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**Official Report
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Monday 11 June 2012

Lundi 11 juin 2012

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 11 June 2012

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 11 juin 2012

The House met at 1030.

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

Prayers.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Monsieur le Président, j'aimerais présenter aujourd'hui ma filleule, ma nièce, Marie-Christine Chartrand et son amie Tiphaine Dereyen : my goddaughter, Marie-Christine Chartrand, and her friend Tiphaine DeReyen.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'd like to welcome Rachel Chertkoff, Alex Rotman and Danielle Arje from the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, or CJPAC. I'm pleased that they're here with us this morning to watch question period.

Mr. Reza Moridi: It's my pleasure to introduce the parents of page Angela Feng—her mother, Julie Song, and her father, Alex Feng—and her grandmother, Wong Shu Lan. Please join me in welcoming them to the House today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We welcome our guests. Further introductions?

M^{me} France Gélinas: They're on their way here, but I would like to introduce to this House Mrs. Natalie Mehra, who is with the Ontario Health Coalition; Mr. Peter Clutterbuck, who is from the Social Planning Network of Ontario; as well as Adrienne Silnicki, from the Council of Canadians, and their supporters who came to see question period this morning.

Mr. Reza Moridi: It is my pleasure to introduce and welcome my intern, Najva Amin, sitting in the members' gallery.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On behalf of the member from Scarborough Southwest, in the public gallery we have Mohammad Quader, here to see his daughter, page Tameem Quader, in action. We welcome them to Queen's Park.

Last call for introductions.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Last call? I've heard that before.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You've been there?

SPEAKER'S WARRANT

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table a copy of my warrant, issued in accordance with the adoption of the

House on June 7 of the report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts respecting testimony of Dr. Chris Mazza, which was delivered in person, on my order, by the Sergeant-at-Arms on June 8, 2012.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question to the Premier: Premier, eight months ago, in the election, Ontario families sent us here with a very clear message. They want to see us focused on private sector job creation and reining in public spending to balance the books in our province.

The problem is, you didn't seem to get that message. After eight months, what should be up is down, and what should be down is up. The deficit is up, spending is up, taxes are up, and what should be up—jobs—are actually down in our province. Clearly, Premier, doesn't this indicate we're on the wrong path? Why didn't you get that message eight months ago?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm pleased to take the question. Obviously, I take issue with my honourable colleague's perspective on this. The fact of the matter is that jobs overall are up. The trend is moving in the right direction. We have created 320,000 new jobs since the recession. March and April were particularly good: We created 70,000 new jobs. May was not as promising.

I think Ontarians understand that we are plugged into the global economy and that there is a tremendous amount of uncertainty. When bad things happen over there, there are in fact reverberations that are felt here. I know that Ontarians understand that.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I think the Premier used the expression, "The train is moving in the right direction." We're worried that when it enters the province of Ontario, it becomes derailed. It becomes derailed by higher taxes in this budget, by higher energy rates and just more and more red tape that has become this thicket that anybody has to hack through with a machete to try to get anything done in this province when they have the audacity to try create jobs.

Premier, the other provinces actually added 32,000 full-time jobs last month, despite international uncertainty. The provinces added 32,000 jobs, while our province actually lost 31,000 full-time jobs this past month.

Premier, isn't that an indication that you're on the wrong path and instead you should adopt our PC ideas

that are pro-jobs and pro-growth and will turn Ontario's economy around?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, my honourable colleague is always interested in comparing Ontario to the other provinces, and I think there's probably a little bit of merit in that, but not too much. The fact of the matter is that we each have our own different economic strengths, and our responsibility is to play to those strengths. If you have a resource-based economy, the fact of the matter is, there's a tremendous global demand for resources, and it makes it a little bit different for us as a province which still places a great deal of emphasis on manufacturing.

Having said that, Speaker, we know that one of the most important things that we can do to be competitive in the global economy is to invest in the skills and education of our people. That's why I'm so very concerned that my honourable colleague would eliminate our 30%-off tuition grant, which is going to give families a \$1,700 credit this year for university and an \$800 credit this year for college, which is exactly what they need.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: It is amazing, Speaker, that every time we ask the Premier about private sector job creation and every time we ask about balancing the books, he comes up with new ideas for new spending in the province that we simply cannot afford.

The Premier says that sometimes we compare ourselves with other provinces. I think we should. In fact, Speaker, we should be number one, and the other nine behind us. That's my mission, and we won't stop until Ontario is number one in job creation again.

Premier, on Friday, we actually lost 31,000 full-time jobs. The other nine provinces added on 32,000 full-time jobs. You talked about the train moving in the right direction; Ontario has moved from being the engine of Confederation to the caboose. It's time for a change in direction, one focused like a laser on private sector job creation: our plan to make energy affordable; to lower taxes, not increase them; and to get our fiscal house in order. This is the path to prosperity in our province, Premier. Won't you accept the ideas we've put on the table?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: No, Speaker. I appreciate the ideas, but I'll tell you why I can't accept them. My honourable colleague is proposing that they cut corporate taxes at this point in time when we can't afford to do so. Over the course of three years, that costs \$1.5 billion. They also want to go ahead and cut the business education tax. Over the course of three years, that's \$300 million. They want to maintain in place the racetrack subsidy. Over the course of three years, that's over \$1 billion. When you add those three measures together, they cost \$2.8 billion. My honourable colleague wants to spend \$2.8 billion in those areas.

He's going to have to take the money out of our schools and out of our health care, Speaker. We believe that at the same time that we take measures to grow our economy, we've got to protect our schools and we've got

to protect health care for Ontario families. I think that's a balanced approach.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier on jobs and the economy and the lack of any kind of response from the Premier on what has become a jobs crisis in this province: Again, Premier, we lost jobs last month while the rest of Canada gained.

Since the election eight months ago, we actually have lost private sector jobs, while we've increased the size and cost of government under this Premier by almost 300,000 positions. We've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs and added 300,000 to the government payroll. It is simply not sustainable.

Only this Premier would argue that in the midst of a job crisis, when we're losing good full-time, good middle-class jobs—what's his solution? Increasing taxes on job creators, increasing taxes on innovators. It's the wrong approach, sir. We need one that says, "We'll get behind the private sector economy to grow again, that the train will be strong in the province of Ontario. We'll be number one in Confederation again, not at the back of the pack."

1040

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, I think I should take the opportunity to come to the rescue of truth, which is becoming a big casualty here.

I want to say that since the recession, Ontario has created 320,000 new jobs, which is more than any other province. My honourable colleague says that we want to increase taxes. I'm not sure where he's coming from in that regard. We have cut corporate taxes several times. We've eliminated capital taxes. We have reduced small business taxes. We've eliminated tens of thousands of regulatory burdens. We've done a lot to ensure that our businesses are on a competitive floor with respect to the rest of the country and, indeed, in the global economy.

So I'd say to my honourable colleague, as he moves forward, he should keep in mind the reality of what we've done here in Ontario to support businesses.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I think the Premier would probably benefit from an injection of that reality that he talks so much about.

Two Fridays ago, we lost 2,000 good middle-class jobs at GM. The Equinox and the Impala, which had been made in Ontario, now will shift production across the border to the States—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Mr. Tim Hudak: —31,000 full-time jobs in our province. The middle class, that has been the source of security and the strength of our province, is becoming hollowed out. Their incomes are falling behind inflation.

Clearly, Speaker, we need a change of course that says it does count where Ontario ranks among the provinces. We should be number one, the best place in this entire

country, to find a good job, to start a business, to see it grow. All the Premier does, in the face of the job losses: another panel, another study; he kicks the can down the road.

We say, kick that can no more. Get down to work. Create jobs with a bold plan to grow our economy and get the private sector moving again.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: If only rhetoric could do it all for us, Speaker.

The good news is, in many ways, that Ontarians understand the global economy. They understand there's a lot of uncertainty out there; they understand that has a consequence on us in here. They understand that while we can't guarantee our children jobs for life, they also understand that those jobs that are hardest for us to lose are those jobs requiring the highest levels of skills and education, which is why we're moving ahead with our 30%-off tuition grant. This year, this September, it means a \$1,700 credit for families sending a child to university and \$800 for a student who's going to college.

I say to my honourable colleague, there really are no simple answers, but we know one thing for sure: You can never go wrong by investing in skills and education, investing in our families.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: The Premier seems to imply that those who worked at GM and lost their jobs, those who worked at Caterpillar and lost their jobs, those who worked at Xstrata in Timmins who lost their jobs, those who worked at—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Timken.

Mr. Tim Hudak:—Timken and lost their jobs, the list goes on and on—his question seems to imply that they weren't skilled workers. They are highly skilled workers—and the types of jobs that built our province, that made our middle class secure and the engine of consumption, not just for Ontario but for Canada. The Premier seems to shrug them off and dismiss them.

Premier, a dose of reality has hit those families real hard. And that's just the start of the 300,000 jobs we've lost in manufacturing, the 30,000 jobs last month. The Premier says this is mere rhetoric.

These are bold ideas that have made Ontario strong in the past—tried and true Conservative ideals that will turn our province around and make Canada strong at the same time. Sir, put that rhetoric into action, and I promise you, Ontario will lead Canada again. We'll do it. Why won't you?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Did we convince you yet?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Not there yet, Speaker. I give my honourable colleague credit for trying, but I have yet to be convinced, and I think, more importantly, Ontarians have yet to be convinced.

Again, Speaker, since the recession we've created some 320,000 new jobs, more than any other province.

I remind my honourable colleague, when it came to putting in place a difficult and challenging political and economic measure, adopting the HST, my honourable colleague stood against that. That was something that business demanded that we put in place in Ontario. When the auto sector said, "You've got to lend us a hand. There are 400,000 jobs at stake. Work with the federal government, work with the Obama administration. Come to the support of the auto sector," my honourable colleague opposite said no to that.

Business knows that when push comes to shove, we are in their corner, but we do it in a balanced way that also protects our schools and protects our health care for our families.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Mr. Michael Prue: My question is to the Premier. Half a decade ago, the government established a new system for Ontario's air ambulance system. At the time, this was a stand-alone private company. Ornge would be freed from government oversight, as was said, and provide better service at less cost. Does the Premier think the public got good value for its money from Ornge?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you for the question. I think everyone in this House knows there were some challenges at Ornge. That is why we have changed the structure and strengthened oversight. One missing piece is, of course, Bill 50, which is before this House and that I'm hoping will be supported by the members opposite.

Ornge transports close to 20,000 patients every year. They do an extraordinary job getting people to the care they need. Just yesterday there were 37 patients transferred by Ornge; there were 30 inter-facility transfers, four by land; seven pediatric patients were transported. This is about getting people to the care they need as quickly as possible.

While we know there are things that need to change at Ornge, they are changing, and I'm very proud of the progress.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Michael Prue: People who watched as well-connected insiders wasted millions of dollars at Ornge are worried about this government's plans. Under the 300-page omnibus bill, the government will, and I'm quoting here Ontario's Ombudsman, "smooth the way for the government to further relieve itself of service administration through a variety of means, including designating delegated administrative authorities, and entering other delegation arrangements." The Ombudsman goes on to note, "One has only to think of the raging Ornge scandal to grasp that private players administering public services do not always share or respect public sector values."

Has the government not learned anything from the mess at Ornge?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This government is looking at a variety of methods to get better value for our dollar to ensure that services are better delivered. The member opposite overlooked the fact that air ambulance services used to be privately delivered in Ontario. We've had some challenges that the Minister of Health has moved to correct.

We will continue to find better value for Ontarians across a range of services. Teranet is a good example of a very successful venture in that way.

It is about getting back to balance, and our commitment is to invest in health care and education. Those are this government's priorities as we deal with the question of better taxpayer value for all Ontarians.

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

Mr. Michael Prue: In October, Ontarians elected a minority government to work together to tackle their challenges. More decisions in secret, less accountability, and new eHealths and Ornges are not what they had in mind. Is the government ready to heed the advice of independent legislative officers like Ontario's Ombudsman and amend their 300-page omnibus bill to ensure that the public is protected from another Ornge debacle?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In the case of ServiceOntario, I think two thirds of its services are already privately delivered, and they're well delivered privately. The member opposite neglects to share with the House that there is a substantial investment needed in new technology: new computers, new systems of delivering traditional government services. Frankly, given our priorities in health and education, rather than spend that money on computers for ServiceOntario we prefer to invest in health and education as we invite the private sector to deliver the last one third of those services.

It is about priorities. This government will continue to have education and health care as its focus. We will continue to look at value for taxpayers. As we do that, we will look at alternative service delivery models.

1050

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: My question is to the Minister of Finance. We all know that Ontario families pay the highest auto insurance in the country, but what we don't know is—in 2010 the government promised reforms to make auto insurance more affordable. The rates keep rising instead. Can the minister tell us where all the savings went?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The member opposite neglected to mention in his question that in the first quarter of this year, auto insurance rates declined—again, Mr. Speaker. I know he didn't say that. He neglected to say that the rate of increase in auto insurance premiums,

under this government, is much lower than the previous government's and much lower than the government before that.

There is always more to do, Mr. Speaker. We have our task force on fraud. We are looking forward to getting their report back so that we can better manage all insurance costs. There's always more to do. Our record speaks for itself. Rates have come down—or grown, excuse me, at a lower rate than inflation, and certainly much lower than they did under previous governments of all political stripes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, what the minister fails to acknowledge is that, over the past nine years of Liberal rule, insurance rates have gone up by 26%. In fact, the reduction that the minister is talking about was 0.18%—not even 0.2% of a reduction.

A document obtained from FSCO, the government agency that regulates auto insurance, has some startling news. In 2010, it cost the insurance industry \$765 per vehicle to cover the cost of accident benefits. But after the government's dramatic statutory accident benefit cuts, costs fell dramatically to \$300 per vehicle.

The costs of doing business went down, but the product keeps increasing in terms of its cost. Can the minister explain why drivers are paying more than ever and how that's a success story?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In fact, the rate of increase in insurance has been the lowest under any government. The member opposite and the NDP have brought forward a plan. They want to emulate California, Mr. Speaker. They want to have the highest insurance premiums, on average, in North America. They want people in northern Ontario with good driving records to subsidize people in the greater Toronto area who have bad driving records. They don't want to listen to Mothers Against Drunk Drivers. They don't want to listen to the Ontario Provincial Police Association. They don't want to listen to a variety of other stakeholders that have rejected their sky-high auto insurance bill, which will leave families right across the province paying more while you subsidize people whose driving records are bad. We simply don't agree.

Our record speaks for itself, and we're going to continue to work to keep auto insurance premiums down for all Ontarians.

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

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I agree with the Minister of Finance. The Liberal government's record speaks for itself: the highest auto insurance rates in the country and an increase of 26% while they were in rule. The record speaks for itself.

Insurance firms making record profits have seen their medical costs go down by 50%, but drivers' rates are still going up, year after year. Is the minister ready to admit that his reforms have been a bust and work with us to make a real plan to make driving insurance more affordable here in Ontario?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The NDP's sky-high auto premiums for Ontario bill won't work. It is about good drivers with good driving records subsidizing bad drivers with bad driving records. Don't take my word for it. Listen to the people that came to your committee: Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, the Ontario Provincial Police Association.

All the members in northern Ontario in the NDP caucus should speak up for their constituents and say no to your plan to drive northern Ontario insurance rates up by 30% to 34%. They will drive insurance premiums up in southwestern Ontario and in eastern Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, Ontarians recognize that this plan that we've laid out has kept the rate of growth in premiums lower than most other jurisdictions and that we have a better public safety record, and they reject your plan to raise—

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

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Frank Klees: My question is to the Minister of Health. It's apparent that the rot is just as deep at the executive offices of the Ministry of Health as it was at Ornge.

We have it on good authority that just days ago, the director of the emergency health services branch wanted to issue two director's orders against Ornge for its continued non-compliance with safety standards: one for violations of documentation standards, and the second for recurring incidences of single-staffing medics that put patients at risk. Assistant Deputy Minister Patricia Li ordered the emergency health services branch not to issue those orders.

What possible explanation does the minister have for a senior ministry official to direct the director of the emergency health services branch not to issue orders against Ornge?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The member opposite is notorious for his lack of credibility. He drops particular half-truths—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I had said before we left for the weekend last weekend that I was concerned about some of the accusations that are being thrown to each member personally. I would like you to keep that in mind.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I can tell you is that the emergency health services branch is providing very strong oversight at Ornge. Our new performance agreement at Ornge, in fact, is working. Those changes were necessary changes, they were recommended by the Auditor General, and we are implementing every one of the Auditor General's recommendations.

In addition, we do have legislation before this House that I would very much like to see passed.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: Minister, we have it on very good authority that the director of the emergency health services branch wrote those two orders and wanted to issue them against Ornge. The director had an express direction from the assistant deputy minister not to issue those orders against Ornge.

The minister can speak as much as she wants to about my lack of credibility. I would like to hear from the minister: Does she even know about this? If not, what does that say about her competence and her credibility?

Interjections.

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

Stop the clock, please.

My comments were based on individuals that I've been hearing inside of heckling and also in questioning. I continue to say two wrongs do not make a right. Please keep your comments at a professional level about the issue. It would be very helpful in this House.

Minister?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, Speaker, it has become very clear that good news at Ornge is bad news for the member from Newmarket–Aurora, so we've got some very good news at Ornge. We've got 10 more paramedics working than we did a year ago. We've got a virtually full-time complement, 98%, of the fixed-wing pilots. By July we'll be at 95% of helicopter pilots. These are issues the member has raised; these are issues that have been addressed.

Speaker, we continue to strengthen the leadership. Bruce Farr—I know the member from Newmarket–Aurora questions his credentials, but he has very strong credentials. Robert Giguere: special adviser on aviation, a long history in aviation, worked as a pilot, senior executive positions at Air Canada; he's an independent aviation consultant. We've also added Wayne Howard as vice-president of finance.

Things are moving forward at Ornge and I'm very, very pleased with the progress they're making.

FAMILY HEALTH TEAMS

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est également pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

This weekend, the health minister's family health team model was in the news, with allegations that the ministry is allowing unspent funds to remain with the organizations rather than recoup those funds, as would usually be the case. It was also in the news because whistleblowers had alerted her ministry of problems and then they were let go, with no intervention from her ministry.

1100

Can the minister explain why her government is so eager to introduce new ideas but so unwilling to provide the oversight necessary to make sure that it is working properly and using its funds properly?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, we are very, very pleased and excited, in fact, about the family health teams that are now operating right across this province:

200 family health teams that are serving 2.8 million Ontarians. Over 600,000 of those people did not have a family doctor before the institution of family health teams.

We do take our oversight responsibilities extremely seriously, though. That's why every family health team does have someone in the ministry who reviews, line by line, their expenditures and does that reconciliation. Since 2005-06, we have recovered \$121 million of unspent funds from family health teams. Indeed, we do have a process in place—and the member opposite is aware of this—where we do conduct audits. I'll speak more to that in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Right now, Ontarians are little bit leery, and they're getting sick and tired of a government that is all too willing to shell out hundreds of millions of dollars for health care services but does not seem to bother to properly monitor or to properly oversee, which we all know is a core function of the government—oversight. Yet today, it doesn't seem like it is being done.

Can the minister assure Ontarians that her family health team model is not yet another idea turned sour because the government did not bother to follow the money to demand accountability?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I know that the member opposite is very familiar with the success of family health teams. Tens of thousands of people in her own riding are benefiting from family health teams.

Do we have important responsibilities for oversight? Absolutely. We take that very seriously. Indeed, the Mel Lloyd family health team in Shelburne has been subject to a ministry audit because concerns were raised by the community, and we have acted on those concerns.

This is an important part of moving forward with the transformation of health care. We need to focus on wellness. We need to get people the care they need before they get so sick that they have to go to hospital. Family health teams are a wonderful addition to health care in this province.

EDUCATION

Ms. Tracy MacCharles: My question this morning is for the Minister of Education.

Minister, we all know that schools suffered in Ontario under the last government. The good news is under our government, we opened 500 schools and we hired 13,000 teachers. The PC Party closed 400 schools; 15,000 teacher jobs were lost.

In the last eight years, we have brought the graduation rate up by 14% in this province. I have seen these results in my riding of Pickering–Scarborough East: at Dunbarton High School, St. Mary's collegiate and—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Ms. Tracy MacCharles: Under the last government, only 68% of graduates were getting through high school.

Will the minister tell this House about programs that help more students in Ontario graduate?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I want to thank the member from Pickering–Scarborough East for her advocacy for her community when it comes to education.

This morning, the Premier and I had a chance to visit Weston Collegiate with the member from York South–Weston. There, we had a chance to speak directly with our Ontario high school students, many of whom are benefiting from a new and ever-expanding program called the specialist high-skills major program. Six years ago, that program had only 500 students in it. Next year, we will have 38,000 students who benefit from that.

In September, there will be more than 1,500 specialist high-skills major programs in 670 high schools across Ontario, an increase from 1,300 programs this year. What that program does is it gives students the ability to acquire a specialized, career-focused education, it gives them a chance to get specially recognized certification and training, and opens the doors for them to see what career path they might want in the future.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Tracy MacCharles: Thanks to the minister for her answer. Last week, CBC News reported on the success of this very program at Lester B. Pearson high school. The high school students will be graduating this year, many with the specialist high-skills major in health care.

I'd like to quote the report from CBC: "Experience in health care and a competitive edge in post-secondary school education is what these 27 students" at Lester B. Pearson "have gained through their specialist program."

Minister, I know how important education is to my constituents in Pickering–Scarborough East and everyone in Ontario, and I look forward to attending some graduation ceremonies this month at my local high schools. Speaker, through you to the minister, what else are we doing to help Ontario students graduate?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: Innovation in education and listening to our students about what they need to succeed is what's helping us ensure that more students will graduate.

I'm so proud that we now have 93,000 more students who have graduated. That really puts those students on a much better career path and much better life trajectory for the future.

Specialist high-skills major programs, like other programs such as expanded co-op credits, the dual credit program—all of those programs are helping students get the experience that they need so that they can be successful in school, so that they can ensure that they find a pathway for their future. That's why we're so focused, Speaker, on ensuring that we continue to put significant investments in our schools, we continue to innovate, and we continue to put Ontario students first.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Monte McNaughton: My question today is for the Minister of Health. Does this sound familiar: "Hos-

pital Loses Faith in Ornge”? Well, it should sound familiar because it’s a Windsor Star headline to an article where the Windsor Regional Hospital CEO says, ““Things have not changed at Ornge. Whatever cultural issues are going on in that organization, things have not changed.”

The minister has stood in her place saying she has fixed the problems at Ornge, but it’s undeniable: The minister and the McGuinty government have failed. But they no longer need to take our word for it. The question is, will they now take the word of a hospital CEO right in the backyard of Dwight Duncan?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A reminder for the member: We refer to all members by their riding or their title. Thank you.

Minister.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, if the member opposite is genuine in his wish to improve care at Ornge, he would stop blocking Bill 50 and get that legislation passed. I do not understand why the party opposite continues to raise concerns but refuses to be part of the solution. We are making important progress at Ornge, there is no question about that, but we do need to get Bill 50 passed to ensure that there is oversight by legislation of Ornge. As I say, it is unconscionable, frankly, that they can complain but they refuse to be part of the solution; in fact, they block the solution.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I honestly don’t know how this minister sleeps at night.

Again, to the minister: We now know of yet another situation under your so-called new leadership. In April, Ornge dispatched a crew to Windsor Regional Hospital for a critical patient but didn’t send enough paramedics. Disgusted and frantic at the incompetence, the CEO of the hospital paid \$500 cash out of his own pocket to pay for a taxi to send a nurse along with the air ambulance to fill in for the lack of paramedics. Is this her idea of cleaning up the mess at Ornge?

The Windsor Star now says, “The Ornge ambulance crisis has become a full-blown scandal, and the Liberal government can no longer deny it.”

Minister, with a full-blown scandal under your leadership, why don’t you do us all a favour, including Dwight Duncan, and resign immediately?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Stop the clock. The first time was a warning. The second time was defiance.

Minister.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: There is significant improvement happening at Ornge. Are we all the way there yet? No, we are not. But we’ve added significantly to the strength of the Ornge team by adding—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew is warned.

Stop the clock. I also have another point to make. I find it interesting that more and more members are taking to using their earpieces to hear. That is not a good sign.

1110

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And I don’t need any other comment when I’m standing.

Please finish, Minister.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, yes, we’ve got very good news at Ornge. I know that good news at Ornge is bad news for the opposition, but it’s good news for the people of Ontario. We’ve got 10 more paramedics working. We’ve got more pilots working. We’ve got new senior management on board. We know the member opposite is opposed to the Ontario southwestern economic development fund; he has voted against that. Is he also opposed to Bill 50? I’m going to ask him, if you really want to be part of the solution, let’s work together. Why don’t you take on the job in your caucus of getting your caucus supporting Bill 50?

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Mr. Michael Prue: My question, again, is to the Premier. Today I will be reintroducing my bill to ban owners and managers from taking their employees’ hard-earned tips. This problem was growing in 2010 when the bill was first introduced and when it passed second reading, but for thousands of servers this unfair practice continues, in some cases costing them more than ever before. Speaker, does the Premier agree that tips should go to the hard-working bartenders, servers and dishwashers across Ontario and not to their bosses?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I want to thank the member for the question. I know he has been a champion on this issue for a long time. We know that waiters and waitresses and bartenders across Ontario are the front line of a successful hospitality sector in Ontario, and we know that these young men and women often do a great job and work very hard to earn a decent living. At many establishments, servers share some of their tips with the bussers and the hosts and other service support staff. Those tip-sharing agreements are up to the management of each establishment.

The service sector is very competitive and the managers and the owners understand that their success depends on a service staff that is competent, caring and suitably compensated. We’re certainly aware that the tip-out issue is a contentious issue within the hospitality industry, and we welcome the debate on the topic.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Michael Prue: I think the honourable minister is mistaking tip-outs for tip-sharing, and there is a fundamental difference between them. Most people don’t even know that when they leave a tip, the owners of some restaurants and bars take a cut. Some owners take it all. But now we have a chance in this minority Parliament to see to it that restaurant and bar owners and managers be banned from taking their employees’ tip money. We have a chance to finally give those workers the protection they so deserve. Will the government support my efforts to

make sure all of the tips go to the people they are meant for, the hard-working employees?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: Again, I thank the member for his advocacy on this issue and I look forward to his introducing this bill. If any service staff have labour-related issues or feel that they're being treated unfairly by their employer, I would encourage them to call the Ministry of Labour's employment standards office for assistance. We care deeply about the workers and we want to ensure that employee rights are protected under the Employment Standards Act, because we understand how important these men and women are to our hospitality sector across Ontario. We know that they're the front line of that industry and it's an important economic development opportunity for Ontario, so I look forward to discussing the issue and I thank the member for his advocacy on this issue.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr. Jeff Leal: My tough and thorough question this morning is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, last week you announced the creation of a panel to consult with the horse racing industry and that transition at the end of the slots-at-racetracks program. This is of great interest to the horse people in my riding who I met this past weekend. I've spoken to many of them since the announcement of the end of the slots-at-racetracks program, and I know that you've been speaking with horse people right across this great province. Mr. Speaker, could the minister please inform this House of the members and the mandate of this panel?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member from Peterborough, an unabashed advocate of moving forward with consultations to help the horse racing industry transition from the slots-at-racetracks program to a more sustainable, self-sufficient model.

The consultations are being led by a panel of three former cabinet ministers: former NDP Minister of Agriculture Elmer Buchanan, former Progressive Conservative Minister John Snobelen, and my former colleague John Wilkinson. The panel will work with the industry to develop a vision for the horse racing future, provide recommendations to the government on how to allocate transition funding, and advise on the modernization of other industry revenue sources to assist the industry in becoming self-sufficient. I look forward to the report.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the minister for that detailed answer.

The members of the panel and its mandate have been subject to much discussion amongst the horse racing industry since last week's announcement. Having received \$3.7 billion through the slots-at-racetracks program through the OLG since 1998, the industry will have to engage with the panel on a new business model that is self-sustaining, moving forward.

I have spoken to many people at Kawartha Downs in my riding who believe that there is a positive future for

this industry, and they want us to sit down with the industry and get a positive plan going forward. Could the minister please elaborate on the transition program for the industry announced with this panel?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: First, I want to say that I know the horse racing industry will survive, but I'd also like to see it thrive. Program decisions will be made based on the recommendations of the panel, and we need to let them do their work. Many people in the horse racing industry want to work to help shape the future of that industry. They will be an important part of the process.

We know that the slots-at-racetracks program is ending at the end of next year. The future for the industry is one that doesn't rely on government support. So we've asked the panel to work with the industry and to advise us how to get there.

Speaker, I'm not going to prejudge what they come in with, but I do know that if you want to predict your future, you've got to be about creating it.

WOMEN'S SHELTER

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the Premier. I need, and so does our city, your urgent action by Thursday. That's when the board of directors at Nelson House is expected to shut down the women's shelter for good. This move has already displaced 15 at-risk women and their children with few crisis supports, with the exception of Ontario Works. Sadly, we know that a split second can mean the difference for those women and their children.

These 15 beds are part of a larger problem in Ottawa. In 2009, it was found that over 3,000 women were turned away from crisis shelters in our city. That's basically one in every six women. At Nelson House, it was far higher—one in every 11.

The chair of Nelson House has cited a government risk assessment that said the agency was at high risk. Premier, did your government commission the study? Have you or any of your ministers seen it, and will you commit to reviewing it today before it's too late and those beds are closed for good?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. John Milloy: I think all members are concerned with the potential permanent closure of Nelson House. Just to bring members up to speed, as the member alluded to, there has been a temporary closure of the facility. I want to assure her, and assure all members, that the ministry has worked to make sure all residents at Nelson House have been transitioned to safe accommodations. The crisis line which has been operated by Nelson House has been transferred to ensure that women in crisis are supported.

The executive committee membership is meeting on June 14 to consider the board's recommendations to close permanently. This is an independent institution that has that authority. MCSS officials will attend this meeting to address the ministry's expectations and requirements regarding the risks they identify over the shelter's

governance and management problems. Obviously, based on the decision that the board makes, we will work very closely to address the results.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Back to the Premier: There's no question that community and social services has a major stake in the game. So do virtually several other government departments.

1120

One of the problems with what's happening at Nelson House is the mixed messages coming from the chair and effectively repeated today. Speculation is running rampant because the chair has cited a government risk assessment study. She has said repeatedly that the financial situation was becoming "more desperate by the month," and she cited lack of managerial support.

The truth is, the management board at Nelson House hasn't been forthcoming, and it will have ripple effects throughout our entire community. Without transparency, the public simply doesn't know what's wrong so that we can help.

Will you commit today, Premier, to intervene so our community can get those 15 crisis beds for women and children up and running today?

Hon. John Milloy: I know the member would never want to leave the impression—Nelson House is an independent body which contracts with the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The decision that they will reach on the 14th, this Thursday, is based on discussions they're going to have internally.

I want to reiterate that if they do decide on Thursday to wind down their operations, MCSS will continue to work with the community at large to make sure that the transition, those 15 beds that would be closed down—that the community will have the capacity to deal with women who are in crisis.

As I said in my earlier answer, we have worked to make sure that the 15 women who were there have been dealt with in the community, and we're going to continue to work with Nelson House and the community at large.

CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATION

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, the Premier said today that instead of moving forward with my bill to give condo owners more protection, he's conducting a condo review, which, according to rumours, may drag on for 18 months. Condo owners don't want to wait two more years for better protections. Why is the Premier stalling on badly needed changes?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Consumer Services.

Hon. Margaret R. Best: It's my pleasure to respond to the concern that the member raised. It's a very important question for us, because we know that in Ontario, 525,000 condominium units are in the province, and the rate is growing very rapidly.

The condominium market in Ontario has changed dramatically since the Condominium Act came into force

over a decade ago. We are in fact taking steps to modernize the condominium market here and the act. This review that we're doing will directly engage the entire condominium community—owners, residents, developers and property managers—to identify a comprehensive set of issues and bring long-term solutions to the ever-changing market.

We will continue to work with all the consumers in the province of Ontario to ensure that we get this right.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The minister is telling us things that I have been telling you for four years. This condo bill has not been updated for 15 years. I've been saying that for four years. We know that there are over 1.3 million condo owners.

I want to say to the Premier, you're looking for my advice, so here it is. Let's not draw this out for years. Condo owners have been telling me for five years they need licensed property managers, a quick and affordable way to resolve disputes, and better protections against shoddy construction. Is the Premier ready to move ahead with my proposed update of condo rules, or is he going to wait two more long years?

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I thank the honourable member for his good intentions. Certainly, we want to work in collaboration with the members, Mr. Speaker. We will consider the proposals that he has made and how they will affect condominium owners and other stakeholders.

It is important for us to ensure that we get it right. This is an ever-changing marketplace. We want to make sure that when we get to the end of this with the review, we will have the right bill and we will ensure that the consumers are protected. We are looking at consumer protection for buyers, condominium finances, reserve fund management, condominium boards of governance; we're looking at the expertise and accreditation of condominium managers, at dispute resolution.

This is a very important engagement process. We want to ensure that this Condominium Act—which, by the way, has been in place for approximately 11 years, not 15 years—is going to be the right act when we get to the end of this.

ASSISTANCE TO FLOOD VICTIMS

Mr. Bill Mauro: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I also want to thank Premier McGuinty and Finance Minister Duncan for their support and assistance with Friday's \$16-million announcement in Thunder Bay for flood relief for my communities of Conmee, Oliver Paipoonge and the city of Thunder Bay.

In spite of this great news, there are still those that are trying to convey an impression somehow that our government was slow in responding. Either they don't understand the process or they're pretending that they don't understand the process. In fact, Speaker, it's quite the opposite. Our turnaround time on response to this

flooding crisis in three communities in my riding was incredibly quick, and it's primarily a function of information that's required back from the three affected municipalities.

Can the minister please explain to the people in my riding the process for declaring a disaster area and the timelines associated with the announcement?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to thank the members from Thunder Bay–Atikokan and Thunder Bay–Superior North for their advocacy for the community. I want to also thank everybody on the ground—all the emergency services, municipal officials, community organizations and local volunteers—for all of their hard work in Thunder Bay, Conmee and Oliver Paipoonge, the three affected communities.

When we received the resolution from Thunder Bay city council asking the province to declare the city a disaster area, we then worked with the municipalities to get assessments in place and have people on the ground to gather the information necessary. We got that information last Thursday. On Friday—so, 24 hours later—I was happy to visit Thunder Bay with both Bill Mauro and Michael Gravelle to inform the community that we'd be able to commit up to \$16 million to help Thunder Bay, Conmee and Oliver Paipoonge to get back on the ground. The volunteers like Michelle Likun on Spofford Street and 87-year-old Helen, who came out to speak to me—all of those people have been involved in getting the community back on its feet.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Mauro: Minister, thank you for the response. You're right: The residents appreciate the efforts of the responders, ministry officials, the voluntary orgs and everybody who has helped to deal with this challenge.

While the residents are very appreciative of the \$16 million that we've put forward to reduce the burden significantly on the taxpayers of Thunder Bay, there are still some questions that remain on what is considered to be one of the biggest floods in Ontario's history.

My question is: Does the federal government have a role in helping the people in Thunder Bay, in Conmee and in Oliver Paipoonge? Can the minister please explain if there's any possibility that the federal government once in a while will show up in Thunder Bay and provide some assistance to my communities in Thunder Bay, Conmee and Oliver Paipoonge?

Interjections.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: You know, from the noise on the other side of the House, you would think that this was a party opposite that doesn't believe that government levels should work together. We actually believe that governments should work together.

The up to \$16 million that we are talking about is from ODRAP, which is Ontario disaster relief. But what is also in place is that there's federal government disaster financial assistance. There are strict criteria that have to be reached, that have to be met.

What would have to happen is, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing would have to apply for

funding on behalf of the province. For the province to become eligible, Ontario—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's enough.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Ontario would have to spend \$1 per capita. That means that, based on—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm not appreciative of the member from Dufferin–Caledon, as soon as I sit down—actually, I wasn't even quite sat in my seat, to start.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No, no. This is not the moment to try to challenge me to do anything else, but to focus on what I'm talking about.

Minister.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It's a bit bizarre that the party opposite wouldn't want to hear what other assistance Thunder Bay, Conmee and Oliver Paipoonge could get.

Based on 2011 population data, that would mean Ontario would have to invest \$13.3 million in recovery efforts and then we could apply for federal funding on behalf of Thunder Bay and the surrounding areas. So we're going to be paying attention and we're going to monitor the situation closely because we think we should apply if there's that possibility, and I think the party opposite should agree with that.

1130

JOB CREATION

Mr. Jeff Yurek: My question is to the Premier. Premier, last month, Ontario lost 31,000 full-time jobs, and May was the 65th consecutive month that Ontario has lagged Canada in job creation. The Premier has failed to take action on Ontario's jobs crisis and instead struck yet another panel to talk about it.

Last Friday, the Premier announced that CAW economist Jim Stanford would be sitting on this panel—the same Jim Stanford who has a chapter in his book entitled “Replacing Capitalism?” Will this Premier explain why he has made Jim Stanford his jobs adviser?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I think Jim Stanford is a great Canadian who has a lot to offer this country. I may not agree with him, but you know what? Stop trashing good citizens of this province and country who dedicate and volunteer their service. I'm proud that John Snobelen is helping us with the horse racing industry. I'm proud that Jake Epp is the chair of Ontario Power Generation.

You know what? Instead of that negative attacking of Ontarians, vote for the southwest Ontario economic development fund today. Let's work together to create jobs. Let's stop name-calling and let's stop demonizing the people who we don't agree with. Let's work together for a better future for all Ontarians. Doing that will pass the

southwest economic development fund. Thank God people like Jim have stood up in support of that—

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

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Back to the Premier: If you want to stop trashing Ontarians, stop trashing the doctors. Stop trashing the Ontario horse racing industry. Stop trashing Ontario breeders.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberals clearly have no plan to tackle Ontario's jobs crisis. They brought in CAW economist Jim Stanford to advise on jobs—a man, in his book, who condemns “the continuing, scandalous failure of capitalism.” Does this Premier accept Jim Stanford's position on capitalism? If not, why has the Premier brought in Jim Stanford as a jobs adviser?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The member's constituents who work for and in the auto sector ought to be listening very carefully.

Mr. Speaker, it is about respect. We all work together in this province. Our jobs and growth council is composed of people from all walks of life. We have the head of a bank; a union economist; we have a number of people from the manufacturing sector. These are all people who want to give back to their province and their country. We think that's important. In fact—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. That's been said twice, and the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound will withdraw.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No, you stand and withdraw.

Mr. Bill Walker: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: These people are all volunteering.

I'd like to thank John Tory, the former leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, for working with us on Ontario Place.

Mr. Speaker, we can all work together. That kind of attitude sets Ontario back. We're prepared to work with all Ontarians for a better future for Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): New question. The member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Paul Miller: Thank you, Speaker.

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I'm going to ask that security clear that now.

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On this side, as well.

The member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: I always get screwed on question 6.

Speaker, my question is to the health minister. Mike Pidberezny is a constituent of mine, a father, a husband, a Hamilton police officer for 29 years. Mike was diagnosed

with kidney cancer in January of this year. His team of experts at the renowned Juravinski Cancer Centre have recommended interleukin 2 as the only effective means of treatment for a sustainable remission. Mike has been told he is an ideal candidate for this treatment. Unfortunately, this treatment is no longer available in Ontario, even though it continues to be funded in other provinces. Mike has applied for out-of-province coverage, but the ministry is unwilling to foot the bill.

Speaker, why is this government denying patients in Ontario access to treatments that doctors and other provinces continue to endorse? Minister, will you help Mike?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The member opposite knows that these decisions are made by independent experts who are extremely knowledgeable about health care, about drugs, about what is available in Ontario and about what is not available in Ontario.

I'm very proud of the coverage that we do offer. We're always looking at ways to make it better. I think the member opposite knows that we are absolutely committed to doing what's right for Ontario patients.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no deferred votes. Therefore, this House sits recessed until this afternoon at 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1137 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Mike Colle: I'm here to introduce some of our friendly members of the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario. We have Dave Elliott, who's also president of Elliott Insurance; Arthur Lofsky, who's in charge of government relations from the Insurance Brokers Association; we've got John McClelland, who's also with the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario; and a very special person, a good friend of mine who is the president-elect of the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario, Debbie Thompson. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We welcome our guests to the House. Further introduction of guests?

There being no further introductions, it is now time for members' statements.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ROSY RHUBARB FESTIVAL

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from—let me get this—Elgin-Middlesex-London. I trip on that one all the time.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: That's right—a tongue twister. Thank you, Speaker.

This past weekend was the 20th anniversary of Rosy Rhubarb Festival in Shedden, Ontario. Twenty years ago, a small group of people gathered together with an idea to promote the small rural community of Shedden, Ontario,

and also raise some money for a new community complex.

Gary Carr, one of the initiators of the fundraising idea, also masqueraded as Rosy Rhubarb. Gary passed away in December 1996, and the organizing committee decided no one else could do the job the way Gary did, and retired his costume. But the spirit of Rosy Rhubarb lives on. Every year, on the second weekend in June, they celebrate the plant that put their village on the map. Gardens are lush with ripe rhubarb waiting to be turned into tasty treats for friends, families and visitors. Only the best pies, tarts and cakes make it into the annual rhubarb bakeoff. The winning entries are auctioned off on the Friday night of the festival, kicking off a weekend of fun, community spirit and fundraising.

To date, the Rosy Rhubarb Festival, an alcohol-free event, has raised more than \$800,000. The Rosy Rhubarb Festival is organized and run entirely by volunteers from the community. Special thanks to Jean and Ralph Palmer, Lorne Spicer, and chairman Keith Orchard for their continued service to this event and community.

I wanted to share the excitement of this rural festival. I have brought strawberry-rhubarb pie for the PC, NDP and Liberal caucuses. Remember to think of Rosy when you enjoy your pie.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I hope the member doesn't forget the Speaker, either.

PETER VOYNOVICH

Ms. Cindy Forster: Mr. Speaker, on May 29, 2012, the community of Welland lost a 39-year veteran professional firefighter. Peter Voynovich, age 60, was laid to rest with a funeral and honour guard befitting a wonderful and kind husband, father, friend and devoted firefighter. Hundreds of firefighters from across the province attended to pay their respects. Welland's fire chief, Denys Prevost, described him as an expert at his work.

Peter and his wife, Connie, faced many health challenges over the last few years, but lived each day with hope and enthusiasm. Peter's spirit was an inspiration for all who met him. Peter's passing was a line-of-duty death because of colon cancer that he valiantly fought for five years and that was related to his career.

In June 2007, the province moved on presumptive legislation for firefighters, allowing injured workers' benefits for them and their families. Unfortunately, Ontario has fallen behind other provinces who have broadened their scopes for protections for firefighters for other cancers and recently have recognized post-traumatic stress disorder.

Regrettably, over the last five years, firefighters have lost their lives in the line of duty and have gone to their graves and are not recognized in Ontario, to the detriment of their families.

For Peter's family, his wife, Connie, and sons, Joshua, Matthew and Peter, let's do the right thing. Let's expand our scope and let's protect firefighters like Peter from work-related illnesses.

FRIENDS FOR LIFE

AMIES POUR LA VIE

Mr. Grant Crack: I'd like to take a moment to speak about one of the great groups in my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell that supports the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation's Run for the Cure. The fundraising team is called Friends for Life, or Amies pour la vie.

Friends for Life was formed in 2010 by Marie-Claire Ivanski, Ginette Rivet, a breast cancer survivor, and Lorraine Dicaire. They formed their own team after seeing the difference the breakfast made to survivors in terms of support and the importance of money raised for research and awareness.

The 2013 team has added two new dynamic members, Diane Bourdeau, the 2012 breast cancer breakfast guest of honour and breast cancer survivor, and Nicole Gosselin-Séguin, whose mother-in-law, Jacynthe Séguin, passed away from breast cancer at the age of 57. It was her death that inspired Friends for Life to fight their fight.

Une femme sur neuf est susceptible de développer un cancer du sein au cours de sa vie, et ce, chez les femmes au-dessus de l'âge de 20 ans.

The Friends for Life mission is to raise important dollars for funding research, education and awareness programs, and reducing the stigma of breast cancer. It is also building a network of support in our communities for our breast cancer survivors, to give hope for tomorrow by standing united today.

La mission des Amies pour la vie est aussi de créer un réseau d'appui dans nos communautés pour nos survivantes du cancer du sein et d'offrir de l'espoir pour demain en s'entraidant aujourd'hui.

Friends for Life has many fundraising activities, including an annual fundraising breakfast, a trip to Quebec City draw, a candlelighting ceremony, a Victorian tea and a garden tour on June 23, and a bingo in October later this year.

Speaker, I'm very proud of this local initiative. I congratulate Friends for Life and wish them all the very best in their future endeavours and their hard work. Congratulations. Félicitations.

WORLD UNIVERSITY ARCHERY CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm pleased to share with the Ontario Legislature today my congratulations to a constituent of mine, Nathan Urquhart, who will be flying to Madrid on July 1 to represent Canada at the ninth annual World University Archery Championship. This is Nathan's first major archery competition, and I have heard that he's extremely excited and honoured to have this opportunity.

Nathan will be representing Canada and the world at the world championship, along with four teammates who are from Alberta and Ottawa.

This is a big sacrifice for these athletes, as this is an athlete-funded event. I know that they have worked long

and hard and made some significant sacrifices to get to this championship. I admire their hard work and dedication to their sport.

I want to wish Nathan and his teammates the best of luck at the World University Archery Championship and offer our congratulations for achieving this great honour.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

M^{me} France Gélinas: There are 19 families in and around Nickel Belt who have lost loved ones or suffered adverse events while Ornge was involved. The weight of the doubt, that maybe things could have gone differently, wears very heavily on their shoulders. For some, it's almost too much to bear.

Those people deserve an independent third party to investigate their complaints, to help them turn the page, lift the weight that doubts have put on their shoulders and find closure. They deserve Ombudsman oversight.

The Minister of Health has put in front of this House Bill 50, An Act to amend the Ambulance Act with respect to air ambulance services. She wants to make sure that what happened at Ornge—the debacle—never happens again. Yet Bill 50 does not include Ombudsman oversight.

We will all win when people confronted with adverse health events or families who have lost a loved one can have their complaints investigated by an independent and impartial third party.

After everything we've heard about Ornge, from the \$1.4-million salary to the private loans and the web of for-profit companies feeding off public funds, the people of Ontario deserve Ombudsman oversight.

Will the Minister of Health agree to amend the bill to show compassion for the families affected and caught in the middle of this mess and give the Ombudsman the right to investigate their complaints?

AJAX HOME WEEK

Mr. Joe Dickson: I'd like to let everybody know about the great 42nd annual Ajax Home Week, which commences today, Monday, June 11.

There's an Albion Amusements carnival all week at Zellers. The Legion is open all day to all residents. They don't have to be members.

The town unfolds hospitality. Tonight, there is Lions Pasta Night. On Tuesday, there's the free Ajax Seniors Day at the Legion. You don't even have to be a member. You're covered, including your meal.

There's free swimming at the McLean centre from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, which I sponsor. On Wednesday, we have Scrambles 8th Annual Home Week barbecue that goes all day. We also have the Ajax Home Week Peace and Community Harmony Concert at the McLean Centre. It's free of charge. St. Louis Bar and Grill—prizes for the winners. I better hurry up.

Ajax Home Week Auction at the Legion on Thursday. St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church barbecue.

Friday—pre-parade events. There's entertainment from 6 to 9 at Durham Centre. A free community barbecue; again, it's my MPP office. We served 1,600 people last year. The Home Week parade: We kick off the summer at Finn McCool's lobster fest that night. Saturday is the Salvation Army's soaker fest.

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But the big day is Sunday, June 17. It's waterfront day, it's Father's Day, and the whole family is welcome. Most of the day is free at the waterfront. There's a classic car show at Finn McCool's. There are crafters. There's fun in the sun, with six different children's rides, all free for the family. The police helicopter from Durham region drops in, and it goes on and on.

I'm going to have to pull the plug on it, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I think so.

Mr. Joe Dickson: But there are the largest fireworks in all of Durham region on the Sunday night—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Glad to hear it.

Mr. Joe Dickson:—starting at dusk, at 10 p.m.

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

Mr. Joe Dickson: And thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member pulled his own plug. Thank you very much.

CITY OF KITCHENER

Mr. Michael Harris: Yesterday marked Kitchener's 100th anniversary as a city. Thousands of proud residents joined together on Sunday to remember our community's past, celebrate our heritage and look forward to our future.

Kitchener's story began in 1852, when new settlers from Germany and across Europe founded a small rural community in southern Ontario. Over the next 60 years, they worked together to build up the local economy and attract new residents to what had become an industrial hub for a provincial economy.

In 1912, Kitchener, then called Berlin, became a city which more than 15,000 people called home. Since then, Kitchener's population has grown rapidly, attracting people from all different backgrounds and cultures.

In fact, new Canadians make up a quarter of Kitchener's population, which is now more than 200,000. These newcomers to Kitchener have done so much to contribute to our community, whether it's by educating residents about their cultures or by opening up successful new businesses. Their strong and unwavering work ethic reflects the long-standing reputation of our community. Not even the Great Depression or the recessions of the 1980s or 1990s, as well as the financial crisis of 2008, could break our community's resolve. We have always found a way to bounce back, succeed and evolve.

Manufacturing continues to be a staple of the local economy, but Kitchener has also developed as a vital part of Canada's renowned research and innovation capital.

The last 100 years have been nothing short of amazing, and I'm sure, if the past is any guide, Kitchener has an exciting and promising future in store.

PROLUCID TECHNOLOGIES

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Mississauga, like countless communities across Ontario, began life as a farming community. In particular, specifically, it was apple orchards that were original economy of Mississauga. Even today, we have a lot of names that celebrate that heritage. In my riding, we have names like Golden Orchard, Orchard Street, Applewood etc.

But over the years, Mississauga's economy has obviously evolved and diversified and prospered, because like most successful communities, that's what you have to do: Reinvent yourself over and over again.

I've always wondered how this reinvention takes place. How do you go from a community that has been farming orchards to aviation manufacturing? How does that happen? I got a peek into that last Thursday when I visited a company called Prolucid Technologies. I was there to announce, and I'm really proud to say, that we just gave them a grant of \$887,000. What they're going to do with that is create eight new jobs—not just any jobs, but the kind of jobs that Mississauga and Ontario and Canada need to have a prosperous future.

Prolucid is involved in the smart grid. It's going to smarten up our electricity grid. What does that mean? The best way it was explained to me was that Prolucid is going to do for Ontario's electricity grid what smart phones did for cellphones.

I am so proud to have this little jewel in my riding of Mississauga East–Cooksville.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I very much appreciate the opportunity today to rise in support of the independent school bus industry. I know that several of my colleagues have spoken out in support of small and rural independent school bus operators throughout Ontario.

On April 27, the Minister of Education received a letter from the school bus industry, asking for clarification on non-negotiated fixed-fee contracts, to see if they were actually a form of competitive procurement that complies with the BPS procurement directive. They further asked the minister if school boards and consortia would have an answer in time to plan for the 2013 competitive procurement deadline.

As you can understand, Speaker, these small, independent school bus operators require a answer from this government. However, they are still waiting.

In the past, I've asked the Minister of Education to release the Coulter Osborne report. When it was finally released, we learned that there were some key recommendations, including that further study was needed to ensure that the government was moving in the right direction for this particular industry, and that an in-

dependent third party conduct a review of the procurement process. One can speculate that he did not believe this government was up to the challenge and had the confidence in them to conduct the review properly themselves.

It appears to the school bus industry and to the opposition that the Minister of Education has ignored these recommendations, and that is unfortunate. I can assure you, Speaker, that members on this side of the House will continue to stand up for independent school bus operators because, I must say, they're an important part of rural and small town Ontario because they know our children and our children know them.

ANNUAL REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the 2011-12 annual report of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I also beg to inform the House that, pursuant to section (a) of the order of the House passed on May 31, 2012, the House leaders have indicated in writing to the Clerk of the House that the following two private members' public bills have been selected: Bill 8, An Act respecting an underground infrastructure notification system for Ontario, and Bill 33, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code with respect to gender identity and gender expression.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROTECTING EMPLOYEES' TIPS ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LA PROTECTION DU POURBOIRE DES EMPLOYÉS

Mr. Prue moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 107, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 with respect to tips and other gratuities / Projet de loi 107, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne les pourboires et autres gratifications.

Mr. Prue moved first reading of the following bill:

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. Michael Prue: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The bill prohibits employers from taking any portion of an employee's tips or other gratuities: simple as that.

HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE CREDIT
SCORING BAN ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012
INTERDISANT LE RECOURS
AU POINTAGE DE CRÉDIT
POUR L'ASSURANCE
PROPRIÉTAIRE OCCUPANT

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 108, An Act to amend the Insurance Act to ban the use of credit history and ratings in respect of homeowners and other personal property insurance / Projet de loi 108, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances en vue d'interdire le recours aux antécédents en matière de crédit et aux cotes de solvabilité relativement à l'assurance propriétaire occupant et à d'autres types d'assurance de biens meubles.

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. Mike Colle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The bill, if passed, will prohibit insurers from using, in respect of personal property insurance, a person's credit history or rating as grounds for the following: (1) declining to issue, terminate or refusing to renew a contract, or refusing to provide or continue any coverage or endorsement in respect of a contract; and (2) classifying risk in the determination of rates for the coverage of a category of insurance.

1320

In other words, we banned credit scoring for auto; now it's about time we banned it for home insurance to protect consumers.

MOTIONS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice concerning the order passed by the House on May 31, 2012.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader seeks unanimous consent to introduce a motion without notice. Agreed? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: I move that, notwithstanding section (a), private members' public bills, of the order passed by the House on May 31, 2012, the requirement that the order for third reading of Bill 8, An Act respecting an underground infrastructure notification system for Ontario, be discharged and that the bill be recommitted to the Standing Committee on General Government be waived, and that Bill 8 remain ordered for third reading; and

That the order for third reading of Bill 8, An Act respecting an underground infrastructure notification

system for Ontario, may be called during morning orders of the day on Thursday, June 14, 2012.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader has moved this motion. Are we in agreement? Agreed? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I received this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario through the Honourable Bob Chiarelli and the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur.

"Whereas the Ontario horse racing and breeding industry generates \$2 billion of economic activity, mostly in rural Ontario;

"Whereas more than 60,000 Ontarians are employed by the ... horse racing and breeding industry;

"Whereas 20% of the funds generated by the OLG slots-at-racetracks program is reinvested in racetracks and the horse racing and breeding industry, while 75% is returned to the government of Ontario;

"Whereas the OLG slots-at-racetracks program generates \$1.3 billion a year for health care and other spending, making it the most profitable form of gaming in the" entire "province for OLG;

"Whereas the government has announced plans to cancel the slots-at-racetracks program, a decision that will cost the government \$1.1 billion a year and threatens more than 60,000 jobs;

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

"Call on the Ontario government to:

"(1) protect the \$1.1 billion of revenue the government received annually because of the OLG slots-at-racetracks program;

"(2) direct OLG to honour the contracts with race-tracks and protect the horse racing and breeding industry by continuing the OLG slots-at-racetracks revenue-sharing program."

I support the members of Nepean-Carleton who signed this, and I will sign and affix my signature as well, and present it to Anthonie.

CYCLING

Mr. Jonah Schein: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas 28% of Ontario adults regularly cycle and over 50% of children cycle either daily or weekly;

"Whereas a cycling fatality occurs every month in Ontario and thousands of cyclists are injured each month;

"Whereas Ontario is lagging behind provinces like British Columbia and Quebec that have invested \$31 million and \$200 million respectively in cycling infrastructure;

“Whereas investing in cycling infrastructure in Ontario will create jobs and benefit the economy, reduce traffic congestion and pollution, protect those sharing the road, encourage active transportation and improve public health;

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

“That the province of Ontario release a comprehensive bicycling strategy for Ontario that facilitates the development of policy and legislation relating to bicycling in Ontario. This policy would include dedicated funding to match municipal investments in cycling infrastructure, education initiatives to raise awareness about the rights and responsibilities of all road users, and a review and update of provincial legislation, including the Highway Traffic Act and Planning Act, to ensure roadways are safe for all users;

“That the strategy set provincial targets and timelines for increasing the number of people who commute by bike and cycle recreationally.”

Speaker, I approve of this petition. I’ll affix my name to it and give it to page Kendra.

ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

Mr. Jeff Leal: Mr. Speaker, I’m very pleased today to present a petition on behalf of Mary Grant from Kitchener, Ontario. She lives on Vanier Drive. I know she was out over the weekend celebrating Kitchener’s 100th anniversary. I want to thank her for this wonderful 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 will affix my signature to it and give it to page Katie.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I’d like to remind the members that they can offer a brief summary of their petitions, if they’d like to expedite this.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr. Bill Walker: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the horse racing industry employs approximately 60,000 people, creates \$1.5 billion in wages and \$2 billion in recurring expenditures annually; and

“Whereas the partnership that was created between government and the horse breeding and racing industry has been a model arrangement and is heralded throughout North America, with 75% of revenues going to the provincial government to fund important programs like health care and education, 5% to the municipalities and only 20% goes back to the horse business; and

“Whereas the horse business is a significant source of revenue for the farming community and rural municipalities;

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

“That the Ministry of Finance continue the revenue-sharing partnership with the horse racing industry for the benefit of Ontario’s agricultural and rural economies.”

I support this petition, will affix my name and send it with page Annaleise to the clerks’ desk.

RADIATION SAFETY

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from all over Ontario.

“Whereas there are risks inherent in the use of ionizing, magnetic and other radiations in medical diagnostic and radiation therapy procedures; and

“Whereas the main piece of legislation governing these activities, the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (HARPA), dates from the 1980s; and

“Whereas neither the legislation nor the regulations established under the act have kept pace with the explosion in imaging examinations, including image-guided procedures used in cardiology, radiation therapy, ultrasound, orthopaedics etc.;

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

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care establish, as soon as possible, a committee consisting of experts to review the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (1990) and its regulations and make recommendations on how to modernize this act to bring it up to 21st-century standards, so that it becomes responsive to the safety of patients and the public and covers all forms of radiation that are currently used in the health care sector for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes.”

I support this recommendation, Mr. Speaker, will affix my name to it and ask page Colin to bring it to you.

KIDNEY DISEASE

Mr. Jeff Leal: I’m delighted today to present a petition on behalf of Vera Hicks, who’s from Little Britain, Ontario—a great community.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

WIND TURBINES

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

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

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

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

"That the Ministry of the Environment revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments; and

"That the Minister of the Environment conduct a thorough scientific study on the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines."

I agree with this petition. I will be signing it and giving it off to page Anthonie.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I have 1,000 petitions signed regarding auto insurance. It reads as follows:

"Whereas auto insurance rates are too high in the province of Ontario and continue to increase;

"Whereas families across the greater Toronto area ... are facing unfair insurance premiums that have more to do with where they live than their accident history or driving ability; and

"Whereas insurance premiums across the GTA differ by as much as 150% for drivers with the same driving record;

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

"That the Ontario Legislative Assembly undertake auto insurance reforms that protect consumers, ensuring that premiums are based on a fair assessment of a driver's known ability and history, rather than unfairly targeting drivers on the basis of where they live."

I support this petition, will affix my signature, and hand it to page Annaleise.

RADON

Ms. Dipika Damerla: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas radon is an inert gas formed by the radioactive decay of uranium-238, which is present in rocks and soils in the earth's crust;

"Whereas there have been many studies linking radon gas as a cancer-causing agent;

"Whereas studies have covered various aspects of radon exposure as a prevalent carcinogen in various locations, the most predominant locations being" mines "and residential homes; and

"Whereas currently there is no regulation in Ontario that governs what is an acceptable level of radon in a public and/or private dwelling;

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

"To support private member's Bill 36, introduced by Reza Moridi, MPP, Richmond Hill, on February 23, 2012, which would enact the Radon Awareness and Prevention Act, 2012, and amend the Building Code Act, 1992, with respect to radon."

I present this petition to page Tameem.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Peter Shurman: I have a petition here being read, actually, for the first time in the assembly. It's from several hundred concerned citizens.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care unilaterally introduced cuts to funding for physician services and diagnostic testing; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has implemented these cuts without consulting the Ontario Medical Association; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has no alternative plan to ensure the standard of care for patients is uninterrupted; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has cut funding for ophthalmologists' diagnostic equipment by up to 80%; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care prohibits individuals from paying privately for OHIP-funded tests; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has not given physicians the final funding amounts for services;

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

"To agree to meet and negotiate in good faith with the Ontario Medical Association; and

"To properly fund the health care system in Ontario, given that the population is increasing at approximately 1.2% annually; and

“To give the Ontario Medical Association the final funding amounts for services.”

I agree with this petition, will sign it and give it to page Sam.

GREY BRUCE HEALTH UNIT

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that came to me from the people of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. It reads as follows:

“Whereas residents of Bruce and Grey counties do not support the closure of the Walkerton office of the Grey Bruce Health Unit; and

“Whereas board of health members have not been consulted regarding the closure; and

“Whereas the Grey Bruce Health Unit administration has failed to release the cost-benefit analysis used to determine why the Walkerton office of the Grey Bruce Health Unit should be permanently closed;

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

“To direct the Grey Bruce Health Unit’s medical officer of health to keep the Walkerton office of the health unit open and fully operational.”

I will send this with Tameem.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Reza Moridi: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas currently the chair of the regional municipality of York is not an elected official and is appointed;

“Whereas currently the population of the regional municipality of York is approximately one million and forecasted to reach 1.5 million within the next 20 years;

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

“To support private member’s Bill 60, brought forward by Reza Moridi, MPP for Richmond Hill, which would amend the Municipal Act, 2001 to provide that the head of council of the regional municipality of York must be elected and may not be appointed.”

I fully agree with this petition, sign it and pass it on to page Andrew.

ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM OFFICE

Mr. Jeff Yurek: To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario decided to close the Ontario Disability Support Program office in St. Thomas, an office which serves over 3,245 people of our most vulnerable population throughout St. Thomas and Elgin county;

“Whereas the government of Ontario made this decision without consultation;

“Whereas the majority of clients don’t have access to transportation to London to attend appointments with their caseworker, which may result in loss of benefits;

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

“That the Ministry of Community and Social Services consult with the city of St. Thomas and Elgin county to find a solution to keep the ODSP office open in St. Thomas.”

I agree with this petition and I affix my signature to it.

INDOOR TANNING EQUIPMENT

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Member for Peterborough.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Hey, hey, hey.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): She’s right; she’s correct.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It’s nice to see you’re looking at me.

“Whereas there is a growing body of evidence linking tanning bed use to increased cancer risk...; and

“Whereas many groups, including the Canadian Cancer Society and the Ontario Medical Association, support a ban on the use of indoor tanning equipment by youths under the age of 18; and

“Whereas the provinces of British Columbia and Nova Scotia have passed legislation banning youths from using indoor tanning equipment...; and

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

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

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Angela to bring it to the Clerk.

RADIATION SAFETY

Mr. Joe Dickson: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (1990) is in serious need of modernization;

“Whereas the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (1990) is not in harmony with all the following acts, regulations, guidelines and codes: the Occupational Health and Safety Act of Ontario, the radiation protection regulations of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, the safety codes of Health Canada and the radiation protection guidelines of the International Commission on Radiological Protection;

“Whereas dental hygienists need to be able to prescribe X-rays and to be designated as radiation protection officers in order to provide their clients with safe and convenient access to a medically necessary procedure, as is already the case in many comparable jurisdictions;

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

"To express support for the motion filed on April 17, 2012, by Reza Moridi, the member from Richmond Hill, that asks the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to establish a committee consisting of experts to review the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (1990) and its regulations, make recommendations on how to modernize this act, and bring it to 21st-century standards, so that it becomes responsive to the safety of patients and the public and to include all forms of radiation that are currently used in the health care sector for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes."

I add my signature to this and will pass it to page Alexander.

OPTICAL COHERENCE TOMOGRAPHY

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

"Whereas the optical coherence test (OCT) is critical for the treatment of macular degeneration, glaucoma, vascular disease of the retina and diabetic macular edema; and

"Whereas the government has reduced funding for the OCT test; and

"Whereas the reduction of funding will result in loss of vision for many Ontarians;

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

"We urge our leaders to reverse the recent cuts in health care, and specifically to fund the OCT test at a level that will continue to give the best possible eye care for our population."

I affix my signature, as I agree with this petition.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The time for petitions has expired. Again, I know there are a number of members who would have wanted to present petitions this afternoon. Had the members been willing to abbreviate their petitions, then everyone would have had a chance to present their petitions today. Given the fact that this is the last week of the spring sitting, I would encourage all members to endeavour to abbreviate their petitions if possible, so as to allow everybody to get their petitions in.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you will find we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private bills.

1340

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to bring forward a motion with respect to private bills. Agreed? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively, and that the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills be put immediately without debate:

Bill Pr1, An Act to revive Coutu Gold Mines Limited;

Bill Pr3, An Act respecting Master's College and Seminary;

Bill Pr4, An Act to revive Hili Enterprises Ltd.; and

That Mr. Leal, the member from Peterborough, may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr1 on behalf of Mr. Orazietti, the member from Sault Ste. Marie.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Milloy has moved that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively, and that the questions on the motions for second—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Dispense? Dispense.

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

Motion agreed to.

COUTU GOLD MINES LIMITED ACT, 2012

Mr. Leal, on behalf of Mr. Orazietti, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr1, An Act to revive Coutu Gold Mines Limited.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

COUTU GOLD MINES LIMITED ACT, 2012

Mr. Leal, on behalf of Mr. Orazietti, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr1, An Act to revive Coutu Gold Mines Limited.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

MASTER'S COLLEGE AND SEMINARY ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2012

Mr. Leal moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr3, An Act respecting Master's College and Seminary.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

MASTER'S COLLEGE AND SEMINARY
ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2012

Mr. Leal moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr3, An Act respecting Master's College and Seminary.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

HILI ENTERPRISES LTD. ACT, 2012

Ms. Damerla moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr4, An Act to revive Hili Enterprises Ltd.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

HILI ENTERPRISES LTD. ACT, 2012

Ms. Damerla moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr4, An Act to revive Hili Enterprises Ltd.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

ATTRACTING INVESTMENT
AND CREATING JOBS ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 VISANT
À ATTIRER LES INVESTISSEMENTS
ET À CRÉER DES EMPLOIS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 10, 2012, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 11, An Act respecting the continuation and establishment of development funds in order to promote regional economic development in eastern and southwestern Ontario / Projet de loi 11, Loi concernant la prorogation et la création de fonds de développement pour promouvoir le développement économique régional dans l'Est et le Sud-Ouest de l'Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm happy to rise again to continue our opposition to Bill 11 and continue the debate on this bill.

We've been, on our side of the House, very clear and consistent on why we can't spend an extra \$160 million at this point in time. Bill 11 proposes \$160 million in new spending at a time when Ontario has a deficit of \$16 billion.

It's ironic that across the globe recently, we're seeing the trouble with Greece running into massive debt and

deficits. On the weekend, Spain just got a bailout, in fact, of €100 billion. In Spain, we see unemployment at 25%. It's the position of our party that, come hell or high water, we're not going to allow Ontario to become a Greece or a Spain, and that's the reason for our opposition to this bill, Bill 11. Ontario, under this government, is heading in the wrong direction: a deficit of \$16 billion and a debt, according to Don Drummond, that could reach \$411 billion by 2017-18.

We just saw the job numbers released last Friday. Ontario lost 31,000 full-time jobs in the month of May. I was at the press conference with the Minister of Economic Development and Innovation where he blamed the troubles in the United States for Ontario's job woes. But it's also ironic that companies are leaving Ontario. We saw General Motors in the last couple of weeks announce that they're heading to Detroit and Tennessee. So the minister is blaming the United States for Ontario's job losses, yet jobs are leaving Ontario for the United States.

The government is heading in the wrong direction here in Ontario, and we need a real jobs plan. That's what we've been talking about consistently. Urgent action is needed. We need to create the environment for growth and for jobs to prosper, for businesses to prosper. What we don't need is Bill 11, which is \$160 million in more spending, in more corporate handouts. On a long-term basis, corporate handouts don't work. They're not sustainable.

We're standing up for the taxpayers, here on this side of the House, in why we oppose Bill 11, and it's really very simple: This government has a huge spending problem. Spending more money when you're in debt, with a debt the size that Ontario faces, is a bad decision. It's the wrong decision and it's not going to help Ontario families get back to work.

For example, our party, our caucus, believes that the current apprenticeship system needs to change. The system is out of date and is not creating the jobs that Ontarians need. This would be one point that I'd like to make this afternoon: Instead of spending \$160 million, let's get the apprenticeship system reformed so we can create up to 200,000 jobs.

The Ministry of Finance predicts there are going to be over one million skilled-job vacancies by 2021, despite Ontario's job crisis. We have a labour shortage. Modernizing Ontario's apprenticeship system, as I said, would help create 200,000 skilled trades jobs over four years. This is good policy. Allowing employers to take on more apprentices, and giving more responsibility to colleges to match apprentices up with employers, would help more young people find skilled trades jobs. This would certainly help businesses and people unemployed in southwestern Ontario, and in eastern Ontario as well. Our caucus would lower the apprenticeship ratio to 1 to 1 while delegating more responsibility to Ontario colleges, as I said, for matching apprentices with employers.

People want to work in the skilled trades, but this government once again is preventing job growth and economic growth from happening here in Ontario. In one

simple, practical step, we can give 200,000 men and women employment opportunity, a good career in the skilled trades right here in the province of Ontario.

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Imagine the impact this will have on new home construction, infrastructure maintenance and on industrial output. Imagine the jobs there if we had a government that would take our PC plan to create 200,000 jobs.

In most provinces around this great country, employers are allowed to hire one apprentice for every journeyman employed. In Ontario, some trades require as many as five journeymen to hire one apprentice, limiting the number of young people who can find work. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has said, "The sole limiting factor in our ability to train more apprentices is the journeyman/apprentice ratio requirements" in Ontario.

Ontario faces a big and growing jobs-training deficit, producing 46% fewer tradespeople per capita than in the rest of the country. Because of the Premier's dismal record on creating apprenticeship positions, only one in four Ontario apprentices finishes their job training. Ontario will face up to one million skilled trades vacancies by 2021 without urgent action to reform an antiquated system. There are jobs that can be created with little to no cost, versus the approach we're seeing by this government with Bill 11, which is another big spending bill. Why does the McGuinty government think that the only way to solve problems is to spend hard-earned taxpayers' money?

Ontario is lagging behind the rest of the world as well. In the 1990s, Australia reformed its training system and the number of apprentices doubled between 1995 and 2000. The UK, France and Sweden have also increased their number of apprenticeship positions through similar reforms.

Speaker, this is an opportunity for this government, and they're doing nothing to take advantage of this. Enough is enough. It's time that the spending stops and the current structures that are in place are changed to encourage opportunities for people in Ontario.

And I hear, time and time again, from my constituents in Lambton-Kent-Middlesex that they don't want a government that favours one region over another or one industry over another. Importantly, they want a change in direction: new thinking and new ideas coming from their government. But this Premier and this government just don't get it.

It's not just members of the opposition saying this, Speaker. As reported in the Ottawa Citizen on November 15, 2011, the recent Roger Martin report has asked that the government abandon "its policy of picking 'winners and losers' ... through subsidies to businesses." This is a respected dean from the Rotman School of Management saying this.

Another interesting fact comes from a study done by the Fraser Institute which uncovers that government has spent a total of nearly \$30 billion on corporate handouts. The money has been spent based on the promise that the

economic state in Ontario will get better, and we all know that the state of the economy in Ontario is actually getting worse, thanks to the decisions made by this government.

It has been proven over and over again that the Premier's spending legacy is not working. It has proven itself to be a complete and utter failure. The people of Ontario may sit back and ask, "How did this happen? How did the economic state of Ontario get so bad?" You see, Speaker, in Ontario, revenue is actually up \$35 billion under this government, but spending is up \$45 billion. This year alone, and currently, we're spending nearly \$2 million more each hour than we are taking in—\$2 million of hard-earned taxpayers' money is being spent more than what's coming in on the revenue side.

The single biggest cost driver on the spending side is public sector compensation and the expansion of government. This is not what we stand for, and this is not affordable. It never was affordable, Speaker. That is why we have called—and my colleague from Elgin-Middlesex-London introduced a great piece of legislation calling for a public sector wage freeze, something that will save families over \$2 billion in the next two years alone. Unfortunately, our leader, Tim Hudak, and our PC caucus were the only party in this House to support my fellow colleague's bill from Elgin-Middlesex-London.

While a public sector wage freeze won't turn our entire province around, it does signal that things are changing in Ontario and that we will not continue down our current path.

You see, what is affordable for Ontario families is creating an attractive environment to run a business, a place where costs are predictable and where small businesses and entrepreneurs can come and grow their businesses. I believe in a system of free enterprise, a system where people and businesses create jobs, not government.

Speaker, in Ontario, our revenue is at an all-time high, but it is uncontrolled spending on things like public sector compensation that's the problem. The current government has not posed a single new idea for reining in spending. The Premier really only knows how to do one thing, and that's spend. I guess another good proof point is the fact that when this Premier was elected and this government was elected in 2003, 20,000 employees in the public sector made over \$100,000 a year. This year, that number is going to hit 80,000, so the size and cost of government has grown dramatically. It's a problem and why we have a \$16-billion deficit and a debt that's going to hit \$411 billion if we continue down the same path.

So we have all of this spending going on, all of this debt and massive deficit, and we also have 600,000 people unemployed. It relates: If you have a massive debt and a massive deficit, you're going to have fewer jobs in the province and more people unemployed. We're seeing that across the globe right now.

I sometimes question and ask myself how can this government and their members sleep at night knowing that when it comes to the jobs crisis and the debt crisis in

Ontario, they're kicking the can down the road to the next generation. The reckless spending and inability to define priorities are at the root of the crisis we face today. The Premier has no idea what to do, so the Premier just keeps on spending, like Bill 11, hoping that something will work, something will stick and that something might change here in the province. We can't depend on much these days, but we can count on one thing, if given the chance under this Premier, and that is that spending will increase, the deficit will increase, jobs will continue to leave, and the people of Ontario will continue to suffer with higher taxes, higher hydro bills and skyrocketing debt levels.

Our position is quite clear: We can't support additional spending without significant savings elsewhere. It's as simple as that. We have to get our fundamentals right. We have to get our books back in balance, and that will lead to job creation in the province, especially in particular by getting the fundamentals of the economy right. Government can't buy things that the public can't afford. Families in Ontario understand this. Small businesses in Ontario certainly understand this. Our caucus, the PC caucus, members of our opposition, understand this.

To be clear, it's not the government's job to pick winners and losers amongst privately owned companies. Ontario families simply can't afford these corporate subsidies any longer. It seems that the only people not to understand this are the members of the government.

Red tape and increased government spending are not helping our economy, either. Instead, we are seeing the debt rise daily. In Ontario we have hundreds of thousands of regulations that are really tying the hands of business owners. Business owners should have the time to dedicate their days to creating jobs in the province of Ontario, not dealing with red tape from some government inspector coming through the door.

The economy is getting worse and worse because the government is still spending. As I said, back to Friday's announcement with 31,000 full-time jobs lost in the month of May because of this government, we're heading on the wrong track and things every month seem to be getting a little worse. Our party has been clear that we don't want Ontario to be the next Greece, the next Spain. We have to get our books back in order.

Speaker, as you know, myself and our leader and caucus strongly oppose corporate welfare. We strongly oppose government slush funds such as the one being proposed. We strongly believe that now is the time to reduce spending, not increase it. As I have stated here today, and as we have stated since the election, we can't support additional spending without some cutbacks elsewhere.

Just on a little personal note—a lot of the members of the House will know this—I come from a family business background in southwestern Ontario. I'm proud to say that our family has been in business since 1948. It started with my grandfather and then my father and my brother and myself. It's a Home Hardware Building Centre, an

auto and farm supply store and an LCBO agency store. We have 65 employees. And I can tell you that it's all about governments getting the conditions right for businesses to prosper. It's about cutting red tape. It's about getting the fiscal house in order.

It's about having affordable energy—because that's the one thing in my riding and as I tour the province that I hear in my portfolio as economic development and innovation critic: that hydro bills are killing jobs. I rose in the House a few weeks ago to deliver the bad news that the Sobeys grocery store in Wallaceburg is closing. It actually closed this week, I believe: 70 jobs gone in Wallaceburg, a hard-hit area of the province, in my riding. Time and time again, I hear about hydro bills going through the roof. They've doubled, on average, over the last number of years under this government and are set to go up almost 50% over the next four or five years. It's by far the number one job killer.

Again, we're opposed to Bill 11. We're opposed to \$160 million in new spending when the deficit is skyrocketing, the debt is skyrocketing. We really want the government to listen to our caucus, to our leader, to get the fundamentals right, because that's what we're hearing as we travel the province.

With that, I will end and encourage all members here today to join with me in opposing bigger government and more spending, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I'll have an opportunity in the next 10 minutes to do my lead on this bill, which will give us about an hour, and I will critique much of what the Conservatives stand for when I have that hour.

But I do want to thank the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex for supporting the amendments that I introduced around Bill 11. This is one of the bills around which we were able to achieve amendments for the very first time. They are before us in this bill, and we could not have done it without the support of the Conservative members who were a part of that committee. Every now and then, you see, we can work together to make some changes. I'll be able to speak to those amendments—because I suspect that while you may not agree with all of them, you did agree with the majority of them. People deserve to know that New Democrats and Conservatives made those amendments together, with much resistance from the Liberal caucus on that committee. I'll speak to that in about 10 minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Grant Crack: It's a pleasure for me today to speak on Bill 11, the Attracting Investment and Creating Jobs Act. I can tell you, as a former mayor, that we have a number of businesses in my municipality and in my riding of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell that have benefited from this particular fund. In particular, Bentley Leathers, last fall, was a recipient of this, and they were able to expand their business and innovate.

I'm confused as to why the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex and the Conservative Party are not in

favour of this, because we're doing what we can to create jobs in the province of Ontario. We get criticized when GM decides to move jobs elsewhere, but at the same time, I would suspect that they were looking for the government to prop them up as well, to keep those jobs.

This is a great bill—very well supported by the mayors and the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus in eastern Ontario, and it would certainly benefit those in southwest Ontario.

I've got a few seconds here. I just want to touch on a letter that Minister Duguid had sent to Mr. McNaughton. We're looking for a response on this particular bill. The minister says: "I am writing you today to request that we allow debate to collapse before the Legislature adjourns on Monday to allow the legislation to be called for a final vote on Monday afternoon, which we would then ask be deferred until Tuesday, June 12, 2012, during deferred votes."

We need to get this legislation passed. We're looking for a good partnership, co-operation with the NDP to make sure that we can continue to create good jobs right across the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I stand today to discuss this bill. I have a number of problems with it.

First of all, my colleague from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell talked about the eastern Ontario wardens supporting this, and they did, but it was not for this reason. The bill was to solve some of the inequities with eastern Ontario, some of the problems we have, the lack of assessment. We're half the assessment, half the population that they are in western Ontario. Now they've taken this money that was assigned to our area and are spreading it around. It was an acknowledgment by the government that we had some competitive issues.

It's interesting to hear some of the credit they're taking today. We're looking at an economy where we're losing jobs to the US because we're no longer competitive. We can't go on spending money just because a pot of money is found. First of all, it was assigned for something else, and now it's just going to be spread around.

The comment about maybe keeping GM here—that was a problem with not being competitive. Our hydro rates are the highest in North America. How do you expect companies that are looking around to Americans—who are having their own problems, but if you're a company that's looking to set up employment, it doesn't look as bad as it does in Ontario today. So they're actually going down to the States. They get a better deal down there, because they can be competitive. Hydro rates are much less than ours; taxes are less than ours.

What we're looking for from this government is some new ideas. A former government here came into power under Mike Harris and looked at the roadblocks we had. We had over 250 agencies back then. Through a reduction in red tape, he brought that down to 150 in the short time he had to do that role. But this government has brought it back over 600. It chews up money we don't

have and it just gets in the way of business. I think we have to vote against this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments? I return to the member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Thanks to the members from Trinity–Spadina and Glengarry–Prescott–Russell and my colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Speaker, listening in particular to the government member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, only Liberals believe that bigger government and government subsidies create long-term, sustainable jobs. They just in fact don't. Again, it's about getting the fundamentals right in the economy. It's about reforming the apprenticeship system to create 200,000 new jobs in the province and give opportunities to young people who are looking for work today. It's about getting affordable energy—the number one issue that businesses have in Ontario. It's about cutting red tape. We have hundreds of thousands of regulations on the books that are nothing but job-killers in this province. And of course, it's about government getting its fiscal house in order. We have a \$16-billion deficit, a debt that's heading to \$411 billion, and businesses are concerned about that. Why invest in a place like Ontario when you have a Liberal government spending \$16 million more per year than it's taking in? Young kids know that you can't spend that much more than you take in, in a year, and it's just disrespectful to the taxpayers and the small business owners, and all business owners in the province of Ontario, spending that much money.

I would like to put on the record, Speaker, that during budget negotiations, I know for a fact that the Liberals didn't even ask to have this bill passed. They didn't even bring it up on the list of bills that they wanted passed by the end of this session, so it actually is the Liberals, the Liberal Party, the Liberal government, that's holding this bill up now. We're going through the legislative debate on this bill, which is important for our democracy, and we're following through on that.

We're opposed to Bill 11: \$160 million in spending. We just can't afford it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I'm happy to have this opportunity to speak to Bill 11, and I welcome the listeners who are watching this political forum. We are online. It's 2:10, early in the afternoon. I want to divide my speech into four areas, Speaker. I want to critique a bit what the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex has just put forth, and then I want to talk about the history of corporate tax cuts that both Liberals and Conservatives have engaged in that, in my view, haven't given us very much. Then I'll talk about some of the specifics of Bill 11 and about the amendments that we have made that I believe have made this bill a little better.

1410

Speaking to some of the things that the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex said—he is representing his

party on this, so he's not alone in thinking these things; obviously, all of his caucus members are deeply connected to these thoughts—he talks about having to change the apprenticeship system as a way of creating more jobs. He and his leader have talked about creating 250,000 jobs—

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It was 250,000, you said.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: It was 200,000.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Did that number change, or was it always 200,000?

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I thought it was a bit higher. Okay, I don't want to inflate those numbers unnecessarily. I want to be factual.

They said they would create 200,000 jobs by simply changing the ratios in the apprenticeship system. I don't know where they got that number, but it just comes out of the blue, Mr. Speaker. That number is not real. Most of the trades have a 1-to-1 ratio between the apprentice and the journeyman. Some have a 1-to-2 ratio, and some have 1-to-3. There's a reason why unions and governments accepted those ratios in the past, and it has a lot to do with safety, generally speaking.

We've got a training centre that's looking at those numbers. I have to assume that the training centre is going to come up with a different way of doing our training, and they're involving a whole lot of sectors. At the end of the day, I am convinced they will come up with the right numbers that will basically modernize our apprenticeship system in a way that I think will be good for workers and good for Ontarians on the whole.

For the Conservatives to say, "We're going to change the ratio, make all trades 1-to-1, and lo and behold, that will create 200,000 jobs" is simply faux—false. It doesn't exist. Those numbers are not real. Those are numbers they've just picked out of a hat. It has a whole lot of people across Ontario persuaded that they're on to something. You don't have to be factual about those things; you just have to say it, and lo and behold, it becomes a reality. I wanted to put that out first and foremost, because I think that really needs a critique from different sectors.

The member from Lambton added that we should give responsibilities to colleges to match students and employers. It's not a bad idea. I think giving high school teachers in the co-op program more of an option, giving them power to be able to match people up, is not a bad idea. At the high school level, where we have the co-op program, once the students are out of that program, they are responsible individually for finding work. That's not right, in my mind, and it isn't practical. A young person simply has no way of connecting to an employer. In terms of where to do one's co-op, that individual, on his or her own, has no way of linking up to a potential employer. In my mind, the guidance teacher ought to be able to link those young people to prospective employers, rather than relying on the individual to find an employer with whom to do the co-op program. What happens is,

these young people end up doing something with a relative. Is that the best potential employment possibility that one could have? I don't think so. It's better than nothing, one would argue, but I really believe that guidance counsellors could be given enhanced powers to link people to employers and then find a way to make sure that we help those young people to find employment once the co-op is over.

Similarly, colleges, once young people have gone through that apprenticeship, could link them up to prospective employers and be given enhanced powers. I don't think that's a bad idea.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I was speaking to the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, who, for 18 minutes, spoke about all the great economic ideas that you guys had, so I thought I would, in response to it, give you my critique.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Well, they were great ideas.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes, and I'm critiquing those great ideas as best as I can. So I'm going to take—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The Speaker is not irrelevant to the discussion in the House. I remind the member for Trinity–Spadina to make his remarks through the Chair.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: One of the Conservative members was saying, "Is this Bill 11?" I reminded him that his critic spoke for 18 minutes on other related issues connected to economic development. So it was just a reminder to him—through you always, of course, Speaker.

The other points he made: How do we create great economic development? They said, "We're going to cut red tape." I have to remind him and all of you fine Conservatives that Mike Harris simply cut that ribbon to death in eight and a half years. But Tories keep on insisting that there is more red tape to cut. That's the beauty of Tory inventions. If we've exhausted, chewed up, that red tape in eight and a half years, don't worry: We'll create other red tapes to cut, over and over again. I've got to admit, you guys are creative. I thought Mike Harris had done all the cutting he could. I thought he had carpal tunnel syndrome after all that cutting: eight and a half years. That's what you get after you cut eight and a half years: You get problems in the elbow. The Minister of Labour would know these things.

But no. Lo and behold, the member from Lambton–Kent said that we've still got to cut red tape. Okay.

He mentions that hydro is just too expensive. He's right, and we have been killing jobs in northern Ontario. Our former leader, Howard Hampton, would rail against Tories when they were in power, rail against Liberals for eight and a half years, saying, "Hydro rates are killing our jobs," and the mills out there are closing by the day because they can't afford to compete with Quebec in particular and Manitoba, and that we needed to get a handle on that so that we could keep jobs here in Ontario. So I remind my good Tory friends, most of whom are new to this place, and some who are old, of when—and

the Speaker would know because he was here then: Mike Harris began the privatization of the hydro system, something Tories dare not speak of. They talk about high hydro rates, but they don't say why.

You will recall, Speaker—as a friendly reminder to all the new Tories—that you guys gave away Bruce 2 to an English company.

Interjections.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes, hold on. They gave Bruce 2 away to a British company. They privatized it. They gave it away for 16 or 17 long years, at the end of which, those fine British folks—who, I think, sold out and gave it to somebody else—would leave that fine nuclear system in the hands of the taxpayers, ready and willing to pay for the refurbishing of that Bruce 2 because taxpayers are so happy to help the private sector take the money, go, leave the trouble of the nuclear station in the hands of your friends, taxpayers, who are so happy to hold the bag and say, “We’re ready to pay \$1 billion, \$2 billion to refurbish while you take the millions, year in and year out, of the country.”

Tories are good. You Tories are really good. The first year that your Tory friends gave Bruce 2 away to the British company, do you know how much money they made? You wouldn't know. I have to help: 165 million bucks—all to the private sector to take as profit. Bruce 2 was profitable on its own in public hands. But no, we had to give it away to private hands so they could run it and make \$165 million that first year, 1996 through 1997.

1420

You Tories are really good at giving away public assets. You never talk about why hydro rates go up because of what you did. You created 14 different distributing companies to sell gas, to sell whatever rich resources we got; 14 distributing companies going around, knocking at your door, saying, “We can give you gas cheaper. Just sign up with us.” You know the scandal, Speaker. You and your friends know all the different scandals that have been going on for the last 10, 12 years.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And you, fine Tories, set up that system where you actually took it away from the public sector, because you know how badly run—and you gave it away to 14 different distributing companies so they could make the pecunia and put it in their deep, long pockets. That's okay. It's okay to privatize a system and give it away to the wealthy, but a public system that could work efficiently and take the money and give it back to the citizens and the taxpayers—“Oh, no, that's bad.”

You guys crack me up, honest to God, year in and year out. You crack me up.

Here, you've got the member from Lambton–Kent—you see, you said so much. You already spent 10 minutes, 12 minutes. The member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex says, “Tories oppose corporate tax giveaways,” and they are opposed to corporate welfare. God bless. Here is the other dilemma, the paradoxical point that I wanted to point out to them through you, Speaker:

How come it is that they oppose the \$2 billion that Liberals have to give away to corporations—true, grants mostly—but they're not adverse or opposed to corporate tax cuts? You understand the paradox, Speaker? They're opposed to giving away money by governments for grants, but they are okay on the other side of the corporate ledger, meaning corporate tax cuts. So corporate tax cuts are not corporate welfare but corporate grants are. Do you understand? You understand what I'm getting at? I hope.

Mr. Bill Walker: Absolutely, Rosie. We're with you, buddy.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So I'm wondering, do you understand the paradox I put to you, and when you're doing at least your two minutes, you might comment on any one of these items, if you could, just to clarify in my mind at least, if not yours, what you mean by “corporate welfare.”

I want to be able to comment on this in a brief five minutes as I explore more deeply some of the other comments that the Tories continue to make.

They say that the real problem is that we spend too much.

Mr. Bill Walker: Well, you can't argue that. Even you can't argue that one.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But I can.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I can, and here's the problemo, Speaker. I find that I have to repeat it so often because I know that so many in this place don't listen. I know that I've got to repeat it at least seven times before people hear it.

When Mike Harris was in this fine place many years ago, he cut corporate taxes by \$13.4 billion—corporate and income. Understand, Speaker, what that means. When you cut \$13.4 billion, it's gone forever. So when spending increases ever so slightly, without that revenue, spending appears that it's outpacing, outracing corporate revenues.

Do you understand, fine Tories, what that means? If you keep cutting corporate taxes and income taxes, at some point spending is way out of whack with revenues.

Now, what I know about Tories is that they like to reduce governments to as little as possible. “Just make them tiny,” they say, although if you look at the Harper example, your federal cousins, they have spent a whole lot more than many other previous governments have. But don't be bothered by these. But it is interesting that when Harper got into the federal office, he spent a lot more than what he was actually bringing in. Because, remember, he cut the GST by two points, and that eliminated \$10 billion a year—\$10 billion a year. We wouldn't have had a deficit if he had kept that there. But he cut the GST. He was lucky enough that he had a good economy that brought in revenues with which he was able to grow the military by leaps and bounds. Because you know Harper is a real man. He's a real man, not just an ordinary man; he's a real man with guns and big stuff, right?

So, much of that money went to that sector, because he wants show the world that he's a tough guy and that on the call of the Americans he's ready to go and send a whole lot of Canadian soldiers to die, no matter how useless the war might be in Afghanistan. But that's okay. I mean, Tories can do what they like, and they do. They can contradict themselves as much as they want, and they do and pretend they don't.

Am I spending too much time on this, Speaker? You let me know. Just sort of say, in case. No, no, just in case—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Given that you've given me the opportunity, I would say that we're discussing Bill 11 and I would ask all members to confine their comments to the bill.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You see, I'm just trying to help you, because I was getting weary of attacking the Tories. You're so right.

But economic development is critical. There are a lot of issues around this economic development file, I have to admit. There's so much that could be done. I supported this initiative that the Liberals have introduced. Bill 11 was an initiative that New Democrats supported with changes, which we got. But I have to tell you, there are a lot of other things we could be doing. We could be doing, for example, what Quebec has done since 1985, 1986 or 1987, I think, where they have imposed a 1% payroll tax on companies and corporations that earn over \$1 million, and they put aside that 1% for job training. It's a big deal.

I introduced such a resolution in this place and it was defeated by Tories and, dare I say, Liberals. Not one Liberal stood to support my resolution, if I recall. But when we talk about training—job training, apprenticeship programs—that's what we could be doing. By the way, Quebec modelled this after the Irish and the French. It's not as if they necessarily, on their own, came up with that magical solution. They had other models.

The point is that we could do good training in this country, and we could model it after what Quebec has done. We need to improve our apprenticeship training. We need to. If we did it as well as the Germans did, it would work so well and workers would be trained so well. If we did it like Germany, governments, unions and the corporate sector would work together, not against each other. Even in Germany, under a conservative—

Mr. Robert Bailey: Government?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Government, yes, but I was looking for—

Mr. Bill Walker: Chancellor?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Chancellor, exactly—supports a model where the corporate sector, unions and governments work together. It makes sense. It means they're not at odds with each other. It means that corporations and unions are not killing each other and going after each other. It means governments are helping to bring these people together. It should be a tripartite effort, but you won't find Tories talking about that. No, no, no; Tories talk about the ratio: "If we just had 1 to 1, we'd create 200,000 jobs." It couldn't get more simplistic than that.

Mr. Bill Walker: So you support us?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No. It's a bad idea. It doesn't create the jobs it purports to. It's a lie. It doesn't do it.

The 1% payroll tax for job training would be a great idea. I say this for the Tories to reflect on.

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The other problem Tories don't speak about—and they should, because they are purportedly the party of business, but neither Liberals nor Conservatives are talking about it—is access to capital. Small businesses have been complaining about not being able to access capital from the banks for the last 22 years that I have been in this place. Where are the Tories on this? Where are the Liberals on this? When they both say small business creates 80% to 90% of the jobs, where are they when small businesses are saying, "We need access to capital and we're not getting it"? I haven't heard one Tory speak about that in the 22 years that I've been in this place. I haven't heard Liberals talk about this in the 22 years that I've been in the place. Wow. That's a big deal. So I bring it to your attention, Speaker, and through you to them, so they could reflect on it, because there's still time; there's always time to make things better and to change things. I offer that as a second idea.

The third one is that we are a country and a province rich in resources, and for the last 100 years we simply take the richness out of the earth and send it to America to process. How can that be good economic development? Why is it that Ontario and the government of Canada have never been able to come to grips with this problem where we extract, we export, then we re-import the finished product, and that's economic development? How could we not think about that? How could we not say, "This has to change"? We are a great mining country with a great deal of expertise. In fact, we're in South America, we're in Africa, we're everywhere with our expertise. Yet we import 90% of the instruments that we use for our own mining in our own provinces. How could that be? Why can't we change that around, which is what the NDP talked about in the last election? Why cannot we process our own resources?

Think about lumber. We export so much lumber to the world: to the US, to China, to everybody. Why can't we process that here instead of just exporting that resource? In Ontario, we have been closing the lumberyards in northern Ontario by the year, by the week, by the month, because, yes, hydro rates skyrocketed and we haven't been able to solve it. To be fair to the Liberals, after our former leader Howard Hampton badgered day in and day out, the Liberals finally, a couple of years back, decided to lower the rates somewhat, which I'm not sure has been able to save them, but to the extent that it did, it was because of the efforts that Howard Hampton had made in this Legislature to persuade Liberals year after year to do something. They would make fun of us, of course, until finally they did a little something. The point is, we need to process the richness of our resources, and not just export it.

The fourth point is that we've got to get the corporations to have a little Canadian pride. We have to start

building and start processing, start keeping the jobs in this province and in this country. Why is it that we lowered the corporate tax rates for the last 20, 25 years provincially and federally, and they take the money and then buy up bigger companies, put the money as cash reserves in banks, just leave it there and do not invest? Why is it that they do that and we put no obligations on those corporations to say, “With all the money that we’ve given you in the last 20 years, we want you to spend some of it here and not take the jobs to China or somewhere else”? Do I have to say that? Shouldn’t it be automatic that corporations should have a little Ontario and Canadian pride? Where are the Tories and Liberals on this? Why aren’t they saying to the corporate sector, “We give you those corporate tax cuts. We expect you to bring those jobs here to this country”? Why aren’t you saying that? Why do I have to tell you, day in and day out? Do you need constant reminding? Do you know how tiring that is to have to remind you day in and day out that you’ve got to get the corporate sector on our side and not taking our money and bringing the jobs somewhere else and then—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That’s right, Rosie.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Of course. The corporate tax cuts do not work. They have never worked.

Since 2000, the combined federal and provincial tax rate was reduced from 44% to 25%—you’ll never have a Tory or a Liberal say that—but business investments deteriorated, and they did not invest in productivity, i.e., machinery and equipment. We lag behind in productivity, but we’ve been cutting corporate taxes for 20 years.

The argument Tories make, or the corporate sector makes—they’re one and one, often, with the Liberals right behind—is that if you give corporate tax cuts, they will invest in productivity. But the evidence shows that they’re not investing in productivity.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: What evidence?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: What evidence? Good Lord. I don’t know what you’ve been reading by way of the corporate media that tells you that the corporate tax cuts have gone into productivity. Bring that to me, because, I’m telling you—

Mr. Jeff Yurek: You bring it to me.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I have to bring it to you? Oh, no. You are the fine Tories and Liberals who support the corporate tax giveaways with a view that that would create greater productivity, and the evidence from the Globe and Mail that you people read and the National Post the Tories read or Liberals read—the evidence there shows that productivity lags over and over, year after year, vis-à-vis the States and other countries. It lags because those people at the corporate level take the money, have cash reserves, and they do not spend it in creating jobs, and they do not spend it in productivity as a way of creating more efficiency and jobs.

The accumulated cash revenue by 2010, says Stats Canada, or what remains of it—that we have half a trillion dollars in cash reserves—half a trillion. It’s a whole lot of money. It’s a whole lot of pecunia. We are

in the 500 billions of dollars stashed away, not being invested, neither in productivity nor job creation. Since 2008, \$83 billion has been stashed away in cash savings—83 billion bucks.

So we got half a trillion by 2010 and \$83 billion since 2008. They’re just taking the money. God bless. They love taxpayers’ money. They love the money of citizens. They want to take it, put it away, stash it, wait for the right moment to go after some other corporate sector that they could gobble up. All of these investments are going into gobbling up other corporations, other companies, making even bigger monsters out of our corporate sectors, with nary a job that’s created.

Corporate tax reductions do not trickle down. They never have. The effects of corporate tax reductions are profoundly regressive. They are not distributed to the citizens and to the taxpayers. They are distributed among the big one-percenters who earn in the millions and billions of dollars. God bless.

The people who have got a problem are the individual homeowners. Households are having issues with money, issues with deficits. It’s not the corporate sector. They are suffering the financial crunch.

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I remind the Liberals and Tories that we lost 160,000 jobs—or, no; we had 160,000 fewer jobs pre-recession peak, and those jobs have not come back. While some jobs have come back, they are not well-paying, and the majority of workers are working for part-time wages, low wages. I’m always reminding you folks that half of the college teachers are there on a contract basis because they can’t get a full-time job. Up to 30% of university professors are on contract because they can’t get a full-time job. Most of the people who work are part-time. Many of the people who are working are working at two or three jobs. Many of the people who are working are working for minimum wage. You can’t build an honest-to-goodness standard of living and have a good life in this country any more without an improvement in wages.

Tories want to freeze wages, and even though teachers are saying, “We voluntarily freeze our wages for two years,” Tories say, “No, it’s not good enough. We want to mandate that, because that’s the way we Tories want to do it.” And Liberals, not to be outdone, say, “Negotiate with the teachers or we’ll legislate.” Same idea, different language, but it’s the same baloney, right? “Negotiate or legislate. You teachers decide.” It’s the same stuff, except you’re trying to be nice in appearances, and they’re just cleaner about it.

So we’ve got to worry, in my mind, about how deficits are affecting homeowners, because if we don’t worry about that, our economy is never going to get any better. The average hourly wage has not changed since 1991, and salaries of people since 1991, the 1990s, have stayed more or less the same. We’re in trouble. If people don’t have money, they can’t spend. So when Tories say, “We’ve got a spending problem. We’ve got to cut back,” what we’re cutting back on are the social programs that affect directly those very people whose incomes have been at the same level since 1990.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: But they know all about that.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: They do. So I offer that to you, Speaker, through you to the others: just a little background, some little historical background that might be of help to the people who are watching this program and to the MPPs who are listening to this debate.

I want to talk about Bill 11.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Finally.

Interjections.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Right. How come you didn't make fun of your member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, who for 18 minutes didn't talk about Bill 11? I just thought I would remind you.

This bill, when originally introduced, we thought, "It's supportable, but there are some problems."

Mr. Bill Walker: Why do we need a bill?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You need a bill.

Mr. Bill Walker: Why?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I'll explain in a minute.

We said that the \$20 million you want to spend is not much, in the scheme of things. That's what you're spending in eastern Ontario—up to—and you want to do the same in western Ontario. That's okay. We said it's not much. It will accomplish some things; better than nothing; but it wasn't a big sum of money, first.

Secondly, the job guarantees are a real concern for us, because we've argued for the last, I don't know, many years that you just can't give money away and not have any job guarantees, and you cannot give money away without a threat by government of a clawback, should you give that money and the jobs do not result. So we've been critical of you in the last many years on this particular score, but you haven't been listening, from what I've been able to glean over the last four or five or six years. So we reminded the government that you've got to have stronger language in the bill to make that a little stronger and clearer.

Thirdly, the southwestern fund is being financed by reallocation from other programs within the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation, and much of that money comes from the strategic jobs and investment fund. So we said to you, "This strategic jobs and investment fund is a good one."

I'll read the quote that speaks about this program, because I think—for the benefit of Tories—they might like it; I'm not sure. The ministry describes it as the following: "aimed at innovative companies that make anchor investments in Ontario that support cluster development and leading-edge initiatives that build long-term prosperity and global competitiveness." This is good.

China is doing this, day in and day out. They focus on where they want their investments to go and they invest billions strategically in their economy so as to build international strength and international competitiveness. They directly, intentionally, say, "What do we do as a government?", versus the Conservative market ideology that simply says, "Oh, no. Governments shouldn't do that. They should simply let it happen. They should

simply allow the corporate sector to do that on their own"—because you know how bright they are—"and they know exactly what they need to do in the economy, and it will simply happen."

Brothers and sisters of both political persuasions: It doesn't always happen. That's why China effectively intervenes in their economy; Japan as well. They both do it. America dares not go after China because China is a powerful country. They don't want to go after China by saying, "You're affecting our economies here. You're manipulating our economies. We don't want you to do that." America does that with little countries they can control, like Canada and others, but not China. Can't tell China what to do. God bless. That's a good thing.

But it makes an argument for government involvement in finding strategic ways of funding leading-edge investments and thus creating jobs in Ontario. So I say to the government that taking \$20 million from the strategic jobs and investment fund has an equal result in the end. If you left it in the strategic jobs and investment fund, my suspicion is that it would create the same number of jobs. Whether you have a western or an eastern economic development board that deals with these issues might not matter too much. If the money was in addition to the strategic jobs and investment fund, one would argue that it's a little more money, and it will create more jobs, and that's a good thing. But to take it from one pot as an offset, as we say in Italian, doesn't accomplish much. Right? That's the expression. But who am I to tell the Liberals anything around here? They don't listen very much.

Hon. John Milloy: We always listen to you, Rosie.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My sense is that you don't listen too often to what we have to say. It's my experience in 22 years.

The fourth critique was that we wanted to have independent boards that are responsible for approving funded projects. This is how it's done in the northern Ontario heritage fund, and we argue that it's a good model.

During the debates, the Liberals didn't support any of these things in second reading. I have to tell you, in committee they didn't support it either. But with alliances with the Conservative Party, we managed to make some changes, and these changes are positive in nature. That tells you what you can accomplish in minority government. This is one of the finest examples of a successful intervention by the opposition parties to impose on the government—because they were reluctant—changes that we believe are going to make this bill better.

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Even though we made these changes, the Tories are still saying they can't support it. I don't know. I don't agree with them. I thank them for their support, but I don't agree with them. But they did agree to making sure that when the minister makes an announcement on monies given by this new fund, this Attracting Investment and Creating Jobs Act, the opposition members have to be invited to be present at the announcement.

This has not always been the case. Tories and New Democrats argued successfully, by way of an amend-

ment, that the opposition parties had to be present at the announcement. How could Liberals disagree with those things, I say to myself. Why wouldn't they have done it on their own? Why do they need to be nudged by me? Why? I don't know why. It ought to be a given, because, I'd remind you, some day you'll be here, and you'll be complaining. "We're not invited to the announcements. Why?" And the others will say, "Because you did the same," and on and on it goes. That was a simple one, a minor one, and we got it. It makes sure that some partisanship is eliminated.

The other matter: Funds will be housed in independent corporations with boards of directors drawn from the southwestern and eastern Ontario regions. What we have accomplished here is making sure that the politics of the approval process move away from the minister and be put into the hands of an independent board. What could be so wrong with that? We said to the Liberals, "Look, this is good for you, because you don't want to appear to be doing this for political reasons, for which you were attacked in the past." I know. You have been attacked in the past for doing that. So if you have an independent board, it will take out the partisan politics.

The Liberals argued in committee that if we do this, it will become unmanageable; it will become unwieldy; it will become less efficient. I said, "Are you arguing that the northern Ontario heritage fund is inefficient?" No? No Liberal would argue that. But if we have the northern Ontario heritage fund, which functions in this way—it already exists—you have a model by which to be able to put together an independent board for eastern Ontario that deals with economic development, and it will be done quickly, efficiently and responsibly, because you have a model that works. The bureaucracy knows how it works.

The Minister of Northern Development nods in approval: "He's right."

The arguments were specious in committee, to be fair, but because we had the Tories on board, we were able to get that one as well.

We argued that there should be local advisory committees that will represent sub-regions and possibly industry sectors. This is good. Creating local advisory committees to represent the sub-regions is a positive element, a positive addition, a positive amendment that we were able to put into that debate and were successful in.

The other one, that the accountability measures, including job guarantees and more transparency in contracts, be included: We want greater accountability. It should be an easy one to accept by governments. Why wouldn't you want greater accountability? Greater transparency is something you talk about all the time, yet when you're actually confronted with having to do that and it's presented to you by the opposition, you oppose it. But by the mercy of having two opposition parties that had the numbers to determine success of these amendments, we got that one too.

We also argued that there should be a one-year review of the major provisions in the act, to ensure that things are working as expected and to examine possible refine-

ments. To be fair, that amendment was introduced by the Liberals, and it wasn't introduced on the basis of our amendments, initially, but it was introduced on the basis of their bill going through as they had it. So they wanted their bill to be as it was and they had proposed a one-year review of the major provisions of the act. But I think this review is even better with our amendments. So we were able to, as generous as we were, incorporate that amendment as well into Bill 11.

All of these things are improvements that tell the citizens who watch this program and follow it that minority governments, from time to time, work, and that if we are able to do it together, it can work. If Liberal governments who have still a governing position—if they did not resist the opposition parties, as they often do, it would be so much easier. But you just have to give up a little bit of control. You just have to say and acknowledge and accept that you don't have a majority government. When you accept that, as you're beginning to, God bless, things begin to unravel in positive ways. I see that. It's good. I see the government is becoming a little more elastic, recognizing the fragile position that it has in this minority situation. See, minority makes you come to your senses a little bit, eventually. I'm happy about that.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: At least two of the parties.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: That's sometimes true too; you're quite right.

These are the things we were able to accomplish—and by the way, just as a quick and final comment on—what do you call it?—the Jobs and Prosperity Council that you created, you have recognized what our leader has been saying for quite some time; that is, that we need to attach job security, job improvements, to the corporate tax cuts that we give. They have to be one and the same.

New Democrats, unlike Conservatives, say that if we support corporations that create jobs, that is a positive thing. But to give money away willy-nilly, as both Liberals and Tories have done for the last 20 years, is a mistake. But if we say to the corporations, "You are creating jobs for the long term," this is good. That's what we want; that's what people want: job creation. The government has relented a little bit and said, "We will take your suggestions and make sure that the people who are setting up the Jobs and Prosperity Council will look into those suggestions." Do I think that we are together on that? I don't know, but at least they will be given consideration. We would have hoped for a little more detail on this, but we don't know.

You see, our program works. We know from Winnipeg how that works. Because what we have proposed is that it should be a two-year refundable job creator tax credit that would be administered through the existing corporate income tax system. It would reimburse employers for 10% of the salary paid to a new hire during their first year of employment, up to a maximum of \$5,000. To demonstrate that the new hire is an additional job rather than a replacement for a previous employee, each employer would be required to submit workforce baseline numbers and wage bill information annually. To

calculate the credit, workforce employment numbers would be compared year to year, and employers would also have to submit information that indicates the total wage bill of new employees hired. Employers would not be eligible for a credit for increasing wages of existing employees.

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To create over 50,000 jobs, \$250 million of the \$2-billion jobs and prosperity fund would be allocated to the tax credit. You see, this one is the one that we have not been able to persuade the government to do. We think that two billion bucks could be reallocated in a way that, if we gave \$250 million in the way that we described, it would create the 50,000 jobs.

We New Democrats are open to discussion about ways to ensure that no single employer monopolizes the program, such as capping the total credits per employer.

We offer these suggestions as a way of doing real economic development in the province. We hope that a minority government will persuade Liberals to do things a little differently; we hope that it persuades them to listen to some of the suggestions that we have so as to benefit citizens in particular, households that are struggling to make ends meet; and we are hoping that this bill will go through.

I know that the Liberals are asking the Tories whether they're going to support this. I understand. But I think we should be able to do this together. I think Liberals and New Democrats can do this together. If the Tories don't want to join us, I think it's a problem, but we can do it. The eastern economic development fund worked for eastern Ontario. The Conservative member and members of that region support the program. They know that it has helped them as well. Yes, some of it was politically partisan; there's no doubt about it. That's why we want to make this less partisan. That's why we want to create an independent board in western Ontario.

But the program has worked in eastern Ontario and it can work in western Ontario. With the changes that we have made, Conservatives and New Democrats, it allows us the opportunity to accomplish what we want. That's why I say that there's absolutely no reason for the Tories to oppose this. If you believe corporate tax cuts are not corporate welfare but you think that tax grants are, you've got a contradiction to deal with. You've got to be able to deal with them, got to be able to see that one and the other are part of the same problem. You can't have it both ways, and at the moment, Tories want it both ways. It used to be that the Liberals always wanted it both ways; now it seems the Tories want it both ways. I don't get it.

We can do this. I think we should be able to pass Bill 11 and demonstrate to people that the amendments that New Democrats made, with the help of the Conservatives, will work more effectively, more efficiently and better for the municipalities, non-profits, the private sector that's in those regions, and the citizens in particular.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Phil McNeely: I'm pleased to rise today to respond to the member about Bill 11, something that's important for Ottawa–Orléans. In Ottawa–Orléans, we have about 0.5 jobs per household, where Kanata has something like 1.6 jobs per household. Jobs are very important.

I had a brief experience with the eastern Ontario development fund. Even though Ottawa–Orléans was not within that area, I was able to speak at a couple of presentations of cheques. I don't mind; I agree with the member that it is nice that the MPP of the riding is going to be at the announcement. I think that's important. We're all trying to create jobs in Ontario.

The EODF was very positive. There are really good results. We weren't putting in big dollars; I think the average was that 11% of the dollars that went in were provincial, so there had to be a really good plan there. What they were looking at were winners that had good ideas that could move forward and get them in place. I ran a business for 35 years. We had some good ideas and some things to do, but it was always that you're risking your own money. You were making good money in your business, but to risk new money to create jobs—the incentive was never there. This puts that incentive there to create jobs for people that are winners, that know how to run companies, that are providing jobs and that want to provide more.

I think that certainly the experience of the fund in eastern Ontario—it was a good program. Only two of the 113 projects were not successful. That's a 98% success rate. They were good projects. You only had to go to the projects and see them under way to know that we were doing right thing.

There's many other things that could be done. There are improvements that may have been brought in your case. This is a good program. I'm glad to see it go into southwestern Ontario and eastern Ontario, including Ottawa–Orléans.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Member for Elgin–Middlesex–London.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'm pleased to comment on the words spoken by the member from Trinity–Spadina. It was great. We heard NDP philosophy. We heard, "Let's beat up the federal government." We heard about the 1% and 99%. We heard about cutting social programs, which is in this budget that they're supporting. So I don't know where he is on that.

I take exception to the point that he's vilifying corporations. They like to paint this picture that corporations are these great big hulking menaces that employ hundreds of thousands around the world. My business is a corporation; I'm incorporated and I employ 60 people. I can't think there's one making minimum wage, and 100% of the money that we make in our pharmacy stays in Canada, stays in Ontario and stays in our riding. So let's be fair to corporations across Ontario. A lot of small businesses are corporations. You can't vilify them, because they're what's going to bring the economy back.

Just a few comments on Bill 11, I guess proportionate to the time of the hour that he took. Basically, let's stop the spin. There's no money for this program. Tax cuts will benefit everybody, instead of a few. You don't really need the legislation to have the southwest fund. You didn't do it for the eastern fund. If you really wanted to get it out, you would have done it back in November. We need to get government out of the way of businesses and let them create the jobs and get our economy rolling back. Thank you for your words.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Member for Davenport.

Mr. Jonah Schein: I'm pleased to stand and speak on behalf of the riding of Davenport in Toronto.

For the viewers at home, it's almost 10 after 3 now on June 11, 2012, which is noteworthy, as my colleague pointed out. Because it's 2012, and as my colleague from Trinity-Spadina was saying, it has been almost 20 years—more than 20 years—with the exact same strategy here from both the Liberals and Conservatives, the strategy of cutting taxes for the biggest corporations.

We see that in this province things have not gotten better. We have not attracted investment. We have worse social programs than 20 years ago and we don't have the resources to pay for them. That's why I think we desperately need a jobs strategy. There's no doubt about that. We need to put people back to work in this province, but we can't continue down the same path that we've been going in. We need Bill 11. We need to bring it to committee. We need to make this Parliament work.

I think that Bill 11 would be greatly improved with the support of the NDP. We have brought some ideas forward. We believe that we should support folks who are actually going to create a job in this province; we shouldn't just allow people to give away tax dollars and move their companies abroad. I think that's a sensible idea. That's a balanced approach and something that this Parliament desperately needs.

What we've seen from the government's perspective is a job creation strategy that's like this: You build a gas-powered plant, and then you tear it down. That creates, in the minds of the government, maybe, twice as many jobs. You build a diesel train in my riding only to tear it down in favour of an electric train. Again, that's the idea of creating a job. You lure away an opposite member of Parliament and give them a job with WSIB. That creates one full-time job.

This is not the approach that works for this province. We need a reasonable approach that's going to support people who actually create jobs in Ontario. I would encourage that we pass this, we bring it to committee and we allow some reasonable, sensible folks here—

Interjection.

Mr. Jonah Schein: To pass it, but to amend it to make it work and make sure that we can put people back to work in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

1510

Mr. Grant Crack: It's a pleasure again to rise. I know that the member from Trinity-Spadina is receiving a lot of attention here, but I'd just like to point out one of the points that he made with reference to economic development in Ontario being very important and that it's important that the government also supports economic development.

It boggles my mind, Speaker, when I hear members of the opposition criticize our initiatives, our government policies when it comes to job creation, but at the same time, as the member from Trinity-Spadina said, these members should be there in attendance at any future announcements. I just can't understand how you would want to attend an event with a fund supporting a business in your local community when you don't support it yourself. I'm not that kind of politician. I'm going to support this bill. I think it's great.

We listened to our Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. They made it clear they wanted a job creation program. We expanded it into southwest Ontario, and I know that the mayors in those regions are going to enjoy the benefits of seeing their residents employed.

I'd like to say that that \$53.5 million has leveraged \$493 million in investment. That's an 8 to 1 ratio in creating or retaining jobs in eastern Ontario. That's 12,000 jobs. The fund is equally spread out to support over 13 sectors and 13 counties across eastern Ontario. I think that is fairly significant.

So, in closing, I'm glad that this is coming forward. It's about time. We need to get our people back to work. We need to support our manufacturing sectors. We need to support smaller business as well. I look forward to seeing third reading and passage of this bill tomorrow.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you. That concludes the time for questions and comments. We return to the member for Trinity-Spadina, who has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Speaker. I thank all the speakers.

I just want to comment to my friend from Elgin-Middlesex-London. I don't know: Did I vilify the corporations? I don't think I did that. All I'm saying is that we have been giving them corporate tax cuts for the last 20 years, and instead of investing in creating jobs or in productivity, they simply sack away the dollars and just wait for an opportune moment. Did I vilify them? I'm just saying, when we help them in the way that we have been doing, please, help create jobs.

Don't tell me you're incorporated too and all the others are incorporated. I understand that. You know how many of my constituents want to incorporate so they can get a tax break? So many individuals say, "I want to incorporate too so I can get my tax benefit." "What about me?" they're saying.

Mr. Bill Walker: Is that legal?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's legal. We should all incorporate and we should all get a tax break.

Anyway, I wasn't vilifying the corporations. All I'm saying is, there should be corporate pride in Canada and in Ontario. When they get a tax break, they should feel honour-bound to create jobs in this province. Is that vilifying them? No. It's saying they should be good corporate citizens who have a responsibility to the people of Ontario and Canada. When we give them tax breaks, which we have been doing for so long, and we don't see the jobs, then we have to question our policies and we have to question the private sector.

When the member from Elgin-Middlesex says there's no money for this program, the money's already there. It's just been offset. It's been taken from one to the other. But if it helps some people, that's okay. We had members from Durham and Muskoka-Haliburton saying, "Where's our share?" And they don't vote NDP. Most of them are Conservatives up there. I happen to agree with them. But they weren't, obviously, part of this—they were outside of the boundary, so we couldn't help them. Too bad.

This is a nice initiative. We should support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Mario Sergio): Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Leal: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm really delighted to be here this afternoon to speak at third reading debate on Bill 11.

Just to give a bit of background—I wish there were some more members from eastern Ontario here in the House this afternoon, because I could give you a detailed background on how the eastern Ontario development fund got established. For many years, economic development officers in eastern Ontario, and indeed the wardens in eastern Ontario, would be attending AMO meetings with their colleagues, particularly from northern Ontario. When they attended those AMO meetings, they would hear at length the value of the northern Ontario heritage fund. That fund, set up with a board of directors, was established several governments ago—

Mr. Bill Mauro: David Peterson.

Mr. Jeff Leal: —by David Peterson, my friend from Thunder Bay—Atikokan tells me—to make a separate board, an arm's-length board, to make strategic investments into business entities and activities in northern Ontario. As I said, for the longest time, my colleagues in eastern Ontario were looking at that, economic development officers, and they said, "Let's look at the creation of such a fund in eastern Ontario."

Prior to the 2007 election, my former colleague Lou Rinaldi, the member from Northumberland—Quinte West, convened a meeting of the wardens in eastern Ontario and, indeed, all the economic development officers in eastern Ontario, to come up with a platform plank, a policy. That is the genesis of the eastern Ontario development fund. It had input from the grassroots, so this was a grassroots initiative to make the EODF come alive, part of our platform commitment in 2007, which we then brought into being after the election of 2007. A number of people in an elected capacity, and indeed, develop-

ment officers, and Mr. Rinaldi himself, deserve a tremendous amount of credit for moving this forward.

My warden of Peterborough county is the past chair of the eastern Ontario wardens' conference, J. Murray Jones, who is also the mayor of the wonderful municipality, the township of Douro-Dummer. In fact, I was in his municipality just yesterday for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Father Bernard Heffernan. Warden Jones and I had a great discussion yesterday. His first question to me was, after we concluded the celebration, "Jeff, where is Bill 11? I and my colleagues in eastern Ontario want Bill 11 passed."

I said, "Mr. Warden, I'll have the privilege of speaking to this bill on Monday. We're looking forward to that kind of comradeship from the official opposition, and indeed the third party, to see if we can get Bill 11 established."

One might ask, why do we want the EODF enshrined in legislation? This was the request of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, who want to see this legislation enshrined so that somewhere down the line, in the future, if the government of the day wanted to change the EODF, they would have to come back to the House to get those changes made, which I think is a great idea.

We have been extremely successful in the riding of Peterborough with EODF funding, and I just want to go through a list here this afternoon, because these are all exemplary, well-run, well-managed, innovative companies.

First of all, I want to talk about Stickling's Bakery. Stickling's Bakery is a very innovative organization. They've brought new machinery and new processes, and developed a variety of baked products that they distribute. They have niche markets all across the province of Ontario. They were able to use the EODF grant money to buy new equipment, to make sure that they could exploit these new niche markets right across the province of Ontario for unique baked goods. I invite anybody coming to the Peterborough area to drop by the Stickling's store and sample some of their wonderful products.

The next one I want to talk about is Safran Electronics. Safran Electronics is a multinational company with a branch located in Peterborough. They're part of the wider Safran umbrella. They also used their EODF grant money to purchase new machinery, again for innovative processes. Most members of this House would be familiar with the black boxes that are in all of our large commercial planes that fly internationally. Safran builds the majority of the component parts that are in those black boxes and that, of course, are used by all the major aircraft manufacturers throughout the world. Indeed, through the money they got through EODF, they developed the technology for the second generation of black boxes that are used by aviation companies throughout the world.

Another company that I'm very proud of and that received money through the EODF is Central Smith ice cream. They're located on the road between Fowlers Corners and Bridgenorth, Ontario.

They're very involved in manufacturing ice cream for commercial and industrial users. For example, members would be familiar—seeing Sysco Food Services trucks on our highways. Central Smith produces the ice cream that is purchased by the Sysco food group and the Gordon food group and then provided for institutional users right across the province of Ontario—indeed, a company that used EODF money for innovation, again, to further their market reach and create new jobs.

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The next one that received two grants under the EODF—McCloskey Brothers. McCloskey Brothers is a very interesting company. They're located on Highway 28 in the eastern part of Peterborough. They build trommel equipment that is used by the mining industry, by the aggregate industry. In fact, the money they got through the EODF allowed them to buy new equipment and to actually repatriate work that was formerly being done in Ireland, bringing that back to Ontario and using Ontario as their export platform for markets right around the world. That's so important.

The next company I want to talk about is Drain Brothers. Drain Brothers is a family-owned company, headquartered in Norwood, Ontario, again in the eastern part of Peterborough riding. Drain Brothers are in the aggregate business, and just recently, through the EODF grant money, they bought new technology to be used in processing aggregate. They've entered into a partnership with Iko. Many members of this House will know that Iko is probably one of the largest manufacturers of roofing products, shingles, in the world. They are using the aggregate that's being processed by Drain Brothers in Havelock, Ontario, to produce for Iko a new brand of shingle that has a longer shelf life. Most of us know that we replace a roof every 15, 20, 25 years, but with this new aggregate that they're mining in Havelock, Ontario—put through the processes, through the technology they have there, and then shipped to Iko, which has an operation in Marlborough, Ontario, I believe. It is then put into shingles which are exported right around the world.

The next company I want to talk about that received EODF grant money is Siemens. Many members of this House will know about Siemens. It's a multinational company. We're very pleased that they employ 400 people in manufacturing in my riding. Peterborough is their centre for the manufacture of water and waste water treatment technology. They also have a training centre at their location in Peterborough where they bring municipal staff from all over Canada. Those municipalities that purchase Siemens equipment for water and waste water treatment bring them all to Peterborough to do the training on Siemens equipment. It has been a great partnership. It's one of the most dynamic manufacturing centres that I've witnessed in a long, long time. I invite members opposite to make the trip to Peterborough. I'd love to take them to Siemens, because one of the areas that we all know that Ontario has great expertise in is in the area of water and waste water treatment systems,

allowing us to use the opportunities in Peterborough as an export platform.

Next, I want to get to Flying Colours. Flying Colours is a very interesting company. My friend the member from York Centre, Mr. Kwinter, is very familiar with Flying Colours. Over the years, the member from York Centre has been involved in the entities that own Flying Colours in a very positive way. Just to give you the Reader's Digest version, Mr. Speaker, Flying Colours takes executive jets, whether brand new executive jets from Bombardier—or they refurbish used executive jets. They have an operation in Peterborough and an operation in St. Louis, Missouri. What they do, on an international basis, is they take brand new Bombardier executive jets and retrofit them, reconfigure them to client needs, or they take executive jets that have a few miles on them, bring them to Peterborough, and again they're refitted for new uses. The last time I was down at Flying Colours, a short time ago, they were doing a new Bombardier jet for the head of the Bank of China. It was a \$14-million retrofit of an executive jet. They were also, at the same time, doing an executive jet for one of the leading financial institutions from India—again, a \$14-million retrofit. So \$28 million in two jets done right in Peterborough. The EODF allowed Flying Colours to acquire the technology needed to make that happen.

We also have a couple of other EODF grants pending for companies in the not-too-distant future, so we look forward to doing those.

Mr. Speaker, I have a speech here. I want to make reference to it, if I can grab it; just bear with me for a moment. It was a speech that was delivered a short time ago by Mark Carney, the governor of the Bank of Canada. He actually delivered it in Waterloo on April 2, 2012. It was the 100th anniversary of the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce. One of the things that he commented on—and I just want to make reference to his speech, because I think it's relevant to the investments we're making through the EODF to enhance competitiveness and to allow companies to export further.

He said, "As I alluded to earlier, among the most striking features of the recent Canadian recession was the performance of exports.

"During the most intense phase of the great recession—a nine-month period beginning in the fall of 2008—the level of Canadian exports plunged more than 16%, or more than twice the total drop during the previous two" recessionary "cycles. By the end of last year, exports still remained roughly 8% below their pre-recession peak."

He goes on in the speech to talk about why we need here in Ontario, on a strategic basis, to invest in those companies, to acquire that new machinery, to improve their productivity and take advantage of export markets.

He goes on to say that one of the structural weaknesses not only of Ontario but of Canada, of course, is our significant dependence on the United States. In his speech, he goes to great lengths to say that even though

the United States is on the road to recovery, their full capacity, in terms of recovery, is going to be less than other recoveries, as we have gone through other recessionary cycles in the past. What he is saying, in a nutshell, is that we have to take every opportunity here in Ontario and Canada to make sure that we work with our businesses so they're prepared to have export-oriented products and diversify our trade as much as possible away from the United States.

He said that where Canada and Ontario need to be is to get into export markets that are some of the fastest-growing in the world. Obviously, he talks about China and India, but he goes on at great lengths to describe the emerging markets such as Chile, Argentina and Brazil. He says it's critically important, with the technology and products that Ontario and Canada have to offer, to make sure that we become major players in those particular markets.

He goes on to say in his speech that what Ontario manufacturers need to do is retool as quickly as possible, and I can't think of a better way, through the southwestern Ontario development fund and indeed the eastern Ontario development fund, to make those key investments into areas to allow our manufacturers to retool as quickly as possible, to improve their productivity and to make sure that they continue to be very, very productive.

To date, I just want to look at the success, a quick reference, of the eastern Ontario development fund. Some 113 products have been approved of 132 applications, an application success rate of over 86%. Mr. Speaker, when I was in elementary, secondary and university, 86% would be a great passing grade, and I think you would also concede that point in terms of a wonderful passing grade.

Only two of the 113 projects have not been successful: a program success rate of over 98%. Some \$53.5 million has leveraged over \$493 million, an investment ratio of eight to one, creating or retaining over 12,000 jobs in eastern Ontario and critical jobs right in the riding of Peterborough.

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This fund has spread over and has the support of over 13 sectors in 13 counties across eastern Ontario. Indeed, we even asked a third party. I always believe there's great merit in asking a third party to look at government programs. KPMG, one of the most widely respected international accounting firms, indicated that the eastern Ontario development fund is exceeding job growth targets and that those are sustainable jobs and not just project-related. There we go: We have a third party. KPMG has come in, they've looked at the eastern Ontario development fund and they've indicated that it is given a five-star rating in terms of a government program. I certainly concur with what KPMG has said about the eastern Ontario development fund.

As I said, I've talked extensively with economic development officers in the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. They're telling everybody, "You talk to your friends across the aisle." I always talk to my friends

across the aisle. I believe in reaching across the aisle to have a consensus on any given day so we can move Ontario forward together, which I think is the way to go.

I think that the southwestern Ontario development fund and the eastern Ontario development fund are examples of strategically designed programs, approaches, that will certainly make a difference. I know we have a programming motion in place, but I'm hoping we can add Bill 11. This would be a great passage of a bill. I know it would be well received by my friends in the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. It would be well received by development officers in eastern Ontario. They want us to get on with this bill. They want it to get in place to help those businesses that need this help so we can indeed move forward together.

We should all take an opportunity. I could mention companies in Port Hope, in Cobourg, in Belleville, in Kingston, in Alexandria—you name it. Every community in the 13 counties in eastern Ontario have been helped by EODF. It's very important. Last Wednesday, I had the opportunity to chat with a former member from eastern Ontario, a good friend of us all: Norm Sterling. I know that if Norm were in this House this afternoon, he would be standing in his place and being one of the number one cheerleaders for getting the EODF enshrined. After almost 35 years in this House, I think Norm's philosophy should be echoed here today and that we should get on with the passage of this bill.

Our other good friend, Mr. Speaker—you know him well. He's now in the red chamber in Ottawa: Senator Bob Runciman. I know that Bob was a champion out of Brockville, Ontario, for great things like the EODF. If he were with us today—I know he's with us today in spirit—he would be standing up to say, "Look, folks, we've got to get the EODF enshrined." I know he would say it. I'd love to call him in Ottawa today. I don't have his phone number, but I know he's with us.

I think we all have to get together. This is a great bill. We've got to get it passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's always a pleasure to follow my colleague from across the floor from Peterborough.

A couple of points I'd just like to raise, having listened to the debate from both Mr. Marchese from my NDP colleagues to the left and Mr. Leal: If a business has a viable idea, why can they not go to a bank that is established to actually lend funds? It happens all over the world, I'm told. Why do they feel that they have to come back to the government to always ask for money from the government and the general taxpayer to fund something? If it's a viable, feasible, sound business plan, that's the whole spirit of entrepreneurialism. That's what our country and our province was founded on.

Why do we need grants, Mr. Speaker? We have created an environment whereby it is expected that grants are the only way certain businesses will grow. That's not the environment we need. That's not the way we need to move forward, Mr. Speaker.

Our party fundamentally believes it's our job to set the framework to provide a good environment for businesses to thrive and grow, and get out of the way. We have private lending institutions that are quite happy to go out and lend money to viable, productive businesses. That's where they should be going, particularly in a case when we're in debt—\$15 billion just this year and moving towards \$411 billion.

If the party opposite would put as much effort into getting the red tape, the bureaucracy, out of the way, we would be further ahead. I have a number of businesses in my constituency that are saying, "They're going to put me out of business." I'm bringing issues forward every day that are impeding their ability to do their job and keep their people employed.

I hear nothing about it in this House, and yet we're spending time in a bill that, in my mind, doesn't even need to be here. When they did the eastern Ontario development fund—before my time—I'm told they did it without creating a bill. They just put it through, and everybody everyone accepted it and said, fine, there it goes.

This is nothing more than a wedge tactic. It's gamesmanship. Our province is in serious fiscal challenges. We cannot accept it. We need to create jobs. We need to cut spending. We need to reduce the deficit. This bill will not do any of that, and therefore we will not support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member from Trinity–Spadina.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Just as an argument to make against the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound—

Mr. Bill Walker: Now, be nice.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, because your point is, if you've got a good idea, it's viable, it's feasible, blah, blah, then you go to the bank and get your money. That's the way you made the argument. The problem is that banks are not lending to small business as much as they should. So some small businesses get some support, but banks have been very risk-averse for quite a long time. So good ideas, viable ideas, feasible ideas haven't been working. I'm waiting for a Conservative initiative that says, how do we make the banks give more support to those who are creating the jobs?

Until we do that, we as a government have a role to play in giving out grants and loans. The southwestern development fund will have a loan component, not just grants, so we need that. It will also involve the non-profit sector, including cities and not just private sector folks. It has been expanded somewhat.

But I have a question for the member from Peterborough. You didn't once mention the amendments the NDP made. Do you like them? Do you support them? Do you like the idea of making sure that funding announcements become less partisan and guarantee that the local MPPs get invited? Did you support the idea of setting up an independent corporation with a board of directors drawn from the southwestern and eastern Ontario regions, where they are the ones that make the decision, as opposed to the minister and/or someone connected to

the minister that makes those decisions? Do you support the idea of local advisory committees? Do you support greater accountability measures that we put in the bill? It would be good if you spoke to that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I want to thank the member from Peterborough for his great remarks.

I do also want to mention to the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound the same argument that was just made against what you said. Do you think the banks will lend money to everybody? You should come up to northern Ontario and see what happens when a small business person tries to get money from the banks. It very clearly articulates the needs for these funds because you, I must say with respect, simply don't understand the reality in northern Ontario.

Now, Speaker, the best example I can give you of why funds are important and why they work is the northern Ontario heritage fund, a fund established by a Liberal government in the late 1980s, which, unfortunately, had morphed into being used for different things under a previous administration. We took the money, we re-oriented the programming, and we have been supporting many small, private businesses in northern Ontario now, private sector investment, private sector job creation for one of the very fundamental reasons: that it's hard for these businesses to get access to capital. Many of them are very, very successful. I can give an example like the member from Peterborough did: One company in my riding, Actlabs, received northern Ontario heritage fund money. When we stepped in to help them, they were in the teens, a very relatively small company. That business in Thunder Bay now is employing somewhere between 100 and 150 people, doing mining-related work. They got their seed money from the northern Ontario heritage fund. They started, but we supported it.

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We're not picking winners and losers. There's a board of directors that makes the choice, and then Deloitte and Touche steps in and does a third party review on their business case to make sure they are sustainable and they're going to make it. So this isn't about the government picking winners and losers. This is about a very, very supportable, accommodating use of taxpayers' money to create private sector jobs in northern Ontario.

I would suspect that the EODF that's being referenced by my good friend from Peterborough here today will be just as successful as the northern Ontario heritage fund in Thunder Bay and northern Ontario, which we've increased from \$60 million to \$100 million annually.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: It's interesting to hear the member opposite from Peterborough talk about 2007. I sat on the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus in 2006, when Bob Sweet, our former chair, requested the government to come out, through much lobbying. We spent a significant amount of feed money from the 14 counties to do the

studies that showed the reason for this fund that was for eastern Ontario. It was put in place without legislation, as was said here.

This is just turning this into politics. We're talking about an area where the assessment is less than half of what it is in western Ontario. We're talking about the reason why they needed help in eastern Ontario. Now you're taking this money and you're taking it away from the reason why it was placed there.

Again, it's strictly for politics, because this fund was created without legislation. It was put in place because of pressure the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus put on the government. From that time, it certainly wasn't an initiative of the government. Actually, at ROMA that year the government was embarrassed by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. They'd put a lot of pressure because they were looking at cutting back some of the funding.

To look back just over the last month, they take much credit for this fund. In fact, on May 2, they took credit for the Canadian Bio Pellet plant that was so successful under this plan. But in actual fact, the plant never occurred. The funding never went to them. So I just wonder about some of the other successes they're talking about. This is a project that actually didn't happen.

If you go back to the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, they met with us this year during ROMA. They're still talking about the need for help in eastern Ontario. I wish this government would stop playing politics and go back to helping the people in Ontario that need it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes the time for questions and comments. I return to the member for Peterborough for his reply.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I certainly appreciated the comments from the members for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Trinity–Spadina, Thunder Bay–Atikokan and Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

To my friend from Trinity–Spadina, yes, I support the bill as amended. I think the amendments make it a much better, much more transparent and stronger bill.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker. If I'm in a riding that's held by an opposition member, I always make sure that the opposition member is called to be there. That is the appropriate, polite and civil thing to do. In fact, about a month ago, I had a tourism announcement with my good friend from Prince Edward–Hastings. I made sure that when I arrived I sought out the member for Prince Edward–Hastings to make sure he was standing right beside me on the platform. Indeed, when I finished my comments, I made reference to the member from Prince Edward–Hastings to make sure that he got the opportunity to speak. It was a great day in Stirling, Ontario—the home of Rob Ray, by the way, a famous National Hockey League player.

That is the standard that I live by.

Interestingly enough, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry is trying to rewrite history a little bit here. I always tell people, "You shouldn't try to

rewrite history when people who were part of that history are still alive to provide witness to that history." He is stretching it a bit here. I was at those meetings to create the EODF. I know exactly what the eastern Ontario wardens said, because my former warden was chair of the eastern Ontario wardens' conference. I know exactly what J. Murray Jones said, and it's not quite the same story that my good friend from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry shared with us this afternoon. But I'll get another moment in the future to talk about that.

The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus wants this legislation enshrined. It needs to be done. Let's vote for Bill 11.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's my pleasure to address this third reading of Bill 11. To be clear to the folks here today and to those perhaps watching from home, I'll be voting against this bill. But I'm glad to have the opportunity to state my reasonings for voting against it, as I have many times before, because my constituents deserve to know why, as do the families of Ontario.

I think it's clear by the mere introduction of this bill that the government has lost the plot on the problems facing Ontario. I've said it before many times and I'll say it again here: The days of the Premier and his finance minister simply throwing money at Ontario's challenges are over. Quite frankly, it never should have gotten this far. They promised no tax hikes, but tax hikes are exactly what we got year after year. They promised a plan for eliminating the deficit, yet they offer up a budget that increases spending in over half of the government's ministries and keeps us on a path to a \$30-billion deficit. They promised to protect Ontario families from labour strikes in the classroom and the waiting room, vilifying the other parties in the process, yet their ineptitude has led to gridlock and rising emotions on both fronts. So when this government says that Bill 11 will create jobs across Ontario only if we shove millions more in taxpayers' dollars out the door, I'm not inclined to take their word for it.

Consider this: Would you buy a car strictly based on colour, ignoring all the key attributes that make that car run? The answer, I suspect, is no. I certainly wouldn't, and I don't think the folks back in Chatham–Kent–Essex would either. Instead, would you base your decision on the things that matter most, the things that lead to the results you seek, things like the ability to purchase? Can I afford this car right now? How will this affect my finances three, five and 10 years from now? What's under the hood? Is this car actually going to get me from point A to point B? Am I getting value for what I'm paying? Does it have a safety guarantee? Am I buying it from a reputable dealership?

Here we have a bill introduced by the member from Scarborough Centre. On the surface, sure, it looks great—a southwest economic development fund that will deliver tens of millions of taxpayers' dollars. The Liberal government has positioned it as a saving grace for

southwestern Ontario, with the money flowing into Chatham–Kent–Essex, Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, Sarnia–Lambton, Elgin–Middlesex–London and even Perth–Wellington. But the fact is, all this government is selling is the colour of the car without even looking under the hood. If they were being honest with the people of Ontario, they would admit that they've put our province on a bumpy road, and what's under the hood is crucial, more now than ever before.

First, let's consider the affordability and our ability to hand out money. The Liberal government has more than doubled our provincial debt. They are on their way to tripling it. It took 23 Premiers and 136 years to build our first debt load. Even after increasing the number twofold, this government wants us to believe that they're competent money managers. Well, we on this side of the House pride ourselves on being the wallet watchers on behalf of Ontario families. This government, on the other hand, is set to give away \$20 million every year in the hopes that it will show dividends. It's a direction without a plan, but I'll get to that in just a moment.

I'd like to know how this government can justify putting us on a path to a \$411-billion debt, yet refuse to turn off the taps. Make no mistake about this: This bill would promote \$80 million in new spending—I'll repeat that—\$80 million in new spending at a time when Ontario's fiscal instability has prompted job losses as we've seen across the province. But let's take a deeper look at the bill.

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I sincerely hope that the member from Scarborough Centre is watching my presentation from home, because he's not here today. I also hope that our local municipal leaders in southwestern Ontario, some who I know support this bill, are watching, because I want to make this case to them as well. Gentlemen, as deputy labour critic, I hold your opinions in the highest regard, but I do not support them. I was born and raised in southwestern Ontario. I believe, as many others do, that there's a better way to get our communities back on their feet, other than by throwing more money at the problem.

I've been working hard to represent my riding amongst the business leaders I interact with every day at Queen's Park. Chatham–Kent–Essex is still home to some of the hardest-working people in the nation. I believe we can attract companies to come back to our area and set the proper conditions for success for home-grown businesses, but I don't believe handing out money at a time when we can't afford it, at a time when the bank is empty, is the right move. I say this coming from a riding that has been particularly hit hard.

I don't need the finance minister to stand across the aisle and tell me how Chatham-Kent is hurting. I'm there every chance I get, meeting the folks at my constituency office and talking to small business owners who have seen Ontario decline more rapidly over the last eight years than ever before in their lifetime.

This government allowed over 300,000 manufacturing jobs to evaporate in Ontario. I can't tell you how badly

my riding was hit when that happened. While this government spent the province into oblivion, Chatham–Kent–Essex has lost over 10,000 jobs since 2003—incidentally, the year this government came to power.

I need this government to understand what has happened to my riding while they were busy throwing taxpayer dollars into the wind. I'm going to remind them of some of the businesses that have closed since they took over: Navistar, KS Centoco, Oxford Automotive, Fleetwood Metal, OES in Blenheim, Energy Automotive, Siemens VDO, ArvinMeritor, Daymond Aluminum, Southwest Regional Centre, Great Lakes Fish in Wheatley, Penske Logistics—and the list continues. Over 150 businesses have closed since 2003.

Our first priority should be setting the conditions for success, not throwing money at our problems. We must push for lower taxes on our businesses, at rates that allow them to reinvest in their businesses, and not fork over weighty cheques to subsidize the government's appetite for spending.

We must push for more affordable energy pricing, not levy thousands of dollars in global adjustment fees for manufacturing plants that employ hundreds. We've seen the devastation that approach has certainly had in northern Ontario, and we don't want it in southern Ontario, too.

We need to get our government out of the day-to-day operations of running a business. That concept may sound foreign to the members on the opposite side of the House, but business owners understand that that means getting crippling red tape under control. Nearly 400,000 pieces of regulation exist in this province, and there is no plan to deal with it in a way that makes sense for business.

That is what we've been doing; that's what I've been doing. It's playing the long game. Is it playing the long game? My answer to that is yes, it is. Does it forgo expensive, short-term, unstable solutions in favour of rebuilding our economy for the next generation? Yes, it does. I will not apologize for refusing to support a do-nothing bill that simply throws away tens of millions of dollars that we don't have in favour of a plan that provides absolutely no guarantee of success.

The members opposite have delighted in using Bill 11 to make myself and my colleagues appear out of touch. But the truth is, this Liberal government is nowhere to be found when it comes time to deliver the goods and actually explain how their scheme is going to work.

For example, what are the boundaries of the development fund? Given that the vast majority of the funds for the similar eastern Ontario development fund found their way into Liberal-friendly ridings, I'm not entirely confident that the families of southwestern Ontario are going to get the results they're paying for. My best guess: Everything west of Toronto, including Niagara Falls and Hamilton, through to Windsor, will encompass the boundaries of the southwest economic development fund. So, no established boundaries yet. I guess we'll just have to wait and see, until it comes time to write the cheque.

There's been no criteria established as to how businesses will be selected for funding. What must their business plan include? How many stable, permanent jobs do they anticipate? Given this government's failure to prop up WindTronics in Windsor at a taxpayer cost of \$2.7 million, I don't trust them to make the savvy business decisions necessary to bring growth to southwestern Ontario once more. I feel like the folks at WindTronics, who were promised a bright future by this government only to be met with Liberal excuses when their jobs evaporated. How many more broken promises must we accept before we get an admission from this government that their plans aren't working.

Look, I have a saying that has been heard in this Legislature several times over the past several months: "When you mess up, fess up." Your plans have messed up.

There's no solid criteria for how much each company would receive, either. What percentage of investment must be made available in order for a successful business? Given this government's reluctance to consider proper consultations on any file, I don't suspect the disbursal of money will be performed with respect for the taxpayer in mind.

Finally, government, please, show us the criteria for accountability. This is perhaps the most troubling omission of all, that a government in the middle of a fiasco at Ornge, which some experts estimate could be a billion-dollar scandal, could ask Ontarians to fork over tens of millions without any guarantee of best practices is simply astounding to me. What I don't want is to be here in the fall asking the Minister of Economic Development to resign because he couldn't follow the money that was being squandered to Liberal insiders. I don't think he wants that either. That's why we have asked, over and over, for details. Don't sell us the colour of the car; show us what's under the hood.

Ontario families and workers are tired. They're tired of their government having to be reminded that it's tax dollars they're playing with, not free money. They're tired of placing their hope in a Liberal government to responsibly disburse funds as they're needed, only to watch millions be thrown out the window in yet another scandal, yet another lawsuit.

I say to the member from Scarborough Centre, I've worked in the private business sector for over 40 years. I've run a successful training and development company on my own. I know that businesses want a hand up, not a handout.

A few months ago, I spoke in the House about the importance of determining between a want and a need. This government has increased spending by \$20 billion since the recession, and almost \$2 billion since this do-nothing budget was tabled. So forgive me if I assume that the lessons about wants and needs, which we have been trying every day to make them understand, have been ignored.

The Liberal government has had every opportunity, not just this year but over eight years, to implement the

changes that would have helped lift up southwestern Ontario. The workers are strong and ready to hit the ground running, the business owners are experts at creating jobs and keeping money in the community, but what holds them back is this government's refusal to bring forward any proposal that doesn't involve spending taxpayers' money in massive amounts. I would call it inaction, but sadly, it's action of the worst kind. Speaker, it's reckless, costly and ultimately doomed to fail. Meanwhile, southern Ontario waits.

They've sent a message to this government in the last election to stop providing handouts and instead get back to work. Do something; don't just pay for something. There are smart people in this Legislature with fresh ideas that do matter. No more picking winners and losers in the marketplace; we have seen that too many times: \$2.7 million here for a failed wind turbine industry in Windsor, and funding taken away from horse racing, an industry that employed thousands. This government has never proven itself capable of picking successful businesses with any regularity. As such, they're gambling with taxpayer money.

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Speaker, allow me to summarize: I cannot and will not support Bill 11 because, point number 1, the government does not have the money to spend. You're talking about spending new money that you don't have, and if it did, this government has not: (a) identified the real geographic boundaries of the bill; (b) provided us with solid criteria for how companies will be selected; (c) provided us with criteria for determining how much money a company would receive; or (d) shown us the accountability factors that need to be put in place, the terms and conditions to ensure a company doesn't simply shut down or move within a specific time period after receiving government money—oh, no, I should say "taxpayer money."

No one, including those in this Legislature and our municipal leaders, should support this bill without first finding out the answers to the above questions.

I want to again thank the member from Scarborough Centre for the submission of this bill, but I cannot support Bill 11 at this time; nor should anyone else.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm happy to stand today and speak to some of the comments that I've heard from the member of Chatham-Kent-Essex.

We were all elected here to a minority government, and a minority government gives us a chance to work together. It has been many, many years since this Legislature has seen a minority government, and we need to make sure that we're putting that to good use. That's what New Democrats plan on doing.

This is now before us in third reading. When it was at committee, we put forward strong amendments, and they were based on things that we had been campaigning on. We want to make sure that there are strings attached to money when we're helping corporations, making sure that we are giving our people jobs and making sure that

the strings are attached to those jobs to ensure that they're there at the end of the day and that corporations just can't get up and walk away with our money.

I heard the member say that money was being put into this programming, but when I'm looking here, I'm seeing that no new money is being put into this. It's coming from the strategic jobs and investment fund. So it's money being moved around to ensure that people in different parts of the province do have jobs. I know that in my community of Hamilton Mountain we're striving and struggling to get new jobs there in the community.

I think voting against this bill would be the wrong thing to do. I will be supporting this bill, in hopes that we are looking at new, fresh ideas, that that we are doing something different and that we can put the people of Ontario back to work.

He mentioned the horse racing people and the jobs that have been lost in that industry. I'm sure these people would love to see investments into new jobs coming forward for them in such desperate times.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jeff Leal: I was here for 95% of the speech from the member of Chatham–Kent–Essex. I hope he brings in a private member's bill to actually make the riding Chatham-Kent-Leamington, which actually reflects the geography of the area.

It's interesting. I share with him the need for accountability. If you look at section 3.1 of Bill 11—amendments put forward, I assume, by the opposition third party—it says:

“The board of directors shall establish a local advisory committee and appoint its members. The composition of the committee must reflect sectoral and subregional interests within southeastern or southwestern Ontario, as the case may be....

“Within 90 days after the end of every fiscal year, each corporation shall give the minister an annual report on its affairs during the fiscal year, and the report must include the audited financial statements of the corporation....

“The minister shall lay the report before the assembly at the earliest reasonable opportunity....

“The minister shall ensure that guidelines for each program are available to the public, setting out the performance standards to be satisfied by participants in the program with respect to the creation of jobs and other economic development targets”—very important. The mayor of Chatham, Randy Hope, I think would be very supportive of getting this program in place.

Mr. Speaker, last Friday a number of my Conservatives friends were at the Kawartha Golf and Country Club in Peterborough, a beautiful golf course. Instead of being at the golf course on Friday, they should have come with me. I would have given them, free of charge, a tour of a number of companies in Peterborough that received EODF grants: Stickling's Bakery, Safran Electronics, Central Smith ice cream, McCloskey Brothers, Drain Brothers, Siemens and Flying Colours. They could

have come to see where the real work is going on in the province of Ontario—those men and women creating value-added wealth for this community—instead of playing golf last Friday. And my insider told me that the member for Prince Edward–Hastings left the meeting early.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to follow my colleague from Chatham–Kent–Essex. I think he brought a lot of good points, a lot of solid, factual points to bear on why we won't support this.

One of the key things he said was about debt and spending money they do not have. We're \$15.3 billion in the hole; there's no debating that. That's where we're at. I ask the question, am I being a good parent if I try to appease my children by giving them funds I don't have today, while knowing full well that I am saddling them and their children, probably, with a hole of debt that they may never dig out of? Speaker, that's not my way of going forward.

He talked a little bit about it being a wedge issue. I will go on record here so as to refute that wedge issue; that I'll work and I'll fight as hard as anyone in this Legislature for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound to get their fair share, if the Liberals go ahead and put more funds in—funds they don't have. Again, we need to ensure that we're here representing the hard-working, taxpaying people of Ontario. We shouldn't be trying to buy our way; we shouldn't be trying to put wedge issues in front when we're in such dire economic situations.

We need, as my colleague pointed out, to live within our means, not spend money that we do not have and saddle our kids. We're staring a \$15.3-billion deficit and a \$411-billion debt in the face.

A couple of colleagues from the Liberals and the NDP said that the banks aren't willing to lend money to small business. Well, then, I suggest, why aren't they bringing legislation forward, as a government, to do something more about that and ensure our small businesses do have a goal? We need to ensure that that's the case. We don't have to become the people who give out all of the money and create reliance on grants.

It's great for my colleague from Peterborough to stand here and spout off all the companies that he's giving money to. That, to me, is buying a seat. That's not doing what's needed for the people who are not here, who have to pay the freight. He's running us on money that we do not have today. You cannot continue to spend money you don't have, or you'll put us in the same place as Greece. I cannot support it. I will not support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: On the remarks that were just made by the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, I concur almost 100%. I leave the “almost” there because I wasn't here, but I was in my office watching and listening to the greatest extent. What he says is true: There's no action plan.

What's the first, most important thing you look for? What do we look forward to in the economy? Jobs and the economy. Without jobs that create taxable income for the province, you can't have the programs that we all want.

I measure it this way: Our quality of life is really a measurement of the quality of the economy. Which way is the economy going in Ontario? It's going south, at 100 miles an hour.

What's happening? Now they're fighting with doctors. I met with 20 on the weekend in Durham, with Christine Elliott, and I've met with other doctors. I'm hearing from teachers on an unprecedented scale. These are two large groups in the economy that are very, very, very upset with this government. They're walking away from the table of negotiation. Reasonableness has left the office, and Premier McGuinty's hatchet man, Dwight Duncan, has come in.

We know the economy is in trouble because there was a very extensive report by Don Drummond, one of the top economists in Canada—he was Paul Martin's deputy minister, so he's very qualified—and he told them that they were in a structural deficit. The cliff is in sight. They have not reduced their speed or their spending one ounce.

I worry for the children—not just the pages here, but for the young people graduating from high school and university. What are the jobs for our young people? There is simply no plan that I've seen, other than spending and taxing. That's a moniker from the Liberals that has been well-earned, and this budget simply demonstrates they can't do the job.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments. I return to the member for Chatham–Kent–Essex.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you very much, Speaker. Again, I'd like to thank the members from Hamilton Mountain, Peterborough, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and—

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Elgin–Middlesex–London.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: —from Durham. Did you speak too as well?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: No.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: You just want me to say “Elgin–Middlesex–London” as well.

A couple of things here, Speaker: First of all, as I said earlier, in order for businesses to grow they really don't want the government involved in their businesses. They need to be offered a hand up, not a handout, because they'll take the money and, so to speak—you know, they'll take the money and run.

What is that really teaching people today? What is it teaching businesses? What is it teaching our young people in terms of—well, they have an attitude of expecting things just to happen their way. I don't fully agree with that.

The member from Peterborough talked about accountability, and I respect his comments on accountability, but my concern is, when they establish boards, who is going

to be on those boards? Is it going to be partisan boards whereby, in fact, they'll be able to bury or hide certain things? I don't know. I certainly wouldn't want that to become another Ornge situation. I refuse to use the word Ornge “scandal,” although I may want to call it what it is. Speaker, you cannot spend money you just do not have.

My colleague from Hamilton Mountain talked about moving money around from point A to point B in different funds. Well, that's just playing with numbers, that's all that is, and I don't agree with that either. The fact of the matter is—let's provide the proper workplace environment that encourages businesses and industry to—and are welcomed into a community. You set those standards. You maintain and keep energy rates low. You get rid of a lot of the red tape. Those businesses and industries, big or small, will create the jobs that will then provide for people to provide for their families.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Good afternoon, Speaker. I'm very happy to have the opportunity to speak on Bill 11, the Attracting Investment and Creating Jobs Act. I also want to thank the other speakers who spoke on this bill for their comments and insights.

As many of you know, I've been very concerned about the extraordinary unemployment rate in my riding of London–Fanshawe. Our unemployment rate hovers just below 10%, and has done so for quite some time.

We've seen plant closures like EMD. While many believe the EMD scenario was unusual, I am here to tell you that it's not. The families and the workers of my riding and many others are desperate for this province and specifically this government to promote this real economic development in our region. Too many have lost their jobs, homes and, most importantly, their hope that we will come up with an effective solution to get them back to work as quickly as possible.

At its core, the idea the government put forth with this bill is sound: Invest in the people of the province and the growth will come; invest in workers of this province and the hope will return.

But the growth and the hope will only come if we invest in our province effectively. Our progress must be well thought out, well financed and have built-in accountability measures.

The people of Ontario have seen enough of their money go out the doors with very little return under this government's watch. Most importantly, our focus must be on job creation. Between September 2008 and May 2009, 250,000 Ontarians lost their jobs. The unemployment rate in centres like Windsor and Oshawa spiked well into the double digits, and Toronto wasn't that far behind. No sector was safe. From retail to information technology, this great recession has left deep and lasting impacts on people of this province.

Although there has been some job creation since the depth of this recession, economists are warning of a prolonged period of sluggish growth. Our unemployment remains stubbornly high while other provinces have

recovered to their pre-recession employment levels, and real wages continue to stagnate.

This government is pleased to pat itself on the back for their efforts around job creation, but the question remains, why haven't the tactics used by this government to mitigate the recession come to fruition? It is because this government has blindly continued down the wrong path of no-strings-attached corporate tax cuts. There were presentations in committee by leading economists like Toby Sanger, who analyzed how corporate tax reductions are distributed in the population. The result are in: The effect of no-strings-attached corporate tax cuts is profoundly regressive. He also noted that the priority should be on households who are suffering from a financial crunch, and not on the corporate sector.

We have seen record corporate profits, as we did with EMD, yet no investment in job creation or significant investment in our communities. In fact, we saw quite the opposite, with corporations coming to take advantage of our no-strings-attached corporate tax cuts and then literally running across the border to get the next one. They left our communities and families and workers out in the cold at the worst possible time without a second thought.

I may not be an economist, but I know what bad math looks like. The people of London–Fanshawe and many other ridings have been forced out of their jobs due to this government's refusal to accept that their approach is way off the mark. It's not working, and yet they continue blindly and resolutely down the same path over and over again. We are tired of watching companies post record-high profits while being handed tax cut after tax cut.

What are these businesses doing with the money from these tax cuts? We know they are not investing it back into the community and back into this province. Most of the excess profits went into financial speculative investments, mergers and acquisitions, share buybacks and major excess cash reserves. How does this approach put workers and their families back to work or strengthen our province?

Meanwhile, the debts of Canadian households have steadily increased and are now at record rates. In some instances, our household debt ratios are even higher than in the United States. I don't know about you, but I've been told many times that here in Canada and in Ontario we are insulated from much of the fallout that the recession had on the United States. Clearly, this isn't the case.

Our corporate combined tax rate in 2010 was 28.5%, making it less than in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania and many others. Even the US weighted average is still as high as 36.1%. Meanwhile, corporate debt ratios have kept on falling way through the recession. So once again, the corporate tax sector has great balance sheets, lots of excess cash and isn't investing in Ontario.

Where are our priorities? When did it become okay to leave the families of this province high and dry solely to appease businesses, especially businesses that are not re-investing in this province, businesses that are not creating jobs and businesses who happily pack up and run way

while leaving our communities desolate? When you reduce the taxes on businesses from 44% to 25% and over the course of 10 years you can't prove their investment or job creation, why would this government continue down the same unproven path time and time again?

I do want to take a moment to acknowledge the efforts of my caucus and their tenacity in committee on this bill. This is the first government bill in a generation that has been substantially rewritten in committee. Our leader, Andrea Horwath, and the entire NDP caucus have been determined to include as many provisions as possible to make this bill work. Time and time again they have attempted to be fair and thoughtful in their approach. As we did with the budget, the NDP continued to roll up our sleeves and get the work done. I certainly know that the people of my riding can ill afford for us to play partisan political games when it comes to their futures, and the NDP heard them loud and clear.

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We asked for this bill to include common sense, accountability and less political interference, while working towards the goals of job creation and spurring economic growth. We raised issues that strengthened this bill to make it fair. We ensured funding announcements were less partisan, so that local MPPs would be guaranteed an invitation to appear at funding announcements. We ensured the funds would be housed in independent corporations with boards of directors drawn from the regional areas they represent.

We also required that there be local advisory committees that represent sub-regions, and potentially industry sectors as well. We also set out to include provisions around accountability measures, including job guarantees and more transparency in contracts. We have also initiated terms that included one-year reviews of the major provisions in the act to ensure that things work as expected, allowing for us to hone or refine the act as necessary to deliver the results it should.

I think we can all agree that these are substantial improvements to this bill, and it clearly demonstrates how minority government can be effective.

While the NDP is proud of the achievements they have obtained, we are also very clear that there is much, much more which needs to be done on the jobs front. Many of the Liberal job creation programs have been weak, and until we actually see the language used in the contracts, we won't know if the promised job guarantees are strong enough under this bill. We already know that the culmination of job losses has destroyed savings, and overall economic anxiety has put the squeeze on families, particularly on middle-income Ontario. It doesn't take much effort to pay attention to the fact that the average hourly wage has not changed since 1991, when we take inflation into account. Clearly, middle-income Ontario has been de-prioritized over the no-strings-attached corporate tax cuts.

This is why the NDP believes that emphasis must be placed on our job creation tax credit. We said this during

the fall election campaign, and it was again in our recent negotiations with the government on this budget: Reward job creators and get the people back to work.

Our proposal is sound and we know it will get Ontarians back into their jobs while boosting small and medium business activity. It is our priority to get this program into action, and we are pleased that this government has finally agreed to study it. We would certainly prefer for them to go beyond merely studying it and translate that into action. It is a simple but innovative idea that can get our province moving forward right away.

For clarity, here's how we propose that this program would work. The job creator tax credit would operate on a two-year term and be refundable. It can be administered through the existing corporate income tax system to simplify the administration. It would reimburse employers for 10% of the salary paid to new hires during the first year of the employment, to the maximum of \$5,000. It is also critical for us that businesses be required to demonstrate that their new hire, this new employee or employees, is a newly created job rather than a replacement for previous employees.

How can this new reporting be achieved? Well, it is easily achieved by having employers submit baseline workforce numbers and wage bill information annually. To calculate the credit, the numbers would be compared year to year, and employers would also have to submit information that indicates the total wage bill of the new employees hired. This reporting mechanism ensures employers would be eligible for the credit by simply increasing the wages of existing employees rather than creation of new employees.

To create over 50,000 jobs, \$250 million of the current \$2 billion allocated to the jobs and prosperity fund would be dedicated exclusively to that tax credit. In a riding like mine, it is easy to see how much of an impact we could have at restoring middle-income Ontarians back to the level of dignity and hope that they deserve, in the manner they want to be restored in, by creating employment options for people who currently have none. I was quite pleased to learn, through the work of the committee, that many stakeholders were prepared to discuss this bill with the goal of improving it. The Southwest Economic Alliance came to the table ready to work. They were well researched and well informed about the need in their region. They also clearly identified the strong economic heritage that the region of southwestern Ontario has in place, including a superior talent pool, a superior network of colleges and universities, along with innovation and research capabilities spread throughout not only the private sector but also public institutions. They echoed the NDP's call for the primary focus of the fund to be direct and measurable job creation.

I want to quote Mr. Lavoie of SWEA, who stated, "We've been hit hard by the manufacturing slowdown. There are a lot of unengaged workers in our area, and we believe that a grassroots approach to building small business is a way ... to re-engage these workers in the short to medium term."

He went on to say, "We feel that given the relatively modest size of the fund—\$20 million a year—and the pent-up demand for it, quite frankly, there's a real need to focus on business start-ups, expansion and retention in" the small and medium-sized enterprise "sector specifically. We want to do it that way because it's the best way to distribute the benefits of the fund...."

I was further pleased to hear that they strongly felt that both loans and grants should be evaluated based upon the number of jobs that would be created, and that the payout should come only when jobs have been created, which builds maximum accountability into the fund.

They also identified that a key component of this program is the inclusion of local advisory councils. It is crucial for the success of this program to ensure that those who know the area best and those who know the needs are also given the opportunity to guide and advise how best to spend these funds.

They also asked for an appropriate balance to be found between loans and grants. They recognized, as we all should, that there are many excellent co-operative projects coming from the NGO and not-for-profit sectors. By making grants available, as well as loans, the not-for-profit and the NGO sectors can effectively participate in the program and do what is best: offer effective services in our communities.

We know that the best way to get Ontario back to work requires a comprehensive and holistic approach, an approach that takes into account the immediate needs of unemployment, lack of funding available for small and medium-sized enterprises, and our community organizations.

I still feel that these funds are rather disproportionate to the need at hand and barely make a dent in Ontario's job crisis. This program falls short of what is needed to compensate for the loss of the tens of thousands of good-paying jobs in manufacturing in southwestern Ontario.

The situation in London–Fanshawe is so dire that it requires us to move forward as quickly as possible to provide relief to families now. Asking the families who are hit the hardest by the recession to wait for another few months before they receive our support is just unacceptable.

I ask everyone here today to put aside their partisan politics and prioritize this bill and its passing so that Ontarians have some hope, when they're looking for a job, that there will be a job out there for them.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: It's a pleasure to make a few comments in response to the member from London–Fanshawe. I've noticed that she's always very detailed and certainly speaks with great sincerity.

My riding of Oak Ridges–Markham is probably in one of the more affluent parts of Ontario, in the GTA. In fact, if you come to my riding, say, Markham or Whitchurch–Stouffville, you'll see construction everywhere. You'll see a number of businesses booming. Markham is concentrated on high-tech industry, a lot of medical services,

medical assistive devices, pharmaceuticals. So it is with really quite a bit of bit of interest that I've looked at the development fund that was created in eastern Ontario. I have no doubt that it should in fact be continued on a permanent basis. Some areas of the province that have been perhaps less unfortunate through this economic difficulty over the last several years would benefit as well, including, of course, southwestern Ontario.

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Looking at what the eastern Ontario development fund has been able to achieve—some \$53.5 million leveraged \$493 million in investments, an eight-to-one ratio, which created and retained over 12,000 jobs. The fund has spread out to support over 13 sectors in 13 counties across eastern Ontario, and a very high applicant success rate, some 86%; 113 projects approved out of 132 applications.

When KPMG reported that currently the eastern Ontario development fund is exceeding job growth targets and that these are sustainable jobs, not project-related, I was really extremely happy to hear that, and feel sure that Bill 11 is an excellent bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to comment on Bill 11, An Act respecting the continuation and establishment of development funds in order to promote regional economic development.

Unfortunately, I cannot support this bill. Part of the reason I can't support it is that the government seems to have forgotten where Muskoka and Parry Sound–Muskoka is. It seems to have disappeared off the map in terms of any support from the government. This government has created and supports various regional economic development funds. We have the northern Ontario heritage fund. In 2004, the government removed Muskoka from qualifying for that area. Now we have the eastern Ontario fund, we have the southwestern Ontario fund and then we have a black hole in the middle, and that's called Muskoka.

We just had the member from Oak Ridges–Markham talking about her riding as being quite affluent. I think the government members think that Muskoka is very affluent because they probably visit and they see the beautiful million-dollar cottages. But they forget that people live there year-round, and it's very much a seasonal economy. The average income levels in Muskoka are far below the provincial average. Perhaps some of the government members don't realize that. We have Ontario Works or welfare cases that are at just about record levels at this time.

The members very shortly will have a summer break. I suggest they come up and visit Muskoka, help stimulate the economy of Muskoka. I'm sure they'll enjoy themselves while they're there. But at the same time, maybe drive away from the waterfront, tour some back roads and try to learn about how the average person who lives in Muskoka year-round is struggling. Perhaps they will see that Muskoka is deserving of support, like anywhere else in this province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I'm very pleased to stand up and speak to this issue, and pleased to respond to the comments of the member from London–Fanshawe.

At the end of the day, what we're talking about here is an opportunity, an opportunity that companies in the London area and southwestern Ontario and, of course, in eastern Ontario will be able to benefit from, not as all of the funding they would receive for a particular initiative, not as even most of the funding they would receive for a particular initiative, but as that very important starter or seed funding that would attract other sources of funds.

One of the reasons that I'm so interested and supportive of this southwestern Ontario development fund is the success it has had in eastern Ontario. For every dollar from that eastern Ontario fund, they attracted between eight and 10 other dollars. That makes for a very powerful leveraging fund to create jobs for a region. I can't really understand why members of the opposition are not supportive of maintaining an eastern Ontario development fund, but in any event, in southwestern Ontario, boy, we can use the help. We've had a lot of very successful funds: helped establish Hanwha, Cakerie, supported Brose in our area, supported the auto industry, Magna. We've got Toyota up the road, CAMI up the road, both doing very well.

This is an important fund that we need to support, but I would simply say this: There has been a lot of discussion on this—a lot of discussion. People have pretty much had their say, so let's make a decision. Let's agree we can bring this to a vote, and those who like it can support it and those who have a different view can take their different view. It's time—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Questions and comments?

Okay, I'll return to the member for London–Fanshawe. You have two minutes to reply.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Thank you for the comments from the member for Oak Ridges–Markham, the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka and the member from London West.

You know, with a minority government, the New Democrats have made a promise to people to make this minority government work, and I think we have a proven track record of that happening.

With this Bill 11, which is the economic development fund, having it go to committee—there were how many amendments adopted out of that? I believe it was five amendments that we worked hard on in committee to make sure that this bill had some accountability. One of the pieces that I'm very impressed with in work that was done on the committee was that there is going to be that one-year review of major provisions in the act to ensure that things are working as expected and to examine possible refinements.

When we're dealing with taxpayers' money, it is incumbent on us to make sure that that money is being used for the intent it was created for and that there are

strings attached. This money is to create jobs. When we give that taxpayers' hard-earned money back to businesses to create those jobs, we need to have the link. So I'm glad to see that that was one of the amendments that was clearly put in there, for a one-year review. Then you can tweak it. That way, if there have been problems, you catch them early. They're not going to grow into big, massive Ornge fields. So that's one good amendment, I thought.

The other amendment was about nonpartisan. When you come to this House, you need to do the work of the people, and if that means putting your banner aside, you do that for the better of the people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Further debate?

Mr. Todd Smith: I rise to speak to Bill 11 as well. I've been up a couple of times on this bill already, and it's the kind of thing that a government comes up with when they're completely out of ideas. I've said that statement a few times when it comes to some government bills over the past several months since I've been here. There's not a lot to it. This bill is the kind of policy a government comes up with when it doesn't want to do any of the heavy lifting, when it doesn't want to make any hard economic choices. When you've spent eight years throwing money at problems and digging the province into a hole that it's going to take us a long time to dig out of, this is the kind of thing that you just keep doing.

The bill, with its lack of vision, is exactly the kind of thing we've seen time and time again from this government. When the going gets tough, you can trust the Premier and the finance minister to start throwing money around without a real plan to put it to work.

I know other members have said it as well: This is a government more concerned with looking like it's doing something than it is with actually doing something. We have real problems in the province. They've been detailed at great length in the House over the past several months and likely several years.

You know, we did have an announcement on Friday that just seems to go unnoticed. It's brushed aside by this government, but I think it says it all about this government. We lost 31,000 full-time jobs in May in this province. That was an announcement that was made last Friday, and the Premier stands up here in question period and he continues to trumpet how great Ontario's doing. They're not looking at the real numbers. They're not looking at themselves in the mirror. They're continuing to blame everybody else for the problems that this province is facing right now—31,000 full-time jobs. Those are real numbers.

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I find it quite interesting that the member from Peterborough stood up and spoke about how important the EODF has been in Peterborough. He had a long grocery list of businesses that have acquired money through the EODF. I'm sure they've been doing okay. But despite the fact that this government continues to throw money

around, I would just like to show that perhaps throwing all of that money around isn't working.

I told you about the story that came out last Friday, the number from StatsCan showing 31,000 full-time jobs lost. Okay, you've got that number. This story was in the Windsor Star on Saturday morning: "Windsor's unemployment rate dropped marginally in May but remains the highest in Canada...."

"The...jobless rate last month was 9.9%," in Windsor.

You would think that with all of the outstanding work that the EODF is doing in Peterborough, maybe Peterborough would be doing very well. You know what community in Canada has the second-highest unemployment rate?

Mr. Bill Walker: Peterborough.

Mr. Todd Smith: Peterborough.

Mr. Bill Walker: Shameful.

Mr. Todd Smith: Peterborough has the second-highest unemployment rate in all of Canada, at 9.2%. So, sure, some companies are doing well in Peterborough, but 9.2% of the population of Peterborough can't get a job.

There's more that needs to be done than continuing the eastern Ontario development fund. Some big structural changes need to take place in the province of Ontario to get this once-great province back on track.

You know, it's a shame. Here are some of the other numbers: Barrie, 9.1%. That would be third-worst in all of Canada—Barrie, 9.1%. Is Barrie included in this proposed southwest development fund? They're not even included in the southwest development fund.

Here's another one for you. How about Toronto, at 8.6%? We're in Toronto right now—8.6%, well over the national unemployment figures. Is Toronto included in the EODF or the southwest Ontario fund? No, they're not. Oshawa, 8.2%, well above the national average. Is Oshawa included in the eastern Ontario or southwest Ontario development fund? No, they're not.

So here we go with a government bill that isn't aimed at the right targets, for one thing, but it's proven that we need structural change in the province of Ontario. We need to go in a different direction. We have lost 31,000 full-time jobs in May in Ontario—scary, scary numbers—and those are the straight facts and the straight talk that you're going to get from this side of the House.

Ontario, as we mentioned, used to be the engine of Confederation. We all know now that that engine is faltering. Rather than opening the hood and getting their hands dirty, what do the Premier and the economic development minister and the finance minister do, instead of fixing that engine? They change the air freshener in the car. That's what they do. They think that's going to solve the problems of Ontario: Let's put a new pine-smelling air freshener in that vehicle and everything is going to run fine.

It doesn't matter how many cheques you hand out—and they're not government cheques. It's not government money. There no such thing as government money. It's your money; it's our money; it's the people's money. If

the fundamentals of your economy aren't sound, which clearly they're not here in the province right now, you're just going to have to keep handing out cheques. And maybe that's fine with some of the members on the government side. They like having their picture taken. I think that's what they like. They like the press conferences and the media availabilities. They like handing out the big, giant cheques to these companies because I think it makes them feel important. But what is it actually doing? It's not solving the problems in the province of Ontario.

We saw it with GM. The government signed over money during the 2008-09 crisis—lots of money—and, a mere three years later, here we are in the same boat again: Oshawa losing 2,000 jobs. It's not like they're ending those lines at General Motors; it's not like the Equinox or the Impala are going out of production. No, they're not. They're going to continue to build them. They're going to build them in the United States, in Michigan or in Tennessee.

Back to Bill 11: It's just a stopgap solution. It's the cork in the flood or the Band-Aid on the bullet wound, so to speak. Ontario is about to have the highest electricity rates, not in Canada; in North America. We've got a budget that just imposed significant tax measures on businesses, and there are over 380,000 pieces of regulation in the province of Ontario. That's just provincial regulation. That doesn't include municipal or federal regulation. There are over 380,000 pieces of provincial regulation in Ontario. As the PC small business critic and the critic in charge of red tape reduction, I can tell you I speak to small and medium-sized business people all the time—not the size, but the company—and they're having serious problems expanding in the province of Ontario.

Do you know what they say the two biggest problems are? Well, let me give you three, because they always say three. The first one is red tape. The 380,000 pieces of regulation would lead you to a good assumption as to why that's happening. There's all this red tape and government interference in their lives. Taxation is number 2. Taxation is huge in the province of Ontario. And the number 3 item—it never used to be, but it's number 3 right now—is electricity, energy costs in the province of Ontario.

So if the government thinks Bill 11 is anything more than a half measure, then they're wrong. There are some big things that need to be fixed in the province, and this is just geared towards press releases and photo ops, as I said earlier, for ministers and members of provincial Parliament.

We've hit 65 months now where Ontario's unemployment rate has been higher than the national average, five and a half years that the unemployment rate in Ontario has been higher than the rest of Canada. This government, this Premier and his cabinet have had five and a half years of worsening conditions here, and still we're presented with legislation that's indicative of a government that seems to enjoy sitting on its hands. In other words, they're continuing to do the same old things that

they've done for the last five and a half years: throw money at it and hope that this will solve all of our problems.

We live in a province that's crying out for real answers and demanding real opportunity be restored here. Ontarians are sick of a government that continually gives them half a solution. The minister has continually gotten up and talked about the jobs created by the eastern Ontario development fund. I speak of the economic development minister, of course. I know that in my area the program would be nothing without the job that's being done on the ground there by Chris King and the Quinte Economic Development Commission. They're doing great work there. The folks at the QEDC work tirelessly with the municipal politicians in my area to ensure that the conditions are ripe for business to succeed. I would state that it reflects poorly on the minister to take credit for the hard work of others happening on the ground there in the Quinte region.

Let's take a closer look at where that money has gone over the last four years. During the three-plus years prior to the last election that the EODF had been up and running in eastern Ontario, 60% of the ridings in eastern Ontario were held by Liberal members—that's not the case anymore—and 40% of the ridings were held by PC members. So we had a Liberal-Conservative 60-40 split at the time. It's worth noting that these numbers only include eastern Ontario ridings that are eligible for the program. Prior to the last election, 60% of those Liberal ridings received 78% of the grants and roughly 81% of the money that was handed out by the program. Despite having 60% of the ridings, 81% of the cash distributed by the EODF went to Liberal-held ridings. Slush funding is nothing new in politics, but usually the government in power has the good sense to at least try to hide it.

We brought the Minister of Economic Development and Innovation before the committee on general government, back in April, to discuss this bill, and we did help out the NDP in making some amendments to the bill when it comes to clarity and accountability when handing out these kinds of dollars.

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When Mr. Duguid was confronted with these statistics, the minister said the following, and I'll quote from Hansard: "There's a great deal of accountability that goes into the process, but I can assure you that it's not—I think you're insinuating somehow that maybe there's some kind of politics that go into this—" When I pressed him on whether or not these stats were a coincidence, the minister didn't have an answer. Perhaps, ironically, the minister raised two ridings that have done well since the election in collecting grant money. The ridings he raised were Kingston and the Islands and Peterborough, both of which, I'm sure coincidentally, are represented by Liberal members. Since the election, those are the two ridings that the minister decided to pinpoint were having a lot of success in getting grants.

The numbers get even more interesting when you take a look at calendar 2011 before the last election—remem-

ber, only 60% of the ridings held by Liberals, but in calendar 2011, prior to the election, those ridings received roughly 86% of the grants that were awarded and more than 92% of the money that was awarded.

Mr. Bill Walker: Wow. Bit of shame, there.

Mr. Todd Smith: It's a bit of a seat-saver program, you could say, as well. Or at least it appears that way.

Mr. Bill Walker: Seat-buyer.

Mr. Todd Smith: A seat-buyer, and it didn't work.

So no wonder, when I asked the minister during committee if this was a coincidence, he deflected that question. No coincidence could be quite this targeted.

Mr. Speaker, it never fails to amuse me when I get to sit in the House, as I did this morning, and listen to the finance minister talk about the corporate welfare strategy. They're coming in this House and asking the opposition to help them keep a seat-saver program alive—that's what they're doing—and now they're looking at expanding it to southwestern Ontario. They're coming in here and asking us to give them the same program for southwestern Ontario that they tried to use as a seat-saver program or a seat-buyer program in eastern Ontario.

The minister can talk all he wants about the results of this program—and as I mentioned earlier, he owes any success in my area to Chris King and the Quinte Economic Development Commission, which uses the eastern Ontario development fund. Without those responsible professionals taking this rather political program and turning it into a respectable tool in their arsenal, this program would have been very seriously abused in many regions, and it arguably already has been, as we're seeing in the debate over the bill. The criteria for funding are being adjusted, or there has been some debate for adjusting the criteria, to target money at university-based research and development now.

This would seem like an admirable goal, right? You take the money that you're distributing and you try to put it into R&D at universities. Just consider this for a moment: The two universities in eastern Ontario, Trent University in Peterborough—a Liberal-held riding—and Queen's University, Kingston and The Islands—a Liberal-held riding. The Attorney General is there.

In southwestern Ontario, the currently defined catchment area for the new fund also has two universities. Guess which ones they are. In the riding for the member of Windsor West and also in the riding of the health minister.

Mr. Bill Walker: Interesting. Coincidence, I'm sure.

Mr. Todd Smith: I'm sure.

As we like to say in Hastings county, if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it probably is a duck. I see the agriculture minister nodding over there. He knows that statement. They use that in Flamborough too, I'm sure. So I guess what I'm saying is, if it looks like a slush fund and operates like a slush fund, it probably is a slush fund.

Let's get into the fund, because this is a central issue. I addressed this earlier. It's the easiest solution in the world to simply throw money at a problem, because it

creates the appearance that you're actually doing something; it gives the sense that your government is interested in finding solutions when, in reality, all you're interested in is biding time until someone comes along and fixes the problem for you.

If this bill passes, we'll have three regional development programs in this province, three programs whose sole purpose is to foster regional economic development in very specific areas. Rather than address the problems in the province as a whole, rather than pick up the whole province and make it better, we're going to get this regional patchwork. We're going to pit the north against the east and the east against the southwest. The point of this is transparent: As long as the regions and the wardens and the mayors are fighting each other for a bigger slice of the pie, they're not focusing on how this government has failed the province as a whole.

It has already been detailed in the House today. What happens when Niagara falters? Well, they don't have an economic development fund.

Mr. Bill Walker: Neither does Muskoka, I don't think. Do they, Norm?

Mr. Todd Smith: Muskoka doesn't either. What about Hamilton? So do we create, then, a Niagara fund? Do we create a Muskoka fund? Do we create a Hamilton fund? I see some members from Ottawa here. They've told us they have a problem as well. The city is experiencing unemployment rates that are above the national average. A couple of ministers are from the Ottawa area, actually. What next? Are we going to have an Ottawa or a national capital region development fund?

We just lost 2,000 jobs at GM in Oshawa because this government has failed in its economic stewardship. Can the minister tell the House when we're going to get a Durham development fund? He didn't talk about Durham, but we shouldn't leave them out, either.

There are all kinds of areas of the province that aren't included in this bill. As I said at the start of my 20 minutes here this afternoon, we need to look at the province as a whole. There are some major changes that need to occur in how the province is doing business in order to get us back on the right track. Creating these little funds that don't sound like a whole lot of money, \$20 million a year—but when you add them all up, it adds up to a lot of money. Billions of dollars, as a matter of fact, have gone into a myriad of different funds across the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, in case you haven't guessed it yet, we won't be voting in support of Bill 11. I can't support a bill that the government has already shown is for its own political gain. I can't support a bill that says if you just throw money at the problem, then it will eventually go away.

This bill gives the government an excuse, a way of saying that they did something, as every month this province is adding to the unemployment line. I can't support a patchwork solution to a province-wide problem. We need to start tackling the tough issues, and Bill 11 doesn't do that. We need serious economic policy in this province, and Bill 11 doesn't even pretend to be that.

We don't need any more Band-Aid solutions to big problems. Some 31,000 jobs lost in the province of Ontario in the month of May—completely unacceptable; the youth unemployment rate—16.5%.

I talk to parents, young families in Prince Edward–Hastings all the time whose children are having to go to the oil sands in Alberta or in Regina where, remarkably, the unemployment rate—I've lost my paper here, but I believe—here it is right here: Regina, 3.9% unemployment, compared to 9.9% in Windsor.

There are some serious problems in the province of Ontario right now, and you don't have to look far to understand why those problems exist. The Premier of Ontario has been here for nine years. The finance minister has been by his side for most of that time. Serious problems in the province of Ontario, and I can't support any more Band-Aid thinking: That's why I'll be voting against Bill 11.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Phil McNeely: I'm pleased to stand in my place here to respond to the member from Prince Edward–Hastings, who has a very negative viewpoint of Ontario.

I think that Ontario is well-positioned. It's a tough world. They neglect that there was a major recession. They neglect that the United States is in terrible economic shape. They neglect that the Canadian dollar has risen about 50%. They neglect to say that manufacturing is the base in Ontario. They neglect to think that in the Third World, labour is about 30 or 40 cents, compared to our labour. So we can't compete on a lot of that. That has made a major change throughout the world, but I think Ontario has done quite well.

This program specifically, if we're looking at south-west Ontario, we have to look at how successful the eastern Ontario development fund was, and it was successful. I've said before when I was up here, Ontario only puts a small percentage of those funds in; I think, on average, it's 11%. You have companies that have ideas, that can hold the employees they have and can increase those employees, and those are the ones we have to target. We get all of the submissions in, and you look at the best. To have I think it was a 98% success rate, that has to be great.

So I think the people on the other side, the Conservatives, don't want to create jobs in southwestern Ontario. They don't want to help those communities that are really struggling. That seems to me to be very counter-productive, as a government.

This is a good bill. It worked in eastern Ontario. We made some changes. These are good changes. Now let's take it to southwestern Ontario and give all those small communities in southwestern Ontario the benefit of this assistance from government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: It's interesting when I hear some of the notes from my honourable colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings, where he talks about how we're

leading in some of these categories, but it's not in an area where we want to lead. We don't want to be leading with the number one, number two and number three municipalities with the highest unemployment in the country. We're leading again with the cost of hydro.

I think this government has got to turn the table upside down and start looking at making things that really make a difference. We want to be able to tackle these unemployment rates.

From some of these astounding numbers, one would have to wonder if they really are looking for the biggest bang for their buck. When you're only looking at the government's own ridings, are you really picking out the best choices, or are you only going after what we've seen this government do so many times in the past: seat-saver programs, whether it be Oakville or Mississauga, where there's no regard for—I hate to use the word—the billions of dollars wasted, only to look at trying to keep a majority in this House? It's time that we started putting the people of Ontario before the interests of this government as they try to cling to life here.

It's hard when people come up and you try to defend what I think is an honourable position as a politician. I've been involved for 20 years. But things seem to be so partisan. One main issue I had was putting policies in place where everybody was treated fairly. When we look at the results of this grant, we certainly don't see that, especially when I hear of earlier last month when the member stood up and took credit for the grant going to one of the companies in my riding, where in fact the grant never did go to them. They never did build the building.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: It's a pleasure to intervene here after the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

What I've liked most about Tim Hudak's team is the consistency. Our policy has been pretty clear—and you as Acting Speaker would know that—that it is wrong of Premier McGuinty to pick winners and losers. In most cases, he has picked more losers than winners. But in fact—

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: Well, look, Research in Motion was doing fine before you guys got elected. Look at them now. I didn't say you caused it, but it's a lot of that intervention in the marketplace that maybe has caused some of the distress.

All I say to you is this. General Motors going south: They're losing jobs faster—I think they should stop working quite as hard, not just in eastern Ontario but in southwestern Ontario. Look at the solar company that went out of business down in the Minister of Finance's riding.

Actually, here's the real issue: Government doesn't create jobs. Government creates the climate for job creation and investment. What the markets watch closely is long-term stability first. Stability is a tax policy.

Here's the truth: The people of Ontario—I have a few minutes here. I could ask for more time. But here it is: In the previous budget, in 2011, they said that they were going to reduce the corporate tax rate from 11.5% to 10%. This is a fact, so listen up. But then, just in this last budget, they cancelled; they backtracked. There have been people arguing that the reason they backtracked was for votes.

Is it the right economic policy? That's the question. Really, this whole debate about whether it's the northern plan, the eastern plan—there should be an economic plan for all of Ontario, and it would include Durham and other places that are excluded today.

I don't understand the policies they have, and I can't support Bill 11.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: I sat intently listening to my colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings. He brought a lot of good things up there. He brought a lot of poignant points. I don't think he was being negative, as one of the people from across the floor said. I think what he was being—and it's a healthy thing; it's realistic. He's looking at the financial situation our province is in and he's being very frank with the people of Ontario. He's not going out and trying to rubber-coat it and think it's rose-coloured glasses and use terms like, “We have very solid debt.” Well, isn't that really wonderful for these wonderful pages down in front, who will be paying that debt when they're long past my age?

Speaker, he raised very practical opinions. He says, “Why are we doing a patchwork quilt?” We have an Ontario-wide issue; we have an Ontario-wide need for a solution, and yet this government, once again, with a seat-buyer mentality, wants to be able to just start going here and there. Why doesn't Durham—

Mr. John O'Toole: Seat-saver.

Mr. Bill Walker: No, it's a seat-buyer, John. Seat-saver, seat-buyer—they're both the same things at the end of the day. They're using taxpayers' money to pad their ridings. And it's just—92%, I think you said, of the funds in eastern Ontario went to Liberal-held-riding projects; just not appropriate, Mr. Speaker.

At the end of the day, we have to not lose sight; the government doesn't have money to spend on new programs. They're \$15.3 billion in the hole, at a time when we have record revenues. They're still spending like drunken sailors, Speaker. They cannot continue to do this, or these young folks sitting in front of you will never have the hope of ever having the lifestyle that we've enjoyed throughout my lifetime. We've come through some wonderful, wonderful times. A part of that is because governments prior lived within their means. We weren't spending \$10 billion servicing the debt and then coming up and promising, “We'll give you more money in a patchwork quilt.”

Therefore, I will not support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments. We return to the member for Prince Edward–Hastings.

Mr. Todd Smith: Thank you, Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity. Thanks to my colleagues from Ottawa–Orléans, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, Durham and Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. The last three speakers made a lot of sense, and obviously, they were paying close attention to what I was saying, so I appreciate that very much.

We do have a serious problem in the province of Ontario. For some reason the member from Ottawa–Orléans doesn't quite grasp the seriousness of the situation in Ontario right now. He's got that Liberal mentality that everything is going to be okay as long as we fire some more money at it; just keep chucking money at it and everything is going to get better. But that's not the way it works. We're going down a slippery slope if we continue to go this route in Ontario. We can't continue to throw money at every problem that we have. We have to make some really tough choices and get moving in the right direction.

We all know about the budget and the fact that the budget doesn't address the problems in the province of Ontario. It's a terrible budget. It was sold as an austerity budget. It increases spending in 14 of 24 ministries—“We're just going to keep throwing money at everything; it's going to get better.” We need to reduce the size of government; we need to go in a different direction.

We need to get out of the way of our businesses so that they can create jobs—380,000 regulations on the books in Ontario, red tape getting in the way of job creation in the province of Ontario. We need to get out of the way so that our businesses can create jobs. We need to create the environment in Ontario so that our businesses can flourish. We need to bring down the cost of energy. We had the cheapest electricity rates in North America 10 years ago. Now they're on the cusp of being the highest in North America, and we're seeing businesses like GM take their car-building and truck-building facilities to Michigan and to Tennessee, of all places.

We need serious change in the province. That's why we can't support Bill 11.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm happy to get an opportunity to stand and speak in opposition to this bill. I've been involved in politics for—well, it's almost 20 years now. I was there when the Bob Rae government was just on its way out, and saw the Mike Harris government come in and make some necessary changes that the municipalities were looking for and trying to make this province more efficient. When they ran their campaign, they made some commitments, they made some promises. I look back, and there's one thing you can't criticize them for: They followed what they promised to do.

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Then we saw the McGuinty government come in, who, at the same time, promised wonders and actually even went as far as signing a contract that they would not increase taxes for the taxpayers of Ontario. So what did they do? Within a month of getting into power, the

largest health tax increase in Ontario's history—and it goes on and on.

When you look at the HST, there are some arguments on the merits of it, but this is the only province that took it in without making it neutral. They took a huge tax increase hit with the HST.

You look back at this government's spending: Their spending has increased 80%, most of that in salaries. Again, when you look at the track record for the last two elections, salaries were used to buy significant funding for some of their benefactors, in some of the legislation they put through. One really has to wonder how the legislation that they put in place changed some of the laws to make it easy in Ontario to do that. That was not something that was done in any of the other provinces. We're the only province where you can jump in and unions can contribute as much money as we do in the province of Ontario. It seems funny, but it only seems to benefit one party: the ruling government.

Now, some of their promises, even they're having a hard time keeping.

You look at some of the studies that come out. The Auditor General was the first one that came out and warned this government of the spending, if they don't address the problems. With things such as credit rating issues, we've now seen a downgrade since their budget came out. They're talking about getting the budget through and needing to get it through. It's the result of this budget on the verge of being passed that we got the downgrade and the warning from the other credit agency.

It's interesting, this whole idea of spending money faster than they can take it in. I'm telling you, they've increased taxes substantially, so it's hard to believe that the deficit can go up when your taxes have gone up by so much. I think they're talking somewhere around 60% increases since they took over.

Going back to 2003 when I first became mayor, this government took over power about the same time, I think about a month before I was there. When it came to March, at the end of the year—and it looked like there was some talk all year, through the election. They talked about how the Eves government was running a huge deficit. Well, it's interesting, because when you look back at the forensic audits they looked at, this government spent \$3.5 billion in the last couple of weeks of March, on the previous government's watch. They did this with unbudgeted, unannounced spending. Looking back at it, is there any other result you can get than to say that it was there to make the previous government look worse than it was? I think it ended up being \$4.5 billion. Even that was the result of not taking money that's generally taken against that year's budget into the next year's. In fact, the Ernie Eves government had a surplus. Then, for years they stood there at ROMA and they talked about how they inherited this deficit. You've got to get away from the spin that they're putting on to this.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Some \$5.6 billion.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Yes, and \$3.5 billion in two weeks in March. Imagine that. I remember our local MPP

talking to me and saying, "I'm run off my feet. We can't make all of the announcements this week so we're going to carry them over into April, but they're still counting against this year's budget." That's what we're looking at. Is that good governance? Or is that all about the perception in the public? It's just not right. I looked at that and you just wonder, how can you run a government like that?

We're looking back nine years later, and we can see the results. We're looking at unemployment now. At that time, Ontario was on fire. Employment was going well. You've got to look back at some of the problems that Premier Harris had. The economy was running so well, he was running out of electricity. But you guys fixed the problem: You shut down the manufacturing industry. Our peak power has never been higher than in 2003, and even that spin was looked upon as blaming the electrical system. Of course, even in the Auditor General's report, they highlight the fact that this was a problem in the States that triggered the shutdown. Of course, they made hay out of that. It's time that you got—you've got to get involved and you've got to tell people what's right.

As a member of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, the first year—you know, as a municipality, I go back to 1999. I mean, municipalities are—there were some changes made through the property tax system to make them a little more self-sufficient. The OMPF funding that we received in 1999—and I know there's been a lot of inflation going on. It's over 10 years now, 11, 12 years. They're still receiving—or actually, we're receiving less in the municipality than we did back in 1999. That's in actual dollars; no inflation has been added. Actually, in our case, in South Glengarry, we're receiving about \$300,000 less.

So how do you account for running a municipality when we don't have anything but property tax? It's little wonder that Ontario has the highest property taxes in the country; I guess I might even say, probably the highest in North America.

It's another reason why—if you're looking at GM and you're looking at trying to decide where you're going to build your next car or your next Cadillac, would you build it in Ontario? Because not only are our rates some of the highest in North America right now—we're not quite there; next year—but they're talking about it going up another 45% in the next five years.

When you look at the Auditor General's report, he warns us that that's if the government contracts were on pace with what they had programmed. But actually, they're far ahead. The Green Energy Act is well over-subscribed, so the numbers of 45% don't count that.

It sounds good to use the word "green" in just about anything and people are kind of happy. But he also said one thing: They have an obligation to let the people of Ontario know what the act is costing them, because they don't know. They try to blame it on infrastructure, blame it on many things. But we can't afford to pay this and we're looking at—what?—another \$30 billion that this Green Energy Act is going to cost us for power we don't need.

Now we're turning around and we can't sell the stuff because we have a surplus of power. We're not using as much as we did in 2003. So now we're paying our competitors to take the power for almost nothing. Was it \$1.8 billion up to last year that we paid our competitors? Wouldn't it be nice if New York state sent us a cheque for \$1.8 billion to take power that we're going to have to turn around and buy? I mean, that's what's happening. That's the ridiculousness of this whole system.

Their answer to some of these economics—one year, when they were talking about reducing the absolute values of the OMPF funding, the wardens' caucus at ROMA asked numerous questions. They lined up at the mikes and they asked the government over and over again how they could cut this funding. It's interesting: That share of the funding was maintained.

But their answer to this whole issue of being held accountable at ROMA, with some 2,000 delegates—they changed the rules the next year so that they couldn't ask the same question more than once. I mean, that's the answer to fixing the economic problems: You just change the rules so people can't ask the questions.

I guess at that time they were finding that they couldn't fool the rural areas—the ROMA's values of eastern Ontario—or I'm sorry, of Ontario. They weren't fooling them. So I guess if you don't like the headlines, you just change the rules so they can't ask the questions.

We go back and we talk about this austerity budget. We've got Don Drummond. One's got to wonder why would we spend that kind of money in getting an esteemed economist—the only previous Liberal economist at the federal level—to come in and do a study, if you're not going to listen to it? Were they thinking they wouldn't be there and this was something else for somebody to look after or have to step over to try to fix the province? But they ignored it. They ignored 300 or 300-and-some recommendations in it, or a large number, anyway. They sat back, and we're looking at a deficit that's the same or a little bit more than last year. Spending is up—well, it'll be up \$2 billion, and then they added a number of extra things in to get some buy-in from the third party. Surprise, surprise: It's still the same spending and the same deficit. I don't know how they did that, but one has got to wonder how you could spend that kind of extra money and still come out at the same number.

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It's interesting. You're talking to different people and—I get a lot of people and their comments are, "You've got to do something about this government." You sit back and you wonder: Why the differences? When you look at the map of Ontario, other than the north, why does it look blue except for a couple of little spots in the major cities? One has to wonder why the rural area has chosen not to support this government, with very few exceptions. Is it because they're land-owners and they're a little more concerned about borrowing money to the extent we're borrowing? Are they more concerned about their children? I don't know. It's hard to

believe that you could have a difference of areas, where the rural or the non-dense areas, whether it be in the north with the NDP or basically the rest of the province further south, chose not to follow this government and not to believe its policies.

In the rural areas, their answer to me is, "How many times can somebody tell you something that they're not going to do, or promise something and not follow through, before you start to wonder if they have any intention of?"—but you know, in the last election they had an interesting slant. Instead of taking the credit for the politicians and not being able to believe them, they spread it around, saying, "Look, you can't believe politicians—anybody." Nobody wanted to talk about the last time this Conservative government was in and they followed their promises, just like they are in Ottawa.

There are some tough decisions. I mean, there's a lot of spending that there's not a person in this Legislature doesn't think is important. But it comes down to how much to put back onto our children. Somebody has got to pay this back. There's no silver bullet, as they say. You can't go on spending money without the idea that it's just going to disappear, unless you're counting on us going bankrupt and we can write these expenses off.

We're looking around the world where this happens time and time again, and now, just on the weekend, we hear this with Spain and the issues they're having there. In my own mind, I was just wondering, "Well, how big is Spain?" Germany's going to help it out. But Spain's economy is two thirds the size of Germany's, and they're expected to bail them out. They're expected to bail Greece out. What happens if one of those countries fails? What happens over here?

We're already seeing some electrical contractors talking about the economy. They see it as soft. They've seen it as soft for the last number of months. People aren't spending money.

Our own public are looking around and they're seeing what's being done around the world and the problems people are having with debt. Our debt loads as Canadians, and even as Americans, are going down. People are seeing that they can't be borrowing at the levels at which they were borrowing in the past. I think what they'd like to see in the government is their own government being a lot more responsible and forward-thinking. If you're going to spend scarce dollars, you have to be somewhat cognizant of just what you're doing.

We look at the scandals this government is taking, whether it was eHealth in the past—we're looking at the Ornge ambulance. A lot of people say that the way you learn from your mistakes is to look at what you've done. But this is a government that refuses to acknowledge and refuses to let this House look at just what happened at Ornge. The resistance that has been there against that select committee, I find that hard to believe, because I thought that in a minority government, the members of the House, the majority, would dictate some of the runnings of this House. But then I hear the comment back: "Well, no, it has got to be unanimous." This is a

democracy. Our whole principles are built on majority votes, and the majority of the members that day voted for a select committee. So what do they do? They just talk about how great things are running.

Here we are—how many months into it?—and we haven't been allowed to talk to the CEO of the corporation. Today, I was glad to hear that the subpoena was issued for him that binds him to come. They should have been wanting to hear what happened. I mean, these were some of the organizations they put in place. You have to start to wonder about what you're doing here.

I talk to small businesses in my riding and they talk about the roadblocks for going anywhere. If they want to do anything, not only are they so numerous it's crazy, but some of the decisions that are coming down from their agencies—you know, you're sitting there, and how do you justify them? There's certainly an idea that you go over the top.

Look at some of the numbers here. I look at our agencies going from 250 to 150 under the Mike Harris government and, granted, you could take the other slant and say maybe they went too far. But what have we got? We're over 600—how do you justify that?—in eight years. You talk about small business leading this province, making a difference. You're getting in their way.

My colleague from Kitchener was showing me a bill from the TSSA for an inspection for one of the propane dealerships: just compliance testing, no problems, passed it. A thousand bucks—a small distributor. That's just the inspection fees, the mileage of one trip. He's got to raise \$1,000 to pay that tax, and that's on top of his property tax, it's on top of his electricity bill, and it's on top of all the administration costs he has to run a business. It's no wonder—I walk into the local grocery store in Williamstown and it's like an attack when you walk in. They get their hydro bill, and they're upset. They say, "How do you expect me to run this place? I can't afford to cool my products."

Their answer is, "Well, if you don't use the power during the day, it's cheaper at night." Try to turn off your freezers during the day. Tell your customers they have to come at night. It just doesn't work.

Miss Monique Taylor: Ice cream.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Yes, ice cream. I'd have to say, if I look at our area, we used to have a hydro system that was reliable. In the village of Lancaster, Dairy Queen lost its full supply of ice cream three times in a year. They were forced to go out and get generators. That never happened. Maybe once every five or six years would you lose power for hours at a time. In summertime, many times without a major storm—and it's just, "That's the way it is."

So the confidence that we need to put into this province to keep our own businesses, let alone attracting somebody—we have a lot of new Canadians coming to this country. They have an opportunity to settle wherever they want, and we can see that fewer of them are settling in Ontario because it's not the land of promise that it used to be. In fact, I heard the Premier complaining that

they weren't getting their continued fair share of help for immigration from the federal government. But it's interesting; actually, the funding had gone up, but it's based on where they settle. The problem was not that they weren't paying the money—they were paying the same money or more per immigrant—but they weren't coming to Ontario, so the money dropped off. Were they expecting more money for less people? That was their answer: They complained that they aren't getting fair help from the government. Well, they actually increased it, but when you're not getting the results—I think I've heard that many times—then don't expect the money.

Nobody knows that more than our small businesses. If they don't get the results, they don't stay in business. These are people who have borrowed everything they could or everything they can to make a go of it. They employ people. Every time you turn around, it's like a bad word, you know: "Jeez, here's a businessman making some money," but in actual fact the people making the money sometimes are the banks, because all they're doing is increasing their debt load to stay alive, hoping that things will go back the way they used to be.

I think if we want, as a province, to get back to the way we used to be, back to being the leader in Canada, then we've got to take some steps and make some hard decisions on where we're putting this money, and they aren't going to be popular, but there have to be some tough decisions. We've got to look at them at the end of the day and say, "We did what had to be done." I think those are the policies you'll see under the PC government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments? The member for—

Mr. Mario Sergio: York West.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): York West. Thank you.

Mr. Mario Sergio: I was waiting for my other colleagues, but I guess they didn't put in a speaker.

I'm very pleased to make some comments, absolutely, with respect to the member from I believe it's Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry.

1730

I have to pick up on a couple of points that he has made, especially when he says, "Look at the feds: They have a hard time; they have to make decisions." We are another level of government, but we're still dealing with representing the same people. So they have difficult decisions, and they have to make those difficult decisions. We have to make difficult decisions, and we have been making those difficult decisions.

The fact is that I hear so much in the House about the southwest fund and the eastern development fund and stuff like that. I say this is a wonderful thing. Why are we criticizing and not supporting the creation of jobs and bringing prosperity to those regions?

There are in the eastern region alone, in this particular development fund, some 113 projects, serving 13 counties and 13 municipalities. I am sure that those municipalities are filled with working people, families, in all

kinds of businesses and sectors. They all have families; they all have kids to go to school; they all need a good education; they all need good health care. Why wouldn't or shouldn't we support those particular communities?

I think it's a wonderful opportunity to put partisanship aside, to say, "We'd like to support the eastern fund and the northern Ontario heritage fund as well. We'd like to support the southwestern fund."

All in all, it's our people; it's their jobs; it's their livelihood. I think it's a good thing to do.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: First, I want to comment on the remarks being made by our side, which I believe pretty much summarized our concerns. The member who I can tell you speaks with some experience is the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry. He's an engineer, and I think he was on council as well. I thought he added value.

I'm also impressed that the member from York West commented. The Liberals today have not been participating in this. They're trying to sort of play the games here, as they are. The bill has been to committee and has come back substantially amended—almost totally rewritten, to be honest.

To me, there are two or three things going on here. The member from York West said that it should be a priority to have prosperity in every region, and I couldn't agree with him more. But what we have in Ontario now is quite the opposite. The unfortunate dilemma of eight years of taxing and spending has pretty well ruined Ontario's opportunities. But you have created these political slush funds, we call them, in eastern Ontario and for the southwestern Ontario fund, along with the northern Ontario heritage fund.

It's important for members of the public—you should know that there are sections where it reinforces that at least seven of the persons appointed to—there must be two boards, to start with, like there is for the northern heritage fund, which is somewhat different. There must be seven political appointments to each one. But it does say clearly that at the end of the day, the minister can scrub it all and just overrule any of the work done by the committee. It's a political reality.

Now, they've excluded—this is important, given that Barrie is excluded and Oshawa is excluded. Oshawa has passed a resolution asking why they've been excluded. They're not in the eastern fund; they're not in the southwest fund. They're in the GTA. Who said the GTA is doing well? We have the highest unemployment ever—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: Speaker, it probably is almost painful to hear me speak again in here, because I think I have done a hit on almost every speaker.

But I think a few of my colleagues have already pointed out—my colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry has 20 years of experience. He speaks

from sitting on a committee. In fact, I am told—and some people on the other side might want to pay attention to this—he still has the binders, so he has the facts of how this was developed and what it was supposed to be and what it was supposed to have accomplished over the years.

Speaker, we just can't lose sight, as I've said in here every time today. There are more bills that we should be speaking about. We need to take fundamental change to where our province is going, and this bill is nothing more than a wedge issue. It's just trying to take, again, focus—it's like what they're doing with Ornge. We want to get to the bottom of Ornge. They want to bring something in that has absolutely nothing to do with the real issues that we should be facing today. We want to talk about the real budget, the structural deficit they're running—\$15.3 billion and a \$411-billion debt, in eight years, might I add, that they have created. And it's all someone else's problem. The world is beautiful. It's rose-coloured glasses. Just keep saying, "That darned old recession," you know?

All the other provinces in Confederation—if I'm not mistaken, all the other provinces in Confederation faced the exact same economic downturn, but they've all come out of it okay. They have made the tough decisions. They've stopped the spending. I could not believe, in this budget, that we were talking austerity, and 14 out of 24 ministries received a spending increase. This is doing nothing. This is just adding another fund to wedge more people. It's going to start pitting region against region.

My colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings, I think, really encapsulated it. Why are we not putting in a province-wide solution for a province-wide problem? We're all in this together. We're all facing the same issues. So why do you pick one here and pick one there? Speaker, we just can't support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We have time for one last question or comment. The member for Prince Edward–Hastings.

Mr. Todd Smith: Well, thank you very much. I know people aren't getting tired of hearing me speak.

Some 31,000 jobs lost in May in the province of Ontario—I go back to this report that came out on Friday of last week; 31,000 jobs disappeared—full-time jobs too—disappeared in the province.

Here's the story, again, from the Windsor Star that appeared. It says, "Welcome to Windsor. 'The Place to Be!' Unemployment Capital of Canada." The jobless rate is 9.9% in Windsor. So, yes, I understand why you would want to have some kind of a solution that would work to create jobs in southwestern Ontario. That makes sense. But the member from Peterborough who was up earlier this afternoon and speaking about the 14 or 16 different companies in his riding that have received money from the eastern Ontario development fund can boast an unemployment rate of 9.2% in Peterborough. The second-highest unemployment rate in all of Canada is in his riding in Peterborough. Clearly, the EODF isn't the silver bullet. It's not the be-all, end-all. It's not going to fix the

problems that our province is currently faced with, where we have extreme unemployment for 65 months now; five and a half years, unemployment exceeding the national average—never heard of before in the province of Ontario until this government took office.

My colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry knows extremely well how the EODF works. As my colleague from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound just described, he's been involved with the EODF for many years as a former mayor and now, as a member of provincial Parliament. I'm not exactly sure why his intentions were to come here to Queen's Park, but I believe it has to do with finding solutions that are going to make the province work again and become the powerhouse of Canada once again. He's on the right track. We need the government to get on the right track too.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments. I return to the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for his response.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'd like to thank the people that spoke on my behalf from York West, Durham, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and Prince Edward–Hastings.

It's interesting, the member from York West talked about education. I'll just talk about post-secondary. I believe Ontario is the lowest contributor to post-secondary in the country. As well, the tuition rates are the highest in the country. I can tell you that from first-hand because I have three children: one that finished two years ago, one last year and one that's still going to school. It's expensive. Tuition in the engineering program was over \$8,000. I can appreciate what you have to pay, but when I look at Quebec, and they're less than 50% of what we're paying here—so there are alternatives.

We talked about the ringing of the bells. I go back to what people in my riding are saying: "You've got to do something to slow this government down, something to stop the spending." Their biggest question is, "What happened? How could this government get back in after its record?"

1740

I know we weren't ringing the bells to slow down this government's spending, but maybe that was a benefit that we didn't see when we came up with what we thought would be a fair plan to put a little pressure on for this committee.

They've got to start looking at where they're throwing the money around. You've got to wonder—it's like throwing spaghetti against the wall to see if it sticks. Obviously, we can see from some of these unemployment numbers that they aren't.

People will go back—if you run a wise household where you can actually retire with a good retirement—it's about spending wisely. More important is what you don't spend. I think that that is a lesson we have to learn here. It's public money; it's not ours. We want to make sure we use it wisely.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: I've been waiting patiently all day to speak to this bill. I've been here since 1 o'clock, listening earnestly to this debate from all sides of the House. The NDP have spoken, the Liberals have spoken, and colleagues on my side of the House from Chatham–Kent–Essex, Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, Prince Edward–Hastings, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, and finally, good old Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound have had the opportunity to share our views.

I respect the views of each person in this House. We obviously look at very different things from very different perspectives. I think what we've seen here today is that the Conservatives have very much said this is where we're at. We're looking at it from the perspective of where are we today, what is the reality of our world we're living in, and what do we need to be doing, all in the context of what this bill's supposed attempts are supposed to be.

Mr. Speaker, I ran for office because I care about the future for my boys, my sons Zach and Ben. I put almost everything that comes through this House through that filter: Will this be beneficial to them, or will it not be beneficial to them? Is this a good idea that's going to benefit them and their colleagues and all of the children of the people in this House, or not? This bill, to me, does nothing to remotely help my sons down the road. In fact, as I've said numerous times today, more than anything it's a wedge issue. It's not really going to do the things that I believe they're purporting it to do.

I kind of take a thought process like this: If we didn't have 600,000 people unemployed—31,000 just in the month of May, and we're adding 2,000 last week from GM, and 60,000 more from the horse racing industry not too far down the road. If we didn't have that many people unemployed, we mightn't need handouts and this seat-saver, seat-buying program, and this would all be moot.

If we didn't have the highest energy rates in North America—not just in Canada, but in the whole continent—46% and rising is what those rates are, and they're predicted to go even higher. We're actually paying the US and Quebec almost half a billion dollars of our taxpaying families' hard-earned money to support their industry and give them—with a bonus and a red ribbon tied on. That's unconscionable. If we didn't do that, we might not have to be in a position to do this seat-saver, seat-buyer program.

If we didn't have some of the highest tax rates in the world, we might have more businesses, not less, and we wouldn't need to, again, prop them up and entice them with these sweet deals. I believe my colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings was able to recount the fact that 92% of the dollars in the eastern Ontario development fund went to Liberal-held ridings and their projects.

If we didn't have a \$15.3-billion deficit, heading towards a \$411-billion debt that they've accumulated in eight years in office; if we had equity as a province; if we actually had money in the bank that we could spend, we might actually be able to look at this in a different light.

Earlier I talked a little bit about why we in the government are looked at as having to provide funding for new

businesses or expanding businesses. We have private lenders, and I must congratulate our Canadian banking system, because we are one of the countries that have come through this economic downturn relatively well. Thank goodness for them and that they had practices and protocols in place to protect all of us. I would suggest that it might be good and conducive for the government on the other side of the House to take a look at some of those protocols and not allow themselves to continue to overspend, and we mightn't be having some of these discussions.

If we had hope; if we had a thriving economy where business drives the economy and government provides the environment and the guideline and the regulation and gets out of the way, then again, I don't think we would be having these discussions, and we wouldn't have to be deemed to be the group that has to give the handouts.

This is a fundamental, core, principal premise that our party is working from: You cannot continue to dole out \$15.3 billion more than you actually take in. I would be remiss if I didn't say that in the last number of years, we've had higher than normal revenues. We've had the highest revenues we've ever had, and yet they're still running up structural deficits. And yet they come with programs like this, espousing to help those businesses and help those areas of our jurisdictions that we come from. It's nothing more than a wedge issue. If we had money in the bank, we would be looking at this in a totally different thought process.

I want to just make sure, before I leave this point, that if we were to do it—and I believe my colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings raised this—why are we doing this patchwork quilt? Why do places like Barrie, Muskoka, Hamilton, Durham and even the GTA not have a development fund? Why do we pick and choose? Why are we not doing a province-wide solution for a province-wide issue? It really, really concerns me that we're continually being divisive and trying to—we hear the rhetoric on the other side of the House: “We have to work together. We have to pull together and be collaborative.” This is not collaborative policy-making.

Speaker, I will, and I did before, earlier today, go on record saying—and I'll make it very clear—I'll be the first person fighting, kicking, screaming and hollering to ensure that Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound gets its fair share if this development fund goes forward. That's the right thing to do. It's no different than lots of people say in the solar industry—“Why would I not go and put my hand out if they're stupid enough to pay me those kind of rates?” You can't argue that logic from a business decision, and I'm no different. I'll be there every day of the week making sure that we get our fair share—and it won't be a 92%, like it unfortunately happened in Prince Edward–Hastings, for Liberal-held projects.

But my concern is, we can't play those games. We need to be honest with the taxpayers of Ontario. We need to ensure that we are using their dollars—and let's not forget, this isn't Liberal dollars we're spending; this is taxpayer of Ontario dollars. We need to ensure we're

spending every single dollar with a value and an output coming out the other end so that we can stand here proudly and say, “I made the right decision.” This is not going to take us in that direction. It's just unfortunate that we want to keep playing these games of rhetoric; we want to play the spin-doctoring and gamesmanship when we're in such dire fiscal situations.

Speaker, I asked before in this House, and I'll ask it again—most of our country has been founded on, someone comes up with a great idea. The entrepreneurial spirit has driven our province and, in fact, our country forward. Someone has an idea, they go out and say, “Hey, I think I can sell this to the people, the consumers of our area,” and they find a way to finance that. Typically, you go through a lending institution. Very quickly, someone from the NDP or the Liberals, when I last broached this subject, jumped up and said, “But the banks won't lend to small business.” Well, what have you done for the last eight years to change that environment? What have you done to help those small businesses who are going to be the driver of our economy? The large manufacturing business has, for the most part, moved on. That's a different decade. The bulk of our economic engine now is going to be small and mid-size business. So I suggest, rather than debating this bill that does absolutely nothing other than create wedges and make it sound good in 30-second sound bites, why aren't we debating that? What can we do to work collaboratively with our banking institutions to ensure we have opportunities for our small businesses?

Why do we need these grants? We've become, again—everybody, my riding included—“Mr. Walker, can you get me some government money?” Well, you know what? I show them the picture. There's \$15.3 billion that we're paying interest on right now; \$10 billion, our third largest expenditure. Most of the people that I speak to the first time have no idea that's the fiscal mess we're in. So why are we not doing things to get that number down? Typically, to the NDP, they're always concerned about the programs that we're not providing for people. Well, just think what we could do program-wise in this province if we weren't spending \$10 billion on just the interest payment alone.

Speaker, we need to get our heads out of the sand. We need to fess up when we mess up, as one of my colleagues certainly says.

Mr. John O'Toole: Fess up.

Mr. Bill Walker: Fess up and mess up.

Speaker, if they would put half as much effort into clearing the red tape, the bureaucracy, the administration that we put on our current businesses—I have a number of businesses in my riding right now that have come to me and said, “Mr. Walker, we need to make some changes. We cannot get through the layers of bureaucracy to keep our business going, and if we don't do that”—they're getting answers like, “We'll get back to you in 12, 14, 16, 18 months with an answer.” What business can thrive and survive if they have to wait 14 months for an environmental approval? It's ludicrous.

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We have to change our thought process. The old days are gone, when we had tons of money sitting in the bank. We're not the economic engine anymore, sadly, and we don't have surpluses sitting in our bank account. We're in a big, big black hole—I would like to say red. We need to change the way we think. We can't continue—

Hon. John Milloy: You say red—

Mr. Bill Walker: I will say red because there's a lot of red ink bleeding, dripping by the pailfuls, unfortunately, Mr. House leader. It's scary. Yet you show no concern for that. An austerity budget that's bleeding red ink, and you still add 14 ministries with increased spending—unbelievable.

Hon. John Milloy: And horse racing: You're in favour of that. What about horse racing?

Mr. Bill Walker: You are absolutely correct: I'm in favour of horse racing because there's 60,000 jobs. We have 600,000 people out of work and you're going to add 60,000 in rural Ontario? Maybe you should come and visit one of our racetracks, Mr. House leader on the opposite side.

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: You keep talking; you're helping me out every day you say that, because the people in my riding understand how critical this is to our economy—to not take them for granted, not pay attention to them and show them disrespect by not even inviting them to the table before you bring in your so-called collaborative stakeholder consultations—thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to continue on. I'm supposed to be bringing everything through you and not debating, so I apologize for that. But Mr. Speaker, it's very important, I believe, that we start looking at this from a perspective of, what are we doing as 107 elected people to get our province back on the rails, to ensure we become again the economic driver of Canada and have policies, processes and protocols in place that are going to ensure that we have new businesses wanting to come to Ontario? We have businesses that want to expand in Ontario. We have people who will come from other parts of the world. But you know what? They're starting to go, "Why would I go to Ontario? Why would I do that when it's the highest taxes," when we've got the highest energy rates, when we've got 600,000 people employed? Why would we not go to Manitoba or—goodness gracious, not Alberta? That's almost a sin word for people on the other side of the House because Alberta has actually got a thriving economy which—let's not forget, we are a huge supplier to that industry, and that might be our opportunity to get out of this hole they've dug us into, but not if we keep discrediting them and using those types of tactics and ploys.

This morning, Monte McNaughton from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex made a very convincing argument. He said, "Why do we not support this bill?" I may be paraphrasing, but at the end of the day, it comes down to principles. We have debt and deficit that we've never seen in our province or in our country. Ontario is going

to soon have more debt than the rest of Confederation if we don't soon make some bold, drastic decisions. We need to be talking about those things, not bills like this that are just wedging more regions against regions. He talked about job woes, and I've already talked about that: 600,000 people unemployed—2,000 people from GM and 60,000 from the horse racing industry that will soon be on the dole, which is unfortunate. We cannot continue to go there.

Another principle: increased spending. Again, in good conscience, with my children—my boys are 15 and 18. They're soon going to be out in the world, fending for themselves. Mr. Walker doesn't have the money to pay for them. I don't have that huge bank account that someone else is paying for to just say, "Yes, you go and do whatever you want, boys. It will all be good. It will be rose-coloured glasses, and we're wonderful." I'm being very frank with them. I'm telling them to take deficit financing 101 in school, and that's what some of the members on the opposite side should be doing as well, I think, because they obviously don't understand that fundamental of you can't continue adding to the debt.

We had revenues of \$35 billion last year, I believe, and expenditures of over \$45 billion. I'm not a mathematician, I didn't take accounting in school, but I know in my own household, if I just break those numbers—a lot of people can't get this "billion" stuff. That's just too far out there, way too many zeroes. But let's break it down to \$350 and \$450. Week after week, month after month, you can't bring in \$350, spend \$450 and keep your house afloat or your car loan afloat or your school loans afloat. You need to make responsible, diligent decisions and live within your means. This government is not doing that. This bill is going to add, again—they're using the "\$20 million" number, but over the years, it's about \$160 million, dollars that we don't have in our bank account to write the cheque. We're going to these young people in front of you and saying, "Hope you're okay with it, but we're going to mortgage your future and probably your grandchildren's future just because we want to be able to say, 'Everything is all right. It's going to be all right. We're good. We're going to add more programs and we're going to add more money wherever you need it.'"

Do they ever say no, except when we have a good idea? That's the only time I hear them saying no.

Speaker, we talk a fair bit in here, as well, about—this bill is not really even required. My understanding—I wasn't here; I'm a newbie. I just came on October 6, 2011—2011, sorry. I thought it was a Liberal thing there. I just—

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: Exponential.

I'm told that the eastern development fund was implemented without a bill having to be brought to this House and debated the way we are today. So if it was such a good thing and it's so great for southwestern Ontario, why would this government, which is continually

accused by us of never taking action and getting anything done to help our province, not have just implemented it? Why would they bring it into this House and have to go through all of this, when we have things back-logged beyond belief that we don't ever get to? Why are we spending hours and hours and hours about this? If it's such a good thing, I would actually respect them more if they just said, "We're going ahead."

They didn't seem to want to stop and debate anything about the horse racing industry. They're not really consulting with the doctors' community right now. They've walked away from the table. They've said, "There are two ways to do things: my way and my way. Thanks for coming out, by the way." They're doing it with the teachers. This isn't consultation. This isn't doing the things that we need to do as a province when we use those rhetorical words of "collaboration" and "working in partnership."

What we need, Speaker, is some honesty and some sincerity. We need to actually debate the true issues that are going to have a huge impact on what our future is going to be for our kids and grandkids.

Why are we not talking more about the things that they need to have done, or not to have done, for the last eight years, instead of bringing in a bill like this, which is really just rehashing and creating wedge issues?

I go on record again to say it is a wedge issue, from that whole premise I just spoke about. This could be done and gone and the money there. If you've got all this money sitting in the bank, why isn't it out helping these small businesses that you purport to be not helping the way we're doing it? Why aren't you out doing it? Why aren't you cutting some of the ABCs—over 600 administrations out there that I believe are not adding value in every single place. We have committed already—my friend Todd Smith from Prince Edward-Hastings is prepared to go across this province to talk to the groups and organizations and find out what's providing value and not providing value.

Those are the things we should be debating. Why are we continuing to pay for administration and bureaucracy that provides absolutely no value—as opposed to this bill, which, to my knowledge, is not going to do much of anything?

I point your attention, Mr. Speaker, because I know someone over there will say I'm negative because I'm bringing out reality—difference of words, difference of interpretation. Reality is where we are today and how we view the world.

I will say, though, on a positive note, I do like the fact—and I believe our colleague across the floor, in his rendition, stated that he believes that MPPs of any political stripe and colour, when there's an announcement made by government, should be there, and I 100% fully respect and support that. I just wish every member would do that, because we are all elected equally by the people of our respective ridings. So that piece that section 3 of the act sets out, I believe that.

What I do have some concerns with—and it's typical of many of these types of things. There's not a lot in the detail—a whole bunch of the broad-brush at the top; "We'll get back to you with the details." These appointments for the boards: Do we have any control over that, that it won't be non-partisan, so that we don't have a situation like Prince Edward-Hastings referred to, that 92% of funds were doled out to Liberal-friendly projects?

Speaker, we need to be accountable to the people of Ontario. We have a lot of empathy in the world—sorry; apathy, not empathy. We probably need some empathy. We have a lot of apathy in the world, where people are saying, "I'm not going to go out and vote because what does it matter? Those people are all not there for the right reasons. They're padding their own backyards, they're setting up these schemes, they're wasting billions of dollars—the Oakville gas plant, the Mississauga gas plant, the eHealth boondoggle."

How do we give them faith? We give them faith when we do things right. We put the partisan stuff aside and say, "Look, let's come together," like the rhetorical words, "and let's work together." Let's ensure that we're actually taking ideals and ideas and we're putting action plans in place that are actually going to move them forward; we're going to cut debt, we're going to reduce spending because that's the right thing to do; we're going to have an action plan to create jobs; we're not going to go back to 15 more panels and add more study and add more paperwork; we're not going to bring in people like Don Drummond, a hand-picked expert, who gave them a blueprint—they could call it a red print if they feel the need—but a blueprint of how things will actually go forward so that we get out of the debt hole that they put us in.

Over eight years, they've doubled the debt of the rest of our entire history, Speaker. So we need to ensure that when we're looking at these types of things, we're not just glossing over the rhetorical spin, we're not just side-stepping, like certain people on the other side of the House do when there's a real issue, such as the Ornge select committee that we tried to get for so long so we can actually get to the bottom of those scandals and put protocols in place so that they never, ever happen again and put the people of Ontario in an unsafe position and in a spot where their safety could be minimalized.

Speaker, this bill is just a bunch of paper, like so many that come forward. We're wasting enormous amounts of time talking about it. I've spent probably in this House today close to an hour talking about this, with all the time put together. You know what? The principle is—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Exactly.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'm glad you respect it, member on the other side, because I always listen intently to you, so thank you for your opinion.

You know what? That's the challenge. Rather than saying, "Let's come together and let's find some common ground," and moving forward with actual actions that are going to get this province out of the hole they've dug us into, they want to spin that type of stuff.

Well, I'm not here for that. I'm here to ensure that we do the right things. I will not support this bill, because it doesn't do the three fundamental things that we've been principled about: It doesn't create jobs with a credible plan that's action-oriented; it doesn't reduce spending, which we definitely have to do when we're \$15.3 billion in debt; and it doesn't reduce the debt over the long term

or the short term, to ensure that our kids and grandkids have a future to look forward to. Thank you, Speaker.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1801.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
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Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
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Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre de Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	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	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Innovation / Ministre du Développement économique et de l'Innovation
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	

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Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	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	
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
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Jane McKenna
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