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**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 6 June 2012**

**Mercredi 6 juin 2012**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Wednesday 6 June 2012

Mercredi 6 juin 2012

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WIRELESS SERVICES  
AGREEMENTS ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LES CONVENTIONS  
DE SERVICES SANS FIL

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 5, 2012, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 82, An Act to strengthen consumer protection with respect to consumer agreements relating to wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, smart phone or any other similar mobile device / *Projet de loi 82, Loi visant à mieux protéger les consommateurs en ce qui concerne les conventions de consommation portant sur les services sans fil accessibles au moyen d'un téléphone cellulaire, d'un téléphone intelligent ou de tout autre appareil mobile semblable.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Before I start, I would like unanimous consent to stand down our lead.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Trinity–Spadina has asked for unanimous consent to stand down the lead. Is it agreed? Agreed.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you very much, Speaker and members.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You owe me, Rosie.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I was going to do my speech anyway.

Speaker, I just want to thank everybody for joining in this political forum, political channel. We are on live. It's 9:05 in the morning and it's June 6 on a Wednesday morning. It's good to have an opportunity to speak to this bill. It's rare that members of the opposition speak to a bill where we say it's a good bill. There are other elements that could be added to the bill, but it is a good bill that even—even—Tories and even New Democrats are going to, I suspect, support because it's a good thing.

It's a timely thing as well. G82 is a bill that enacts a new act to govern wireless agreements. When you look at some of these statistics, you realize why the government had to do something. Over 22.5 million Canadians subscribe to wireless services and 77% of Ontarians sub-

scribe to cellphone services; it's a whole lot of people. The Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services reports that complaints about wireless carriers comprised 52% of the complaints it received in 2009-10, the period they were monitoring. Seventy-five percent of the complaints about post-paid wireless services received by the Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services for 2009 fell within the following categories: billing errors, termination disputes, customer service grievances, and terms and conditions changes.

Cellular phone services is the business category for which the Better Business Bureau in Canada has processed the most complaints this year, and complaints about cellphones and long-distance charges consistently appear on the Ministry of Consumer Services's annual list of top 10 consumer complaints.

When you look at this history, is it any wonder that we have a bill here, introduced by the former member from Sault Ste. Marie, to give him credit—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Former member? He's still the member.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Did I say "former"?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** From the member from Sault Ste. Marie, to give him credit, and later taken up by—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** That was pointed out to you by the former member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Who is still here.

Is it any wonder that the government finally took it on and made the bill its own?

We think it's a good thing, because customers of these kinds of services are left on their own. When they have a grievance, they are on their own trying to solve the problem, which is very difficult in a market that's controlled by four major companies, now five. When you're up against these big guys, mostly, I suspect, the legal costs to defend yourself are incredibly high. The little guy is going to have to do that on his own: call the company, complain, spend hours trying to resolve a problem that generally never gets resolved because there's never anyone to go to to solve it quickly.

It reminds me of the bill that I'm trying to introduce on condominium owner protection. It's a similar kind of problem, because when people have a complaint, like condominium owners, like people who own wireless or cellular phones, unless you have a place where you can go and quickly resolve a dispute, you've got to go to court—and nobody goes to court. We know this. For four years I've been trying to do the same thing on condo-

miniums. People who buy into a condominium have a contract they've got to read called declarations, most of which are incomprehensible to the ordinary homo sapiens that cannot read those agreements, legal agreements which are intended to confuse and make it so that people do not read them. It is deliberately done in such a way that the unsuspecting buyer, whether it's of a cellular phone or a condominium, doesn't know what to do and will not read those contracts until it becomes a problem. Same problemo, condo owner—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Cellphones used to be the same size as condominiums.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Right, right. The Speaker is already up. You see what you're doing?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd just like to remind the member as he sits down that the conversation doesn't go between you two. It goes through the Chair. So could you fix that up for us? Thank you very much.

0910

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you very much. We don't need additional help from the other people in the chairs. Thank you.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** There used to be a time, through you, Speaker, when we had some flexibility in this place, a little give-and-take, which made this place a little more exciting to be in as opposed to this soldier-like quality that is now instilled by some Speakers that force us—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would suggest that the Hollywood production stop. I think criticizing the Chair is not a good thing to do and could be a big error on your part. I suggest you withdraw that last comment.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I withdraw the comment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** There was a time. How things change in this place. You do what you can. What else can you do? I'd like to have a little fun in this place. I do, and so do many other people in this place when they are in this place, debating.

When you look at these contracts, these wireless agreements, they are deliberately complex. It is intended that people do not read them, and they do not, by and large, read them until they're faced with a problem, and then they realize, "My God." You try to resolve it, and usually it doesn't work. So having a bill where the supplier is required to disclose information to a consumer under this act in a way that is clear, comprehensive and prominent, and it will have to deliver the information in a way that is clear to the consumer, is a good thing. It's what we expect of any company dealing with any consumer around any particular service: that the agreements are clear, comprehensive and prominent, meaning people actually see them and are able to read them in a way that isn't hard.

Further, when the information on pricing is provided in the advertising of the services, the supplier has to

advertise the all-inclusive price for the service before the HST, and this all-inclusive cost has to be the most prominent cost into the advertising. What could be wrong with that? It's so obvious. You would think they ought to have done that ages ago—but didn't. It's before us now and it's good.

The supplier has to ensure that the agreement is in writing and that it discloses the name of the consumer, the name and contact information of the supplier, the date of the agreement, term of agreement, expiry date of agreement, a description that itemizes each service, a statement indicating whether any of the goods provided within the agreement are subject to any technological or physical features that restrict their functioning, the terms and methods of payments, the total amount paid by the consumer before entering into the agreement, the minimum amount payable by the consumer for each billing period, the manner of calculating the amounts that the consumer is required to pay to the supplier if the consumer cancels the agreement. It's good.

It's what we expect governments to do: to protect the consumer. It's what we expect the government to do when we're dealing with 1.3 million condominium owners who face the same problem and do not have the same consumer protection. It's the same thing. Finally, we have a bill that deals with consumer protection for wireless agreements but we do not have the same deal, the same agreement, a similar kind of bill, that protects 1.3 million condominium owners who have no consumer protection at all. There is a measure here that says, "If the consumer cancels a wireless agreement" in compliance with this act and the supplier demands payment, "the consumer may commence an action in the Superior Court of Justice...." I thought, when I saw this, "Hmm, how does someone take these big guys to court?" I thought, "This is an enabling piece of legislation, though where there is a disagreement, a consumer can go to court." But you've got to understand, when you've got a big guy with billions of dollars versus a little guy earning \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000 taking them to the Supreme Court—"Who's going to win?" I thought to myself, on the one hand.

On the other, it says that "the court may order exemplary or punitive damages or whatever other relief that the court considers proper" should the individual take it to court—which is good, because it's a way of obviously undermining, potentially, the fact that those who have big loads of money could lose a few dollars in the process of that legal fight. But it still requires people to actually take them to court. But we've got an uneven playing field between the little guy, who earns so little, and these big wireless companies, cellular companies, that earn in the billions of dollars by way of their company profits, and I'm not sure whether or not people eventually, if there's a disagreement, are going to go to court. It allows for people to be able to defend themselves, which is better than nothing, and the penalties are a little bit higher than they used to be, where, if a corporation is convicted under this act, it "is liable to a fine of not more than

\$250,000.” Is that a deterrent? I don’t know. But it’s bigger than before in terms of the penalty. I’m not sure whether for billionaires \$250,000 is that much of a deterrent, but God bless, it’s better than nothing. And the demand that these contracts become “clear, comprehensive and prominent” is a good thing.

So yes, I have to say to the government that when Canadian consumers pay the highest minimum monthly charge for cellphone services out of the 11 countries that were studied, it’s about time that you did this. It’s important that the government learns to respond to other similar problems that other consumers face in society. That is why I made reference to condominium owners who are not getting the same protection, for whom I have fought for four years, introducing bills in this Legislature that I am persuaded the government is listening to, but not by much. Because they haven’t moved one single inch in protecting condo owners, those consumers, from bad developers in particular. They deserve, in my mind, the same respect. While some of you are discussing this in your caucus debates, I’m not sure whether my bill is ever going to make it to third reading debate, let alone consideration by the government. I’m hoping that we’re going to get hearings on that bill, but who knows? But at least this bill appears to move forward, because it has the support of the government and the other opposition party, so I say, God bless.

Mr. Speaker, I think I’ve said enough on the bill. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I’m pleased to speak on Bill 82. I fully agree with the member from Trinity–Spadina that it’s a good bill. I was at a community event this past weekend in my riding, and I met lots of constituents who expressed their happiness, that it is good that the government has taken action and we have introduced Bill 82, because it deals with cellphone agreements. It will help cellphone agreements and contracts to be more fair, and the agreements will be, if this bill is passed, in more clear, plain, easy-to-understand language. At the same time this bill helps to reduce costs, cap cancellation fees, prevent automatic renewals etc.

I really appreciate members’ sincere comments that it is a good bill. The people, my constituents, were telling me that they cannot understand why this will not have all-party support and be passed quickly. Thank you.

0920

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Oxford.

**Interjection:** Durham.

**Mr. John O’Toole:** We look a lot alike; what can I say? Anyway, I think he’s actually younger than I am, but he’s a very, very prominent person.

Anyway, the member from Trinity–Spadina, I believe, usually brings a fair amount of enthusiasm to the discussion. I know, Speaker, that perhaps his style is, as you say, often theatrical, but the content is definitely there.

I think if I look at the work that David Oraziotti has done on this bill, Mr. Oraziotti’s intent here—Minister Best was kind enough to recognize that—I commend him for doing that.

Now the deal is, I’ve really never heard too many complaints about this, to be honest. The only one I’ve heard is when—I had a couple, a retired couple, I gather, and they were in Florida for a month. They were phoning home every day and maybe getting calls from home about things going on in the neighbourhood etc., from their family. When they got home, they got this huge roaming charge. They were quite shocked; I think it was like two grand or something.

Now, in my role—and I’m sure any MPP would take the occasion to bring it to the attention of the minister. But it is a contract, and there’s a reciprocal responsibility when you sign a contract, even though what I like about this part is to have the plain-language provision in the legislation. That’s important because a lot of these contracts are drawn up and it’s in fine print and you assume it’s a trustworthy agreement. I think openness, transparency and accountability are important in a contract, in a relationship. But even when I look at some of the young people today, they’re on the phone all the time. Do you understand? I walk up from the GO Train often and I see them looking at their phones.

I think it’s a consumer protection issue and I believe it’s the right thing to do, to have full, open disclosure.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I’m pleased to stand this morning, as always, on behalf of the good folks of Davenport and speak to this bill, Bill 82. I also believe that I can support this, and our party will be supporting this, because this is a step in the right direction in terms of consumer protection and fairness.

You know, most of us don’t have too many choices about where we go, and our cellphone use is pretty much compulsory at this point. It’s just a part of everyday life in this city. Too many people are gouged because they haven’t read the fine print. They don’t understand the fine print. So I think putting contracts into plain language is really important. I know that in the riding of Davenport there are many people for whom English is not their first language and who suffer, whether it’s through wireless service agreements or through folks who are trying to sell fraudulent heating systems or furnaces. I think we need to level the playing field here.

So I would support this absolutely. I think there are other steps that we need to take. As my friend from Trinity–Spadina was saying, trying to make this a level playing field when it comes to holding condo developers accountable, too—this is another place where we’d like to move forward, where people in Davenport definitely need the support of government on their side to make sure that they’re not the victims of predatory developers or corporations.

The issue of, as our friend from Durham was saying, the roaming charges is something I’ve heard constantly,

where people rack up hundreds and hundreds of dollars in fees that they had no idea they were accumulating, and I'd like to make sure that this bill includes language that would enforce that, so that people know that if they're travelling abroad, they might suffer from roaming charges. I hope that we can tighten that up as well. But generally I support this bill. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Just before I get a chance to make some comments on the remarks from the member for Trinity–Spadina, I think all of us would recognize that there are commemorative services all across Canada today. It's the 68th anniversary of the invasion in Normandy. Elements of the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Navy and Royal Canadian Air Force stormed Juno Beach, part of one of the greatest military battles in the history of mankind. I know all of us want to remember, because we're here today because of their brave sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to visit with my good friend Sammy Kershaw, who operates the Bell Mobility store on Lansdowne Street West in Peterborough. We've had some discussions about various contracts with cellphones etc. I want to blend that into what the member from Trinity–Spadina said today. He's always long been a consumer advocate here in the province of Ontario, and his support, along with the opposition's, as we get to committee will give us the opportunity to all come together in a unified fashion to produce a consumer affairs bill to protect cellphone contracts, which I think is so important for the people of Peterborough and Ontario today. I want to get in the good folks at home this morning. Many of them have cellphones and they're looking to us for leadership on this particular file, to strengthen those contracts, to strengthen accountability and to make sure that when they enter into a contract, they know all the terms and conditions of that contract, to make sure that indeed they're protected.

As I said, the work of the member for Trinity–Spadina, the work of the member for Sault Ste. Marie, the work of the Minister of Consumer Affairs and indeed the work of my good friend from Prince Edward–Hastings—all of us coming together can make this a really strong consumer protection bill. We all know, whether you've been in municipal politics or here at the Legislature, you constantly get inquiries about organizations ripping off consumers. We can halt that here today with this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Trinity–Spadina has two minutes.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I thank the members for their comments. I know the member from Durham said he hasn't received too many complaints, but I think people have, and that's why I began with a history and talked about the Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services, which reports that complaints about wireless carriers comprise 52% of all the complaints. This is huge. It's not as if we're not hearing about

it. They are hearing about it, and we are too. That's why I wanted to give that bit of history.

I do agree with the members from Durham and Davenport, where they talked about roaming charges. That is one of the issues I wanted to touch upon, and this is where I think we can, in committee, add that additional element that has been left out of this bill, because roaming charges are yet another big problem that people complain about, and the government has left that out. That will give us an opportunity, as the member from Peterborough said, to come together, all three political parties. I think we could have come together if you had included it in the original draft, but we can still come together when we get together in committee, to deal with the roaming charges in particular.

To the member from Mississauga South, when she says people in her riding cannot understand why there is no three-party support—I think we have three-party support and I think all other amendments are possible. But I also say to the member from Mississauga South that the people in my riding in condominiums are saying the same thing to you and to your party when we talk about people not being able to understand why the Liberal caucus in particular doesn't support consumer amendments to the condo act that would make their life a little bit easier, and they have been waiting for a long, long time. So I'm urging the member from Mississauga South to take that into account as well. Merci.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I'm pleased to speak on Bill 82. First of all, I would like to thank my colleague the Minister of Consumer Services for bringing this bill forward. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, wireless services are an \$18-billion industry that pervades all of our lives. With the advancements in technology, this world has become flat. This world is changing every moment, and this change is impacting all of us. This change has also made us dependent on wireless services. If we look around, in every walk of life we have become dependent on iPhones, iPads, tablets, BlackBerrys. If we do not get connected to our BlackBerrys for, say, 10 or 15 minutes, we feel like we have lost something.

**0930**

I would also like to share with the House that this bill has a lot of independent support as well. As I said earlier, this past weekend I was at a community event in my riding. I met lots of my constituents who were very happy that our government has introduced Bill 82. In the past, they have expressed their concerns about cellphone contracts. Many have said they are in very fine print; it's hard to read and it's hard to understand. Some have said that the terms of the contracts are so complex that you need legal counsel to interpret them. So they were all very happy that our government has taken action.

This is a pocketbook issue. Consumers want our government to address this. This bill contains measures that will help reduce costs, cap cancellation fees, prevent automatic renewals and make cellphone contracts sim-

pler, in plain language, easy and clear language, which will be very helpful for consumers to understand.

Today I would like to speak to the benefits of this proposed legislation. When we look at the provisions in this bill, the benefits to Ontario consumers are enormous and they are very clear as well. If passed, this bill will allow customers to cancel their agreements at any time and with modest cancellation fees. Four other provinces—Quebec, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia—have introduced similar provisions. With a consistent approach across provinces, we can facilitate greater industry compliance, ultimately benefiting the consumer.

Companies will be required to clearly disclose which services are included and the minimum cost of an agreement, as well as the added costs that would be charged when additional services are used. The terms must be clear, comprehensible and prominent, and they must include specific information on roaming charges and cell-phone logs.

The bill also requires companies to have agreements that use clear language, as I said earlier, with full disclosure so consumers understand what they are getting into and what they are agreeing to. This level of disclosure is essential for consumer protection. Customers must understand what they are getting before and after making any agreement.

Companies will need to get a customer's express consent before renewing, extending or amending a fixed-term contract. Contracts will no longer be renewed automatically, without the customer's consent. When we look at today's market, we find that simply asking for a change to an agreement can result in the agreement being extended or renewed. The bill says that agreeing to a change in service is not the same as agreeing to an automatic extension or renewal. The customer must be asked if they want to renew and the customer must say yes before this takes place.

We are aiming to reduce cell shock by enforcing all-inclusive price advertising, requiring providers to advertise with the total of all costs and fees disclosed most prominently in any price advertising. If the all-in price is advertised, there can be no surprises when the bill arrives.

This legislation, if passed, will result in strong, enforceable remedies, making it an offence for wireless services providers to charge for payments they are not entitled to. If a service provider owes a refund to a customer, the customer has the right to sue the provider to recover the amount owed to them, and they will have the right to claim three times the amount of a refund that is owed. If this bill is passed, it will offer some of the strictest penalties of all the Canadian provinces.

The proposed legislation also prohibits billing for services that a customer cannot use. If a wireless device is not working and is still under warranty, the provider cannot charge for services a customer cannot use because the device is being repaired, nor can they charge for a loaner if one is provided.

Many consumers object to paying extra for services they did not know would cost them extra if used. The proposed law requires wireless companies to have a system in place to notify customers when they are close to their user limits, so that the customer is aware that further use may result in additional costs. And they must disclose these cost details to the customer before any agreement is signed.

If the bill is passed, implementation of this legislation will include a strategic enforcement approach and a proactive communications plan to ensure that consumers are fully aware of the changes and their rights. If this bill becomes law, Mr. Speaker, it will take effect a full six months after royal assent. The six-month implementation period will give companies enough time to prepare their systems to comply with the new law.

When it comes into force, the new act will apply to all new agreements. It will also apply to all service contract transactions, like renewals, that may already be in progress. It will also apply to existing contracts that are changed after the date it comes into force.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that telecommunications is a federal responsibility, while consumer protection is a matter for the provinces. For this reason, the bill focuses exclusively on the consumer aspects of the industry. It focuses on the needs of Ontarians who are considering or who have already signed agreements for wireless cellphone services. The bill, if passed, is designed to protect consumers through clear disclosure requirements and cancellation rights.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague the Minister of Consumer Services has said that the government has consulted industry on the development of this bill, and the industry's message was clear: Any government action must be consistent with actions taken by other provinces. We have listened to the industry's message, and this bill has been aligned with similar initiatives in other provinces, to avoid a patchwork of regulations across the country.

We are taking steps, through this proposed legislation, to help consumers make informed choices when spending their hard-earned dollars. As I have mentioned, we are responding to consumer frustrations with contracts in this sector to help Ontario families. Families, when they sign cellphone contracts, would benefit from clear and easy-to-understand language in cellphone contracts. This would put the onus on businesses to make sure their customers know what services they are paying for.

#### **0940**

Ontario is also aligning with Quebec and Manitoba, who have taken action in this sector. General consistency across provinces will reduce the burden on industry and facilitate compliance in Ontario.

The legislation would ensure that before a contract is signed, the wireless service supplier has disclosed to the consumer whether a phone or other device is locked and only usable with respect to a particular supplier, and, if so, how long it is locked for and whether the lock will be removed at the end of the contract, and at what price.

Bill 82 would help people understand what they are receiving in their wireless services agreement. Agreements would need to clearly explain what services are provided, what services would result in added cost for the customer, how services can be assessed, and rates and restrictions; for example, if a long-distance plan is within the province of Ontario or within the country of Canada or throughout America.

If a phone is provided free or at a discount, the contract would need to include its retail value and the actual cost to the consumer.

Information on how cancellation fees are calculated would need to be included in the agreement.

It is encouraging to see the CRTC is considering taking active steps to explore their role in the wireless sector by stating their intent to hold consultations on the state of wireless competition in Canada. But the CRTC can be slow. We at the provincial level are taking action. We are on the front lines of consumer protection. Ontarians come to us with their complaints and inquiries, and we know that cellphone contracts are a huge issue for many consumers.

There's a lot of independent support for this bill, as I have said earlier. Michael Janigan is the executive director and general counsel for the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, whose background and experience is one of supporting consumers on many issues. He stated, "This bill will help remove barriers to real competition for the ordinary consumers of wireless services," and, he said, "It will help level the playing field for customers who currently feel trapped by ... one-sided conditions."

Mel Fruitman, who is the vice-president of the Consumers' Association of Canada, stated, "For a long time consumers have been victims of the nefarious marketing practices of wireless telephone companies. This protection for consumers is necessary and long overdue. We can see no reason why this act would not receive all-party support and be quickly passed."

I will be supporting this bill at second reading because this bill contains strong measures that will protect consumers and their families. I know the constituents in my riding of Mississauga-Brampton South and consumers all across Ontario will also support our government's measures as proposed in this important piece of legislation. We are involving consumers by ensuring that they get the information they need to make informed decisions. This information will help consumers to better understand their mobile and cellphone contracts and get the contract they agree to.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise in debate today. Of course, we all recognize the need for consumer protection in Ontario, particularly as it relates to cellphone bills and for those folks that have been gouged. We in the official opposition do find it passing strange, however, that the Minister of Consumer Services, Margaret Best, decided to steal the thunder of the member from Sault Ste. Marie, Mr. Oraziotti, who has

had quite a strong legislative track record. I think the minister was quite envious.

We also find the timing to be considerably awkward, given the fact that the CRTC, just five days before Margaret Best decided to steal Mr. Oraziotti's thunder, decided to look into this. I believe they have announced consultations in preparation for creating a national regulation with major providers; and many of those major providers, I might add, are on board with that particular legislation. But it also, I think, speaks to this motivation.

As I mentioned, the member from Sault Ste. Marie had put forward a bill, Bill 5. He had put forward this bill previously as well. It's in committee. Instead, what this bill will do is kill his bill. As I stated, this non-government member in the Liberal government has put forward a number of pieces of legislation in the past, and they were quite able to amend his legislation and give him the credit. But I think his strong track record in making legislation pass this House, with the exception of what the Minister of Consumer Services has in the past, was the reason for him losing his bill. So I have profound regret on behalf of that member and for that member that the minister would behave this way.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Hamilton Mountain.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I am also happy to stand on behalf of Hamilton Mountain residents this morning to speak about this important bill that's before us, because consumer protection is quite important. We know that many times consumers' children, who are probably among the top users of cellphones these days—seniors are using cellphones; people who are learning our languages are using cellphones. It states here that 77% of Ontarians are using cellphones. Many folks don't even have home phones in their residence anymore. They're counting on cellphone providers to give them a good service and a service that they can trust in. Hopefully, we'll be able to make sure that this bill becomes law in protecting consumers.

We definitely see every day the young folks, kids, teenagers who are running around with cellphones in their ears. When parents don't know what kind of contract that they're signing and then they see a bill at the end of the month that's hundreds of dollars for a use that they believed would suit their child's needs, that is something that most families can't afford. Like I said, you can't have one kid having a cellphone and not the other these days. It's become like the Nike shoes of the past—and worse.

Again, consumers aren't reading the big, long contracts. Making sure that we have clear contracts that put the consumer first, that know what the consumers are buying into, is definitely important. I will be supporting this bill and look forward to that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from York West.

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** I'm pleased to hear that the members are supporting Bill 82. I think the member from



Sault Ste. Marie should be congratulated, Speaker, for bringing this to the attention of the House.

It's one of those issues that, again, is affecting all of our people, I would say. I don't have to tell you, Speaker, that technology is changing as we speak. Therefore, anything that we can do to improve clarity, that can improve consumer protection and save them money at the same time, I think is a good thing. I hope that this bill goes to second reading so we can have further hearings on this as it travels, because there are still other areas to be looked at to make it even stronger. I don't think the bill goes far enough. I think there are other areas we should be looking at.

**0950**

I can look at my own bills, Mr. Speaker, and I have to tell you that when your own BlackBerry or whatever you use—I have no idea why companies have to repeat their message three or four times before it is erased. That is stealing time and stealing money from the pockets of our people.

If there is a contract, the contract should stipulate very clearly the facts, the terms of the contract, the limits and limitations. I think the bill clarifies all of that. We should give our consumers every opportunity to save money. There are people using it a lot and they pay a lot of money, and they could be saving a lot of money. It's incumbent upon us to do the right thing, bring it to the attention of the public. It's important that we, as legislators, look into it for the benefit of our people.

I hope that Bill 82 will pass and move on to public hearings.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to comment on the address by the member from Mississauga on Bill 82, the cellphone bill.

If there's somebody out there who could say they have never opened up a cellphone bill and reacted in some way angrily, even if in private, then I would say they've never actually opened up a cellphone bill. Nobody who's got a cellphone in this province doesn't shake their head sometimes and say, "What in the name of Sam Hill is going on here?"

I do commend the member for Sault Ste. Marie. This has been a pet peeve of his since he came here in 2003—I was elected at the same time—and he has been on the cellphone issue for that length of time.

This bill will do something to help. It's about disclosure and ensuring that there's some clarity and understandability to the cellphone bills. Is it going to reduce the costs of operating cellphones? It doesn't really touch on that. That's not an issue. You're not going to have fewer roaming charges and stuff like that; they're not delving into that side of the telecommunications industry.

But from the point of view of being able to, in some way, understand the bill a little better, it's a positive step. We'll have to see how it actually materializes, because so much of the legislation this government introduces turns out to be a toothless tiger at times. We're hoping this

actually does have some impact and that people have a better understanding of the cellphone bill they're getting.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Mississauga–Brampton South has two minutes.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, this is a pocketbook issue and consumers want it to be addressed.

I appreciate the comments from the members opposite, but I differ from the member from Nepean–Carleton. She said that the minister has stolen the thunder from the member from Sault Ste. Marie. He deserves congratulations; he has done a lot of work. In life, we all know it's working together, it's teamwork, we work in unison. Actually, I'm proud of our strong caucus. I totally disagree with this.

This bill contains strong measures, as I said earlier. It will protect consumers and their families. This bill, if passed, will provide information to consumers that will help them better understand their mobile and wireless services contracts and get the contract they agree to.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Renfrew—no?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** No, I'm just leaving.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much. It's great to speak this morning. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has lots of opportunities to speak. We don't need to hear him again.

It is great to be up here today to speak to Bill 82. My colleague the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, in eastern Ontario, did a great job yesterday outlining this meticulous bill and detailing some of the problems that do exist in the bill from a logistics point of view.

I think those who are talking about the fact that it's going to result in smaller cellphone bills—it's a bit of a myth. This bill isn't going to do that. This bill is going to make it a bit clearer for people to understand their bills, but I do worry sometimes about red tape—increasing red tape and increasing legislation. I know in Manitoba, when they brought in a bill similar to this—you know, a cellphone contract sometimes looks like this, right? You open it up and it's got all this small print on it and you can read it a long time. Government legislation often looks like this. This is from Mike Harris here, my friend. That's going to make it simpler? Creating legislation? I don't know if that's necessarily the answer in this case.

But my colleague who spoke yesterday was the lead on this for consumer services. He's Tim Hudak's critic. He's an engineer. He's got years of experience in this field. He's uniquely qualified among members of the House to speak on this issue as he worked with Bell Canada for many, many years. He suggested yesterday that we call this the "me too" bill. I don't know if he's too far off the mark in calling it the "me too" bill. That's not meant to denigrate the member from Sault Ste. Marie, who in the last session and earlier in the previous session, as well as the act alluded to in 2003, when he was

elected—this has been his pet project: to bring in legislation to create some reform in the wireless telecommunications industry in this province, where obviously there is an issue. But again I go back to the fact that I don't know if this legislation, as it stands right now, is the be-all, end-all answer to the problems that exist. I don't know if it's going to do what is necessary to make your cellphone bills smaller in the province, which is what we've heard a lot about in the discussions so far this morning from different members of the House—roaming charges and information packages that cost so much money.

With two young daughters in my house that are nine and 11 years old, there's a couple of different smart phones and there's a cellphone sitting around there as well. My daughter gets on my BlackBerry and starts to download her Katy Perry video or her Lady Gaga video or Taylor Swift or whoever it might be today. That's going to end up still costing you money—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** We know it's you. We know it's you, Smitty.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'm not downloading the Lady Gaga; Taylor Swift, she's okay. I don't mind Taylor Swift.

Anyway, this government continually plays games with policies like this; that's what this government does. So, you know, they're taking advantage of the headlines. It was no coincidence, I don't think, that the week after the CBC did a major news story on cell shock with data plans and those types of things that the government decided, "Hey, this is the perfect opportunity to bring in this bill that Mr. Oraziotti has had on the table for eight years now." So they're taking advantage of the situation—

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I thought the Conservatives didn't watch the CBC.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Once in a while I watch the CBC, Mr. Leal.

None of this, I don't think, is particularly shocking to people who have been watching the goings-on here at Queen's Park for the last eight or nine years. We've talked about the fact that a lot of the bills are made for headlines. They're made to give the illusion that the government is actually working on behalf of the people of Ontario to create meaningful legislation, when really what it's being created for is to create a few positive headlines and make it seem like they're doing work.

As my colleague pointed out yesterday, in addition to the CBC running that story, the CRTC had also presented notice that they're considering changes to the federal regulations in this regard. In addition to the public steps, the governments of Quebec and Manitoba have already introduced legislation on this subject. As I mentioned, the Manitoba legislation is pretty, pretty thick.

So once again it's a government that seems to enjoy leading from the back of the pack. It's the "me too" bill. Hard to think of something that the current government enjoys doing more than giving itself the opportunity to poke other jurisdictions in the eye, whether it's Alberta over the oil sands, or they continually like to poke our

friends in Ottawa in the eye as well, our federal government.

I know that there are those who ask why we should care about why a bill is being brought forward and whether or not that should matter to this debate, but it does matter. It matters because it's symbolic of a larger problem. It's a bill to address the headline once again. We're stuck with this bill after the headline is gone, so we've got to make sure that this is a good bill. My colleague yesterday referred to this as a distraction. That's exactly what it is. There are a lot of things that we should be talking about right now in this House—

**1000**

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Job creation.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Job creation; the economy, which is going down the toilet; a huge, huge debt; deficit—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** What about the horse racing industry?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** My friend from Nepean–Carleton wants to talk about the horse racing industry; good call as well. How about the Ornge scandal? The government said that they would give us a select committee on the Ornge scandal. The health minister said that herself many, many times. There are so many other issues that mean a lot to people: soaring hydro rates in the province of Ontario, seniors that can't live in their homes because they're paying—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would hope that the member would keep to the agenda. He seems to be drifting a bit and he seems to be having cross-dialogue with other members. Go through me, thanks.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a former referee as well, I do respect you, that you're in control of the situation here.

You know, this isn't to say that cell shock isn't a problem in Ontario. I just talked about a number of the red tape problems and all of the problems in the province of Ontario. Cell shock is also a problem—it is. We have ministers on the government side of the House who stand up during question period and pay lip service to reducing regulation for business, and then the next week the government brings in a bill like this that's going to increase regulation on the telecommunications industry.

The member from the Soo, in his initial remarks, acknowledged that this is a federal responsibility. He then proceeded to attack the federal regulator for being slow to act, which maybe is okay; they were a little slow to react. However, as I and the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry have pointed out, the CRTC launched a regulatory review of this very matter.

So the government knows that this is occurring right now in the nation's capital and it would create a blanket of regulations for the entire country, not this piecemeal, patchwork type of regulation. That's why it's very important, I think, going forward, that instead of creating our own legislation here in the province of Ontario that might be different from Manitoba or different from Quebec, we actually look at the Quebec legislation and

we make sure that our legislation matches up with what's happening in Quebec, because if you take Ontario and you take Quebec, you're taking a lot of the cellphone users and putting them under the same regulations, because let's face it, most of the population of the country is in Quebec and here in Ontario. Therefore, most of the cellphone users are in these two provinces.

We have to make sure that when we sit down at committee, which we're willing to do, we reduce the amount of red tape, because we all know that red tape only increases the cost of doing business. It just does; it's a fact. We have to adopt the same standards as Quebec, or very similar standards, so that we're not creating more red tape for the telecommunications industry. We've heard all of the members here in the House today talking about the fact that we're paying too much for our cellphone bills. What are we going to do if we create more red tape for the industry? We're going to cause the cellphone bills to increase. It's just a matter of fact. That's what's going to happen. So for every clause we deviate from the existing legislation in other provinces, we add another layer of red tape to this industry. So regardless of what the member from the Soo chooses to believe, this additional cost will be paid by the consumer. The cellphone user will end up paying. They always do. So our consumers may be able to make more informed choices but they may have to do so at a higher cost.

This particular bill has brought out the best anti-business tone in this Liberal government. We've heard how the big, bad telecom companies are seeking to take advantage of consumers and how without this bill consumers will be powerless against companies that have bullied the CRTC in order to get their way. That's from the Liberal backbench. During question period, of course, the Premier and his ministers come in and they thank these companies for doing more to keep this province economically afloat than this government has ever done.

There are things in this bill that are, as I said, commonsense solutions to consumer concerns. It's a desirable condition of a free market that the consumer be able to make decisions that are as informed as possible. We should want to protect consumers, and we do on this side of the House. We should want a healthy, viable, innovative and growing telecommunications sector in this province, and I believe that we do have that, although there are some bad things happening at RIM right now. We should want to reduce the red tape and regulatory burden, because it affects consumers as well as businesses.

As the PC critic for small business and red tape, I want regulation in this province that makes sense, and that's what our businesses want as well. Regulation for the sake of regulation or, worse yet, regulation for the sake of appearing decisive often leads to more laws and amendments later on. So what I think we'd like to see here and what we'd like to see addressed here is the best bill possible. More importantly, Ontario needs to stop unnecessarily picking fights with other levels of government, whether it's our fellow provinces in the west or the federal government in Ottawa.

There was a time when the province of Ontario took pride in having a leadership role in Confederation; there was a time when we didn't blame the other levels of government for problems in Ontario. But when you're staring down the face of the Ornge scandal and when you've been downgraded twice after your budget, you need a distraction. Again, I think that's where this bill comes in. It's a distraction from the problems that are currently faced here in Ontario. We're here talking about a telecommunications cell shock bill when we should be talking about the other issues I talked about three or four minutes ago.

I said yesterday that we had serious problems to face in this province, and we do. We have to address them like adults. We're not sent here to play childish name-calling games with other levels of government; we're sent here to make sure that we get the job done. We're sent here to make sure that our constituents are being represented well and getting the best government that we can possibly give them. So I ask my colleagues over on the government benches, why is it in our interest to demonize, rather than work with, the CRTC? That's kind of what's happening here. We're blaming the CRTC: "They haven't done anything; they're sitting on their cushy chairs in Ottawa." That's the rhetoric that I'm hearing from the other side, when really we should be working with the CRTC to ensure that we get the best possible bill that will cover the whole country of Canada.

Telecommunications law is, at the moment, in the jurisdiction of federal government, and the member from the Soo and the Minister of Consumer Services said the same last week when they brought in this bill, or at least began debate on it. Everyone who has spoken to the bill so far acknowledges that if we could or if we still can work with the other provinces and work with the CRTC to ensure one comprehensive national set of regulations to protect consumers, then why isn't that the very best option? Well, it goes back to the headlines again, because they want to get the good press now and make it seem like they're actually doing something here, when we know full well that not much has gotten done here over the last several years.

Ontario can make a substantive contribution to a national discussion here. Every member of this House likely has their smart phone bolted to their hip right now and it's vibrating away, or it's in their pockets. We know the Minister of the Environment doesn't have that problem. He's still using his Hilroy scrapbook to keep track of his messages.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** He's doing a good job.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** He is doing a great job at keeping track of his messages, considering he doesn't use a smart phone. But these devices, for most of us here—for the other 105 of us—have changed the way that we communicate: Twitter, Facebook, BlackBerry Messenger, BBM, the emails that now exist at our fingertips 24 hours a day. It's something that would have seemed inconceivable, probably, when the Minister of the Environment arrived here, that we would all be communicating that way. He did just celebrate his 35th anniversary here

yesterday. Imagine that we would be living in this world right now where we're communicating instantly on cellphones on our hips—not the large cellphones. I remember when I was hired at Quinte Broadcasting, in the Belleville area, our news cruiser—we had a Jeep Cherokee, and the Jeep Cherokee had a cellphone in it that was this big. It sat in between the front seats in the cruiser. Imagine, you had to get out and carry it over your shoulder and go report on a crash on the 401 or whatever it might be. Now you can do it right on your hip. So it's quite amazing how technology has evolved—and it's going to continue to evolve. There's no way that we're ever going to stop progress; that's for sure. The smart phone is only going to play a more integral part in commerce and communications going forward.

That's why I brought in a private member's bill, which was supported by a member of the government side, a few weeks ago, and I look forward to making that legislation. It would help members of the real estate community complete real estate transactions by using electronic signatures. It just seemed like a common sense bill, and it's something that I'm happy that the member from Ottawa Centre is able to support as well, and hopefully the government side will support it.

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** It's coming. It's coming.

1010

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I like what I'm hearing from over there, that it's coming. That's good.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be offering cautious support to Bill 82. I know you were sitting on the edge of your seat waiting for that. We will be offering cautious support to Bill 82 at the second reading stage. I think there's an opportunity there to amend the bill and protect consumers without creating unnecessary red tape, as I described earlier, in this growing industry.

We hope that it continues to grow, and we believe it will. I've met with all of the telecommunication giants in this country, and they're doing all kinds of work across the country, adding to their systems to make sure that more and more people in rural parts of Ontario are able to access cellphone service, so that our businesses are able to access the wireless that is needed. But I know in eastern Ontario there is a huge project supported by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, that's been supported by all levels of government, and it's making sure that all of the rural areas are able to access the same types of advantages that businesses here in the GTA and in the Ottawa area are able to access.

In order to make sure that we have a good bill—and it was described by the member from Trinity–Spadina as a good bill earlier; it could be a much better bill—we need to get it to the clause-by-clause stage at committee to make sure that this bill will have the impact that we want it to have to make life better for wireless users in Ontario.

We also need to have a serious discussion about how Ontario can best assume a leadership role in ensuring that there's a national standard that serves the best interests of consumers not just here in Ontario but across the country. I'd say that this is one area where leadership on the government benches has been most noticeably missing.

Anyone can pick a fight, Mr. Speaker, and it seems that it's the oldest political trick in the book: You pick an opponent, you paint them as a controlling or wealthy predatory person, and then paint yourself as the underdog, sticking up for the little guy. It's the classic political formula, and we've seen it too often. It's somewhat insulting to our voters.

Some issues, and this is one, are way too complicated to deal with on a black-and-white basis. The more we try and make this a simple issue, the greater the likelihood that we'll end up with a piece of legislation that isn't up to the task that it was drafted for. If that happens, those of us who are lucky enough to return to this House will be back here in a couple of years, or five years, and we'll be debating a package of amendments to this bill to try and change it, well after it has caused damage either to consumers or to the industry that we ignored right now.

So we need to sit down and we need to listen to people like Bernard Lord of the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association, the former Premier of New Brunswick, who got that province back to balanced budgets.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** He's a fine man.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** He's a fine man.

The CWTA has some concerns about this bill, and I've spoken at length with them about some of the issues, including one that involves the end of the contract. So in this bill, what happens is—you've got your cellphone, right? It's running on a three-year package. Maybe you're not opening your mail when it comes to you, and you don't realize that your three-year deal is about to come to an end. When your deal comes to an end and you haven't renewed that contract, that very next day, your cellphone is cancelled. So you wake up in the morning and you're not getting your talking notes from the Premier's office. Imagine what could go wrong.

This is something that does need to be addressed in committee, because if the contract just ends, what happens now, too, is that your phone number that you've had for 15 years goes into a pool and it's just gone, right? So you've got your business cards saying "member from Peterborough" on them, and then your cellphone number is gone. They've been distributed to thousands of people. So it's a serious issue that does need to be looked at in committee as well.

I think the one thing that this bill doesn't do—and again, the myth that surrounds this bill is that it's actually going to drive down the cost of cellphone usage in the province of Ontario. This bill isn't going to do that. This bill is going to make it clearer to understand the contract, right? We have to be careful that if we bring in unnecessary red tape and create more red tape and more cumbersome, burdensome things for the companies to deal with, then it is going to end up on the bills of consumers.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this on this beautiful Wednesday morning.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the individual members' expenses for the fiscal year 2011-12. The members will find copies of that report in their own desks here in the House.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm very pleased today to introduce a good friend of mine, Joe Neal. He is in the west gallery here. Joe is a ward 1 councillor in the municipality of Clarington and a practising lawyer. Welcome, Joe. Enjoy the day.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'd like to introduce Trevor Kidd. He's a flight paramedic and a long-term resident of my constituency. He testified at the hearings this morning.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like to introduce, in the east members' gallery, Amelia McLeod. She's the president of the Queen's debating union, but more importantly, she's working in my office this summer.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm pleased and proud to introduce Feng Bai, who is the mother of page Sam Sun, from the riding of Kitchener-Waterloo.

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar:** I would like to introduce Naila Qazi. She's the mother of the page from my riding of Mississauga-Erindale, Sherry Aslam. I want to welcome her to the Legislature.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I would like to welcome a former member and a good friend of mine, Joyce Savoline, from Burlington, and Bianca Lankheit.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'd like to welcome guests from the University of Toronto who will be shadowing me today: Rafael, Tarana and Chantelle.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I'd like to introduce two young women in the east members' gallery who are volunteering in my constituency office. Samantha Ho is a fourth-year student at York University. She speaks four languages. Atifat Ashraf is a graduate from U of T in economics and international relations.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'd like to introduce my wife, Jane; my mum and dad, Lyle and Jackie; my mother-in-law, Aleta; and my brother- and sister-in-law, Gary and Penny Ludwig.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I'm delighted to recognize and welcome Oresta Mishalkowsky. She's a constituent in my riding. She won the opportunity to have lunch with me, and that's what we're going to do later today.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I ask all members to help me welcome the grade 5 class from Fred C. Cook Public School from Bradford, who will be joining us momentarily.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for— let me get this right—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, yes. He's so disappointed. Prescott-Russell—

**Interjections:** Glengarry.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Glengarry— Prescott-Russell.

**M. Grant Crack:** Merci, monsieur le Président. C'est un honneur pour moi ce matin de présenter l'ancien député de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, M. Jean-Marc Lalonde.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'm pleased to welcome a friend of mine, a well-known, well-respected lawyer and a member of the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association: Kris Bonn.

**Ms. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm very pleased to introduce two young women: Lauren Hanna, who is just finishing up in my office with the Ontario legislative intern program. Also, welcome to Kartiga Thavarais, who is going to be a summer intern in my office. Please join me in welcoming them.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'd like to introduce to the House the father of page Louis Vatrt, who is here today to see the proceedings and his son's role as a page. Thank you, and welcome.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'm delighted today to welcome Joe and Lozanne Wamback, who are the founders of the Canadian Crime Victims Foundation. They are also here to tell us about the Freedom Walk that they are doing across Canada. It's going to come to Queen's Park on June 23. They are welcoming everybody to come by room 212A after question period for just five minutes, and maybe you as an MPP can participate in their Freedom Walk. Joe and Lozanne Wamback, welcome.

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

As stated before by myself, the tradition is for the Speaker to acknowledge these wonderful members who have returned to visit, so I would like to introduce, for us to once again receive, Joyce Savoline from Burlington in the 38th and 39th Parliaments. Welcome.

And someone who's probably going to give me proper heck for getting a blank in my mind for the name of the riding, who I'm going to hear from as well, and that is Jean-Marc Lalonde from Prescott-Russell in the 36th and Glengarry-Prescott-Russell from the 37th—

**Interjection:** Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now it's your turn to listen. I said from Prescott-Russell in the 36th Parliament and Glengarry-Prescott-Russell in the 37th, 38th and 39th Parliaments: Jean-Marc Lalonde.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's my wish that everyone listen.

Anyway, it is now time for oral questions.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

## AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Minister of Health. This morning, the public accounts committee heard from flight paramedic Trevor Kidd. Mr. Kidd travelled from Thunder Bay to tell us what it was like, as a front-line flight paramedic, to provide service within

Ornge Air while millions of tax dollars were being wasted and while patients were being put at risk.

Here's what he said when asked why more of his colleagues are not willing to come forward to tell us about their experience: He said they are afraid to lose their jobs.

Speaker, these are our front-line emergency responders of our air ambulance service. I ask the minister this: Why should those front-line emergency responders have to be afraid to tell us about their working conditions in this province? I would ask the minister to respond directly to Mr. Kidd and his colleagues on the front lines.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We think it's very important that we have a full airing of what is happening, or what was happening, at Ornge. That's why public accounts is meeting and will continue to meet to hear from people like Mr. Kidd.

I, of course, am paying attention to the hearings. I think it's important that we do continue to improve operations at Ornge. That's why we have Bill 50 before this House. Bill 50 includes whistle-blower protection. I really wish that if the member opposite was genuinely interested in improving the operations at Ornge, he would quit blocking Bill 50 and support it.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, when we raise questions in this House about what's going on at Ornge and why ambulance services cannot respond to emergencies because there are no pilots, because there are no paramedics, because of a faulty interior that doesn't allow paramedics to conduct basic CPR—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member for Peterborough, come to order.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** When we raise those issues, the minister accuses us of playing partisan politics. Mr. Kidd raised those same questions in the public accounts committee today. He told us that little, if anything, has changed.

I would like to know now—she accuses us of being partisan—what does she have to say to Mr. Kidd, who is listening to her now? Is he being partisan as well?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I would like to say to Mr. Kidd and to all the witnesses who have come to testify before public accounts committee, thank you. We think it's important that we have a full airing of the issues around Ornge. I think it's also important to note that the committee does provide protection. I would urge the member opposite to stop suggesting otherwise. Witnesses before the committee do have protection, Speaker.

1040

I also would invite the member opposite to reveal the information that he has, because I don't know why he's hiding information when he has no compunction whatsoever in releasing personal health information.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** One of the reasons that we have the information is that the people out there trust us and they don't trust this government. That's why.

They don't trust this government to take them seriously. That's why those paramedics on the front lines continue to try to find a way to get the message through to this government that they continue to experience down-staffing, that there continue to be circumstances where there are no pilots, where there are not enough paramedics and where they cannot respond to emergency calls.

Now, the minister won't listen to us. She continues to say that everything's fine on the front lines. Will she tell Mr. Trevor Kidd and the paramedics on the front lines today that she will now begin to take some decisive action and restore credibility to our air ambulance service?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** My understanding is that Mr. Kidd did leave Ornge in 2009. I can also tell the member opposite that I have met with several current front-line staff at Ornge. They tell me that they are very encouraged by the changes they are seeing.

I've said in this House before that the new leadership at Ornge is very committed to getting the staffing where it needs to be. They're making great progress and I look forward to hearing from them very soon about the progress they're making in their staffing.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Flight paramedic Trevor Kidd—back to the minister—travelled here from Thunder Bay to testify at the hearings into this Ornge air ambulance scandal. He told us why he no longer works there.

Here's what he said about why the exodus of front-line paramedics and pilots continues today. I'll quote from his statement. "Because they feel that the actions done so far have been to try to minimize political fallout, and have little confidence that serious efforts are being made to improve patient care..."

When we raise these concerns in that tone, we're accused of being partisan. I would like the minister now to explain to Mr. Kidd why all of those people on the front lines still don't have confidence, and what will she do to restore that confidence?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I can tell you that we are very interested in hearing from all of the witnesses. This particular witness has not worked at Ornge since 2009. I can tell you that the paramedics I speak to are encouraged by our progress.

I think it's also important to recognize the work that our front-line staff are doing rather than having them bashed every day in this Legislature.

Just yesterday, 58 patients were transported by Ornge; 58 patients who are grateful for getting to the care they need. Speaker, 50 of those patients were being transferred from one facility to another. There were seven that were transported by land—babies, pediatric patients—and there was one rotor scene response.

This work is ongoing. We have to say thank you to our very dedicated front-line staff.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Well, Speaker, I'd like the minister to listen to these statistics, because they are statistics directly from Thunder Bay—just one base—over the last month. Twenty-nine recorded incidents of downtime: 17 due to no paramedic available for 87 hours; 10 due to no pilot available for a total of 90 hours; two incidents of unscheduled maintenance. The minister can tell me about 50 patients who have been transferred. I'm asking her about the many patients who never received a call, who were never able to be attended to.

I'd like to know this: If in fact it was a member of the minister's family to whom an air ambulance was not able to respond, would she stand in her place and be as glib about this incident as she is today?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It is vitally important that all parts of our health care system are working to their maximum capability. Ornge is making significant progress towards being the very best it can be—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's a scam.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean-Carleton will withdraw.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Withdrawn.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** In the performance agreement that is in place, the new legislation that is currently before the House will give us the information we need to be able to measure exactly the kinds of questions the member opposite is asking. I think it's vitally important that all members of this House acknowledge that Bill 50 is an important piece of moving forward with Ornge. I do not understand why the member opposite continues to criticize but will not be part of the solution.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** What the minister doesn't understand is that this province doesn't need more regulations and regulations; it needs a minister who can hold accountable our air ambulance service. That's what we need.

The reality is that in our hearings so far there are three themes that are developing. One of them is that greed led to waste of precious health care dollars at our air ambulance service. The second is that incompetence and mismanagement have put patients at risk. The third theme is that this government is much more intent on defending itself and diverting attention from itself than it is about getting down to the bottom of fixing what needs to be fixed.

I would suggest to this minister that what she should do now is look carefully at the testimony of Mr. Kidd and others from across this province and admit that she has mishandled this file. What she should do now is either get it fixed or step aside and let someone competent deal with the file.

*Interjections.*

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

Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Of course we're paying very careful attention to all of the people who are testifying before the Ornge inquiry. I think it's important that we also take advice from other non-partisan, impartial experts. That includes the Auditor General of this province. The Auditor General has acknowledged the significant steps that have been taken. His advice is to do what we are doing in Bill 50.

I do not understand why the member opposite continues to hide information that he has on this issue. I do not understand why he rejects the advice of the Auditor General. If he wants to be part of the solution, then stand up and be part of the solution.

*Interjection.*

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

#### POWER PLANT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Acting Premier. A decade ago, the Liberal leader promised to run a different sort of government. He promised, "You have a right to know how your money is being spent. We will make sure you can exercise it."

"We will require that all future contracts signed by the government be subject to public scrutiny."

Does the Liberal government still believe that the people of this province, the people who work hard and pay their electricity bills, have a right to know how their money is being spent?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Yes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Last year, days before an election, the government cancelled construction of a gas-fired generation plant in Mississauga. Since that day, they have refused to tell the people who will pay for that decision how much it's going to cost them.

Ten years ago, the Liberal leader promised, "We will require that all future contracts signed by the government be subject to public scrutiny," and added, "Where legitimate confidentiality concerns prevent certain provisions from being released, we will make them available to the Provincial Auditor to make a public interest ruling."

Why is the government now refusing to do exactly this with regard to the private power plants in Oakville and Mississauga?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** To the Minister of Energy.  
1050

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** We did say, during September, that the plant would not proceed in Mississauga and that we would work to relocate it—a decision, I might add, that was quickly joined in and confirmed by the third party and by the opposition. They've never changed that. And now what we're involved in are those discussions, those negotiations. And there are some lawsuits on both sides of the border relating to those circum-

stances. When they reach a conclusion and we have more to report—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I asked this awhile ago and I'll ask it again: Inside voices, please.

Minister.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** When they reach a conclusion, when we have more to report addressing the issues that are raised by the leader of the third party, I'm looking forward to being able to speak to them at that time.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, contrary to the Minister of Energy's assertions, New Democrats, immediately when that plant was cancelled, contacted the Auditor General and asked him to look into the cost. Via a page, I'll send this letter over to the Minister of Energy so that he can remember how New Democrats reacted to that announcement.

Really, it's pretty simple stuff—it's pretty simple stuff. The people who sent us here are the people who pay the bills. They have a right to know what it is that they're paying for. Building power lines? We're happy to pay for that. Tunnels at Niagara Falls? We're ready to pay. Eighty-million dollar handouts to US hedge funds so the government can win a seat? Not so happy to pay for that. When did the Ontario Liberals so badly lose their way? Where is the Dalton McGuinty of 2002?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** History and the record will confirm, I do believe, that after we announced the intention not to proceed with the gas plant in Mississauga, the third party did support our intention, did not wish the gas plant to proceed; also confirmed by the PCs. They've never changed that position, unless they're now saying to the people of Mississauga and the western GTA that in fact they want it there.

The issue about the results of the very sensitive discussions that we're involved in representing the people of Ontario and the lawsuits where we're representing the people of Ontario—the results of those discussions I look forward to speaking to at the appropriate time.

#### POWER PLANT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** New Democrats have always been against Liberal private power deals from day one.

My next question is to the Acting Premier. There is no question that Ontario is facing tough economic times, but when this minority government asks Ontarians to tighten their belts, it should be setting a good example. Instead, they're proving that price is no object when it comes to protecting their own partisan interests. Will this government explain to Ontarians just how much in taxpayers' dollars they're willing to spend to make the Mississauga gas plant go away?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** The Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** As I indicated to the House, we are in discussions right now about the reloca-

tion of the gas plant that was scheduled for Mississauga and that all three parties agree should not proceed there. Those discussions have not reached a conclusion. There are very sensitive discussions in which the interests of the people of the province of Ontario are at stake, and we're representing those. And there are lawsuits—not surprisingly—on both sides of the border relating to that. As those proceed and as they reach a conclusion, we'll be able to speak to the issues that are raised by the leader of the third party.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The interests of the people of Ontario are the last thing that are on the minds of this Liberal government. It's the interests of the Liberals that are on the mind of this government.

This government is crying poor, but they're acting like the last of the big-time spenders when they cancel the Mississauga plant. It's telling northerners on the one hand that there's no money to protect the ONTC; meanwhile, it's slipping Ontario Power Authority \$82.3 million to pay off a US hedge fund. Why can this government find the dough to save its own bacon but nothing to save a vital transportation link for remote northern communities?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** I'll confine my remarks to the issue about the Mississauga plant, about which, as I recall, the member from Toronto–Danforth, on September 26, 2011, said, “We wouldn't build it.” So we're all on the same page.

It is important that we be able to address these issues as they've reached a conclusion—not in the piecemeal rumours, innuendos, suggestions, but as they reach a conclusion, so at that point we can have a full discussion about the relocation and all of the other attendant issues that I'm sure the leader of the third party will want to ask me about.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Minister of Energy finally got it right: New Democrats wouldn't have gotten into that private power scheme in the first place.

Speaker, either this government doesn't understand what “getting good value for money” means or they just don't care. Families across the province are stretching their hard-earned wages to pay for groceries and to keep the lights on. Meanwhile, this government is giving away money for nothing.

Yesterday, the Minister of Energy dodged every single question about the cost of cancelling the Mississauga power plant. Will this government come clean today and tell Ontarians how much they're prepared to spend to make that Mississauga gas plant go away?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** As I've indicated, both in the House and, of course, at that other place, we're involved in some very sensitive discussions with respect to the Mississauga gas plant. The interests of the people of the province of Ontario are being represented. Those interests won't be assisted if we publicize our position—to the detriment of the interests of the people of the prov-



ince of Ontario—while we're involved in these delicate discussions and the defence and the representation on certain lawsuits. I think it's in the broader interest that we want those to reach a conclusion so that we can speak completely about them at the appropriate time.

In the meantime, we're working very hard on fulfilling the commitment we made not to have the Mississauga gas plant there and to find a place for its relocation.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr. John O'Toole:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, recently leaked cabinet documents reveal that, despite the minister's claims, Ornge remains unable to fulfill its mandate and that serious operational service gaps persist. Sadly, the cabinet document confirms that the people of Durham and indeed Peterborough county have experienced first-hand the inadequacies and failings that you have continued under your leadership.

It is saddening to see that on at least six occasions in the last 19 months, the Ministry of Health has investigated an incident involving a patient from Durham or the Peterborough area. Each and every one of these cases is due to the serious issues that the minister refuses to address. I ask her: Given that we know the minister has ignored warnings and refused to act, how can she justify her continued presence in cabinet?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I think all of us, no matter what side of this House we sit on, have a responsibility to the people of Ontario. One of those responsibilities is to not misrepresent, to not—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister will withdraw.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I withdraw—to not distort information, to not make an inaccurate representation of the information.

We must all realize that each one of these cases that has been revealed by the member from Newmarket–Aurora—this personal information that has been revealed—each one of those is a person with a family, a family that is grieving, that is dealing with the death of a loved one.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Renfrew, come to order.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We owe it to them to let them know the truth, not the political spin.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The minister must answer for her failure in leadership. As a minister of the crown, responsibility for the ongoing compromised patient safety at Ornge rests solely with you.

I'd ask you to look at a specific case. On October 16, 2011, many months after our caucus raised concerns about Ornge, a child from Durham could not be transported by air ambulance to Sick Kids due to the helicopter's faulty interior design. During the land transport, paramedics exhausted supplies of critical medications due to the policies implemented under your team

at Ornge. Paramedics had to make an emergency stop at a hospital to replenish their supplies.

**1100**

What does the minister have to say to the residents and families of Durham who suffered as a result of your failed leadership? They expect that you would apologize and resign.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** These are very, very serious incidents, Speaker. They have all been thoroughly investigated. The information is available to the coroner of Ontario. The coroner has access to information, does a thorough review and can choose, if he determines it's necessary, to order an inquest.

The chief coroner of Ontario had to issue a statement to clarify the inaccurate depiction of this information. He said very clearly, "Of our completed investigations, there have been no cases in which issues with air ambulance transportation materially affected the course of the patient's illness or injury." The family members deserve to hear from the experts.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour le premier ministre par intérim.

This morning, a former paramedic at Ornge, Mr. Trevor Kidd, who's sitting here with us, testified, "I knew there was corruption going on. I knew about the ski boat, the resort. We knew Dr. Mazza had disappeared from the sunshine list. We knew Steve Farquhar's salary had gone up by \$90,000. We knew about Dr. Mazza's girlfriend.... These were the worst-kept secrets at Ornge."

Did his Minister of Health choose to turn a blind eye to all of these events, or was she oblivious to the whole thing?

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

**Hon. John Milloy:** I think it's a matter of public record, the strong action that was taken by the Minister of Health when she learned of the problems that were going on at Ornge, the leadership that she showed.

Mr. Speaker, I find it passing strange—I have here a letter that was sent to the leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party, December 22, 2010, which outlined many of the Ornge business models and the way moving forward. I believe it was copied to the member who just asked the question. So you can turn the question around, Mr. Speaker, and ask, where was the NDP in raising these concerns?

At the same time, we have learned a lot through the committee. We've learned about what happened at the Oshawa airport, that despite the fact that senior aviation experts were saying that you shouldn't go to the Oshawa airport, we had prominent members of the Conservative Party, both provincial and federal members, lobbying Ornge to have it placed in that community.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** At least it was entertaining, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kidd was so concerned about what was happening at Ornge that he actually felt he had to resign. He went to his father, who happens to be the mayor of Temiskaming Shores, Carman Kidd, so that he could ask him to help ring the alarm bells, that what was going on at Ornge was not right. Carman Kidd did help raise the alarm bells. He called the Ministry of Health. He spoke to the director of emergency services. He spoke to Malcolm Bates. He spoke to Kevin Finnerty.

He also called his Liberal MPP. It happened to be David Ramsay at the time. In 2009 he met with him. He met with him again in 2010 and rang the alarm bells. You know what, Mr. Speaker? The more witnesses we hear from, the more red flags we find were raised. Those red flags were raised by Trevor Kidd, Jacob Blum, ministry lawyers. Howard Hampton raised the alarm bell and so did I. Why did the minister ignore the red flags for so many, many years?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, we have a Minister of Health who has taken decisive action to address the concerns at Ornge. We have new leadership at Ornge, Mr. Speaker. We have the Auditor General, who has conducted a thorough review, which is right now being looked at by the public accounts committee. We had forensic auditors who came in, and due to the evidence that they found, the minister brought in the Ontario Provincial Police.

The missing piece of the puzzle, Mr. Speaker, is Bill 50—Bill 50, which brings together the recommendations that were put forward by the auditor. The opposition stands in this Legislature and claims that they want to make changes to Ornge, that they want to have better oversight at Ornge and better accountability. Then I ask them, why are they not supporting Bill 50? Will the New Democratic Party allow Bill 50 to go through so that we can put that final piece in place and make the changes that are necessary at that organization?

## HUNTING AND FISHING

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** My question this morning is to the hard-working and dedicated Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, I understand that Ontario has moved away from the paper-based system of issuing hunting and fishing licences and towards a more efficient and modern licensing system. Many of my constituents in the riding of Peterborough, the headquarters of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, have bought their fishing and/or hunting licences for the season, and they're telling me that the system makes it easier for them to get out and enjoy Ontario's great outdoors.

Minister, can you elaborate, for the members of this House and all Ontarians, on how the new system works and remind those anglers and hunters who have not yet bought one where they can go to get their new licence and Ontario Outdoors Card—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** —like the minister and I did several months ago—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Tennessee: Yours to Discover.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not the time to do that. And this is the way I'd like it.

Minister.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. It was great to be with the MPP for Peterborough when we were at the Outdoors Card centre a couple months ago, getting our Outdoors Cards.

Indeed, we are rolling out a new, modern system that will make it easier for anglers and hunters to get their licences. The new system offers many more options for getting and renewing licences. You can get your fishing and hunting licences online, by phone from the comfort of your home, local store or a ServiceOntario centre.

Since December, almost 1.3 million licences, Outdoors Cards and tags have been sold. I want to report also that all 69 ServiceOntario centres that are selling hunting and fishing licences are up and running. Over 867 private issuers are currently using the new system.

Hunting and fishing is a tremendous way for Ontarians to get out and experience the great outdoors and also a great contributor to our economy, and we ask more people to use the new system.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Speaker, we won't need a late show with that comprehensive answer. Thank you, Minister, for sharing the detailed information on our new licensing system.

Minister, both opposition parties have made claims that there are privacy risks, as the company contracted to manage our new and more efficient hunting and fishing licensing system is based in the United States. They claim that the information held by the company may be used inappropriately or accessed through the Patriot Act.

Minister, the Information and Privacy Commissioner was at Queen's Park Monday to table her annual report in the Legislature. I understand she spoke about this very important issue.

Minister, I know that you have on numerous occasions expressed confidence in the privacy provisions that are built into our government's contract. Based on what the privacy commissioner said yesterday, should hunters and anglers still be concerned that their privacy is at risk?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** That's a great question, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond. Indeed, the privacy commissioner was here at Queen's Park, and she did make very specific reference to the issue that had come up related to privacy. She told us she will also be presenting us with a report on that issue, and we look forward to that report and any recommendations she may have.

She also had a chance to express her support for the work MNR is doing to ensure the privacy of Ontarians remains very safe. Specifically on MNR's contractual agreement with the company, the commissioner said, "There's a very tight contract. There are very tight service provisions.... And there's an audit provision so that

their use of data will be carefully audited.... I have no concerns about that whatsoever.”

Speaker, we welcome the comments made by the commissioner. We will certainly continue to work cooperatively to address any future concerns or questions that she may have.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Minister of Health. I rise today not to question the minister's ability to manage Ornge or emergency dispatching in Waterloo region, because let's be honest: We all know she has miserably failed at both. Instead, I rise today to question the minister's ability to manage basic correspondence.

Minister, Waterloo region chair Ken Seiling sent you a letter dated February 10, calling on you and your government to address serious problems with emergency dispatching in the region of Waterloo. But here we are, four months later, and you haven't even replied to the region's concerns.

1110

Minister, my question today is simple: Do you have any plans to respond to this important public safety concern raised by elected officials at Waterloo region, yes or no?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I take my correspondence very seriously, and there are issues that are raised that deserve a thoughtful, thorough reply. This particular piece of correspondence is one of them. I can assure you that I am aware of this correspondence, and we will be replying to Mr. Seiling when we have a complete and full answer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Again to the minister: I guess four months later is better late than never, I suppose.

Just last year, confusion between emergency dispatching centres led to a significant delay in both the land and Ornge air ambulance response to a fatal helicopter crash in the region of Waterloo. This should have been a wake-up call for the Liberal government, especially since the region has been pleading for the province's help.

Speaker, the problem gets even worse. The letter I'm holding here was also c.c.'d to John Milloy, the member for Kitchener Centre, but he has decided to ignore the region's concerns as well. Since the member for Kitchener Centre has completely failed as a regional minister to stand up for the people in Waterloo region, the PC Party will.

Minister, how can the people of Waterloo region have any faith in your government when you and your colleagues continue to overlook these life-and-death matters?

*Interjections.*

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

I am very concerned about the continuation of comments after we start to get quiet—to be used as a moment

in which you believe that's the best time for you to heckle. It isn't.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It isn't from you either.

My frustration isn't the fact that there's heckling; my frustration is the fact that you yourself should be controlling yourselves. If you want me to do it, you will not like it.

Minister.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** When the member raised this issue a week or two ago, I spoke to him privately and I told him in the House that we actually are piloting something pretty exciting in Kitchener–Waterloo, and that is simultaneous dispatch, where the firefighters and the ambulances will be notified simultaneously so that care can get to people as quickly as possible. This is an important move forward, Speaker.

The request from Mr. Seiling, as I understand it, is to have all emergency notified at once. That is a very significant departure from where we are now, Speaker. We are looking at ways to improve response times, and I think simultaneous dispatch is a very exciting option. I'm pleased that it will be piloted first in Kitchener–Waterloo.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Economic Development. Finding a job is a worry to thousands of people in southwestern Ontario. There are 23,000 people out of work in London, and Windsor's unemployment rates remain in the double digits. Can families in southwestern Ontario, who are worried about their jobs, expect the southwestern economic development bill to become law this spring?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I want to thank the member for that friendly question. It's important, I think, that people throughout southwestern Ontario are made aware of the status of the southwestern Ontario development fund, because, unfortunately, it's locked in this Legislature right now, waiting for third reading, because the PC Party has been ringing the bells. It hasn't allowed that very important piece of legislation to pass. The result is, because the PC Party do not support the investments that we want to make, and the NDP support, in southwestern Ontario, those investments at this point in time are being delayed. Jobs, important jobs, in southwestern Ontario are not being created.

I join with the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, in urging the PC Party to let us get that bill through this Legislature.

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Let us support the economy in southwestern Ontario.

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Let us support the workers—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Another reminder to all members that when I say, “Thank you,” that is the end of your answer or question.

Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I'd appreciate it if you'd say it sooner—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'd appreciate it if you'd stop it.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Back to the Minister of Economic Development: This government said that passing the southwestern economic development bill was an urgent priority. The government House leader said: "Southwestern Ontario needs this sort of support sooner rather than later.... We want to get it through the Legislature."

And the Liberal MPP for Windsor West said: "I ... hope this fund is up and running in the spring."

New Democrats agree that we should be getting this fund up and running now, so why is this government dragging its heels, unlikely to pass its own bill before this session ends next week?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It was fully our intention, and we expressed that, to have that money flowing into southwestern Ontario, and into eastern Ontario, for that matter, by this June. But because of the tactics of the PC Party, because of their lack of support for jobs in southwestern Ontario and eastern Ontario—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds–Grenville will withdraw.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I withdraw.

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** But let me exchange quotes with the member opposite, because she had some good quotes. I have some as well.

This is a quote from Mayor John Grace, from the London Free Press, and this is what he had to say: "It is the wrong time to be playing politics, the wrong time to hold this up. The last thing we need here is another stall tactic."

That's all we've had from the party opposite, Mr. Speaker, is stall tactics. We need to move forward and create jobs in southwestern Ontario.

#### CHILDHOOD OBESITY

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, getting our children to eat right and exercise is the best way to confront the growing childhood obesity. But as a mother of a 14-year-old, I know how hard it can be sometimes to get our kids to eat right and exercise. That is why this government has started programs such as EatRight Ontario, the Healthy Schools initiative, and curriculum revisions.

But, Minister, there's still more to be done, and I understand that is why you're striking a Healthy Kids panel. Could you tell this House how this panel will help reduce childhood obesity in Ontario?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville for this very important question. I'm very proud to say that the government is making the right choice to reduce the rate of childhood

obesity in this province. We've committed to the ambitious goal to reduce the rate by 20% over five years.

But in order to achieve this goal, we cannot work alone. We must work closely with all of the sectors that have a role to play in reducing childhood obesity. These include our schools, industry, communities, other levels of government and others.

The panel members are independent experts. They're recognized leaders in their fields. They possess important qualities which will be beneficial to their work. They've got an expertise and knowledge of the factors that influence obesity rates, a demonstrated commitment to address childhood obesity, and they are champions and leaders who will really drive this change we need.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you, Minister. The creation of this panel, Minister, depends on the collaboration of a number of stakeholders who are interested in reducing childhood obesity. I know this panel has generated a lot of interest in my own riding, with groups like TransformNation doing a lot of the grassroots work on this.

Minister, can you tell me and the House, why is it important to tackle childhood obesity?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It's a bit of a cliché, but it's true that the children are the future of this province. Addressing the factors that contribute to obesity early in a person's life helps reduce the likelihood of being overweight and obese in adolescence and adulthood.

Childhood obesity is strongly linked to increased risk of hypertension, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, gall bladder disease, stroke, and certain types of cancer, including breast and colon cancer. Working to find ways to reduce and prevent childhood obesity will greatly change the lives of many children in this province and will also reduce the burden on our Ontario health care system in years to come.

Bringing together this panel of experts from diverse backgrounds offers Ontario a unique opportunity. By the end of this year, the panel will provide me with a set of prioritized, evidence-based recommendations that build on existing initiatives and create new ones.

1120

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question this morning is for the Minister of Finance. Earlier this winter, you proudly announced that slots operations would be shut down at Ontario's racetracks by March 31, 2013. You then announced that slot machines would be removed from the province's three border racetracks—Fort Erie, Windsor and Hiawatha—on April 30, 2012.

Sadly, following its annual board meeting yesterday, the Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium said that Fort Erie Race Track would close permanently, putting hundreds of hard-working men and women out of work.

Minister, please inform the over 60,000 people employed by the horse racing industry what your plan is for

them now that you have single-handedly destroyed their industry and their livelihoods.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, so the Legislature—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Maybe they can go to work at GM.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Last year, horse racing at Fort Erie received \$8.6 million from the slots-at-racetracks subsidy. Above and beyond that—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Above and beyond that, the government provided an additional \$6 million over the past three years.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, second time.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** And above that, the government provided another \$1 million from economic development and trade.

Earlier this year, the member for Niagara Falls asked for a business plan—

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** For a member who has spoken passionately about corporate welfare, this simply wasn't sustainable. The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs will have more to say about the people in the industry very shortly, but make no mistake, unlike you when you were—

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

Before I move to the supplementary, I will now tell you that I will look to each member and start identifying you, which will lead to a warning. The warning is only one.

Supplementary, please.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Since the MPP from Niagara Falls won't stand up in his place and ask the tough questions on behalf of his constituents, I will. I would again direct my question to the Minister of Finance.

The historic Fort Erie Race Track's first day of operation was Wednesday, June 16, 1897—and sadly, the final day of racing will be October 30. This is a racetrack that has survived not only the Great Depression but also two world wars and other turbulence throughout its long and storied history. Unfortunately the 115-year-old racetrack will be joining the Windsor Raceway in line for mothballing by this minister. What is your plan for the hundreds of men and women in Fort Erie and Windsor who now find themselves out of work as a result of your poor decisions?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** That member's party, when it came to saving GM, said, "Let 400,000 jobs be lost." Shame on you. That member—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Minister.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** That member ought to stand up for his riding. Instead of blocking the southwest Ontario economic development fund, he ought to let it be passed.

I'll remind the member opposite that the mayors of London and other southwestern Ontario communities wrote him directly and said that he doesn't have a clue when it comes to horse racing.

We are making the right choices. There will continue to be a horse racing industry. The only difference is that it will be strong and viable and self-supporting. It won't be reliant on handouts from a government that prefers to close hospitals and fund racetracks. Their priorities are wrong, they're different from ours and—

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

#### MERCURY POISONING

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** My question is to the Acting Premier. For decades, the communities of Grassy Narrows and White Dog First Nation have been dealing with the after-effects of mercury poisoning. A new study by the world's leading mercury poisoning scientist, Dr. Harada, shows that 59% of community members are suffering from the effects of this poisoning, including 44% of those who were born after the dumping of mercury had ended. Despite that, despite the cessation of dumping, this proves that the poisoning continues.

Now we find out that this poisoning will affect many generations. They are forced to rely on scientists in Japan to monitor their health and the impact because this government walked away in the 1990s. Will this government act immediately to sit down with Grassy Narrows and White Dog to listen to their concerns?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** To the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** First of all, let me say that this is a dreadful situation that never should have happened. The dumping that happened in the 1960s and 1970s never should have happened.

I welcome the people in the gallery who have come. I will be going out to the front lawn today to meet with them. What I commit is that I will do everything I can to re-engage the federal government and the community in a conversation about this situation.

I have received the report. I have had a chance to look at it. I know that there's a lot of work that has been done—mercury levels are down about 87%—but there's still a consumption advisory in place on the fish. That's why it's very important that we continue this conversation. But I will say to the member opposite: We weren't in office in the 1990s, and so the decisions that were made in the 1990s are not the decisions that we have made.

What we have said is, we want to engage the community. In the supplementary, I will go through the sequence of initiatives that we've taken.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean–Carleton, come to order.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Residents from both communities have travelled thousands of kilometres to the Legislature today, and as the minister pointed out, they are joining us here in the members' gallery this morning. They wanted to meet with the Premier, but they received no response.

In the 1980s, a compensation fund was set up for community members to help them deal with the after-effects of this poisoning. Unfortunately, many have found it nearly impossible to access the compensation that they deserve. In one case, a woman who was used as the test case in court to prove the existence of mercury poisoning has not even received compensation herself.

I ask again: Will this government meet with Grassy Narrows First Nation to address mercury poisoning instead of dodging their basic responsibilities?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Absolutely. I will stand in for the Premier and I will be meeting with the community; absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to be clear that on April 21, 2010, the then minister met with a community delegation led by Chief Simon Fobister. In June 2010, we formed an inter-ministerial working group to look at the issues that had come out of the Harada report. In June 2011, staff from my ministry met with Chief Fobister on the community's concerns. Since then, we've been waiting for a response from the community to set up that next meeting. That needs to happen. If the communication has not been in place and we need to reach out and set up that meeting, that's what we will do, because that ADM committee needs to have the input of the community so we understand the situation better.

I'll be talking to the folks on the lawn today. I will be having that conversation, and we will re-engage; absolutely.

#### FIRST NATIONS

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** My question is also for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Minister, a big part of the work of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is to work with First Nations and the federal government to find solutions to long-standing historical grievances. Just recently, we saw a settlement with the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation to resolve a flooding claim stemming from events that happened over 100 years ago.

Can the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs tell us more about Ontario's general approach to resolving these types of historical grievances?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm really very pleased to be able to talk about the claims process, because it's one of the ways in which we're working to build those stronger relationships with the aboriginal community.

The successful resolution of the flooding claim that my colleague mentioned will create a positive economic environment for Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation as well as for the regional economy and for nearby communities,

because I think it's important to understand that the land claims process doesn't just affect the First Nation but affects the broader community as well.

We're acting on the recommendations of the Ipperwash inquiry, which we set up, to strengthen relationships.

Land claim negotiations, we believe, are by far the preferable alternative to litigation. Negotiation settlements result in enduring solutions. They strengthen relationships and they provide certainty for aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities.

1130

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I'm pleased to learn about Ontario's approach in taking its responsibility to work with First Nations, the federal government and local communities to settle these types of historic land claims.

Speaker, I understand that eastern Ontario is actually home to the largest territory subject to a claim currently under negotiation in Ontario. The Algonquin land claim has been under negotiation since 1994, and Ontarians are beginning to ask questions as to the status of that negotiation.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Could the minister please provide an update and let us know what the settlement of this long-standing land claim will mean for communities in eastern Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I guess the first thing I want to say about that eastern Ontario land claim is that public consultation is an integral part of the process. I was asked this week, earlier, by the fishers and anglers whether there would be ongoing public consultation, and indeed that is our commitment. That will happen.

Canada, Ontario and the Algonquins of Ontario are working together to resolve a comprehensive land claim through a negotiated settlement, and it will produce, at its completion, Ontario's first modern-day, constitutionally protected treaty. This is a major, major process.

Again, settlement of the claim will provide certainty for the Algonquins of Ontario regarding rights but also to the larger community regarding land and natural resources. It will improve eastern Ontario's business climate, and it will allow the Algonquin people and their neighbours to work together.

Public consultation is ongoing and will be comprehensive.

#### JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Attorney General. Last Saturday, an individual out on bail unleashed a reign of terror in the Eaton Centre. We now know that Mr. Husbands was on house arrest, related to a sexual assault charge stemming from a November 2010 incident. Minister, yesterday, when referring to the house arrest system in the province of Ontario, you said you think the system is working well. Do you believe the victims of the Eaton Centre rampage believe that?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** First of all, obviously, our thoughts and prayers go out to all of the victims who were involved last Saturday in this very tragic event.

The system of bail that we have in the province of Ontario and in Canada has been in existence since the mid-1970s, and it has existed that way under all governments of this province and of this country, Speaker.

It is the responsibility of the judiciary, under the Bail Reform Act, to set out the conditions of bail that are applicable in a particular situation. In this particular situation, bail was granted. An order was made—we can't release the terms of that—by the court etc., but that's the situation that the gentleman was under. The matter of the trial that he was involved with started some time ago, and it is to continue later on this month with respect to the sexual assault charge.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Minister, the people of Ontario are absolutely disturbed, but now they're looking for answers. The individual had a history of criminal activity. Someone known to police for having a violent history killed a 24-year-old man and randomly shot several others, including a 13-year-old boy who was shot in the head. You have a responsibility to ensure that all available conditions are imposed when individuals refuse to comply with their bail conditions.

Minister, how can you say that the bail system is working when it leads to one man dead and several victims?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** First of all, the rules relating to bail, that have been in existence for the last 35 years, are part of the federal system of laws that we administer at the provincial level, Speaker.

The first trial date with respect to this particular issue—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** —before the court on right now, was set in September 2011. That trial is continuing.

There have been many individuals who are out on bail under a system that has worked relatively well since the mid-1970s, Speaker. Obviously, in this particular case, something happened last Saturday that never should have happened. The system of bail that we have has worked relatively well in the province of Ontario for the last 35 years.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. The King family in my riding have five-year-old twins diagnosed with autism. Dr. King and his wife wanted the best possible life for their twins, so they paid out of pocket, at great financial cost, for the IBI therapy, and they sat on a wait-list. Finally, after years of waiting, they're being told their kids are no longer eligible, because they've become proficient at cognitive tests being used as the sole determinant for therapy. Does the minister think that this situation sounds just?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I thank the member opposite for the question. Obviously, the services that we provide for families with children with autism are a high priority of

this government. That's why, in fact, since 2003, we've quadrupled the resources that we've provided to these services: the important IBI programs that the member opposite references. I'd be happy to discuss this specific issue with the member opposite to—I'm not familiar with the specific case, but I do want to say that as well, last year, we added an additional \$25 million in funding for ABA treatment, which this individual may be eligible for. It's an important option available for families with children with autism. It's an option, actually, that often is a preferable one for families that they choose for a variety of reasons.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** The therapy is being denied solely on the basis of an IQ test, ignoring the behaviour issues, which also greatly impact opportunities for these kids. Even worse, it seems the criteria being used in our region—in Niagara—are not the same as what's being used in other parts of the province.

Does the minister think that it is fair that the eligibility for IBI therapy is dependent upon the region in which you live rather than on the benefit that it would bring to these children?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you again. I have to admit that the characterization of this particular challenge does not make sense to me in terms of the policies that are in place across the province. I want to say, in terms of eligibility as well as the decision taken when IBI or ABA is no longer being provided to a specific child, that there are important measures in place. Obviously, we talked to the organization, and ultimately it's the organization providing the services that provides us with the guidance and advice in terms of whether that service is useful.

But we're also setting up a clinical expert committee to help us give a greater role to families so that it's taken away from any sort of centralized decision-making process. In fact, it's experts who provide guidance to the families and to the organizations involved, to determine in fact whether a particular service is being of benefit to that child. But again, I'm happy to talk about this specific case.

#### UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Today in question period, I heard a couple of times where comments were made about other members. I find them disturbing. I would wish, as a caution and maybe as reflection, that we think twice before we make accusations towards another member of their duties.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1138 to 1500.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** It's my pleasure today to welcome Kelly MacDougall and Chris Bedwell—they're self-advocates who are here today to join us in the House—as

well as Connie Harrison and William Easter. Thank you for coming and welcome to the House today.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### CONCERNS IN PERTH–WELLINGTON

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Earlier this year I sent a newsletter to all my constituents. The response was very positive, especially on the survey that people sent back by mail and online. Here's just a sample of what people are saying.

Kevin from St. Pauls writes, "We just want our governments to live within their means and pay the bills." The most important issue to Joe from Listowel is, "Making sure that the province has a secure future." Rick from St. Marys is concerned about apprenticeship ratios. Roger from Stratford agrees. He also writes that the cost of energy, taxes, CPP premiums, EI premiums, stat holidays, insurance, fuel, accounting, legal, paperwork, maintenance and now mandatory WSIB, are all too high.

My constituent Darrel says, "Other countries are putting these wind turbine projects on hold but we are blindly going forward."

More than 77% of respondents agreed that our communities need a greater say over the placement of industrial wind turbines. Thinking of their personal economic circumstances, 38% of respondents are not confident in the future, and that's very troubling. Over 60% believe that the provincial government is in general on the wrong track.

I am very pleased that so many of my constituents took time to respond with their ideas and concerns. I certainly am honoured to serve them. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Members' statements? The member from Trinity–Spadina

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario"—14,000 people have signed this petition—"Whereas the Ontario government has closed most of Ontario Place to plan"—

**Interjection:** Members' statements.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Oh, sorry. Members' statements. I beg your pardon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you very much. You're ahead of yourself.

We'll restart the clock.

### EVENTS IN KIRKLAND LAKE

**Mr. John Vanthof:** On Friday, June 1, I had the opportunity to attend the opening ceremonies and walk a few laps in the Kirkland Lake edition of the Relay for Life—in the rain. As we all know, this event is held to recognize those who have fought, those who are fighting and those who will fight and someday beat the disease that has touched all of us, cancer.

The irony of the rain falling on this evening was not lost on the walkers. For weeks, people from Kirkland

Lake had been praying for rain. The town had been under a state of emergency since Sunday, May 20, when Kirkland Lake number 8, as the fire was to be known, came perilously close to levelling the town's main employer and threatening the town itself. A quick response from the MNR fire crews diverted the first wave of flames, but the threat persisted. Emergency Management Ontario, the OPP, town staff and many others prepared plans for a mass evacuation. It all depended on the direction of the wind and on the efforts of the firefighters in the forest and in the air.

Three hundred people were forced out of their homes for over a week. I have never experienced anything quite like it. People seemed to go about their business like any other day, but the mood at the Tim Hortons was different. Someone compared it to waiting for a hurricane. In the end the wind held, the fire was contained and disaster was averted. It had been a long 10 days.

As I drove home, the signs posted along Kirkland's main street, known locally as the Mile of Gold, said it all: "Thank you, firefighters." And on that rainy evening, thank you, walkers.

### TREE CANOPY

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** I'd like to stand and applaud the work of Mark Cullen and a group of not-for-profit coalition members, 12 of whom are working together to deal with the issue of the tree canopy in Toronto, especially in the GTA area.

Our GTA is expected to grow by 2.7 million people over the next 30 years. As our population grows and the building projects happen, our trees are certainly in jeopardy. A tree requires 500 square feet of root space. Currently, our Toronto tree canopy stores 1.1 million metric tonnes of carbon, and our trees intercept 1,430 metric tonnes of air pollutants each year as well as absorb stormwater runoff. They also drive up our property values and put money in our pockets because trees, in particular, reduce the amount of energy used in our own homes. They can either shade or they can provide, during the winter months, certain conditions as well.

The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that we need to do something. We're losing our trees. They're down 19%—the emerald ash borer, in particular. And trees are an integral part of what we need throughout Ontario, but in particular in our urban settings.

Mark Cullen and the group are doing an absolutely superb job by helping to restore that canopy in the GTA. I'd like to applaud their work, and I'm pleased to be able to say I'm part of that coalition.

### D-DAY ANNIVERSARY

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I stand today on the 68th anniversary of D-Day in honour of the 14,000 men of the 3rd Canadian Division and the 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade.

In the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, with great courage, these men stormed the near-impassable barrier



of Hitler's Atlantic wall. That day, as part of the Allied forces effort, some 130,000 Allied troops landed on the shores of Normandy. At Juno Beach, the tenacity of Canadian troops quickly overwhelmed the surprised Nazi forces. In doing so, our troops helped to establish an 80-kilometre beachhead with Allied forces, a turning point that would lead to the eventual defeat of Germany in the Second World War.

Last June 6th, I had the opportunity to travel to Juno Beach and visit that hallowed ground. I stood on the sands where those brave young Canadians and others fought their way so ferociously through the killing zone of German artillery, and where 344 soldiers made that ultimate sacrifice by giving their lives in the fight to liberate Europe.

I ask today, as we tend to the business of our individual lives, that each of us reflects upon the past service and sacrifice of our veterans in all conflicts, and we give thanks for their determination and commitment to protecting our traditions of freedom, justice and democracy.

#### BOOK PUBLISHERS

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Today I rise in support of Ontario's book publishers. I'm thrilled to be going on a publishing tour this Friday, and I look forward to learning more about the fantastic work publishers are doing in Trinity-Spadina.

My community is overflowing with talented writers. Book publishers help encourage these writers and promote their work to new audiences.

Canadian publishers are champions of local writers. Without these strong local voices, we might not see ourselves reflected back in the books we read. That would be an enormous loss to our sense of shared identity as Canadians.

The cultural benefits of Ontario's publishing industry cannot be understated, but book publishers also have a tremendous impact on our economy. Book publishing provides Ontario with \$1 billion in annual revenues and 5,600 direct jobs. In fact, 80% of our Canadian book publishers are based right here in Ontario.

Robertson Davies, a great Canadian writer, said, "A truly great book should be read in youth, again in maturity and once more in old age, as a fine building should be seen by morning light, at noon and by moonlight." I agree.

We need to make sure readers will continue to find these great books by supporting a strong local publishing industry here in Ontario.

#### ONTARIO CRAFT BEER WEEK

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** This year marks the third annual Ontario Craft Beer Week, which celebrates Ontario's small and independent brewers and the quality local products they produce.

Starting June 17, until June 23, Ontario's 29 independent breweries will be hosting many community events to introduce and promote their locally crafted beers.

Ontarians will have the opportunity to enjoy premium products at their neighbourhood pubs, restaurants, event venues and service clubs.

My riding of Oak Ridges-Markham is home to the King Brewery, a local craft brewery established in 2002 in the town of Nobleton. The King Brewery is focused on tradition and craftsmanship and seeks to be recognized as a leader in the premium beer market. I'm proud to say that it placed first at the Speaker's annual beer-tasting reception, with many enjoying the brewery's unique King Pilsner in the golden lagers, pilsners and light beer category.

Over the years, Ontario Craft Beer Week has grown in size and scope, now offering over 150 premium beers, the opportunity to personally meet local producers, and great food and entertainment.

I encourage Ontarians to get to know what products their local communities have to offer. There's a new mobile application that helps people find their local breweries. Simply go to my Facebook page to download the app for your smart phone.

1510

#### MINING VIDEO AWARDS

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Last night, I had the pleasure of attending So You Think You Know Mining awards gala hosted by the Ontario Mining Association and held at the Royal Ontario Museum. So You Think You Know Mining is a high school video competition in which students from across the province submit videos highlighting the importance of mining in our lives.

In its fourth year, the competition is growing rapidly. This year, 135 videos were received, and the students were competing for over \$33,000 in prize money.

Scott Keyes from London won the \$5,000 grand prize for his video *The Melodic Miners*, and Brooklyn Vercruyssen and Jeremy Keith were runners-up.

Awards were also taken home by Hananeel Robertson, Andy Le, Peter Lilly, Leah Gosselin, Braedan Lee, Amin Khajehnassiri, Erind Zaganjori, Omar Hoblos and Cody Trites.

Mining is one of our most powerful economic drivers in this province. It creates high-paying, high-skilled jobs and provides the resources that keep this province running.

Not only are these bright young students educating themselves as to the opportunities and possibilities in mining, but they're educating others as well.

I want to offer my congratulations to each of the nominees and winners and to everyone who submitted a video and thank the Ontario Mining Association for hosting this event.

#### DARSHAN SINGH BAINS

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** Professor Darshan Singh Bains was editor and owner of *Ajit Weekly* newspaper in Toronto.

Dr. Singh was born in India, where he worked as an educator. In Canada, he started the *Ajit Weekly* news-

paper, which is now published at four locations: Ontario, British Columbia, New York and California.

He was a role model in Punjabi media and a strong voice for multiculturalism; never afraid to speak the truth and a defender of the underprivileged.

He was the architect and organizer of the World Punjabi Conference, a forum to introduce the Punjabi language and culture to the world. It also helped the young generation of Punjabi-speaking people to connect with their culture and language.

He also championed the Kalm Language Development Foundation of North America, a group dedicated to the development of the Punjabi language worldwide. He authored seven books in English and Punjabi.

On May 18, 2012, he lost his battle with cancer. He's survived by his wife, Kanwaljit Kaur, and sons Sunny and Vinni.

Dr. Bains will be missed. Rest in peace, Dr. Bains.

#### FLOODING IN THUNDER BAY

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I want to take time today to offer, on behalf of our caucus, our sympathies to the victims of the recent flooding to hit Thunder Bay. I also want to pay tribute to the spirit of generosity the community has shown through the wake of this disaster.

When I spoke earlier with Mayor Keith Hobbs, a friend of mine, he estimated that the basements of 1,000 homes were flooded after more than 100 millimetres of rain hit the city last week. He said that that was more rain than they had in the entire month of May of any other year. This has, of course, crippled the city's sewage treatment plant, which only made matters worse.

The city of Thunder Bay declared a state of emergency and has asked the provincial government to make an official disaster declaration.

I want to say to the mayor, the council, the city staff and all of the EMS personnel, they deserve the support for their efforts to assist those affected by this situation.

The Salvation Army and the Red Cross launched national appeals for help in the wake of the flooding, and people have responded.

As a fellow northerner, I would say that the aftermath of this will linger for weeks, if not years, and I urge all of us Ontarians to do what we can to help those affected.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move its adoption.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Mr. Miller from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts presents the committee's report as follows and moves its adoption:

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts met on Wednesday, June 6, 2012, to consider the 2012 Special Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario on Ornge Air Ambulance and Related Services.

During this meeting the committee adopted a motion requesting that the House authorize the Speaker to issue his warrant for the appearance of Dr. Chris Mazza, former president and CEO of Ornge, before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, in room number 151, Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, July 18, 2012. That Dr. Chris Mazza produce all documents relating to the 2012 Special Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario on Ornge Air Ambulance and Related Services. That, if necessary the warrant can be delivered to Dr. Chris Mazza's attorney, Roger D. Yachetti, QC.

Your committee therefore requests that the House authorize the Speaker to issue his warrant, as provided in section 35 of the Legislative Assembly Act, requiring the appearance of Dr. Chris Mazza, before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Miller presents the committee's report and moves its adoption.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly it is the will of the public accounts committee to get Dr. Chris Mazza, who is a central, key figure in the Ornge air ambulance investigation, to come before the committee to answer questions. A Speaker's warrant has previously been issued, but we were not able to have Dr. Mazza come before the committee because of some ongoing health concerns. It is looking like he may very well be able to come in mid-summer, and we are very much interested in seeing him. That's why this request for a Speaker's warrant has been put forward in the report.

I would move adjournment of the debate.

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

*Debate adjourned.*

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Building Code Act, 1992 with respect to the height of wood frame buildings / Projet de loi 52, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1992 sur le code du bâtiment en ce qui a trait à la hauteur des bâtiments à ossature de bois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2012

#### LOI DE 2012 SUR LA PROTECTION DES GRANDS LACS

Mr. Bradley moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 100, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin / Projet de loi 100, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

**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?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I'll confine that to the time dedicated for ministerial statements.

### BALANCED BUDGET AND DEBT LIMIT ACT, 2012

#### LOI DE 2012 SUR L'ÉQUILIBRE BUDGÉTAIRE ET LA LIMITATION DE LA DETTE

Mr. Leone moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 101, An Act to enact the Balanced Budget Act, 2012 and to amend the Financial Administration Act / Projet de loi 101, Loi édictant la Loi de 2012 sur l'équilibre budgétaire et modifiant la Loi sur l'administration financière.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

1520

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

**Mr. Rob Leone:** This bill is going to reintroduce the Balanced Budget Act, 1999, that was repealed in December 2004. In addition to mandating that the government balance its books by the fiscal year 2018-19 or else face a pay cut, this bill also seeks to put a maximum limit to the amount of debt that we can incur in the province of Ontario to 50% of GDP.

### EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT (BLOCKER PADS), 2012

#### LOI DE 2012 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ÉDUCATION (BLOQUEURS)

Mr. Jackson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 102, An Act to amend the Education Act to restrict the use of blocker pads / Projet de loi 102, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation pour restreindre l'utilisation de bloqueurs.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** This bill is essentially an amendment to the Education Act that will ban foam blocker pads similar to those used in sports throughout Ontario's school system. It will be exempt for the use of sport.

Foam blocker pads can be defined as movable pads that are made of foam or a similar material that are designed to provide a barrier to impede the movement of a person. It would be an offence for a person to use a blocker pad to impede the movement of another person on school premises or in any other school-related activity except if the other person is engaging in a school-related sporting activity where a blocker pad is required to assure the safety of the other person.

This also would require reporting of violations of the act.

### GREAT LAKES SHORELINE RIGHT OF PASSAGE ACT, 2012

#### LOI DE 2012 SUR LE DROIT DE PASSAGE SUR LE LITTORAL DES GRANDS LACS

Mr. Craitor moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to create a right of passage along the shoreline of the Great Lakes / Projet de loi 103, Loi créant un droit de passage le long du littoral des Grands Lacs.

**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. Kim Craitor:** The bill creates a right of passage along the shoreline of the Great Lakes between the water's edge and the high-water mark. The right is limited as specified in the bill. In layman's language, what it simply says is that the people of Ontario have the right to walk along our Great Lakes, along the shoreline. This bill will ensure that there's a right of passage established and it will determine the conditions under which people are allowed to enjoy the Great Lakes by walking along their shoreline.

I'm pleased to introduce it again for the third time.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Contrary to popular belief, you can also be told to stop heckling outside of question period.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### PROTECTION OF GREAT LAKES

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The speech from the throne in November 2011 stated our government's commitment to develop a Great Lakes Protection Act. Today, I have

the honour of introducing proposed legislation that, if passed, would help restore and protect the Great Lakes so that they stay drinkable, swimmable and fishable.

From the earliest days of the First Nations, the story of our province has unfolded through our connection to, and dependence on, our Great Lakes and their many tributary rivers and streams. Holding one fifth of the world's surface freshwater resources, home to biologically rich ecosystems, they have supplied our drinking water, powered our towns and cities, irrigated our farms, filled our fishers' nets, cooled our factories and provided countless hours of recreation, relaxation and spiritual sustenance for Ontario families and visitors alike. Our Great Lakes are the great keystone of our economy and quality of life.

Ontario has long worked to protect the Great Lakes. Levels of many toxic chemicals have been reduced. Polluted hot spots have been cleaned up in Collingwood Harbour and Severn Sound on Georgian Bay, and Wheatley Harbour on Lake Erie. And we have seen the return of bald eagles and Atlantic salmon to Lake Ontario. These are heartening accomplishments, and members on all sides of the House can justly feel pride in them.

But population growth and emerging issues, including new chemicals of concern, invasive species, pollution and climate change, are stressing the Great Lakes. New challenges are overwhelming old solutions. That is why our government is introducing the proposed Great Lakes Protection Act today.

The proposed act, an enabling act, would, if passed, provide new tools for the Ontario government to protect beaches, wetlands and other coastal areas of the Great Lakes, and the waterways that flow into them. It would establish a Great Lakes guardians' council. The council would be chaired by the Minister of the Environment and would include other ministers with Great Lakes responsibilities as well as representatives of municipalities, First Nations and Métis communities, and other stakeholders. The council would identify provincial Great Lakes improvement priorities and focus resources on addressing these provincial priorities.

The proposed act would authorize the Minister of the Environment to set targets and to require public bodies to develop and implement initiatives to address particular Great Lakes problems. The proposed act would be accompanied by a Great Lakes community action fund. The fund would help volunteers to undertake improvement projects in their corner of the Great Lakes. A cottagers' association could conduct a spring cleanup project to remove trash from a stretch of shoreline or wetland. A service organization could organize a weekly beach patrol to keep beaches clear of flotsam and jetsam throughout the warmer-weather months. A fishing club could sponsor tree plantings along the shores of a tributary stream to shade and cool the water, improving sport fish habitat.

We are committed to working with all orders of government, with aboriginal communities and with our partners and municipalities, business leaders, scientists,

community groups and environmental organizations to protect and restore the Great Lakes. I encourage all members of the House to stand with us and be true guardians of the Great Lakes. Thank you.

## NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

### JOURNÉE NATIONALE DES AUTOCHTONES

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm very pleased to rise to acknowledge National Aboriginal Day on June 21, and I'm very pleased that a number of the people from Grassy Narrows who have made their way to Queen's Park have joined us in the Legislature.

This day is an opportunity to learn about the rich heritage and contributions of aboriginal people in Ontario and across Canada. It is my privilege as the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs for Ontario to work daily in partnership with individuals and communities who are committed to the success of aboriginal people in Ontario.

J'ai rencontré des personnes autochtones qui contribuent grandement à notre province chaque jour.

I've met many aboriginal people who are making enormous contributions to this province every day.

#### 1530

Mr. Speaker, aboriginal youth are the fastest-growing segment of our population and an important part of Ontario's future. More than 40% of aboriginal people in Ontario are under the age of 25. Only if aboriginal youth achieve their full potential can aboriginal communities—and Ontario—prosper as they should.

In February, six First Nations youth ambassadors travelled to the United Nations in order to voice this desire to reach their full potential. These inspiring youth shared their personal experiences and demonstrated to the UN how inequities in child welfare, education and health have affected their communities across Canada.

Je félicite ces jeunes ambassadeurs pour leur passion, leur vigueur et leur engagement envers le changement.

At last week's Truth and Reconciliation event in Toronto, Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux noted that, even in the face of obstacles and hardship, "We have not forgotten how to dance and we have not forgotten how to laugh." This was illustrated through a powerful performance by two young Inuit throat singers, Pamela Sevigny and Qatsuu Evis. The rhythmic humming and deep guttural sounds of throat singing resonated throughout the room, calling out the spirit of resilience and inspiration.

Our government's commitment to partnership has been demonstrated in many ways since we came to office in 2003. We've developed strategies like the aboriginal health and wellness strategy, Ontario's aboriginal education strategy, aboriginal affairs working group, the northern training partnership fund, and a First Nations strategic framework to end violence against women.

Strong partnerships between the government, First Nations, boards, schools, educators, families, students and aboriginal organizations are essential. All of these

are good things, and as I have said, we can use this moment to celebrate and acknowledge the good work that has been done.

Et nous avons une autre responsabilité devant cette Assemblée législative.

We have another responsibility in this Legislature. That responsibility is to understand the magnitude of what remains undone. That responsibility is to continue to confront the challenges of relationships that, throughout our shared history, have suffered from misunderstanding, conflict and even violence. That responsibility is to fully comprehend that the future strength of this province depends, at least in part, on the health and success of aboriginal youth and their families.

Monsieur le Président, la réalité est dure.

The facts are stark.

Over one quarter of aboriginal people in Ontario have not completed high school.

The unemployment rate for aboriginal people in Ontario is twice that of non-aboriginal Ontarians and can be much higher in remote First Nations communities.

Suicide rates for First Nations youth are five to six times higher than for non-aboriginal youth.

The life expectancy for aboriginal people in Ontario is eight to 10 years less than for non-aboriginal Ontarians.

In my time as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and indeed in my previous portfolios, I've had the opportunity to travel to First Nations communities and friendship centres across the province.

Les jeunes autochtones demandent que leurs voix soient entendues.

Aboriginal youth are demanding that their voices be heard, and elders are committed to supporting those young voices and are looking for avenues of economic development and, most particularly, educational success.

De nouveaux modèles éducatifs doivent être adoptés.

We have to adopt new models of education. We must have the courage to try economic mechanisms that have worked in other places, like Ontario's new aboriginal procurement pilot and Ontario's aboriginal business directory. In some cases, we must work to create made-in-Ontario solutions to intractable problems such as our work with the Anishinabek Nation Union of Ontario Indians on a new education model to improve outcomes.

We recognized, when we came to office, that the relationship between the Ontario government and aboriginal people had to change. We called the Ipperwash inquiry; we have addressed or are currently addressing those recommendations. We created a stand-alone Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and we take the responsibility for creating a new relationship very seriously, including provision of funding for the processes necessary to build stronger relationships.

Our responsibility as government and, I would suggest, the responsibility of all elected officials is to be honest about the challenges. It is political expediency of the worst kind to encourage and capitalize on division and despair.

I believe that the aboriginal children of this province have a right to expect that all the adults in their lives and

politicians at all levels of government will work together, push each other and find ways to set aside their partisanship to ensure that there are decent schools in all of their communities; that there is a curriculum in every school that tells the entire history of this land; that there is the same quality of healthy food, clean water and medical care available to every child of Ontario; and that the dream of being able to take part in Ontario's economic success is not a dream but a given expectation.

Our job as elected officials is to foster the climate for that success.

National Aboriginal Day is about building stronger relationships through awareness of the contributions of aboriginal people in Ontario and our roles and responsibilities as leaders and citizens. I invite all Ontarians to join me and thousands of other Canadians as we celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and our shared history.

Miigwetch. Nia:wen. Marsé. Nakurmiik. Merci. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I rise today to recognize June as Ontario's second annual Italian Heritage Month.

Italian Canadians, nearly 900,000 strong, are one of Ontario's biggest immigrant communities. This House proclaimed Italian Heritage Month to recognize their achievements and celebrate their heritage.

The story of Italian Canadians is intertwined with the story of Ontario. Their skills, know-how, ambition and hard work are legendary.

Beginning in the late 19th century, many Italian Canadians were employed in mining and forestry and building railways. As cities grew, more immigrants found work constructing urban infrastructure, as well as homes and public buildings. Italian Canadians also laboured in the expanding manufacturing, commercial and service sectors.

As opportunities increased, Italian Canadians found success in field after field, from Johnny Lombardi in broadcasting to former Supreme Court Justice Frank Iacobucci to the late Vince Kerrio, the first Italian Canadian ever to serve as an Ontario cabinet minister.

Today, many, many Italian families have been here for decades, yet their traditions and culture endure. That's the wonder of Ontario.

During the month of June, let's enjoy the many Italian heritage events around the province. Let's remember the contributions of earlier generations and celebrate the great contributions Italian Canadians have made to our province. To all Italian Canadians, especially as the European Cup approaches, I say Forza Italia.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** On a point of order—I apologize, Mr. Speaker. In my statement, I believe that I said some people from Grassy Narrows had come in; in

fact, the young people who are with us are from Fort Severn. I apologize for that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member has a point of order and can correct the record. Thank you.

Responses?

#### PROTECTION OF GREAT LAKES

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'm pleased to take this opportunity to address the bill tabled today by the environment minister, the Great Lakes Protection Act.

The Great Lakes are an immense resource, containing a significant portion of the world's fresh water. They sustain a rich variety of plants and animals and are a direct source of drinking water for 33 million people, including 8.5 million Canadians.

The Great Lakes are also the foundation for billions of dollars of economic activity, supporting 25% of Canadians' agricultural capacity and 45% of Canadians' industrial capacity. Each year, the Great Lakes contribute \$180 billion in trade between Canada and the US and sustain hundreds of millions of dollars in commercial and recreational fishing activity.

But the Great Lakes story isn't all good news. Unfortunately, new and emerging challenges like invasive species, new chemical contaminants and the impacts of climate change have threatened the health of the Great Lakes. Different levels of government in Canada and the US have worked together to address these common challenges, but there's more work that needs to be done. Solving these challenges, however, should be carried out in a way that doesn't create unnecessary legislative overlap or excessive new regulations. The costs and benefits have to be carefully weighed when considering every new program, given Ontario's unsustainable financial situation.

So, Speaker, I'm looking forward to examining this bill, because protecting our drinking water and environment is crucial for the future of our province.

#### NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** National Aboriginal Day allows fellow Canadians to learn more about our Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples, their cultures and their significant contributions to the growth and development of our country. As a matter of fact, Speaker, my family has Métis status.

This year's National Aboriginal Day is being held on June 21, the first day of the summer solstice, a day that already holds special significance for many aboriginal groups and cultures.

1540

While the minister and the government stand up and recognize aboriginal peoples and applaud the great relationships they have with our First Nation communities in Ontario, what we're hearing is precisely the opposite. Contrary to what the minister is stating about building and strengthening partnerships with First Nations, this

government has actually been divisive in its approach to negotiations and consultations.

The government is currently engaged in the Algonquin land claim process, which encompasses a substantial area of 8.9 million acres in southern Ontario, including most of Algonquin Park. While the government says that they have undertaken a comprehensive consultation process, what we are hearing throughout this is just the opposite.

Those directly influenced by the details of the claim—the area municipalities, the fishing and hunting community, the tourism sector, the forestry sector—have not been involved in the consultation process whatsoever, other than to say it exists. Instead, the government has been holding closed meetings and negotiations and simply presenting general briefings with limited details to the interested stakeholders and jurisdictions, except to say that they are taking place.

Despite concerns brought to the minister's attention from groups and organizations, the McGuinty government has ignored input and concerns and is intent on moving ahead hastily towards an agreement in principle this fall.

Earlier today in the House, the minister had the audacity to claim that the public consultation to the OFAH is an ongoing and integral part of a major, major process.

What does it say about this government to boast about its record of dealing with the First Nations, when the truth is that conditions in First Nation communities are not improving, education for First Nation children is falling further behind and the secretive negotiations are causing further unrest, resentment and divisions between First Nations and non-aboriginal people in Ontario?

To quote Grand Chief Stan Beardy, there are three ways we can solve this problem, and quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the third way is that we can sit down and talk about it, and that's what we need to do. Miigwetch.

#### ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** It is an honour to quickly speak to Italian Heritage Month. As Canadians of Italian heritage, we have a tremendous amount of pride, and for good reason. Let me tell you a little bit about my family's story as part of the wonderful Italian-Canadian community we have in North Bay.

My grandfather Antonnio Fava came over from Santo Stefano in 1924 with \$5 in his pocket. He settled in North Bay and spent most of his life with the Department of Highways. My most vivid memories are hunting with him, where he'd send me into the field to pick up the partridge.

My grandfather Vittorio Fedeli came over from Porto San Eipidio when he was 20. He settled in the Soo and spent his working life with Algoma Steel. He was known as a kind and generous man who loved to cook, garden and be with his family.

My dad, Hub Fedeli, has been gone almost three years, but everyone in North Bay would be quick to tell you he

was the patriarch of our Italian community. His beloved Davedi Club shines as a beacon of Italian pride and as a symbol of culture that embraces our heritage—especially if it involves food.

I'm proud to be a Canadian-Italian descendant and to have this opportunity to share some stories.

#### NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I would like to start off by welcoming the students, parents and teachers of Fort Severn's Wasaho First Nation School, with us today. I think they might have just stepped out; long proceedings today.

On June 21, people across Canada gather to celebrate the rich culture of our first peoples. On behalf of the Ontario NDP caucus, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our First Nations, Métis and Inuit people for sharing their culture and their land with us, and I encourage everyone to join us in celebrating the traditions and wisdom they have shared with us.

While First Nations have shared much with us, including their land, we have not properly reciprocated. We live in a time when the scars of residential schools are still fresh. We like to pretend that these acts were decades ago, but the final residential school did not close until 1996, coincidentally the same year National Aboriginal Day was proclaimed.

In our error, we robbed generations of our first peoples of their culture, and we created wounds that have made many turn to alcohol and prescription drug abuse, which have become an epidemic in communities across Canada and across Ontario.

Conditions on many reserves mirror those of Third World countries, where housing is drastically short, infrastructure is crumbling, and schools and water treatment plants sit in disrepair.

Rather than the nation-to-nation relationship that we promised, we have shunned, pushed away and hid our first peoples on reserves where they have been kept away from the rest of the population.

Only when we find wealth, such as in the Ring of Fire, do governments begin paying attention. But that relationship, once again, does not live up to the nation-to-nation promise but is more a case of giving "take it or leave it" offers of table scraps to our forgotten peoples.

Even today, the people of Grassy Narrows and White Dog First Nation are gathered outside asking for the government to help address the long-term consequences of our irresponsibilities, yet rather than being welcomed in to enter into a discussion, they're left out in the cold.

June 21 is a day to celebrate the diverse and unique culture of our First Nations people, but every day we should remember the commitments we made, the crown made, to our First Peoples.

#### PROTECTION OF GREAT LAKES

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I rise today to speak to the Great Lakes Protection Act.

We're blessed to live in this province with so much fresh water. The Great Lakes play a huge role to our ecology, to tourism, to our economy, and they provide drinking water to our province. But we know there are significant threats to the Great Lakes, from invasive species to destruction of shoreline habitats to pollution like algae and beach closures.

We also know that the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario has shown in his most recent report that the McGuinty government's record in protecting the Great Lakes has been spotty at best over eight years. He has noted:

- inadequate funding for cleaning up the Great Lakes;
- failure to control sewage overflows;
- lack of monitoring of phosphorus levels in the Great Lakes;
- insufficient protection of coastal wetlands from development and pollution;
- failure to reduce farm and livestock nitrogen and phosphorus runoff;
- a lack of consideration of the impact of the infrastructure plan on the Great Lakes;
- failure to educate the public about the importance of the Great Lakes.

In addition, the government has refused to listen to the over 100,000 people calling on them to put a stop to shipping radioactive steam generators on the Great Lakes.

We need comprehensive action on the Great Lakes, and it's overdue, Speaker. In the election platform, the NDP called for a Great Lakes act to ensure decisions by all ministries take into account and minimize impacts on the Great Lakes. We welcome this bill. We will be working to ensure that it is not only symbolic but that it sets strong targets, it's adequately resourced, and it's effective.

Speaker, given the government's watering down of protection of lands, lakes and rivers in the budget bill, we need to be especially vigilant that this is not a diversion or window dressing.

#### ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** New Democrats, including me and Cheri DiNovo, want to join the Minister of Culture in celebrating the second annual Italian Canadian heritage month. There will be many events organized this month throughout the whole of Ontario, so anybody who wants to take part can feel free to join in as we celebrate Italian Canadian pride.

I just want to take advantage of this 50 seconds to thank Michael Tibollo, who is the president of the National Congress of Italian-Canadians, without whom many of these activities would not happen, so I want to personally thank him for all the great work that he does on a regular basis, voluntarily, because he doesn't get paid for this.

The other one is to congratulate and thank Gianni Bardini, the consul general of Italy, who is finishing his

term shortly. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank him for his intelligence, for his sensitivity and for his commitment to Italian Canadians, including, especially, his ability to connect to us all. I congratulate his work and wish him well in the next phase of his career.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would beg your indulgence for an introduction. In the gallery today we have two former MPPs: Mr. Gord Miller from Norfolk in the 34th, and a friend—Gord, glad you're here; and Mr. Jack Riddell from Huron in the 29th, Huron–Middlesex in the 30th to 33rd, and then back to Huron in the 34th. Welcome.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT AWARENESS WEEK

#### SEMAINE DE SENSIBILISATION AU HARCÈLEMENT SEXUEL

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I believe we have unanimous consent that each party be permitted to speak for up to five minutes in recognition of Sexual Harassment Awareness Week.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I rise to recognize Sexual Harassment Awareness Week in Ontario.

Je prends la parole pour reconnaître la Semaine de sensibilisation au harcèlement sexuel en Ontario. Il y a cinq ans, notre gouvernement a proclamé la première semaine de juin Semaine de sensibilisation au harcèlement sexuel.

1550

Speaker, the term “sexual harassment” did not emerge until the 1970s, when the voices of women’s advocates and court decisions in jurisdictions around the world began to reach a tipping point.

In 1989, in one of the leading Supreme Court of Canada decisions on sexual harassment, Chief Justice Dickson wrote, “When sexual harassment occurs in the workplace, it is an abuse of both economic and sexual power.... [S]exual harassment in the workplace attacks the dignity and self-respect of the victim both as an employee and as a human being.”

This decision was a major turning point as it gave legal recognition of sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination.

Here in Ontario, Sexual Harassment Awareness Week has its origins in the memory of one woman who represents too many others. For years, Chatham resident Theresa Vince was the victim of persistent sexual harassment perpetrated by her supervisor. On June 2, 1996, this same supervisor murdered Theresa Vince, and this week we mark the tragic anniversary of Ms. Vince’s death and honour her life by bringing awareness to the issue of sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment Awareness Week exists to increase public awareness, foster change in attitudes and behaviour and to prevent another tragedy from occurring.

In 2010, our government took action and strengthened Ontario’s Occupational Health and Safety Act to bring in more protection with respect to violence and harassment. Employers in Ontario are now required to develop workplace violence and harassment policies and programs and are responsible for responding to sexual harassment.

Protéger les femmes au travail est une étape importante, mais il reste encore plus à faire pour voir à ce que nous vivions toutes et tous sans crainte de harcèlement et de violence.

At its extreme, women like Theresa have lost their lives because of sexual harassment. However, for most women who experience it, sexual harassment does not make the nightly news. Rather, it takes an insidious form whereby each and every day women dread the thought of setting foot in their workplace. These women are deprived of their basic entitlement to earn a living. They’re deprived of a safe space to ensure their own economic security. For women who have suffered sexual harassment, they know first-hand how gross an abuse of economic and sexual power this act can be.

Our government will not tolerate sexual harassment, and I’m proud to be part of a government that has taken action to better the lives of women on so many fronts: through our comprehensive domestic violence action plan, which is helping women and children to live free from the fear of domestic violence; and through our sexual violence action plan, which is working to prevent sexual violence and improve supports for survivors. And now we have passed the Accepting Schools Act, which makes it clear that bullying, and in particular harassment based on sex, is not acceptable in our schools.

Along with this, we’re teaching healthy, equal relationships to our young people through a range of school-based programs, recognizing that attitudes and behaviours formed at a young age are immensely important.

Through our strong public education campaigns, such as Make It Our Business, we continue to raise awareness about how we can all contribute to a safe workplace.

And that is a part of what former Liberal member Pat Hoy wanted to accomplish in declaring this week as Sexual Harassment Awareness Week. He knew the importance of raising awareness when he said that “sexual harassment interferes with a woman’s safety, her dignity and her equality.”

I would like to be able to say that since sexual harassment was given its name in the 1970s, or following the 1989 Supreme Court case, we no longer have to contend with the issue in 2012. Unfortunately, that is not the reality. Regardless of how far we have come, sexual harassment is still present in our workplaces, et cela signifie que nous devons encore faire plus pour sensibiliser à cette question et pour prendre des mesures en la matière.



Everyone—government, educators, parents, students, employers, managers and colleagues—has a role to play. All of us can help to build a healthy and respectful workplace. All of us can learn how to recognize the warning signs of sexual harassment and how to respond. It is incumbent on each and every one of us to remain vigilant when it comes to sexual harassment, not just during the first week of June but each and every day. Only by working together in a positive environment can we eliminate sexual harassment both in the workplace and in society, and when we have done that, we will have made our province stronger and we will have accomplished something we can all be proud of.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the PC Party and our leader, Tim Hudak, and as the PC critic for women's issues to mark Sexual Harassment Awareness Week.

"Harassment" is a word that does not have a shred of happiness associated with it, especially when it is prefaced with the word "sexual."

To some people, sexual harassment is a vague concept they have heard about but do not really understand, but for others it can represent a life-altering event that has changed them so dramatically that they never fully recover from it.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is severe or pervasive and, when it occurs in a workplace setting, can affect working conditions and create a hostile work environment, and sometimes even lead to death, as the minister stated.

The most recent sexual harassment statistics for Canada show that young women are the most likely to be sexually harassed, with 10% of women 18 to 24 years of age having experienced sexual harassment in the workplace within the previous 12 months. As many as 90% of Canadian women have admitted that they have experienced this type of harassment at some point during their working lives.

Sexual harassment can occur anywhere at any time: at work, at home, at school or in a social situation.

I want to emphasize that while some forms of harassment happen predominantly against women, no one is immune. Sexual harassment can be perpetrated on or by anyone. Typical scenarios are co-worker to co-worker, a supervisor harassing a subordinate, a subordinate harassing a supervisor, men harassing women, women harassing men, same-sex harassment with men harassing men and women harassing women, sexual orientation harassment, or third party harassment such as customers and suppliers.

This week is an important reminder to both men and women of why this issue is of grave concern and to stress that sexual harassment has no place in our society.

Whatever its shape or form, the bottom line is that sexual harassment is never okay. It is against the law. It is against the very moral fabric of our province and our country to tolerate such acts.

Fortunately, the victims of sexual harassment do not have to be alone. In my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha

Lakes-Brock, Kawartha/Haliburton Victim Services offers victim crisis assistance and referral services for the residents of the city of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton county, in partnership with police, emergency services and community agencies. They provide immediate onsite assistance and referral services to victims of various crimes, including sexual harassment. Organizations like this, in communities across the province, and staffed primarily by well-trained volunteers, perform an invaluable service for victims and their families. Their work is to be commended and needs our ongoing support.

Sexual Harassment Awareness Week is, as the name suggests, a vehicle for educating people about the impact that actions, both verbal and physical, can have on other people. We need to be cognizant of our relationships with other people to ensure that we are not inflicting psychological, emotional and even physical harm, whether intentional or otherwise.

Education is the key to understanding, and understanding is the key to eliminating the problem.

I'm pleased to have had the opportunity to speak on this important issue today. Thank you.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I rise on behalf of the New Democratic Party and our leader, Andrea Horwath, to speak about Sexual Harassment Awareness Week. It's interesting that this follows on the passage of Bill 13, because when you think about the homophobic and also gender-based bullying that has been going on in our schools, one of the principal components of that is targeting boys who act like girls. There's misogyny behind it. There seems to be something wrong still, in the atmosphere in our schools, to be feminine—to be effeminate or to be a girl.

Quite frankly, I take exception to some of the numbers we've heard here today, because I've never met a woman—never met a woman—who has not been the subject of sexual harassment at some point in her life. I remember running to school being chased by boys, as a little girl. This is not uncommon. This is what girls go through in schools. Gender is one of the main reasons that kids get bullied in school. I wanted to put that on the record.

We also rise, of course, in memory of Theresa Vince, who in 1996 was murdered by her boss after being sexually harassed for years, and Lori Dupont, murdered in 2005 by an ex-boyfriend after being harassed for years in her workplace.

I'll say two things are critical to combat sexual harassment. Women need to be able to speak out about it and they need to be able to afford to get away from it—those two components. And those still, unfortunately, are lacking in the province of Ontario. Women still make 71% of what men make, and we're not enforcing our own pay equity laws. Women don't have access to daycare; this is also a problem. And victim services: For example, just down here on College Street, the pre-eminent responders to domestic violence or harassment actually have not had a raise in their funding in 20 years, and the funding per victim has gone down. It's about a fifth of

what it was 20 years ago. So there's not enough money there for those who would help the victims.

### 1600

Of course, men play a role here too, and I want to give a shout-out to the White Ribbon Campaign, founded by the late Jack Layton, a phenomenal organization that really raises awareness. The men in that campaign, that really is all-year-round, pledge two things. They pledge never to be a perpetrator of harassment or violence, and they also pledge not to be silent in the face of it, but to speak up for the victims. I do believe—and I'm speaking to my benchmate here—that younger men are getting the message, that younger men really are improving in that regard, so there's hope. It's because of those folk, who have done so much work for so long, that there is hope.

I also want to quote Nancy Hutchison from the OFL, because there was mention of Bill 168. She's the OFL secretary-treasurer. She said: "Bill 168 promised to protect workers against workplace violence and harassment, but more needs to be done to strengthen the legislation.... Victims need to have rights and know about them before they are able to exercise them, but they also need to be given the confidence that the law will be enforced and their rights will be vigorously protected."

It has been two years since that bill was passed and we supported it, but there has been no campaign to raise public awareness about it. Nobody knows about it. Lots of workplaces don't know about it. It has not been enforced either. In fact, only one in 100 employers ever sees anybody from the Ministry of Labour to enforce anything. But, certainly, this has not been enforced either. If people don't know about it, if women don't know about it, if men don't know about it, it won't work. And if it's not enforced, it won't work. So, yes, it was a step forward, but again, we have to look at the implementation. We've had two years.

What is the Ontario Federation of Labour calling for?

- stronger, more effective and more timely enforcement;

- strong regulations on training and consultation with workplace joint health and safety committees;

- an expansion of the Employment Standards Act definition for "compassionate leave," to help women;

- provisions in the Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Employment Standards Act guaranteeing abused women the right to workplace accommodation, including the right to alternative work, flexible hours and job transfers; and

- a multi-language public education campaign to ensure women workers know their workplace rights and where to go for enforcement.

These are critical factors to keep women safe.

So again, two things: Women need to be able to speak out about it and to be able to afford to get away from it. Those two criteria have still not been dealt with in the province of Ontario, and we in the NDP won't rest until they are.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## PETITIONS

### BAITFISH INDUSTRY

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** "Protecting Ontario's Live Baitfish Industry and the Rights of Ontario Anglers.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources has banned the harvesting of frogs and crayfish, imports of leeches, and the use of organic bait in some areas, infringing the rights of Ontario anglers; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources has further restricted the rights of Ontario anglers by imposing inflexible restrictions on the live baitfish industry after receiving confirmation of a new outbreak of viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS); and

"Whereas a six-month delay by the Ministry of Natural Resources confirming a new outbreak of VHS to the live baitfish industry and the inflexible restrictions imposed on the bait industry's movement of live bait in Ontario has caused the live baitfish industry to suffer significant financial losses; and

"Whereas the live baitfish industry has tried to work with the Ministry of Natural Resources to create a sustainable and effective response to outbreaks of VHS to protect the live baitfish industry, the rights of Ontario anglers and Ontario's natural environment;

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

"That the Ministry of Natural Resources recognize, and work with, the live baitfish industry to ensure a viable quality baitfish produce for the anglers of Ontario."

It's signed by hundreds of people all over the province of Ontario.

### ONTARIO PLACE

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now petition time, so I will recognize the member from Trinity-Spadina.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you for remembering, Mr. Speaker.

"Whereas the Ontario government has closed most of Ontario Place to plan the 'revitalization' of the 96-acre site;

"Whereas Ontario Place was dedicated to the 'People of Ontario—Past, Present and Future,' when it was opened in 1971;

"Whereas Ontario Place was turning the corner when the government pulled the rug out from under it;

"Whereas, after decades of neglect, an investment of \$10.8 million in new rides and refurbished attractions resulted in an 89% increase in attendance in 2011;

"Whereas revenues from ride ticket sales, concession sales, Play All Day passes and Cinesphere tickets all went up; and

"Whereas closing the park now is a waste of the money invested less than 12 months ago;

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

"Ontario Place must be kept open while the revitalization plans are being developed and the park must remain a public, family-oriented space for all Ontarians to enjoy now and into the future."

I support these 1,400 people who signed this petition.

#### ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from young people in the Waterloo and Wellington area.

"Whereas all Ontario students have the right to a school environment where they feel safe, welcome and respected;

"Whereas school boards must take preventative measures against bullies and issue tougher consequences for those who participate in bullying;

"Whereas creating a safe and positive learning environment is an essential part of helping students succeed in school;

"Whereas all schools should support students who want to lead activities that promote acceptance and respect for all, including a group named a gay-straight alliance;

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

"That Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, 2012, be adopted so that students across Ontario are protected from the harmful effects of bullying and given every opportunity to succeed in school."

I agree with this and will affix my name.

#### 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."

I've affixed my signature to this and given it to page Sherry.

#### ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member for Kenora–Rainy River.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Thank you, Speaker. It's nice to see you back in the chair.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission provides services which are vital to the north's economy; and

"Whereas it is a lifeline for the residents of northern communities who have no other source of public transportation; and

"Whereas the ONTC could be a vital link to the Ring of Fire;

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

"That the planned cancellation of the Northlander and the sale of the rest of the assets of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission be halted immediately."

I support this and have affixed my signature.

#### ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas all Ontario students have the right to a school environment where they feel safe, welcome and respected;

"Whereas school boards must take preventative measures against bullies and issue tougher consequences for those who participate in bullying;

"Whereas creating a safe and positive learning environment is an essential part of helping students succeed in school;

"Whereas all schools should support students who want to lead activities that promote acceptance and respect for all, including a group named a gay-straight alliance;

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

"That Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, 2012, be adopted so that students across Ontario are protected from the harmful effects of bullying and given every opportunity to succeed in school."

I agree with this petition, will sign it and send it to the table with Stavroula.

1610

#### HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I have a petition signed by hundreds of my constituents, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the McGuinty government has initiated the GTA West Corridor Study; and

“The study has identified a possible route for a new highway through the town of Halton Hills, which is known as Alternative 4-3; and

“The province of Ontario has a total debt of at least \$236.3 billion, and a deficit this year of at least \$16 billion, and a diminished fiscal capacity to build new highways like this one; and

“The councils of the town of Halton Hills and the region of Halton have formally expressed serious concerns about Alternative 4-3; and

“Many Halton Hills residents have objected in writing to Alternative 4-3, because of the impact it would have on our local environment, heritage and historical sites, good-quality farmland, community identity, and property values;

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

“That the Minister of Transportation should announce that Alternative 4-3 of the GTA West Corridor Study has been removed from further consideration.”

I would urge the minister to announce that publicly.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I'd like to read a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers have been paying over millions in extra charges on their hydro bills to help retire the debt. The amount collected to date, as per the Auditor General's report, is \$8.7 billion, but the amount owing was \$7.8 billion;

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers are asking, where is the money being invested?

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers are asking why this was not addressed at the time the debt was” retired;

“Whereas electrical rates have increased with the new creation of green energy coming online, to include solar and wind, refurbishment of nuclear plants and deregulation of Hydro One;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows to obtain answers to the following questions:

“How much of the debt remains?

“When will it be eliminated from Ontario taxpayers' hydro bills?”

I will present the petition to Anthonie.

#### ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I have a petition today from Barb Sheppard, who lives at 519 Sunnydale Place in wonderful Waterloo, Ontario. It says:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas all Ontario students have the right to a school environment where they feel safe, welcome and respected;

“Whereas school boards must take preventative measures against bullies and issue tougher consequences for those who participate in bullying;

“Whereas creating a safe and positive learning environment is an essential part of helping students succeed in school;

“Whereas all schools should support students who want to lead activities that promote acceptance and respect for all, including a group named a gay-straight alliance;”

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

“That Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, 2012, be adopted so that students across Ontario are protected from the harmful effects of bullying and given every opportunity to succeed in school.”

Mr. Speaker, I will affix my signature to it.

#### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas collecting and restoring old vehicles honours Ontario's automotive heritage while contributing to the economy through the purchase of goods and services, tourism, and support for special events; and

“Whereas the stringent application of emissions regulations for older cars equipped with newer engines can result in fines and additional expenses that discourage car collectors and restorers from pursuing their hobby; and

“Whereas newer engines installed by hobbyists in vehicles over 20 years old provide cleaner emissions than the original equipment; and

“Whereas car collectors typically use their vehicles only on an occasional basis, during four to five months of the year;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the Ontario Legislature support Ontarians who collect and restore old vehicles by amending the appropriate laws and regulations to ensure vehicles over 20 years old and exempt from Drive Clean testing shall also be exempt from additional emissions requirements enforced by the Ministry of the Environment and governing the installation of newer engines into old cars and trucks.”

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

#### OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Ombudsman, who is an officer of the Legislature, is not allowed to provide trusted, independent investigations of complaints in the areas of hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children's aid societies, police, retirement homes and universities; and

“Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada not allowing their Ombudsman to investigate any of these areas; and

“Whereas people wronged by these institutions are left feeling helpless and most have nowhere else to turn for help to correct systemic issues;

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

“Grant the Ombudsman the power to investigate hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children’s aid societies, police, retirement homes and universities.”

I couldn’t agree more. I’m going to give it to Tameen. I’m going to affix my signature. Tameen is going to take it to the table.

#### ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** I’d like to present this petition on behalf of students from the Kitchener-Waterloo area, Cambridge and also from Toronto:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas all Ontario students have the right to a school environment where they feel safe, welcome and respected;

“Whereas school boards must take preventative measures against bullies and issue tougher consequences for those who participate in bullying;

“Whereas creating a safe and positive learning environment is an essential part of helping students succeed in school;

“Whereas all schools should support students who want to lead activities that promote acceptance and respect for all, including a group named a gay-straight alliance;”

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

“That Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, 2012, be adopted so that students across Ontario are protected from the harmful effects of bullying and given every opportunity to succeed in school.”

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will give this to page Sherry.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario slots-at-racetracks program has, for over a decade, provided mutual benefit to the province of Ontario and the horse racing industry; and

“Whereas the government has announced the cancellation of the slots-at-racetracks program, jeopardizing the future of the horse racing and breeding industry in Ontario at the cost of thousands of jobs and \$2 billion in economic activity;

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

“That the government of Ontario work with the horse racing industry to reinstate and improve the slots-at-

racetracks program with its revenue-sharing agreement to sustain and grow the horse racing industry to the benefit of our communities.”

I agree with this and affix my signature to it.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas based on current, exhaustive and peer-reviewed research, more than 95% of climate scientists conclude that greenhouse gas emissions from human activity are responsible for most of the increase in global average temperature over the past 200 years;

“Compelling scientific evidence indicates that a return from the current concentration of more than 392 parts per million of carbon dioxide, CO<sub>2</sub>, in the atmosphere to 350 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> or less is necessary to avoid dangerous interference in the climate system;

“Further increases in global temperatures pose imminent and substantial dangers to human health, the natural environment, agriculture, the economy, public safety and national security and an unacceptable and unnecessary risk of catastrophic impacts to human civilization;

“It is our moral, global and intergenerational duty to put measures in place that will return the concentration of greenhouse gases to 350 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> and help communities adapt to a changing climate, while diversifying the economy in Ontario and the nation, creating local jobs and improving health during the transition to a new energy economy, based on conservation and renewable energy;

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

“Give this problem its immediate and fullest attention and create policies that support innovative solutions;

“Commit to the most current science-based greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets;

“Work with the Canadian government and other provinces to create a Canadian energy strategy which focuses on transitioning to a new energy economy, based on conservation and renewable energy. Facilitate this transition through the Green Energy Act, and by providing incentives to improve energy efficiencies, and investing in public transit and other low-carbon infrastructure and technologies.”

I support this petition, put my name to it and send it up with Sam.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

AMBULANCE AMENDMENT ACT  
(AIR AMBULANCES), 2012

LOI DE 2012 MODIFIANT  
LA LOI SUR LES AMBULANCES  
(SERVICES D’AMBULANCE AÉRIENS)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 3, 2012, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 50, An Act to amend the Ambulance Act with respect to air ambulance services / Projet de loi 50, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les ambulances en ce qui concerne les services d'ambulance aériens.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The last time we debated this, the member from Cambridge had 18 minutes. He'll lead off.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I note that the last time I spoke to this bill was May 3, 2012, which was far more than a month ago. One of the reasons why it's taken so long to get to this point is simply because, first of all, the government didn't adhere to our request to have a select committee on Ornge; and secondly, they didn't amend the terms of reference of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to a satisfactory level. Then they ended up, of course, in an agreement where they decided they would extend some hearings into Ornge, and here we are today, debating it, one month later—one month lost in terms of debate time for this bill, one month lost in debate time for all other bills as well. It's the government who failed, frankly, to move this legislation forward—legislation, I have to add, that they say is very important to the future of our air ambulance service in the province of Ontario.

1620

Mr. Speaker, as you would know, prior to entering politics I was a university professor. You would know that because I know that one of my former students actually works for you. It's interesting that he works for you and his brother works for the PC caucus. I don't know how this worked out in that family. I'd certainly want to be there at the family dinner when this happens.

Mr. Speaker, when we were talking about public policy when I was teaching at the university—I will impart that knowledge to members of this House—one of the things that we liked to do before we entered into a discussion of public policy was to actually decide that we have a problem to address. I think most people would acknowledge that when it comes to our air ambulance service in the province of Ontario, there is a problem. But the one thing that we haven't really addressed is the full scope of that problem. I would submit to this House that we actually have to understand that full scope. That's why we requested a special committee, to get to the bottom of Ornge, to find out the depth and the extent of the problem. Before we come up with legislation to address those concerns, we have to actually understand that scope. So, in many ways, I think there's information that has been uncovered and continues to be uncovered as to the size and scope of the problems at Ornge that would very well be necessary to address in a piece of legislation like this.

Frankly, we haven't got to that problem yet; we haven't got to the bottom of what's happened at Ornge. I think we have to do that in order to proceed in a very—in a manner that is—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I noticed the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke almost fell, so it caught my attention there; it caught the corner of my eye.

But we have to understand the full scope of the problem before we can address it.

I want to address something very important here. I would say that members of the PC caucus—in fact, members of the opposition, if I can be so bold—are not acting, as the government would have us believe, in a partisan interest. We are interested in the public interest, and seeing to the public interest is making sure that we fix all the problems at Ornge—all the problems. That's what our interest is: Our interest is in the public interest. Frankly, I think that it would do everyone a good service to not essentially impugn motive to other members with respect to what we are doing here. We want to get to the bottom of it. We want to make sure that this legislation reflects the interest that is at hand.

I also have to note that there have been a couple of occasions where members of this House have had an opportunity to debate things that are relevant to Ornge. For example, in one instance, the member for Newmarket–Aurora, co-sponsored by the member for Nickel Belt, wanted to create a select committee on Ornge. There was a vote on that, and in that vote, I have to say that members on the governing side decided not to support that motion, even though it was the will of the House. That select committee was not made. They voted against what we're doing with Ornge.

I also note that on March 1, the member for Dufferin–Caledon introduced a motion that would protect whistle-blowers—whistle-blower protection—those people who were coming to our party and to the other opposition members with information with respect to what's happening at Ornge. We had debated the lengths that this House should go to protect those witnesses. We had a vote in this House. That vote in this House again showed that members of the opposition supported the protection of whistle-blowers, and members of the governing side voted against it. So we've had two votes on Ornge and Ornge-related activities where members of the opposition have decided to support those activities, those motions, and the government refused to do so.

I find it very interesting, Mr. Speaker, that today, before this House, we have Bill 50, which essentially is the government's response to some of the problems that we find at Ornge. They are here today saying, "Listen to us. We have the solutions. Vote with me." Mr. Speaker, this is a minority Parliament, a Parliament that often sees that we need a little bit of give and take. The government has shown no willingness to listen to some of the things that we have said with respect to Ornge and the votes that we have had. Now, today, they are asking us to support what is Bill 50.

We have, as noted by several members on this side of the House who have spoken to Bill 50, a number of issues with what's happening with this bill and some of the deficiencies that we see with it. I'm going to address those, but before I do so, Mr. Speaker, I do have to remind this House that the reason we're here, the reason that all members are actually sitting here debating this bill, is because there is a mess to be cleaned up. Now, I

know the government doesn't want to admit that they had any play in that, and that they are certainly interested in making sure that we don't expose any more wrongdoings, if those wrongdoings do in fact exist. But the reality of it is that it's the government's responsibility to administer public services on behalf of the people of the province of Ontario. It's the government's responsibility to ensure public safety. It's the opposition's responsibility to hold the government accountable. It's the opposition's responsibility to ensure that government transparency is adhered to. That is, in essence, what we're doing, what we're talking about, here in this House today, about that role and our role as members of Her Majesty's loyal opposition in holding the government to account for what is, for no better way of explaining it, mismanagement of our air ambulance services.

That mismanagement is not a categorization that members of this House have simply given the air ambulance service; it is a categorization that comes from the Auditor General himself. I think we have to acknowledge the fact that the auditor has outlined a series of problems with Ornge and our air ambulance service in the province of Ontario that speaks of the kind of mismanagement that desperately needs some adjustment, refinement and a lot of change.

As members of our party have said consistently, despite the claims by the government that change is before us, what we have in fact seen is very little change. That is something that we find very troubling. That's why, Mr. Speaker, we have continually asked for a change in leadership—not just a change in leadership at Ornge, but a change in leadership in cabinet with respect to the file of health and long-term care. I say that with the greatest respect to our front-line workers, who work day in and day out trying to protect the public, trying to protect people who are in need, who are ailing, who have serious medical conditions that need immediate attention. We respect those front-line workers. We want them to work in the best of working conditions, because it's important that they do that in order to keep the public safe.

We are very concerned, Mr. Speaker, that the government hasn't really heard that message of mismanagement, and that's something that we need to address.

One of the things that Bill 50 doesn't talk about in any great detail addresses the motion that was put forth by the member for Dufferin–Caledon with respect to whistle-blowing. Whistle-blowing is a very important thing that we have to protect, and witnesses have to feel free to come forward so they can provide information to whatever committee is investigating their situation, free from reprisals for actually bringing that information forward. It's very important that we have that.

**1630**

This bill, Mr. Speaker, does not provide across-the-board protection for whistle-blowers. It imposes limits on which individuals are protected and who they can approach with information. The legislation, in our opinion, ought to provide a formal process, through the Ombudsman, that ensures proper protection and follow-up.

On March 1, during the debate on the member for Dufferin–Caledon's motion with respect to whistle-blowing, and on a point that this bill does not address—or does not address, obviously, to the liking of members on this side of the House—I made a few comments with respect to whistle-blowing that I think bear repeating. I quoted a gentleman named Shaun Young, who has done a lot of work on whistle-blowing. He suggests that, “At its root, the act of whistle-blowing is concerned with responsibility and accountability”—again, Mr. Speaker, “responsibility” and “accountability” being words that should be part of our normal discourse in this place. That's what we have to ensure. We have to ensure responsibility and accountability—responsibility for the actions that happen in government; accountability: being able to tell members of this Legislature what has happened. That's what “being accountable” means. “Taking responsibility” means that you take some ownership of the problems. At the end of the day, responsibility and accountability are what is at the heart of whistle-blowing as well. So: “responsibility and accountability, with ensuring that those charged with acting on behalf of the best interests of others do so, and that their failure to satisfy effectively that duty will generate negative consequences for them.” This is what Shaun Young continues to say.

He goes on to quote Fred Alford, who defines a whistle-blower as “anyone who speaks out in the name of the public good within ... [an] organization.”

Young continues and suggests that, “More precisely, ‘whistle-blowing’ is typically understood to refer to the act of disclosing information about a ‘wrongdoing’ to someone who can help ensure that the wrongdoing ceases and that its” proprietor “is held accountable for his or her action(s).”

Mr. Speaker, I think that when we're talking about what's happened with Ornge, this is exactly what we're looking for. We're making sure that the proprietor—the perpetrator; sorry; I have to correct that—is held accountable for his or her actions. That's what we're looking for. We're looking for somebody to be held accountable for what they have done, and if there was wrongdoing, that we at the very least get an explanation of what has gone on. It would be helpful if we also had an apology. It would also be helpful, perhaps, if there was some other act, some other action—perhaps even losing a job—as a result of harming the public interest.

We're very concerned that this bill that seeks to correct all the problems that are before us with Ornge—we have a problem with respect to the fact that the people who are going to be coming forward and talking about what has happened here aren't going to be protected.

If this bill passes second reading, Mr. Speaker, it's going to go to committee. When it goes to committee, I imagine that the committee will be seeking deputations from a variety of witnesses. If those witnesses come forward, to what extent are they going to be protected? To what extent are they going to be free in terms of trying to offer the information that the committee would need to

make sure that they make informed choices if they like the bill or if they want to amend the bill? These are certainly aspects of the bill that we would like to see move forward, and I think that that's where we would like to see some more work be done.

I also want to point out the section that speaks to the ability to appoint inspectors. The bill says that cabinet may appoint special investigators to investigate a designated air ambulance service. What the bill doesn't mention, Mr. Speaker, is that the minister already has those powers. The bill is an attempt, in my view, to divert attention to the real issues, saying that powers don't exist where they do, using that as an attempt to say, "I couldn't have acted earlier." I have a serious issue with that. As a minister of the crown who is in charge of that ministry, who is in charge of dispensing public services on behalf of the government, saying that powers don't exist where they do and using that explanation as a way to say, "I didn't do anything," or "I couldn't have done anything," I think is an act of trying to shy away from taking the responsibility that is necessary in this case, with Ornge.

The reason why I say the minister has the power already is, if you refer to the original performance agreement with Ornge, article 15 of that original performance agreement already allows the minister to have the power to intervene—the power to appoint inspectors, as this bill suggests. Those powers were already there.

If we really believe in the tenets of what we're supposed to be doing here, that the opposition is supposed to be holding the government to account, to request some information where necessary, I think we have to be very clear with respect to what is actually in the bill, and put that next to what already exists through other agreements, through other statutes.

In my view, I believe that the health minister could have acted earlier, should have acted earlier, must have acted earlier. It's one of the reasons why members on this side of the House have continually asked for explanations and, where those explanations do not exist and did not exist, that we have asked for the resignation of that minister.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, I stand up to talk to Bill 50 today, to suggest that there are serious problems and to also suggest the government should not—should not—abdicate its responsibility with respect to the air ambulance service in the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I sat here and I enjoyed the comments from my colleague from Cambridge. There are a lot of good things he did say there.

I came here with the idea that we need to really get things done and move things along. The one key thing that he highlighted was responsibility and accountability, which I totally agree with. We need to find out exactly what has happened with this.

He referred to what has happened with Ornge as a mess. I just want to help him out on that. My son's bedroom over the weekend was a mess; this was a lot

more than a mess. This was more of a tornado that kept returning and returning and returning, causing more damage, more collateral damage, and nobody seemed to want to stop it.

The words that are key here are responsibility and accountability. However, we can't hold Ontarians hostage. We have to get through this phase. We have to get through to the next opportunity in order to start curing the mess, start bringing this tornado under control, to start answering a lot of those questions. We need to get to that point so we can have those discussions.

I fully agree with the member from Cambridge. We have to get to the bottom of this mess: how it was instigated, how it was permitted to go forward. The effectiveness of this bill is really clouding what the actual root cause of this problem was. It obscures the role that the minister had absolute opportunity to get involved and stop this. It was her choice not to look at it. It was her choice to look away.

1640

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I'm pleased to respond to the comments from the member for Cambridge.

Just a couple of comments: First of all, any committee of this Legislature, be it for the purpose of hearing input on legislation, be it like public accounts—anybody who appears as a witness before that committee enjoys exactly the same parliamentary privilege that we enjoy as members, so in fact there is protection for people who come forward to talk about the legislation or at public accounts. Secondly, the current Ambulance Act does not contain the power for the minister to appoint an investigator, which can then lead on to appoint a supervisor to actually take over an ambulance service that is as far off the rails as Ornge. What the amendments in this bill do, in part, is give the minister the authority to appoint a supervisor following an investigation—and that authority is not there.

Now, one of the things that has happened is that in fact every single Liberal minister who has had the ability to interact with Ornge has appeared before the public accounts committee. At the invite of the public accounts committee, every single Liberal minister has appeared. The one minister who had responsibility but who has not responded to an invitation to appear is Minister Clement, the Conservative minister, and what we heard today was that—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** He didn't invent Ornge.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Well, I don't know. We started—they started at Ornge billing his wife at Fasken's for bills his wife—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What's she got to do with it?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Well, she was the lawyer who was lobbying him.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. It just ended at the right time, but I would suggest that we



go through the Chair and not have a debate across the floor. Thank you.

The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my privilege and offer a few remarks in regard to my colleague from Cambridge. He was obviously a highly regarded professor prior to coming here, and not surprisingly, he did his homework and presented a lot of solid facts for us all to contemplate here today.

What I took from his comments is that we in our PC caucus certainly do fully value the efforts of the front-line care providers, and a big part of what he brought out was the need for whistle-blower protection in this bill if it is to go forward. We need people to be able to freely come forward. This morning we had Mr. Kidd in the audience, and he also appeared in front of committee. Now, that gentleman actually resigned. He brought his concerns forward, saw nothing happening to change it, and he decided of his own volition to get out. So he didn't really need the whistle-blower protection. But that speaks very highly to the amount of concern that he had with something that was such a boondoggle, such a scheme that was going on. You know, he brought those concerns forward, and nothing happened—and that was a couple of years ago.

The concern I have is that we're still not hearing of much action truly. You know, they flipped a few board members out, they've changed a few of the chairs around at the top, but most of the people who were involved in the scheme are still there—and that's very concerning for all of us.

He suggested an apology was needed, and I've said that in the last week as well. The Premier still has not stepped up to those families who have been impacted by this poor service delivery and offered an apology. That needs to be done. He spoke about action required, and this bill is just, again, moving more paperwork. We don't need more paperwork; we need less paperwork. We need to give action to the people who need it so that the care is provided to the families that we all come to this place every day to represent.

He suggested that it diverts attention, and I think that's exactly what the strategy was: "Let's throw another piece of paper, let's get another bill into the mill, so that we don't have to really address the concerns and be frank with the people of Ontario, to say we messed up." As one of my colleagues typically says daily, "If you mess up, fess up," and they need to do that.

This is very serious. We need to get to the bottom of it and we need to not give up until we get to the facts, the root of the problem, so that we can put protocols in place so that another Ornge fiasco never happens again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's a pleasure to respond to some of the comments of the member from Cambridge. This is the second time that I've had the opportunity to listen to him speak regarding whistle-blowing, and he used some very good references. Also, someone talked about Trevor Kidd, who came this morning to the Ornge review.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** That was your constituent.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** His father is my constituent.

Whistle-blowing also has to have a culture of, someone has to want to listen to the whistle. There are so many people who have come forward to this committee, and what we've heard, including in Mr. Kidd's testimony today—quite frankly, no one was listening or no one wanted to listen. Perhaps that's what we're hearing.

Even in the hearing today, it was insinuated that Mr. Kidd was somehow putting people in front of health care because he didn't want to reveal names of people. There seems to be a culture of blaming people instead of wanting—here was a front-line worker who quit his job for what he believed and who came to this committee and was willing to be grilled, and he was grilled. Instead of asking for information—in some cases, he was grilled about this name or that name. It's more of a blame game than actually "Let's listen to the problem."

It was pointed out with G50 that, as the member for Cambridge said, the whistle-blowing is very—MPPs and the press. You're not covered if you talk to those under Bill 50. Well, those are the ones who brought the Ornge scandal out. So we've got a long way to go with this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Cambridge has two minutes.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for Algoma–Manitoulin; the member for Guelph; the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, my great colleague; and the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane.

I want to address a couple of points made in those comments. We're not talking about a couple of brown envelopes here. We're talking about boxes full of information that are handed in secrecy to members of the opposition, to their offices. If that doesn't speak to fear of bringing information forward, I don't know what does. This isn't a matter of a piece of paper. This is huge boxes of information. Pretty soon, we're going to need a moving truck to get this information from our members' offices right here to Queen's Park.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** An Ornge van.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Perhaps in an Ornge van or maybe even a helicopter. The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane makes some great points here in terms of how these boxes could be transported here to the Legislature.

This is a very serious matter, and there is a lot of information out there that's being transferred to us in secrecy. That speaks to a fear of reprisal, and that kind of fear of reprisal is exactly what I was trying to address with respect to that.

I have a problem, Mr. Speaker, that every time there's some problem over there on that side of the House, their first resort is to blame the Harper government, blame the federal government: They didn't implement bills, or they did something or they didn't do something. They keep talking about all these ministers at the federal level, when they are the government of Ontario. They are the cabinet. They dispense public services to the people. This is just an abdication of responsibility that, frankly, sickens me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Algoma–Manitoulin.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to this bill, G50, the Ambulance Amendment Act, 2012.

As many of my colleagues have stated, there are many elements to this bill which are missing. While the bill allows cabinet to appoint representatives to the board of designated air ambulance service providers and appoint a supervisor or special investigator, I am concerned that Ornge will not be subject to freedom of information.

The Ontario Ombudsman will not have oversight of this agency. The lack of accountability is something I take issue with. We should be looking at expanding what the Ombudsman's role is, which will bring that oversight, but it's something that is very much lacking in this particular bill.

**1650**

Although this bill allows the minister to issue directives to air ambulance, I fail to see how that will change things that have been done and the way they were done in the past.

The fact that the Minister of Health introduced this bill on the same day the Auditor General released his damning report on Ornge seems more like a reactive approach. It appears more of an attempt to change the channel, but the bill still falls very short of being able to accomplish this.

It has been clear that the Premier and the Minister of Health for months have been trying to push the blame on everyone else—everyone else—but themselves for the issue of Ornge. Again, today, during question period fingers were being pointed across to the opposition; fingers were being pointed across to the third party. But when you point a finger, let's remember that there are three other ones that are directed toward yourself, and we should be looking and taking that responsibility and being accountable for the decisions or lack of decisions that have not been made with this.

The Liberals have been trying to use the fact that Ornge was a federally incorporated entity. However, I don't see how this prevented them from providing the necessary oversight to avoid this mess. After all, Ontario's hospitals are federally incorporated, and this has no impact on oversight whatsoever.

This is an opportunity to create a bill that could prevent such disregard for taxpayers' dollars and ensure that it doesn't happen again. I am unclear as to how this bill will actually do much to prevent us from seeing this, time and time again. Blaming the opposition for this mess is not productive. Creating useful legislation is, and absolutely must be, something we're working toward.

If this government can't even admit that they were wrong, that they had a role to play in creating this disaster, how can the general public and how can we trust that they are trying to find ways to actually assure Ontarians that this will not happen again?

As I said from the start, someone needs to be responsible and we need transparency. Rather than creating a

bill that gives us just that, the Liberals have tabled one in which Ornge continues to not be subject to freedom-of-information requests. How can we trust a government who is clearly continuing to move forward with no transparency? When organizations know that they are under freedom of information, they will undoubtedly behave in a different manner. One would think they would do so. So why are we proceeding in this manner? Why are we doing this? Yes, we are talking about the mismanagement of money—not just a little bit of money; a lot of money: millions of dollars, spent without proper responsibility and accountability; taxpayers' money. This is a huge concern alone.

However, what is more worrisome is that air ambulance deals with life-and-death situations. When things go wrong, families deserve to know the facts and have closure. Depriving these grieving families from getting this information is unacceptable. Providing the information and the details would bring some type of credibility to this bill, but again, it lacks that provision. Ontarians would agree that organizations such as Ornge need to be under the mandate of the Ombudsman.

*Vous savez, le gouvernement a présentement la chance devant eux de corriger ce problème, de vraiment adresser le problème, de retourner un niveau de crédibilité à ce gouvernement et puis à notre système de santé, parce qu'il y a plusieurs questions qui sont posées dans le public en général. Il y a plusieurs doutes qui étaient aussi soulevés de ce gouvernement, en s'asseyant là et en regardant l'opposition et puis en créant une idée que c'est le problème de quelqu'un d'autre—de blâmer les autres partis, de blâmer les autres gens, et de ne pas prendre la responsabilité de ce gouvernement, des décisions qu'ils ont choisi de ne pas faire. La décision de regarder envers une autre avenue, la décision de ne pas vraiment établir et regarder aux problèmes essentiels, ceci, c'est de quoi que ce gouvernement doit porter. Il doit prendre la décision et il doit prendre la responsabilité d'admettre que c'est leur problème et puis de prendre les premières étapes pour corriger le problème. C'est la seule façon qu'on peut vraiment adresser ce problème.*

Rendre les droits nécessaires à l'ombudsman pour vraiment répondre aux questions, c'est aussi une étape qu'on devrait prendre, et ce projet de loi ne l'adresse pas.

Et puis, on doit poser la question à l'ombudsman aujourd'hui: s'il aurait eu le droit, s'il aurait eu la permission et l'habileté de regarder à ce problème, est-ce qu'on serait en train d'avoir cette conversation?

Had the Ombudsman had oversight, perhaps we would not have been here today, so why have the Liberals not taken this step? Clearly, they are not really serious about preventing similar catastrophes in the future.

In Algoma–Manitoulin, in much of northern Ontario, we know how many of our services are being cut. We often travel great distances to seek medical attention, and there isn't funding for important health projects that our communities need. I speak to constituents who travel many hours away, travelling to either one end of the cycle, which is Sudbury, or the other end, in the Soo.

Whether you're coming in from Hornepayne, Manitowadge, down to Sault Ste. Marie, it is a day's event that you're going through. It is difficult for people to get to their area. They have to do this—they can't, spur of the moment, have a discussion. It takes a couple of days to plan. It's difficult to explain to them how this government squanders health care dollars with zero accountability and transparency and the health care situation in the north is severely deprived. Northern and rural communities need to know that when there is an emergency, there is help close by. This is not always the case for these folks. Without transparency in health organizations, northerners are going to suffer again.

The money is there to create a good health care system that makes patients, that makes people, the priority: not the corporations, not the boardrooms, but people, who should be at the front of the line always when we're making these decisions, but clearly the current leadership is failing to do this. This government needs to be accountable and put our patients, taxpayers, and their needs in our health care system first.

I just want to reiterate a little bit of what I highlighted with my colleague from Cambridge. We really need to get to the bottom of the responsibility in order to bring accountability and trust back to our health care system. People in Ontario deserve that. They deserve nothing less than that. But again, we need to get to that stage by having the discussions that we need. They're the ones who should be at the front of the line on every decision that we make when it comes to health care dollars.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I'm pleased to respond to the member's comments.

I think perhaps I was misunderstood with some previous comments I have made, so I want to make sure that my record is absolutely clear. The former Liberal Ontario Minister of Health George Smitherman has appeared before the committee. Former Ontario Minister of Health David Caplan has appeared before the committee. Current Ontario Minister of Health Deb Matthews has appeared.

What the members opposite clearly don't understand and which became very clear today was that the work by Fasken's, the legal firm, on the transition to Ornge began on January 1, 2003. In fact, there was actually an agreement, and legislation under the Red Tape Commission had begun to be drafted during 2003 under Ontario Minister of Health Tony Clement. The drafting of the legislation began on the Conservative watch.

**1700**

What we would like to find out was, what was the intent, because if you look at the billings of the lawyers, they're already talking about, how do you hide salaries? How do you create spin-off entities? How many foundations should we set up? They were discussing that in January and February 2003 with Guy Giorno, a former Ontario Conservative chief of staff—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. The member from York-Simcoe.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to take the time I have in responding to the comments made about Bill 50, that there are three key words that people use when they talk about issues such as this. One of them is "transparency," the other is "accountability," and the one I want to start with is "oversight," because if you think about what it means to have oversight, it means that you are taking responsibility and you've been given this responsibility by the process of oversight, and you must exercise it.

Government can create agencies, as we're looking at the creation of Ornge, or any other body. But at the end of the day, it is government that has a duty to exercise, and that duty is the obligation to oversight.

When we listen to the details that came out after the scathing report made by the Auditor General and the comments made in the committee, it becomes very clear that there was no oversight by the current minister. And being able to do this, the government has or should have a transparent process. Clearly, this one does not.

That transparent process would expose the shortcomings. It would be a process that has consequences to deal with the shortcomings. In other words, all of these things are missing in the conversation about Ornge. There has been no government oversight. The government's responsibility is to two things: transparency and consequences. They did neither.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I think my colleague raised some very good points. In fact, many people have spoken about the need for us to have greater oversight, and really that is the problem with privatization that we're seeing. I know this isn't privatized, but we're seeing that creeping privatization in many, many ministries. In addition to costing more, privatization often leaves us with no oversight.

It's frustrating, at a time when we are talking about bringing in more oversight for something that we already know to be a scandal, that at the same time in the budget bill they're looking at privatizing even more things.

I think what happened at Ornge is a travesty, with the lack of oversight, the lack of checks and balances, but it's not just what was happening at Ornge that was the problem; it's the fact that it was allowed to be created. Despite the public and MPPs sounding the alarm bells for years, the government withheld the information that we were trying to seek. We tried every avenue. It was only when the media broke the story that something happened.

It sort of begs the question: How was the government allowed to do this? The problem is, we don't have anything in place to force the government to behave in a transparent and ethical manner. Maybe the legislation that we should consider now isn't, how do we stop or prevent this same scandal or travesty from happening, but maybe we should talk about giving the public the power to impeach a government or to invalidate election results. Maybe we wouldn't see so many of these spending scandals if the MPPs knew that if they were to do some-

thing wrong, the public could say, “You know what? You’re out of there.”

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It’s nice to hear that the NDP has now adapted the Reform Party’s recall legislation, especially after what happened in Wisconsin. It’s kind of interesting where these conversations go.

Maybe we can get back to planet Earth here, because I think the health minister has done a rather extraordinary job here. If we’re actually completely non-partisan about this, it was very, very clear over a period of two years that many members of the Legislature in all parties were becoming increasingly aware of concerns at Ornge. As that sense of urgency rose, over 12 to 18 months—and I think most of us want to believe in the better angels of the public service. I don’t think most of us come here because we’re cynical; I think most of us come here because we believe that the people in this House are honest, and I do think we’re honourable people; I think all of you sacrifice quite a lot. I think that most of the people who work in the public service are generally good folks, and I think we’ve generally extended them the benefit of the doubt.

Once evidence is there, and I think in the last 12 months—and I’ve only been in this Legislature for two years—when you call in the police, when you start asking questions and you’re not getting answers, you call in the Auditor General and you do all of the things, you become convinced, at a tipping point, that something has gone terribly wrong.

From my perspective, I think, in a fair-minded way, the minister acted with great promptness to do that. The bill coming forward today, I think, does close the loop-holes.

I was a mayor of a city, and there were problems in Winnipeg at the time with police services. I brought in inquiries when I was mayor. It is typical that you take considered time before you act and that you act quickly enough to avoid problems. I think the Minister of Health did that, and I think this bill should be passed. It’s an excellent piece of legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Algoma–Manitoulin has a two-minute reply.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to thank the members from Guelph, York–Simcoe, Kenora–Rainy River and also the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Unfortunately, I was hoping to hear different comments, but again I heard comments in regard to whose fault it was, again laying the blame. When you look at this, if it was the government of then, why did the government of today permit this to continue? Where were the red flags? Why didn’t they see them? They were flying. The wind was blowing. Like I said earlier, there was a tornado going on.

We have to come to a sense that the world doesn’t just revolve in here. There is a perception out there, which is in the general public, which is within everyday people’s

lives that they see when they look at us, that it’s okay to do wrong until you’re caught, but then you have to correct it. We have to change that somehow. We have to really hold ourselves to a higher standard to making sure the proper decisions are made and there is some accountability and there is some transparency.

I enjoyed the words from the minister where he talked about having honour and really looking at what you’re doing on a daily basis to make sure that the right decisions are made. With all due respect, all the credibility to our front-line health care workers—they need to be recognized for the work they are doing. But in all fairness and due respect to the minister, there were many, many tipping points during the discussions. There were many teeter-totter rides and many, many opportunities to get this corrected and get it done properly. We missed that ride.

I hope we can move forward and get this done once and for all.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** It’s my pleasure to join the debate today on, interestingly enough, Bill 50. I think I’d title it “bill shifty,” because what it’s designed to do is to try to shift the focus away from why we have this bill before the Legislature in the first place, and that is, without any exaggeration at all, Speaker, with what might be the worst, biggest, deepest, ugliest scandal in the health care system in Ontario’s history, perhaps even bigger than eHealth because of what has gone on as a result of this.

**1710**

The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities made a comment about the police being involved in this investigation. Well, there’s a good reason. It’s a mess, and the government knows its back is up against the wall. It didn’t bring in the police to find out what’s going on; it’s hoping to get some deflection away from the issue of the day and hide behind the fact that, “Well, we can’t talk about this. It’s the subject of a police investigation, so we cannot delve into that at this time.” This is so deep and so ugly that it’s almost beyond description. If the government had done some of the things prior and did its due diligence and had some oversight in Ornge, which, by the way, it had all the power in the world to do under article 15 in the original performance agreement—it had all the power to investigate, and the minister always had the power to demand information from Ornge. So now they’re hiding behind that, saying they couldn’t ask those questions.

At one point—but the minister dropped that one—“Oh, no, we can’t ask questions because it’s federally incorporated.” But then someone in her ministry, I guess, reminded her that hospitals in Ontario are federally incorporated too. The implication would have been that we can’t ask questions about what’s going on at hospitals because, as federally incorporated entities, the province doesn’t have the right to.

It’s those silly assertions—and then talking about Tony Clement, for God’s sake, who was the health min-

ister in 2003. You were a member then, Speaker; I wasn't, but I was still living in this province, and I think that Tony Clement was pretty busy in 2003 dealing with two episodes of SARS in this province. He wasn't all that involved with anything—that pretty much had his attention.

This mess at Ornge makes me every bit as sick as if I'd been afflicted with SARS, because the people of the province of Ontario have been so badly served by this government in this Ornge scandal.

Let's just talk about some of the details. Since 2007, Ornge has received from your money, the taxpayers of this province, over \$750 million. So we're getting close to that billion-dollar eHealth figure.

We got two leaked cabinet documents last week, one of them indicating that in 2004—Mr. Speaker, in 2004—the McGuinty government was in receipt of documents and advice from their own senior ministry advisers that said, “Whoa, this looks ugly. This is a bad idea. Don't be signing over the rights to air ambulance service in this province to Dr. Chris Mazza for a dollar”—a dollar—but they went ahead and did it.

We heard last week that the Premier said, “Oh, I never saw those documents.” What goes on at those cabinet meetings? I'd like to know. I've never been at one, but I suppose all these top-secret documents, and they're too busy—I don't know, maybe they have some fancy meals or something, and they haven't got time to read the documents, or they're afraid that the gravy is going to get spilled on them. I'm not sure. But clearly, if they're not reading it, they're just as irresponsible as if they didn't react to the information that they should have had.

So advisers said, “Don't do this. Don't do this.” That's one cabinet document.

We also found out that 26 deaths since 2007 were linked to Ornge—26 deaths—and the minister is going on, “Well, the coroner has said the ones he has investigated are not directly related to the transportation service.” That must mean that Ornge is operating really, really well, eh? You're the subject of an investigation of 26 deaths and numerous other incidents. It should tell you about the rot and incompetency that's going on there.

But let's talk about how this thing was set up and a couple of the things that went on there. It was a Ponzi scheme from the start. The government saw what was going on and did nothing about it. I'll just give you an example out of the auditor's report. Ornge's corporate headquarters was bought for \$15 million using funds borrowed through a bond issue, and then they entered into a complex agreement with some of these other companies that they set up. They sell it to one of these companies and then they lease it back, Ornge leases it back, paying 40% more than the fair market value for the rent. So somebody is making a nice deal here. Well, it was one of those subsidiary companies. But who do you think owns the subsidiary companies? Well, interestingly enough, it was owned by members of Ornge's senior management and the board. Now, I'm not sure if that meets the classic definition of a Ponzi scheme, but it's

close enough for me. Bernie Madoff is in jail. What the heck is going on here?

Then they buy 12 helicopters. They were told they should have bought less, but they needed—Ornge is big. So they buy 12 helicopters from an Italian manufacturer, overpay for the helicopters and get over \$7 million back from the company. Most people call that a kickback. So where is that going? Well, it's going to help with future marketing services for Ornge, but that would be done by another company—again, you guessed it, Mr. Speaker—owned by shareholders and the board.

All through this time, the Minister of Health has the blinders on. “I see nothing. I know nothing.” You know, the people of Ontario deserve a whole lot better, and what do we get? We get bill shifty. It was brought in here for first reading on March 21. It is now June 6, the 68th anniversary of D-Day, and we're here on second reading.

The House leaders negotiated a programming motion in this place, Mr. Speaker, to try to have some kind of orderly end to the spring session. The government never brought Bill 50 to those discussions, never put it on the table at all. Do they really want it passed, or did they just need to put something on the table here so it made it look like they were doing something about Ornge? If you really wanted to get this passed—and as they go on and say repeatedly, “If we only had Bill 50, we could make sure that Ornge never repeats itself.” Well, we'd better make darned sure Ornge never repeats itself, with or without Bill 50. We could start by the people on that side of the House, starting with the man in the corner office, taking some responsibility for how they have messed this up.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, this does not absolve anyone of their responsibility and the guilt of the failure. Somebody has to pay. Their position there is, “Well, if we just move on now, everything will be fine.” That would be like getting a statement from a murderer saying he won't do it again and you say, “Oh, well, that's fine. You're free to go.” No, we still put them in jail. Somebody has to pay here. It should start with the Minister of Health. She should tender her resignation, and then we can find who else is to blame over there.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's my pleasure to respond to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I don't think I can equal his speaking style, but one thing he brought to the discussion is that some of the transgressions that happened at Ornge were almost—maybe that's why they were ignored. They were too big to believe, because some of the things that were in the Auditor General's report—sitting back and, for the people at home, thinking, “You've got to be kidding. How did no one catch this? You've got to be kidding.”

**1720**

This was all through the organization. Even with the accountability agreement that they say wasn't good enough and this wasn't good enough, still, at the end of the day, we're all left with, “You've got to be kidding.”

With all due respect, the minister said there are people on all sides, but from this side—and I did a bit of reading—we brought it to the government’s attention in 2010.

I heard testimony from a person who lived in my riding for most of his life—his parents still live in my riding—and he brought it to the people’s attention in 2009. Once again, he brought it, believe it or not—one paramedic quits his job and goes to the press. Do you know what the reaction from the press was? “Come on. Nobody’s going to believe that. You’ve got to be kidding.”

Once again, we’ve got to get to the bottom of this. How can this happen with all these checks and balances? It’s almost like no one wants to look, and I think that is the problem.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I think we need to be clear here. There is nobody in this Legislature who does not agree with the fact that this was, certainly in my experience, the most egregious act of siphoning public money into people’s pockets for private gain. I think everybody here agrees on that.

In fact, this afternoon we unanimously passed a motion for a Speaker’s warrant to get Dr. Mazza in here. I placed that motion on behalf of the subcommittee at public accounts, which represents all three parties. There is unanimous agreement that we need to get to the bottom of this. What we probably don’t agree on is how. Hanging the current Minister of Health isn’t going to help us get to the bottom of it.

What will help us get to the bottom of it is continuing to hear from the witnesses who come forward, but what we do know is that the Auditor General of the province of Ontario said, “I can’t get at the information. It’s been blocked. I can’t get at the information on the private spinoffs.” That’s what the Auditor General said.

The minister sent in the forensic auditors from the Minister of Finance once she broke the logjam and they had a look at it, and what we found was so shocking, it was turned over to the Ontario Provincial Police. No politician in the Legislature can tell the OPP what to do as a result of an investigation. I’d like to know what they think, too. But we don’t have that power. In Canada, we separate police from politicians—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I’ve been listening to this debate all afternoon, and I think what we have here is a failure to communicate. I really do.

In order to have a sound, there has to be a sender and a receiver; at least that’s what I learned in high school. One thing we used to argue in high school was, if a tree fell in a bush and nobody was around to hear it, would there be sound? I guess you could argue that either way, but I believe there wouldn’t be a sound because there’s nobody there to receive it, and that’s what’s going on on the other side of the House here. We’ve got a bush over

there. A tree has fallen and nobody wants to hear it, and the tree happens to be Ornge.

This legislation that we’re debating today, I believe, is just designed to take the heat off the health minister, who had the authority to act, but didn’t, plain and simple. She had the authority to go into Ornge when she heard about it and decided to stay away from it. This bill is nothing more than to help her get around her responsibility in Ornge. We asked—we voted to have a select committee to study this, and the minister said that she would abide by the House. Of course, we’ve seen how far that has gone: no select committee.

I do believe that there are more things that we need to learn before we can get to the bottom of Ornge, and fortunately, we have a few more days to do it. But I read a statement that the honourable minister said in the past. She said we needed to make changes to the government’s performance agreement and couldn’t do so. We found that to be false, and I believe the minister should resign over this question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker. I’ll just scooch into my spot here. I listened to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, and I do appreciate some of his humour. He does make me chuckle. It’s entertaining to listen to you, Mr.—I can’t say your name, sorry. That will be a point of order you’ll call me on next.

But on a more serious note, one of the things we recently debated was Bill 34. From that bill, we were discussing back and forth a little bit of history and how this government had a secret meeting and passed some legislation that allowed the G20 incident to occur, which resulted in horrific violations of human rights. The government’s response to that was, “It was the Conservative federal government. We didn’t have enough time. We couldn’t prepare.” That was their reasoning for the horrible fiasco with regard to human rights with the G20. Fine. I got that. I can see where maybe—I can even see where that timeline wouldn’t have helped for the pre-planning of the G20. I can get that. But then the part where there was that secret meeting where legislation was passed—I had a problem with that.

Now we’re here at the Ornge scandal, and now the member from Guelph is saying it’s the PCs’ Mr. Clement who’s to blame. It’s not working. The blame game isn’t working. You have to face up to fact that you’re government now. There were bells beyond belief—deafening bells. The dog whistle, I’ll bet they could hear the bells ringing.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, it wasn’t silent to everyone else. It wasn’t just a dog whistle; everybody heard it. We need to own up to the fact that it has to have some accountability to what’s happened at Ornge.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I appreciate the comments from the members from Timiskaming–Cochrane, Guelph, Perth–Wellington and London–Fanshawe.

In a manner of speaking, I want to correct my record, Speaker. I said that this may be the biggest scandal in the history of the Ministry of Health. I need to correct that. It could very well be the biggest scandal in the history of government in the province of Ontario—history of government in the province of Ontario.

To the member from Guelph, who asks, what good would the resignation of the Minister of Health do in this? Well, I'll tell you what it would do. It would send a clear message to everybody out there that this government is actually accepting responsibility for how it has made an absolute catastrophe of the Ornge air ambulance service. It would say that the government is going to take its responsibility and accept that someone has to be held accountable. Other than that, they believe that they're above accountability. It would say to all those people who would like to maybe come and appear before the standing committee that, you know what? We actually believe the government is interested in getting to the bottom of it.

But no, you hear the minister day after day defending what's going on at Ornge. How can you defend the indefensible? That's what we hear in this House on a daily basis. In order to save her own skin, she is willing to defend a bunch of crooks. Those people should be in jail. This investigation—if the minister starts with a resignation, then we'll be able to get to the bottom of this as we should.

1730

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's my pleasure—I guess it's a pleasure—to speak on G50, the Ambulance Amendment Act. I guess from our perspective, this act is meant to hopefully correct problems from the past. We're hoping, but we're not really sure if it's not meant to just mask problems from the past. That's the proof we have to see: whether it's really meant to correct or meant to mask.

We hear words like, "It's the biggest scandal in the history of the government." That could well be true. I don't know. I'll be the first to admit that I don't know.

But we've heard, and I think everyone in this House would agree, that the most important people in this issue are the patients who have the misfortune—and I don't mean misfortune in a bad way. I mean, if you're sick, you need air ambulance.

Perhaps the people who are the most impacted and who we all have the most respect for are the people who actually work in this system, the people who actually provide the care. Because they don't really care—they do care but they're not part of this scandal.

Or are they? Because does what we're talking about—in this House we're probably as far away from patient care as you can get. We are talking in abstract about scandal. But really touching the patient, we're about as far away as we can get.

But today at the committee hearing was a flight paramedic, a former employee of Ornge. I had the opportunity to sit in that committee today. I believe he was the

only one, and please correct me if I'm wrong, the only on-the-ground—I guess that's a bad term for a flight paramedic—

**Interjection:** Front line.

**Mr. John Vanthof:**—front line. Well, he works for Ornge; he might be on the ground. For the record, I'd like to read his testimony, because I think it should be not just in the committee Hansard, but it should be in the Hansard of the House. I asked him today, and it was okay with him, so hopefully it's okay with the House.

"Thank you for having me. My name is Trevor Kidd. I have been a paramedic for 11 years. I would like to briefly outline just a few of the many concerns regarding unsafe, egregious and unprofessional practices I experienced under Ornge, which I left in disgust in the fall of 2009.

"I initially joined the air ambulance in 2003. Ornge took over the Sioux Lookout base I was working at in 2006. Already having my advanced care, I started the critical care course, which traditionally took one year, under the previous carriers, and was a time frame that Ornge itself advertises. However, under Ornge, accountability for having properly trained crews was gone. The time frame for the six students in my class ranged from two years, eight months to more than five years. I feel the reluctance of Ornge to invest in their paramedics significantly compromised patient care in this province."

And something we're not realizing is Ornge is responsible for training as well as employing. They're the only game in town, so it's Ornge or else.

"In 2008, I was moved to the new fixed-wing that Ornge was starting in Thunder Bay. That was the first time I have experienced the terror of working on an aircraft which, due to the interior setup, had no business carrying sick patients. We felt we were putting patients and staff at risk. When Ornge refused to address any of these issues after many months, I applied for and was approved for a transfer to the new critical care land transfer unit that was scheduled to open in Windsor on November 3, 2008. I was one of 11 staff looking forward to providing care in this city that had long been neglected."

Remember the word "Windsor."

"Now, of course, I know what you are saying. There is no base in Windsor. On that very day, November 3, we were told that Windsor was not opening and that Markham and Peterborough would be opened half-time. That stunt secured Ornge millions of unearned taxpayer dollars every year thereafter.

"As background to the land program, Ornge received \$9.4 million in start-up funds for the 2006 fiscal year and \$13.2 million the following year, despite only opening a single base very late in the year. This was \$23 million for essentially doing nothing.

"Unfortunately for Ornge, come 2008 there was finally pressure to deliver something for the money. Instead, they created a crisis. Ornge's documents to the Ministry of Finance claim that they spent \$22.3 million on the land program that year. More recently, the Auditor General found that Ornge only spent \$8.2 million. That \$14-

million discrepancy has never been discussed, explained or accounted for....

“The Auditor General also found that year that \$8 million Ornge received for the program was not spent on the land program and was not returned to the Ministry of Health. We also know that in June 2008, \$8.4 million was transferred out of Ornge into the Ornge Foundation.... Three months later, Ornge created a crisis by not opening the bases they were supposed to. From that time on, Ornge received 70% of the originally proposed funds while delivering only 20% of the proposed crews, receiving millions of dollars every year. The executives took this windfall and ran with it. In the following months, Steve Farquhar and Tom Lepine received raises of \$96,000 and \$106,000, respectively. For the other execs, we know how well they, their family and friends made out.

“For the paramedics involved, the story is different. Some were left commuting several hours to work, others living apart from their families, and others still with expenses that Ornge caused us to incur, which ranged up to \$50,000. Ornge not only did not assist us, but their continued lies prevented us from making informed decisions which would have minimized our losses. To this day, they refuse to take any responsibility for their actions in this fraud.

“Since that time, Ornge has had staffing issues the likes of which had never been seen before. When I left a year later, Sioux Lookout was properly staffed 27% of the time; Thunder Bay’s fixed-wing, 2%; and Moosonee, 0%. These problems have spread to Toronto and Sudbury, which for the first part of this year were properly staffed only 60% and 65% of the time, respectively. Pilots and engineers are also leaving in droves with six each from Toronto Island alone so far this year.

“Despite knowing that the control Ornge had over the air ambulance left me with nowhere else to go, I left two and a half years ago with the goal of exposing the corruption that was already evident by that time. I kept in contact with many staff and compiled evidence of Ornge’s mismanagement. Those I talk to do not feel that this nightmare is being seriously [dealt with] to this day. The air ambulance in this province used to be among the most respected in the world. It was so high that it took six years of concerted effort for the execs to drive it into the ground. It will take many years for the system to be restored, but whether that respect can ever be returned, I have serious doubts.

“That ends my speech. However, if I may, I have asked many of those who have sent me information over the years if they would agree to allow their names to be submitted to the committee in writing under terms of extreme care for maintaining confidentiality. They unanimously said no.”

That brings it back to the patient perspective and to the morale of the people who actually provide the service, because in Mr. Kidd’s letter—and what happened is, he was promised a job at a base, and the day before he was supposed to move to the base, they got an email saying,

“Oh, sorry. We’re not going to open that base.” So what is the morale of the employees?

When you’re dealing in aircraft that aren’t suitable—and it’s pretty simple stuff. The old aircraft had shelves on the side for all your—

**Interjection:** Medical supplies.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Medical supplies, yes; you know, needles and stuff like that, IV tubes. In the new, improved ones, they had the stuff in bags because there was no room for the shelves in the single-engine. Well, come on. So this—I don’t even like using the word “scandal,” but this does affect patient care.

It came up in the committee: “Are you aware, Mr. Kidd, that you can divulge these names because you’re protected under the committee?” There’s a table there for press. Who are we kidding? Once again, there has to be a culture of wanting to deal with the problem, and so far on this issue, there has been a culture of wanting to shove the problem on to somebody else. There was a time, I’ve heard, that the NDP was blamed for Ornge. Just because our party’s the same colour, we didn’t create the problem.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** And Tony Clement’s responsible. You know what? This scandal is—and you contradict Mr. Kidd, but this scandal is threatening patients.

**1740**

I’d like to close with this: As Mr. Kidd was speaking, the Auditor General was in the room. Mr. Kidd was speaking and the Auditor General was nodding. Mr. Kidd is a flight paramedic. He’s not a forensic accountant, but he saw what was going on. The Auditor General is one of the brightest financial minds in the province, and they both knew. Once again, they both knew, but everybody else didn’t know what was going on? Impossible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Guelph again.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Thank you very much, Speaker, again.

I’m pleased to respond to the words from the member for Timiskaming. I probably got your riding all wrong, sorry. Actually, I would like to thank you for your comment that Bill 50 really is about moving forward. It’s not, as has been suggested, about delay; it is about how to fix things.

I would like to comment on the testimony from Mr. Kidd, your former constituent—his father still lives in your constituency, I know—because I think he made some really interesting comments. The thing that he talked about that nobody else has talked about, which I thought was quite interesting, was about some of the training issues and upgrading to a critical care paramedic, and how that process works. Some of his comments struck a chord with me, and I would actually be kind of interested in pursuing that, because he was talking about the conflict when your employer has total control over the training and how that was very difficult for him.

He also made a really interesting comment, I thought, when he did go to the media, about the fact that this is



such a bizarre story that, when people have tried to give a heads up, people actually do react, “Well, that couldn’t possibly be. What you’re telling me is just so bizarre.” That, I think, has been the reaction of many people when you got to the siphoning of money and the kickbacks, renting buildings at an inflated price—all of these things.

I think Mr. Kidd did have some useful things to say to us today, and certainly I would thank him for his testimony.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It’s a privilege to speak in regard to my colleague from Timiskaming–Cochrane. He always stands up and, I believe, speaks from the heart and speaks off his sleeve, but he always puts out there some good thought processes for us to think about.

What I really heard him say is a lot about Mr. Kidd. Mr. Kidd went through this. He lived it, he saw it first-hand, he was part of the process. He went back to his principles and when he couldn’t take it anymore, even though he stepped up and said, “There’s something going wrong here,” he took it. He did his job. He brought it to the light of those in power and nothing happened. At some point, he stood behind his own principles and convictions and he resigned.

I think the minister should maybe give some thought to this. Maybe she didn’t know every intricate detail, and probably this scam is so big that she couldn’t know every detail, but at some point, she has to step up and take that responsibility and do the right thing, do the honourable thing. As I believe John said earlier, she has to step up. She has to give faith back to the people who are paying the freight. They need to have hope and faith that the people in control actually have their interests at heart.

This isn’t a political game here, folks; we’re dealing with people’s lives. We need to do the thing that’s going to definitely ensure that the people of Ontario have trust. Those front-line people, most importantly, need to know that the people above them are going to listen to them when they bring a concern to their attention. They need to know that when they do step up—that whistle-blower is very, very important, so that people will come up and tell the truth, so that the facts truly will get there.

If we don’t get to the bottom of this scandal, if we really don’t understand just how complex and where it really came from and how it emanated, and who did know or didn’t know, then how do we ever put protocols in place to prevent it from ever happening again? We’re dealing with people’s lives. We need to ensure that we get to the bottom of this. That’s why we as a party have stood so strong in our conviction to say, “We will not give up on this. We will come to this House every day and make it an issue until we get to the bottom of it,” so that the people of Ontario have faith in their government and their health care service.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I’d just like to say that the member from Timiskaming really brought it down to a human

level, as other members have said here, and we could see what the individual within the Ornge organization was doing.

Today, we went back to the first nine months of 2003, which was the period before we were elected. That was in the formative days of Ornge, and that’s when the bad start came and continued. The people who were mostly involved with Heinz, who was a witness today, were Giorno, Clement, Golding, Kevin McCarthy, Apps and Blum. Those were the names I saw in all those charges from the lawyers for Ornge. That was the start of the company. That was building it up. They had Mazza in there.

I don’t know what went wrong, but what they were trying to do was get away from the Red Tape Commission, trying to get less oversight, and they certainly got it. Of course, it continued with our government not knowing what was going on inside that organization, and that’s really difficult. You can see how many people were hurt by it and continue to be hurt by it.

The minister has done the right thing. The minister went in there—the board left—appointed a new board, saw what was there, brought in the OPP, got a new performance agreement, and Bill 50 is part of that and is going to make that performance agreement stronger.

We have to look forward. If we keep following those air ambulances around and destroying the morale there, it’s going to be difficult to rebuild. That’s what the minister is trying to do. That’s what McKerlie is trying to do. We’ll have to go forward and make sure that the people of Ontario get the service they need and that they’re paying for.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** This whole thing is quite a fiasco. We’re sitting here debating Bill 50. It’s a bill that I believe was just made to help the Minister of Health keep her job and take some of the responsibility off her.

When there are patients who might need their care, as the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane has said in his statement, people could suffer over this—

**Interjection:** And have.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** —and have, because of the staffing issues at Ornge.

But the horse is out of the barn, the gate was left open, and this government just can’t understand that. They’ve got to find the solution to fixing Ornge.

One thing that I believe is not a solution to this thing is trying to introduce legislation that blocks the minister’s responsibility. That’s what I think is going on here with Bill 50.

We’re not blaming the front-line staff. They only want to do the jobs that they were hired to do. That’s what they’re there for. But it’s the management and, ultimately, government control that has let this horse go, and they’re having a hard time reining it in.

I believe that Bill 50 was just designed to take the pressure off the health minister. It’s not working. We’re going to continue putting the pressure on the health

ministry and the minister to come clean as to what was going on, what she knew. Ultimately, it's her responsibility to get this mess cleaned up.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Timiskaming–Cochrane has two minutes.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you, Speaker. I'd also like to thank the members from Guelph, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Perth–Wellington and Ottawa–Orléans.

One thing to the member for Guelph: I didn't say that I agreed that Bill 50 was for moving forward. I said the jury is still out, whether it's actually for moving forward or trying to deflect the problem or deflect the blame. I think the jury is really still out on that.

I'd also like to add something regarding Trevor Kidd. He contacted his superiors at Ornge before he left. He contacted the ministry. He contacted his MPP. It wasn't me at the time, but it could have been me at the time. The story was pretty fabulous, but at the end of the day, when an employee in the health care sector makes allegations that strong, strong enough that he's willing to give up his job over it, I think someone in the ministry somewhere—I'm not trying to make this—but somewhere somebody said, "Whoa, hold the phone." You know? And in 2009 and 2010, when people said, "Excuse me, you maybe should check this." They should say, "Hold the phone."

**1750**

The fact that nobody is doing that, and the fact that we're still trying to lay blame now—in fact, if this bill was really, really intended to fix the problem, you would have whistle-blower protection no matter who you blew it on or where you gave your information. But it's not like that; it's only to selected people. In this case, if the next Trevor Kidd goes to the MPP, no whistle-blower protection under Bill 50. No Ombudsman is going to look. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 50, An Act to amend the Ambulance Act with respect to air ambulance services. We've heard a lot about—we no longer call it air ambulance service. When you talk to the people of Ontario, you just say Ornge, and they all know what we're talking about.

This is the McGuinty government's response to the scandal at Ornge. Unfortunately, it is a weak and, I think, ineffective response. This act gives the government authority to do things that they already could, such as appoint an investigator, but they play on the fact that, no, presently, they appoint supervisors; under the new legislation, they would be able to appoint an investigator.

Ornge was created by the government of Ontario and funded by the government of Ontario. If the government had been serious about taking action to address the problems, they could have done so last year. The government claims to have taken action by replacing some of the management at Ornge. If the minister had her hands tied, as she claims, you have to wonder how suddenly she had the ability to do just that.

This legislation addresses whistle-blowers, but it fails to provide across-the-board protection for them. In fact, it limits which individuals are protected and who they can approach with that information. We need to ensure that the people are able to speak up.

Without them, we might never have discovered that Ornge had purchased helicopters in which they didn't have room for the paramedics to do their job—at least, not to do the job properly. In an air ambulance where you can't do CPR, it's not much of an air ambulance. Without them, we might not have discovered that Ornge purchased 12 helicopters and 10 airplanes, even though their own analysis said that was three helicopters and four airplanes more than they needed. They then rented some storage space to put them in. Without whistle-blowers, we might not have learned about the mysterious payments of millions of dollars that manufacturers paid to companies related to Ornge—buy it more expensive, get a refund and put it in the bank in a private account.

The main issue here, Mr. Speaker, is accountability and responsibility. As a Conservative, I believe strongly in both of those values, and I believe the McGuinty government has failed on both.

The problems at Ornge didn't develop in the last six months. That's just when the media coverage started, and the government chose to respond. There were numerous warning signs over the last few years. Over that time the problems continued to grow, and the government continued to ignore them.

They ignored warnings from staff at Ornge. They ignored questions from my colleague the member from Newmarket–Aurora. They ignored reports that helicopters couldn't respond to calls because they were understaffed. They ignored warnings from senior civil servants even though the civil service produced a document for cabinet that references 27 cases involving Ornge as the primary subject of investigations into failed health care delivery in 2011, and an additional 40 cases from January to May of this year. They ignored the letter to the minister which laid out in detail Ornge's plan to create independent for-profit corporations; that's where that kickback came from the companies back to one of those companies.

The McGuinty government failed to take responsibility and investigate Ornge to ensure that it was providing the necessary services for Ontarians at a critical time in their lives. Bill 50 does nothing to address the fact that the government did not take action and responsibility when they should have. Bill 50 gives the minister power to appoint investigators, but in fact she already had that power under article 15 of the original Ornge performance agreement. She just chose not to take that action.

Perhaps the Minister of Health thought if she ignored the problem, no one else would notice. Perhaps they believe that it's only a problem if it ends up in the Toronto Star, because that is when the minister finally started to take notice. At that point, the minister and the McGuinty government had another opportunity to

demonstrate responsibility and accountability, and again they failed. They blocked our efforts to create a select committee to investigate Ornge.

Bill 50 does not address the need to fully investigate what happened so that we can ensure that it never happens again. Bill 50 just does what the minister already could do, and obviously it does absolutely nothing for what needs to be investigated so we know what went wrong so that that can be fixed. Again, the government has continued to focus on public relations. They are more concerned about looking bad than about trying to expose the truth and solve the problems.

Minister, your job is to make sure that the health care system works for the people of Ontario. It is your job to make sure that our dedicated paramedics have the equipment they need to save lives. Instead, we have air ambulances that are so cramped that paramedics can't perform the basic CPR.

Minister, you can do all the photo ops you want, but that doesn't fix the system. That won't make sure that if there's a car accident and someone is critically injured, there is a helicopter to get them to the hospital in time. Ontarians, like the driver of the cube van killed in a collision on Bloomington Road on May 9 and his family, were relying on you, Madam Minister, and you let him down.

As that demonstrates, the decisions that this minister makes are sometimes life and death. That's why the lack of action to deal with the problems at Ornge is so significant. It is why it is so disappointing that your response, Madam Minister, was to introduce such weak legislation.

Mr. Speaker, in 2007 we discovered that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration had handed out money without an application process. I think everybody remembers the \$1 million to the cricket club. After the auditor released his report, the Premier said, "The process (Colle's) ministry followed was clearly inadequate. In this circumstance, Mike and I agree the minister must be held accountable and that stepping aside is the right thing to do."

I don't believe that that case was anywhere near to the point where we are today with the Minister of Health. I would suggest that maybe the Premier might want to have that same talk with the Minister of Health. If it was right that the minister be held accountable for handing out taxpayer dollars without proper process and application, how can the Premier possibly justify not holding the Minister of Health accountable for this situation and asking her to step aside?

Ornge not only was a misuse of taxpayers' dollars, it also risked lives. It resulted in critically ill patients being

transported in helicopters where paramedics couldn't perform CPR and, worse, resulted in helicopters not being deployed when needed.

Serving in this Legislature is an honour, and with that comes a duty to our constituents—a duty to the taxpayers and a duty to the citizens. As a member of the cabinet, that responsibility is even greater. You have a responsibility to ensure that the ministry that you are responsible for delivers services for the people intended. As Minister of Health, the services that she oversees are possibly the most important and essential. It isn't an easy job, but it is a privilege. As a minister, you are expected to hold yourself to a higher standard; and if you fail, as this minister has, you are expected to do the honourable thing and resign.

The truth is that Ornge isn't fixed. Recently, a budget document was leaked which revealed that the agency is running a \$14.5-million deficit and will require nearly an 11% increase in funding to stem the red ink.

But, Mr. Speaker, the bigger concern is that there are still lives at risk. On February 28, a spot inspection at the London Ornge air base discovered that there wasn't one single paramedic on duty—not one. That base covers my riding of Oxford, as well as Haldimand–Norfolk, Middlesex, Chatham and the rest of southwestern Ontario, including London. If there had been an accident in Oxford that required emergency medical transportation, there would have been no way for Ornge to respond. Mr. Speaker, that's not acceptable.

It's clear that the minister is more focused on trying to make this situation appear fixed rather than actually fixing it. This legislation doesn't address the real problem, which is a government that refuses to take responsibility and accountability to fix the problem. The minister needs to step down, and we need an all-party select committee to investigate Ornge to ensure this cannot happen again.

The people of Ontario deserve to have a health care system that they can count on. They deserve to know that if they or their loved ones need emergency medical transportation, it will be there. They deserve to have a Minister of Health with integrity who will take accountability for her actions or the lack thereof.

This bill seems to deal with the structure of Ornge—and I guess the time has arrived, so, Mr. Speaker, we will continue this at a later date.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being two minutes after 6, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1801.*

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<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre de Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	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	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
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	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Innovation / Ministre du Développement économique et de l'Innovation
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
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	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	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	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	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	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	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
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	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)	Richmond Hill	
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	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
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	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	
Vacant	Kitchener–Waterloo	

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Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Mario Sergio  
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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Todd Smith, Jeff Yurek  
David Zimmer  
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Phil McNeely, Randy Pettapiece  
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Lisa M. Thompson  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Shafiq Qadri  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Mike Colle  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Paul Miller, Rob E. Milligan  
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**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon  
Gilles Bisson, Donna H. Cansfield  
Steve Clark, Garfield Dunlop  
Jeff Leal, Lisa MacLeod  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics**

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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  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Michael Coteau, Grant Crack  
Vic Dhillon, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Mario Sergio  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Ted Chudleigh, Dipika Damerla  
Cheri DiNovo, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Ernie Hardeman, Tracy MacCharles  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch







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