislature to promote cancer prevention?

Today, I would like to draw attention to one aspect of cancer prevention which Ontario has yet to act upon, even though other jurisdictions have. This issue is indoor tanning. Twice before, legislation has been introduced in this House to restrict access to indoor tanning for youth and to increase regulation for this industry. Today I have

just reintroduced this legislation, and I hope that I can count on the support of each and every one of you.

As everyone in this Legislature should know, damage caused by ultraviolet light can lead to skin cancer. What seems like a harmless sunburn or a healthy tan causes cancer later in life, including deadly melanoma.

Another thing that everyone here is probably aware of is the popularity of indoor tanning with youth. Proms and graduations are right around the corner, Mr. Speaker. Those teens are flocking to tanning salons. Kate Neale, who spoke earlier today, is pretty; she's intelligent; she's eloquent. She is a very brave young woman who is turning 22 years old today. Happy birthday, Kate. Kate was one of those teens who not only used tanning beds, but who also worked for a tanning salon, which fed her misinformation about tanning and which required, as a way to keep her job, that she maintain a tan. Today, after multiple biopsies and three surgeries to remove melanoma, she is a cancer survivor.

Despite the growing number of stories like Kate's, one in 10 are using tanning beds. If you look at the youth in grade 12, 21% of Ontarian youth in grade 12 use tanning beds. Why? That's because the tanning industry directly markets to those young people in their yearbooks, at their graduations and during prom nights—and there's nothing that's being done in Ontario to help protect those youth from an industry that is purposely misleading them about the health risks of indoor tanning.

Melanoma is now the most common cancer among youth aged 25 to 29. This is the most common cancer. And do you know what? People who tan before the age of 30 have a 75% increased chance of developing skin cancer and melanoma.

It is time to act. Thousands of people have asked us to act. Thousands more have sent postcards. It is time for the people in this Legislature to listen to the youth, to listen to the Canadian Cancer Society and others and pass this bill.

NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent that up to five minutes be allotted to each party to speak on the National Day of Mourning, after which I would ask that the House observe a moment of silence.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The request for unanimous consent has been required. Agreed? Agreed. Minister of Labour.

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: This April 28 will be a solemn day here in Ontario. The 28th is the day we pause and remember workers who have been killed or injured on the job. It is the official Day of Mourning.

This weekend, people across this province will gather in ceremonies in city squares and at union halls. Flags will be lowered to half-mast to honour loved ones, co-workers and friends. Heads will be bowed.

Since the 1980s, the Ontario government has recognized the Day of Mourning. It is a day recognized in

cities across Canada and in 80 countries around the world. But it is much more than a day of remembrance; it is a day when we reaffirm our commitment to do whatever we can to prevent workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses. It is a day to remember those we have lost and to acknowledge those who are injured. It is also a day to renew our resolve to fight for the living, to work towards a brighter future where we eliminate workplace hazards.

In the year 2010, 57 people in Ontario lost their lives due to a traumatic injury on the job. That's more than one person every week who died in Ontario due to a preventable workplace injury. No one should fear when they leave for work in the morning that they may not return at the end of the day safe and sound.

In 2010, over 184,000 people in this province suffered lost-time injuries or illnesses as a result of their work. There were many more, of course, who were able to recover and return to their job, and we give thanks for this, but others were not so lucky. Injuries and illnesses changed their lives forever, and they forever changed the lives of their loved ones.

Tragically, workplace injuries and illnesses have a serious and, at times, a lasting impact on families. The numbers I cited are not mere statistics; they are human lives. They are our sons and daughters, our husbands and wives, and our friends and neighbours. That's why all of us must continue to fight to protect Ontario workers and their families.

Since 2003, we have significantly lowered the rate of workplace injury in this province. One of the reasons for that decrease is that since 2003 our government has nearly doubled the number of Ministry of Labour health and safety inspectors in the province.

There are other important steps we have taken to ensure a safer, healthier future for Ontario workers. One step was the creation and passage of Bill 160, which amended the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act and allows us to better manage and align Ontario's workplace health and safety system.

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Another step taken was our appointment of the new chief prevention officer, who will better coordinate and focus our efforts and those of our health and safety partners. This means that health and safety enforcement and prevention will be under the same roof for the very first time. Our new chief prevention officer will work to help ensure all Ontarians know their rights and their responsibilities under the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act.

To protect young workers all through the summer, Ministry of Labour health and safety inspectors will conduct inspections in workplaces where students and young people go to for summer jobs. And, Speaker, tomorrow I will be in Guelph to announce a province-wide safety blitz targeting our new and young workers.

We've done these things and we're committed to doing more, but we can't do it alone. Together, all of us must work to build a strong safety culture—a culture of

prevention in our province's workplaces. Together, we can prevent workplace deaths and injuries.

In a few days we'll observe a moment of silence for those who have suffered in workplace incidents. This Saturday, April 28, I ask all people of this province, whether you're an employee or an employer, to stop and ask yourself if every step is being taken to prevent an injury in your workplace, because workplace health and safety is everyone's responsibility.

So let us—every one of us—re-dedicate ourselves to making sure Ontario workers go home safe and sound at the end of the day. We owe the working people of this province nothing less.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Response? The member from Chatham–Kent–Middlesex.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Essex.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Essex.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister of Labour as well for her kind words.

It's with a heavy heart that I rise today to mark an upcoming National Day of Mourning to commemorate workers that have been injured or killed while performing their duties. This Saturday, April 28, the flag on Parliament Hill in our nation's capital will fly at half-mast as a tribute to the men and women who paid far too high a price for simply showing up and doing their jobs. The statistics are startling. In 2010 alone, there were over 1,000 workplace deaths in this country. That's almost three people losing their lives each and every day while on the job.

I have the honour of serving my caucus as the deputy critic of labour, a role that I take very seriously. In my short time as a member of this House and as a representative for my riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex, I've heard dozens of stories, from industry spokespeople to regular folks that come into my constituency office looking for help with their disability claims. Every one of them has a different concern, a different risk and a different solution. Listening to these stories is a task of paramount importance.

Many of my colleagues in this House come from former careers in industries where safety is paramount—farming, engineering or skilled trades, for example. The sad fact is, probably many of us here today know of an Ontario worker that has been severely injured while at work.

Since 1993, Canada has been losing an average of almost 900 people per year to on-the-job accidents. Add that up over two decades and you have 17,000 people—more than four times the size of the community of Blenheim in my riding of Chatham–Kent. But these workers are more than just statistics. They're moms and dads, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and friends that make up our communities.

Since autumn of last year, we here in Toronto have been subject to a series of terrifying stories of lives lost on the job. On October 11, Kyle Knox, a 24-year-old construction worker, was killed when a drilling rig fell on his loader at a York University job site. Friends remem-

bered Kyle as a prankster, a handsome, fun-loving guy that lived life to the fullest and was planning to marry his girlfriend of five years. I know all of us remember the tragedy in Burlington this past February, when a Via Rail train derailed, killing three Via workers on an otherwise quiet afternoon.

There are a number of avenues we can take as legislators to address this tragic reality. We may try to create better workplace safety laws or take the time to listen to the various organizations that fight every day for workers' rights.

I personally believe that we could take action immediately by addressing the looming issue of the funding shortfall at the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and ensuring that workers and taxpayers are getting the value they've paid for. But nothing will repair the situation faster than an increased awareness of the inherent risks in every job and constant vigilance not just for our personal safety, but for that of our colleagues.

I'm proud to say that when I was in the private sector and responsible for human resource development, I managed a great staff who were often responsible for providing health and safety training for over 4,000 unionized staff. That's a positive note I'd like to end on. For every worker injured on the job, we must remember that there are hundreds—thousands—more who look out for each other. It is possible to avoid the human error and equipment failure that can lead to the worst-case scenarios.

We owe it to each other and to our families to look out for each other, and to work together to ensure that moms and dads, brothers and sisters all arrive home at the end of each day safe and sound.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: It's an honour to stand here today as a worker, someone who came out of the construction field, a member of the Labourers union, Local 625, health and safety director, trainer, to stand to remember workers in this country, and indeed across the world, who have died due to injury or illness while going to work.

Each and every year, we stand and deliver the statistics, and they are shocking and they continue to be shocking. But it strikes me as though they've become actuarially acceptable; that in industry, with the numbers of people who go to work each and every day, it's a given that some will fall sick, some will be injured and indeed some will die. It begs the question: At what point does this House, this Legislature, and across the country—when do we decide that it is completely unacceptable that any person should go to work without knowing that they will come home at the end of the day?

It's particularly interesting that we have representatives from the cancer society here today, because I'll remind members of this House that we live in a country that still allows the mining of asbestos, that still allows the export of asbestos, a known carcinogen, and this happens underneath our noses. In that light, how can we indeed stand firm on our own resolve to change the way

our health and safety legislation is enforced and acted on proactively?

I don't believe we can do that in a real, concerted effort without acknowledging, first, that we have so much more work to do. Indeed, we know the tragedies that this country has suffered. The Westray mine tragedy: It is the 20th anniversary of that tragedy, where 26 workers lost their lives. Eleven of them are still down in the mine, a kilometre below the earth in the Foord seam, a seam that was known to be dangerous for decades prior to that explosion. It's been said that the most important thing to come up from a mine is the miner. Shouldn't that be the case for every worker in this country, in this province: that the most important thing to come home is the worker, not the paycheque?

We have to commit ourselves—and I appreciate the comments from my colleagues the Minister of Labour and the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex. I believe that they are true to their intentions that we need to do more. But until we see a day without incidents like that where the young woman who worked in a tanning salon was told that she had to have a tan, she had to promote that industry that we know has been causing cancer, we are not doing enough; we will not be doing enough.

1400

Young workers in this province who find themselves more and more in precarious working positions aren't afforded the opportunity to have in-depth training such as I had, working in a unionized environment. I submit to the honourable Minister of Labour that she should commit herself to working with trade unions and affiliates, because they have been carrying the load in progressive health and safety legislation for decades in this province and can guide us to where we can make headway in making sure that workplaces are safer not only for young people but for everyone in this province.

Indeed, everyone has a story of someone they know who has been hurt or injured. One of my colleagues, Takis Escoto, died last year leaving a construction site—wasn't even active on the site; walking away, ending his day, going home, a young worker who was hit by a piece of heavy machinery. It's unacceptable; there's no reason for that. We have to commit the appropriate levels of funding, the appropriate levels of enforcement—and that is the missing piece.

I've heard some indications that the province is doing as much as they can by enhancing some enforcement, but it is not enough. It certainly is not enough, and it certainly doesn't pay tribute to those who have fallen. It doesn't give them the hope that things will get better when it comes to our health and safety legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you and the members of this Legislature for giving unanimous consent to this day to honour those who have fallen. But let us commit ourselves to working as hard as we can to bring those rates down to zero. That is the only acceptable number.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would like to thank all members for their comments. At this time, as part of the unanimous consent, we would ask that every-

one in the House rise for a moment of silence in honour of those who have died or have been injured or sick on the job.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

PETITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

INDOOR TANNING EQUIPMENT

M^{me} France Gélinas: Mr. Speaker, I have been very patient, waiting to present all these petitions.

Interjection: How many?

M^{me} France Gélinas: There are thousands and thousands and thousands of petitions that I'm presenting today. Some of them are in the form of postcards from the south York region of the Canadian Cancer Society. Others, also in the form of postcards, are from the Ontario Medical Students Association, and the rest are mainly from youth from every one of the 107 ridings in this province. Actually, it's kind of heavy, so I'm only going to hold one—we've just said we have to protect workers here.

“Whereas there is a growing body of evidence linking tanning bed use to increased cancer risk, the World Health Organization considers tanning beds a group 1 carcinogen, and use of tanning beds before the age of 30 raises one's risk of melanoma by 75%; and

“Whereas many groups, including the Canadian Cancer Society and the Ontario Medical Association,

support a ban on the use of indoor tanning equipment by youths under the age of 18; and

“Whereas the provinces of British Columbia and Nova Scotia have passed legislation banning youths from using indoor tanning equipment, and governments around the world are considering similar legislation; and

“Whereas there is broad public support in Ontario for increased regulation of the tanning industry, with 83% supporting a ban on indoor tanning for those under 18;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning youths under the age of 18 from using indoor tanning equipment except in the case of medical need.”

I fully support this petition. So do the tens of thousands of people who have sent me those petitions and the people here in the Legislature. I will sign it and only send a few copies down—because we don't want to injure our little pages here—with page Jenny.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Alzheimer's disease is a degenerative brain disease that causes thinking and memory impairment. Alzheimer's disease is progressive, worsens over time, and will eventually lead to death;

“Whereas there are an estimated 181,000 Ontarians diagnosed with Alzheimer's and related dementia today, and that number is set to increase by 40% in the next 10 years;

“Whereas Alzheimer's disease creates social, emotional and economic burdens on the family and friends of those suffering with the disease;

“Whereas the total economic burden of dementia in Ontario is expected to increase by more than \$770 million per year through to 2020;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to establish an Alzheimer's advisory council to advise the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on matters pertaining to strategy respecting research, treatment and the prevention of Alzheimer's and other related dementia.”

I sign my name to this petition and wholeheartedly concur and will give it to page Safa.

UTILITY CHARGES

Mr. Rob Leone: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas section 398(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001 (the 'act'), allows a municipality to add public utility arrears incurred by a tenant to the municipal tax bill of the owner; and

“Whereas Ontario regulation 581/06 permits such arrears to have priority lien status under the act; and

“Whereas these provisions reversed the long-standing law in this area that held that a landlord was not responsible for utility charges where the landlord was not the consumer; and

“Whereas landlords may now be burdened unfairly, and potentially catastrophically, with fees and charges they have no control over; and

“Whereas these provisions will also impact tenants who are not in arrears with their utility payments but who will now face rent increases and/or increases in utility payments where such payments are pooled as landlords attempt to recoup these outstanding liabilities; and

“Whereas a number of municipalities, including Penetanguishene, Bracebridge and Niagara Falls, have reversed such policies as a result of the demonstrated and unprecedented negative impacts on landlords and tenants; and

“Whereas municipalities and utility providers in Ontario already have at their disposal a number of means by which they can control or collect outstanding arrears, including by requiring deposits for the utility service pursuant to the Public Utilities Act and by seizing personal property in the possession of the ratepayer;

“Now therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“Repeal section 398(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, and amend Ontario regulation 581/06 accordingly, to ensure that property owners are not responsible for the payment of outstanding utility arrears where they are not the consumer.”

Mr. Speaker, I will sign this petition and hand it to page William.

CELLULAR TRANSMISSION EQUIPMENT

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I have a petition signed by some members from my community.

“Whereas the operation of cellular commercial transmission equipment on new or existing cell towers has been proposed near residential areas in Oakville and other communities around the province; and

“Whereas Industry Canada has ultimate authority to approve the location of cellular communications transmission equipment under the federal Radiocommunication Act; and

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“Whereas the province of Ontario has no jurisdiction in the placement of cell communications equipment or services; and

“Whereas many area residents and local elected officials have expressed concerns with the location due to its 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 review the siting of cellular commercial communications transmission equipment in residential areas; and

“That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada place a moratorium on the installation of cellular commercial communication transmission equipment on new or existing towers within 1,000 metres

of residential homes until an improved separation distance is established by the federal government.”

I agree with this, I've signed it and will send it down with Noah.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

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

“Whereas a report from Ontario’s Auditor General on the province’s air ambulance service, Ornge, found a web of questionable financial deals where tens of millions of taxpayers’ dollars have been wasted and public safety compromised;

“Whereas Ornge officials created a ‘mini-conglomerate’ of more than a dozen private entities that enriched former senior officers and left taxpayers on the hook for \$300 million in debt;

“Whereas government funding for Ornge climbed 20% to \$700 million, while the number of patients airlifted actually declined by 6%;

“Whereas Ornge was paid \$7,700 per patient transported by land ambulance despite subcontracting this service for \$1,700 per patient, a full \$6,000 per patient less;

“Whereas, after receiving questions of serious concerns at Ornge from the opposition in 2010 and early 2011, the Minister of Health did not provide adequate oversight, ignored the red flags and reassured the Legislature that all was well; and

“Whereas, on March 21, 2012, the Legislature voted to create a special all-party select committee to investigate the scandals surrounding Ornge;

“Whereas such a committee provides protection from disciplinary action against employees who testify;

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

“The government of Ontario immediately appoint a special all-party select committee to investigate the scandals surrounding Ornge.”

I agree with this petition. I will be signing it.

TOURISM

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I have a petition which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas tourism is a vital contributor to the economy of northwestern Ontario, bringing hundreds of millions of dollars into the province’s economy from other provinces and the United States, unlike other regions in the province whose target demographic is people who already reside in Ontario;

“Whereas northwestern Ontario’s tourist economy has been under attack by government policies such as the cancellation of the spring bear hunt, the harmonized sales tax ... , the strong Canadian dollar and difficulties passing through the Canada/United States border; and

“Whereas studies have shown that tourism in the northwest nets significantly more money per stay than

other regions of the province, in part due to visitors frequenting historical sites, parks and roadside attractions that they learn about through travel information centres;

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

“To keep the travel information centres in Fort Frances, Kenora and Rainy River open permanently to ensure that northwestern Ontario maximizes the benefit of our tourist economy.”

I proudly support this and will give this to page Katarina to bring forward.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I have a petition from the residents of York South–Weston.

“Whereas St. John the Evangelist Catholic elementary school in Weston is overcrowded, with 480 students in a school designed for 260; and

“Whereas the students will be relocating 40 minutes away in September 2012 during the duration of the Metrolinx Weston tunnel construction; and

“Whereas the Toronto Catholic District School Board has placed St. John the Evangelist third on the urgent capital priority list for 2012;

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

“Respectfully request full funding to replace St. John the Evangelist school during the Metrolinx Weston tunnel construction; therefore, the students are not relocated twice.”

I agree with this petition and I will hand it over to page Sarah, and sign it as well.

SOCIAL WORK

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I have a petition signed by a great many people from around the province, a lot of them from my great riding of Oxford. It is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas many children and their families have been and continue to be adversely affected by the actions of CAS workers who are engaged in the practice of social work but not registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers ... as required under law; and

“Whereas unregulated and unregistered CAS workers are entering schools, detaining children and violating the rights of children and parents under sections 7 and 9 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to the right to life, liberty and security of their persons, as well as the right not to be detained; and

“Whereas the Social Work and Social Service Work Act (1998) ... requires that all persons who engage in the practice of social work in the province of Ontario must be registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers; and

“Whereas the college has a duty under sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the act to regulate the practice of social work

in Ontario to protect the public interest but has failed to fulfill its legal mandate since the year 2000; and

“Whereas the unlawful practice of social work by CAS workers is causing significant harm to children and families and bringing disrepute to the profession of social work and is undermining the administration of justice and the rule of law;

“We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to take steps to protect children and families in the following way:

“That the government of Ontario take steps to ensure that all CAS workers in the province of Ontario who are engaged in the practice of social work be required to be in compliance” with “the Social Work and Social Service Work Act ... and to be registered with the college, as is now required under existing legislation.”

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to present this petition.

ONTARIO PLACE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Trinity–Spadina.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you very much, Speaker. I made it.

“Whereas Ontario Place was dedicated ‘To the People of Ontario—Past, Present and Future’; and

“Whereas Ontario Place is nestled within a public space beloved and used extensively by the people of Toronto and Ontario; and

“Whereas Ontario Place has been an affordable family-oriented destination for the people of Ontario since 1971; and

“Whereas the Premier of Ontario has initiated a review to revitalize Ontario Place; and

“Whereas the government has been silent in its vision for this public space and any effects on surrounding residential areas;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to demand that Ontario Place remain a public space for all Ontarians to enjoy, and further, that no casinos or other gambling facilities be built or placed at Ontario Place.”

I support this petition strongly with all the 300 or 400 people who have signed this petition.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

PROTECTION OF MINORS IN AMATEUR SPORTS ACT, 2012 LOI DE 2012 SUR LA PROTECTION DES MINEURS PARTICIPANT À DES SPORTS AMATEURS

Mr. Ouellette moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 24, An Act to provide protection for minors participating in amateur sports / Projet de loi 24, Loi visant à protéger les mineurs qui participent à des sports amateurs.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I very much appreciate this opportunity; I believe it's the fourth time I've had the opportunity to debate this bill.

In accordance with the rules of the Legislature, I need to correct my record as it pertains to the last time I debated this bill. You see, I specifically stated, "I have to tell you since my wife, Dianne—and my sons were old enough, Josh and Garrett, in order to play hockey, this coming fall will be the first time that I am not coaching." Actually, that fall I was asked to coach, and I need to correct my record because I ended up coaching then.

First of all I want to congratulate the tens of thousands of volunteers providing decades of volunteer time out there in the community, providing opportunities for kids, giving them the chance we were given in our earlier days by volunteering in coaching, refereeing, managing and training all these youth in the province of Ontario and, quite frankly, throughout Canada, North America and around the world.

You know, for the 99.9% of individuals who are doing a great job out there, there's that one small percentage point of individuals that needs to be addressed. I bring in a number of headlines. This one is from April 19: "Swim Coach Charged with Sexual Offences." This one is from Friday, April 13: "Junior Sports Coach Guilty of Attempted Rape of Boy." This one, April 17: "Ex-Green Forest Coach Arrested" for sexual assault. This one: "Coach Accused of Sexual Assault." The list goes on and on and on: soccer coaches, tae kwon do individuals, swim coaches, basketball coaches. You just need to look at the headlines, or one only needs to look at the headlines out there, to know that there's a problem in an area that I think we're trying to address to the best of our ability.

1420

I should explain how this came to be in my own life. Quite frankly, it was right back when I was in grade 6. We got a new principal in the school at that time, and I recall my father saying—it was halfway through the year, and he says, "Whatever you do, I want you to stay away from that principal. No matter what, don't be caught with him. Don't be alone with him in any way, shape or form." To a grade 6, I looked up at Dad—who, I should add, was on the Durham regional police force at the time, or it could have been still the Oshawa police force. He had been, for 33 years—a great career in policing. I looked up and I said, "Well, why?" He turned—and you know, when Dad goes into cop mode, you stay right away. "Because I said so," he said. At that, I just backed off. I remember about two years later, when I was in grade 8, I asked him, "Dad, why did you tell me when I

was in grade 6, no matter what happens, to stay away from that particular individual?" He said that, quite frankly, it was because he had charged the individual with sexually molesting a 14-year-old boy at Continental Massage in downtown Oshawa at that time. There was no way to recognize or identify that particular individual or remove him from the ability to be in confinement with children at that time. The only way it could be done was by that person, my father, telling me to make sure I do whatever I could to stay away from the individual.

Mr. Speaker, when I was in grade 8, I said that that is wrong and if I ever get the chance to do something about it, I will. When I first came to this Legislature and had the privilege and honour to be elected in 1995, my first bill coming in was to deal with this particular aspect. The end result was, we ended up with the sex offender registry in the province of Ontario, which the federal government then followed up on Canada-wide.

I thought all was great and wonderful until I happened to be, quite frankly, as many do here in the Legislature, coaching hockey at the time. An individual came to me and said, "You know something? You see that referee out there? They shouldn't be on the ice with those kids."

I said, "Well, what do you mean?"

"I can't tell you, but that referee should not be out there on the ice with those kids."

"Well, why?"

"I can't tell you. I'm just telling you that that person should not be out there."

I said, "Why can't you tell me?"

"It's because of my work."

"Well, where do you work?"

"Well, I can't tell you."

So I started to do the research and found out, lo and behold—I used my contacts; you know, you have a father in a policing community. There's certainly an abundance of contacts that you can use to check these things out. I checked and, lo and behold, the referee who was on the ice had multiple sex convictions.

For those who don't know, referees have the ability, or kids have the ability at 14, to start refereeing younger kids. This convicted sex offender could be in the change room, changing with a 14-year-old at that time, and had multiple sex convictions.

I then thought I'd do the appropriate thing and went to the referees in chief. I approached them and I said, "Look, we've got a problem out there we have to address." They said, "Well, what's that?" I explained the individual and I explained the circumstances, explained my research, and they said, "Oh, we'll check into it." So the next time I happened to meet the referee in chief of the district, he turned to me and he said, "You know something? You've got something wrong here." He said, "We've done the background and read his resumé. We did the check and this person, as a matter of fact, is a police officer. What are you talking about?" I looked at him, and I looked up and I said, "Don't you realize? The only thing you checked was his resumé. He has been

convicted of impersonating a police officer as well.” They went, “Oh, my God. We need to do something.”

As a result of those actions, I then went to individuals, including Hockey Canada, and sat down with Hockey Canada. I’m sure everybody in the chamber knows about what happened with Sheldon Kennedy and Theo Fleury and the things that unfortunately happened to those individuals by an individual who’s now serving time for his actions, and hopefully that’ll be appealed to make sure the individual serves just time for the actions that have occurred for those individuals.

But I went to Hockey Canada and I said, “Look, we’ve got a bit of a problem.” They said, “What do you mean?” I said, “Here’s the situation.”

I started to do some research about bringing in legislation at the time. When I met with the great staff individuals who help us all draft legislation here at Queen’s Park, they asked about, “Well, rather than just hockey, what about other components or other sports throughout the province of Ontario?” I said, “You know something? That’s a good idea. Let’s check into it.” When we checked into it, lo and behold, there were differences throughout the entire province for different sports—not only that, but different hockey leagues as well. So what we did is, we did some research. We contacted some sporting activities that never had any requirement to do background checks for anybody, whether they’re coaching, managing, training or refereeing officials, in any way, shape or form.

So we drafted up a bill that essentially encompassed all amateur sport—and this is important—as to be determined by Sport Ontario. This is a funding agency that receives funds from the province of Ontario that determines what amateur sport actually is. You see, Mr. Speaker, during the bill: “What are we going to do with kids playing road hockey? That’s amateur sport. No, no; we’ll determine that the guidelines established by Sport Ontario will be the ones.”

Any individual that comes in contact with kids at that time will have to have a background check. It’s called a vulnerable person’s check, a vulnerable sector check or a criminal investigation. Essentially what takes place is, the individual would then apply for a coaching position—and it happens all the time; as a matter of fact, they were short of lacrosse coaches and, quite frankly, I don’t know all the rules of lacrosse but guess who’s on the bench on Tuesday night because we needed some coaches? Otherwise the league was going to have a lot of trouble.

However, the background check is then—so you get approved for working or volunteering in an organization. Then you would submit your name to a policing department or, quite frankly—and this is another key component—there are agencies out there that now do this full time. I know that the former deputy chief of police for the region of Durham—his name is Rod Piukkala—now works for a company, and that’s what their service does. They do background checks for individuals for work-related activities and/or sports activities.

So, for example, the league could approach them and get a reduced rate, and they will do a background check

of all your coaching staff or all those individuals involved in that in order to save costs and time.

Then, after the background check comes back, the league would review it. They normally have a review committee, and they determine whether the individual is one that should be working with kids in any way, shape or form. I mentioned sex offenders on this, but there are a lot of other aspects where there’s a convicted or a multi-convicted individual for drinking and driving, impaired driving. Would you want them driving your kids to hockey games, lacrosse games, soccer or those sorts of things? Or, are there individuals out there with multiple convictions for selling drugs? Would you want somebody who’s had known convictions for that working with kids?

As I stressed, there are thousands and thousands of volunteers, and 99.999% of them are all doing a great job. But it’s that one small one that gives the headlines that I read earlier that kind of paint a lot with a bad brush or give concern to parents to make sure that the right individuals take part.

Now, what we’re doing here is giving those opportunities and ensuring that those individuals who are working with kids—and it’s not to say that this may not happen. All it does is allow the organizations due diligence to ensure that they’ve done everything possible regarding those individuals who have had a past in areas where they don’t want them being associated with kids, so they’re not being associated with kids. Those are just for the ones who have been caught, Mr. Speaker. We know that. But it works as a deterrent, and we need to start somewhere to find out what we can do for these kids.

There has been a bit of a complication in it, and what has taken place is that, apparently—well, I’ll mention it anyway—sex offenders have found that they can eliminate a lot of their aspects by changing their names. So the difficulty is that those who are applying for the background checks, if they have the same birth date as a convicted sex offender, a lot of times the RCMP are requiring fingerprint checks to ensure that that individual has not changed their name. I have, subsequently, met with the RCMP, the detachment in our area, and asked them if there is legislation that we can bring forward that ensures that individuals who change their name are not exempt from having their records follow them to the new name. This will speed up the process. That’s causing a lot of concern and costing time now.

Now, one of the things, in the time I have remaining, was that each of the leagues—and there was a northern Ontario hockey league, when we started on this legislation, that had been doing a great job. They had a component in there where they were allowed to maintain the record checks or background checks for these individuals for four years. What that does is, it speeds up the amount of time or increases the requirements for individuals to make sure that it’s working. It was working in that league, so we made sure that that component was in here; that the leagues have the ability to determine the length of time their background check would be good

in that league and then for a follow-up one. So if it was working in one area, why change it as it relates to some of the others?

One of the other things is the cost. There has been a cost affiliated with it. It ranges, depending on where you go, if you use a service, an agency or local enforcement. It amounts to roughly about \$1 per player on the team for each individual that is working as a coach, a trainer or manager in that aspect. I know that some of the sport associations contacted us, saying, "We're going to lose volunteers, and this is going to have a huge impact on us. We may lose volunteers." I just looked at them and I said, "Is that the sort of individual that you want taking care of your kids, one who is reluctant to get that background check?"

1430

We want to make sure that we do everything we can to protect kids and move forward. I know in the past we've been able to receive all support in the House. Hopefully, should this bill pass again for the second reading, we'll be able to get it to committee this time so those organizations impacted will come forward.

I must say that, although the bill has not passed in the past, organizations like the Canadian Ski Patrol have adopted the policy. I was a keynote speaker at lacrosse Ontario, who are implementing that policy because they think it's the right thing to do. They just needed some guidance support and, hopefully, the House will decide it's the right thing to do.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Trinity–Spadina.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to congratulate the member from Oshawa for his diligence and persistence in this regard.

Clearly, this has been before us three times, and this is the fourth effort that he makes. Our party has spoken to this bill in support, and it has never made it through hearings and never came back here for third reading, and it is unfortunate, I have to say.

While it is limited in terms of its scope, I think there is enough there to support in second reading and send it for committee hearings and allow the different people who are interested to come and give feedback to the bill because there are things that could be done that would make the bill better, quite clearly. I'm sure the member from Oshawa probably agrees.

What the bill does is to make it mandatory for amateur sports organizations that have children under the age of 18 involved to require police background checks of adults who have regular contact with children. An adult must consent to the background check. However, for the positions of referee, official trainer or coach, consenting to this criminal record check is mandatory.

One of the things that I'm sure drove the member from Oshawa to introduce this is the incredible number of horrible, heinous stories that have come forward connected to sexual abuse by coaches with the young men they have coached. That kind of sexual predation is horrible. We know that it has ruined lives of young men

and that it is difficult to get over that kind of abuse. For me, any effort that we could introduce that could prevent that sort of heinous act from happening that ruins people's lives is a good thing.

Now, whether a mandatory check or a mandatory criminal record check would get at the problem is another matter, but I believe it's one of the many things that could and should be done.

I know that Sports4Ontario makes a comment where they say that "there is no data or even anecdotal evidence to suggest that sport or any other segment of the non-profit sector (including recreation, arts, culture, etc.) is rampant with criminals," and they're probably right. I know that many organizations feel as if somehow they're being targeted with it or somehow that having a mandatory check makes them appear as if there is a great deal of criminal activity going on, and I don't think that is the case. I'm sure that's not the intent by the writing of this bill by the member from Oshawa.

But I do know that many have stated concerns, and I want to read some for the record—and it comes from the same organization. And here's a quote from one of them:

"The Sports4Ontario is in full support of developing and maintaining a safe environment for all sport participants. However, this is not a sport-only issue. Efforts should focus on helping all organizations, regardless of sector; improve screening for all vulnerable persons in accordance with Volunteer Canada's full 10-step process."

I have to admit I haven't read the full 10-step process, but I suspect they're probably good, and I suspect the member from Oshawa agrees with those steps. I don't know, but that's something to look at. I'm looking forward to this individual now that's coming forward to talk about that.

"Effective risk management requires attention to all potential remedies for any given risk. Presenting one solution but ignoring the increased risks thereby created is not acceptable in today's environment of organizational accountability. Screening is of great importance, and implementing a responsible system must be a collective process across the sectors in partnership with the government." That's Margaret Emin, chair, Sport4Ontario.

Another person says, "The Ontario Hockey Federation has been a proponent of mandatory volunteer screening since 2001 and has continued to enhance its screening process each year. Bill 30 attempts to address the issue of volunteer screening in the sport sector, although it fails to be considered even an adequate approach. The not-for-profit volunteer organization sector continues to work towards improved risk management and safety for its members; however, an approach such as the submission of Bill 30 without working with the organizations is detrimental to the overall improvement of programming for citizens of Ontario." That is Phillip McKee, executive director, Ontario Hockey Federation.

Someone else has another matter to raise: "Gymnastics Ontario has adopted Volunteer Canada's 10-step

process as a starting point for managing the risks to our organization. We also go further and have developed a comprehensive strategy for coaches, judges and volunteers. Bill 30 describes only one facet of managing risks and should not be the only thrust for a sport organization.” And that’s Holly Abraham, CEO, Gymnastics Ontario.

So a number of people clearly have some concerns, and it’s good to hear from them as we send this to committee hearings, because I think that when we debate this, we might get amendments to the bill that all of us can agree on to strengthen what the member from Oshawa is trying to do. I know that some people have issues connected to the cost. The cost of criminal record checks varies throughout the province; in some areas there is no cost and in others there may be a fee of \$25, \$35, \$50 per week. This is a number that some people throw out. They say that if there is such a cost to organizations, the government has an obligation to deal with that. So there are concerns that are stated by some, and I think that the more we talk to people, the better we create policies around here.

By the way, I should point out that my concern isn’t just around sexual predatory practices, and the member alluded to other potential problems. There could be other fraudulent activity that sports organizations would be concerned about. There could be issues connected to drug-related activity that we should be speaking about, and all of that is something that organizations are very concerned about, to be sure.

The same organization that I mentioned, Sport4Ontario, raises issues of how a criminal record check may not be sufficient in terms of getting to the problem, and they say the following: “A criminal record check from the local police detachment may only capture criminal convictions within that particular jurisdiction. If a person moves from town to town and leaves a trail of convictions, that may not be disclosed,” which is a good point.

“Bill 30 does not require a criminal record check that includes a Canadian Police Information Centre check that will capture criminal convictions across the country.

“Criminal record checks do not capture dropped charges, investigations of criminal behaviour or other areas that are captured by vulnerable sector checks.”

These are legitimate concerns, and I think sending it to committee is useful to do as a way of making this bill improved and more effective. So we support this bill on second reading and support sending it to committee for hearings, because I think we’ll get better suggestions and better ideas on how to improve the bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It’s a pleasure to rise in the House today, and it sounds like there’s going to be some level of agreement on this bill that’s before us. From the outset, let me thank the member from Oshawa for bringing forward the bill. I admire his tenacity. That usually leads to success, they tell us, so perhaps this is the time that it does get through the process.

1440

We, as a government, recognize the significant role in our society that amateur sports plays in our communities and in our sports organizations, athletic organizations, and I think what we’re doing as individuals or as parents is entrusting our children to those organizations. Often it’s for athletic reasons, for sports reasons, for cultural reasons, entrusting them for a few hours or a few minutes, sometimes a few days, into the care of other adults. What I think the member is trying to do is trying to ensure that there’s a process that’s in place that ensures that those adults that we’re entrusting our kids to are worthy of our own trust in the first place.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our communities, so I think we have to ensure that the process we have for volunteers is one that we all agree with.

I think the member has made some good points about his own personal exposure to this type of issue and some of the issues that he’s been involved with in minor sports, but as a previous speaker has noted, there are some concerns.

Let me state from the outset that I will be supporting the bill, and I believe other members on this side of the House will be supporting the bill, because we want to see it go to committee, because we have heard from others, obviously, and there’s some parts of the bill that we think could be improved upon. I think the member from Trinity–Spadina suggested a few of those, and I have a few that are here before me now.

Depending on the type of check obtained, for example, convictions that have happened in other jurisdictions do not always appear on the search in this type of check. There’s also something called a vulnerable sector check which provides additional details, and perhaps that should be included. That’s something that may not appear on a standard criminal check.

What we also would like to see happen is that all sports be required to accept this process. We know we’ve had some that have come forward on a voluntary basis, but there appears to be agreement around the House today that this should be mandatory, that this isn’t something that should be optional, that there should be a process in place.

We also hear—I think all of us have heard in our communities—that a lot of these organizations, on an annual basis, are facing financial pressures. So we have to implement the system, whatever system is agreed upon at the end of the day, in a way that doesn’t impose a financial burden on either the individual who’s trying to volunteer or on the organizations themselves. We really want to retain the ability to attract volunteers and to ensure that people feel safe when they come forward, that they’re not going to have to go through an onerous process, but there should be an understanding that they do have to go through a fair process.

We also have to specify the offences. We’ve heard of some of the offences that have been brought forward. I think a more fulsome discussion of what type of offences should be included that should prevent somebody from becoming a referee, a coach or trainer, or an adviser.

We also need to establish clear and reasonable rules around this, so that there's an expectation that is placed upon on the individual organizations and upon the individuals themselves, so that they understand the process they'll be submitting themselves to.

There are also provisions under Bill 24 that's before us that would permit the inspection of third party premises. That's something that I think goes beyond the realm of what is in the bill and needs to be expanded on. I'm not opposed to the idea, but I just think we need to be careful and we need to be specific about it.

I like private members' time, Speaker, because often it allows us to do what we're doing right here: for a member to stand up and to bring forward what I think is a very good idea. It allows others from the House to agree with the member, to say this is a great idea, but also to bring suggestions forward and to allow the bill to move forward. I think that what happens at private members' time is that the strings that often orchestrate government aren't being pulled. I think what's happening is that we're here, either members of the opposition, members of the third party, members of the government, debating what we believe is in the best interests of our community and kids. This, I think, is a perfect example. There are some examples out there that are currently taking place that I think would be the opposite of this, where our kids aren't being put first.

In this case, I think the individual, who belongs to a different party than I do and probably has a different political philosophy, is putting forward an idea that is in the best interests of the kids in my riding as well. I will agree with him on this. I want to work with him to ensure that this moves forward, that other people are heard from, that the committee process is one that includes everybody. I wish the member success and would hope that this would eventually receive royal assent some day.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member from Wellington–Halton Hills—sorry, you were standing. The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thank you, Speaker. I guess the other member is just heading out for a minute.

I'd like to first of all thank the member from Oshawa for bringing forward this bill. He's been a strong advocate for youth and his constituents, and he has been a pretty strong mentor for all our new MPPs here.

This is a very important issue, and recently it's come to the forefront with many publicized cases. I take, for instance, the Theo Fleury case that came up about his incidents that occurred when he was in minor sports. It's coming out as a very public matter, and the extent is very damaging. It just proves to the effect that there is abuse that is in our sports system.

But it's not just occurring in the headlines. Unfortunately, it's in places that we'd least expect it. The victims who come forward—I just can't imagine how they feel coming forward and being public about bringing out what has occurred.

That's why I think it's very important that we're here today to debate this issue. We have a duty to the citizens

of this province to open the dialogue on this issue, try to remove the stigma and protect our children. We need to foster a culture that not only protects the kids but prevents abuse and also helps people who are victims come forward.

We can continue to talk about it, but now it's time to take some action. Bill 24 is a tangible way to protect our children by mandating a criminal background check on anyone volunteering to coach a youth sport. As a father, I coach my daughter's soccer every year, and I see how kids can become vulnerable out on the field, being alone with someone, let alone the referees—and that's just in soccer. Myself, being the coach, someday I will not be there, and I would like to ensure that my daughter is safe out there on the soccer field. I think, being a volunteer coach, this is very important. This isn't an attack on the coaches who are out there now because, as you say, there are probably 98% of them out there who are true and dedicated to their sport; the same with the referees, trainers, etc. But it's that small minority out there that causes such damage to a child in later years, as we have seen in the cases that come forward.

I'll just take a minute here. This is a really effective piece of legislation, and I thank you for bringing it forward. We seem to have unanimous consent here, so hopefully we can pass it, actually get it through committee quickly and get it up here to third reading so that we can get this out and start protecting our kids.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Davenport.

Mr. Jonah Schein: I'm honoured to rise here today, and I'd like to acknowledge and thank the member from Oshawa for bringing this issue forward and, as has been said, forward once again. This is the fourth time it's been brought forward. It has had the support of our party in the past and it will certainly have my support going forward to move it to committee.

As a newcomer in this House, I'm hoping that this is something we can actually get through committee, that it has the opportunity for people to weigh in, to strengthen the bill. I'd like to move it forward to make sure that it does what it's intended to do.

I'm pleased to see something that means so much to a member here, who then has the commitment to continue to bring it forward, and also to speak, whether it's to Theo Fleury and his bravery in telling his story or, unfortunately, the thousands of survivors of sexual abuse and child abuse in this province who need protection, obviously.

As has been mentioned by my colleague from Trinity–Spadina and others here in the House today, there are some concerns, I think, about the fees associated with police background checks. I think that's something that should be looked at closely in committee. I have some concerns overall about the fact that, in this province, we seem to be stepping away from providing social services in a way that's publicly funded, that's regulated, that has proper oversight. Instead, we're relying more and more on the volunteer sector, on the charitable sector, to fill in that role.

As that begins to happen—I think volunteerism has a huge value in this province, but volunteers are people who are trying to build their resumé's, often, and advance their careers, and that's important. They're young people, often, who are trying to get a first job. They're often low-income people who are on Ontario Works or ODSP. I think that for all of those folks, we need to make sure that money is not a barrier to their enthusiasm and passion for their community, to volunteer. We need to make sure that this bill does ensure that volunteerism is not an obstacle for anybody here, and that's something that I would want to look into in committee.

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Again, I want to thank the member from Oshawa and express my support for this bill and to move it forward as soon as possible.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Pickering–Scarborough East.

Ms. Tracy MacCharles: I too would like to join in with the other members participating in this debate and congratulating the member from Oshawa for bringing this forward, a colleague member of mine in the great region of Durham, where there are just so many wonderful amateur sports taking place. I congratulate him for bringing this forward.

Certainly as a mother who has volunteered in amateur sporting areas and other areas, but also as a parliamentary assistant for children and youth services in Ontario, I'm very supportive of this bill. There are some concerns and opportunities that I share with members opposite, of the third party, that I think can be addressed in committee, but I too am hopeful that this bill can go forward.

The intention of the bill, as I understand it, if passed, will require any organizer of an amateur sports program to obtain a criminal record check of persons who are a referee, other official, trainer, coach or any other position which involves dealing with persons under 18 years of age on a regular basis.

I want to talk a bit about children's safety, which I believe is paramount to this bill. We certainly have a responsibility to do everything we can to protect society's most vulnerable from the harm of sexual abuse and assault and from other things like bullying, as we proposed in Bill 13. The protection and safety of Ontario's children and youth is one of our government's priorities.

I'm very proud to be the first jurisdiction in Canada to establish a sex offender registry. Ontario's registry has proven to be very effective. Our rate of compliance is over 97%. This is one of the highest compliance rates of all sex offender registries in operation, including registries in the United States.

We provide support to child victims of sexual abuse. Victim witness assistance programs provide services to child victims and witnesses by offering emotional support, preparing them for court and referring them to counselling and other services. We are expanding the innovative child victim witness program to eight centres, serving their regions across the province, and we're

providing community grants for projects focused on child victims of sexual abuse.

We've allocated \$15.4 million to the provincial strategy to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation on the Internet, which was created in 2006. This initiative brings together police from across the province to develop an all-encompassing approach to preventing child abuse and exploitation.

Since 2004, we have invested \$5.2 million to the safer and vital communities grant, a program which helps community-based non-profit organizations to establish local crime prevention programs and initiatives which, amongst other things, target children and youth.

As someone who has volunteered quite a bit in Pickering–Scarborough East, the great community I represent, which is part of Durham region as well, I am supportive of this bill. I think we do need to listen to the feedback that has been received about this bill regarding screening, because we know that, depending on the type of check obtained, convictions in other jurisdictions may not be presented. There are other checks, such as a vulnerable sector check, which I believe my colleague from Oakville spoke to. So I think we do need to address those things in committee, and we do need to have some conversations about these concerns that are coming forward about the cost of undertaking criminal record checks of each employee and volunteer, what kind of burden that places upon not just the organization but the volunteers themselves.

I don't think people have a problem going through that process or even spending some money on this, but we have to look at what's reasonable. When I look at the world of volunteers, we have people who volunteer day in and day out, and we have some volunteers who volunteer once a month, a couple of times a year. We certainly don't want to have implications that affect the ability of sports to retain and attract those volunteers.

So, if this bill moves forward to committee, and I'm hopeful that it will, I suggest that we look at ways of minimizing that financial administrative burden to the volunteers and the organizations that they support.

It's also important to note that the bill does not specify which offences, if any, will prevent an individual from becoming a referee, coach or trainer, and the bill does not establish clear and reasonable rules governing how criminal record information is collected, used, assessed and maintained by amateur sporting organizations. Provisions under Bill 24 that permit the inspection of third party premises where agency records are believed to be stored may well go too far, possibly giving rise to a charter violation.

These are just some of the things I think we need to consider and look at when this goes to committee. I sense a great deal of support from all parties in the House, and I am very pleased and honoured to provide my personal support to my colleague the member from Oshawa.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate.

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's great to rise to support the member from Oshawa for this bill. I have the privilege of

being involved, having three young children with my wife, Margie, in minor sports for the past 30 years, having coached and been involved in the executive for 15 years each of minor hockey and minor soccer.

I know one of the biggest problems we have is around getting volunteers. I know that we hear the stories, and there's many more stories locally we don't see in the paper about problems that come up. We need to devise a system that will make it easy on our volunteers to do the checks, as much financially as it is organizationally.

I know that some of our soccer programs in our area—they're a very small group. Four or five people and volunteers are in charge of getting coaches for 600 children. In one organization being involved with that, you spend hours looking for people. You want to be careful that we can somehow maybe provide a list that could be checked against the database so it wouldn't time-out our volunteers. A neighbouring soccer group with about the same number of children folded just because of volunteer hours; it couldn't get the volunteers it needed.

Our volunteers are generally coaches and assistant coaches. They're generally people who will coach for one or two years at a time. These are not professional coaches. In many cases, especially with the youngest children, volunteers haven't even played the sport. It's more about just changing them and getting them on the field.

We've really relied on the volunteer hours in the high schools. I think that was brought in under the former government. That really helped save our program.

So when you look at a group of people on a shoestring and trying to just get enough hours between them to run an association, you want to make sure that we don't do something that will end up just giving our children less places to actually get out and play sports, whether it be dancing—it can be even with seniors. We have a lot of vulnerable people here. But we want something, a system that actually does what it's intended to do and weeds out the people we don't want involved, but also does it in a way that's quite easy to look after.

I think that as we go through the committee stage, we should be able to find something that solves those and meets both those requirements. I think the timeframes are right. If we're handing a simple list of our people to the local police station, having them review it would make it a lot easier. Sometimes, they know a lot about the local people, and it can simply be a yes or a no and leave it at that. But it gives the protection we need, because too often we see these stories a year after about how people's lives have been affected.

But on the positive side, we also see with these young children some of the great stories of being involved. Even in our area we have a couple of people I was able to coach—Michael Robertson, who was the University of Ottawa athlete of the year this year, and Christina Julien from our area, who's on the Canada Olympic soccer team. They got their starts through these minor sports, and they've gone on to be great students throughout

school, and they're great mentors today coming back to the area. So we need to promote this in every way we can.

I'm glad to have the opportunity to talk to this bill, and I look forward to bringing it through, because it's a bill, I understand, that the member from Oshawa has tried before. For many good reasons, he has brought it back, and I really want to see it succeed this time and really do what it's intended to do so we end up with a strong system for our kids to participate in, and even our seniors, and to make sure that all our volunteer groups are protected.

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The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's my pleasure, actually, to rise to speak in support of Bill 24. I know it's been a long time coming for my colleague from Oshawa, and I congratulate him for bringing this bill forward.

I think there are probably few MPPs in our caucus, perhaps even the entire House, who have been as involved in community sports and children's programs as my colleague, so you know that this legislation is coming from his heart.

I also appreciate the encouraging comments received from my colleagues from the government side, as well as from the third party opposition.

I, myself, have been proudly involved in community sports for many years. As a youth, I played on many different baseball and hockey teams, and I even coached Chatham Minor Baseball, house league and travel league; sponsored girls' minor soccer; I was also a coach with Chatham Minor Hockey Association at the peewee level; and I coached and played on several men's slo-pitch teams, as well as even umpired at various levels in the youth and adult sports, and enjoyed that very much. As a result, Mr. Speaker, I truly know the value of getting active at a young age and how these organizations can, in fact, bring families and friends together.

Yet we live in a world with far more access to information than we used to. That brings the benefit of a heightened awareness but also terrifying stories of abuses of power by adults in charge.

As part of the Ontario PC caucus, I ran in the recent campaign on a platform that included getting serious about catching dangerous predators and ensuring community safety. Did you know, Speaker, that there are over 14,000 names on Ontario's sex offender registry? We sought to strengthen that registry by giving police the tools they needed to apprehend dangerous predators. Our position was supported by organizations such as the Canadian Crime Victims Foundation.

The well-being of our children has been at the front of the public consciousness in recent years. From the horrifying details of disgraced hockey coach Graham James and his high-profile victims in Theo Fleury and Sheldon Kennedy to the charges recently brought against Jerry Sandusky at Penn State University, where there may have been up to 10 young victims, there has not

been a more appropriate moment to respond to public concerns.

We need to be more proactive when it comes to individuals, both male and female, who are put in a position of authority over our kids. I believe that my colleague's bill closes a significant loophole and, more importantly, offers parents better peace of mind, ensuring that more safeguards have been put in place.

As a father and a grandfather and as someone with a long history of involvement in sport, I am eager to support this legislation, and I applaud my colleague for bringing it forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member for Oshawa, you have two minutes for a response.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: No, no, I can use the remaining time.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You want to use the remaining time?

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity.

I'm going to, first of all, thank the members from Trinity–Spadina, Oakville, Elgin–Middlesex–London, Davenport, Pickering–Scarborough East, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Chatham–Kent–Essex for their comments.

I want to mention a few things in regard to some of the comments regarding the member from Trinity–Spadina. The reason it was limited in scope is because there are a lot of other sectors that could be used out there, and it needs to start somewhere. We need to be able to ensure that—because if you cast the net fairly wide, it's going to be overwhelming to implement in all the volunteer sectors in the province of Ontario. I think if they capture one of the largest components, being the sporting sector, it would take on an ability to expand from that once the bugs have been worked out.

There are some specific areas that need to be worked out, very clearly. Some of the individuals I met with since the bill was introduced again were individuals who were victims of what happened at Maple Leaf Gardens. The problem is that there are no support groups for those individuals out there in the province of Ontario. We've tried to find and aid them and have been unable to find a specific program that will help these individuals, hopefully so that they'll be able to make sure that they can gain the support necessary to take them through the troubled times they've experienced and all that.

Some of the other aspects: The member from Trinity–Spadina mentioned—I'm not sure if I heard it incorrectly—about \$25 weekly. It's usually an annual fee that takes place, but the organization in the bill is designed so you can do it once every four years if the organization deems it fit.

The other thing is—and this would be for those individuals watching: Order multiple copies when you get it done. Like myself, volunteering in lacrosse and hockey this particular year and coming years, I would order two copies at one time. The cost is still the same;

you don't pay twice the cost. That way, I can submit them to both leagues in order to reduce the cost.

What organizations like Oshawa Minor Hockey have done is gone with organizations, and there are a number of them out there now, that provide the service at a reduced cost. I know my colleague sitting beside me was concerned about the cost. What they do is submit all the individuals from the league. The league covered the cost to the organization, and it was through the former deputy chief of police, who's now working in this sector. All the individuals—and there's 36 teams in Oshawa Minor, approximately five individuals per team that go out there, plus on-ice individuals. They were covering the entire cost, and it was substantially reduced to the local ones.

I should mention that the OPP at one time—this is what was expressed to me—offered to do it for free. However, some of the local police departments were very concerned because it happens to be that if you have 1,000 volunteers at \$25 a pop, it adds up to a substantial amount of revenue for them, and they were reluctant to lose that revenue for the departments in the costs there.

I think what I'm hearing, though, is great. The other aspect is the 10-step program that the member from Trinity–Spadina mentioned. Number 7 of the 10-step program specifically requires what we're asking for here.

The only thing I say in closing is: Is there any chance that we shouldn't be taking to do the best we can to protect our kids?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll vote on this particular item later on in business.

NEW DRIVERS' INSURANCE RATE REDUCTION ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LA RÉDUCTION DES TAUX D'ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE POUR LES NOUVEAUX CONDUCTEURS

Mr. Sergio moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 71, An Act to amend the Insurance Act to provide for lower insurance rates for new drivers / Projet de loi 71, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances afin de prévoir des taux d'assurance-automobile moins élevés pour les nouveaux conducteurs.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Mario Sergio: I'm pleased to initiate the debate on Bill 71. It's a bill that aims to bring changes to the auto insurance system. It will improve accessibility, increase affordability and promote fairness within a regulated and competitive system.

If passed, Bill 71 will lower insurance premiums by crediting new drivers with additional years of driving experience. New drivers would be eligible if they complete a ministry-approved driver education course and would be discredited if they committed offences as at fault in an accident or have not paid fines related to an

accident. This legislation would essentially offer new drivers a clean driving record and the opportunity to pay rates comparable to those paid by other drivers with clean records. Bill 71 gives the benefit of the doubt to the first-time drivers, making auto insurance more affordable and accessible to families across our province of Ontario.

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New drivers pay substantially more in insurance premiums than those at age 25, even if they have clean records. This makes driving a financial burden on families, students driving to school or those who are newly employed and rely on a car to get to their place of work.

First drivers need to be given a chance to prove themselves. First drivers need not to be looked on with indifference. First drivers need not to be lumped as the group causing the most accidents. Is it a sin to be young? Do we find a young person guilty before he or she had his or her day in court? Why do we want to penalize and discriminate against our first drivers? Is this how we want to encourage and give our young people a bit of a lift, with less stress and less weight on their shoulders?

Let us not disregard the needs of first drivers, especially a young first driver. Seeking that first job, buying that first car, prohibitive insurance rates may prohibit the first driver to acquire that first car and seek that very first job.

Some would say that by lowering insurance rates for new drivers, someone else will have to pay or pick up the difference. If this is the thinking mode, are we then perpetrating the injustice of penalizing our young drivers by subsidizing the rates of older or more experienced drivers?

Often, getting that first car or even just being a first driver can be a real burden not only for the new driver but on his or her parents in the case of a young driver. Often, parents have to make extreme sacrifices to help pay, first, for a car and, second, to help pay for insurance in order to ease the entry of their son or daughter into the workforce.

I'm pleased to say that this bill is supported by the insurance bureau of Ontario. Speaker, I would like to give you, just for the information not only of the House and the members in the House but for the public as well, some of the rates as they are being applied today in our market.

I'm just choosing a middle-of-the-road insurance company out of 10, if you will, that operate in the province of Ontario. It's not the lowest, it's not the highest, but just to indicate to you, Speaker, to the House and to the people out there how they differentiate, how the cost varies. Just to give you an example of a 23-year-old on a 2012 Volks, one of our own cars here—I'm choosing the Dominion Insurance Co. of Canada.

Starting at six stars, six years' experience in Toronto—quoting Toronto now—the amount will be \$4,803. If it were to be a three-star, three-year, it would be \$11,777. That is a \$6,900 difference.

If this were to be in Ottawa, still the same 23-year-old, the same car, the same insurance company, it would be a

six-star, \$3,600; a three-star, \$8,304, for a difference of \$5,100.

If this were to be in the wonderful region of Durham, just east from us here, a 23-year-old, same car, same address, six stars, would be paying—it's a bit less, by the way. I don't know why, but it would be \$3,201 in Durham. But if you were a three-star, then you would be paying \$8,029, for a difference of \$4,800. Why is that, Speaker? I'm asking you: Which young man graduating from college or fresh from university can afford to purchase a car, can afford these rates? It's impossible.

Is this how we want to treat our young drivers? I have to tell you that I know a lot of young drivers, and they would put to shame some of the older drivers.

This is over 18 or 19 or 20—17-year-olds are not allowed; they do not qualify to come under the same circumstances or to acquire a six-star rating, if you will.

This would be a different story if we were to look at a 17-year-old who wants to drive, purchase a first car, under the parents' insurance, but on their own this is what they would be paying with the same company: a 17-year-old, three stars—unbelievable—\$13,493. This is in Toronto. In our capital city of Ottawa, Dominion of Canada, the same car, same address, the Ottawa area, three stars, \$8,700 for a 17-year-old. And then, of course, in Durham, Dominion of Canada, same insurance, 17 years old, three stars, \$8,700.

I think this is sending a message to us as legislators that it's time that we look at the possibility of allowing our young drivers, if you will, new drivers—and they don't have to be young; they can be 25, 26, 28, getting their licence for the first time and getting into a car for the first time.

The thing that we should take into consideration is this: When insurance companies want to increase their rates, where do they go? They come to us, to the branch of the government, to FSCO, and most of the time, you tell me—let's tell our people out there, let's tell the parents, let's tell our young people—what do we say? “What do you want: 3%, 4%, 5%?” Hardly ever, we say no.

Where do our people go for help, Speaker? Where do they go, our young people, the parents or grandparents? In most cases, grandparents pitch in to help the grandson or granddaughter. They have nowhere to go; they have absolutely nowhere to go.

So this is a chance for us here today to say, “You know what? Let's move this bill a bit forward and let's take a look at it.” Let's talk to the people who really will be touched by this, and I think all Ontarians would be affected by this. Let's send it to a committee, let's do some consultations, and let's talk to the people who are interested in making submissions, that have an interest. Let's make it even better. Let's give them an opportunity to say yes or no. I have spoken to a number of agents, and they would love to see it coming, but the fact is that unless we make a move and we take that opportunity, it will never happen.

So today I present the bill to the House in the hope that it gains support by all sides of the House and we can

present something to our people, because young drivers, new drivers, are no different in Toronto than if they are in Ottawa or Durham or if they are in the north, south-east, southwest. They are new drivers. Up until now, I think they've been getting really a bum rap, I should say. Why attach to our young drivers—I don't want to say "young people" alone; young drivers, new drivers—this stigma? Why should we do that because they just happen to be first-time or young drivers? I think we should give them the opportunity to prove themselves, that indeed they can be good drivers, that indeed they deserve to have the same chance that we give other drivers. If we can do that, I think we will have accomplished something wonderful that is going to be helping young drivers, parents and grandparents. And, you know what? I tend to say that this would be a bit of a boon for our car-selling businesses or car rental businesses.

I'll give you an example of my own grandson. He graduated from college, but he couldn't afford the insurance rates, so he had to wait two years before he would seriously look at getting a car and getting insurance. We wouldn't even be thinking of sending our sons or daughters, grandsons or granddaughters to buy a car without insurance, to drive without insurance. I think it would help him mentally to send a message out there and say, "We can afford it. It's reasonable. Why wait two or three years to buy a car?" And it doesn't have to be a new car. Most of the time, young drivers—or parents that buy a car for their children or family members—tend to go to a resale. So I think there is an economic side to it as well, but the intent is the same; it doesn't matter. That would be an added benefit, if you will.

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For now, for today, let me say that the people I have spoken to, they say, "We can't wait to have something like this." So I would say, let's look at the possibility to do something about it. Let's move the bill ahead of the House and let's bring it back later on, even better, and do something right and good for the people, for the young people and the parents of Ontario. I thank you, Speaker, for your time.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'm glad to rise to comment on the bill proposed by the member from York West.

I'm kind of confused. He has brought this bill out, saying that he's going to give a discount of three years to new drivers. That already exists. They already do, if they do their course, start out with the three-year experience given to them in order to lower their rates.

By doing this, giving them another three years, it's automatically equating them to a driver who has six-years-plus experience, 30 years, 50 years, and not really taking into account that these are new drivers. These are drivers out there who probably are causing more claims, because usually if you're younger, you might be a little more reckless, driving a little faster—inexperience. Therefore, they're more of a risk; therefore, they cost more. It doesn't affect the claim costs.

What we need to do, if we're going to look at reforming insurance—and I've talked to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, I've talked to insurance brokers of Ontario and I've talked to constituents who pay premiums. If we can lower claims costs, then premiums will go down. The best way to address this is going after fraud, which is something this government tends to be putting on the back burner. Fraud accounts for close to \$1.3 billion, and that's the cost that has been attributed to the insurance industry for the past 10, 15 years. It has been there; it has just been ignored. If we can attack fraud and we can actually start putting the fraudsters in jail and getting rid of the clinics and the fake accidents that are out there, then we could actually start to get premiums lower.

This bill is going to, I guess, in a sense cause a subsidy. If rates are caused to be lower in one section of an insurance agency and the claim costs stay the same, then, therefore, the rates in the other parts of industry will rise.

I'll give you an example: State Farm. State Farm probably has one of the lowest insurance rate premiums for new young drivers. And they do so, as they have; that's their market. They're going after the low cost, and this is their low fruit that they're going to get businesses, in hopes that as the drivers age, they stay with them. But at the other end of the spectrum, State Farm has the higher rates, on average, for any experienced driver, and they do that because they have to subsidize the lower rates they're putting out there.

This bill is basically asking the government to tell the industry to give the rates to the new drivers, the new experience, and subsidize their low rates, and then for every one of us in this chamber, unless you just learned how to drive, rates are going to rise, because that's how the industry is operating. That's how it works.

I question equating taking a course to driving experience. They're two separate things. There are many people out there who are book smart, who can just read and go, but the technique of doing any task takes time to learn and do better, so you're more at risk for higher claims.

Speaker, I applaud him on trying to lower insurance rates, and if this bill does pass and go to committee, I will have plenty of amendments to fix this bill. But as it stands, all we're doing is subsidizing another part of the marketplace. You're causing everyday taxpayers who have been driving for six-plus years to subsidize the lower rates. I don't think our seniors can afford to do that, considering the expenses they have with their energy costs, the cost of groceries, the cost of gasoline.

So let's not raise the rates. Let's work at getting the claims cost down. Let's attack fraud. Let's work together.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'll begin with this: Bill 71 is a bill which will address the issue that new drivers are often hit with the very difficult task of affording insurance. It's very difficult because their insurance rates are very high, and this bill will in some measure decrease that amount. I acknowledge that and I recognize that.

I have a lot of young people whom I worked with before I was in politics and a lot of young people whom I work with now, in my campaign and in the community, and I think this is a good idea. I will support anything that helps to make driving more accessible and more fair, so I want to get that out of the way, first and foremost. Crediting new drivers with some additional experience if they fulfill certain criteria is a step at making insurance rates more affordable for new drivers, and I acknowledge that.

What I want to turn to and address, though, is the fact that, though this is a good measure, there are a number of other concerns in the auto insurance industry. What I'm particularly concerned about is the fact that, initially, my colleague the member opposite, the member from the government—

Mr. Mario Sergio: York West.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much—the member from York West. The member from York West noticed me looking for his name.

The member from York West initially presented a bill which struck to the heart of a very serious issue that's affecting a lot of drivers in this region, particularly in the greater Toronto area. That bill, Bill 43, was to address neighbourhood discrimination.

What I'm concerned about is the fact that that bill was initially slotted for debate today. That is a very serious issue. That was an issue that was number one in my riding and number one in a number of ridings across the GTA. It was an issue that affected people directly in their pocketbooks. Driving is a necessity, particularly in suburban communities where there is no accessible transportation, where there is no public transit that would be efficient to get them to their jobs, to their schools. Driving is a necessity in those areas, and auto insurance is something that people have to deal with, and there is clear discrimination going on based on where you live.

It troubles me that the member from York West is not debating that bill today. Perhaps due to pressure from the insurance companies, perhaps due to pressure from lobbyists or from those who are interested in maintaining the rates and maintaining the system the way it is, he is not debating that bill today. But I will make this commitment: I will not retract my bill. Bill 45 will continue. I will fight neighbourhood discrimination. I will fight against this because it's the right thing to do. It does not matter how many lobbyists, it doesn't matter how many insurance companies approach me and tell me not to bring this bill forward; I will not stop and I will not retract this bill. The reason is, people are in dire circumstances. People are very hard up. Times are very difficult. This is a bill that will bring some fairness to the auto insurance industry.

Mr. Speaker, let me give you some examples of what's going on in and across the GTA. We took an example; we did some research on this issue. The researchers in our caucus took a driver, and the example was someone who is 40 years old, married, who had been driving since 1990—so a very experienced driver—driving a very modest car, a 2009 Toyota Yaris, driving it

10 kilometres a day for leisure, with snow tires, and it was kept in a carport—in a garage—and asked for a reasonable insurance policy.

For this individual residing in Lawrence Park, the quote that he received was \$1,153. For the very same driver—all the same criteria, all the same driving experience—if he resided at Jane and Weston, he was paying 2.5 times more, more than double the rates: \$2,517, just for living in a different community. That's simply unfair. That's something that is unacceptable.

Jane and Finch, they were paying the same rate—\$2,515; Rexdale, again, double—\$2,172; in Bramalea, not nearly as much as Jane and Weston, Jane and Finch or Rexdale, but still just under double—\$1,839. Again, Mr. Speaker, why are people being discriminated against simply based on where they live, not how they drive?

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In fact, what is interesting to note is that the provincial average in terms of claims is 9%. So in a particular community, only 9% of the members of that community make a claim, as a provincial average. Some communities are higher, and obviously, some communities are lower. Now, in Brampton, one of these examples, the rate is somewhat higher. It's 15%. That's 6% higher. Again, that means that 85% of people in Brampton are not making a claim. That means that 85% of people are being discriminated against based on where they live and not on whether they are making a claim, not based on their driving record, not on their risk factors; simply their postal code.

That's something that's simply wrong. We can't accept that. We should not accept that. That's why I'm bringing Bill 45, and that's why I will not retract that bill. We will debate that bill in this House. I ask every member in the House to support that bill, because it will increase fairness across the province, it will increase fairness in the GTA and it will ensure that other communities across Ontario are not negatively impacted. Rural communities will not be negatively impacted, nor will communities outside the GTA.

Now, the overarching principle here, the overarching idea, is that we need more fairness in the auto insurance industry. The reason I make this argument and the reason we need to address the fact that fairness is lacking in the industry—let's look at some of the recent amendments that have happened. Let's look at the history of what is going on in the auto insurance industry.

In the past six years we've seen approximately a 20% increase in our rates. Just last year, a regulation came into effect that slashed the benefits drivers receive. The regulations that were passed cut our benefits from \$100,000 to \$50,000, cut ancillary services that were once \$76,000 to \$36,000 and change, and created a third category, \$3,500. It's no surprise that the majority of people were now funnelled into the \$3,500 category.

What has this resulted in? It's resulted in some record profits for insurance companies. I'm quoting here from the FSCO superintendent's report on insurance. It states that if you look at Canadian underwriting income and we compare 2010 to 2011, and we compare a company—for

example, Intact—in 2010, the company made \$193 million, and in 2011, after the regulations came into effect that slashed our benefits and slashed consumer services in terms of the benefits consumers received—slashed those—the profit went up to \$273 million. That’s a 42% increase. Economical saw a 167% increase. These insurance companies are benefiting. That’s full-year results. If you look at fourth-quarter results only, we’re seeing a 400% increase in terms of profits, a 300% increase in other companies; substantial increases in terms of profits, but where are the savings for consumers?

Now, my colleague from the opposition talks about insurance fraud and how insurance fraud is the solution to the problem. Mr. Speaker, insurance fraud, based on the Auditor General’s report, accounts for 10% to 15% of the cost incurred by insurance companies. It does not contribute 90% or 95% or 85% of the costs; it’s only 10%. If our rates are increasing at 20% over six years, then fraud is a marginal portion of that increase. What I’m saying is that fraud is not the majority cause of the increase in our insurance rates.

We need to acknowledge this and not focus on fraud as the be-all and end-all. We need to strike to the heart of the matter: that there is not fairness in the auto insurance regime, that there is discrimination based on neighbourhoods and that insurance rates are too high. One of the factors that the Auditor General cited or spoke to in terms of why there is this increase is that there is a legislated protection that guarantees a return on equity of 12% per year for insurance companies. Now that’s a specific reason why insurance rates go up. There are many other factors involved, but let’s be clear that insurance fraud is something we should address. Insurance fraud is certainly a problem, but it is not the major component of why insurance rates are increasing. Contrary to the insurance company claims, the Auditor General has made it very clear that it is not the main reason why our rates are going up. It’s simply not.

It’s another example, when we talk about fraud or fraud legislation—what it does is, it gives another tool to the insurance companies to make more money. It doesn’t give a tool to citizens, consumers and the people of Ontario to ensure their rates will go down. If we address fraud, that’s great: Address it. But where is the guarantee that, if we address fraud, insurance companies will actually lower rates for drivers? Where is that guarantee? If we give insurance companies more tools to make more money without providing any strings attached to say, “Listen, if you make more money, if you increase your profits, you have to present a savings to the people of Ontario, to the consumers.” There has to be that translation.

In fact, the regulations that were passed in 2010 that came into force last year—the purpose was ostensibly to create a savings for drivers. We haven’t seen the savings; we simply have not seen the savings. We’ve seen profits go up and rates go up as well.

So I ask you: Let’s change the discourse when it comes to auto insurance. Let’s ensure that our priorities

are putting people first, putting their rates lower, making rates more fair and getting rid of geographic discrimination. That would be a step in the right direction and a step in the direction for the people of Ontario. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. David Oraziotti: I’m pleased to join the debate today on Bill 71. First of all, I want to say congratulations to the member from York West, who has introduced a very informative, thoughtful bill that is proposing benefits to all young drivers across this province that would be a tremendously cost-saving measure for younger drivers in this province. We think it’s important to give them the benefit of the doubt.

I want to take you through a couple of key aspects of this bill and then make some comments in response to some of the comments that have been made today.

First of all, the member from York West, as members of this Legislature know, has been in public service for over 30 years and has been involved as an MPP for 16 years. He has led numerous initiatives around seniors’ rights. The York University support that he has provided with respect to the subway and the campus there has been incredibly important. So I want to congratulate him today on bringing forward a very thoughtful bill.

Let’s get to the key elements of that bill. First of all, the bill calls for a reduction in rates for driving premiums for younger drivers by giving younger drivers a credit of six years if the driver has (1) completed a ministry-approved driver education course at a driving school that is licensed under the Highway Traffic Act; or (2) has completed a driver education course at a licensed driving school in North America that is substantially similar to a ministry-approved driver education course.

The driver would not qualify for the reductions in rates if they were found to be more than 25% at fault in a claim arising from a motor vehicle accident or had his or her licence suspended for non-payment of a fine relating to the use of a motor vehicle. As well, it’s important to point out the new driver would not be disqualified from getting the new rate if it was the result of a non-payment that is solely related to parking of a motor vehicle—in other words, a minor parking offence.

This is incredibly important. You heard the MPP from York West talk about the rates, and compare and contrast the various rates across the province. The average reduction for younger drivers would be approximately 30%. This is not negatively impacting other drivers across the province. This is something that the insurance association of Ontario is supportive of. This is not an issue that is controversial in the insurance industry; this is not an issue that the insurance companies are saying, “Well, look: If you attempt to do this, we’re going to raise rates on older drivers.” That’s not what this is about.

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The insurance association of Ontario have clearly indicated that they endorse this measure that would help to reduce drivers’ costs for younger drivers, according to the information that was provided earlier and read into

the record, anywhere from \$1,000 to \$8,000 per year for younger drivers. This helps Ontario families. This helps the older drivers, who probably in many cases are the parents of the younger drivers who are paying the cost of the auto insurance, but it also obviously helps directly those younger people who pay the cost of auto insurance.

Right now, these are some of the best drivers out there, and they're paying higher-than-average insurance premiums simply because they're new drivers, not because of their driving record. Drivers under the age of 25 are paying far more in premiums than drivers over that age even when they're accident-free and may have demonstrated a clean record for a number of years. The bill would give young drivers the opportunity to prove themselves as good drivers and give them a break on their premiums if it was merited.

I clearly want to lend my support to the member from York West's bill, Bill 71. I think it's a great bill. It has tremendous potential to reduce premiums. It's something, again, that's supported by the auto insurance association of Ontario. I do want to give the member, as well, credit because he's recognizing here the importance of doing something that's beneficial to all Ontarians.

In contrast, the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton spoke about Bill 45 at length and spent very little time speaking about the member from York West's bill because it's a positive bill. His bill has a tremendously negative impact on Ontarians, and I certainly, when that comes up, won't be supporting it. He's suggesting that the way to get at problems in his riding and in his area is to raise auto insurance rates on all other areas of Ontario, increase auto insurance rates on people in northern Ontario, in southwestern Ontario, in southeastern Ontario; anywhere outside the GTA, let's jack up their auto insurance rates so people in his riding can pay less. That's just wrong-headed.

What needs to happen is that we need to get at the causes of auto insurance being driven up in his area. Whether it's fraud, whether it's theft, there are other issues out there that we need to deal with. But clearly, moving forward with that bill would have a very negative impact on auto insurance rates across Ontario. In Brantford, Guelph, Kitchener, rates would go up by about 10%; in St. Catharines, they'd go up by 10%; in Sarnia, they'd go up by 25%; in Ottawa, 27%; in northern Ontario, 30%. I want to know what the member from Timmins–James Bay thinks, I want to know what the member from Kenora–Rainy River thinks when the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton wants to raise auto insurance rates on them in the northwest by nearly 40% to get rates—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member to keep his remarks to the bill that is in front of us. A short comment is okay, but—

Mr. David Oraziotti: Speaker, I'm certainly happy to do that. I'm just responding to the comments by the member who decided to speak about his bill, and I'll be very brief on that.

Back to the bill at hand, Speaker—and thanks for clarifying that—I wholeheartedly support Bill 71. The

member from York West has done an absolutely fantastic job in bring forward this bill to reduce auto insurance premiums for younger drivers. It's a bill that warrants support from all members of the Legislature. It's not a bill that pits one region of Ontario against another and seeks to drive auto insurance rates up in northern Ontario by 30%. I won't be supporting that. I'll be supporting the well-thought-out bill by the member from York West here.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Rod Jackson: It's a great pleasure to stand here and speak to my colleagues in the House today on behalf of the PC caucus on Bill 71, the New Drivers' Insurance Rate Reduction Act.

Simply put, the PC caucus cannot responsibly lend our support to this bill.

Let me be clear that we cannot lend our support not because the sponsor, the member from York West, is sitting on the other side of the floor but because rejecting the bill is the sensible and right thing to do. We would love to work with the government and the third party to pass laws that would actually bring benefit to Ontarians; this one does not.

Contrary to the other members' comments, I believe Bill 71 is poorly thought out and is designed to artificially fix new drivers' insurance premiums by crediting them with three years of experience for being new drivers if they take driver education courses at ministry-approved driving schools. However, the bill does not lower the overall claims costs, and high claims costs are the root of higher insurance premiums in Ontario. You know, it doesn't take a genius to figure this out. If you lower insurance premiums for one group without lowering the overall claims costs, other groups will have to subsidize the decreases with a raise to their premiums.

Statistics show us that less-experienced drivers are more likely to file insurance claims. Bill 71 unfairly asks experienced drivers to pick up the tabs for new drivers. It seems that my colleague from the other side didn't really fully think this through before introducing it. Furthermore, I really don't believe the bill can possibly be well-researched. The bill assumes the completion of a driver education course equates to six years of actual experience on the road. Mr. Speaker, while classroom experience cannot be termed unimportant—it certainly is, and I think no amount of it isn't helpful—there's no amount of learning in a classroom that can substitute for practical experience. Speaking from my own experience living in Barrie, where we have a fair amount of snowfall in the course of a year, and coming from my experience actually racing cars, I can tell you there is absolutely no substitute for experience behind the wheel.

Currently, there isn't any way to evaluate the quality of driver education courses other than the graduated licence test. But the licence test doesn't adequately inform insurance companies how much risk they are taking when they sign a new insurance contract with a new driver. Therefore, I'd like to ask anyone to provide

this Legislature with some form of data that shows that completing a driver education course is indeed worth the full six years of experience that this bill would suggest. Until this evidence can be provided to justify this questionable assumption, I'd like to ask all my colleagues in the House not to support Bill 71.

We must oppose this bill. It's bad legislation. It's not well thought out. It's favouring one group over another at the cost of all. It's an unnecessary adjustment that adds redundant regulations to the system, and as Her Majesty's loyal opposition it's our duty, I think, to reject it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Leal: I just rushed back in from doing a couple of things in my office to speak on behalf of Bill 71, a bill that's been presented by my good friend and colleague the member from York West.

It's interesting when you look at the history of the member from York West since he's been here, since 1995, after he had what I would consider a very distinguished career as a councillor in Toronto, a member of the old Metro council. Consistently over his career in public life, he's always been a strong advocate when it comes to consumer issues: to protect the consumer, indeed to give the consumer a break. And now he's certainly devoting his energy, through Bill 71, in order to help some of our younger drivers in the province of Ontario get what I would call essentially a little better shake in life. This has particular relevance in rural Ontario, and let me spend some time from that particular perspective.

In rural Ontario, you don't have transit, you don't have a lot of other transportation alternatives, and the main vehicle for transportation is indeed the motor vehicle. The member from York West has provided a substantial background here with the wide discrepancy, I would say, for insurance costs. He talks about Toronto, Ottawa and Durham. You look at the difference of thousands of dollars in terms of providing auto insurance, which is mandatory in the province of Ontario, as it should be for some of our youngest drivers. If you look at some of the costs to be impacted on those citizens in rural Ontario, you can see that Bill 71 has a lot to offer to provide some financial relief for those youngest citizens in rural Ontario, and they would certainly welcome the approach in Bill 71.

1550

You know, Mr. Speaker, when you take the time, as you have and I have and members of this Legislature have, particularly when you talk to our 17-, 18- and 19-year-olds, they've really been at the forefront. Their generation has been at the forefront in reducing drinking and driving in the province of Ontario. As a matter of fact, when those citizens were in their high school years, they were great advocates in encouraging their peers to be more responsible, find a designated driver, find an alternative way home, phone Mom and Dad. You really get the sense that they're very in tune with road safety in the province of Ontario.

Indeed, as I said, when you look at rural Ontario, again you have our 17-, 18-, 19-year-olds—very, very experienced. They often operate farm equipment, helping out on their farms, driving tractors, combines and other equipment, and they're some of our very best and very skilled drivers. So it is really from that perspective, Mr. Speaker—I'm getting on a bit of a roll here; I'll have a drink of water.

Mr. Bill Walker: You should.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I thank my member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, because I recommended the same thing to him yesterday. He's reciprocating his good advice today, and I want to thank him for that.

I was really, really shocked by the divergence of prices that have been put forward, the information given to us by the member from York West. Frankly, I find that it's quite amazing when you look at some of these numbers. One of the great beauties of getting Bill 71 to committee will be the opportunity to call witnesses. In fact, this bill has been endorsed by the insurance bureau of Ontario, a very reputable organization which obviously has great insight into insurance costs in the province of Ontario. To get this bill into committee and call witnesses and call people who have insight into the pricing of insurance in the province of Ontario I think would be a great opportunity for all of us.

As it is with you, Mr. Speaker, one of the questions that we all get in our constituency offices is, how do we determine the price of insurance premiums in the province of Ontario? I think this would be an opportunity to provide some clarity and clarification in terms of the cost of determining insurance premiums in the province of Ontario.

This indeed is an excellent initiative. It's well thought out by the member from York West. This would receive a very positive review in rural Ontario as I talk to my constituents on this particular matter.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Harris: I'm pleased to take this opportunity to speak to Bill 71.

The member for York West seems intent on continually introducing misguided insurance legislation here in this House. First he tabled Bill 43, which seeks to handicap insurance companies' ability to determine regional risk profiles. Now he has chosen to introduce Bill 71, which is based on the same ill-advised principles of restricting the marketplace.

Time and time again, this corporate-welfare Liberal government tightens its grip on the free market, squeezing out competition, investment and, ultimately, jobs. This bill is just another example of the unfortunate process.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to spend some time talking about why insurance companies assess risk before providing insurance policies to potential clients, because I think it's important for everyone to have a clear understanding of how the market works.

When insurance companies set their rates, they first need to determine what risks are associated with provid-

ing each type of insurance, whether it's for a home, mortgage or vehicle. For example, auto insurance evaluates the risk profile of each area before providing potential clients with an insurance policy. To determine that profile, they must consider a number of different factors for each area. For auto insurance companies, this profile includes consideration of road conditions, speed limits, traffic levels and the number of accidents. The reality is, insurance companies use a number of factors to correlate rates as closely as possible with actual claims.

Of course, insurers look at the drivers with less experience behind the wheel as more likely to file a claim. But if these drivers want to fast-track that experience, insurance companies will credit them with three years of driving experience if they complete the driver's education course, and I believe that's fair.

I remember learning how to drive when I was younger. I'd drive with my father to the store, to see the big game, out in rural Ontario on the farm. We often used a lot of our vehicles before the age of 16 around the farm, and that gave me the good experience as an independent driver. So it's hard to understand how the member for York West has arrived at the conclusion that completion of a driver's education equates to six years of experience. Common sense would dictate—and “common sense” is still a term we like to use today—that there's no substitute for actual experience. I'd like to see the member for York West present an extensive study to this House that correlates drivers' education programs with six years of driving experience.

I'll leave some time for my colleague Bill Walker, of course, but the fact remains that Bill 71, just like Bill 43, fails to address real problems behind inflated premiums, and that's the high claim costs. Bill 71 in no way reduces the overall cost level in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Further debate? The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you, Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Harris, my esteemed colleague, for allowing me some time, because I share a lot of your thoughts, I believe. Part of that is because our other esteemed colleague, Jeff Yurek from Elgin–Middlesex–London, has reviewed this very carefully and with due diligence. His role is to be critical and to ensure that we're putting good legislation in place so that we are giving the best value to the people of Ontario.

His concern is that this bill does not address the real issue, and that is fraud. Our stats show us that 9% of the driving public are young drivers, yet they also represent 25% of road fatalities. Similar to Mr. Harris, who grew up in rural Ontario and had to learn how to drive, you have to earn these things. You have to have experience. Sitting in a classroom taking a course does not give you the practical, valued experience.

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: Well, certainly, Jim, and I share that, because it is hazardous to drive down here. It's probably why they need the Scarborough subway to go in, so that will take some more cars off the road—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would remind the member to refer to members by their riding, not their names.

Mr. Bill Walker: Sorry, Speaker.

I get back to saying that what we need to be doing is ensuring that we look at the real thing, the fraud, those phony claims, those things that are happening that take valuable dollars out of our pockets. This bill, in its current form, does absolutely nothing to address this. It takes money from one pocket and puts it into another pocket with no real significant change—kind of a Liberal trait.

I cannot support it in its current form. Significant amendments are needed.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The member from York West, you have two minutes for reply.

Mr. Mario Sergio: Thank you very much, Speaker. I have to say that I'm truly blessed to have such a wonderful variety of members joining the debate on Bill 71: Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, thank you very much; Conestoga; Barrie; Chatham–Kent; of course, my wonderful seatmate here from Peterborough; Sault Ste. Marie joined us as well here; and Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

Recognizing the comment from our colleague on the PC side, let me say, Speaker, the bill intends exactly what they are trying not to accomplish by not supporting the bill, I have to say—that it's okay for young drivers to subsidize the other drivers, but it's not okay for all the other drivers to give these young drivers the opportunity, to give them a bit of a handout when they start their new life, coming out of college or university or seeking their new job. I have to say that I know a lot of young people who drive much better than experienced people. I drive a lot. I'm on the road a lot, and you would be amazed what you see on the road.

To my colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton there, your bill, with all due respect, has all the good elements. I look forward to debating it. I look forward to seeing it when it gets to the House. I'm going to say to the House now that I will be supporting that particular bill and I've received some comments with respect to Bill 43, and it's because of the similarity, but today this is what's here. This is for the young people. I hope that we have the support of the House and send this to a committee soon.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We'll vote on this item at the end of regular business.

1600

ALZHEIMER ADVISORY
COUNCIL ACT, 2012
LOI DE 2012 CRÉANT
LE CONSEIL CONSULTATIF
DE LA MALADIE D'ALZHEIMER

Mrs. Cansfield moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 48, An Act to establish the Alzheimer Advisory Council and develop a strategy for the research, treatment

and prevention of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia / *Projet de loi 48, Loi créant le Conseil consultatif de la maladie d'Alzheimer et élaborant une stratégie de traitement et de prévention de la maladie d'Alzheimer et d'autres formes de démence et de recherche en la matière.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I'd like to take an opportunity first to introduce some guests and say thank you very much for joining us today: David Harvey, Jacquie Micallef, Karin McNair, Marija Padjen, Rosanne Meandro, Audra Rusinas, Phil Caffery and Rami Zeidan. Thank you for coming.

I'd also like to say a very special thank you to my co-sponsors, the member from Whitby–Oshawa and the member from Parkdale–High Park, both of whom have been absolutely phenomenal in their support, and I'm very appreciative.

I also want to thank the thousands of supporters who have written, who have sent messages, who have signed petitions for their support throughout this journey we've taken with this bill.

Finally, I'd like to say a special thanks to my legislative assistant Katherine Preiss for her outstanding research work that every member received, that spoke to the issue of Alzheimer's as it relates to their particular riding through their LHIN. Katie did just an incredible job.

What I'd like to share with you first of all are just some facts, and then I'd like to speak a little bit more on the personal side. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia in Canada; one in 10 seniors in Ontario has Alzheimer's disease. Currently, there are two million seniors in Ontario, so that means 200,000 individuals have Alzheimer's and related dementia disease.

In four years, by 2016, the incidence of Alzheimer's and related dementia in seniors will rise by 12%; by 2020, it will rise by 24%; and by 2025, we will have over 300,000 seniors diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. That leaves a significant number who will not be diagnosed for one reason or another. By 2030, the number of seniors with Alzheimer's disease in Ontario alone will rise by 76%. That, in itself, speaks to the need for us to address an extraordinary challenge that is facing this government, this province and all of the people who are either afflicted with this disease or have been touched by this disease through their families.

People with dementia are three times more likely to be hospitalized as compared to seniors without the disease. Currently in our hospitals, one in six—or one in four, depending on the hospital and whether it's in Canada or Ontario—are in a hospital bed at \$1,800 a day with dementia or Alzheimer's. That's not where they belong, and yet that's where they are. The cost to us, in terms of an economic cost, is horrific, but the cost to the individual, because they're not receiving the proper care in a hospital bed—it's not designed for that—is even more horrific.

They're four times more likely to receive a diagnosis of being just frail, and yet you can certainly have the disease without being frail, and twice as likely to have 10 or more aggregate co-morbidity conditions. For example, we're now discovering, in my riding, that we have people who have developmental delay issues and are also starting to experience dementia and Alzheimer's. We are also having people who have Parkinson's and have Alzheimer's and dementia. The co-morbidity issue is a significant challenge as individuals and their caregivers are trying to cope with these issues. They're four times as likely to experience alternate-level-of-care days following an acute care admission.

So what's the challenge? You can look at it from strictly an economic challenge of \$770 million within the next year for the cost to start to care for individuals with this disease. We can also look at it strictly from a curative perspective, but we know there's no cure for this disease. But we can look at it from the perspective of prevention through research and discussion with the caregivers on better care for those individuals.

Let's chat a little bit about the research and the need for that research, because strictly by numbers, in the demographics, there is no question, whether you live in Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, or Arkansas: We have to deal with the aging demographic and the diseases that are related, and dementia and Alzheimer's are at the top of the list. We must do it; we have no choice.

How do we do it? Do we institutionalize everyone? Absolutely not. Prevention must be at the forefront of what we're thinking, and obviously, through prevention, the number one is research and investment in that research. Then we start to look at, well, we've got an economic—and we still have to deal with those who have the disease, and as that disease progresses, what can we do? We can start to address it from the ground up, not from 40,000 feet in a ministry and a bureaucracy, but from the people who are actually dealing with this on a day-to-day basis, whether it's the person who has the first initial stages of Alzheimer's or dementia, whether it's the caregiver who's trying to provide—remember, this disease can start in your 50s or as late as your 80s, so you've got an extraordinary range. But also remember, most of it is with people who are older and their caregivers are older. We don't have a system that's designed to provide additional support for these individuals more so than if they were just considered old and frail. So that changes the amount of support. Respite is an extraordinary need among the people who are the caregivers.

But we can also talk to these individuals who are experiencing this from the physician's perspective, the personal care support workers, the individuals themselves who are going through this and their caregivers, as to what they need on a day-to-day basis to stay in their homes with the required support, as opposed to being institutionalized. That's where I'm coming from.

I'd like to share a few personal experiences that I've had. I'm not going to share names, but an individual lady

gave me a book she wrote about her experience. This was an example of a person whose husband was the CEO of a company. He was an extraordinarily capable individual. He ran a multi-million dollar corporation. And he got Alzheimer's. As this disease progressed, it changed his personality. She tried to cope with this. She tried respite. Their friends dropped off the radar. They were no longer invited out for dinners because his behaviour was erratic; he was agitated, and it was difficult.

Suddenly, she was coping alone. She didn't have the support mechanism of a family, and she and her husband, as he went through this disease, were struggling. As he became more agitated and angrier, what happened was, he started to accuse her of doing things or things happening in their home, especially with another man in the house, and that changed the dynamic in the relationship with this person. It wasn't until she realized, when he was so angry one day—she found him in front of a mirror arguing with that person: How dare he be in his house? He didn't recognize himself.

You can imagine the impact on this individual. But had she known that or had she had some support mechanism beforehand to help her cope with these changes, she may not have had to struggle so long before she had to ultimately deal with this.

Another where—I can use this because it's my brother-in-law, and I've spoken about Norm before; what an extraordinary man, now dealing with the final, advanced stages of Alzheimer's, but who spent his day happy as could be, whistling 24 hours a day as long as he was awake. The stress on an individual trying to cope with that is extraordinary, the loneliness and the guilt you feel as you are trying to deal with this emotional turmoil of caring for someone as they are leaving you. If you are married for 60 years to somebody, the last thing you want to do is institutionalize them in a long-term-care home, because really that's what that care ultimately becomes. You want to be able to keep them close to you because you've had them close for 50 years, 60 years, or in some cases, longer—65, 70 years. The extraordinary guilt that these individuals feel as they have to let that person go, to me, is incredible. If we have some way of supporting them to keep that individual at home, it's our responsibility to do that.

All this bill says is, let's start talking about it. Let's put together that advisory committee that says, let's bring those caregivers together who say, "What is it we can do to help people as they go through dementia, Alzheimer's, the stages of the disease?" I think we have a responsibility to do that. So you've got an economic case that's going to tell you it's a heck of a lot cheaper, and you've got an ethical, moral case that tells you that this is the kind of thing you must and should do for the people of the province of Ontario, because it is the right thing to do.

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There are many people—the Alzheimer society, in particular—who have done extraordinary work in support, but they can only do so much. They actually

need the direction and the ultimate involvement, full involvement, of government to move this forward, as government does with any particular disease. We need to provide the support, whether it's in the research, the planning, the strategies, and I can think of no better people to do it than those who are involved in it on a day-to-day basis, who know and understand the struggles of individuals either with the disease or coping with the disease as a support person and trying to help them.

Years ago, I met a lady, and it was through the Alzheimer Society, at a very special meeting—it was an AGM—and I'll just share this with you, because it's really been my motivation in this. She said that as she went through the stages of this disease with her husband—it was a psychologist telling the story—one of the things that happened is, you try so hard to cope, so hard to deal with it, and you go through all the emotions, that that day comes when that person looks at you and says, "And who are you?" And then you realize that, in that journey, you never got to say goodbye to that person you so desperately cared for. I think that's wrong. I just think that's wrong, and I think we have a responsibility to kick-start this and get it going, and I think we can do this by working together, because Alzheimer's definitely isn't a partisan issue. It belongs to each and every one of us, in every riding across this province, and I think that working together, starting with a very simple advisory group to give recommendations to the Minister of Health on how to move forward, is not asking an awful lot.

I'm asking for your support today so that we can move this forward. Again, I want to say thank you to everyone who has been so encouraging as we've taken this journey with this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: It is truly a pleasure to rise today to speak in favour of Bill 48. I would like to start by thanking the member from Etobicoke Centre for her tremendous leadership on this issue and for taking the initiative to bring it forward to the floor of this House today. I'm very proud to be a co-sponsor of the bill, along with the member from Parkdale-High Park.

I would like to welcome our guests in the gallery today for providing us with the education, the information, knowing the extraordinary work that you do with people in our community each and every day. So thank you for being here today for this debate.

This is the second time that this issue has been debated here in the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, and I'm certainly hopeful that we will be able to get this to and through third reading as soon as possible, because we really need to take urgent action in order to stem the tide, the tsunami, of Alzheimer's that is coming our way with our aging population, and we know that we are going to be facing vastly increased numbers of people who are being diagnosed with both Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia in the next few years.

Dr. David Walker, who is the alternate-level-of-care lead provincially, said in 2011, "Our society now

confronts a growing phenomenon—that of a burgeoning aging population of individuals living with frailty and/or multiple co-morbidities, all of which may be confounded by the challenges of dementia.”

The statistics are truly alarming. As Ontario’s baby boomers enter their senior years, the number of people suffering from dementia will increase from 200,000 in 2013 to approximately 300,000 by 2025. And I do have statistics from both my riding of Whitby–Oshawa and also Durham region, which indicate that our area is going to be very severely impacted by this disease. Specifically, there are roughly 78,000 seniors living in Durham region alone, and that number will grow by almost half, or 44%, by 2020. With some 7,000 of those seniors suffering from Alzheimer’s and dementia, Durham region currently has the seventh largest population of individuals living with Alzheimer’s and dementia in the province. Incredibly, that figure is expected to double to more than 15,000 cases of Alzheimer’s or other dementias by 2030.

Furthermore, Ontario’s Central East health region has the second highest number of people with dementia, and over the next four years this region will have over 25,000 people diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and related dementia. It’s certainly clear that as our population enters their senior years over the next decade, both Ontario’s health care system and the health care system in Durham region will experience a serious influx of persons living with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias.

Now, while Alzheimer’s itself is a serious issue for both the individuals and families that are dealing with it, this seriousness is considerably elevated when you consider the disease’s impact on the broader health system. That’s one of the issues we need to take a look at, the economic factor.

Specifically, persons with dementia are three times as likely to be hospitalized compared to seniors without the disease, four times as likely to receive diagnoses of frailty, and twice as likely to have 10 or more aggregated co-morbid conditions. They’re also four times as likely to experience alternate-level-of-care days following acute care admission.

In 2009-10, nearly one quarter of Canadian seniors who were hospitalized with ALC days had a diagnosis of dementia. Moreover, hospital stays were twice as long on average, the median being 20 versus nine days for people with dementia compared to seniors without the disease.

In summary, dementia patients are intensive users of health care resources, so it’s absolutely vital for the long-term sustainability of our health care system that we consider strategies for tackling this disease and incorporate them into our long-term health care plan.

There are a lot of issues that need to be resolved in order to deal with the challenges of Alzheimer’s and other dementias, and we need to have a multi-faceted strategy. We need to continue our research into the causes of Alzheimer’s, to support people who have been diagnosed and to promote proven therapies and services which can slow the progress of the disease.

But so far, I’ve only talked about the economic impact. As the member from Etobicoke Centre said, we

need to consider the moral and ethical issues related here. It’s the right thing to do, to step forward to help individuals and families who are trying to cope with this disease under very, very difficult circumstances.

I think all of the members of this House know of constituents who are living in our community, mostly frail elderly people where one spouse has been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and the other one is left to cope with it with very few support services and very little respite. I think it’s a particular aspect of Alzheimer’s where the caregiver gets very worn down because it’s very one-way communication. You never get the positive feedback because of the nature of the illness to feel that you’ve done a good job, that you’re making them happy, that you’re making their life worthwhile. It just continues to drain away from you, especially when you get to the point where they no longer recognize you. The caregivers in this case are a very particular group of people that we really need to support, both physically and emotionally, as they go through their journey. They are exhausted and they have little hope.

That’s why I feel so strongly that Bill 48 needs to be passed, and I would urge all of my colleagues to support it because although the responsibility for developing the actual Alzheimer’s strategy will continue to rest with the Minister of Health, the minister will be required to take into account the recommendations made by the Alzheimer Advisory Council as well as the Ontario Health Quality Council.

We’re very fortunate that we have very good starting points here to get people around the table and to start talking. I would like to commend the Alzheimer Society, which has done tremendous work in this area with many programs and services that are extremely valuable in our community.

Among other things, you’ve been very helpful in educating us as MPPs about what the need is and some of the strategies that you would recommend that we put into place. I think that the advisory council would be an ideal venue for us to get all of the relevant parties around the table to actually talk through a provincial strategy.

I would like to make mention of one strategy that I think is excellent that provides very valuable service that I first became aware of during the course of the work that the members here that were involved with the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addiction, and that’s the service called First Link. For those of you who aren’t familiar with this service, it provides a point of contact for people with dementia, making it quicker and easier for them to access expert care and resources in their community right after diagnosis.

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This can be a huge help, not only to the individuals but to their caregivers, helping them to understand what they can expect, first of all, with the progression of the disease, things they can do to maybe slow the progress of the disease, and ways that they can cope. Its success lies in the coordination of locally available resources, and I think that in this time of economic restraint, it’s vital for

us to take a look at what we can do with those limited resources in order to be able to stretch them as far as possible. This is an excellent starting point, and one that I hope would be seriously considered in advancing fully across the province of Ontario, because it does provide such a valuable resource, both to the individuals affected as well as to their families.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, again I would like to thank the member from Etobicoke Centre for bringing this forward, and the member from Parkdale–High Park for co-sponsoring it, because we know that over the next 10 to 15 years, as Ontario faces more and more challenging health challenges, based on our aging population, we need to do whatever we can to combat both Alzheimer's and its spinoff effects, and to support the families who are impacted by this disease, in order to really provide the quality service that I think people quite rightly expect from their health care system.

Including these strategies in our long-term-care plan is vital, and I think that Bill 48 is a significant first step in achieving the goal and creating the kind of health care system that we really want to see brought forward to support people with Alzheimer's and related dementias.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to speak on this matter.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's an absolute pleasure to rise. I first want to echo my colleagues the member from Etobicoke Centre and the member from Whitby–Oshawa in thanking the Alzheimer Society for all the good work you do and for sitting through a very long afternoon. Thank you for being here.

I want to thank, of course, the woman who tabled the bill, the member from Etobicoke Centre. I have to say that both these women, the member from Whitby–Oshawa and the member from Etobicoke Centre, are phenomenal members of this Legislature. I have co-written a number of bills with them. They are certainly the very face of making this Legislature work, and I want to thank them for doing that, for always putting the interests of their constituents first.

By the way, I can't say this about the member from Whitby–Oshawa, but the member from Etobicoke Centre is an incredible cook. I've actually been to her house for dinner. So I'll say that for her as well.

I want to start by telling a story of one of our constituents. I'm going to call her Rosemary, obviously for reasons of anonymity.

Rosemary is one of those constituents who walked into our office—we all see them. They come in the door and they've got this much paper with them, and it's colour-coded, and you kind of get this feeling when they walk in, because you know it's going to be a story of woe. You often feel, and rightly so, that there's not a lot you can do for them, especially if they've been in the system for a while.

Rosemary told us her story, and her story was the following. She said that she had a very vibrant career. I

won't tell you what that is, either, but she had a very vibrant career. She was a single mother whose own mother came down with dementia that was then diagnosed as Alzheimer's. She quit her job to look after her mother. She was an only child, and nobody else was going to do it. She and her daughter moved into her mother's house.

As the disease progressed, of course, Rosemary had more and more on her plate as a single mother and as a caregiver and, remember, without an income now—without an income. So what did they have in terms of financial resources? Well, they had a house, so they took out a reverse mortgage on the mother's house. Luckily, they had a house, and luckily it was paid off.

I can tell you—this is a story that I've heard echoed through many other constituents—it didn't take very long to get respite care for herself, because she couldn't be there 24 hours a day. She just couldn't; nobody can. She had to pay someone to come in and help; she had to pay someone so she could go out and just do shopping and errands; and that began to eat up the value of the house.

By the time her mother passed away, Rosemary was destitute. She was literally homeless, on the street. By this time, she herself was getting close to 60. Her years of earning potential were over. It was very difficult to find a job. She still had a child to support. All the value of the house had been used up in the care of her mother.

This is not an unusual story. I have many, many constituents—and before this, I was a United Church minister and had many congregants who were in this position. I remember one wonderful woman; she had, I think, five children, and she had umpteen grandchildren. This poor woman simply lived too long, is the way I would describe her. She lived to be 96. She was incredibly brilliant in her youth. She was an amazing community activist. She lived too long. She ended up with dementia. She ended up, again, running through all the resources of her house that she had to sell. None of the children could take her in, for various reasons—because it's difficult; it's hard to look after somebody 24/7—and she ended up in a ward, and that's how she passed way. Such a tragic death and, I feel, such an unnecessary one in many ways. We just don't have the supports.

What the member has suggested and what we're all suggesting, the three of us in this bill, is that, first and foremost, we've got to start looking at this issue. First and foremost, we've got to get people together, talking about this issue, looking at this issue and then giving some very practical suggestions to the Minister of Health so that something can be done about this issue. That's critical.

I have lots of ideas. The New Democrats put forward a number of ideas in our platform, mainly and mostly around the caregiver problem. I just want to go over a few of those because I think they're good suggestions, and the committee can look at them.

The successful SMILE program: We think that should be expanded. Often, in the early stages especially, just somebody to come in, somebody to do the shopping,

somebody to help out around the house, somebody to help with quite the menial chores—giving a bath, that kind of thing—can make all the difference to a family. That can keep the person in the home a great deal longer. That's important. We thought and we still think that much more money should go into that program.

Obviously, what you've heard from the others is the enormity of the problem. You've heard the statistics; I won't go over them. But they all point to the reality, both financial and otherwise, of the fact that many people who are diagnosed as frail, who end up with some diagnosis, end up in emergency wards, end up in hospital beds at a rate of about \$450 a day or more. That's not where they should be, obviously. Again, home care would answer that problem.

We think there should be more hours of home care—and that's beyond the simple menial jobs that need to be done—provided. The current waiting list now of 10,000 people for home care services is absolutely unacceptable. We need to do something about the waiting list; we need to whittle it down. Of course, that's going to require some resources.

I think both members alluded to the fact that this is not money out the door; this is an investment, not only in the health of the person who has a diagnosis but the health of their family, the health of a whole range of supports in the community that are affected by the one person with that one diagnosis. This is an investment. It's an investment that will see a return because, because if there is an alternative level of care, we can keep them in the home with supports. If something can happen, then we will save money. We will save money, and the story of Rosemary herself becoming someone who needs to be looked after won't be repeated.

We know that one of the social determinants of health is poverty. So many families are driven to poverty because of this diagnosis. Again, you heard that this isn't a remote diagnosis; this is one in 10 people we'll be looking at.

Currently, there are 25,000 Ontarians waiting for long-term care. Clearly, we, as New Democrats, think we've got to do something better with that waiting list. We've got to whittle that down. That's not good enough.

My husband and I were in Sweden a few years back, and they had a very innovative program. I just send this out as a thought for, I hope, the advisory committee that I hope will be struck after this bill is, I hope, passed. One of the things they did in Sweden was, they realized that institutional care was the most expensive care and it wasn't necessarily the best care. So what they did—and Sweden was very innovative—they tried to move people out of institutions, not into them. What they did was say that if you have a family member who is willing to care for someone, we will train you, we will even unionize you—make you part of a union that that will supervise you—and send you back into your home with a salary to look after that person. They found that doing that was way cheaper than putting them in a long-term-care home, even, or an institution, a phenomenal program that they

say works—again, just a thought, just a suggestion. It sounds outrageously expensive, but in fact they found it was much, much cheaper.

1630

What I'm saying, in short, is that there are ideas from around the world, from jurisdictions we could look at where people look after people better and where they have the same rates of diagnoses. So that's where we are now.

Of course, the bill looks to a place in the future where we want to be, and that's where we don't have the numbers of people diagnosed with Alzheimer's and dementia that we do now. I love that, because if there's one thing we do in this place that I wish we did a little more often is dream big. The Alzheimer Society has shown us that you can dream big. We look forward to a future where no one has Alzheimer's and no one has dementia because we actually figure out what causes it and we actually find a cure. That's also part of what this council can start to look at. Look at the research from around the world. Look at the research from other jurisdictions. Figure out what we can do here in the interim until we get to that halcyon day. Again, that's where we want to get.

So again, I love the idea of a council that really sits down with people who have had experience—people who know what they're talking about—and starts to look at the remedy, because, boy oh boy, we need one. We need one.

I remember many, many cases of serving communion to people with Alzheimer's and dementia in nursing homes across my riding of Parkdale–High Park. I want to say a shout-out to all the caregivers in the institutions, in the long-term-care homes and in private homes who are dealing with this issue, because what a working day that is. I mean, Lord knows they need our prayers and they need to hear from us. They need to hear from us in terms of our support for what they do, often with very, very little resources to guide them. So a shout-out to them as well, because we know they're watching, we know they're out there and we know this is affecting them on a personal basis.

The member from Etobicoke Centre said something that I found moving: to not even have a good-bye from someone you love, to not even be able to say good-bye—I mean, it doesn't really get much more tragic than that. And that's what we're talking about. So this is a small step, but it's an essential one because we need good information and we need information to advise policy. So we need that next step, too, that out of this comes policy.

I was impressed with the work of the select committee, probably the best work I've seen done here in a nonpartisan way, and their many recommendations. But we haven't put those recommendations into effect. I would hate to see the same happen with the Alzheimer's advisory committee. We need to pass the bill, we need to set the committee, we need to hear from the committee and then we need to act on what this council does and says and advises.

Thank you to the member from Whitby–Oshawa. Thank you to the member from Etobicoke Centre. Thank you to all the caregivers out there. Thank you to the Alzheimer Society. And please, everyone here, say yes to this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from York South–Weston.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wish to start by thanking the member from Etobicoke Centre for bringing forward this bill. We know that she has been, and is, a strong advocate for her constituents and for seniors all across Ontario. I wish to also thank the co-sponsors of the bill.

I have seen first-hand how Alzheimer's takes hold of the lives of both patients and their caregivers. I have several close friends who have lived with the physical and emotional challenges of managing this disease, many while raising a young family and working full-time. The day-to-day struggles of caring for a loved one at home often leave many patients and caregivers living in isolation, and isolation is not a solution.

I think we agree that the issues and concerns facing Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers need to be heard and not forgotten. We have heard today here that with our aging population, the number of people suffering from dementia will rise dramatically. Next year, there will be over 200,000 seniors with the disease in Ontario, and that number is expected to rise by 50%—50%—in the next decade.

The riding which I have the privilege to represent, York South–Weston, has a large population of seniors, and it's right next door to Etobicoke Centre. I've had the chance to speak to many of my constituents who are caregivers for loved ones living with this terrible disease. They all say the same thing: "We need more supports for the people living with Alzheimer's, and also for the people taking care of them."

Alzheimer's is a disease that affects everyone surrounded by it. It is estimated that each person with dementia has between one and three individuals serving as informal caregivers. These caregivers are usually close family members, such as a spouse or children, who in most cases take time off work to provide for their loved ones. Sometimes the spouse is the only caregiver. He or she is often an elderly person as well, suffering perhaps from other health issues. They dedicate all their time—their days, their nights—to being the primary caregiver, and everything becomes an issue, even running a little errand or attending to their own needs and their health priorities. They need respite, and even social diversion. They need to talk to others; they need to have some advice; they need direction. As time goes on, as the member from Etobicoke Centre mentioned, these patients will start not to recognize their family members. They're beside them; they're alive. They need extraordinary assistance, but in a way, if you're their caregiver, you are losing a bit of them day by day, and it's very hard to let go.

I have seen first-hand just how exhausting and frustrating it can be to take care of a family member living with dementia. The very nature of the disease—the

decline in self-management, memory loss, mood swings and trouble making decisions—puts an enormous burden on their caregivers, who in turn can burn out from the stress. We've already spoken about the cost. It only makes sense to act now to establish this advisory council, to explore ways of integrating the health care services, to develop a strategy for the research, the treatment and the prevention.

This bill provides the right framework for this, and I support it in its entirety. I wish the three members all the success. I express all my support, and I look forward to working with the member for Etobicoke Centre in assisting her in seeing this piece of legislation move forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I'm really pleased to speak to Bill 48, An Act to establish the Alzheimer Advisory Council and develop a strategy for the research, treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. I'd like to applaud all three members: the member from Etobicoke Centre for bringing this bill forward, and the members from Whitby–Oshawa and Parkdale–High Park for co-sponsoring it.

This issue of Alzheimer's is really important for me, because my riding of Mississauga East–Cooksville and the entire region of Peel has the second-largest growing population of seniors and, by extension, Alzheimer's. Here's a shocking statistic: For the Mississauga–Halton region, next year, in 2013, the population of people over the age of 85 is going to grow by 71.2%. Think about that: 71.2% in one year. We are in 2012, and next year it's going to grow by 71.2%, and that means, by extension, all of the diseases that are associated with growing older—and of course Alzheimer's is one of them. So I'm really pleased to be able to talk to this bill today.

1640

What this bill really does is, it recognizes the fact that Ontario has an aging population and that, along with the aging population, diseases like Alzheimer's are going to grow and we need new ideas to tackle this situation. I think all of the speakers who have spoken before me have, in some form or fashion, alluded to the idea that we need new ideas to figure out how to deal with this, because I know, and we all know, that the same old, same old cannot go on.

We've talked about how we are using our resources, the fact that patients with Alzheimer's are ending up in hospitals, where they shouldn't be, taking up resources that could be used for something else. So what can be done? That is what this bill is about.

It begins by focusing on public education. One of the things that I did in preparation for speaking to the bill was to try to learn more about this disease. The one thing that I have learned is how difficult it is for anyone to watch their loved one slip away day by day. The one unifying theme I have found is how many people say, "I wish I'd known earlier that this was what was going on," because in the early stages, often, we don't know that our loved one is suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's. It

leads to a lot of problems, because you don't understand why this person is behaving this way, so that leads to a lot of guilt later on. But more importantly, if we had had intervention earlier on, we could have helped improve the quality of life.

So the fact that this bill wants to establish an advisory council that's going to then focus on public education is really, really key. To be able to learn and recognize those symptoms of Alzheimer's or dementia early on for all of us is really important so that we can help our loved ones or ourselves and also seek treatment so that the end result and the outcomes are more important.

It also talks about access to care and streamlining care for Alzheimer's—I won't go into much detail on that—and, of course, research. I know the member from Etobicoke Centre spoke to that.

The other piece that I really liked about this is the support for the caregiver, because I know all of us talked about how, as hard as it is to suffer from dementia or Alzheimer's, it's equally hard for the person who's giving care. Often these people are at their wits' end in terms not just of monetary resources, but the emotional resource, the loneliness, the isolation that comes with trying to look after somebody full-time and still carry on with your life.

So this bill is really about a new way of tackling a problem that is only going to grow. I'm really pleased this bill was brought forward. I know that there are no silver bullets in life, but this is a good start. Thank you so much for bringing it forward. I look forward to all-party support.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to be able to rise in support of Bill 48, which has been brought by the member for Etobicoke Centre. It is An Act to establish the Alzheimer Advisory Council and develop a strategy for the research, treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

I was one of those fortunate people who were able to serve on the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. I was surprised at how many people came forward and wanted to talk about Alzheimer's and dementia as part of that story, because that wasn't one of the things that I had really anticipated. But time after time, as we went around the province, we would have people from the local Alzheimer's society or people who had a family member come forward and say, "You know, as a society we really need to pay attention to this because the numbers are going up so dramatically."

We saw that in my riding of Guelph when we got an allocation at St. Joseph's Health Centre to add an additional 96 long-term-care beds. They actually, in consultation with the other long-term-care providers in Guelph, said, "You know, we've got a huge need to figure out how we manage the people with Alzheimer's who are in long-term care." They actually took a third of those beds and set up a behavioural unit. The idea here is that people from various long-term-care settings, and maybe alternative levels of care—and maybe even some people at

home—would be able to come to the behavioural unit and get some support in terms of people figuring out how to best manage the behaviour of that particular individual at that particular stage in their dementia journey, and then go back to the other setting that they had come from, but for somebody to actually have the opportunity to look at the individual and figure out how best do we support this person and, if they're going back to a home setting, this person's family. I think this particular bill gives us the opportunity.

I thank the members from Whitby–Oshawa and Parkdale–High Park for their support, because setting up an advisory committee allows all of us to get together and to think about what do we do best to manage this disease and to support the family caregivers. It really is a challenge that we need to face up to dealing with in a very humane and sensible way, and I think this gives us the opportunity.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: As deputy critic for health, rural and northern, it's my pleasure to stand and speak to this bill, and I applaud the three co-sponsors of this bill.

Alzheimer's is something that's going to touch all of us and all of our families at some point in time. It's something we need to put more thought into. We need to put more decisions in that are going to actually turn into actions that are going to have resources and services out there.

This has been brought to the Legislature twice, and I'm hopeful that it will get to third reading, because it's something we need to take urgent action on to stem this tsunami of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia that Ontario will be facing in just a few years.

Dr. David Walker, the provincial ALC lead—no relation—said in 2001, "Our society now confronts a growing phenomenon—that of a burgeoning aging population of individuals living with frailty, and/or multiple co-morbidities, all of which may be confounded by the challenges of dementia."

Mr. Speaker, the statistics are alarming. As our baby boomers enter their senior years, the number of people suffering will increase from 200,000 in 2013 to approximately 300,000 by 2025—significant. My riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound has a higher-than-average incidence of seniors, so this is particularly pertinent in my riding. It's something that we need to be making sure we understand and we spend time on. This is definitely an issue that the three parties can work together on and move forward.

With some 7,000 seniors in Durham suffering, it's just another number and another statistic that points out to—my colleague Mr. O'Toole from Durham is dealing with this. Christine Elliot, in her riding of Oshawa—again, very significant numbers that she's dealing with—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member to refer to ridings and not names.

Mr. Bill Walker: My apologies. The point that I was trying to stress is that this is impacting all ridings across Ontario.

Alzheimer's itself is a serious issue for the individuals and families that suffer from this. The seriousness is also considerably elevated when one considers the disease's impact on the broader health system. We have burgeoning numbers that are going to continue to snowball and increase, and we're going to have to be ready for this. This is a tsunami coming our way, not unlike the debt that we're facing right now. We have to ensure that we're thinking ahead, we have to take proactive measures, and we have to make tough decisions to ensure we have the services for those people most in need. This not only impacts the victim but significantly impacts the families of those people suffering with either Alzheimer's or dementia.

In summary, dementia patients are intensive users of health care resources. It's absolutely vital for the long-term sustainability of our health care system that we consider strategies for attacking this disease and incorporate them into our long-term health care plan. We need to take action—like the budget—today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Etobicoke Centre, you have two minutes for a reply.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I'd like to say thank you, obviously, to my co-sponsors from Whitby–Oshawa and Parkdale–High Park, and to the members who spoke, from York South–Weston, Mississauga East–Cooksville, Guelph and Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. I think each of them touched exactly on what the issue is.

The fact is that none of us are untouched by Alzheimer's, whether it's personal or within our constituency. It has been recognized that in fact it is a tsunami. It has also been recognized that it is something we must address and we cannot ignore, and if we do, we ignore it at our peril.

Is there a cost? Absolutely. It will be \$770 million a year. And so the question must be asked: Will those dollars be spent wisely, efficiently and effectively to address the issue? But there's a greater cost, and that's the human cost. You can't build enough long-term-care homes to deal with the staggering numbers with Alzheimer's and dementia that will face us, nor should you when there are alternatives we can do to address that. This isn't all the answer; it's just the beginning of bringing together the people, including the patients themselves—the persons suffering from the disease—to help us develop the strategies and then give those recommendations to the minister for consideration.

To me, it just makes eminent sense to bring together the people most impacted and affected by this disease to help us deliver a sustainable strategy as we move forward in what are going to be some very difficult fiscal times ahead of us. And we do this because these are the people in our communities whom we care for. This is our obligation and our responsibility, not only as members of this House but just as human beings caring for one another, making sure we care for those who are most vulnerable and most affected. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

Mr. Mario Sergio: On a point of order, Speaker—my apologies—I want to correct my record. During my deliberation, I made reference to the insurance bureau of Ontario. There is no such thing; it is the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario. I want to correct my record.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member is allowed to correct his own record.

PROTECTION OF MINORS IN AMATEUR SPORTS ACT, 2012 LOI DE 2012 SUR LA PROTECTION DES MINEURS PARTICIPANT À DES SPORTS AMATEURS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Ouellette has moved second reading of Bill 24. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is referred to—

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I would refer the bill to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The request is to refer the bill to the Standing Committee on Social Policy. Agreed? Agreed.

NEW DRIVERS' INSURANCE RATE REDUCTION ACT, 2012 LOI DE 2012 SUR LA RÉDUCTION DES TAUX D'ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE POUR LES NOUVEAUX CONDUCTEURS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Sergio has moved second reading of Bill 71. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

We will deal with this vote at the end of regular business.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Sorry. In my opinion, the nays have it. We will deal with the vote at the end of other business.

ALZHEIMER ADVISORY COUNCIL ACT, 2012 LOI DE 2012 CRÉANT LE CONSEIL CONSULTATIF DE LA MALADIE D'ALZHEIMER

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mrs. Cansfield has moved second reading of Bill 48. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is referred to—

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I'd love to stand up and ask for third reading. I'll refer it to justice or social policy, whichever—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Pick one.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Social policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has requested that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy. Agreed? Agreed.

NEW DRIVERS' INSURANCE
RATE REDUCTION ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LA RÉDUCTION
DES TAUX D'ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE
POUR LES NOUVEAUX CONDUCTEURS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1654 to 1659.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Would members please take their seats? Mr. Sergio has moved second reading of Bill 71. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David
Bentley, Christopher	Hoskins, Eric	Prue, Michael
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bisson, Gilles	Jeffrey, Linda	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Schein, Jonah
Broten, Laurel C.	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Campbell, Sarah	Mangat, Amrit	Singh, Jagmeet
Cansfield, Donna H.	Mantha, Michael	Sousa, Charles
Coteau, Michael	Marchese, Rosario	Taylor, Monique
Crack, Grant	McMeekin, Ted	Vanthof, John
Damerla, Dipika	McNeely, Phil	Wong, Soo
Delaney, Bob	Miller, Paul	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dhillon, Vic	Moridi, Reza	Zimmer, David
DiNovo, Cheri	Murray, Glen R.	
Duguid, Brad	Natyshak, Taras	

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 43; the nays are 0.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I declare the bill approved.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is referred—Mr. Sergio?

Mr. Mario Sergio: General government, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The request is to have the bill referred to general government. Agreed? Agreed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES
AMENDMENT ACT (RENT
INCREASE GUIDELINE), 2012

LOI DE 2012 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LA LOCATION
À USAGE D'HABITATION
(TAUX LÉGAL D'AUGMENTATION
DES LOYERS)

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 24, 2012, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 19, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of the rent increase guideline / Projet de loi 19, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne le taux légal d'augmentation des loyers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): When the House recessed, Mr. McNaughton had the floor. Mr. McNaughton.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm pleased to rise today to continue speaking on Bill 19. Bill 19 amends section 120 of the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, with regard to the annual rent increase guideline. The bill further amends the Residential Tenancies Act.

As everyone across the province knows, Ontario's economy is in bad shape. When it comes to housing in the province of Ontario, whether you're a landlord, a tenant or a service provider, the situation is far from perfect. Everyone is facing serious challenges. The PC Party believes that there needs to be action that results in Ontario becoming more affordable for the people who live and operate a business in the province.

Under the current government, we have seen the exact opposite. Life is getting more expensive by the day. The debt continues to grow, along with the deficit, and Ontarians continue to suffer for Dalton McGuinty's mismanaged finances. Under the McGuinty government, hydro rates have increased eight times since 2003, with another increase coming, as we all know in this House, on May 1, for a total of 84% since 2003. For a family with a smart meter at your home, well, you've seen your bill go up by a staggering 150%.

As a result, people are struggling to just pay their heating bill. "Just getting by" is something that I hear far too often from the people in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Forget getting ahead; people in Ontario can barely afford to heat their home in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario.

It's important to remember that when we talk about housing, it's not just about a building. In the case of this legislation, a formula is used to calculate how much somebody's rent is going to go up each and every year. A home is more than a place to hang your hat; it is a place to connect with loved ones, to share a meal, a place where you belong. Having a place to call home gives people the basis from which their life begins. Without it,

there's no hope to maintain employment or get the education and training necessary to break the cycle of poverty.

Too many people in this province are living paycheque to paycheque with nothing put away for an emergency. If they lost their job or missed one week of pay, they would be finding themselves either at the mercy of their landlord or out on the street. That's the problem that the people of Ontario are struggling with.

Bill 19, the bill that this Liberal government is proposing, does not do anything to address the real issue. They, as always, aren't doing what the people of Ontario want and, most importantly, what the people of Ontario need.

This bill actually would have very little overall impact, as ministry staff—they themselves have stated, during a briefing, that the 10-year average increase is 2.1% per year, and over the last five years it's 1.7% annually. It's a move by the minister to be seen as being on the side of tenants, while there are clearly more substantive changes to the act she can undertake to truly improve the situation for landlords and tenants.

As I mentioned earlier, it's not just tenants that are feeling the pinch in Ontario, Speaker. The reality is that landlords in this province have seen their costs going up and up and up, particularly for small landlords that I speak to in my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex. The landlords in my riding are hard-working small business people, and the landlords I speak to are telling me that right now in Ontario, the rental business, for too many, is a money-losing operation.

This is a story that, unfortunately, more and more small business owners across the province are telling me. Our party repeatedly warned the government of the risk of Ontario's rental housing stock deteriorating, with the

additional cost of the HST on top of the risk that small landlords might get out of the business altogether.

The McGuinty Liberals ignored the warnings and originally told landlords to absorb the cost of the HST, putting the aging stock of Ontario's rental housing at risk. Dalton McGuinty has become an expert at driving business out of the province. He refuses to address the real issues. Ontario needs to be the number one place to do business in Canada. This is our priority, and this is the priority of the entire PC caucus. It is very clear that it is not the priority of the Dalton McGuinty Liberals.

I think, as my colleague from Kitchener–Conestoga just mentioned, that Dalton McGuinty is also ignoring the will of the Legislature, as we've stated a number of times. So we would like to call for adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has moved adjournment of the House. Agreed?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1707 to 1737.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Would all members please take their seats? Mr. McNaughton has moved adjournment of the House.

All in favour, please stand and remain standing.

All opposed, please stand and remain standing.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 38; the nays are 0.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): This House stands adjourned until Monday, 10:30.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1740.

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. Dave Levac

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
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre de Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Innovation / Ministre du Développement économique et de l'Innovation
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
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 Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Hudak, Tim (PC)	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
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
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Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milligan, Rob E. (PC) Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Moridi, Reza (LIB) Munro, Julia (PC)	Richmond Hill York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Grant Crack, Kim Craitor
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris
Rob Leone, Taras Natyshak
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue
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Cindy Forster, Monte McNaughton
Yasir Naqvi, Teresa Piruzza
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Soo Wong
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Todd Smith, Jeff Yurek
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Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely
Donna H. Cansfield, Helena Jaczek
Bill Mauro, Jim McDonell
Phil McNeely, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns, Monique Taylor
Lisa M. Thompson
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Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Présidente: Laura Albanese
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Shafiq Qaadri
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Mike Colle
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Paul Miller, Rob E. Milligan
Shafiq Qaadri
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
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Gilles Bisson, Donna H. Cansfield
Steve Clark, Garfield Dunlop
Jeff Leal, Lisa MacLeod
Jonah Schein
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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Chair / Président: Norm Miller
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett
Toby Barrett, France Gélinas
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller
Reza Moridi, Jerry J. Ouellette
Liz Sandals, Jagmeet Singh
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
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Michael Coteau, Grant Crack
Vic Dhillon, Randy Hillier
Rod Jackson, Mario Sergio
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Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh
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