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(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 12 June 2012**

**Mardi 12 juin 2012**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 12 June 2012

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 12 juin 2012

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

ONTARIO ELECTRICITY SYSTEM  
OPERATOR ACT, 2012

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 7, 2012, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I would like to pick up where I left off on June 7, I believe. To the viewer, I was giving a complete breakdown, from the Macdonald commission to where we are today.

I have the privilege in my riding of having three academic people who are experts in the area, plus a couple of former deputy ministers who have helped me understand this file. As I said before, let's not be fooled. Tell us where we are today, and this will set it for the future. The real facts are that Premier McGuinty has pretty well ruined the entire electricity system in Ontario.

When I say that, the proof is in the price. At the end of the day, right now, the energy board and others have commented on the price of energy. The price of energy is up 46% in Ontario. It's completely unacceptable. How do I know this? In fact, one of the things they introduced was a 10% rebate on seniors' hydro bills. Really, what that is is an admission that they'd gone too far, too fast, on price. The consumers in all our ridings—and if they're not saying so, they're not listening to their consumers—are struggling when they open their hydro bill.

What's really important, to bring it up to date: Tim Hudak and our critic Vic Fedeli—we've had some pretty important consultations to develop a draft paper. The draft paper the viewer should look up is *Paths to Prosperity*. It's a fundamental difference of opinion between them and us, but it has, I think, five or six extremely important points for discussion. That's what this discussion paper is about. In the few minutes that I have left, I'm just going to run through a couple of them.

One is to monetize Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One. That's probably bringing public sector pensions into a very stable investment environment. I would suspect that less than 50% of that would be in public ownership, to the extent that it would be owned by public sector pensions.

Proposal number two is to abolish the 33% transfer tax to change cost efficiency of consolidations of the LDCs, the local distribution companies. I believe that process is sort of under way right now, in fact. I was talking to the Minister of Energy yesterday. He didn't say the goal was to have fewer of them, but that's clearly what the plan is.

Here's another one: Establish a new power rate for manufacturing and resource-based industries, like mining and pulp and paper, and those industries that are struggling. It's amazing. This morning, I believe the Minister of Energy as well as the Minister of Economic Development, Mr. Bentley and Mr. Duguid, are going to make an announcement very similar to this. They're going to come up with an industrial hydro rate. I have it on good authority that's going to happen this morning.

But this is what they do: They copy all of Tim Hudak's ideas. We want the right amount of power in the right place at the right time at the right price. All I can say is this: The power rate in the McGuinty government is a social policy. A power rate under a Tim Hudak government would be an economic policy. That's the meddling that has caused such grief in the system today—not to mention the unfortunate dilemma we find ourselves in with the whole global adjustment. People should look up the global adjustment and realize that industry in Ontario now is paying an exorbitant rate. What is it? It's the shortfall between the cost of energy and the price they're paying for the FIT energy. This is a file that has been so mixed up and screwed up—pardon my language; I hope that's in order—messed up, I can say, that they should actually withdraw what they've done and have a look at this proposal, this white paper.

The idea of Bill 75 is to merge the OPA and the IESO. We said in our election document that we'd get rid of the OPA—a complete waste of bureaucrats—toast. It's

saving money and saving the taxpayers and saving the electricity system of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Thanks very much, Madam Speaker. I listened to my friend from Durham very carefully. Having had the opportunity to be the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy, we all are aware—I do have Bill 75 here. Take a look at Bill 75. We're aware that on any given day in the province of Ontario we need 14,700 megawatts of baseload capacity—principally Darlington, Pickering and Bruce, the run-of-the-river, of course, at Beck and lower Temagami, those other opportunities.

I have always consulted widely on electricity, because of the great work that is done by the Peterborough Utilities services, one of the largest municipally owned public utilities in the province of Ontario. I would consult with the former CEO, Bob Lake; Larry Doran, who is a former vice-president of the old Ontario Hydro; and of course John Stephenson, who is the current CEO of Peterborough Utilities services. Plus we have GE Hitachi in Peterborough, and GE's long tradition in the nuclear industry, and indeed the run-of-the-river development. They provide great insight. They've all provided insight on Bill 75 as a way to move forward.

The OPA, which has traditionally looked after the demand management file, is looking forward to the future and looking at the IESO, which is frankly like the general sitting in front of a grid in Maple, Ontario, looking at all the generators that are going on in terms of producing electricity, and matching demand and supply on any given day. There's an opportunity to have a great discussion on this file.

I just want to note on Darlington, it's interesting when you look at the debt profile of Darlington, which I have. The debt that was issued in 1979, 1980 and 1981 by the old Ontario Hydro were the long-term Ontario Hydro bonds. The rate of interest on those, you may want to know, is 19%, 20%, 21%, for 50 years, held by all the major banks—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. Further comments and questions? The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, a lovely place, Speaker. It's my pleasure to comment on my colleague from Durham, Mr. O'Toole, on his address on Bill 75. This gentleman understands the electricity sector as well as anybody in this House. He was energy critic for a long time, and he also is home to the Darlington nuclear facility here in the Clarington district, so he understands this sector. What he talks about is exactly right. The failure of this government is what he talks a lot about, in fact not just on this bill, but on a lot of other bills.

When you look at Bill 75—and I'm going to have a chance to speak to this a little later myself, Madam Speaker—you really have to ask yourself, boy, are they on their game, these folks? You know, the game of deflection: When most people are asking themselves, "Why do we have the OPA?" asking themselves, "Why

do we have this \$400-million organization that started out as a virtual agency? Why does it even exist here in the province of Ontario?"—the government knows they're under a lot of heat for the mess that they've perpetrated on the people of Ontario with their screwball electricity policies that have driven up the price of hydro and driven industries out of this province, shut down jobs in this province, yet they persist, because they are so far down that road that they don't know how to escape it themselves. They know it's wrong—they know it's wrong—but they can't reverse course, because you know a Liberal cannot admit that they're wrong. All you've got to do, Madam Speaker, is look at Ornge. All you've got to do is look at Ornge and say, "Can a Liberal admit when they have messed up?" The answer is unequivocally no, and that's what we've got here with Bill 75.

**0910**

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** It's very early in the morning, but I was listening to the member from Durham very carefully, and the last speaker as well. I have to say that what is being proposed—it is time. But what's most important is, we have to realize that the time has come to have a good look at how to do it properly. Other members at different times, of different governments, decided overnight without any consultation, and they went ahead and did it. They would come back into this House week after week, trying to sell bits and pieces, and at the end, they spent five years. They ruined the situation and nothing happened.

At least we are saying, "We're going to do it and we're going to do it right. We're going to take our time and we're going to do it right. We're going to do consultation, we're going to see what is the best thing for the people of Ontario, and that's what is going to happen."

I think the members on the opposite side agree that something should be done. I was here at a time when—I remember my friend Mike Harris and the then minister. They were trying to split it. They were trying to cut it. They were trying to sell it. "What do you want to sell? Which part? What piece?" At the end, they created a real mess and nothing happened.

Because of that particular time, Speaker—I remember you were here—we had that wonderful day called the blackout. We all remember and we don't want to go into that again. We said, "We are going to clean up the air as well," so we started closing the coal-burning generation stations.

We are going to do it, but there is a way of doing it. We understand what is right. We believe in consultation and this is what's going to happen. That's how we're going to do it, and we're going to do it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments or questions?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's great to speak to Bill 75 today, another meaningless bill coming from the Liberal government. This is a bill that I believe is intended to save some money, and \$25 million is what is saved as a result

of this bill when this government has increased the cost of electricity for our consumers by much, much more than that.

It's interesting to note that the member across the way talked about the fact that they're phasing out coal-fired power plants. We haven't had a single coal-fired power plant phased out by this government in nine years, and that's nine years of promising to do just that. Yesterday, here in Toronto, we had another smog day. We've had four smog days already this year in the province of Ontario, and you claim that you're cleaning up the air. Well, you're not doing a very good job, and you're certainly not doing a very good job at managing the fiscal responsibilities of the Ontario government. It's been a complete disaster.

As I pointed out a couple of times yesterday in talking to another bill, Bill 11, in May we lost 31,000 full-time jobs in the province of Ontario. There are a number of reasons for that, but one of the big reasons for that is the cost of electricity, which has soared under this government. The Minister of Energy, Chris Bentley, is here, and he's watched hydro rates soar because of an unaffordable FIT program that's producing huge subsidies. It's paying out huge subsidies to producers. At the same time, while it's paying out huge subsidies to green energy projects, it's cancelling million-dollar—perhaps even billion-dollar—power plants in Oakville and Mississauga.

This is the strategy that this government has? This is a failed strategy. The whole thing is a debacle, it's an embarrassment, it's an energy boondoggle, and it's time that this government woke up and started to make some significant changes to the pattern they have taken. It's driving manufacturers out of the province of Ontario. They're going to the United States, many different states, where the power is cheaper. It used to be the cheapest place in North America to produce right here in Ontario—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The member for Durham has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I very much appreciate the member from Peterborough, also a good friend. But when he mentioned the Beck tunnel, it just typifies the scandalous waste in this government's project. Look at the numbers on the Beck project. The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke is right on many things. He was a very successful energy critic, as our party is. Our party believes it's an economic policy, as opposed to a social policy. The member from York West was agreeing, we need change—but not the way you're changing it. But also, the member from Prince Edward-Hastings put it all together: Really, this is about jobs and the economy, and they've got it wrong. We're shedding jobs. One of the reasons is this failed energy policy.

It's not just me saying it. Just this past week—I'm going to read this, and people will—this is a quiz. Here's the quote; I want to start by introducing it. When you hear the name George Smitherman, remember eHealth, remember the Green Energy Act, and remember the

Ornge helicopter scandal. He was in charge of all of them, and all of them are failed policies. So here's one here; this is a quote: "When the" Green Energy Act "was introduced the" McGuinty "government said that fostering a 'culture of conservation' was just as important as increasing the amount of renewable energy. But three years after its passage, many of the bill's conservation promises remain unfulfilled," and some completely abandoned. That's Gord Miller, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, in his report from last week. They haven't saved one electron; they've probably squandered it all.

The real bottom line here is, be prepared for a government that has lost its focus. In fairness, it's in its third term. It really shouldn't be in its third term, but that's a whole other discussion. I would say this: They have tried, and they have failed.

The real issue here is, without a plan for the future, including renewable energy—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I think the member from Durham has it right: We do have a failed energy policy in place, and it began a long time ago. That's something that the Conservatives don't want to speak about, nor my good friend from Durham, because the failed energy policy started a long time ago. The thing is that once the Conservatives are in opposition, they say, "Stop talking about the past. Focus on the present." I understand that; I do.

We used to have what was called Ontario Hydro. Everybody understood it. It was called Ontario Hydro. There was no confusion about its role. It provided hydro at affordable rates both to serve the citizens of Ontario and to serve our manufacturing industry, on which we depend. It was simple.

When mon ami Mike Harris got elected—God bless—he changed everything around. He turned everything upside down. He wanted to create a market system out of hydro. He felt Ontario hydro was simply too public and too inefficient and, lo and behold, he creates a privatized market. Out of that came all these different names of different functions in Ontario Hydro. He created Hydro One, he created the electricity system operator, he created some other board, whose name escapes me. Then the Liberals came along and say, "No, we've got to try to fix that," and they created the Ontario Power Authority.

So many different bodies doing different things. The public is so utterly confused about who does what, when and how. Imagine that I can't even remember the fourth body, entity, that was created by the previous regime. There's just so many. How do you keep track?

Lo and behold, my Conservative friends all of a sudden say, "We have too many of these bodies." That's why I keep saying, "God bless." They create the mess, and then they say, "We need to solve the mess," and it goes back and forth. It's just like bankers: They create the mess and then they say, "You need us to help solve the mess," and on and on it goes. Like bankers, they

create the mess, and then they say, “But you need us to solve the mess,” and on and on.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What about Amazon hydro? Tell us about it.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Mon ami John Yakabuski from—it’s such a long, long riding—Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. My good friend.

*Interjection.*

**0920**

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You will have an opportunity for two minutes soon. Don’t rush. Take your time.

It used to be so simple. Yes, Darlington was a huge mistake, first of all because some of us believe that nuclear isn’t entirely safe—and, by the way, Minister, it ain’t cheap. If you’ll recall, Darlington was started by the Tories, completed by the Liberals, and then we land on to it in 1990. It was created by both of you—14 billion bucks. Think about that number. My little mind just can’t fathom those big numbers; it just doesn’t, because it’s just a little mind, right? But 14 billion bucks—we’re still paying for it; since 1989 to this day, we’re still paying for Darlington. Something is wrong with that. I know it’s a long time ago and whatever the Tories did is irrelevant now. I understand that. But could they not have just warned us a little bit and said, “By the way, this is going to cost you, citizens and taxpayers”—because Tories love to talk about taxpayers. Taxpayers are on the hook and have been on the hook forever, and it’s not safe and it’s really costly.

So we had Hydro One, simple to understand, and then Mike Harris privatizes the system.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** So should we shut it down, Rosie? Tomorrow? Next week?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Member from Renfrew, please. You’ll have two minutes in a second, or at least in 15 minutes or so.

You privatized the system because you said, “No, we have to let the private market get in because they know how to do it better.” Oh, yes, the private sector knows how to do it better. I can tell you what they know how to do better. They know how to take money from the taxpayers and the citizens of Ontario. They know how to take money and put it in their pockets. They love that. Tories love the private sector when they take the citizens’ money out of their pockets.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I’d remind the member to speak to the bill.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It’s absolutely connected to the bill, Madam Speaker. Everything I’ve said is connected to the bill. Why else would I be saying these things? I do, from time to time, reach deep into the recesses of history as a way of making these links, because without the connection to history you wouldn’t understand why we are here, Madam Speaker, through you to the others. When people have a sense of that history, they remember. They say, “Yes, my God, it did start then, didn’t it?” It started in 1995 when they, the fine Tories of the time, decided a privatized system works, that to put electricity on the spot market was the way to go,

connected to markets and the vagaries of markets—the vagaries of markets that do well for the private sector but not for the citizens of Ontario.

Prices shot through the roof. Why? Because every little private sector that had a piece of it wanted a piece of it for their own gain. No one talks about that in the Conservative ranks, and no one talks about that from the Liberal ranks either. Money is being sifted away, taken out to be given to those who will profit from public power, something our former leader, Howard Hampton, used to talk about. Ontario Hydro was about public power, public in the sense that it belonged to the people of Ontario, public in the sense that we wanted hydro to be produced at affordable rates for the people of Ontario. When you don’t have somebody making money out of it, that’s when you make it more affordable.

When we call for the elimination of many of these boards—Ontario Power Authority and the Independent Electricity System Operator—we think and we thought that that was good, and that’s why we pushed for it years ago. Howard Hampton, our leader, did that for many, many years, when he pointed out that all these multiple entities are simply sucking up so much energy, and money to boot. Then the Tories followed suit and they thought it was a good idea to merge some of these bodies. Merging these two entities New Democrats believe is a good thing.

There are some problems that I think are negatives, and they’re connected to the merger of these two bills because something else is happening. The merger allows for clarity, for better efficiencies and for savings, because you don’t have two different entities making loads of money doing different things. There are savings to be had, and we agree with that. New Democrats believe there are savings to be had, and we agree with that. But the government is doing something else in the bill that we think has negatives that need to be debated and need to be sent to committee for discussion and clarity.

The way they’ve gone about doing the bill, it removes the independent planning and review required by the present supply planning regime. This is something the NDP does not support. I would like the Liberals to speak to this idea of what has happened to that independent planning and review.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** But you wanted it to be simpler.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Sorry?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You wanted it to be simpler.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You’re quite right. But we don’t want the independent planning and review to disappear. You will agree with that, Minister, I think.

Those are the matters that we want to talk about, the merger to form the Ontario Electricity System Operator—look how difficult it is just to pronounce these names. You can’t even get it out of your lips, so difficult they are. We are creating now the Ontario Electricity System Operator. You, good citizens: You figure it out. It’s a good idea, but we feel strongly that by eliminating

what's called the integrated power system plan—yet another acronym, IPSP; look at all these acronyms. The government is eliminating the current integrated power system plan, which gives the public an opportunity to be able to participate in the energy planning process.

The involvement of citizens, the involvement of their environmental groups, is greatly reduced by its elimination. “Why is the government doing that?” is the question that New Democrats have and that citizens who are following this particular merger have raised with us, and I'm sure they've raised it with you as well. The government hasn't spoken to this yet that I am aware of.

Bill 75 removes the Ontario Power Authority's power and duty to develop an integrated power system plan for approval by the Ontario Energy Board, and the Ontario Energy Board's power and duty to review that plan for economic prudence, cost effectiveness and regulatory compliance. The integrated power system plan is now replaced by the ministerial energy plans—which sounds good, because if the minister is doing them, one would say, “It must be okay.” The problem is, it's a question of who is in power. You might have good people in that position who might want to do the right thing, but you never know who's going to be there from time to time.

“So when the minister is now in control and is the one who has control of the energy plan, what happens?” is the question we ask. The minister must consult with the Ontario Energy Board on the impact of the energy plan on consumers, electricity bills and on methods of managing that impact. The minister must also refer the plan to the Ontario Energy Board for a review of the estimated capital costs in the plan, in accordance with the referral. This is what we say is a far cry from the independent review—my God, these names—of the IPSP by the Ontario Energy Board that is presently required. It deprives the stakeholders of the ability to test in a proceeding before the Ontario Energy Board the government's energy and procurement plans and the consequent effects of those plans on rates.

By removing the Ontario Energy Board explicitly in the energy planning process, Bill 75 blurs the distinction between the functions of the OESO and the Ontario Energy Board. The OESO is the new Ontario Electricity System Operator. You people have to just really pay close attention to these functions because I forget them, and I have to keep referring to all these different bodies.

**0930**

The NDP is worried about the merger of these functions under one roof. For example, the Ontario Power Authority currently has the responsibility to make and implement procurement processes for the integrated power system plan, and the Independent Electricity System Operator's regulation of market participants includes potential parties to the Ontario Power Authority procurement. Therein lies the potential for conflict of interest. How does the government deal with the fact that these two functions are under the same roof, managed by one operator? We think it's possible to separate the two, but it's probably not that easy, and we want the government

to comment on how they're going to be able to do that. The minister understands this and does say that he or she will take back the responsibility for procurement decisions, and then adds that “The board of directors of the OESO is required to ensure that there is an effective separation of functions and activities of the OESO relating to its market operations and its procurement and contract management activities. The OESO is prohibited from conducting itself in a manner that could unduly advantage or disadvantage any market participant or any party to a procurement contract or interfere with, reduce or impede a market participant's non-discriminatory access to transmission systems or distribution systems. The board of directors is also required to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.” However, this new entity will still have the power and responsibility to implement the minister's procurement decisions. It is not immediately clear how the board of directors of the OESO will keep these conflicting functions separate without in effect keeping the two former organizations separate under one roof.

These are some of the conflicts that we believe need to be sorted out by the government and need to be sorted out in committee. What we need are plenty of public hearings to hear what the environmentalists, in particular, have to say about the loss of the independent review. Without that, we feel we could be committing an error as we do something good. As we merge these two bodies we could, by either intentional or unintentional purposes, create problems that we need to deal with. I'm not quite sure whether the minister knows that or he feels that somehow these two functions can be dealt with appropriately under this new board, but we don't see that yet. So if the minister has a better sense of how we can separate these two functions so that we do not create a conflict of interest, I would love to hear that.

Madam Speaker, these are the comments that I have. I know that our critic will have a lot more to say when he does his lead, but we wanted to be able to put this on the record for the moment. We think that by having the public hearings, some of this will be sorted out and the merger, in the end, will be a public good for all.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** It was a pleasure to listen, as it always is, to my colleague the member from Trinity–Spadina. What we are dealing with today, Madam Speaker, is second reading of Bill 75, An Act to amend the Electricity Act, 1998 to amalgamate the Independent Electricity System Operator and the Ontario Power Authority, to amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 and to make complementary amendments to other Acts. I think this is exactly what is being discussed today, and nothing else. Listening to the member from Trinity–Spadina, this is exactly what we are doing today. He's asking for expansive consultation, public consultation, to send it to a committee, and I think if we can move the bill from the House to do that, then we are on our way to providing the people of Ontario with a very transparent method of dealing with a very important issue.

This has been on the books for quite some time. It didn't begin with us today; this began years ago. As my friend says, let's delve into the past a little bit.

I have to say that this heading here is quite appropriate: "Cuts to Our Past Harm Our Future." Wow. If this had been a *[inaudible]* maybe 20 years ago, we would have said "Nuts." But looking at the past, today we are seeing how true it was, and all the cuts that were effected years and years ago we are paying for today.

We are paying, still, the so-called stranded debt. How did we accumulate the stranded debt? We are paying it today, and it is because of the cuts of yesterday, but we don't want to leave them anymore for tomorrow. So, Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you.

The member for Parry Sound–Muskoka.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to have a chance to comment on Bill 75, the Ontario Electricity System Operator Act, 2012. As you've heard, this bill is about joining a couple of agencies, the Independent Electricity System Operator, the IESO, and the Ontario Power Authority.

Of course, we know that the Ontario Power Authority was a new agency created by the McGuinty government that was supposed to be a transitional agency, but as we now see, it has grown, so that it now has gone through some \$375 million in the last number of years. It has 87 people making over \$100,000 a year.

So our party's position is that we shouldn't be joining this with another agency; we should be just doing away with the Ontario Power Authority. We made that very clear in the past election. That's our policy: We should just do away with it and save all the money.

The issue that certainly you hear about if you're back in your riding is energy prices, and the huge driver of that is this government's feed-in tariff program, the green energy program, where they just come up with these crazy subsidies where they're paying so much for electricity that's really not playing any significant role in the electricity needs across the province, and you sure hear about it when you go around to your riding and talk to people who just don't understand why their electricity bills have gone up so dramatically under the McGuinty government.

Our solution to this debate today, though, is just to do away with the Ontario Power Authority. Don't join it with another agency.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's always fun to listen to my friend from Trinity–Spadina. I think he did a very good job of delineating a fundamental ideological difference that exists in this House, and that is between the public ownership of necessities for the province and the people of Ontario and the privatization of those same necessities.

You know, there's a real myth about privatization—that it's more efficient. It's not, and we've proven it over and over again in this House. The recent example that

comes to mind is Ornge, of course, but there have been many over the years. Private is not cheaper, and it is not more efficient. In fact, when you think about it—I used to be in business—the very essence of business is to make a profit. Now, if you're going to charge the same, the profit has to come from somewhere, so you either dampen wages or the product you produce or the profit doesn't come. So an efficient public service is absolutely what we need.

For my friends on the right here, quite ideologically and also literally, all you have to do is look at a time in history when everything was private to see how that looks. And that time, we know very well, was the time of Charles Dickens. If you want to go that route, with child labour and everything else—I mean, that's libertarianism, truly. That's what it looks like. We've done that experiment and it failed—I think we can all agree on that—so obviously we need to move forward from that.

My friend delineated what are some of the problems in this way of moving forward, but the bottom line is, necessities should be public. That's our DNA in the NDP. From medicare to power, they should be public. Now, just because they're public doesn't mean they're efficient either, so obviously oversight has to happen.

**0940**

We have also been very critical of bodies like the LHINs, for example. We don't need new levels of bureaucracy; we don't need overpaid—and by overpaid public servants, I'm not talking about the people who are making \$60,000 a year; I'm talking about the people who are making \$6 million a year. Those should not exist.

That's where we stand, and I thank the member from Trinity–Spadina for delineating that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It's a pleasure to rise to speak to the comments by the member for Trinity–Spadina. I think the most important thing that we can do in this discussion around electricity is actually move away from ideology altogether. What we want is a system that's well run and what we want is a system that's clean and efficient.

I can remember, when I was campaigning for the election in the fall of 2003, that the thing that was on people's minds most of all was power. The energy supply was not working; there were brownouts, blackouts; it was a very bad time for power in the province. I heard over and over again that we need more clean energy generation in Ontario. That was probably the thing I heard most frequently.

The first part of what I want to say is that we have moved on that. We have created a new culture of green energy and conservation in Ontario that was not here previously. I think that we've responded to what Ontarians were calling for.

The second piece that I want to talk about is this change that we're proposing here. The member for Trinity–Spadina talked about the complexity. He also talked about the desire—or certainly the third party has



talked about the desire—to have simplicity. You can't get rid of functions; functions have to land somewhere. So we have to be clear that the functions that are necessary go on.

In this scheme, the government will prepare the plan that the member for Trinity–Spadina was talking about, in broad consultation with experts with the new entity if we choose, but the plan will be prepared by the government. Then, the new entity, the OESO, as it's called in the bill, will be engaged in—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** IESO.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** No, the new entity in the bill is the OESO. That new entity will be involved in the plan preparation—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you.

The member for Trinity–Spadina has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** To the Minister of Housing: The simplicity I was looking for was public power. It's not so much the confusion of language and entities that the Tories created, but rather the simplicity of having to produce power at rates that we can afford, where there is no private sector siphoning of money. That's the simplicity I was talking about. All the other stuff—I was just commenting on the creation of so many acronyms that are just so confusing for everybody. That's a different matter.

Moving away from ideology, it would be lovely to move away from a private market to a public power system, but we're not likely to have it. The Minister of Housing: What you created was, in addition to what they started, the Ontario Power Authority. You compounded the confusion by adding yet another entity into the mix. Yes, you've moved on by creating up to 2% of green energy, which New Democrats support, even though you've done it at feed-in tariffs that were so incredibly high that you got criticized, in some cases for good reason.

In relation to this bill, what you have done in Bill 75 is to eliminate the integrated power system plan, which gave the opportunity for public and stakeholder participation in energy planning. That is something you need to look at.

Further, although the short- and long-term forecasting functions of the IESO and the OPA should integrate well, it will be more difficult to integrate the Ontario Power Authority's planning and procurement functions with the Independent Electricity System Operator's responsibility to administer and enforce the market rules. We think you need to look at that in committee. That's why we want committees: because we want to be able to address the negatives, the fallout, of Bill 75.

On the whole, we support integration, because integration will not only make it easier for people to understand, but we're going to save money, and that's good for citizens.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I'm very pleased to be able to rise and speak this morning on Bill 75, the Ontario Electricity System Operator Act, which, if passed, as you've heard already this morning, would amalgamate two of Ontario's electricity agencies—and as my colleague across the way has explained, two of the many.

First of all, it would amalgamate the Independent Electricity System Operator, which is known as the IESO—as the name implies, that's the system operator—and the Ontario Power Authority, or OPA, which is the system planner.

What does that mean? The IESO is the agency that is responsible for making the minute-to-minute, hour-by-hour decisions about how much generation we need at any one time, because the tricky thing about electricity is, you can't store it. As it's produced, you need to use it. So operating the system is very, very tricky because we, as consumers, change our usage hourly, daily, weekly, monthly.

If you pick a day in the middle of the winter, when the days are short and we turn the lights on early and leave them on through the morning because it's dark when we get up for breakfast, and we have all sorts of appliances and things that involve generating heat, we're burning electricity like mad. When we're in the spring and it's just nice, moderate weather, and when we're in the fall, we don't use as much electricity. When you get hot, steamy days like we've had the last few days, the electricity use goes way up again as everybody starts to turn on their air conditioners.

Operating the system is non-trivial. The system operator has to make decisions about the base supply, the nuclear generators and then bringing other generators in and out of the mix literally on a minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour basis. That's the function of the system operator.

The Ontario Power Authority is taking a more long-term view of things, which is, in order to satisfy that minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour demand, what generation do we need immediately? How much of it is base operation that's hydroelectric and nuclear that's there all the time? How much is electricity supply that we can turn on and off at a minute's notice as we need it? They have to think forward into the future to plan for the mix of generators that would be available.

It is true that the function of the OPA has increased, but that's because we have a much more diverse mix of energy generators now than we used to have. We now have all those green energy supplies. We have the wind, we have the solar, we have small hydroelectric. In Guelph, we actually have a closed landfill where we're capturing the gases coming from the closed landfill and using that to generate electricity. OPA, the planner, has a contract with the city to produce electricity from the gas from the old landfill. So, what OPA is doing has become much more complicated.

Nevertheless, the functions of the independent system operator and the OPA, the power authority, overlap somewhat, and we think we could make the whole system more efficient, save \$25 million, Madam Speaker, by

amalgamating those two functions and getting rid of the duplication, because there is definitely some duplication in carrying out those functions. There are some advantages in having those experts seated together as they do the planning and look at how we make sure that we have the right supply.

Some of the Conservatives across the way—the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka and the member for Durham talked about the fact that if the Conservatives had their druthers, part of their plan is to get rid of the OPA. Think back to what I just said about the function of the OPA. It's the OPA that contracts for green energy: for wind, for solar, for small hydroelectric projects, for biogas, for all these new forms of energy that we have brought into the system. Getting rid of the OPA is code for getting rid of green energy, and we absolutely, totally disagree with that position.

**0950**

It's interesting, when the leader of the Conservatives came to Guelph a few weeks ago he had a breakfast meeting, and not too many people showed up. In fact, maybe they weren't even serving breakfast; I don't know. But the media reaction was interesting because one of the things he focused on was the Conservatives' energy plan, and my local media's reaction was, "What was he thinking? Why would you come to Guelph and talk about getting rid of green energy? Do you know how many jobs that creates in Guelph?" So he was totally dismissed by the local media.

At any rate, let's get back to the legislation that we're having a look at this morning, Madam Speaker. The proposed amalgamation is actually required because each of these bodies, the IESO and the OPA, was created with legislation. In order to do this amalgamation, we actually require this legislation to move forward. While this legislation is going through the process of second reading, committee hearings and third reading, those two entities will continue to operate as they do now, because that is the current state of the legislation in Ontario.

However, if the legislation is passed, some of the features of the legislation include outlining the governance structure of the proposed new independent—sorry; see, we all have trouble with the alphabet soup—the Ontario Electricity System Operator. It sets out the governance structure for that. The Ministry of Energy will continue to appoint the board of directors. The Minister of Energy will appoint the first executive officer or CEO, and then for subsequent rounds it will operate like a normal board of directors of other corporations, and the board of directors will select the new CEO.

There is a need, as my colleague from Trinity–Spadina pointed out, to maintain some independence in the functions, and in particular there will be a requirement to maintain independent market operations and to separate market operations from contract management with the various generators with whom we have contracts, big and small.

In terms of the energy planning process, there still will be a requirement for issuing energy plans, and those

would be approved by cabinet. The Ontario Energy Board, which is another member of the alphabet soup, will still continue to do its role. The Ontario Energy Board is responsible for reviewing rate proposals from all the various entities, and it also will be looking at the plan's capital costs. As the plans are tabled, the OEB will be responsible for reviewing the estimated capital costs that are involved in that.

We understand that the whole issue of electricity pricing is a very delicate matter. One doesn't want to have electricity priced so low that—we all think it's good to have things really, really low. The reality is, if the price is too low, people do not conserve energy. But we also know that if the price is too high, that can create economic difficulties for both families and businesses. This business of constraining the cost of electricity, we understand, is very important. We need to keep that at a reasonable cost. The amalgamation of the IESO and the OPA is one of the things we're doing to manage costs.

But that's not the only thing. We have been quite aggressive with two of the other members of the alphabet soup: Hydro One, which is responsible for transmission and distribution, the provincial transmission grid and, in some cases, local distribution in more rural parts of the province; and Ontario Power Generation, which owns and operates the big provincial generators—that would be the nuclear generators and the big hydroelectric plants at Niagara Falls and the coal-fired generators. We have been very aggressive with them in saying, "You must control your costs." Traditionally, those entities have not necessarily had that as their top priority, controlling costs. So far, I'm pleased to report that they have saved half a billion dollars, and we will be asking them to save more.

We have also had a very thorough review of the feed-in tariff program. This is the one where people who are going to produce green energy locally are guaranteed—have a contract for a certain amount for a fixed number of years.

I think we need to stop and take a look at what happens when you have a new technology, a new product in the market. When you had desktop computers originally, personal computers, they cost thousands of dollars. When big-screen TVs first came on the market, they cost an arm and a leg. When you first started to get these BlackBerrys, with which we all live, they were quite expensive.

You're not going to steal that, are you? It didn't go off. We're not really supposed to have these, but we all sneak them in, as long as we have them on quiet. But I digress.

All these products, when they're first introduced, are quite expensive. As we get more experience with the technology, we gain efficiencies. Solar and wind power, but particularly solar, are no different. When we first introduced it to Ontario, it was a new thing.

We said we need to have Ontario manufacturers manufacturing equipment for wind power and solar power. We don't want to import it from Asia or Europe. We

want to build it right here. With the start-up costs and the learning curve, there was a requirement for the market to start at a higher price, but now that we do have local manufacturers who are experienced, local installers who are experienced, as we get more experience with the technology—like any other new technology—we lower the price.

That's exactly what we have done, Madam Speaker, with the green energy prices. In fact, some of the solar energy prices have been lowered twice now. With those greater efficiencies of Ontario manufacturers coming to the market, we've been able to do that because so much more of the production and the expertise is now locally available right here in Ontario and, I'm pleased to say, right in Guelph, in my own riding.

We also announced in the 2012 budget that Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One will be benchmarked against national and international peers. One of the things that has been a complaint is that those two entities, which were the big pieces of the old Ontario Hydro, have costs per unit of generation and costs per unit of transmission which seemed to be out of line somewhat with other provinces or other states, in some cases. We want to make sure they are performing at the same level as their counterparts in other jurisdictions.

We have also set up the Ontario Distribution Sector Panel, which will look at what are formally known as local distribution companies, but what you would just think of as your local hydro company. In my case, it would be Guelph Hydro, but depending on where you live, it will be someone different.

That panel will be consulting with the electricity sector and looking at how the local distribution companies can achieve long- and short-term financial savings—in some cases, that may mean consolidation; in others, it won't—and how they can gain some operational efficiencies. That panel will be reporting back to the Minister of Energy within a year.

**1000**

I think it's important to think about where we've come from and where we are now. As we've mentioned, the Conservative government broke up the old Ontario Hydro and created this alphabet soup of agencies, and we haven't even mentioned all of them. There are some other bits and pieces out there that are trying to manage the stranded debt that was left and which we are all still trying to manage down.

One of the really, really significant things that happened during the Conservative reign was, because they broke Ontario Hydro up and thought they could sell it all, they were not prepared to put money into fixing things so that our transmission system, our provincial trunk transmission system, became very fragile. When nuclear generators were in need of repair, they just sort of parked them, waiting for some private sector person to come along and do the repairs. Oddly enough, what we found during the Harris era and the Eves era was that the demand for hydro, for electricity, continued to go up, but the capacity to produce electricity actually decreased, so

we had a bigger and bigger gap here in Ontario between the capacity to produce and the consumption.

What happened out of that was two things. First of all, we became more and more reliant on coal. Coal became one of our biggest producers of electricity. Of course, that meant a lot of smog, a lot of air pollution. The other thing that happened was that we became more and more reliant on importing energy rather than exporting it, so that Ontario became a big net importer of electricity, and that gave us the brownouts. It complicated the blackout.

In Guelph, when we had the big blackout that summer, we were out longer than just about any other place in Ontario. So when my constituents think about Tory energy policy, what they think about is a four-day blackout in the middle of a heat wave—not a brownout, a blackout, in the middle of a heat wave. That's what my constituents think about, and that's maybe why my constituents have been so—

*Interjection.*

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Well, they certainly didn't like the idea of diesel generators on the street corners.

That's why my constituents have been so excited to be able to have rooftop solar generation, because they understand the fragile nature that the Conservatives left us with.

That's why we fixed the nuclear generation. That's why we are bringing on big hydroelectric projects. Just think of that tunnel that Big Becky is digging in Niagara Falls, that has been completed now. They're in the process of installing the generators so we can get more power out of Niagara Falls. We have another big project that will be done in the James Bay basin. We've been closing down the coal and replacing it with other forms of energy, and that includes green energy.

This bill will help us save money so we can have good, clean energy in Ontario that consumers find affordable. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions? The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Very good, Speaker. Thank you very much.

It's a pleasure to comment on the address by the member from Guelph. It is clear that she has not only drunk the Liberal Kool-Aid; she is intoxicated on it. It is just unbelievable how she just buys the entire package of messaging coming out of the Premier's corner office, and the Minister of Energy across the way, and how they are able to revise history, with no concern for the accuracy of what they're saying.

Let's make one thing clear about the blackout of August 17, 2003. There was much investigation done on the happenings of that very, very difficult event here in Ontario's history that cost the province close to \$1 billion at the end of the day. It was traced absolutely, clearly and definitively to a switching station in Ohio that malfunctioned. It caused a cascading knockout of switch after switch after switch up the line, knocking out the entire northeastern states and most of Ontario. Madam Speaker,

this is the kind of irresponsible politicking that goes on in this government when they've got themselves caught in a mess because of their irresponsible energy policy. They try to go back to an incident in 2003 when categorically, when the investigation was completed, it made it crystal clear that there were no issues in the Ontario electrical system that contributed to or caused that blackout.

There were changes made since then to ensure that that could not be repeated by changing the way—there are now checks and balances and stops in place so that this cannot happen. But when members across the way try to make politics out of one of the great disasters in history, on August 17, 2003, and play politics with it, it just shows how bad this government is. It's time to go.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I just want to comment on a couple of things that the member from Guelph said. She spoke about the feed-in tariff. I have to say, I supported the feed-in tariff. We support small and medium-sized operators to get into the transmission system that we have in this province. We thought that was good. But the rates that you gave out were so incredibly high that you left yourself open to criticism and abuse. In Manitoba, the highest rate that was given as a feed-in tariff was five cents. So when you realize that the Liberal government gave up to 85 or 86 cents, the disparity between these two jurisdictions ought to be alarming to you, but it didn't occur to you that that was a problem. In my view, you should have thought of that in the beginning, and you didn't. To a lot of operators, you gave a whole lot of money. That's why they jumped into the market: because it was a good way to make a few dollars. While it was a good thing to do because the more of these small independent operators we have producing green energy—while that is good, we lost a whole lot of money in the process. Yes, you've got to pay in the beginning, but boy, did we pay a huge price.

I've got to tell you: What this government is not doing, neither your government nor the previous government, is to talk about conservation. Your commitment ought to be on conserving energy, not producing more energy. Your commitment to building more nuclear power is wrong. We should be focused on conservation. That ought to be the policy of any government of the day, because producing more power means we will pay more, and conserving means we would pay less. That should be the focus.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I did appreciate the comments from the minister of Guelph—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The minister of Guelph?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** The member from Guelph.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Well, she does such a great job representing Guelph.

Let me shed a little light on what the history is in chapter 2 of August 17, 2003. After the free trade agree-

ment in 1988—prior to 1988, Canada's electricity system functioned on an east-west grid. After the free trade agreement in 1988, it went to a north-south grid, so it was totally integrated. When a switching system went down in Ohio, because of the orientation of the north-south grid, everything went down in the province of Ontario.

**1010**

That's exactly what happened. That was reviewed by a number of experts, including the CEO of Peterborough Utility Services, Bob Lake, who was a former vice-president of Ontario Hydro. Let me tell you, Bob Lake has somewhat of an insight into how the electricity system operated in North America through the IESO. So if there were any problems in the States, it was going to directly impact in the province of Ontario. Madam Speaker, those are the facts.

Since 2003 we have gone forward to put a number of failsafe technologies into the system to make sure that, if a small switch failed in Ohio—I've got to tell you, it probably wasn't a General Electric product manufactured in Peterborough, that switching system in Ohio, because it would have been much more reliable if it was a made-in-Peterborough, made-in-Ontario product.

There are briefings available that could give you the orientation about how the electricity system operates in North America. Indeed, the fellow at Maple, Ontario, who sits by the monitor, the IESO, can look at all generation aspects of electricity in North America to pinpoint. Those are the—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I was very raised to the challenge from the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, where he was categorically explaining for the member from Guelph.

The member from Peterborough adds another dimension. There has never been an east-west grid in Canada—ever.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, there isn't. In fact, the east grid was always integrated because Quebec was selling all their power to New York long before free trade. It was formally integrated, but there has always been the north-east grid. Ontario's problem in the overall system is that it has very limited—about 3,000 megawatts—interconnect capacity. Why? It's hydroelectricity in Quebec, and it's hydroelectricity in Manitoba. Both are five times cheaper than ours. They don't want to—we should be buying their power.

What you say from Peterborough is absolutely wrong. It's another statement that they don't understand the system.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Look, Jeff, I will send you a report. You send me a report—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments through the Chair.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Guelph is putting information on the table, as is the member from Peterborough, that is not correct. Ontario was always the leader in electricity generation.

If you put some context around it, after the NDP, we started the refurbishment of the Pickering plant. That Pickering nuclear plant was down. That was another part down. You guys had promised to eliminate the coal plant, which you never did. You still haven't closed a coal plant; Elizabeth Witmer did. The whole point is, every time you talk about this file, the file that is completely messed up, you try to blame it on someone else. What the conservation commissioner said in his report—remember the conservation culture? You have done nothing on conservation.

Please explain your lack of a plan and the lack of execution of a plan, and explain why the taxpayers of Ontario are paying more and getting less from the McGuinty government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member from Guelph has two minutes to respond.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Thank you to the members from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Trinity–Spadina, Peterborough and Durham.

I'd like to talk a little bit about this blackout. In fact, I didn't say that the blackout was caused in Ontario. I totally accept that it was caused by a switching device in Ohio which took down the whole of northeast America. What I talked about was the fact that it took four days to get Guelph back up—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We had nuclear plants. They don't start instantly, Liz. You've got to cool them down, and you've got to start them back up.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I know that. I'm a physicist's daughter. For heaven's sake, don't try to teach me that.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Order.

The member for Guelph.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Not everywhere in Ontario took four days to come back up. That's the problem: Coming back up effectively, efficiently and quickly had to do with the fact that Ontario did not have enough generating capacity to meet its own supply, and we had to wait for others to get back online. It had to do with the transmission grid, a trunk transmission grid, which was fragile. It was the recovery that was caused by your neglect.

Secondly, with respect to the member from Durham's comments, 90% of coal use has been—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Order.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** —will be eliminated by 2014. That will be all coal shut down.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The time for this session has ended. This House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I would like to introduce members of A Cappella Showcase. This ladies' chorus will be representing Ontario and Canada at the World Choir Games this July in Cincinnati, Ohio. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If they break out in song, I'm not going to consider that heckling.

The member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I invite the entire assembly to join me in welcoming members of the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association. I have Nick Gurevich, Patricia Howell, Robert Stephens, Niki Kerimova, Jaisa Sulit, Dino Le Donne, Andrew Murray, John Karapita, Linda Langston and Brian Patterson. All of them are not here yet, but they'll be here soon.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to introduce people from Sudbury who came all the way down to listen to introduction of bills this afternoon. Their names are Neil and Tabatha Haskett. They brought their three children, Clarisse, Natalia and Aiden. I also want to mention the grandmother, who is a good friend of mine, Desneiges Labonté. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

In the east members' gallery we have, from St. Joseph's College School, interning at Queen's Park, Theodora Kyriakakos. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** Thank you, Speaker. I would just like to introduce a former intern who was with me when I was in natural resources and now has joined me in the Ministry of Labour: Caleb Groen, my intern for the summer.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, for the 65th straight month, Ontario's unemployment rate has been higher than the national average. In May alone, while Ontario lost 31,000 full-time jobs, the rest of the country added 32,000 full-time jobs. Only Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have yet to recover the private sector jobs lost during the last recession. Premier, can you explain why Ontario continues to lag behind the rest of the country?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I refer the official opposition to a report that came out this morning from Royal Bank. Let me read what Royal Bank has to say: "Ontario's economic growth rate will close much of the gap with the national average this year. We expect real GDP growth in Ontario to accelerate to 2.5%...."

I've got some more quotes—but to the opposition: Yesterday they talked about Ontario's challenges, Mr. Speaker. GDP is up. Employment is up. Unemployment is down. Retail sales are improving. Housing starts are up. Consumer prices are growing less in the country. Ontario is the best place in Canada. We're going to lead Canada again. We're going to lead it under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberal party. Stop denigrating our province and start celebrating our success.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. As I am—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now that I have a moment, with all members in their seats properly, if they're going to make any comments, I will move right into identifying individual members during question period.

Supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Well, with respect, the facts tell a different story. Let's look at reality here: 600 jobs in Timmins have left for Quebec; 190 jobs from St. Thomas have moved to Ohio; another 600 jobs in Chatham have moved to Indiana. Ontario has lost almost 300,000 manufacturing jobs since 2003. Clearly, manufacturers are leaving Ontario for friendlier business climates, and one of the reasons that they are is because of your unaffordable energy policies.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of the Environment.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Your energy experiments have driven up hydro rates and driven good jobs out of Ontario in droves. Premier, when will you stop experimenting with—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Peterborough.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** —the livelihoods of Ontarians?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Here's what the Royal Bank says about manufacturing and auto manufacturing this morning: "New motor vehicle production ... for all intents and purposes, entirely in Ontario ... stepped up significantly since the recession lows and, following a strong push since late last year, has now ... returned to pre-recession levels. In the first four months of 2012, auto production averaged a little more than 2.5 million units," which is up over the period of 10 years ago.

This government stood behind the auto sector, behind General Motors and Chrysler when they were in trouble. But guess where the member is having her fundraiser—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Peterborough.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** —later this month? She's having it at Downtown Porsche—

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** —in Toronto. Imagine that. We ought to be supporting Canadian manufacturers. You're out singing a song about manufacturing—

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

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** —you're slowing down the southwest Ontario economic development fund—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would offer a general warning: Do not test my resolve.

Final supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Again to the Minister of Finance: I would suggest you tell all of that to the 500,000-plus people in Ontario who still don't have jobs.

Since 2003, Ontario has had the worst private sector growth outside of Atlantic Canada, sitting at a pitiful 4%. Meanwhile, the public sector has grown by a whopping 22%.

Premier, when will you understand that you can't spend your way out of this jobs crisis? When will you realize you can't grow our economy by growing the public sector? It simply doesn't work that way. When will you commit yourself to scrapping your energy experiments and make good policy decisions instead of good political decisions, which seems to be the case these days? When will you take a fair and balanced and sensible approach, get your spending under control, build your province and make Ontario again the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Again, let me refer the member opposite—they're just presenting factual errors. Here's what the Royal Bank said this morning. There's declining public sector employment in Ontario since last year as a result of very significant federal cuts as well as what this government has done. In fact, the growth in employment has been in the private sector.

I would ask the official opposition to stand up for Ontario. Recognize that it's not what we're doing or what they're doing; it's what businesses are doing across this province. It's what working men and women across this province are doing. It's what our schools are doing. It's implementing a policy that will make Ontario number one now that the global recession is over, now that we've absorbed the dollar going from 62 cents to \$1. We're going to have a bright future. We've got the right policies to achieve it—

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

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Ornge front-line staff have been watching the minister read inflated pilot and paramedic numbers from her Ornge news release.

Here's what Ornge helicopter pilot Bruce Wade from Thunder Bay told the minister in his email to her on June 7 about that Ornge press release that she has been reading

from: “Ornge claims to the press and others the base is staffed 24 hours per day. This statement, while technically correct, is less than honest.

“The actual facts remain: Medics are routinely, chronically and, without regard to proper medevac capability, removed or just not available for the trauma helicopter in Thunder Bay.... We are fully grounded without medics.”

“Less than honest”: That’s how the front lines are describing this Ornge press release. Speaker, when will the minister realize that it’s her responsibility to defend the people of Ontario, not Ornge?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I would like to ask the member opposite: When is he going to take his responsibility as a member of this Legislature seriously and actually be part of the solution when it comes to improving oversight at Ornge? I think it’s important that we look at yet the latest in a series of almost, partly, a little bit true, but not completely true, information that the member—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member is getting desperately close to doing what I think she’s trying to do, which means you should not be doing that. If you catch my drift, I think you’ll stop.

1040

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Yesterday the member opposite raised an issue. I looked into that issue, and what I found was that the allegations were not actually correct. So let me share the facts with the House. The use of a directive is one of last resort. The opposition is incorrect to allege that the use of a directive was—

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The ministry has been working very closely with Ornge to ensure they comply with the new performance agreement. Since the new leadership has been installed, we’ve seen tremendous progress in the information we get.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, here’s why Mr. Wade and his fellow pilots and paramedics are so frustrated with this minister and her government. The fact is that her response now is, in fact, disrespectful of Mr. Wade and his front-line employees and staff.

Here’s what the latest downtime report for the Thunder Bay base for just the past 11 days shows: nine incidents totalling 44 hours where there were no paramedics at the base; two incidents totalling 21 hours where there were no pilots. These are statistics that represent lives at risk. When will the minister recognize that the numbers that count are not the numbers of the patients who were transferred successfully? That’s the expectation.

It’s the number of calls that we can’t respond to that represent lives at risk. When will the minister assume her responsibility and become part of the solution rather than defend the indefensible?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I do understand that the member opposite is doing everything he can to dismiss the progress at Ornge. I think that’s very unfortunate.

The fact is, because of the new performance agreement, we are now collecting information that we did not have access to before, exactly the kind of information that the member opposite is suggesting that we do collect. We do have a new performance agreement in place. It does mean we have more information. It means we can act on that information.

If the member opposite and his party would quit blocking Bill 50, we actually would be able to make the progress that we need to. Bill 50 would give the minister the authority to issue a directive.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Let’s get one thing straight, Speaker. If the government had wanted to pass Bill 50, they would have included it in to the programming motion that was tabled here. It was not. This is nothing more than rhetoric.

I’m going to send across to the minister both the downtime report as well as the email from Mr. Wade, because she obviously doesn’t understand it and certainly hasn’t read it.

I’m going to make a proposal to the minister right now. Rather than have front-line staff resorting to sending us brown envelopes, why don’t we reserve one special day of hearings for all of those front-line staff who want to come forward? Let’s provide them with a written guarantee of immunity from—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Peterborough, second time.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** —against reprisal so that they can all come forward and tell us what’s going on at Ornge, tell us what’s going on at the Ministry of Health. Will the minister, will the Premier, agree to that proposal?

*Interjections.*

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, Mr. Klees himself today acknowledges that the facts in the press release are accurate, so let me repeat those facts in the press release. Ten more paramedics are working at Ornge now than a year ago. As far as airplane pilots, by mid-July we’ll be at 98% of a full complement of airplane pilots. We have 69 helicopter pilots; we’ve recently hired five more, bringing the total to 74 in July. At that time it will be at 75%.

This is good news. This is movement in the right direction. I know it’s not good news for the member opposite, but it sure is good news for the people of Ontario.

## JOB CREATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. Last week, StatsCan reported that Ontario lost 19,000 jobs last month. Once again, Ontario is lagging the national economy. Nearly 15% of young people in this province are unemployed. The Premier’s old solution was to insist that his unfair HST and corporate tax giveaways

would create jobs. Now, nobody believes that anymore, so is the Premier ready to consider new ideas to create and protect jobs in this province?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Economic Development and Innovation.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Of course we're ready to consider new ideas. We always do, and the Premier is always open to new ideas. That's why he's setting up the Jobs and Prosperity Council: to bring some of the brightest minds in Ontario together around a table, looking to our future, to work with this government, to continue to tackle some of the challenges that exist, not only here in Ontario but in economies right around the world—challenges like skill shortages, challenges like productivity enhancements and improvements and productivity gaps that have existed here in Canada and in many jurisdictions around the world for a long time.

We're going to continue to work very closely with our business community, with our labour community and with Ontarians to build on the good work we've done to date in building a very strong economy, the good work we've done to date in putting the fundamentals in place to build that strong economy.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The government says their jobs council is going to come up with their next batch of ideas, but it looks like a recipe for more of the same old ideas. The Premier promised "solid representation" from business, labour, academics and government representatives on the Jobs and Prosperity Council, but the bankers and CEOs outnumber labour 10 to 1. According to a report today, the chair, Gord Nixon, took home \$26 million in options over the past couple of years. Now, that's great for him, but it leaves everyday people wondering if he's going to understand at all the challenges that they're facing.

Does the Premier think that's a balanced group of people, capable of understanding the urgent need for a job creation program that actually puts people first?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It's kind of ironic. The PCs think there's too much labour representation on the council, and the NDP think there's too little. I think, Mr. Speaker, that's an indication that we probably have it just about right.

There are a lot of talented people in this province, and the Premier and I have talked about this. We could have probably put together 10 councils representing hundreds of Ontarians who are qualified to give us this advice, but we didn't want to set up a congress. We needed to set up a council that can work together, of the right size—and I think this is about the right size—bringing together some of the best minds in this province.

I think if you look at the individuals on this council—who, incidentally, are doing this as a public service—these are people with great responsibilities. Their time is very valuable. They're donating their time so that they can help us build a stronger economy. Rather than denigrating the individuals on that council, I think the NDP should be joining us in praising them for stepping up.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I don't know what planet the minister is from, but 10 to 1 doesn't sound like balance to me and probably doesn't sound like balance to a lot of Ontarians. And do you know what? I've met with some of these people before. They're nice people, and I do not doubt their sincerity, but everyday people who are looking for work were hoping for some different views, to bring some new ideas, and instead we see a lot of the same old CEOs with the same old solutions.

We've put forward positive ideas to protect and create jobs, like a jobs creation tax credit, for example. Is the government ready to start listening, or are we just going to see more of the same failure?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, this government doesn't just listen; we act. That's why we've put in place in Ontario the fundamentals critical to building a strong economy: investing in our people, investing in the education of our young people: 81% of our young people now graduate to post-secondary education, the best in the OECD, one of the best in the world. We've built one of the best workforces. We've invested in infrastructure, critical to building a strong economy, in record amounts. We've lowered the tax rates here for businesses in this province, helping to ensure that we're one of the best locations for foreign direct investment in all of North America. And Mr. Speaker, because of the vision of our Premier, who has put his passion behind investing in innovation, we've doubled the investments in research; we've made Ontario a virtual research and innovation hotbed.

**1050**

Those initiatives are paying off in building a strong economy in this province.

We're not satisfied. We want to do more, and the jobs and prosperity task force will help us get there.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is for the Premier. In 2010, with much fanfare, the government re-jiggered Ontario's auto insurance rules. As a result, insurance companies are making even bigger profits because they're saving \$350 in medical and rehabilitation benefits for every single car that they insure. Can the Premier tell us why drivers pay more and are getting less in this province?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Speaker, I'll be pleased to take the first question and refer the subsequent ones to my colleague the Minister of Finance.

What I can say is, it's important to take a look at our record when it comes to automobile insurance. The fact of the matter is that we have kept rates below the increase in inflation, or the cost of living. We have the most comprehensive coverage in the country. In the last period where we look at—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, come to order.



**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** —in fact, overall, come down.

So we are working very hard to continue to strike the right balance between the cost of premiums and the coverage that—

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** —have to be able to count on. I think to this point in time, we've been striking the right balance.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Gee, Speaker, today seems to be morning of the Liberals deciding that they don't know what balance is all about. That's what we see over here. They do not know what balance is all about.

You know what? The government's reforms make life very profitable for some, but they leave everyday drivers with the worst—worst—of both worlds. Drivers pay auto insurance with the reasonable expectation that they're going to be covered in case they have an accident. Now we learn that those who are injured the most severely will see their benefits axed, and yet Ontario drivers are still paying the highest rates in Canada. That is not balanced, Speaker. That is not a balanced system. How can this government call that a fair system?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, let's just put some facts into the debate. We've released a report today to get public comment about catastrophic injury, based on a panel of experts that have made recommendations to the government. None of those is being proposed to be implemented today, so I'd recommend that you withdraw the rhetoric associated with that, number one.

Number two: Rates in Ontario have gone up slower than virtually everywhere else in the country since we took office. They went down the last quarter on regulated rate increases.

We've improved benefits. Our benefits are comparable to every province in the country.

What the leader of the third party and her party want to do is raise premiums in northern Ontario, they want to raise them in eastern Ontario, they want to raise them in southwestern Ontario. They want to make good drivers subsidize bad drivers. They want to make good drivers subsidize people who get convicted of things like drunk driving, Mr. Speaker. That's why a number of groups—and we'll share their quotes in a moment—reject your concept.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, what the finance minister is not telling anybody is that Ontario premiums were 3.5% higher in 2011 than they were in 2010. What this government wants to do is just protect the status quo that isn't working for drivers and has us paying the highest rates across the country.

As the government knows, we get letters over here. John in Brampton writes this: "In 2003 I paid about \$700

for car insurance. Today almost \$2,000. I am 65 and retired, living on around \$25,000 per year. Due to the punishing cost of insurance...I no longer can afford to live in a city and area that I have resided in my whole life."

April writes: "Not only is the auto insurance industry in Ontario discriminatory, it is a scam that is making a few people very, very rich."

Is the government ready to admit that they have failed drivers, that their status quo isn't working and it's time for a plan that gets costs under control, not just time for good profits for the companies that sell insurance?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, when those rates went up 3.5%, we took action with a package of reforms that are now bringing rates down again.

I'd like to remind the leader of the opposition, who doesn't seem to think about public safety—I don't have an anonymous quote from a first-name unidentified individual; I have a quote from a group that wants to put its name on the public record, and a very reputable group. Here's what Mothers Against Drunk Driving says about the NDP's insurance policy: "MADD Canada would strongly advocate that" it "be rejected. In our view," it "sends all the wrong messages, punishes responsible drivers, rewards dangerous drivers, and will increase the risk to Ontario road users." In the short, you are threatening public safety with an ill-thought-out, ill-conceived plan that will raise premiums for the very people you purport to represent.

This government has a plan that's lowering rates. It's the right plan, and the people of Ontario understand that.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is for the Minister of Health. In an attempt to defend her lack of appropriate action and her failure to restore confidence in Ontario's air ambulance service, the minister has recently taken to reciting a litany of statistics related to Ornge. The minister has recounted the number of patients Ornge transfers, the number of vehicles Ornge owns and the number of staff that she's recently hired. Since the minister is seemingly up to date on her numbers, I would like to ask her this question: Can she inform the House of the total number of minutes Ornge helicopters at the London base have been unavailable to respond to emergencies so far this calendar year?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I actually do have some good numbers for today because I know the people of this House do want to know how Ornge is doing. Yesterday at Ornge, there were 37 patients transferred; 71 hours flown; three rotor scene patients transported; 30 inter-facility transports; four by land; and seven little babies, pediatric patients, got to the care they needed.

We are addressing the challenges at Ornge. We're hiring more paramedics—

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** —we're hiring more pilots—

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We're moving in the right direction, and I think the people of Ontario expect to see that progress.

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

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** We've been advised that the base in London responds to emergencies throughout southwestern Ontario, including Wellington county, Halton region and Waterloo region. The minister seems to be unaware of the serious situation that is occurring throughout Ontario, and she has been rather selective in the data she chooses to share with this House.

The PC caucus has obtained yet more leaked information from insiders that reveal that from January 1 of this year to yesterday, June 11, helicopters at the Ornge base in London have been unable to respond to emergencies for 10,224 minutes. That's 170 hours, or the equivalent of a full week of downtime—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** He's asking the question, member from Renfrew.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** —and we're not even halfway through the year.

Will she now admit that the air ambulance service the people in southwestern Ontario rely upon in a life-or-death crisis often cannot even be deployed?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It's no secret that there have been staffing issues at Ornge. It's also no secret that we are addressing those challenges. We have very good news—very good news. We've got 38 pilots—seven more coming on board by mid-July—that will take us to 98%. When it comes to helicopter pilots, we've got 69—recently hired five more—bringing it to 74 by July; we'll be at 95%—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew has been eyeballing the eagle.

Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** So, Speaker, this is good news.

I really would like to ask the member opposite if he will volunteer to be the whip in his caucus to get support for Bill 50 so we can get that passed and get moved on with the changes that need to be made at Ornge.

#### NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question is to the Premier. A constituent of mine from Chapleau, Debby Pellow, must travel to Timmins for dialysis three times a week. This forces her to drive 12 hours a week and stay in Timmins overnight when roads are bad. This is exhausting, stressful and very difficult for her to accomplish. But to make matters worse, Ms. Pellow is waiting as long as three months to be reimbursed through the northern

health travel grant, and she is going deep into debt waiting.

Does the Premier remember his promise to simplify this program with online applications with a three-week limit on reimbursement?

1100

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What I can say is that we have really speeded up the process for the northern Ontario travel grant. I will more than happily look into this particular case, Speaker.

We think it's important that people get to the care they need, regardless of how far they are from the care that they need, and that's why we have quite a robust northern Ontario travel grant. We are working hard to streamline it. We've made some terrific headway, but I will certainly look into this particular constituent.

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

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question again is to the Premier. Speaker, the sad fact is, last summer the Premier made his third promise to fix the broken northern health travel grant with a three-week service guarantee. When an election is around the corner, the Premier is ready to acknowledge how broken this travel grant system is and gives his word that it will be fixed. But once re-elected, it is constituents like mine, Mrs. Pellow, who are left to deal with a program that treats their access to health care services as an afterthought.

Speaker, why should people like Mrs. Pellow continue with hardship and trust this Premier to deliver on health care promises when year after year those promises are broken?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What I can tell you is that in 2007 we improved the eligibility criteria. We've made the program more accessible. We've raised the accommodation allowances, making the needed travel more affordable. We have improved the processes pretty dramatically, but I will go back and check to make sure that we are actually meeting our target. I can tell you that as of February 2011, 98% of applicants were processed within six weeks, Speaker. I will undertake to ensure that we are still meeting a very high standard.

#### JOB CREATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** This question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Innovation. Minister, on Friday, Statistics Canada released its monthly job numbers. While year to date Ontario is up in overall net jobs, I share the concern of our residents in Mississauga who see swings in employment month to month: up full-time jobs and down part-time in one month, and up part-time and down full-time jobs in the next month.

Families are nervous about the instability and the unpredictability of our economic future and also our potential for job growth here in Ontario. Minister, how is Ontario tackling this issue, and what steps has the province taken to combat this concern among Ontarians?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I thank the member very much for that question. Really, those are the questions that have

been consuming this government for the last eight or nine years as we've made important investments in the fundamentals of building of a strong economy.

But, Mr. Speaker, we want to go even further. We want to look at some of the key challenges that our economy and others are going to face over the coming years. We want to take a look at our business support programs, for instance, to ensure we're getting the best possible value for those programs, so we've set up the Jobs and Prosperity Council, which will provide us with some advice on that. We also want to look, Mr. Speaker, at ways to improve productivity and competitiveness so we can continue to compete in that fiercely competitive global economy. The council will give us advice on that. We want to also look at the skills shortage that we see happening in Ontario and globally. We'll look for their advice on that.

We'll also look at the job creator tax credit that the NDP is proposing.

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

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Minister, the new Jobs and Prosperity Council will provide the Premier and this House with sound advice on job creation. The minister has spoken about the qualifications of Gord Nixon, who is set to be the chair of the council. As head of the Royal Bank of Canada, Mr. Nixon has an impressive resumé.

It's nice that the council has a strong chair, but my question is about the balance of those who are going to serve on the Jobs and Prosperity Council. Would the minister give the House an overview of the backgrounds of the remainder of the council?

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The member heckles the question, and it's actually almost identical to a question that came earlier from the NDP. It's a good question because balance is really important, Mr. Speaker. We're going to be counting on these individuals to provide us with the best possible advice.

As I said, we would have liked to have had sectors right across the board represented, but you've got to be practical; you've got to be realistic.

But we do have a lot of sectors in our economy represented. For instance, there's Jim Stanford. He represents the CAW. He is a very well-thought-of economist. He'll be providing us with some assistance. The retail sector is represented by Bonnie Brooks of the Hudson's Bay Co. Northern Ontario is represented by a gentleman by the name of Darryl Lake, the food processing industry by Maple Leaf Foods president Michael McCain, and the auto parts industry by Linda Hasenfratz. There are entrepreneurs, forestry representatives and many others. I'll wrap up by saying we're looking forward to their advice.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** My question is for the Minister of Health. The minister has made numerous claims to have fixed the problem at Ornge. She likes to call on

numbers as proof of the progress that she has made, so I'd like to share some relevant numbers with the minister—numbers that have come directly from Ornge; numbers leaked by concerned front-line staff.

On February 13, 2012, the primary helicopter at the Toronto Island base was out of service for 12 hours, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The very next day, the same helicopter was out of service for another 12 hours. On April 22, the primary helicopter was out of service for six hours and 45 minutes. May 26, 2012: again out of service for another 12 hours.

I ask the minister: Given these numbers, will she admit that the people of Toronto and the GTA do not have access to a safe and reliable air ambulance service?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I do have a couple of more numbers that I would love to share with the member opposite. One of those numbers is 36; 36 is the number of votes that I think we should get from the party opposite to vote for a bill with another number, and that number is 50. If the members opposite are so concerned and want to be part of the solution when it comes to Ornge, I would really support the notion that 36 members vote for Bill 50.

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

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Minister, everyone has five minutes of truth a day. Hopefully, you'll have them in here.

The minister owes the people of Burlington and the GTA a credible explanation for her failure to address the serious operational gaps at Ornge. From January 1, 2012, to yesterday, the Ornge base on Toronto Island has struggled with an out-of-service helicopter for 26,420 minutes—440 hours in the last six months when an air ambulance was totally unavailable in the GTA. Given this information, will the minister admit that she has failed the residents of the GTA, that she has put patients at risk and that she will hold a special day of hearings with immunity for front-line staff at Ornge?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaking of front-line staff at Ornge, I think it's really important that we take this opportunity to say thank you to the extraordinary men and women who work at Ornge who do everything they possibly can every day to provide the best possible care to the people who are trusting them to get them to where they need to go.

I am enormously proud of the people at Ornge. These have been difficult times because they've been under attack from the party opposite. But I can tell you, I am very, very pleased to see, despite the attempts of the members opposite, that more people are actually joining the Ornge team. We've got 10 more paramedics working at Ornge, we've got seven more airplane pilots and we've got five more helicopter pilots joining the team at Ornge. This is great news, and I am delighted to see the changes at Ornge.

#### DOCTORS' SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Yet

again, we are hearing that talks with the Ontario Medical Association have broken down. The minister and her government seem to be kind of happy to play the blaming game, yet a very simple step would go a long way to bring the two sides together: the use of a conciliator.

Will the minister finally agree to use a conciliator so that progress can finally be made in the OMA negotiations?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We are so blessed in this province to have the doctors we have. We have extraordinary doctors. I'm enormously proud of the work they do every day in our hospitals, in our communities, in our long-term-care homes. We are blessed to have superb physicians.

1110

We are attempting to have negotiations on fees. That is the work of government. I stand by our decision, which is to really focus on community care and home care, services that can take people out of hospital and back home where they want to be. We're asking physicians to be part of the transformation in health care, and I'm confident and hopeful that we'll get back to the table, and we'll get there soon.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Speaker, the question I asked was a simple one, but the minister seems so determined not to budge an inch that she's losing sight of her responsibility, the responsibility to put people and patient care first. Refusing to talk to Ontario physicians puts us in a lose-lose-lose: the government loses, the physicians lose and every patient in Ontario also loses.

Why won't the minister agree to this simple step and ask for a conciliator so that both parties can negotiate a fair agreement?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** There are conversations that are going on between government and the OMA. Those conversations, I hope, will continue and, indeed, accelerate.

What I can tell you, Speaker, is that we have 3,400 more doctors working in this province than when we took office. I can tell you we've increased compensation to physicians by 85% over the past eight years. In 2003, we inherited a very serious problem from the party opposite. Ontario doctors were leaving Ontario. They were moving to other jurisdictions. We did have a problem: Ontario doctors were underpaid. That is no longer the problem.

In our health care system, we have to set priorities. Our clear priority is getting people out of hospitals and back home where they want to be, where they'll receive the best possible care.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. I understand that Corporate Knights, a Canadian company focused on green industries, recently released their third biannual Green Provincial Report Card. The report card evaluated provinces and territories on their progress in seven categories: air and climate,

water, nature, transportation, waste, energy and buildings, and innovation.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** They didn't check us out to see if we're supporting your pro-pesticide ban across the hall here.

Speaker, through you, I'm wondering if the minister could please speak to the details of this recent report and, specifically, how Ontario fared in comparison to the rest of Canada.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The member obviously stole the next Tory question.

I'm pleased to inform the House that Corporate Knights has found Ontario to be Canada's greenest province in the latest Green Provincial Report Card. Ontario earned the highest grade in the 2012 report with an A minus. The province was recognized for our success in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the phasing out of coal-fired electricity generation, the single-largest greenhouse gas reduction initiative in Canada.

Earlier this year, Ontario got top marks in Canada from Ecojustice when that uncompromising environmental group looked at how well provinces protect drinking water.

Last week, our government introduced the proposed Great Lakes Protection Act that, if passed, would ensure a cleaner Great Lakes for the future.

It's an honour for Ontario to be recognized for our success in building a greener province, and I know that all members of the Legislature will applaud that particular recognition by Corporate Knights.

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

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Minister, thank you for the detailed reply. My next question is more focused on our emissions and air quality as we move forward into the future of energy supply.

A section of the Green Provincial Report Card discussed energy and emissions, which are typically an area of discussion on an international level. Many international jurisdictions are looking for cleaner sources of power like wind and solar to help bring down their impact on the environment. My constituents in particular have been wondering what Ontario has been doing to ensure that the health of our families are a primary focus of our energy—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

I've tried to be patient, and that one was a shot at an individual, so the member is warned, the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** To the Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** The member from Ottawa-Orléans, a great champion of green, is very correct. We've made it a determined policy to get out of coal. We're making a lot of progress. We've shut down 10 of the 19 coal units. Of course, burning coal creates dirty air. It's now less than 3% of our power supply; under the PCs, it was 25% of the power supply and increasing.

Not only is this the largest climate improvement initiative in North America—greenhouse gas reduction initiative—it saves billions of dollars in health care costs; it saves thousands of illnesses.

Let's be clear: We're getting out of coal; the two parties opposite are going to put it on standby. We all know that the only reason you put something on standby is so that you can secretly bring it back. So we call on the parties opposite: Shut it down, take it out of service, do what we're doing, get out of coal by 2014.

### SKILLED TRADES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, and it's about your newly formed boondoggle, the Ontario College of Trades.

Minister, the first part of my question is about the newest McGuinty tax grab. The new trades tax for membership fees is something that Ontario trades workers do not need or even know is occurring. As I visit organizations across the province, I am finding that the vast majority of the construction industry has no idea what your College of Trades even is. Those who do know are deeply concerned with the direction it is headed, primarily because of the biased governance and now the trades tax.

Construction associations are estimating that your new trades tax will collect a minimum of \$84 million in the first year from the trades workers.

Minister, can you tell this House and the hard-working tradespeople in Ontario what they are getting from the College of Trades for their 84 million trades tax dollars?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It's a delight. I'm glad the member opposite has switched to tea from coffee.

The trades council is a very critical part of building a successful apprenticeship strategy, and let's just start with what the results of that have been. We have 120,000 students now in apprenticeships and trades. That's twice as many as we had only eight years ago.

I want to pay tribute to all of those families and parents who are understanding that carpenters and pipefitters and folks are part of this extraordinary construction boom that's going on out there, where 140 towers are going up in my city alone, a level of economic success and demand for trades that was never seen when the party opposite—and we've been governing through difficult times, Mr. Speaker.

We are upskilling our workforce. The college oversees ratios, it oversees standards, it oversees safety, and it brings the same level of professionalism that our teachers, lawyers and other professions have had, and most people in the field are excited about it.

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

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I don't think you understood the question. I asked you what the \$84 million was going to get the trades workers.

Minister, the secrecy around your College of Trades is actually deafening. Their website claims, "The college is

committed to an open and accountable consultation process." That's what they actually say, and yet we now learn the details from the submissions for consultations on your trades tax, the \$84 million in membership fees, will not be made until possibly later this summer. From this, we conclude that there is a massive opposition to these trade tax fees.

Clearly, there is a lack of accountability and transparency. I know that the Ontario Working Families Coalition won't agree with us, but it is time for you to show leadership and to stand up with Tim Hudak and the Ontario PCs and scrap not only your trades tax but also scrap this real mistake that is the College of Trades. Minister, will you scrap it?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take a guess that my friend is more familiar with Mr. Johnson than I am, since he served in caucus—I know he wasn't here as long as Mr. Bradley. I've always viewed Mr. Johnson as an ethical, transparent, accountable person, and I think the leadership that he is providing right now to the College of Trades is critically important.

This government, unlike the party opposite, has governed in a very non-partisan way. We have invited members on almost every committee—from the horse issues to this—we have invited former cabinet ministers from governments opposite and brought forward a good balance between labour and business, because we're trying to govern for all Ontarians, not some subset.

We realize that sometimes we have to be Ontarians before we're partisans. Certainly, the success we've had now with 30,000 folks is partly because of people like Mr. Johnson. This government has reached out—

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

1120

### BEDBUG INFESTATION

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Last year, Toronto Public Health's bedbug unit inspected almost 5,000 apartment units and helped hundreds of households get rid of bedbugs. But the province cut funding for this program in March, and now there's only one bedbug inspector for our entire city.

Last week, council committed \$250,000 to partially reinstate its bedbug program. Council is asking the Ministry of Health to provide matching funding so that the bedbug prevention efforts can be fully reinstated. Why is the province refusing?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you for the question. I want to take a moment to acknowledge the very fine work of the member from Eglinton—Lawrence on this issue. He raised this issue, and he spurred the action that came out of that.

The member opposite knows that the funding we supplied was one-time funding. We were abundantly clear that it was one-time funding. The city of Toronto received \$1.2 million. We're also prepared to flow an additional \$255,000 to Toronto for three new public health nurses.

We launched a public education campaign to help Ontarians fight bedbugs. The website, bedbuginfo.ca, is one of the legacy pieces of that initial investment and it is helping people every day.

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

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Back to the minister: You speak as if the bedbug problem has been solved, and it simply has not. This is a provincial issue. The minister wrote to the city in April and you said, minister, that you “recognize the resurgence of bedbug infestations in Toronto is an important issue.” But so far, Speaker, the minister has refused to offer a single penny of support. Worse, the McGuinty government has cancelled the community start-up and maintenance program, which helped families on social assistance pay for emergency repairs related to bedbug infestations.

A small amount of funding for inspection and support can help families avoid significant health issues and even homelessness. Why is the government so stubbornly refusing to partner with the city of Toronto in tackling the current bedbug infestation?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** As I said, we made it very, very clear that our investment of \$5 million last year to fight bedbugs was one-time funding. All of our partners knew it was one-time funding. The city of Toronto is enjoying a magnificent surplus; we are not. We urge Toronto Public Health to do their job to help their residents fight bedbugs. We’ve done our part. We have increased base funding to Toronto Public Health by 90%; we’ve almost doubled funding to Toronto Public Health since we were elected in 2003.

#### ICEWINE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Kim Craitor:** My question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, Canada enjoys a fine international reputation for its icewine production. This is a sector which exports over \$12 million annually, over 80% of which comes from Ontario. I am extremely pleased to say that a large portion of that is from my riding, from Niagara-on-the-Lake. Over 675,000 litres of icewine were produced in Ontario in 2011. In fact, about 30% of Ontario’s 103 wineries produce icewine.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, can the minister outline the importance of the icewine sector’s high standards that need to continue in order to succeed?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Yes, I can, Mr. Speaker. I want to first thank the member from Niagara Falls for his question.

Ontario growers should be tremendously pleased with the praise that their icewine receives. The distinctiveness, quality and authenticity of Ontario icewine have been central to its success as a signature Canadian export. This reputation is our most valued asset, developed principally by Ontario grape and wine industry stakeholders, and any downgrading of the standard upon which this reputation has been built would constitute a considerable blow to the industry.

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

**Mr. Kim Craitor:** My question is again to the Minister of Agriculture. I was contacted by the Grape Growers of Ontario recently about concerns they had with the identification of our locally produced icewine.

As I’m sure you’re aware, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency currently has a proposal to develop a national standard for icewine production. Minister, establishing a standard that requires icewine to be made only from grapes naturally frozen on the vine is critical to maintaining Canada’s reputation as a world leader in icewine.

Through you, Mr. Speaker: Minister, could you inform this House of any communications you may have had with the federal government with regard to their ongoing discussions on icewine standards?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I’m delighted to respond to the member, and I’m pleased to indicate that I have written to my federal colleague Minister Ritz with respect to adopting a national standard.

We believe in Ontario that adopting this standard would be consistent with the standard we already have in place here in the province. So I’ve urged Minister Ritz to adopt strong national standards of production in order to maintain our hard-won reputation. I’ll be having the next of several periodic consultations by phone this afternoon with Minister Ritz, and I’ll be driving that point home then.

#### FAMILY HEALTH TEAMS

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Minister of Health. The residents of North Dufferin have been struggling to find primary care since a number of physicians and nurse practitioners resigned from the family health team last year.

Minister, I wrote you in March, asking that the audit be released so the public knows what has been happening at the Shelburne family health team. Will you commit today, in the name of transparency, to release that audit?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I do want to thank the member opposite for bringing this issue to my attention some time ago. As she does know, there is an audit, and I will undertake to release that audit. In fact, I believe that I can do that today.

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thank you, Minister. I do appreciate that. It’s unfortunate that we were reading excerpts of that audit on the weekend in the newspaper, but I appreciate the offer to release the audit.

The reality is that the Shelburne health centre, the county of Dufferin, the Headwaters Health Care Centre all want to work together to ensure that my residents in North Dufferin and Shelburne get the services they need. I’m sure, and I’m hopeful, that as a result of the audits, we will finally get some action on primary care in Shelburne, because, as you know, we’ve struggled for many, many years to get primary physicians and nurse practitioners to come and stay in our community.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I think on this issue, the member opposite and I are completely aligned. I think there are 4,400 patients being served by the Mel Lloyd family health team. We know that it is a challenge getting those health professionals in rural areas. That's why we treasure them so much.

I look forward to working with the member opposite to make sure the people in her community do get access to the primary care they need—

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

#### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Minister of Labour. Yesterday the Minister of Labour seemed misinformed or didn't understand her own ministry and their guidelines. She said that servers in Ontario could call her ministry for help if they are being treated unfairly by their bosses.

It seemed at that time that the minister did not know that her Employment Standards Act does not cover employees' tips. And she did not understand that in Ontario, it is not illegal for employers to help themselves to servers' tips.

Now that the minister understands that the Employment Standards Act does not prevent bosses from taking their workers' tip money, will she work with us to prepare an act that will actually help employees?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** Maintaining a fair and balanced relationship between employers and employees in all industries, including hospitality, is one that our government feels is important. Our government is always willing to listen to ideas on how we can improve the lives of workers in our province.

This issue is a little more complicated than the member would lead us to believe, and this one-sentence amendment wouldn't actually achieve what I think he wants it to.

1130

For example, many establishments' tip-outs are collected from servers and are shared with dishwashers, hosts and bussers, who help the restaurant function. This strategy is implemented by restaurants as a means to ensure that the support staff take home more than the minimum wage. The language used in the bill suggests that the owners may be forbidden from collecting tip-outs and distributing them to hard-working members of the support staff.

Clearly, the member has good intentions, but the bill has some unintended consequences. I know that debate will help that conversation, and I look forward to working with the member to ensure fairness in the industry.

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Perhaps the minister is not aware of how widespread this is. One Toronto restaurant even gave their manager the tip-outs in lieu of Christmas bonuses. That's how widespread this is.

The jury is out. The public and members of this House agree that bosses should not be allowed to help them-

selves to tip money meant for employees. Thousands of employees are legally being ripped off by their employers. It is wrong. It is egregious.

Instead of the minister telling servers to find another job if they don't like tipping out to their bosses, will she act quickly to protect Ontario's servers and support Bill 107 or, if she wants, bring in her own bill?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I want to reiterate that waiters and waitresses and bartenders work hard to earn a decent living and they deserve to be treated fairly by their employers. So I want to thank the member for his advocacy. Our government, again, is always willing to listen to new ideas on how we can improve the lives of workers in the province.

I know that tip-outs are a contentious issue within the hospitality industry. What is considered a tip-out in one business may be considered tip-sharing in another. I actually did my own poll last night and talked to my son, who has previously worked as a server, and he said that his tip-outs were often taken by the employer and redistributed amongst support staff.

What I would say is that I know that I've heard from a few servers. I would encourage the member to share the information he has. I want to work with him. I think this is a very important issue. I want to debate it, and I look forward to working with him to ensure fairness in this sector.

#### ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

**Mr. Grant Crack:** My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Minister, your ministry plays a valued role in promoting attractions while drawing visitors to Ontario, supporting the cultural and heritage sectors and fostering participation in sport and recreation activities across the province. Through these initiatives, the government must continue to build a creative and innovative knowledge-based economy and vibrant and livable communities.

In particular, Minister, Ontario's aboriginal communities play a key role in the province's and in Canada's history. We are home to a rich diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, and we must continue to invest in them.

Speaker, can the minister indicate what this government is providing to support aboriginal communities in the areas of tourism, culture and sport?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I thank the honourable member for asking that question and for standing up for Ontario's aboriginal community. Speaker, the member will be reassured to hear that since 2003, we have invested over \$44 million for cultural initiatives, over \$5 million for tourism supports and over \$20 million for sport, recreation, and community-based programs benefitting aboriginal populations in Ontario.

Our investment includes \$11 million in First Nations libraries; over \$900,000 through Celebrate Ontario for 21 aboriginal events since 2007; over \$3.5 million through the Community Aboriginal Recreational Activator pro-

gram; and nearly half a million dollars for the development and implementation of a provincial aboriginal sport body. We will continue to support our aboriginal community.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1134 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my privilege and pleasure to announce that the Holy Family school from Hanover in the beautiful riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound was here earlier today. They were in the gallery. I had my photo taken with them on the stairs. They thoroughly enjoyed their day in our building.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome to our guests.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's my honour to also introduce the students of École Assomption in Earlton, from my hometown of Earlton. They're here today and I had my picture taken as well. They also really enjoyed this part of southern Ontario.

**M. Shafiq Qaadri:** Merci, monsieur le Président. J'ai le plaisir maintenant de vous présenter l'équipe Qaadri. Speaker, I have the pleasure and honour and privilege of presenting to you the Qaadri team from where it all happens: the senior Dr. Qaadri, her husband—who happens as well to be my father—Mr. Qaadri, my wife, Huma Qaadri, and the next generation of parliamentarians, Dr. Shafiq Qaadri Jr., and Dr. Shamsa Qaadri. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome to our guests.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have a family that has driven all the way from Sudbury to come here to Queen's Park today because they are very happy about the introduction of a bill that my colleague is going to do this afternoon. Their names are Neil Haskett, Tabatha Haskett, and they have their three children with them. This is Clarisse, Natalia, as well as Aiden. And I also want to mention their grandmother—her mother—Desneiges Labonté.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions? Do I see the member from York West with an introduction or—

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** I was going to introduce you, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You were going to introduce me. Okay. I need all the help I can get.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### GARY CROWELL

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Halton Police Chief Gary Crowell retired on Saturday, June 2, after a 42-year policing career.

**Interjection: Wow!**

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I know.

A Burlington resident, Chief Crowell served 13 years with the Halton Regional Police Service, the last six as its chief of police. In that capacity, Chief Crowell developed programs such as the domestic violence unit, the Internet child exploitation unit and the street crime unit.

He has earned praise from faith and multicultural leaders across Halton for his community outreach. Chief Crowell is also known for his strong support for women in policing and was the first recipient of the Ontario Women in Law Enforcement president's award.

Chief Crowell has witnessed a period of transformative growth in Halton region. He has managed a force of 600 police officers, an annual budget in excess of \$116 million and, above all, defended the security of Halton's half million residents. He was instrumental in Halton being ranked the safest place to live in the GTA and the safest regional municipality in Canada four years in a row by Maclean's magazine.

It was my pleasure to attend Chief Crowell's final official function, the citizenship court at Burlington city hall, on Friday, June 1. I'd like to wish Chief Crowell a happy, restful and well-earned retirement.

### GLENN COCHRANE

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's with a great deal of sadness I rise today to talk about Glenn Cochrane. Glenn Cochrane, as many people know, worked for CFTO News for many years, and you would have remembered his television—he was always on at the end to show a fluff and funny piece, a man of tremendous wit.

He started working in his journalistic career at the Hamilton Spectator and, in fact, was born in Hamilton. He went on to CFTO News, where he was a mainstay of that for 25 years, until he retired nearly 20 years ago.

But people who live in our neighbourhood know him best as a Beacher, a person who lived in the Beach and celebrated the Beach and worked for the people who lived in the Beach for many years, along with his wife, Jean.

He was a print journalist, but most recently at the Beach Metro News he wrote a funny column that was always a pleasure to read each and every week. He was also a celebrated author. He wrote a book called Glenn Cochrane's Ontario, for which he was honoured with a heritage award in 2006, and most recently, in 2009, a celebrated book—a small, little book, 128 pages—called The Beach, tracing the whole history of our community.

In 2002, he was named citizen of the year, and we celebrated with him at that time.

Our condolences go out to his wife, Jean, to his two daughters, Judith and Martha, and to his grandson Christopher. We will always remember Jean and Glenn as a couple—but especially Glenn for his wit and wisdom, a personable man who was well loved by everyone he met on the street.



### COURCELETTE PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** It gives me great pleasure to rise today and congratulate Courcelette Public School on celebrating its 100th anniversary. Courcelette has a long and storied history in my riding of Scarborough Southwest. The school first opened its doors in 1911, when it was formerly known as Chester Avenue. At the time, it was comprised of only one room with no running water or indoor toilets. In 1917, the school was renamed Courcelette in honour of the great World War I battle of the same name.

On May 26 of this year, I had the honour of celebrating Courcelette's anniversary with hundreds of friends, teachers, students, parents and alumni of Courcelette. Greetings were brought by dignitaries, and performances were made by students. I especially enjoyed Ms. Pennington's grade 1 and 2 class performing "When Children Join Hands"—too bad that doesn't happen here.

On behalf of the Premier of Ontario, I had the honour of presenting a scroll to the principal of Courcelette, Ms. Phany Captsis, which recognized the school's tremendous milestone.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the 100th anniversary committee, school council, staff, students, alumni and parents of Courcelette Public School for their hard work and dedication in preparing for this very special celebration.

### VAIBHAVI "SONU" SOLANKI

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I rise in the House today to recognize a remarkable youth leader from Hanover in the great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound who was recently awarded the Youth in Motion Top 20 Under 20 national award for her remarkable scientific work, academic excellence and exceptional service to her local and global communities.

At age 16, Vaibhavi "Sonu" Solanki was the first-ever high school student and one of only two people in Canada to be accepted into the Doctors Without Borders overseas medical program. Her credentials were so superior that an exception was made to the admission process. Normally, you have to be 18 years old and in university.

In preparing for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Sonu quickly and easily mastered the Hindi language in just one month and then flew out to work as an assistant in the surgery room at the Muni Seva Ashram hospital in Goraj, India. While there, Sonu participated in 25 surgeries and helped with administering anaesthetics and following cancer patients from diagnosis to treatment. As part of her outreach work in India, Sonu also helped to vaccinate about 30 people for polio using \$2,000 of her own savings.

It should come as no surprise that this gifted and talented young woman also holds a spot in the country's top 25% of math whiz kids as well as three gold medals at the regional science fair and bronze at the Canada-wide science fair.

She is among a select few students chosen from across Canada to participate in the CEMC national mathematics and computer science program at the University of Waterloo, Queen's University's E=MC<sup>2</sup> enrichment program and the Deep River Science Academy, where she worked on world-class, cutting-edge research.

When she's not busy studying for grade 12 exams, Sonu mentors younger students in science and math and assists with the junior science fair. Last year, the town of Hanover named her its junior citizen of the year.

I'd like the House to join me in congratulating Sonu and wishing her the best in her next endeavour, which will include a pursuit of a medical degree at the University of Toronto, to be followed by a return to rural Ontario to practise medicine—Hanover, we hope.

### LABOUR DISPUTE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, I want to inform the House about 500 members of CUPE Local 966, Ontario Works unit, a unit made up of mostly women, who are on strike and have been on strike for the past six weeks. They're on strike for respect and equality with other workers in the region.

It's particularly shameful that this unit is comprised of 90% women and they provide services to, again, 90% women, and they are not being given a fair share. They provide services such as child care service, outreach to vulnerable residents, financial relief for those in need and employment assistance.

Essentially, what's going on here, Mr. Speaker, is that these workers are not given a fair deal. Other regions are being provided with year-by-year increases and increases to their benefits, whereas these workers are being given a net loss of over \$450 over the next three years. It's simply unacceptable.

In fact, last week, the public works unit has also gone on strike, as well as the transhelp unit of Local 966.

We must stand in solidarity with workers who are providing essential services to Peel, to the city, to the surrounding community, and who are not being given a fair deal. They deserve to be treated with fairness and equality.

1510

### ROAD MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** While summer is not officially here, the warm weather is and people in Thunder Bay-Atikokan have been heading to the lakes and their camps for weeks now. I want to acknowledge the great work being done by the local roads boards in our communities. These volunteers and their ratepayers provide their time and money to support a large system of roadways in northern Ontario.

Speaker, the work they do does not merely benefit the ratepayers and the campers, but it benefits everyone who uses those roads: hikers, people going fishing and blueberry picking, and the list goes on. That's why I was

very pleased to announce last year that our government would double the funding to local roads boards from \$12.5 million to \$25 million, a funding ratio of two government dollars for every dollar raised from the ratepayers. This funding increase reversed a decision made in the early 1990s by a previous government.

I thank my roads boards chairs, trustees and ratepayers for the work that they do to benefit so many, for partnering with us, and I'm grateful that our government maintained this investment during these very, very difficult economic times.

It might have seemed fiscally convenient to reverse the decision, but we did not. Our continued commitment to this initiative for local roads boards in northern Ontario is another example of our government's major investments in our region, and our commitment to the people of northern Ontario.

#### AL PETTIT

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** We've all met some amazing volunteers who do so much in our communities. I'd like to tell you about one special man we just lost. Al Pettit lost his eight-year battle against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis on May 31.

As a retired Mississauga fire captain with 33 years' experience, Al was well respected and admired in the community and by his peers. In 2003, when he was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, he began a hard-fought battle to maintain his independence and was a tireless worker in his effort to increase awareness and support for the ALS community. Al helped to raise an amazing amount of money through fundraisers and by participating in the annual ALS walk.

He also acted as a mentor and supporter for many on an ALS Internet forum that now boasts over 10,000 members. Al loved life, and offered insight through his own struggles and successes as hope to others who are afflicted with the disease.

This year, the Orangeville ALS walk continued in Al's memory, as he passed away only two days before the walk. Seventy per cent of the money raised by the walk helps to fund equipment needed by those with ALS. The remaining 30% goes towards research. As a final gift, Al donated his spinal column and part of his brain to assist in researching treatment for the disease.

Al lived his life with dignity and distinction. He had an enormous compassion for others and has left a lasting legacy, both as a retired firefighter and as a strong advocate for the ALS community. His death is being mourned by his loving family and friends and those who were inspired by his life.

#### MONIKA WYRZYKOWSKA

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Today I rise in the House to thank my OLIP intern, Monika Wyrzykowska, and to commend the Ontario Legislature internship program for creating a non-partisan program that offers great

opportunities for young people to expand their skill set and gain new experiences. Since 1975, the OLIP program has been giving qualified candidates practical work experience in the Legislature. I have only had great experiences, as Monika is my second OLIP intern.

Monika came to our office in February, and from her first day she proved herself a capable, enthusiastic and highly skilled member of our team. She assisted in many areas of the research and development of my private member's bill, Bill 93, and she sat in on meetings with me, wrote communications materials and, during a busy time here at Queen's Park, was a true asset.

During these last few months she contributed so much to my office. And during this time Monika also found the time to go to Europe and get married, proving this remarkable young woman to be the very definition of a multi-tasker.

I am very grateful to Monika for all her hard work and wish her all the best as she enters the Ontario internship program for the next two years within the Ministry of Education.

#### CAREER SERVICES

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to Career Services, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. For the past four decades, Career Services has done much more than just make a difference. They've actually changed the lives of hundreds, probably thousands, of people with intellectual disabilities in Leeds-Grenville.

By providing meaningful work, Career Services has helped them become active and engaged members of our community. We all know a job is crucial to self-esteem. It's essential to being a participant, not a spectator, in society.

I commend Career Services for its unwavering commitment to ensure that a disability isn't a barrier to experiencing the tremendous rewards of independence, opportunity and personal satisfaction that come with being employed.

Under the calm, steady hand of executive director Alec Thomas and his dedicated staff, Career Services has successfully navigated the stormy seas of the economic downturn. This has positioned the agency well to continue providing for its clients. As a former chair of the Career Services board of directors, I count the experience as one of the most rewarding of any public service work I've done, so I want to acknowledge with thanks the outgoing board chair, Dave Paul, who is stepping down after 10 years at the helm. I'm so pleased that Dave will remain on the board to help incoming chair Candy Burkitt lead the journey into a future of continued success.

The clients of Career Services are better off because of the agency's work over the last 40 years, but I also believe that our community as a whole has benefited even more by becoming a more inclusive place to call home.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated June 12, 2012, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 108(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 33, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code with respect to gender identity and gender expression / Projet de loi 33, Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne en ce qui concerne l'identité et l'expression sexuelles, the title of which is amended to read An Act to amend the Human Rights Code with respect to gender identity and gender expression / Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne en ce qui concerne l'identité sexuelle ou l'expression de l'identité sexuelle.

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

*Report adopted.*

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

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE POLICY

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 19, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of the rent increase guideline / Projet de loi 19, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne le taux légal d'augmentation des loyers.

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

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 31, 2012, the bill is ordered for third reading.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT BILLS ACT, 2012

#### LOI DE 2012 SUR LA TRANSPARENCE DES PROJETS DE LOI ÉMANANT DU GOUVERNEMENT

Mr. Harris moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 109, An Act respecting government bills / Projet de loi 109, Loi concernant les projets de loi émanant du gouvernement.

**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 Harris:** Today I'm pleased to introduce the Transparency in Government Bills Act. This piece of legislation, if passed, would require the government to table a comprehensive report with each government bill detailing its financial, economic, health and environmental implications.

When new laws will affect the livelihood of individuals and the profitability of their businesses, the government should at least inform them about the potential impacts. That's why I'm proposing that each government bill include, among other things, a detailed summary of the financial costs the bill will have on government, municipalities, individuals and businesses. My bill then requires that this information be posted on the Legislative Assembly's website to give Ontarians the tools necessary to assess the costs and benefits of new legislation. Thank you.

*Interjections.*

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**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I ask the House for its attention—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, yes. Sorry, sir.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** —and now I've received it.

Introduction of bills?

### OMBUDSMAN AMENDMENT ACT (CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES), 2012

#### LOI DE 2012 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'OMBUDSMAN (SOCIÉTÉS D'AIDE À L'ENFANCE)

Miss Taylor moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 110, An Act to amend the Ombudsman Act with respect to children's aid societies / Projet de loi 110, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'ombudsman en ce qui a trait aux sociétés d'aide à l'enfance.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I have a feeling I have been restricting the heckling in question period too

much, because it's carrying over into introduction of bills.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Holy mackerel.

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.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** The bill amends the Ombudsman Act to allow the Ombudsman to investigate any decision or recommendation made, or any act done or omitted, in the course of the administration of a children's aid society.

There are several families here today, and families watching from across the province, to hear the reading of this bill. The NDP has brought forward this bill several times, and I'm really hopeful that this time, as it's being read as a separate bill dealing directly with the children's aid societies, we will have members from all across the House supporting this bill.

#### TAMIL HERITAGE MONTH ACT, 2012

##### LOI DE 2012 SUR LE MOIS DU PATRIMOINE TAMOUL

Mr. Coteau moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 111, An Act to proclaim the month of January Tamil Heritage Month / Projet de loi 111, Loi proclamant le mois de janvier Mois du patrimoine tamoul.

**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 Coteau:** If passed, this bill would recognize the valued contributions that Tamil Canadians have made in Ontario's social, economic and cultural fabric. Tamil Heritage Month is an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the inspirational role that Tamils have played and continue to play in communities across this great province.

#### OMBUDSMAN AMENDMENT ACT (SCHOOL BOARDS), 2012

##### LOI DE 2012 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'OMBUDSMAN (CONSEILS SCOLAIRES)

Mr. Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 112, An Act to amend the Ombudsman Act to allow the Ombudsman to investigate the actions of school boards / Projet de loi 112, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'ombudsman pour conférer à l'ombudsman le pouvoir d'enquêter sur les actions accomplies par les conseils scolaires.

**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. Rosario Marchese:** The bill amends the Ombudsman Act to allow the Ombudsman to investigate any decision or recommendation made, or any act done or omitted, in the course of the administration of a school board. Merci.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Introduction of bills?

I do want to make one comment before we move to the next business. I remind all members that it is now customary, and it's been reminded, that we read from the explanatory note on the introduction of the bill to avoid any confusion or concerns about statements versus comments. Thank you.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** June 12 is Philippine Independence Day. On this day 114 years ago, Filipinos gained their independence and the Philippine nation was born. We were pleased to acknowledge this important day by raising the Philippines flag at Queen's Park earlier today. By raising the flag, we recognize the tremendous contributions that Filipino Canadians make in Ontario. We also join the Filipino community to celebrate their freedom, both in the Philippines and in Canada.

We're very fortunate to have a large and vibrant Filipino community in Ontario. Like many newcomers to Canada, Filipinos have had to overcome the challenges of moving to a new land, and they have thrived from their hard work, community involvement and strong family ties.

Filipino Canadians' desire to succeed has brought neighbourhoods back to life and strengthened our communities. The Filipino community, along with many other cultural groups, are helping Ontario succeed.

To commemorate independence day, the Filipino community is holding a number of different events and activities to honour and enjoy Filipino culture and celebrate freedom in both the Philippines and Ontario.

Filipino Canadians are proud of their heritage and culture, and they're proud to call Ontario their home. And we're proud of Filipino Canadians. They're a vital part of our diversity, which makes Ontario such a wonderful, strong and dynamic place to live.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Filipino Canadians in Ontario.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Your enthusiasm will get the gallery guests in trouble.

Thank you.

## TOURISM

**Hon. Michael Chan:** On behalf of the McGuinty government, I'm pleased to take this opportunity to speak about some excellent news for Ontario's tourism industry.

Ontario's tourism sector is and will continue to be an important part of this province's overall economy. Recent numbers attest to this. Mr. Speaker, latest Statistics Canada indicators for 2011 suggest that our province saw an increase in visits to 104 million to Ontario, with a strong increase in visitors from emerging markets like India, China and Brazil. And more Ontarians than ever before discovered what a great place Ontario is to explore.

What does that mean for Ontario's economy? It means that visitor spending increased by 3.6%, to \$18.3 billion. It means an increase in tourism receipts to over \$23 billion. In turn, provincial taxes generated by tourism receipts increased by 2.5%, to \$4 billion. All that means jobs for Ontarians.

Those preliminary 2011 figures also show that total employment generated by tourism receipts in Ontario increased to over 330,000 jobs; 2011 was a good year for Ontario tourism.

Ontario's international presence continues to grow and attract visitors from around the globe. Ontario is a premier travel destination, attracting a number of major national and international conventions and events, helping to further strengthen the economy and create jobs.

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In 2011, Ontario hosted major events like Ottawa Bluesfest, the Juno Awards, the Sudbury Francophone Games and the International Indian Film Academy Awards—the first time this event was ever held in North America.

Just look at some of the major events we have going on as we start the summer: the Toronto International Track and Field Games; the Stratford Shakespeare Festival; the Microsoft Worldwide Partner Conference, with 15,000 delegates from 150 countries; the Sarnia Rogers Bayfest; the Toronto International Film Festival; the Ottawa Jazz Festival; Luminato, which is taking place as I speak; and, in the fall, the centennial 2012 Grey Cup.

Major national and international events like these promote Ontario's brand and increase awareness of our province as a premier travel destination.

I would like to make a special note of a unique event: the commemorations of the bicentennial of the War of 1812. This unique three-year event marks a defining moment in our nation's history. It also offers Ontarians a unique opportunity to showcase our province and our heritage—a strong, diverse and vibrant society and a leading tourism destination.

These are just a few of the provincial tourism and culture agencies and attractions that draw millions of visitors every year.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that as a tourism destination, Ontario is second to none. From natural wonders to unique, world-class festivals and events, Ontario is truly a land of diverse and engaging regions that invite exploration.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

## TOURISM

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's my distinct pleasure, on behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus, to respond to the Minister of Tourism and Culture on summer tourism attractions in Ontario.

I'm very privileged to represent the riding of Durham, which is a wonderful riding. It's made up of three distinct communities: Uxbridge, Scugog and Clarington. It stretches from the Oak Ridges moraine in the greenbelt in the north to Lake Ontario in the south. It's the largest riding in the GTA. Its focus is on agriculture, autos, energy, the university—UOIT—as well as the college. We thrive on outdoor activities like sailing, boating, camping, hiking—one of the largest trail networks, all the way from Pickering right through to Northumberland, in our riding. We have summer theatre, Art in the Park with the visual arts centre, and the Kent Farndale Gallery.

I want to thank Durham Region Tourism, specifically Kerri King, who is their manager of tourism—and there's a very interesting website; I'd encourage people to look and encourage them to attend—Kristyn Chambers, who is the tourism coordinator; as well as Kathy Weiss, who's the director of activities.

To mention a few, we have Archibald's winery, and we have Ocala winery, right in my riding.

The Canadian Tire Motorsport raceway just had a great event. I think there were 20,000 or 30,000 people attending.

We also have a really important event occurring in August at the Uxbridge park, Elgin Park, and it's a very well attended, very well supported visual arts presentation, and that's the weekend of August 18 and 19.

Lake Scugog is renowned for the amount of fishing and fishing tournaments that are held on Lake Scugog, all during the summer—and all different varieties of fish, as well.

The local activities that occur almost every weekend in Palmer Park or in Elgin Park are the kinds of things where you meet and greet with people from across the GTA. It's a welcoming community. Really, when you look at it, there are activities for children. The Bowmanville Zoo: It's the largest private zoo, I believe, in Canada.

I would say that if I look at the trails in Durham, not just on the Oak Ridges moraine—Uxbridge is the trail capital of Canada.

So I'd encourage people to visit the riding of Durham, but also the region of Durham. It's full of fun and activities and has a wonderful website that you can

consult and find out what's going on every single weekend all summer long.

#### PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I'd like to take this moment to recognize Philippine Independence Day. On June 12, 1898, Filipino revolutionary forces proclaimed sovereignty and the independence of the Philippine islands from Spain.

On this national day, people of Filipino descent from around the world celebrate their rich history, language and culture.

Here in Ontario, over 200,000 Filipino Canadians will gather with family and friends to celebrate this historic occasion. From parades to flag raisings and the annual Independence Day potluck picnic at Earl Bales Park, hosted by the Philippine Independence Day Council, Toronto, this day truly represents the strength, vitality and solidarity of the Filipino community in Ontario.

Through hard work, responsibility and respect for family, Filipino Canadians not only embody Canadian values but help build a stronger and more prosperous Ontario. For all Ontarians, Philippine Independence Day provides an opportunity to learn about Filipino culture and traditions and to reflect on the tremendous contributions that this community has made to our great province.

On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus and our leader, Tim Hudak, I would like to wish the Filipino community the best as you celebrate Philippine Independence Day.

#### PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It is my privilege and honour to respond to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on this, the national Independence Day of the Philippines. As has been said by other speakers, this is the 114th anniversary of Philippine independence, and all around the world where Filipinos live there are flag raisings, food, music, joy—Filipino traditions that seem to land in every single part of the earth.

Filipinos remember this day as a day of bravery of General Emilio Aguinaldo and his revolutionary forces that overthrew the colonial rulers, but they also remember that in spite of that, they still lived under another sovereignty until 1946, when the Treaty of Manila gave them full authority over their own affairs.

There are some 300,000 Filipinos living in Toronto, and many of those came to Canada during the years 1973 to 1993, when I worked in immigration—a time to meet an awful lot of them. They moved in and around, at first in the St. James Town area of downtown Toronto, and they became there a vibrant community. They spread out across the entire province. But what I remember best were those years of Caravan when the Filipino pavilion was in East York. East Yorkers, to this day, celebrate that great tradition.

#### TOURISM

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My response is to the Minister of Tourism. When I think of summer, I think of many activities that brought us in contact with such things as historical sites, water events and—my favourite—Stoney Creek Dairy cold ice cream on a hot summer day. As an adult, my thoughts turned to the many attractions that are available to explore, appreciate and share with others. Living so close to Niagara Falls, we were lucky to be able to visit that attraction easily. Also I enjoyed many family vacations on Lake Couchiching in Orillia.

But Ontario has so much more to offer each of us, and, of course, our tourists. From the Ontario-Manitoba border to the Ottawa River and Point Pelee, we have something for everyone. Unfortunately, although this government brays about our tourism industry, it turns a cold ear to the real concerns of the providers of information and welcoming our guests to Ontario. Closing the travel information centres in the north is a foolish action that tells these tourists that we don't care about their visit, their spending and then telling their friends and family about the great adventures they had in Ontario.

At the same time as they close the doors on these tourists at the border, they close the doors to Ontarians' access to crown lands, historically available for our local residents and tourists. The McGuinty Liberals seem to be good at partly closing everything and at closed doors.

Over the next three years, Ontarians will commemorate the War of 1812 to 1814. The success in that war is why we are Canadians today. Although there were many battles and successes in the war, the Battle of Stoney Creek on June 5, 1813, was the seminal victory that beat the Americans back across the Niagara River and kept the lands that form part of Ontario today.

I have approached this minister on several occasions for proper funding for the 200th anniversary in Stoney Creek, to no avail. But now, how does this governing group acknowledge such a significant and historical event in Ontario? By apportioning paltry amounts of tourism dollars to local events.

Rather than making announcements about Ontario's summer tourist attractions, this government should be supporting our local events, all of which attract large numbers of tourists while supporting our local industries. Reopen our northern travel information centres, reopen our crown lands to local use, and put real dollars—real dollars, Minister—into the many commemorations of the War of 1812, which you are not doing.

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

#### PETITIONS

##### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Earlier today I spoke with the Minister of the Environment on this very issue.

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

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

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

“Whereas car collectors typically use their vehicles” on only very special occasions over four to five months of the year;

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

I’m pleased to support this on behalf of my constituents, sign it and give it to Andrew, one of the pages.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, I have 840 signatures for auto insurance reform needed to protect consumers. 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 (GTA) 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 strongly agree with this petition, will affix my name and hand it to page Kyra.

#### ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I agree with this, and I will affix my name and send it up to the table with Andrew.

#### MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS TREATMENT

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

“Whereas thousands of people suffer from multiple sclerosis;

“Whereas there is a treatment for chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency, more commonly called CCSVI, which consists of a corrective angioplasty, a well-known and universally practised procedure that is low-risk and at relatively low expense;

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

“That the Minister of Health agrees to proceed with clinical trials of the venoplasty treatment, to fully explore its potential to bring relief to the thousands of Ontarians afflicted with multiple sclerosis.”

This is brought to me by Margaret Anthony, Victoria West District Women’s Institute, and given to page Hannah.

#### ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Mr. John Vanthof:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

I fully agree, add my signature and give it to page Gopi.

### KIDNEY DISEASE

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I'm delighted today to present a petition on behalf of Gladys Shea, who lives at 1182 Fleetwood Road in the wonderful community of Janetville, Ontario.

"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, affix my signature to it and give it to page Angela.

### PROTECTION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas supported-living residents in southwestern and eastern Ontario were subjected to picketing outside their homes during labour strikes in 2007 and 2009; and

"Whereas residents and neighbours had to endure megaphones, picket lines, portable bathrooms and shining lights at all hours of the day and night on their streets; and

"Whereas individuals with intellectual disabilities and the organizations who support them fought for years to break down barriers and live in inclusive communities; and

"Whereas Bill 23 passed first reading in the Ontario Legislature on December 6, 2011;

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

"That the members of the Legislative Assembly vote in support of Sylvia Jones's Bill 23—the Protecting Vulnerable People Against Picketing Act."

For obvious reasons, I support this petition, affix my name to it and give it to page Kyra.

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition coming from the people of Brampton and area, as well as the people of London and area, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario's cardiologists provide accessible, efficient, and cost-effective diagnostic testing services that save, and improve, the lives of thousands of people each year; and

"Whereas the Ontario government's unilateral, punitive changes to the OHIP fee schedule will result in

the elimination of these crucial services, thereby leading to a reduction in patient access to care, the lengthening of waiting lists for services, the eradication of high-quality health professional jobs, and an increase in preventable deaths; and

"Whereas the Ontario Association of Cardiologists has presented an alternative, namely, the implementation of new, rigorous standards, which would ensure that cardiac diagnostic tests are done on the right patients, at the right time, by appropriately trained people, in accredited facilities, thereby reducing the number of inappropriate tests and leading to significant financial savings for the government; and

"Whereas the proposal has the endorsement of the highly respected Cardiac Care Network of Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"Direct the Ontario government to repeal the OHIP fee schedule regulation changes filed on May 7, 2012, and instruct the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to work with the Ontario Association of Cardiologists to implement proposed cardiac diagnostic testing standards across the province."

I will give this petition to Daxime and send it to the Clerk.

### CANADIAN BLOOD SERVICES

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario retains responsibility for the effectiveness of the blood supply system as an integral component of provincial/territorial health care delivery requirements; and

"Whereas Canadian Blood Services has failed to meet provincially mandated targets to increase Canadian content in blood products, including intravenous immunoglobulin (a critical tool in the fight against cancer); and

"Whereas Canadian Blood Services is in fact closing down Canadian production facilities—including the Thunder Bay plasma donor clinic—while increasing imports of American 'surplus' plasma; and

"Whereas the US blood system has not fully adopted the World Health Organization recommendations to reduce transfusion-transmissible infections, raising questions about the security of blood product imports;

"We, the undersigned, request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to use its role as a 'shareholder' in Canadian Blood Services to pursue the goal of increasing Canadian content in blood plasma products and reinstate such facilities as the Thunder Bay plasma donor clinic towards achieving that aim."

### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



“Whereas Dalton McGuinty’s Liberal government is forcing Ontario municipalities to build industrial wind turbines without any local say or local approval; and

“Whereas the McGuinty government transferred decision-making power from elected municipal governments to unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats; and  
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“Whereas Ontario’s largest farm organization, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed, and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning; and

“Whereas the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus has committed to restore local decision-making powers and to building renewable energy projects only in places where they are welcomed, wanted and at prices Ontario families can afford;

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

“That the McGuinty government restore local decision-making powers for renewable energy projects and immediately stop forcing new industrial wind developments on municipalities that have not approved them and whose citizens do not want them in their community.”

I agree with this petition, and I shall sign it and send it down with page Stavroula.

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition from the people of Nickel Belt, and it reads as follows:

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

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

“Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario,” with Health Sciences North, “its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

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

I couldn’t agree more, Madam Speaker. I will affix my name to it and ask Tameem to bring it to the Clerk.

#### SCHOOL FACILITIES

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

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

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

“Whereas the Toronto Catholic District School Board has placed St. John the Evangelist third on the urgent capital priority list for 2012”—and actually, that’s now first on that list;

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

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

I agree with this petition. I will sign it and send it over with page Andrew.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health has changed the availability of epidural injections for quality pain control for people with pain from whenever required by the physician prescribing it, to only being allowed to have 12 epidural injections per 12 months, amounting to one every four weeks to the date of the previous injection, regardless of the level of people’s pain requiring the injection and without regard for the quality of the people’s lives who are living with this pain;

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

“To return the time frame for epidural injections for pain control being administered by the pain specialist physician to the previous allowance of being able to receive these injections when required by the attending physician.”

I affix my signature to these names.

#### SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ça me fait plaisir de présenter une pétition qui a été signée par les gens de Sudbury et de Nickel Belt :

« Attendu que la mission du commissaire aux services en français est de veiller à ce que la population reçoive en français des services de qualité du gouvernement de l’Ontario et de surveiller l’application de la Loi sur les services en français;

« Attendu que le commissaire » aux services en français « a le mandat de mener des enquêtes indépendantes selon la Loi sur les services en français;

« Attendu que contrairement au vérificateur général, à l’ombudsman, au commissaire à l’environnement et au commissaire à l’intégrité qui, eux, relèvent de l’Assemblée législative, le commissaire aux services en français relève de la ministre déléguée aux services en français;

Ils demandent à l’Assemblée législative « de changer les pouvoirs du commissaire aux services en français afin

qu'il relève directement de l'Assemblée législative », comme il est recommandé dans son dernier rapport.

Je vous remercie, madame. J'y ajouterai ma signature et je demande à page Hannah de l'amener aux greffiers.

#### ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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

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

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

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

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

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

I support this. I will add my name and give it to Colin.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The time for petitions has ended.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT ACT (RENT INCREASE GUIDELINE), 2012

##### LOI DE 2012 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA LOCATION À USAGE D'HABITATION (TAUX LÉGAL D'AUGMENTATION DES LOYERS)

Ms. Wynne moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 19, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of the rent increase guideline / Projet de loi 19, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne le taux légal d'augmentation des loyers.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I just would like to note that I am going to split my time with the member for York West, who is also my capable parliamentary assistant and a man who understands housing from his long experience in elected office, both as a city councillor and as an MPP for York

West, where there are many, many constituents who live in rental accommodations. He'll be speaking when I'm finished.

I'm very pleased to rise today to speak on the third reading of Bill 19, which would amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, with regard to the annual rent increase guidelines. I just want to comment at the outset that when I was first campaigning to run in the election of 2003—so it was my first provincial campaign—one of the issues that was top of mind for many of my constituents was that of tenant protection and the affordability of rental accommodation in my riding of Don Valley West, but generally across the province.

When we came into office, we actually made a lot of changes to what was then called the Tenant Protection Act. We changed it because we didn't believe it actually did what the title of the act said, and we created the Residential Tenancies Act, which made a lot of changes that I believe were very balanced. One of them was to introduce a rent increase guideline that was tied to the CPI. I'm going to come back to that as I go through this presentation because, if passed, this proposed amendment that we'd like to make to the Residential Tenancies Act would keep rental housing costs affordable and stable for tenants in Ontario. It would allow landlords to maintain their property and to make sure that any necessary repairs and maintenance costs are covered. Beginning in 2013, the rent increase guideline would be more stable and predictable, if the bill was passed.

I want to acknowledge the important work that was done during the committee phase and the role of the opposition, specifically the role of the third party. I want to acknowledge the work of my critic, the member for Welland, and her help as we moved this legislation through, so thank you very much for that. What happened in committee was that a significant change was made to the proposed amendment. What that change was: to eliminate the floor in the future rent increase guideline. As a result, if this bill is passed in its current form, the guideline would continue to be based on the Ontario consumer price index, but the new guideline formula would ensure the rent increase guideline would be capped at 2.5%, but there would be no floor. That was the change that the third party introduced. It was a significant one, and we thank you for that.

Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker; I apologize—more than one million tenant households in Ontario were covered by the annual rent increase guideline, and that's both individuals and families. Families with children are 31% of tenant households in Ontario, and we know that stability at home is directly related to their health and well-being.

**1600**

Pour que les enfants puissent être forts et en santé, réussir à l'école et s'épanouir, ils ont besoin d'un foyer familial sécuritaire et sûr.

For children to be able to live strong and healthy lives, do well in school and to flourish, they need a secure and safe home with their families. This proposed amendment

would let Ontario families and singles who rent rest assured that their rent would not increase beyond 2.5%. With that, it just removes one more barrier to being able to focus on jobs, education and health during what have been and continue to be somewhat difficult economic times.

This government has the same focus and that's why we've proposed this amendment to help Ontario tenants, because we want people in Ontario to be able to focus on those core responsibilities of education and health and raising their families and making sure that they can take part in the community. So this is what we can do right now to help them find some stability in their tight monthly budgets.

The government continues to look for opportunities that will benefit residents of Ontario in favourable ways, and we believe that this proposed amendment is one of those ways. With the amendment, tenants would have the security of knowing that the monthly cost of their homes would be stabilized.

You know, the economy has been very uncertain. I noted that there have been some difficult economic times. I think one of the difficulties has been the degree to which there has been uncertainty. So when we tied the rent increase guideline to CPI, what we've discovered over the last few years, and certainly in the last year, is that it didn't necessarily reflect what was going on in people's lives. So we felt that putting this amendment in place would increase that stability. I don't think any of us can stress the importance of that enough, that kind of stability. Fluctuation in costs is something that is vital to family, as rent is stressful.

Nous savons tous que disposer d'un logement, c'est avoir accès à quelque chose de fiable, à un élément sur lequel on peut compter.

We all need to know that a place to call home is something that must be reliable and something that we can count on. Proper housing is bricks and mortar, it's the physical place that we live, but it's also much more than that. It's crucial to breaking the cycle of poverty. And we have made a commitment as a government—the first government in Ontario to do that—to have a poverty reduction strategy, to work consistently on reducing poverty. This amendment would fulfill an important goal of that poverty reduction strategy that we've put in place, and that is to work to keep housing costs affordable and stable.

This proposed new rent increase guideline, along with other government initiatives—one of those is our investment in affordable housing, which, to date, is more than \$2.5 billion. Right now, there's \$480 million in communities across the province, money that is provided by the provincial government, in partnership with the federal government, to provide new build for affordable housing and also to allow municipalities to have the flexibility to provide rent supplements and those kinds of supports that allow them to keep housing affordable. So we know that this rent increase guideline is along that continuum and supports that principle of keeping housing affordable.

We've heard that too many families are not able to keep up with inflation, that too many are worried about their rents increasing beyond their ability to pay and they don't know what to expect. The letters received by my ministry attest to the struggle that many tenants are facing, especially pensioners who live on a fixed income. That stability that I spoke of is particularly important to pensioners living on a fixed income. These are people who have worked hard and they've earned the right to live with dignity at a time in their lives when they are the most vulnerable. There are letters from those who cannot afford to pay the rent and from people whose income has not kept up with their annual rent increase. We believe that now is the time to act to provide tenants with some relief.

This proposed amendment, if passed, would also provide some stability and clear expectations for landlords. Safe, secure and properly maintained housing is essential for good health and well-being, and as I've said, it's what Ontario residents and their families deserve. This proposed amendment would help tenants prevent potential financial problems and protect families that are vulnerable. That link between health and housing is well documented, and the fact that it would give landlords some stability and some understanding of what they could expect means that they will be able to do the necessary planning.

In its final report, the social determinants of health commission, under the World Health Organization, indicated the strong link between health and housing. This was a report that was issued in 2008, and I quote from that report.

According to the commission, the health impacts arise from the physical quality and the affordability of housing. It goes on to say, "One of the biggest challenges facing cities is access to adequate shelter for all. Not only is the provision of shelter essential, but the quality of the shelter and the services associated with it, such as water and sanitation, are also vital contributors to health."

So housing, as a determinant of health, I think is well understood among housing providers but also among social service providers, among municipal administrators and among local politicians as well as provincial politicians.

I will just say, Madam Speaker, that the notion that this is an intergovernmental responsibility, I think, is an important one. I mentioned that the investment in affordable housing money that is in the system right now, that \$481 million, is money, as I said, that is in the system because the federal government and the provincial government have worked together. I believe that we need a national housing strategy. We need the investments in affordable housing to be consistent and incremental. Sometimes when we think about infrastructure, we don't always count housing as part of infrastructure. Infrastructure, meaning roads and bridges and institutions, is all critical, but housing is a piece of infrastructure that needs the same kind of incremental treatment that those others do.

Madam Speaker, we certainly know the cost of health care is rising. The contributing factors are varied, but providing adequate housing is linked to and is important to excellent health care.

In that same report from the World Health Organization that I quoted from earlier, it also makes the following important points, saying, “The cost of ‘doing nothing’ in the face of deep and persistent housing insecurity and homelessness—as measured by increased health, justice, education, and social services costs—far outweighs the cost of solutions.”

Our proposed amendment to the act includes a requirement for a review of the annual rent increase guideline formula every four years. The reviewing of the guideline every four years will ensure that it reflects the changes to the economic environment.

We want to move quickly to implement these changes in time to affect the 2013 rent increase guideline. As I’ve said, Madam Speaker, our government is committed to continuing to work hard to make sure that safe, decent and reasonably priced housing is within every family’s reach.

As I said, we developed a plan to do with affordable housing. We’ve developed a long-term affordable housing strategy. It’s the first of its kind in Ontario, and it is a cornerstone piece of the poverty reduction strategy.

Notre gouvernement s’engage à aider les Ontariennes et les Ontariens à trouver un lieu de résidence sûr, salubre et abordable. Je demande instamment à chacune et à chacun d’entre vous d’appuyer ce projet de loi.

I hope that everyone in this House will support this legislation. Our government is committed to helping Ontario residents to have safe, secure, affordable housing, and I think that that’s a goal we can all appreciate and accept and support.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** I’m pleased to rise today in support of third reading of Bill 19. As the minister said, with the passage of this proposed amendment, tenants will have the security of knowing that the monthly cost of their homes would be stabilized. They could rest assured that their rent increase would be capped at 2.5%. People can get on with their daily living without the added stress of worrying about an amount that could affect their household budgets.

Our government has been working hard to find relief for the people of Ontario who rent and whose budgets are stretched—people who struggle to pay their bills every month, people who are fighting to keep their family sheltered in decent homes.

**1610**

This proposed amendment would also work towards reducing uncertainty and giving Ontario families a measure to help them meet the demands of their monthly budgets. Housing is a basic requirement of life. People want to count on having a home for their families, and this proposed amendment would provide something renters could count on.

Families need stability to be healthy and happy, and keeping rent increases stable for Ontario tenants is the goal of this proposed amendment.

Those families with children that rent know that children are affected by what goes on around them, even if they are too young to understand exactly what is happening. The trauma and disruption children experience when their families are forced to move might negatively affect their health, their social and emotional development, their attendance at school, their academic performance. All these factors are closely tied to having a stable home and thus having a sense of security.

Whether or not we have a roof over our head affects everything else in our lives, and this should come as no surprise. We should not downplay what effect this proposed amendment would have on families whose income is budgeted down to the last dollar every month.

Our government has consistently shown a strong commitment to protecting tenants across Ontario. This government proved that commitment with the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, which established strong rent regulations to keep rent affordable for tenants. It was Ontario’s first piece of residential housing legislation to establish a fair, transparent and objective way to calculate annual rent increases. As part of this legislation, the annual rent increase guideline is based on a real cost indicator, namely, the Ontario consumer price index, or CPI. Using the CPI to calculate the annual rent increase guideline is the most transparent approach.

The act was written after extensive consultations that lasted two years with a large number of tenant and landlord groups. The government’s goal was about striking a balance, and these consultations were carried out in order to find that balance. Part of that balance included the McGuinty government’s support for and inclusion of several recommendations from the Federation of Rental Housing Providers of Ontario that are included in the act. As a result, the Residential Tenancies Act established a fairer, more responsive rental housing system that helps build stronger communities across this province.

The proposed amendment, if passed, would make things even more fair by keeping any annual rent increase capped at 2.5% for the next four years. Our government has afforded tenants across Ontario the lowest year-over-year increase of any government in recent memory. We believe this proposed amendment would continue holding the balance we were striving for when we first introduced the act.

To thousands of Ontario residents who rent, this in itself is a huge relief and one less thing to worry about on a daily basis. Wherever Ontario renters call home, they would know that the cost of living in their homes would not be able to increase so dramatically as to take away hard-earned income from their monthly budgets, income that can be spent on the other pressing needs of life: food, clothing, medicine, transportation and the other monthly expenses, many often unforeseen, that all of us face.

Ontario has the largest population in Canada and Ontario’s major cities have some of the more expensive

housing markets in the country. But regardless of where in Ontario someone chooses to live, affordability of housing is a factor of economic well-being. Families or individuals who spend a large portion of their income on shelter may face housing insecurity. Shelter is the largest expenditure for most households, and its affordability can affect well-being.

The Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, or ONPHA, reminds us that “Housing is the home of all issues. And the solution.” Note where this quote came from. ONPHA’s 2011 report titled *Where’s Home?* categorically shows that it is increasingly difficult for low- and modest-income people in Ontario to find safe, affordable and appropriate rental housing options. From the report, we learn the following facts about renters in Ontario: “Just under half a million families with children (403,900) rented their housing in Ontario, representing 31% of tenant households. Seventeen per cent ... or 221,700 households were families headed by couples and 14% were headed by lone parents,” some 182,000 households.

These figures tell us that dependent children are members of families that rent. And, of course, children rely on their parents’ income to provide all their necessities of life.

The report was done jointly with the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada.

When the report came out, Harvey Cooper, manager, government relations at CHF Canada, Ontario region, stated that the findings of the report “clearly demonstrate that the gap between homeowners and tenants’ incomes is growing ever wider, and many Ontarians of low and modest means are struggling to find a home that they can afford.” He went on to say, “I worry about families being forced to choose between paying for the necessities of life, putting food on the table and paying the rent.”

The well-being of the entire family is tied to their income. No family needs the added stress of not knowing if the cost of their home is going to become unaffordable to them.

A person’s physical environment can have an impact on their health and well-being, and if that person is a parent, it can also impact their ability to parent and provide for their children.

This government recognizes the importance of good housing for Ontario residents, and housing has indeed been a focus of our work. The steps this government has already taken are improving people’s access to stable, safe and affordable housing. The Housing Services Act, 2011, which took effect on January 1 of this year, is an example of this. The act supports better decision-making at the local level, particularly through the requirement for local housing and homelessness plans. It includes new accountability requirements to measure and publish a report on local and province-wide progress and to ensure that housing resources are used in the best way possible and are delivering results for people.

In November, the minister announced the signing of the new Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario

funding agreement with the federal government—a combined investment of some \$481 million under a new affordable housing agreement. It will create over 5,000 jobs in the province and continue to reduce the number of households in housing need.

We are committed to working to address a variety of housing needs in this province, from homeowners, renters, shelter victims of family violence to affordable housing for low-income families. Funding will be provided through the new agreement to create and repair affordable housing and provide rental and down payment assistance to families to make housing more affordable.

The Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario program builds on our record of providing some \$2.5 billion in affordable housing—more than any previous government. This allocation will build and repair more than 270,000 units and will provide some 35,000 rent supplements.

To date, Ontario’s housing investments since 2003 have created over 57,000 jobs across our province.

Under the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario program, municipal partners will be allocated a notional amount of funds which may be used to address local housing priorities.

We are improving the affordable housing system from the ground up, building a strong foundation based on four key pillars: putting people first, creating strong partnerships, supporting affordable options, and accountability.

This government understands that affordable housing opens doors to a better and brighter future for everyone. We continue to move forward and to work on behalf of all Ontarians on housing issues, and that is also the focus of the proposed amendment. We want to help Ontario families meet their needs and keep their rent within budget and, hopefully, contribute to keeping their family life stable.

#### 1620

This will have a large positive effect on children, which is something we all want. Stability is a key to a happy and healthy family, for both adults and children. This proposed amendment will help by giving Ontario families one less thing to worry about.

Tenants in Ontario cover many demographics when it comes to age, income, number of family members living in the household and other measurable values. They have many different profiles, and the statistics show us just how wide a segment of the population they represent. Calculations of future housing demands take all these groups into account, and when looking at future needs of the rental market, I again quote from ONPHA’s report:

“Rental demand is expected to increase over the next decades.

“According to Ministry of Finance projections, Ontario’s population is projected to grow by over 3.5 million people over the next 25 years, reaching an estimated 16.7 million people by July 1, 2031.

“Over the longer term, there will continue to be strong growth among those age groups most likely to seek rental housing.”

Reading the details of the different scenarios provided in the report about the population growth expected in Ontario and how it will affect the rental housing market is truly eye-opening. We see that immigration levels to the province are expected to increase and reach 152,000 newcomers per year by 2030-31. Population projections also show that by 2031, almost four million people in Ontario will be seniors aged 65 and over. The number of seniors aged 75 and over is projected to more than double in the same time period, to almost 1.8 million. ONPHA's report also summarizes for us what the future may look like in the province when it comes to seniors:

"Recent trends suggest that the proportion of seniors moving from home ownership to rental may decrease somewhat; however, given the substantial increase in the total number of seniors, there will still be a high demand for appropriate and affordable rental accommodation for those aged 65 and over."

The information about renters in younger age groups and how they will impact the future rental market is just as significant. In fact, across the board, the predictions are for a greater demand for rental housing for most age groups.

As we move towards this picture of the rental future in Ontario, we have to look for housing solutions, but we also have to be ready for whatever economic reality comes our way. The proposed amendment would give us the necessary flexibility to assess a changing economic climate and its impact on rental housing.

It is clear—population and housing experts expect there will be a steady increase in the continued demands for rental housing in our province. Their predictions tell us that the demand for housing will be coming from immigrants, seniors and other segments of the population that will undoubtedly only continue to grow.

Estimates of annual demands for rental housing in the next decade are high, and renters will continue to make up a significant part of the housing market. Our government's proposed amendment might just be one of the solutions that could possibly ease the burden for tenants who find themselves in difficult situations. Our government wants to help tenants, and we believe this proposed amendment would be a step in the right direction, a step towards helping them.

Our government is looking for solutions, and I am confident that Bill 19 would be one of those solutions. That is why our government is proposing this amendment to the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006. We believe it would serve Ontario tenants well, now and in the future. We have to remain focused on the future and move towards it, ready and prepared—prepared for the forecasts from the reports I quoted from today. More reports and statistics will be updated, and we need to be ready if the proposed amendment is passed. As stated, it provides for future reviews of the proposed 2.5% capping of the rent increase guideline. The proposed amendment would also require a review of the annual rent increase guideline formula every four years. This is a reasonable period of time to collect adequate data and evaluate how the formula is working.

Our government believes that the proposed amendment would provide the much-needed safeguards tenants require. We also believe it would provide a solution and some stability for them. I urge all members to support this bill. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I rise to actually speak as the critic on housing and municipal affairs to this Bill 19, the Residential Tenancies Amendment Act. The bill aims to make rent more affordable and predictable by capping the allowable rent increases to be charged by private landlords at 2.5%. The annual guideline is linked to inflation, and high levels of inflation in the past forced that percentage to exceed 3%. The bill will make a very small dent in the crisis of housing affordability here in the province of Ontario.

We heard from seven deputationists this past week on the issue, one actually advocating for landlords and the rest advocating for tenants. It was interesting to hear some of the things they had to say. We as a party put forward nine amendments to this bill, but unfortunately, we were kind of hamstrung by the narrow scope of the bill. While we attempted to get unanimous consent on some of those amendments, we were either ruled out of order or defeated in recorded votes. But on a positive note, we did get one of our amendments through, which was to remove the 1% floor in the annual guideline amount, replacing it with no floor—which will go a small way to assisting people if the rate of inflation falls below 1%. I think that the bill, while it requires the annual rent guideline to be set between 0% now and 2.5%, also allows for a review every four years to adjust those rates.

Deputationists at the committee actually supported the bill as a small step forward in improving affordability but stated that it clearly didn't go far enough to ensure affordability of rents, and hence they proposed a number of amendments which we brought forward.

We worked in four ways to strengthen that bill. We first heard numerous calls on the Residential Tenancies Act to close the current gaps in rent control, so vacancy decontrol and exemption of units constructed after 1991. I said when this bill was originally introduced several months ago that it was actually the NDP at the time, so we took responsibility for actually putting that amendment in. But at the time, it was to try to spur development of rental units across the province. Developers, of course, told us that if we put that amendment in, that if we passed that legislation, they would come and build units. Unfortunately, that didn't happen. Likewise, we introduced amendments to Bill 19 to ensure that the annual guideline limit would apply to new renters and to renters in units built after 1991. Unfortunately, the government refused to consider these motions.

Presenters at the committee also called for stronger enforcement of outstanding work orders. I've met with a number of advocates for tenants across the province over the last six months, in my own riding as well as here in Toronto. Some of the conditions that tenants are living in

are deplorable. I heard from one man who said that his elevator didn't work for a period of three years. I know the government suggests that these work orders are a municipal issue and that municipalities have bylaws to deal with the work orders, but in fact, at the end of the day, what we actually hear from tenants and from these advocacy groups is that it's cheaper to pay the fines than it is to actually do the work, so in many cases the repairs are not getting done.

**1630**

So we proposed an amendment that would have set the annual guideline increase at 0% for units that have outstanding work orders. What we were looking for here was that if you had an outstanding work order and you had it on record with the municipality, that in fact they couldn't increase your rent at all this year until they fixed the work that was needed to be repaired. But the advocates wanted to go even further, Speaker. They actually wanted to have us put an amendment in, which would have been ruled out of order as well, to set up an escrow account, so if they had outstanding work orders, their total rent—in the city of Toronto the average rent is almost \$1,200 a month; in the city of Hamilton the rent is almost \$900 a month on average—that money would actually go into an escrow account to be held by the municipality, perhaps, until those work repairs were finished. Our amendment didn't pass to actually not allow landlords to put the rent increase to those tenants that had work orders outstanding.

In sum, the bill was modestly strengthened at committee, but much more could have been done to ensure affordability and protection for tenants. There are about 1.3 million tenant households in Ontario and 125,000 living in co-ops, accounting for one third of the population here in Ontario. Over 13% of households live in poverty in Ontario and 627,000 are unable to afford shelter that meets adequacy, suitability and affordability, placing them in a core housing need. Most, but not all, of these are tenants. According to a 2006 census, 45%—almost half the population of tenant households—pay 30% or more of their household income on shelter. One in five pays more than 50%. So you can see that the risk of homelessness continues to increase. Thousands more stay in homeless shelters across the province. The high cost of rent is one major reason why there are more than a million visits to food banks here in the city of Toronto and across the province.

There were 152,000 low-income households across Ontario on active waiting lists for social housing at the beginning of 2011. This is an increase of 7.4%, or 10,500 people. After eight years, the government did develop a long-term housing strategy. Unfortunately, it didn't put any funding in place and did not have any targets, nor does it have any timelines—and not one penny announced for new affordable housing in this term of government.

Housing investment creates jobs. They stimulate the local economy and provincial economic activity, generating more revenues back to the province. There needs to

be a long-term commitment, but it needs to have targets, it needs to have funding and it needs to have some sustainability.

Provincial housing policy has been made in Ottawa with the province simply following the lead of the federal government and signing off, often with delays of several years. In, I think, 2003, the McGuinty government actually promised 80,000 units of affordable housing, and it actually only built—or 20,000 units; I correct myself. And over eight years, it's only produced 80% of that.

So the bill will provide some little help for private landlords to do some rent increases, with 90 days' notice, once every 12 months. Landlords who want to go higher than that have to make application to the Landlord and Tenant Board, and it's in conjunction with the consumer price index, which is a Stats Canada calculation.

The CPI has been significantly increasing, though, recently, and tenants who are now paying much higher hydro costs and paying the HST on their utility bills are now going to face a higher rent increase, potentially, along with those high utility bills.

The 2012 guideline increase came at the same time when people were coming out of a recession. We've lost many jobs. We have 600,000 people in this province without a job, and now we are going to be seeing the ability for landlords to actually increase the rents for these people. Putting limits on the guideline increase will provide more stability, perhaps, which is important for tenants who live on fixed incomes in this province.

The limitations of the bill: When we talk to the advocates for tenants, groups do not think that the guideline is the biggest problem when it comes to affordability. According to the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations, if the bill had been in place, it would have only reduced a \$1,000 monthly rent by \$3 over the last two years. So it isn't a huge savings for tenants. Bigger problems need to be addressed.

It could have some negative impacts on social housing providers who have some market-rent units in their affordable housing buildings. It may impact them because they may not be able to charge those market rents at the higher rate, which is part of the program that provides affordable housing for others.

It fails to address vacancy decontrol, which allows landlords to increase the rent any amount on vacant units once they become vacant. That needs to be eliminated. The protection of security of tenure was one of the principal reasons that vacancy decontrol was introduced into rent regulation. However, the RTA allows the landlord to charge any amount of rent to new tenants when moving into vacant units. As a result, vacancy decontrol, over time, decreases the number of rental units that are affordable to seniors on fixed incomes, young people just entering the job market, people who are unemployed, households on social assistance and sole-support families. So we need to actually deal with this vacancy decontrol piece. There are many people that I've talked to over the past few months who are very concerned about this issue, and we need to be doing something about it.

In 2003, during the provincial election, the Liberals promised, “We will get rid of vacancy decontrol, which allows unlimited rent increases on a unit when a tenant leaves. It will be gone.” However, their promise was about regional rent control, which would have been dependent on vacancy rates below a threshold at which tenants have a real choice. It was so complicated to administer, it never happened. Action is needed now to ensure that vacancy decontrol is dealt with.

This bill fails to reintroduce rent regulation to private market-rental units, regardless of the date of construction. I talked about this a few minutes ago. It was introduced in 1999. It was supposed to stimulate development. That didn’t happen. In fact, only 55,000 units have been built since 1999. There have been hundreds of thousands of units of condos built in cities, but as far as apartment dwellings go, it didn’t happen.

Across Ontario, there has been little new purpose-built rental housing built. Based on future population growth, the estimate is that we’ll need 10,000 units of purpose-built rental housing units over the next eight or nine years.

The condo rental units built in the last 10 years form an ever-increasing part of the rental market in urban centres, but generally they’re very expensive to rent. I can tell you, when I was looking for an apartment when I was elected last October, I couldn’t find anything here in the downtown core that was under \$1,700 a month, \$1,800 a month, and some of those were even in disrepair. The rents tend to be higher in the condo market, and that impacts affordability as well.

#### 1640

This bill fails to protect tenants, ensuring that rental units are kept in a proper state of repair. Landlords should not be allowed to increase rents while there are outstanding work orders. The NDP in the past has proposed landlord licensing. This would have been one way to ensure that if there are repairs outstanding, before you got your licence renewed you had to make good with those repairs. But once again I’ll repeat that landlords are paying the fines instead of doing the work because it’s cheaper to pay the fines than it is to make the repairs, unfortunately.

I’m not saying that all landlords are bad landlords; I’m sure there are many great landlords across this province. But we don’t hear about them very often; we only hear about the bad landlords, and we’ve all heard about it.

This legislation also fails to address above-guideline rent increases. It allows landlords to raise rents by up to 9% per application—3% in each of three years for capital repairs, conservation, tax increases, utility cost increases and security equipment. Landlords are already allowed to increase rents automatically by inflation—the guideline—and then they’re allowed to increase it again for these repairs.

According to groups like the board of Federation of Metro Tenants’ Associations, the practice of above-guideline rent increases should be ceased or limited in the following ways: limiting AGIs to conservation initia-

tives; limiting an application to once every five years; and perhaps capping it at 6%: 2% in each year over three years. But we believe that the practices actually need to be reviewed to ensure that affordability is there for tenants.

The legislation also fails to establish loan funds to take the funding burden off of landlords for repairs and off of tenants. Landlords have previously argued that AGIs are necessary in order to get financing, but we think that if there was a loan fund available to them, maybe we would see some more repairs getting done.

The NDP has taken a lot of actions on tenants’ rights. The member from Parkdale–High Park introduced five different bills between 2007 and 2010 around landlord licensing, vacancy decontrol, and closing the loophole around units that are exempt. In each and every case, those bills were voted against by both the government of the day and the opposition party. The provision to close the loophole which allows uncontrolled rent increases on vacant units, the rent control loophole that allows exemptions of the units built after 1991, and the landlord licensing bill to protect tenants from excessive utility increases: All of those were not supported by either the Liberals or the Conservatives in the last sitting of the Legislature.

What else needs to be done to make rent more affordable and to protect tenants? Well, we believe we need to close those loopholes in rent control. Landlords are exploiting the fact that rent control doesn’t apply to vacant units. What we heard at our deputations and what I’ve heard across the province is that landlords actually go after tenants to try and get them to move out of their unit so that then they can bump up the rent. That is really not right. The reason for the legislation is to ensure that there are affordable units for people to rent across this province, and for landlords to be able to do that is just not right.

We also heard from people that they would like the legislation to change in a way that prevented landlords from moving them out so that they could move a family member in.

Cracking down on the bad landlords: too many landlords getting away without doing the repairs. We said during the election campaign that we would crack down on them by bringing forward some legislation with respect to landlord licensing.

We need to increase the supply of affordable housing. During the election, we promised to build over 50,000 new units of affordable housing over the next 10 years. As I said, the Liberal government has not promised one single unit of affordable housing new-starts in this term.

We need to make rent more affordable because more than 50% of tenants are paying more than 30% of their income on rent.

During the election campaign, we promised to phase in a housing benefit. We had that discussion actually at committee with the advocates. The landlords, of course, thought that was a great idea, because the government would be paying the housing benefit. The tenant advo-



cates, although they said it would be welcomed, said it still wouldn't go the long way that needs to be gone to make sure that there are enough affordable housing units in the province and enough rent-controlled units in the province.

I think we need to reduce the cost of heating and hydro. We introduced a bill, which was supported by the official opposition, to take the HST off of home heating bills. That bill hasn't come forward yet. We're still waiting to have the government bring it forward so that we can pass it at third reading. The Liberals seem to be content to let the cost of heating and hydro increase.

I think the last, though, and the most important piece is that housing is a human right. The United Nations has declared that all people have the right to decent, affordable housing. And Canada is part of that; we've ratified that treaty. We have fought, and we will continue to fight, to ensure the fundamental right to housing is recognized in Ontario law. But to be able to do that, we need to pass some of these amendments that I'm talking about here today. We need to introduce some legislation. I'll certainly be doing that if I get to my private member's bill and hope to have the support of some of my colleagues in both of the other parties to make sure that there is safe and affordable housing here in the province for 1.3 million people. The Liberals actually voted down an amendment to their recent housing act that would have recognized housing as a human right. That was in the last sitting of the Legislature.

I'm going to save some of my time for my colleagues in my party. I'm going to end now by saying we will be supporting this bill, because it will make a very small bit of difference, hopefully, in the lives of many of the tenants here in the province. I wanted to thank the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek for his assistance at committee and once again to thank members of both of the other parties for supporting the one lowly amendment.

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

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Thank you for giving me the opportunity to weigh in on this bill. When I first spoke on this bill for 10 minutes, when it was at second reading, I found that it was a bit of a stretch. Now, speaking for another few minutes while it's come to third reading is even more difficult. In that respect, I am thankful for this programming motion that's actually limiting the amount of debate that we have on this particular bill.

It isn't that there isn't all that much to say about this bill, and it's not that it's not an important issue, because it really is. It's that there isn't really all that much substance to the bill, which originally intended to limit rent increases to 1% to 2.5% and now, thanks to the NDP amendment, limits increases from 0% to 2.5%, so it actually is possible to go a year without a rent increase.

This bill does very little to make rent more affordable, and it does nothing to ensure that there are liveable, well-repaired units for people who need shelter. After this bill's passage, we will still have 45% of Ontario's tenant

households, as my colleague mentioned, paying 30% or more of their household income on shelter costs. That's over 580,000 households—not Ontarians but households—who will be paying over 30% of their income on shelter costs. We will still have thousands of people staying at homeless shelters in Ontario, and in Toronto, in this city alone, there are over 22,000 people who are homeless.

**1650**

After the passage of this bill, we will still have rent being one of the highest costs and one of the major reasons why there are more than one million visits to Toronto and area food banks.

I'm not trying to be cynical, but it is difficult, especially when we have these bills, bills like this, which do very little, other than basically, I'm going to suggest, wasting our time by debating them, instead of debating more meaningful bills which serve as—well, all this bill will really do, in my opinion, is just serve as a speaking point for all that the government is doing to help Ontarians.

If you mentioned any of these facts to the government, I'm sure what we would hear back is that we are living in tough economic times and that this is the reason for this austerity, that we're in a deficit situation and therefore we can't afford to make the sweeping and meaningful changes that are needed, changes like creating more affordable rental units across this province which, although it's always important, is that much more important now, given our economic climate and job loss and things like uploading the subsidy provided by municipalities on the local tax base to people with low incomes, or creating more supportive housing to help our seniors stay out of long-term care when they don't actually need long-term care.

I certainly understand that these are tough times across the province, but that doesn't absolve us of our responsibility to ensure that people have the respect of affordable and decent places to live. If anything, it should remind us of the importance of having affordable rental options. It should also underscore the point that we need to invest now so that we can be prepared for this type of situation in the future and, more immediately, so that we can set the conditions that are necessary for us to get back on our feet.

Tough times might mean that we can't invest today as much as we had intended and need to, but it still means that we have to invest. If we don't, we will get caught unprepared to meet the demand, which will only serve to further stall our recovery.

As I said, I'm not trying to be cynical, but it does make me wonder why the government is so dead set on passing bills into law, much like this one, that really don't do a whole lot.

I can understand that it is the end of the legislative session in the spring and the government is very likely, and understandably, wanting to have something to show for the session, but why place so much emphasis on passing bills like this one that are so light on substance?

It almost seems to me as though this is a government that doesn't really have a plan. Maybe, after eight years, the government is tired and has used up all of its A-list ideas. Maybe it wasn't expecting re-election. I can't really say. But what is clear is that so much more can be done to really help people in meaningful ways that won't necessarily break the bank and that won't add to our bottom line, because we do have a tremendous opportunity with this minority government where we can work together.

If the government is short on ideas about how we can improve life for people beyond the walls, beyond this Legislature, who are struggling just to make ends meet, then why can't we work together? No one is saying that the responsibility is on one side of the House, not in a minority government. Why can't the Liberals get together with the Progressive Conservatives and the NDP to formulate bills that may not necessarily add to our deficit but can add to the quality of life of Ontarians? And I really am not meaning this in a partisan or disrespectful way. I just believe that we do have an opportunity to work together in a manner that we don't usually have in this adversarial, first-past-the-post system and that we can accomplish good work here.

For those of you who I've had the pleasure of sitting down with and had a chance to get to know, I can say that there are a great many people in this House who ran and got involved in politics for honest and very well-intentioned reasons, because they really did want to make a positive difference in the lives of their neighbours, their co-workers and their community members. And for me, I just want to leave Ontario in a better state than it was when I first got elected, and I don't even care if I get the credit. I just want to take this opportunity when I'm speaking on this bill to issue this challenge of working together on all sides of the House.

Getting back to the bill itself, I just want to close by saying that, as much as I think that much more can be done and should be done to improve the affordability of essentials in this province and that this bill really doesn't address those things in a meaningful way, I will be supporting this bill at third reading because, ultimately, this bill does take a step in the right direction, however small.

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

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I'll pick up where my colleague left off in that I'll begin my remarks by saying, similarly, that the initiative to control rent is a good initiative, and it's an initiative that we will support and that I will support. However, I'd like to split up my remarks with some comments with respect to some of the work that we were able to do to improve the bill and then by looking at some of the areas that were not touched by this bill that we should work towards improving or addressing.

One of the issues that we are very familiar with—and I think everyone has personal experience with or has constituents who have spoken to them about—is that rent is becoming more and more difficult. The cost of living is increasing, not only in terms of rent. All of the daily

necessities' prices are increasing. Wages are not increasing, and in fact many people are in a difficult circumstance where they're not even employed at the time. This is all a recipe for a very tense and a very precarious position for many families, and so the notion of addressing rent increases is a positive thing.

To look at some of the work that the NDP was able to do—we were able to impact the bill in a number of ways, and I believe some of my colleagues have already touched on this.

First and foremost, as a policy and as a strategy to addressing any concerns that come up in this House, I think what we need to do is consider the people. What are their concerns? What are their problems? What can we do to directly address their issues and their lives? I think to address that, we must be cognizant of the power and the usefulness of consultations and public consultations.

We heard from a number of people who gave deputations in the committee, and I'll just list a couple of remarks that were made. ACORN and Parkdale Community Legal Services indicated that Bill 19 is something that's supported because it will limit annual rent increases, but the bill doesn't go far enough. The deputants all had a common theme: that the bill addresses one need—and I think many of the people in the House have addressed this—one concern, one area of protection for the consumer, but there is a host of other areas that were not addressed.

To address that lack in the bill, some of the weaknesses in the bill, I can read from deputation from an organization called the Federation of Rental-Housing Providers of Ontario. They indicate that the amendment is disappointing. Capping rent is only a stopgap measure. It doesn't go far enough into addressing some of the real concerns which are the lack of affordable housing.

When we look at the Human Rights Code in Ontario, when we look at the rights that we protect, it's a hallmark of a democratic and free society that we have protections for rights such as the ability to express ourselves, the freedom of expression, the ability to practise our religions—religious freedoms—freedom of association, but these are all negative rights. These are rights where we're not able to infringe on someone's ability to engage in society. But there is a hole in our society. There's a hole in Ontario, where positive rights are not recognized.

**1700**

A positive right which would impact people in Ontario is the human right of housing as a right. There are jurisdictions where housing as a right have been recognized. New York state is one example. The idea is that, as a society where we believe we have a responsibility to care for our fellow humans, having a positive right to housing would be a true sign of respect and dignity shown to the lives of others, those who don't have the means to afford housing, afford a roof over their heads. It's in that area that the bill is lacking in terms of addressing the stark lack of housing.

In my riding, I can address some of the concerns. I know many other members may have their own stories or

their own examples of constituents talking about the lack of housing and the housing waiting list. In Peel region alone, there were 15,301 households on the waiting list for social assistance in 2011. That's 15,301 households waiting for a home—10.1% of the total active households on the list.

The service manager in Peel region indicates that singles and families on the chronological waiting list are not gaining access to subsidized housing and are waiting longer and longer. One of the most startling facts is that the wait time that people have to wait to qualify for affordable housing is approximately 15 years. The approximate wait time for social housing is estimated at up to 15 years, which is amongst the highest in the province.

In Peel region, the region I represent, Bramalea–Gore–Malton is among the ridings where this stark need is at its worst. The fact that there are so many people who don't have a home and who are waiting on a list to gain access to affordable housing—it's truly saddening that we don't have the space for these families. Peel region is ranked in the top five areas experiencing the largest increase in the number of households waiting for housing. I'm sure this is true across the province, and I'm sure this is true in many other ridings.

It really calls to mind the fact that, while we are addressing the annual rent increases, what are we doing for those who are waiting for housing, period? What are we doing for those who are waiting for affordable housing? What are we doing for those who are on waiting lists and simply have no access to any option to house themselves? Speaking about housing as a human right and recognizing that as a human right would provide some greater initiative and perhaps could provide us some greater motivation to address this serious concern.

The United Nations has declared that all people have a right to decent, affordable housing, as an organization that recognizes the human rights of all people as a birthright, a right that you are entitled to simply by no other justification than your birth. This treaty that recognizes housing and the right to decent and affordable housing as a human right is something that Canada has ratified.

As a country that has recognized and ratified this right, I call a challenge to this government and to every member of this House to work towards satisfying that treaty. We've signed that treaty. We recognize that that is a noble and a positive and the right step to do, that people should have a right—not just the option or the luxury of—to affordable housing and to decent housing. If it's something that we recognize, we should do something about that.

Here's a challenge to my colleagues across the floor, the Liberal members, my challenge to my colleagues beside us in the opposition: Let's follow through on this treaty. If we truly believe that there should be a right to housing, then let's take the steps to ensure that happens. Let's make this a priority. Let's take it a step further than just controlling rent and make life more affordable for people.

The Liberals voted down an amendment to its recent housing act that would have recognized housing as a human right. That goes to show what the priorities of this government are. Are we truly committed to making life more affordable? Are we truly here to serve the people of Ontario? Are we truly here to serve the people if this government is voting down an amendment which would recognize housing as a human right?

I've spoken about and addressed the fact that housing as a human right and the access to affordable housing has not been addressed. What else can we do to address this issue of housing? There are issues of tenant rights, there are issues of landlords who provide living conditions which are not livable, and there should be some strong legislation that ensures that tenants have greater protections when it comes to those landlords who provide living conditions which are substandard. That's something that we should not accept here in the province of Ontario, and we should ensure that this government protects the rights of tenants by having stronger laws to protect those tenants in the face of landlords who don't provide decent living in their premises.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, and in my capacity as the critic for municipal affairs and housing, I'm pleased to provide some comments on the record to Bill 19, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of the rent increase guideline.

I have to say, looking back at the bill—it was introduced for first reading back on December 6—it was interesting because there was a bill yesterday that was brought into the House, Bill 11, that was debated. It had actually been tabled a week before, so it's interesting the way that some of these bills get introduced early and then don't seem to make it on the government's agenda to come forward.

This bill was introduced by Minister Wynne on December 6. Looking back, it's hard to believe that nearly three months have gone by since I did my leadoff on second reading. However, even though those months have passed, it really hasn't changed my position or that of my caucus. We cannot support this legislation because it's really nothing more than yet another attempt by the government members opposite to be seen as doing something when in reality they're not doing much of anything on this file.

Now, some of the New Democrat speakers have made points earlier. We all suspect that with the NDP support the government will pass this piece of legislation and perhaps there'll be some tenants that will cheer. After all, members of the government have been standing up and touting this bill as some sort of godsend to tenants. I think they've really got the hard sell out trying to market this bill and I'm reminded of the old line that if something is too good to be true, it probably is. I probably am going to digress, so I may not go down that road.

It's a hard sell to the public that the government would have us believe. By putting Bill 19 on the books, they

would make you believe that all of the affordable housing issues will be solved and will be finished. It's quite an astonishment for a bill that's really this thin. When you look at it, it's really a four-page bill. You take the cover and the explanatory note—it's really quite thin. As was mentioned earlier, there was one amendment that all the parties supported.

The bottom line, though, is that this bill is going to do absolutely, positively nothing to create more affordable housing spaces. It will do absolutely nothing to address the chronic issue of people on our waiting lists, waiting for affordable housing spaces. And it certainly is not going to give any relief—real relief—to tenants by passing Bill 19.

**1710**

It would be easy, I suggest, for our caucus to hold our noses and play the same game that the government is playing by voting for a bill and pretending that we're on the side of tenants. We're not going to do that, because I believe there are some serious problems that face tenants and landlords in the province. I truly believed, back in December, prior to the introduction of this bill, and before that, that this minister could do better than the bill that she's offering for debate today. It's because of that fact that I believe that we made the right stand, the very principled stand, as an opposition, that we were not going to support this do-nothing bill when the time demands real action from the province.

Let's take a look at what the bill does to understand what I'm saying. I mentioned a few moments ago that it's only four pages. It's very thin on details. It amends, as some of the previous speakers have said, section 120 of the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, the section of the act that sets the formula that's used in Ontario to calculate the allowable annual rent increase. The reason that this is such a time-sensitive bill is the rate is set by August 31 every year and takes effect the subsequent calendar year; so if passed, the new formula is going to be used this summer to establish the guideline for the 2013 rate increase.

Since the Residential Tenancies Act, or RTA, was implemented by this government, that annual increase has been tied to the consumer price index, and it will continue to be, in some respects, under this amendment. What Bill 19 does is unnecessarily expand the government's influence over the province's rental housing market by establishing a ceiling for those rent increases. Regardless of where CPI falls, under Bill 19, the maximum allowable rent increase would be 2.5%.

One thing has changed, as I mentioned earlier, about this bill. Originally, the bill had a clause that would provide a floor of 1%. It has since, in this amended version that has come forward for third reading, had that section removed. So it is possible, given CPI, that the rent increases, like they were the previous year, could be lower than that 1%. So the floor has now vanished from this bill, despite assurances by the government to some groups that the bill would come out of committee for third reading unchanged. There's a little change. Aside

from committing the minister to a review every four years, this is it; this is the bill that the government has put forward.

For those tenants who are watching at home today, I'm sure that some of you are going to say, "Hey, a cap on rent increases sounds like a pretty good idea." Well, I just want to caution you: Not so fast.

We first need to take a look at some history to prove whether this legislation was actually something that Ontarians needed.

Since 2006, there were just two times that this bill would have actually come into effect: in 2007, when the increase was 2.6%; and most famously, last year, when the 2012 increase was pegged at 3.1%. So if we look at the 10-year average for rent increases, we see just why our caucus has been calling this bill unnecessary. Over 10 years, the average rent increase was 2.1%, a figure, I note, that is below the 2.5% cap established in Bill 19. If we look at the past five years, we see that the average increase was 1.7%. As I said before, Bill 19 is nothing more than unwanted interference by government in an area that I suggest the market has already been looking after itself.

Speaker, we all know the reason why the bill is in front of us today, and that's due to that single anomaly that has taken place in Ontario over the past 10 years when it comes to those rent increase percentages. We're here debating this bill because of a 3.1% increase that hit tenants right at the 2012 guideline, in the month of August, during a time when many ridings were already starting that pre-election mode.

What the minister seems reluctant to talk about is that she cites CPI as the reason why the cost of living went up. She might also recall a tax that her government introduced against howls of outrage in July 2010.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I think it was the HST, Speaker, and I think I got a rise from the front bench.

In a twisted sort of way, it's interesting that this is actually a piece of legislation for a Premier who is such a big fan of bureaucracy and big government. All that, I suggest, is the perfect recipe for why we are here with Bill 19 today. Government creates a problem in the first place in terms of the HST and then they use that increase in CPI as the reason for bringing Bill 19 forward. So they create a problem and now they decide they're going to give new legislation to fix the problem that that created. So this bill isn't about any problem that we have in the rental market. It simply exists because of the HST by Dalton McGuinty and this Liberal government. When the HST was applied to every good, every service, it's no surprise that when you look at the cost and, ultimately, the CPI—it's no surprise. Hence, we had a 3.1% increase in the rent guideline that followed a year later. So the bill is an attempt, I suggest, of this government to try to rewrite history.

The CPI isn't just some number that statisticians make up. It's calculated, as we all know, from a number of items, including food, shelter, transportation and the cost

of basic items. Under Dalton McGuinty, we know that these costs for seniors, for young families, for men, for women, and for children in every part of this province continue to go up and up and up. Much of that is as a result of their own HST, and still the government feels no shame using a problem it created as an opportunity for them to be seen as on the side of tenants. Yep, the folks who gave you the HST and made you afraid to open your hydro bill are now riding to the rescue to protect tenants from those big, bad landlords who are jacking up the rents and laughing all the way to the bank. Fair enough. Your government has beaten up small businesses and manufacturers in every corner of the province of Ontario since 2003, so why shouldn't you take a couple of whacks at the landlords too?

Let's step back and crunch a few numbers, again, to examine the real impact of Bill 19 on the pocketbook of a tenant if it had been in place when the rent increase was announced last August. If the ceiling existed a year ago, that 3.1% increase would have been bumped back under this legislation to 2.5%. So I did some work and I looked at, in Leeds-Grenville, in the city of Brockville, the average rent paid for a three-bedroom apartment, according to CMHC, which is \$802. That's courtesy of CMHC. So you do some quick math. That family renting that apartment would save a grand total of—get this, Speaker—\$4.81 a month if Bill 19 had been in place last year. Yep, a whole \$4.81 a month, almost \$58 a year.

**1720**

I don't want to suggest here that we're not trying to help families save on the family budget. The family budget is very important. I know how tightly families are stretched today, mostly because of the high taxes, fees and energy prices and the failed energy policies that this government has put forward over the last nine years. I've said it many times in this House since I was first elected to represent the people of the great riding of Leeds-Grenville: I understand full well the hardships that they are facing because I'm out in the community talking to my constituents at every single possible opportunity.

Let's be honest. When people find out that this much-heralded piece of legislation is going to save them a few bucks at most per month, I suggest that they're going to be very disappointed. For the approximately 500 families on the waiting list for affordable housing in my riding, Bill 19 isn't going to hasten their move to a safe, secure place to raise their children. It's not going to stop the calls to my constituency office from people wanting to know why, after three years of waiting, they're still no closer to finding adequate shelter.

I'm confident that if I spoke to the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and asked them to address their share of the \$3-billion repair backlog that exists in municipally operated affordable housing projects, they're going to tell me they're not very confident with this bill.

Bill 19 isn't going to fix that leaky roof faster, get that person off the waiting list any faster, to help with one of the most basic human needs: shelter. This is tragic, because we all know—and many other speakers have said

this—that a home is the primary building block necessary for someone to start a successful life. Without a place to call home, I'd argue that a person has little or no hope of finding or holding on to a job, or getting the education or training that they need to get out of the cycle of poverty.

Here we are spending all this time on Bill 19, and what are we spending it on? We're pressing forward with a bill that's going to save a typical tenant in my riding less than five bucks, and that's on the rare occasion that the annual increase would actually exceed 2.5%. I'm sure that they'll want to organize a parade to honour the government's accomplishments. It's going to make headlines all over the province. Hip hip hooray. We're saving people a couple of bucks every month and costing them a lot more with your hated HST.

If the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing really wanted to put a bill forward today and to rise for the summer, I'd prefer that she would have pushed Bill 65 to be called. In fact, it was actually supposed to be on the order paper this week and was subsequently pulled off. It was actually on twice this week. That bill at least did something that all sides of the House feel is very necessary, and I'm not talking about the government finally keeping their promise on this bill, as they failed to do over the last several years. Bill 65 would take the long-overdue step of moving tenure disputes in non-profit housing co-ops from our overburdened court system into the Landlord and Tenant Board.

Instead of that bill and some of the other necessary and long-delayed reforms to the Landlord and Tenant Board, we get Bill 19. It's an empty promise, and it's an unnecessary piece of legislation, if I've ever seen one. The sad reality is, the few dollars that tenants are going to save are going to be quickly gobbled up with the next increase in electricity rates. It's ironic that we're talking about a bill to control rent increases when the 10-year average is below the ceiling that the government is actually seeking to establish.

You're so quick over there to go after the landlords, but you're not going to listen to our party when it comes to the real issues that are creating pain for tenants and other hard-working families right across Ontario.

Speaker, I want to give you some examples of the pain that tenants are facing. I think we need to look at hydro rates since 2003, when Premier McGuinty took office. Those rents have gone up an average of 2.1% in that time, yet electricity prices have gone through the roof. Rates have gone up 84%; 150%, if you have a smart meter. Some of us call them smart meter tax machines, but that was from six months ago.

If you look at the history that I've shared with you earlier, you'll realize that as well as that 84%—if you look at some of the other failed subsidy programs that the government is purporting on energy, energy prices, from their own estimates, are going to go up an additional 46%. If you look at a bill where the average tenant rent increases were 2.1%, what they faced: 84% increase in electricity—another 46% over the next five years. So much for that \$4.81 that Bill 19 is going to save my

constituents for that three-bedroom apartment in Brockville—not with those energy prices. When the Fraser Institute is reporting that Ontario energy consumers will pay an additional \$18 billion over the next 20 years just to pay for their green energy fiasco, it's a bit rich for anybody associated with this government to purport a big savings with Bill 19.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I appreciate that, Minister. You're very charitable, too. I appreciated seeing you at the Jays game last night. Congratulations again on your 35th anniversary.

I think my colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke put it best when we were discussing one of these other government all-talk-no-action bills last week. I think it was Bill 2; that's the healthy homes renovation tax credit. I think if it was actually titled, it would be the wealthy homes renovation tax credit, because only seniors with 10 grand lying around really could take full advantage of that bill. As my colleague the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke said last week, Bill 19 is another example that is designed to knock off that political domino on their agenda, when they look at a specific target group to say, "Look at what we've done for you."

As I stated, our caucus is not going to be a party to that kind of game. It's an opportunity—sorry, it's—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Enough with the games.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** That's right. It's an example of behaviour that is resulting in more and more people being turned off of politics.

Let's be clear, Speaker: This government has done nothing for tenants in Ontario, and Bill 19 is just a shell bill. It doesn't deal with the real issues that are facing tenants and landlords in the province of Ontario right now.

Something that I just want to mention, because I know that it's going to come forward, is the fact that a measure in this government's budget bill is to terminate the community start-up and maintenance benefit, CSUMB, on January 1 next year. Eliminating this program which helps people on social assistance both secure and maintain housing will have far-reaching negative effects in communities across the province. Speaker, I have an ODSP office right beside my constituency office. It has been there for the last couple of years. I know the problems facing those individuals, and I'm extremely worried about the decision the government has made, because I know that benefit is used by many constituents to be able to upgrade their housing, to be able to use that benefit every two years so that they're able to have a leg up and find better accommodation and provide a better life for themselves. So the folks that we're seeing today are not going to be helped by Bill 19.

I know I have a few moments left, Speaker. I just want to go through, quickly, why we're against this bill. First

of all, I've said right from day one that it's unnecessary. It ignores the reality that the fundamental reason people are having a problem is the lack of good-paying jobs. The government, again, has chosen this bill over other bills, which I suggest they'll have to justify to the people of Ontario after this session adjourns. There are a number of issues that we could have been talking about.

Also, consultation: I know that we had one day of hearings and another day with clause-by-clause. Just in closing, I want to hearken back to 1996, when the Harris government introduced the Tenant Protection Act. There were more than 260 deputations on that act. Hearings for that bill lasted for more than 80 hours. Then, a year later, the legislation that they tabled, Bill 96, was taken on the road and they had hearings in seven cities for more than 49 hours. They heard from 140 organizations and individuals; 400 deputations and over 100 hours of hearings.

Again, I just want to say that there are a number of other very pressing issues that the government could have brought forward on the housing file. I did make reference to Bill 65 for the co-ops; that was scheduled, then pulled off. Again, I feel that there was some political will early on in this session to talk about the more substantive issues, yet the government brought forward this piece and, again, it does not address what tenants are telling our party needs to be addressed.

Again, I want to reiterate: We're not creating any more spaces, we're not taking any more people off the waiting list. This is just a bill that tinkers around the edges and is not what substantive legislation needs to be for housing in the province of Ontario.

At that, Madam Speaker, I think I'll sit down and not provide any more comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate? Further debate?

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 31, I am now required to put the question. Ms. Wynne has moved third reading of Bill 19. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Madam Speaker, I think I can work ourselves out of this situation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I have received a deferral slip. It will be until deferred votes on June 13.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Orders of the day?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Is it the pleasure of the members that the motion carry? Carried.

*The House adjourned at 1732.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)</b>	Sudbury	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre de Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Innovation / Ministre du Développement économique et de l'Innovation
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	



<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Kitchener–Waterloo	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craitor  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Mario Sergio  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Bob Delaney  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Teresa Piruzza  
Bob Delaney, Victor Fedeli  
Cindy Forster, Monte McNaughton  
Yasir Naqvi, Teresa Piruzza  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: David Oraziotti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: David Zimmer  
Sarah Campbell, Michael Coteau  
Joe Dickson, Rosario Marchese  
David Oraziotti, Laurie Scott  
Todd Smith, Jeff Yurek  
David Zimmer  
Clerks / Greffiers: Tamara Pomanski (pro. tem), Sylwia Przezdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Bill Mauro  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely  
Donna H. Cansfield, Helena Jaczek  
Bill Mauro, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Randy Pettapiece  
Peter Tabuns, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice**

Chair / Présidente: Laura Albanese  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Shafiq Qadri  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Mike Colle  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Paul Miller, Rob E. Milligan  
Shafiq Qadri  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon  
Gilles Bisson, Donna H. Cansfield  
Steve Clark, Garfield Dunlop  
Jeff Leal, Lisa MacLeod  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, France Gélinas  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Reza Moridi, Jerry J. Ouellette  
Liz Sandals, Jagmeet Singh  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Michael Coteau, Grant Crack  
Vic Dhillon, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Mario Sergio  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Ted Chudleigh, Dipika Damerla  
Cheri DiNovo, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Ernie Hardeman, Tracy MacCharles  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch







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