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(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 19 March 2013

Mardi 19 mars 2013

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 19 March 2013

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 19 mars 2013

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SKIN CANCER PREVENTION
ACT (TANNING BEDS), 2013
LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PRÉVENTION
DU CANCER DE LA PEAU
(LITS DE BRONZAGE)

Ms. Matthews moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 30, An Act to regulate the selling and marketing of tanning services and ultraviolet light treatments /
Projet de loi 30, Loi visant à réglementer la vente et la commercialisation de services de bronzage et de traitements par rayonnement ultraviolet.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Ms. Matthews has moved second reading of Bill 30. Ms. Matthews.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you, Speaker. I will be sharing my time with the member from Oak Ridges–Markham.

I rise in the Legislature today to speak to legislation introduced on March 7 that, if passed, would protect Ontario's young people from the harmful effects of artificial ultraviolet radiation by prohibiting the use of tanning beds for youth under 18 years old.

Before I go any further, I would like to recognize the efforts of the member from Nickel Belt in introducing private member's Bill 74, An Act to help prevent skin cancer, 2012, during the last legislative session. Further, I'd like to recognize the efforts of the former London–Fanshawe MPP Khalil Ramal, who introduced the Skin Cancer Prevention Act, 2008, and co-sponsored the Skin Cancer Prevention Act, 2010, with the member from Nickel Belt. I would also like to recognize the member for Scarborough–Guildwood for her past efforts to restrict tanning for youth in Ontario.

Speaker, prohibiting the use of indoor tanning for our youth is absolutely the right thing to do. Cancer is a terrible disease. We have all been touched by it—our friends, our families, ourselves. In any form, it can take an enormous toll on individuals and their families.

As I mentioned, I introduced this legislation two weeks ago. That day we heard from Susan Cox. Susan is living with melanoma; her story is powerful and her story

is heartbreaking. Susan spoke passionately about her experience with using indoor tanning beds and the impact on her. I would like to thank her again for sharing that story.

I would also like to recognize Kate Neale. Kate has worked very hard to bring this issue to the forefront. Many of you will remember Kate. She has been a real champion when it comes to cancer prevention. She came to Queen's Park to make sure we all knew about the dangers of youth tanning. She has educated MPPs on the importance of restricting access to tanning for young people.

I spoke to Kate on the day this legislation was introduced. Kate had this to say: "At 21 years old, I was diagnosed with skin cancer. I'm 22 now and living with the reality that I've wrecked my health because I used indoor tanning beds as a teen." Kate goes on to say, "The disease has scarred my body and continues to wreak havoc with my health.... I want to stop every 16-year-old from using indoor tanning beds, so I started volunteering with the Canadian Cancer Society in 2012 to take action on this issue." Kate goes on to say, "A year later, thanks to the efforts of many, this dream will hopefully become a reality when this legislation becomes law." I share Kate's hope for this legislation, Mr. Speaker, and I share Kate's hope and optimism for this Legislature.

I know that many Ontarians wake up every day prepared to fight their cancer, and we are fortunate we have so many highly educated, skilled, dedicated health care professionals in this province who come to work every day to help those patients with their fight. But I think it's incumbent upon us, as legislators, to do what we can do to prevent cancer in the first place. As legislators, we owe it to our loved ones to do everything we can to help reduce the risk of cancer, especially where our kids are involved.

I believe that our proposed legislation demonstrates that when it comes to protecting our youth from the harmful effects of tanning beds, we are on common ground. However, on March 4, prior to the introduction of this legislation, in speaking to the media after question period, concerns were raised by one opposition party member when they said that the Progressive Conservative Party does not believe in banning things. So I ask the party opposite to rethink that position. I ask them to think, how far does your opposition to bans extend? I raise this question because members of the same party have already demonstrated their support for the type of legislation we're debating today. In fact, on June 6 of last year, the member for Newmarket–Aurora brought for-

ward a petition from his constituents in support of the private member's bill introduced by the member from Nickel Belt, and he affixed his signature to that petition, signifying his support for that position.

I know the member for Prince Edward–Hastings represents Kate Neale, the young woman I spoke about earlier, and he has said, “There’s enough evidence out there now from the World Health Organization, the Canadian Cancer Society and many other organizations who say it’s not safe for teens to be tanning.”

0910

Mr. Speaker, there are some issues where party lines ought to disappear. For example, as a province we’ve agreed not to allow smoking in cars where children are present. We’ve decided that youth under 19 should not be able to purchase cigarettes or alcohol. As legislators, we’ve agreed among ourselves that there are activities that youth should not partake in to protect their health and well-being. I am confident that restricting access to youth indoor tanning is one of those issues where party lines should disappear. I know that every one of us on all sides of the House want to do our utmost to protect our children. So I call on members from all parties to find common ground and do what is right.

Although we have more work to do in our collective fight against cancer, as a government we have made good progress. For example, we’ve introduced integrated screening programs for cervical, breast and colorectal cancer so participants receive screening reminders. We’re supporting Cancer Care Ontario with the creation of an online tool that uses someone’s medical and family history to assess their personal cancer risks to help determine if someone could benefit from genetic testing, preventive supports or screening. We’re investing in regional cancer centres that provide radiation and chemotherapy; they’re making a tremendous difference in the lives of patients and their families.

We’ve enacted tough legislation to combat smoking. Our action plan for health care identifies the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy as a priority, with the goal to have the lowest smoking rates in Canada. We are determined to reach this goal and we will expand our efforts to do so. We’ve seen success: Smoking rates have decreased from 24.5% in the year 2000 to 19.4% in 2011, a significant decrease in smoking rates. To help Ontarians who want to quit smoking, we’ve expanded access to nicotine replacement therapies and we’ve provided counselling for smokers in family health teams, nurse-practitioner-led clinics, community health centres, aboriginal health access centres and in addiction service organizations. We’ve also helped Ontario Drug Benefit clients by providing funding for smoking cessation drugs through the Ontario Drug Benefit program. And we’ve increased support for Ontarians who smoke with hospital-based cessation initiatives in 15 locations and workplace-based cessation programs in collaboration with 19 public health units. We’ve also moved to protect youth from second-hand smoke and from exposure to cigarette power walls in stores. These measures are all part of our government’s focus on prevention.

Just as there is with smoking, there is clear and compelling evidence to indicate that we must take action on youth indoor tanning, and we must take that action now. Scientists have for some time expressed strong concerns about this issue and have urged governments to restrict young people’s access to tanning beds.

In fact, by passing this legislation, Ontario would join several other municipalities, provinces, states and countries that have already decided to take action on youth indoor tanning. In August of 2012, Oakville became the first municipality in Ontario to ban the use of indoor tanning beds for youth. Peel introduced a similar bylaw in September 2012, and in January 2013, the city of Belleville introduced similar restrictions. Quebec, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland have all introduced a ban, and Manitoba has introduced parental consent. In the US, California and Vermont have banned youth under 18 from using tanning beds, and more than 30 states currently restrict minors’ access to indoor tanning. Britain, Iceland, Finland, Portugal, Norway, Scotland, Spain, Sweden and France also have legislation restricting or prohibiting tanning bed use by youth.

Mr. Speaker, the dangers associated with exposure to artificial ultraviolet radiation at a young age have been well documented. Here’s what we know about cancer rates and youth tanning bed use: The World Health Organization puts tanning beds in the same highest-cancer-risk category as asbestos and smoking. In 2009, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, an expert committee that makes recommendations to the World Health Organization, reclassified UV-emitting tanning devices as carcinogenic to humans. It is known that tanning bed use increases the risk of malignant melanoma by 17%, and, more importantly, that risk increases by 75% if tanning bed use begins before the age of 35. Yet despite the warnings and despite the well-known risks, tanning bed use by youth is on the rise.

Between 2006 and 2012, tanning bed use more than doubled, from 7% to 16%, among grade 11 and 12 students. We know that the incidence of melanoma in Ontario has been rising in youth and young adults aged 15 to 34.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I would ask the members to take their conversation outside or make it so it’s easier to hear.

Please continue.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you.

The incidence of melanoma in Ontario has been rising in youth and young adults aged 15 to 34, especially among females 25 to 34.

As I mentioned, the proposed legislation is similar to earlier legislation introduced in this House, and I would like to highlight some of the action this legislation would take.

First, it would establish a restriction on the sale of tanning services to youth under the age of 18, and it would require tanning bed operators to request identification from anyone who appears to be under 25 years of age.

It includes a provision for medical exemptions. We would consult with health care professionals to determine if a medical exemption is advisable and the form it would take.

The legislation would require that salon operators post signs noting the prohibition on tanning for those under 18, and it would also state on the sign the health risks of using tanning equipment for everyone, regardless of their age.

The legislation would prohibit the advertising or marketing of tanning services to youth under the age of 18, and it would permit the appointment of inspectors to support compliance. Operators would be required to inform their local public health unit of their business contact information to facilitate inspection.

Finally, the proposed legislation would provide for offences consistent with those in the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Specifically, operators would be subject to a maximum fine of \$5,000 for individuals and \$25,000 for corporations for every day or part of a day for which they fail to comply with the proposed legislation.

Speaker, I believe these measures are strict enough to generate compliance with the proposed legislation, but I would also like to assure members that we will work with stakeholders on implementation.

I know that our proposed legislation responds to the call of many organizations in the health community who have advocated for this restriction on youth indoor tanning. I would like to recognize the Canadian Cancer Society, the Ontario Medical Association, the Canadian Dermatology Association, the Melanoma Network of Canada and many, many others who have been advocates for taking action against indoor tanning use.

After we introduced this legislation two weeks ago, I was very happy to see that many in the health community support this legislation. I would like to take a moment to share what some of these very important groups think about the proposed legislation.

First, I'd like to thank the Canadian Cancer Society for their support. Joanne Di Nardo from the Canadian Cancer Society, who was with us when the legislation was introduced, said, "We applaud this decision aimed at saving lives and reducing the devastating impact of skin cancer." She has also said, "We hope that all members of provincial Parliament will act quickly to pass this legislation that has strong support from all parties and Ontarians." I could not agree more.

I would like to thank the Ontario Medical Association, who said that they "urge speedy passage of the bill to make this life-saving measure a reality."

0920

On the same day, my good friend Dr. Doug Weir, the president of the Ontario Medical Association, said that "the evidence is simply unequivocal that the use of tanning beds increases cancer risk—and the earlier in life people are exposed to UV rays, the more likely they will develop skin cancer."

The Melanoma Network of Canada, another strong advocate, was pleased to see the introduction of this bill. Annette Cyr, the chair of the Melanoma Network of Canada, said that, "We know that even limited exposure to tanning equipment in youth can greatly increase the risk of developing melanoma or other forms of skin cancer later in life," and that, "by introducing this bill, the Ontario government is signalling that it is committed to the fight against skin cancer"—and indeed we are, Speaker.

Finally, the Ontario Public Health Association said that it "welcomes the proposed legislation to ban tanning beds for youth under the age of 18." The Ontario Public Health Association also reminded us that "the rates of tanning bed use and melanoma incidence among youths have been rising in recent years and it is evident that education alone on this topic is not sufficient to curb the serious effects of using tanning beds."

Speaker, I know there are other groups and associations that are supportive of this proposed legislation, and once again I thank them for their advocacy in moving this issue forward.

I'm also pleased that this proposed legislation fulfills a commitment of Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care and fits with my ministry's overall goal of keeping Ontarians healthy, the first pillar of our action plan. We're working very hard to make Ontario the healthiest place in North America to grow up and grow old. With that goal in mind, our government is increasingly focused on prevention and keeping Ontarians healthy in the first place, so we're putting more of our efforts into promoting healthy habits and behaviours, supporting lifestyle improvements and better managing chronic conditions. In particular, we note that if we want to prevent illness in the future and achieve better outcomes in the future, we need to improve the health of our kids today.

Just as this proposed legislation takes action to prevent the incidence of skin cancer among our youth, we're also taking action to help our kids lead healthier lives overall. You'll know that last year we struck the Healthy Kids Panel, and last month I was very pleased to receive their report. I'd like to say it really is an excellent tool, an excellent report, that contains invaluable advice on how to help our kids lead healthier lives.

The key issue that the panel's recommendations addressed is childhood obesity. We know that childhood obesity is very complicated. There isn't just one cause, and there isn't just one solution. What we do know is that over the past 30 years, the prevalence of obesity and overweight children in Ontario has increased by 70%. We also know that as our children become adults, obesity later in life can lead to chronic diseases like diabetes, and there's a connection between obesity and cancer too.

So as a starting point, in response to the panel's recommendations, we're going to form an interministerial working group that will direct the government's actions on implementing many of the report's key recommendations. It will be co-chaired by myself and the Minister of Children and Youth Services. I can tell you that I'm very excited to co-chair this panel with my colleague Minister

Piruzza, and I'm looking forward to engaging our colleagues further on this issue. The legislation that we've introduced is one more way we're working to protect and promote the good health of our future, Ontario's young people.

I want to emphasize that restricting access to youth under 18 is not a "should do," it is a "must do." I want to reiterate that it is incumbent upon us as legislators to do everything we can do to prevent cancer. This proposed legislation is a great example of what we can do when we come together and find common ground on our shared priorities. I'm confident that this proposed legislation responds to the evidence before us, and I'm counting on our united effort to take action to prevent Ontario's youngest citizens from the risk of cancer. I'm asking all members to support this important piece of legislation.

I want to again say thank you to the organizations that have worked so hard to restrict youth access to tanning. I would like to say thank you to the member from Nickel Belt again for showing us what we ought to be doing and for coming together with common ground on this bill. I want to again acknowledge Khalil Ramal and the member from Scarborough–Guildwood, and finally I want to say thank you to those who work hard each and every day in this province to fight cancer. Thank you.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I rise in the House today to speak further to our proposed legislation that, if passed, would protect Ontario's young people from the harmful effects of exposure to ultraviolet radiation caused by tanning beds. I would like to acknowledge the presence of two representatives of the Canadian Cancer Society who have joined us here today: Joanne Di Nardo and Florentina Stancu-Soare. Thank you for being here.

This legislation is really a terrific example of what we can achieve when we work together and find common ground on our shared priorities. Our proposed legislation would prohibit the use of tanning beds by youth under 18. The contents of our proposed legislation are highly consistent with the private member's bill that the member from Nickel Belt introduced in 2012, and I want to echo the minister in thanking the member from Nickel Belt for the work that she's done on this issue. I know that this has been an important cause for her and I share her commitment to protecting our young people from the increased risk of developing skin cancer associated with the use of tanning beds. I would also like to thank a former colleague, the member from London–Fanshawe, MPP Khalil Ramal, for his hard work and passion on this subject. He introduced the Skin Cancer Prevention Act of 2008 and co-sponsored the Skin Cancer Prevention Act of 2010 with the member from Nickel Belt, and I was certainly happy to speak in support of both of those bills when they came before this House. Certainly, Khalil has been a strong advocate in the battle against skin cancer on behalf of all Ontarians, and especially our sons and daughters. Lastly, I would also like to thank the member from Scarborough–Guildwood for her work over the past few years to restrict tanning for young people in Ontario.

This is an area where I believe we have common ground with both of the opposition parties, and I believe

that all of us in this House recognize the serious challenge and potential harm posed by tanning beds for young people in this province. Speaker, there are simply too many Ontarians fighting cancer of all kinds. All of us know somebody—a colleague, a family member or a friend—who has courageously battled cancer, and all of us feel the responsibility to help those who are faced with this terrible disease; and all of us, as siblings or parents or friends but also as legislators, know the importance of preventing Ontarians from getting cancer in the first place. This is especially the case when our kids are involved. So we need to take action now.

Malignant skin cancers like melanoma can be aggressive and fatal. I'm not sure how many members of the House know that former Prime Minister Lester Pearson succumbed to malignant melanoma. I dug out one of my old dermatology texts because still, as a former medical officer of health, the need to educate is one of the things that I feel is a responsibility. So I want to tell you a little bit more about malignant melanoma. First of all, "most, but not all, invasive malignant melanomas arise from a pre-existing pigmented junctional nevus," that is, a mole. "The changes that herald the transformation from benign to malignant lesions are as follows: rapid change in size or colour, development of inflammation, bleeding, ulceration, and appearance of pigment around the lesion." The change from a benign to a malignant lesion produces so few warning systems that it is often unobserved. It goes on. It's actually very stirring stuff, I find, to understand exactly what this cancer is all about. And we should all be on the alert. We are talking here about prevention, but every member in this House should be very conscious of the fact that they should observe their skin for changes and report them to a physician immediately if they occur.

Now, at least here in Ontario, we can be confident about the type of cancer care we receive. Dr. Robert Bell, chair of the Cancer Quality Council of Ontario, and president and CEO of the University Health Network, has said that if you live in our province, you have one of the best chances of survival anywhere in the world. Thanks to our dedicated health professionals, if treated early, these cancers can often be beaten.

0930

But we all know it's far better to prevent our Ontarians from getting cancer in the first place. A focus on healthy living and disease prevention is an important part of our government's action plan for health care. The good news is, when it comes to skin cancer, we know one of the major causes: exposure to ultraviolet radiation.

Today, with this proposed legislation, we're taking action against an important source of ultraviolet radiation for many young Ontarians. The dangers of exposure to sources of artificial ultraviolet radiation like tanning beds have been well documented over the years, and there is strong and growing evidence associating the use of tanning beds with an increased risk of contracting skin cancers, including basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and, as already described, the most dangerous type of skin cancer, malignant melanoma. We also know that those dangers are greater for young people.

The World Health Organization has classified tanning beds in its highest-risk category for developing cancer, along with tobacco and asbestos. The International Agency for Research on Cancer, an expert committee that makes recommendations to the World Health Organization, has stated that there is a convincing causal relationship between tanning and skin cancer. In 2009, this agency reclassified ultraviolet-emitting tanning devices as carcinogenic to humans. It has been shown that people who use tanning beds have a 17% increased risk of developing melanoma—the particularly dangerous type of skin cancer—compared to people who don't use tanning beds. More importantly, there is evidence of increased risk for youth. In fact, the risk of melanoma increases by 75% when people use tanning beds before the age of 35.

What's more, skin cancer treatment is costly for the province's health care system. With increased use, those costs will only become higher over time. Very simply, there is significant and increasing evidence that the use of tanning beds increases a person's risk of developing skin cancer. More perniciously, the risk is increased even more for young people using tanning beds.

Public health units across the province have been doing their very best to educate people, particularly children, on the risk of tanning beds. I was pleased to see that the York region health services department website has a campaign to educate the public. It's called "Don't Be Caught Dead in a Tanning Bed," and it outlines a number of tanning bed fast facts; in essence, that tanning lights can give off five times as much ultraviolet radiation as the sun, so that not only can it cause skin cancer but sunburns, wrinkles—very important for young ladies—and eye damage.

Markham Stouffville Hospital has, on its website, promoted the same campaign. However, education is obviously a very important step, but we feel strongly that we need to take education a step further and introduce this important legislation.

So, overall, with the educational efforts that have been made, more and more Ontarians recognize the dangers of youth tanning. In spite of this, substantially more young people are, in fact, using tanning beds today than just a few years ago. We know that tanning bed use by young people between the ages of 12 and 17 rose from 5% to 8% between 2006 and 2012 in Ontario. In the same period, the proportion of grade 11 and grade 12 students using tanning beds more than doubled, from 7% to 16%. Meanwhile, the incidence of melanoma in Ontario has been rising in youth and young adults between the ages of 15 and 34.

We all agree that the best way to fight cancer is not to get it in the first place. As I said earlier, our government has made its commitment to cancer prevention clear, and it is a key part of our action plan for health care. As parents, we have a responsibility to protect our sons and daughters. As legislators, we have a responsibility to protect the young people of this province, and with the proposed legislation before us today, we have an opportunity

to do just that. Speaker, the imperative to act is clear and the time to act is now.

Now let me outline in greater detail the elements of the proposed legislation.

The proposed legislation would establish a ban on the sale of tanning services to youth under the age of 18. There is a provision for medical exemptions, and we will consult with health care professionals to determine if a medical exemption is advisable and what form it would take. As many members in the House I'm sure are aware, an example where UV radiation can be helpful is for some conditions such as psoriasis.

In order to ensure young people are not using tanning services, the legislation would require that salon operators ask anyone appearing to be less than 25 years of age for identification to prove their age. This would be consistent with how the LCBO, Beer Stores and convenience stores ask young customers to provide acceptable forms of identification before they are allowed to purchase alcohol or tobacco products.

The proposed legislation would also require salon operators to post signs noting the prohibition on tanning under the age of 18. Because we recognize that tanning beds pose risks for all who use them, it is important that Ontarians are properly informed before making choices that might affect their health. Signage would also have to outline the health risks of using tanning equipment for everyone, no matter what age.

As the sale of tanning services for young people under the age of 18 would be prohibited, it would also be inappropriate to market those services to young Ontarians. As such, this legislation, if passed, would prohibit the marketing or advertising of tanning services to young people under the age of 18.

Of course, these requirements would need to be enforced, so the proposed legislation would permit the minister to appoint public health inspectors in order to support compliance and respond to complaints about compliance with the legislation. Operators would be required to inform their local public health unit of their business contact information to facilitate inspection. This written notice would include the tanning establishment's location and would be submitted to the local medical officer of health.

This will be extremely helpful for public health units. They have been struggling with the fact that tanning salons open up on just about every corner. They literally, in the course of their duties, note the location and go in to inspection once they are, in fact, aware of the location. So this written notice will facilitate the inspection activities of health units.

Finally, we recognize the need for strong measures to ensure compliance. That's why the proposed legislation would provide for offences, with operators subject to a maximum fine of \$5,000 for individuals and \$25,000 for corporations for every day or part of a day for which they fail to comply with the proposed legislation. The proposed fines are similar to those in the Health Protection and Promotion Act, which is the most relevant statute for

point of comparison, given that addressing tanning is similar to addressing other kinds of health hazards that may affect people.

However, the proposed fines are different from those for selling tobacco and liquor to minors. In the case of tobacco, individuals selling tobacco to persons under age 19 are subject to penalties of up to \$4,000 for a first offence to \$100,000 where the person has committed three or more offences. For corporations, it's up to \$10,000 for a first offence, to up to \$150,000 where the person has committed three or more offences. In terms of alcohol, the Liquor Licence Act states that the maximum fine amounts for selling alcohol to a person under age 19 are \$500,000 for corporations and \$200,000 for individuals, imprisonment for up to one year or both.

The fines we are proposing, \$5,000 for individuals and \$25,000 for corporations, are higher than those provided in the member from Nickel Belt's most recent private member's bill, which were \$2,000 for every day or part of a day not in compliance. I believe that the measures in our proposed legislation are strict enough to generate compliance. However, as the minister said before me, we are committed to working with stakeholders on implementation.

Today, there are about 1,300 tanning facilities operating in Ontario. They are located in a variety of diverse locations. In addition to salons, tanning beds may be found, for example, in gyms and in condominium buildings. The Joint Canadian Tanning Association, or JCTA, estimates that commercial indoor tanning is a \$500-million business in Canada. Overall, the JCTA estimates that about 10% to 12% of the population uses indoor tanning equipment. We know that a growing number of those people are young people.

0940

The good news is that with this legislation we can significantly lower the number of young people using tanning beds. When you consider the dangers of artificial ultraviolet light tanning, which I've already outlined, the need for action is clear. This is an area where there's a great deal of consensus about the necessity of focused action. I believe this proposed legislation represents important common ground for all the members in this House today.

What's very compelling is that there's widespread support among the public and among stakeholders that youth tanning must be banned. For instance, an Ipsos Reid survey conducted in June 2011 found that 83% of Ontarians support a ban on the use of tanning beds by youth under 18, and there are many organizations in the health community that have spoken out loudly and clearly on the need for a ban on indoor tanning for young people.

Organizations that have advocated for a ban on youth indoor tanning include the Canadian Cancer Society, the Ontario Medical Association, Ontario's medical officers of health and public health units, the Canadian Dermatology Association and the Melanoma Network of Canada. The minister, before me, has spoken about the strong

support many of these organizations and others have displayed for this proposed legislation since she introduced it less than two weeks ago. I'm grateful for the support of these organizations and others like them, and they've shown that this is an important piece of proposed legislation. Even more importantly, I'm grateful to them and to many other groups and associations for their continued advocacy on this issue. I think it's important to recognize the thousands of Ontarians who volunteer every day for organizations like those in the fight against cancer. The proposed legislation we are speaking about today is in part the result of their action and advocacy.

A ban on youth indoor tanning has been an important goal for many cancer survivors, loved ones of those who have cancer or who have had it in the past, and others who have been touched by the tragedy of skin cancer.

Clearly, advocates and scientists have expressed strong concerns about this issue, and many have urged governments around the world to restrict young people's access to tanning beds.

Internationally, the World Health Organization and the International Agency for Research on Cancer have both been clear that tanning beds can cause skin cancer.

I have spoken already about the member for Nickel Belt's long advocacy on this issue.

As the minister mentioned moments ago, the member for Prince Edward–Hastings has recognized that "There's enough evidence out there now from the World Health Organization, the Canadian Cancer Society, and many other organizations who say it's not safe for teens to be tanning."

The member for Newmarket–Aurora also brought forward a petition from his constituents last year supporting a restriction on youth indoor tanning, and affixed his signature to it. I'm so glad that he's quoted in the Newmarket Era—I'm sure, Madam Speaker, you read that, as most residents of northern York region do, religiously every week. Mr. Klees is quoted on March 14 of this year with regard to this legislation.

"When a choice turns into a matter of personal harm, the government needs to take action'....

"Although he respects young people, Mr. Klees admitted he made some decisions in his youth that he wouldn't make now." I found that particularly intriguing, Madam Speaker.

"Creating rules for indoor tanning is no different than regulations on cigarettes, gambling and alcohol, he said.

"It is the responsible thing for the government to do."

On the other hand, I was somewhat dismayed recently to hear the member for Whitby–Oshawa say to the media that the official opposition doesn't believe in banning things. I'm hopeful she will reconsider her remarks because I have to wonder if members opposite don't believe in banning young people under 19 from purchasing cigarettes or purchasing and consuming alcohol. And I wonder if the official opposition opposes our ban on smoking in indoor public places like restaurants and bars. And I

wonder if members of the party opposite oppose our ban on smoking in cars where children are present.

Ontarians agree that people, especially young people, should be restricted from certain activities that are harmful to their health. I'm confident that restricting access to youth indoor tanning is one of those issues where party lines disappear.

Many jurisdictions have already taken action on youth indoor tanning: municipalities, provinces, states and countries. Oakville became the first municipality in Ontario to ban the use of tanning beds for youth in August 2012. Only a month later, in September 2012, Peel introduced a similar bylaw. In January 2013, the city of Belleville introduced similar restrictions. So we now have a patchwork across Ontario, and this legislation will provide a level playing field.

Six Canadian provinces—Quebec, Manitoba, BC, PEI, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland—have either introduced or implemented legislation restricting tanning bed use by young people, ranging from requirements for parental consent to an outright ban. In the United States, California and Vermont have banned youth under 18 from using tanning beds. In total, more than 30 states currently restrict a minor's access to indoor tanning, either by requiring parental consent or setting an age limit.

A number of other countries also have legislation on their books restricting or prohibiting tanning bed use by youth, including the United Kingdom, Iceland, Finland, Portugal, Norway, Scotland, Spain, Sweden and France.

In our own country, at the federal level, Health Canada recently proposed regulations to update health warning signs on tanning equipment sold across Canada. Those proposed warning signs will speak to the increased risk of cancer from tanning bed use and will advise that tanning bed use is not recommended for anyone under 18 years of age.

Ontario's proposed signage goes further. It will specify that people under 18 are prohibited from tanning and warn all users of the potential health impacts of tanning bed use. The specifics of the requirements for signage will be prescribed in regulation, and the ministry will consult with other jurisdictions and with Health Canada in their development.

There's no question that Ontario is on the right track with our proposed ban on youth tanning, and it's important to note that in jurisdictions where a youth ban is in place, there has been no evidence to suggest that it has had any serious detrimental effect on tanning businesses.

Speaker, our proposal responds to growing evidence and gathering momentum across our province, our country and around the world that a ban on indoor tanning services for young people is key to reducing the risk of our children contracting skin cancer. I believe our proposed legislation presents a balanced approach—very typical of our government—toward reducing the health risks for young people from tanning, minimizing burdens on the industry, and managing the level of investment required by government for enforcement.

Let me assure the members that we will work with our stakeholders to implement this new legislation, including

developing guidelines on advertising and marketing, which will be prescribed by regulation.

This proposed legislation is consistent with the broader changes we're making in Ontario's health care system. Just over a year ago, the Minister of Health released Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care, an ambitious plan designed to address head-on the twin challenges we are facing: fiscal and demographic. It called for a fundamental change in how we deliver health care in Ontario in order to maintain the sustainability of our universal public health care system for generations to come. It called for the kind of change we could only bring about by working together: government and opposition, legislators and health professionals, policy-makers and front-line workers. We need all Ontarians to work together to bring about a shift in the way we understand health care and how it's delivered. We have made tremendous progress in just over a year, and I believe this piece of proposed legislation represents exactly that kind of change and exactly that kind of co-operation between advocates, scientists, health care workers and members of all parties in this House.

Speaker, Ontarians increasingly recognize the importance of living healthy lives. We recognize that government has a vital role to play in this. Our health care system should be helping people stay healthy, not just treating them when they're injured or ill. That's why a key part of our action plan for health care was our government's commitment to keep Ontario healthy by focusing on wellness, prevention and health promotion. We are working to make Ontario the healthiest place in North America to grow up and grow old.

This proposed legislation aligns closely with this key pillar of our health care system's transformation. It is another step that complements what we've already done to improve our kids' health. We know that as our children become adults, obesity can lead to chronic diseases like diabetes later in life, and there's a connection between obesity and cancer, too.

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Over the past 30 years, the prevalence of obesity and overweight children in our province has increased by 70%. This is a major challenge, and our action plan set an aggressive goal to reduce childhood obesity by 20% over five years. We have already implemented several programs to address obesity, including EatRight Ontario and the Healthy Schools initiative, but we know that effectively tackling obesity goes beyond healthy eating and exercise. It's a complex challenge with many causes and many solutions.

That's why last year we struck the Healthy Kids Panel, bringing together experts in the field to provide us with proven strategies for reducing childhood obesity. Earlier this month, the minister received their recommendations on how to meet our ambitious goal. This is an important report that reflects the best available evidence and includes invaluable guidance on improving the health of our children. In response, we are going to form an inter-ministerial working group that will direct the govern-

ment's action on implementing many of the report's key recommendations, co-chaired by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

We have also worked hard to protect our kids and prevent cancer by toughening tobacco laws, banning smoking in public places and encouraging more Ontarians to quit smoking as part of Smoke-Free Ontario. As part of our action plan, we are determined to have the lowest smoking rates in Canada.

We are building on these strong measures by working to prevent young people from getting addicted, making it easier for smokers to get support and reducing the demand for tobacco products. We banned the retail display of tobacco products on so-called "power walls," and in 2009 we extended the smoking ban to include motor vehicles when children under 16 are present. In July 2010, we banned the sale or distribution of flavoured cigarillos, to protect youth and young adults. We have recently listed smoking cessation drugs on the Ontario drug benefit formulary and expanded access to nicotine replacement therapies for those undergoing addiction treatment. We are committed to increasing fines on those who sell tobacco to children.

We are also investing in a school-based and youth-led strategy to prevent kids from taking up smoking, a Smokers' Helpline, cessation counselling in health care settings, and free nicotine replacement therapy through family health teams and public health units.

Speaker, our government is also supporting communities to plan and deliver integrated programs that improve the health of Ontarians through our Healthy Communities Fund. Additionally, about 130,000 children who have never been able to have a filling, or even have their teeth cleaned, will have access to a dental professional through the additional \$45 million we've invested in Healthy Smiles Ontario. We're also providing \$4.25 million to the Asthma Plan of Action, an integrated plan led by the Ontario Lung Association to improve health outcomes for Ontarians with asthma.

Finally, our province's public health program focuses on the health and well-being of the whole population through promotion and protection of health and the prevention of disease. Public health units and medical officers of health work to protect the health of Ontarians by controlling infectious diseases through regulatory inspections and enforcement and by preventing or reducing exposure to environmental hazards. They work with community partners to promote healthy living and prevent disease and injury by closely monitoring outbreaks, screening for cancer, immunizing to control infectious disease and conducting research on injury prevention. These are just some of the health protection and promotion initiatives our government has taken. This legislation, of course, forms an important part of that program.

Some of our most important commitments to preventing disease are part of our ongoing fight against cancer. It is imperative that Ontarians get screened for cancer; we know that cancer screening saves lives. That

is why we are working hard to make sure all Ontarians are screened, so that cancer can be detected early. To better improve cancer screening rates, we are expanding comprehensive screening programs for cervical, breast and colorectal cancers, so that we notify and remind participants when they are due for their next screening. We've also created the Time to Screen tool, to provide Ontarians with more information on when to start screening based on their age and gender. We are also working on an online personalized cancer risk profile. This tool will use patients' medical and family history to measure their risk of cancer. It will then match people to screening programs and prevention supports, including genetic testing for people at high risk.

We expanded the Ontario Breast Screening Program in 2011 to include high-risk women beginning at age 30, resulting in 90,000 more screens over three years. Our government expanded the provincial breast cancer screening program by funding an additional 332,000 screens and adding 53 new breast screening sites across Ontario. This brings the total number of screening sites in the province to 153. I think this is a huge step forward in accessing health care as close to home as possible.

We launched Canada's first province-wide colorectal cancer screening program to combat the second deadliest form of cancer in the country. We've invested \$193.5 million over five years to implement this colorectal screening program.

We introduced a free vaccine to protect young women against the human papillomavirus or HPV, which is the major cause of cervical cancer. This vaccine is now provided to 77,000 female grade 8 students every year, and that saves families up to \$405 per child.

We've also further expanded cancer detection by funding the prostate-specific antigen, or PSA, test. This is helping to fight prostate cancer, the most common cancer among Canadian men.

We have made tremendous progress, but there's still more to do. Quite simply, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, too many Ontarians are faced with cancer, too many loved ones who have to fight this terrible disease. The proposed legislation before us represents one more important step that we can take to protect our children and prevent Ontarians from developing skin cancer. I believe that this proposed legislation responds to the evidence, advances our health promotion goals and addresses a serious health issue in a fiscally responsible manner. The proposed legislation is aligned with the broader changes we're making in Ontario's health care system through our action plan, the kind of fundamental changes we need to make in order to protect health care for future generations. The legislation, if passed, would be part of our shift toward health promotion and prevention and part of our commitment to keep Ontario healthy.

I believe this proposed legislation shows common ground between all members of this House, and with the support of all members the act could be effective as soon as October 2013 and no later than January 2014. This would allow time to develop supporting documents like

protocols and guidelines for public health units who will enforce the act, training for public health inspectors and the necessary regulations to support the legislation.

I'm asking for all-member support so that this proposed legislation could be implemented as early as possible, and I want to close by once again thanking the many people and organizations who have worked tirelessly to protect our kids by making clear the risks of indoor tanning bed use and advocating for its restriction for Ontario's youth. I want to thank them for the work they do and the dedication they show every single day.

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

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I have enjoyed listening to the leadoff speeches by both the Minister of Health and the member from Oak Ridges–Markham, who has extensive medical knowledge. I thought that it was great that she did have that public service announcement with respect to melanoma and the need to do regular checkups to make sure that you don't have any problem areas.

But I would also like to acknowledge and thank the member for Nickel Belt for really starting this conversation. I think this is something whose time has come. There is very compelling evidence to suggest that exposure to tanning and ultraviolet rays does in fact cause skin cancer, and especially with respect to tanning beds, where there's evidence that there's five times more radiation than one can get from regular sun-skin contact. This is something we need to consider very carefully.

I have consulted with the Canadian Cancer Society, with the Joint Canadian Tanning Association and the OMA. There are numerous groups who have been speaking to this. I know that my colleague the member from Prince Edward–Hastings has a young lady, Ms. Kate Neale, who has been a very outspoken advocate for the banning of skin tanning beds for persons under 18.

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There is certainly a precedent in Ontario for the state to take a role in situations where young people are concerned, with the inherent *parens patriae* power that we see being exercised by the state. The children's aid societies derive their authority under that inherent jurisdiction. So, while it has been said that we don't believe in banning things, there's certainly a reason in some cases to do that where young people are concerned. Adults can of course make their own decisions, but when it's young people that we're considering, we need to make sure that they're kept safe. We look forward to further discussion on this issue.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: I too listened to the Minister of Health and her parliamentary assistant. I have waited a long time to hear the Minister of Health and to hear the government speak in favour of the Skin Cancer Prevention Act.

We have focused a lot of the discussion so far on one part of the bill, which is the part that everybody talks about; that is, that it will ban young people from using

tanning beds. But the bill has other parts that are also important for all of us. You've heard the member for Markham go into quite a bit of detail as to what skin cancer means. Not only do young people get skin cancer but we, too, are at risk.

The bill bans young people from using tanning beds, but it also has other parts to it. One will be that when you go and use a tanning bed, there will be clear signage telling you that tanning beds cause cancer, similar to what you see on cigarette packages, but this message still needs to be told.

Right now in Ontario, we have no idea where those beds are. They are often in health clubs, at the back of a locker room some place, and people use them at will. Now, if you have a tanning bed that you use in a commercial way, you will have to register them with the health units. The health unit will be able to go into your premises and make sure that you have signage, that you don't let young people use them, that you have checked IDs etc., making it safer.

What the bill also will do is that it will continue the hard work of the Canadian Cancer Society—I thank them for being with us today—of educating people who still don't know. It's well worth supporting.

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

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm thrilled to be here to speak on behalf of the bill from the minister and my colleague from Oak Ridges–Markham.

As a registered nurse, but more importantly as a Canadian, this issue is about protecting young people. As the member for Scarborough–Agincourt, I know about this issue first-hand, more importantly as a registered nurse, because the proposed legislation is comprehensive in terms of the education awareness but also the responsibility of the owner, because it's clearly laid out in the explanatory note about the responsibility of those who are selling a service called tanning. Because, at the end of the day, we know the owners have responsibility in having this product being provided on their premises.

The other piece about the legislation is the enforcement aspect of it. Both the member from Oak Ridges–Markham and I have spent over 20 years dealing with tobacco legislation. We know that any time we have legislation in this province we must have an enforcement feature. In the bill, it talks about inspection, what the role of the inspectors is and how they enter the premises. That is critically important.

The other piece about the legislation is the advertisement piece, because we know young people—the same strategy that we currently use for the tobacco awareness campaign is also being considered for this proposed legislation. It's the right thing to do.

I'm confident hearing the colleagues from the opposition party are in support of this legislation. Let's move it from this House to a committee for further debate to enhance this bill, if necessary, but we need to bring this back sooner than later because, at the end of the day, we are here to protect every young Ontarian in this province.

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

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to provide a couple of minutes of comments on Bill 30. I guess it's very appropriate that I speak, given my hairline.

About a year ago, I came back from a holiday south and found that I had a spot on my face. Ultimately, it was skin cancer and I had it cut off. I know it's hard to believe that this face could have all these scars on it. Normally, people thought it was from hockey, but it was from cancer. It was a very sobering thing for me because, as the member for Whitby–Oshawa said, some of us aren't big in terms of banning, but it really changed my outlook on the whole situation.

The other thing that changed my outlook was an event that I attended in my riding after I had had my cancer cut out. It was the Relay for Life at St. Mary Catholic high school. I was so overwhelmed at the number of young people who approached me, as their member of provincial Parliament, who knew that I had had skin cancer, and these young men and women were pledging to me, as a legislator, that I hear from them—even though they didn't have a vote, even though they weren't of age to cast a ballot for members, they wanted me to know how committed they were to this piece of legislation. That really was a game changer for me, not just because I had cancer, but because I listened to what they had to say.

I also learned at a very young age from my late father, who had psoriasis. He self-tanned quite often in the home, but he always said—and this is decades ago—that he knew the perils of that.

So I support the legislation, and I look forward to further debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Oak Ridges–Markham has two minutes to respond.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I'm certainly very pleased and heartened to hear the remarks of the members who have commented on second reading of this bill.

To the member for Whitby–Oshawa, I know that she likes to research things very, very thoroughly, and she obviously has done so in this case. Although I don't think any of us want to ban things for the sake of banning, in this particular case the health of our children is absolutely paramount, and the educational efforts to date have not, unfortunately, been sufficient to reduce the number of young people using tanning beds.

To the member for Nickel Belt, again, a good colleague and someone who has so long advocated for many measures related to public health, I think you've pointed out very importantly that skin cancers can affect any one of us, particularly those, in fact, of fairer skin and those with a tendency to burn with the sun or, in this case, ultraviolet radiation. We all need to be extremely cognizant of changes in our skin.

To the member for Scarborough–Agincourt, who, as many of you know, worked with me at the York region health department for many years: Soo knows all there is to know about tobacco legislation. When things were

getting really tough in York region—and we had some recalcitrant groups related to tobacco legislation, in particular some of the Legion halls—who better to enter in there but public health nurse Soo Wong? She achieved miraculous results in our community.

The member for Leeds–Grenville has had his little brush with mortality. I urge him in fact to ensure that his face and head are both covered as he goes out into the sun, and I know he will never, ever use a tanning bed.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate? The member for Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole: Madam Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Mr. O'Toole has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading debate adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day.

Hon. John Milloy: No further business, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. This House stands recessed until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 1009 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Jane McKenna: The mother of Dan Powers—who is our senior legislative adviser and press secretary to the leader of the official opposition—Dr. Anne Marie Liberatore and his brother Christian Powers are here today for question period.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to introduce the president-elect of OSSTF, Paul Elliott, who is here in the west lobby; and Paul Kossta, the staff person legislative observer. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I'm pleased to introduce the family of page captain John Gobin. They're in the west gallery: Winston and Leila Gobin, the parents; and Rajpattie Ramnaran, the grandmother. Please welcome them to Queen's Park.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Today, I'd like to welcome page Ellen Jansen's grandmother Nancy Millson, in the public gallery. She's here to watch her granddaughter in action today.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to welcome the Wendling family from the Welland riding: Kevin, Rosanne, Kyara, Ariel, Mia and Denise. They're joining us today to see Kyara start her first week as a legislative page. Welcome.

Hon. Michael Chan: I would like to welcome the following guests from my ministry's sport and recreation unit: Russell Zavitz, Janet Rudd, Caterina Rewega, Imshan Poolar, Anushe Rabbani, Parmik Chahal, Faye Blackwood, Scott Cooper, Sarah Love, Barbara Lyon-Stewart and Peter Evans.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's a pleasure for me to announce the presence of the parents of our page Owen

Clute. The parents are Fiona Smith, Tom Clute and Neve Clute. Welcome.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I'd like the opportunity to welcome the grade 5 students from St. Brendan Catholic School from the riding of Pickering–Scarborough East to the Legislature today. They're from the Scarborough part of my riding and they're touring the Legislature and listening to us in question period. I believe they are just coming in now.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I also have parents of pages who are here. Yesterday his mother was here; today his dad, Marc Bédard, is here to support his son Nicolas, who is one of our pages. And the mother of Magalie Malette, Marie-Josée Bergeron, is also here with us today.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce Larry Scott, who was our candidate in the last provincial election for the riding of Oakville.

They're soon to join us in the west gallery—it's my pleasure to introduce Matt Hiraishi, manager of Ontario government relations for the Insurance Bureau of Canada; and Robert Demille of Demille State Farm Insurance in Oakville, whose father was my former campaign manager. They're taking part in the annual insurance day at the park. Please show them all the courtesy the House deserves.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On behalf of the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville, Emily Kostiuik's mother, Julie Rosenberg, who is in the gallery visiting her daughter. Welcome and thank you.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): If I could now have the pages assemble, I would like to introduce our new pages to the House.

I'm going to ask all members to join me in welcoming this group of young pages serving in the second session of the 40th Parliament: Fae Alexander from Thunder Bay–Superior North; Brittany Ally from York Centre; Nicolas Bédard from Nickel Belt; Owen Clute from Trinity–Spadina; Leah Dehn from Kitchener–Conestoga; John Gobin from Scarborough–Rouge River; Eric Guild from Timiskaming–Cochrane; Stone Haines from Windsor–Tecumseh; Andrew Hodgins from Durham; Nadim Iddon from Parkdale–High Park; Ellen Jansen from Huron–Bruce; Ali Javeed from Scarborough–Guildwood; Arveen Kang from Bramalea–Gore–Malton; Emily Kostiuik from Mississauga East–Cooksville; Magalie Malette from Sudbury; Dasha Metropolitansky from Oakville; Andrew Sheehan from Niagara West–Glanbrook; Jacob Van Boekel from Oxford; Kyara Wendling from Welland; and Helen Zheng from Davenport.

Welcome. Now get to work.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I think the member has interpreted my comment very liberally.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That wasn't my message, to get carried away. That was my message to say, let's relax.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PENSION PLANS

Mr. Peter Shurman: My question this morning is for the Minister of Finance. Our party's concern is high as a result of widely reported comments you made that strongly suggest a major solution to your budget deficit woes could be to raise taxes. You bobbed and you weaved, Minister, but when you were asked point-blank if you would raise taxes, your answer was, "I am taking every consideration as to what we need to encourage investment...." Where I come from, Minister, we take that as a qualified yes.

When pressed, you said, "Well, there's been obviously some speculation that's been written and I'm not going to speculate."

Well, no one wants you to speculate, Minister. Just tell me and tell the people of Ontario how you are going to sustain ballooning public sector pensions. Is it your intention to raise taxes in Ontario, yes or no?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I also appreciate the engagement that you're finally giving us in regard to this budget. I've reached out to you so many times. I do appreciate that we're having this discussion, and we are having consultations around the province.

Let's be clear: What have we done? We've cut taxes. We've cut taxes for personal. We've cut taxes for corporate. Ontario is one of the most competitive tax jurisdictions anywhere in the world. We're attracting investment. We're attracting investment that's staying in Ontario. As a result of these initiatives, we've now been able to garner 400,000 net new jobs since the recession.

The fundamentals in Ontario are strong. We're poised to do so much more. I look forward to working with all sides of the House in making this a very good budget for the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Shurman: I can't say you're not learning.

It seems dodge ball is not confined to phys-ed courts in gymnasiums. You and your Premier have evaded every public question pertaining to cutting costs, public sector pension payments, public sector wages, program spending—no apparent curtailment anywhere. Meanwhile, you claim you're on track to eliminate the deficit by 2017, without any figures to support that claim.

Minister, your own economist, Don Drummond, has said that gold-plated public sector pensions are not sustainable. You have provided no evidence of any concrete plan to control spending. With your public sector pensions in place, Ontario is staring down the barrel of a fiscal gun. You will not commit to holding taxes at pres-

ent levels. So tell Ontario and tell me this: What specific spending do you intend to reduce, and by how much, or what specific taxes are you raising?

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Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, the only dodge that we have on our side is David Dodge, and we look forward to his advice, to his contribution, alongside others like Don Drummond. We've taken their advice, and we've started to institute some of those very measures to support a very strong economic power here in Ontario.

We have a sensitive recovery, no doubt. That's why we need to be diligent, but we can't take extreme measures. We can't go off doing slash-and-burn policies; that's only going to hurt our recovery. But we also have to be very careful about our spending, so that we ensure—that we ensure—that the economy continues to thrive, that we are on target to balance our books by 2017-18. We're taking every measure necessary to ensure that.

Again, I say to you, we have reduced taxes, we are one of the most competitive jurisdictions and we're looking forward to going forward.

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

Mr. Peter Shurman: A couple of weeks ago, when we were talking about the throne speech, I quoted my grade 9 history teacher who said, "You talk a lot, but you don't say much." Minister, you cannot keep evading the issue—you can't keep evading the issue. Balancing budgets can only result from increasing revenues, reducing costs or a combination of the two. You and I both know that.

With an estimated \$100 billion in unfunded liability, you're looking at north of \$4 billion per year in pension costs. I could stand here and I could ask you line by line, item by item, what you're going to do, but in Premier Wynne's spirit of openness and transparency, just tell us clearly and directly which programs are being cut or which taxes are being raised.

How are you going to cover the shortfall that you have created to pay for these incredibly rich public sector pensions?

Hon. Charles Sousa: The member opposite would know fully well, because I shared with you my House book; I shared with you my transition binder. I've given you my answers already. I've told you some of the initiatives that were going to help you with questions, no less. But I'll tell you this, because I do want to work cooperatively with you; I am anxious to do so: When it comes to pensions, we have now negotiated with four unions and joint pension plans. That's going to save and avoid costs of up to \$1.5 billion over the next three years. These initiatives are very strong. They are taking the right steps.

What we want, Mr. Speaker, are results. We want positive results. It's how we get there that matters. Some of the suggestions that you're putting forward would create havoc in the system. We want to work with our

stakeholders and our partners, we want those zero/zero wages, we want to ensure that our pensions are under control, and, Mr. Speaker—

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

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Victor Fedeli: My question is for the Premier. Premier, we finally heard yesterday from your energy minister that the \$40-million figure you stuck to for months on the Oakville gas plant cancellation "could be wrong." First, you blamed the OPA, the Ontario Power Authority, for the missing documents, and then, yesterday, your energy minister blamed the OPA for this \$40-million figure, yet the OPA says it was the government who ran the show.

You keep deflecting responsibility, exclaiming things like, "It wasn't me," and "The dog ate my homework." Basically, Premier, who, indeed, is responsible for this? If it's not \$40 million, just how much is the actual cancellation of the Oakville plant?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I appreciate the question of the member opposite, and I know the Minister of Energy is going to want to comment in the supplementary.

I'm very glad that the committee is now looking at all of these questions. That's why we wanted to broaden the mandate of the committee, Mr. Speaker. I was very clear that we wanted that committee to be able to look at all aspects, and that's what's happening. If I had thought that all the answers were in the public realm, then I wouldn't have suggested that the Auditor General look at both gas plants. I made that suggestion because I think there are questions. The Minister of Energy has confirmed that, and so we will allow the Auditor General to do his work. We will get the answers to those questions, and I hope that the member opposite is paying close attention to what's going on in the committee.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: To the Premier: I actually agree with the Premier that not all the information is in the public realm—I will agree with you on that. We're still waiting for many more document dumps. But, Premier, you could have been honest and up front with Ontarians in the past, but you have refused. You could have made this \$40-million admission weeks ago.

On February 21, the same day as the third document dump, the CEO of the OPA refused to confirm the combined amount of \$230 million for the Oakville and Mississauga cancellations. Four days later in this House, the energy minister said, "We stand by that number." Premier, why have you refused to admit the Oakville figure was wrong when the head of the Ontario Power Authority gave you a pretty strong hint four weeks ago that it indeed was an incorrect number?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: It is indeed very helpful to have the justice committee having hearings on this particular

issue at this time. Just this morning, the mayor of Oakville said:

“Our citizens organized their own effort to ask the province to rethink the proposed power plant....

“They won promises from all parties to stop the proposed ... plant.”

He also said, with respect to the cost—and this is very, very important: “Anyone who wishes to criticize the cost of cancelling it would do everybody a favour if they would explain how they would have done it differently.”

They promised to relocate the plants. They have not calculated the cost. They’re picking figures out of the air. They’re not prepared to wait for the witnesses—all the witnesses—to present their evidence or to wait for the Auditor General to give his opinion. Be patient.

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

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Premier, here we are, four weeks into your session, and we’re still waiting for you to be forthright with Ontarians. We know cabinet was briefed over a year ago on Project Vapour, the code word for your Oakville cancellation. We know you know the real cost. Premier, you don’t need a committee to tell Ontarians the truth; you just need to stand up and let it out. Why do you need the Auditor General to tell you what your own deal cost? Has this government lost so much control of Ontario’s finances and the treasury that it now admits it doesn’t know the cost of its own deal?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, he’s raising two or three different points. He’s talking about disclosure; he’s talking about transparency, or a lack of it. We took the initiative to have the Ontario Power Authority senior management come to Queen’s Park and answer questions in an unfettered way. They stated absolutely clearly that they made the decision on their own on which documents to release or were relevant—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I tried humour at the beginning. I have to go back to the other, and that includes comments while the answer is being given from the same side.

Minister.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: They also stated that there was no political interference in terms of which documents would be released, or anything concerning the release of the documents.

We have been open. We’ve been transparent. The Premier has been unbelievably open and transparent with the opposition and with the public, expanding the purview of this committee and being prepared to come forward. She’s willing to go to—

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

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Last year, the Minister of Health promised that executives at Ornge wouldn’t be receiving bonus pay this

year. Can the Premier tell us whatever happened to that plan?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you for the question; I think it’s an important one. Ornge did make the decision a year ago—it was a prudent decision, a decision I supported—not to offer bonuses to its employees. There would be no performance pay. However, that decision was appealed. A group of employees at Ornge did take that decision to the HRSDC. HRSDC did rule that they were entitled to those bonuses, that performance pay. HRSDC ruled that so that Ornge—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: They made the decision, the right decision, to—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As soon as I ask you to be quiet, as soon as there’s a break, you add. So the member from Renfrew, come to order.

Finish, Minister, please.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: In order to avoid the high cost of litigation, they did decide to offer bonuses to their employees with a very clear understanding that this is one time. It brings their salary up to what it was last year. It is not higher than last year’s, and they have a plan going forward.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The fact that executives at a disgraced public company will be getting big bonuses is just another bit of bitter news for patients who want to see health care dollars spent helping people get well, not padding the pockets of already-generous public salaries.

Once again, the government promised to crack down on spending at the top, and their promises have been proven as empty as the government’s promise to cap CEO salaries. When will the Premier take some real action to show patients that they’re the priority in our health care system?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I have to object to the characterization that front-line staff at Ornge are not worthy of appropriate compensation. I think the people at Ornge have been through a very difficult year. I supported the decision of the Ornge board not to grant bonuses, but I don’t think we need to drag down the people who give their lives every day to save the lives of others, Speaker.

The Ornge board made a responsible decision. The first decision was no bonuses. That was appealed; they lost. Going forward, they have a very clear framework so that any pay for performance will be based on very clear criteria.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: People are waiting for results from this government, Speaker, like a five-day home care guarantee.

Sheri, a Toronto resident—not my colleague from Parkdale–High Park, but another Sheri from Toronto—wrote to us out of frustration: “The state of care for our elderly is so sad. My grandmother served her country in the Second World War, she sacrificed so much for herself to make a life for future generations, and this is how we repay her and others from her generation.”

Irma, from the great community of Don Valley West, writes this: “Based on my experience, I would say that the government was wasting far too much money on management and not spending wisely on ensuring that their clients were getting good care.”

We’ve put forward a simple plan. Is the Premier ready to crack down on bonuses and public sector CEO salaries and make smart investments in a five-day home care guarantee?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I thought we were talking about air ambulance. Now I guess we’re talking about home care, but I’m happy to answer the question.

I completely agree with the member opposite. We need to invest more in home care. We are making important investments in adding home care. We have common ground with the third party that investing in home care is a very high priority.

I met last week with health ministers from across the country. All of us are dealing with the same issues regarding our aging population. We agree that we need to invest more in home care so people can stay home as long as they are able.

POWER PLANTS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. Last year, the government insisted that the cost of cancelling the private power deal for the gas plant in Oakville was \$40 million. Will the Premier stand by that figure today?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I said to a question previously from the opposition, we were very clear that we were going to open up all of the information, to provide all of the information. That’s why we asked that the mandate of the justice committee be expanded, Mr. Speaker. That’s why the questions that are being asked are being asked: because we’ve allowed for that expansion of mandate.

That’s why I asked that the Auditor General look at both the Oakville and the Mississauga situations: because I think there are questions, and we don’t have all of the answers that we need. The only way to get the answers is to have people who are experts, like the Auditor General, look at the numbers and determine what the answers are. That’s why we’ve asked them to do it, and I await the work in his report.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, once again, the people see their government make a clear commitment about costs, only to hear later the same government backtrack with a brand new number. Ontario households and businesses are now paying some of the highest electricity rates in the entire country. Does the Premier think it’s acceptable that they can’t get a straight or consistent answer from their government on the true cost of this gas plant debacle?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I made it clear when I came into this office that I thought that there needed to be an openness, that we needed to make sure that every piece of information was available. I have said that it pains me that we haven’t been able to have the information all at once, that it wasn’t a simpler process, that we weren’t able to provide all the information.

The reality is every party in this House said that they were going to cancel those gas plants. That was the position of every single party. The testimony this morning at the justice committee by the mayor of Oakville was that he had all-party support for the cancellation of the Oakville plant.

The reality is that there are questions, Mr. Speaker, that need to be answered. We are providing the conditions so that those questions can be answered, including the Auditor General looking at the books and giving us an answer on the numbers. We await that response and look forward to his report.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: New Democrats were the only party, during the election campaign, who said it would be irresponsible to tear up contracts sight unseen. That’s what we said.

At the justice committee this morning, the government’s witness made it clear that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You kind of got ahead of me, but I was going to stand up and ask for some quiet. Order.

Leader?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: At the justice committee this morning, the government’s witness made it clear that the Liberals’ private power system is a mess. Instead of open, accountable electricity planning that hears public concerns, we have a government handing out hundreds of millions of dollars to private power providers to cover the cost of cancelling contracts that never should have been signed in the first place.

Is the Premier ready to admit that this is a system that is simply not working for the people of this province?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, to hear the leader of the opposition speak this morning, it sounds as though her commitment to the mayor of Oakville when she—Mayor Burton said this morning, “Our citizens organized their own effort to ask the province to rethink the proposed power plant.... They won promises from all

parties to stop the proposed power plant.” That’s all parties, Mr. Speaker. All three parties in this House said that they would cancel those gas plants.

Now the leader of the opposition is saying that she wouldn’t have ripped up contracts—she wasn’t sure what she would have done, Mr. Speaker. The fact is, she gave a promise; she said that that’s what she was going to do. We acted on that promise. We delivered that. We are acting on the promise that we made during the election campaign.

She can’t have it both ways. She can’t have the corner on righteousness on this if she said she was going to cancel it, and now she’s saying she wasn’t going to.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Rob Leone: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. We don’t have to wait for the Auditor General’s report to find out that which we already know. The cost of the Oakville power plant cancellation is more than \$40 million, contrary to that which you’ve previously indicated. Perhaps a little late in the game was the Minister of Energy, who admitted yesterday, when referring to the government documents, “They could be wrong.”

We appreciate the minister finally reading the documents and testimony yesterday from Bruce Sharp, but had he done that earlier, he would know that the government numbers were wrong. Instead, this government has focused on throwing the OPA under the bus at every turn rather than admitting any fault.

Premier, I’d like you to answer this question: Do you agree with the Minister of Energy’s comments yesterday, and if so, can you tell us what the real cost of the cancellation of the Oakville—

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: To the member who asked the question: They could be right. “They could be wrong” means they could be right. Okay? That’s the truth.

The reality is that we have a process under way, Mr. Speaker, which is the justice committee, which is taking evidence under oath.

We have a witness who came forward today who said quite clearly—and I want to repeat: under oath, the mayor of Oakville—“We enjoyed expressions of support from all parties, including Mr. Tabuns, and we appreciated the support of all parties. We were particularly encouraged by the strong statements that MPP Ted Chudleigh made.”

In addition to that, the mayor said—and I agree with the mayor—under oath: “Anyone who wishes to criticize the cost of cancelling it would do everybody a favour if they would explain how they would have done it differently.”

So I ask the member who asked the question, how would you have done it differently? Because you were going to cancel the project yourself.

1100

Interjections.

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

Simply shouting down an answer is not going to cut it today. Starting now, I’ll start mentioning individuals’ ridings.

Supplementary.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I don’t need another comment on that either, Minister.

Mr. Rob Leone: In testimony today, Oakville Mayor Rob Burton stated in committee that he didn’t believe TransCanada was entitled to any payout, because no building permit was issued and no municipal approvals were given, yet \$638 million of public money is gone because of the decisions of your government. You take no responsibility; all you do is blame somebody else.

They blame Bruce Sharp. They blame Chris Bentley. They blame the OPA. They’re even blaming computers, Mr. Speaker. There is literally nothing—human, electronic device, government agency or otherwise—that this government won’t use to blame and refuse to accept responsibility.

I want the Premier to answer this question, Mr. Speaker: Was the Minister of Energy correct in saying that the cost is higher than \$40 million for cancellation of the Oakville power plant?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: There was an election campaign in 2011. All parties have agreed that they were going to relocate the Mississauga gas plant. We were fortunate enough to be elected; we did what we promised to do and we did what the other two parties promised to do. It then came to a question of calculating the costs, and in calculating the costs, the Ontario Power Authority—who did the negotiation, had all the documentation—calculated the cost. They made those figures available to us. We released those figures to the public. We now have a committee—which has a broader mandate, thanks to the Premier—looking into it. The member who asked the question is a member of that committee. Let’s wait until the committee is finished and they decide what the outcome is. We’ll deal with the outcome after all the evidence is in, including the evidence from the Auditor General, whose report we requested.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question to the Premier: Today, Rob Burton, mayor of Oakville, testified that before the agreement with TransCanada was signed, he met with the former Premier to say that Oakville didn’t want the plant, that there were risks that Oakville simply didn’t want; but the government went ahead with it anyway. It made a major mistake. In fact, when we asked if the plant should have simply been stopped before it started, the mayor said, “I would have appreciated that as a taxpayer”—before it started, before you signed a contract. Will the Premier acknowledge that her government

started the problem that has incurred the cost of \$638 million?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader.

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

Hon. John Milloy: Thank you very much, Speaker—
Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville is warned. The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, come to order. The member from Essex, come to order. One warning, and many more to go if I have to.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: The question of the location of gas power plants is one that is before a committee of the Legislature right now, the justice committee, but what's interesting is that all three parties are represented on that committee and all three parties opposed both the Oakville and the Mississauga plants.

As has been pointed out this morning, when Mayor Rob Burton was asked by one of our members, "Would you like to elaborate particularly on the support Mr. Tabuns lent you in the drive to get the Oakville power plant cancelled?" the mayor had this to say: "We enjoyed expressions of support from all parties, including Mr. Tabuns." Once again, this was a promise that was made by all three parties, and it was kept by our government.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Back to the Premier: The Oakville gas plant didn't fall from the sky. The Liberal government signed the contract to put it there, over the staunch objections of the town of Oakville and its mayor. And now the government won't say how much that cancellation is going to cost. Will the Premier acknowledge that the Liberal government created this mess?

Hon. John Milloy: The honourable member raises the issue of cost. Perhaps we should remind him that the Auditor General, an officer of this Legislature, is right now looking into the costs of both the Mississauga and the Oakville plants, with the urging and encouragement of this government. He's also very aware, as he's a member of the committee, that the justice committee is looking into it.

But what I find passing strange is that neither the New Democratic Party nor the Progressive Conservative Party has ever thought to furnish their costings and their policy analysis when they opposed both these plants going into the election, when they put forward the costings of what they would do if they formed government.

Mr. Speaker, isn't it time for all parties to come forward and provide that type of information? We have been forthcoming on this side of the House, and we look for the same spirit on the other side of the House.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Ms. Helena Jaczek: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, on Saturday, March 23, from 8:30

p.m. to 9:30 p.m., people across Ontario and around the world will celebrate Earth Hour. Earth Hour is a global event where we turn off our lights for an hour to show our commitment to energy conservation and protecting the planet. People in my riding of Oak Ridges–Markham take part in Earth Hour every year, turning off their lights and showing support.

Energy conservation is important, both for a healthy environment and a strong energy system—

Interjection.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Chatham will come to order.

Carry on.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: PowerStream, which is one of the electrical distribution companies for homes and businesses in my riding, encourages their customers to turn off their lights during Earth Hour each year.

Speaker, through you, could the minister inform the House of the steps we are taking to conserve energy?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Thank you to the member for Oak Ridges–Markham. Speaker, Earth Hour is an important event for raising awareness around climate change—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Huron–Bruce, come to order.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'm proud to say that our government has worked hard to create a culture of conservation. In the past six years alone, we have saved over 1,900 megawatts, the equivalent of taking 600,000 homes off the grid. Our long-term energy plan makes a commitment to reduce peak demand by 7,100 megawatts by 2030.

We're also working closely with local utilities to deliver meaningful programs to consumers, including the heating and cooling incentive, the fridge and freezer pickup, and requiring increased efficiency for the construction of new large buildings and residential homes. Our government is doing a lot for conservation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Hand in hand with conserving our energy and shifting demand to off-peak hours is having an accessible program that allows Ontarians to conserve energy easily and effectively. Part of doing this is having the proper infrastructure in place so we can accurately read results of when Ontarians consume energy at different times of the day.

Jurisdictions all over the world are turning to a smarter energy grid to allow users to get the energy they need when they need it.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: What is our government doing to create a smart energy system that is friendly to conservation programs and fosters new innovative ideas?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The member is correct: Implementing a smart energy grid is crucial as we build a stronger and more reliable energy system in Ontario. That's why our government has introduced smart meters

and time-of-use pricing across the province to help conservation efforts.

Mr. Speaker, these initiatives are about choice. Smart meters give Ontario families greater control over their energy consumption, with more accurate information. They give Ontarians the choice to shift their energy consumption to different times of the day. This avoids the need for new generation and transmission investments, saving consumers money in the long run.

As we shift our energy usage to off-peak hours, we also minimize the impact on the environment and, in the long run, save the ratepayer money.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Yesterday you were asked about the \$40-million cost estimate for cancelling the Oakville gas plant after it was openly challenged by an expert witness in committee. That witness testimony estimated the true cost to be 15 times higher. You dismissed that testimony as based on assumptions. You were then asked by the media whether you would stand behind your figure of \$50 million, and you said it “could be wrong.”

That’s a stunning reversal after months of insisting that the total cost to the taxpayer of cancelling the Oakville plant was just \$40 million. What changed your mind? Was it the testimony at the committee, or did you just receive an advance draft of the Auditor General’s report?

1110

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: That’s a stunning question because the question was just asked by his colleague and I answered the question. So I’ll answer it again. We fulfilled the commitment to—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: We fulfilled the commitment to cancel and relocate the gas plant, as the opposition had promised. We were fortunate to win re-election and had the opportunity to do so. The Ontario Power Authority did all the negotiation; they did the calculation of costs. They provided the cost to us. They provided documentary information to us, which we released to the public. They were the keepers of the documents; they provided those documents to us. We now have a committee that’s looking into it with an expanded mandate, thanks to the Premier. We will wait for all the evidence to come in. I did not have any advance copy of the Auditor General’s report, and I—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. When I stand, everyone sits. Supplementary.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Minister, after months of your government continuing to insist that \$40 million was the absolute, total price for cancelling those plants, the only reason that you would come up with new information

tomorrow is that you know something that you have not told this House. You have new information; you are aware that that cost is higher. The Auditor General is doing his investigation, and you’ve asked the public to be patient for that report. But yesterday, you were already trying to discredit him by saying that the Auditor General’s figure—and he hasn’t even released it. You said, “I think the figure will be a figure on which there will be a lot of opinion, whatever it is.”

Minister, we’re not philosophers; people have a right to absolute answers. You know today that it is more than \$40 million. It’s about time you fessed up—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. A tightrope walk to saying something unparliamentary, but I would like to remind all members—I’m going to springboard from the member’s comments—that we do not impugn or use certain phraseology in this place that indicates that someone is not telling the truth. I’ll leave it at that.

Minister?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member who asked the question is absolutely dead wrong. If he wants to bring a Bible over here, I’ll swear on it. I have not seen the Auditor General’s report draft or have any information whatsoever.

What I have said consistently is that the Ontario Power Authority did the negotiation; they had all the documents. I said here, every single time the question of cost has come up, that we relied on the information that was provided to us by the Ontario Power Authority. We now have a committee that’s looking into it. The committee will have a purview to examine everything and come up with its own conclusions. I, as minister, have been privy only to the information and numbers that have been provided to me by the Ontario Power Authority and nobody else. Take that, put it in your pipe and smoke it.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Premier.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. There are a couple of members that are desperately on the edge.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Oh, I know—and remain so.

The member from Essex.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you, Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Premier, the OLG is handing out up to \$750,000 in public money to private companies to bid on contracts so the Donald Trumps of the world can make even more money. Yet this same government is obliterating the horse racing industry without any consultation or plan for the future. Why is this government investing money into private companies that are already

making profits and leaving the horse racing industry to collapse completely?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to speak to the horse racing part of that question because I really need the member opposite to know how hard we're working to make the horse racing industry sustainable in the province.

There were many, many concerns about the model that was in place. We put a panel in place. My predecessor, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, put in place a panel—Elmer Buchanan, John Snobelen, John Wilkinson—and the panel found “it would be a mistake to reinstate SARP.... The program has provided far more money than was needed to stabilize the industry—its original purpose—and has done so without compelling the industry to invest in a better consumer experience.”

So we are working with racetracks. We are trying to make sure that racetracks have the ability to survive.

In the member's own backyard, Mr. Speaker, the Lakeshore group is working to try to put together a business model so that they can bring back racing to the Windsor area. So I look forward to working with them.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: The Premier knows full well time is running out. Premier, offering the Donald Trumps of the world public money so that they can make more money on the backs of Ontarians is not a good strategy. Up to 20,000 to 30,000 full-time jobs in the horse industry are at stake in rural Ontario.

My question to you, Premier, is simple, and I would desperately appreciate an answer. Will the Liberal government continue to choose to give subsidies to private corporations who want a piece of the casino industry over coming up with a real plan to save the horse racing industry in rural Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: So, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear as to what he's asking. We have before us a modernization of the OLG, and the lottery and gaming component of it. In order for us to get the best value for money for our taxpayers, we want proponents to make their bids and their submissions. We now have before us a very complex and large bid—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Essex has asked the question, and I'm hoping he will listen to the answer.

Minister.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I'm trying to respond to your “why.” We're doing this so that we can get more proponents because we only have one major bidder. We need to have more so we can have a competitive proposal so that we can do the best we can for our community.

How we did it? We sought legal advice. We went through Infrastructure Ontario. This is standard practice in other regions so that we can get the best value for Ontario—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. Charles Sousa: And why? Because we want to generate even more money for hospitals and health care and our social services to help all Ontarians. That's what this process is about—

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: —and only those—

Interjections.

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

Just a reminder: When I say “thank you,” that's the end; when I say “answer,” you've only got a wrap-up sentence to go.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's true of all people.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I want to liken this to a boxing game. There are people who give cheap shots at the end of a boxing round. That means when the bell goes, the guy gives an extra punch—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Somebody's already doing it while I'm speaking—or a low blow. So when I do get the quiet, it's not the moment in which I want you to ramp it back up again.

New question.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Grant Crack: My question is to the Minister of Government Services. Last fall, our government made it clear that our priority is to secure agreements with our public sector partners, and we've worked really hard to achieve that goal. Since that time, the Ministry of Government Services has successfully negotiated collective agreements with two of its largest unions, OPSEU and AMAPCEO.

Given the need for fiscal restraint and the importance of eliminating our deficit by 2017-18, could the minister please advise this House on how much these savings have achieved for the province of Ontario?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I want to thank the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell for asking this question. Negotiations are never easy, but when both parties work together to achieve the common objective, we can achieve greater results. I really want to thank the leadership of the AMAPCEO and OPSEU organizations for working diligently with us to make sure that we reach fair and reasonable agreements.

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So let me just tell you, Mr. Speaker, that AMAPCEO is a 10,000-member organization, and we reached an agreement with them which they ratified last October, in 2012. The savings that we realized in the first year were \$24.6 million. In the second year, we will get about \$30.4 million.

The OPSEU organization is about 35,000 members and the largest public sector organization. We will

achieve about \$34.1 million in 2013 and \$37.4 million in 2014. We are very proud of these negotiations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Grant Crack: That's very encouraging to hear from the very hard-working minister. I know those savings will go a long way to balancing the budget by 2017-18.

Mr. Speaker, I'd again pose my question through you to the Minister of Government Services. I know that our government is committed to finding fair agreements from our public sector partners for all Ontarians. For agreements to be fair, the contracts we negotiate must respect both employees and taxpayers, and they must balance cost restraints with the public services that Ontario families rely on. We made it clear that returning Ontario back to balanced budgets is a priority for our government and that we plan to achieve this by working with our partners to do what's best for the people of Ontario.

Can the Minister of Government Services please tell us what other benefits Ontarians will receive as a result of these new contracts?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I want to thank the hard-working member. Mr. Speaker, one thing has become very clear to us: that if both parties work together and they can sit at the table and negotiate agreements, we can actually achieve great agreements.

In these two agreements, we will save about \$126.4 million for the public and the government. That will help us to actually balance our budget by 2017-18.

We are very proud of the agreements and the relationship we have with our working partners. We look forward to working with them in the future as well.

DRIVE CLEAN

Mr. Michael Harris: My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Minister, I know you're well aware that vehicle emissions here in Ontario have dramatically declined over the last decade. But this trend isn't unique in Ontario. British Columbia has also seen major reductions, largely as a result of new technology and cleaner fuels. Speaker, that's why the Liberal government in BC is phasing out its emission testing program: because they know it's no longer necessary. But what did you do? You rushed to introduce a new computerized test that's less reliable and more prone to error. Now every day, countless vehicles fail this new test not because of emissions-related problems but because of a computer error.

Minister, can you explain the difference between the situation in Ontario and in BC?

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, the hardest job in this House has to be environment critic for the Conservative Party, because you have to take the anti-environment stand on every occasion. Unlike some of his predecessors—Dr. Harry Parrott would be an example, and Susan Fish, who took a pro-environment stand—he doesn't.

Let me tell you what the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment says about Drive Clean.

“Our doctors are extremely concerned about air pollution. In Ontario, nearly 10,000 people die prematurely each year because of smog. Programs like Drive Clean—which reduce smog components and poisons such as carbon monoxide—are very important to public health. Our doctors believe that, far from being eliminated, these programs should be strengthened.” That's from Gideon Forman, executive director, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Harris: Minister, I flatly disagree: I think the folks who have the hardest job in this House are you 53 on that side trying to defend this scandal-plagued government.

Minister, I'm hoping you can explain how your temporary changes to the new Drive Clean test make any sense. First you tell Ontarians they must pay \$35 to get a new test. Then, if their car fails because the computer isn't ready, you tell them to drive around town and up and down the highway for a day. Also, they can go back to the shop and pay to take another test. And to top it all off, you've added another step for Ontarians buying a vehicle, who may have to get up to three tests at a cost of nearly \$90, before making a purchase.

Minister, in all seriousness, how can Ontarians view this unnecessary program as anything more than a government cash grab?

Hon. James J. Bradley: I keep in close contact with the author of this program, Conservative Minister Norm Sterling. I want to compliment Norm on establishing this program, which is excellent for the province of Ontario. I know he got bounced out of the party by you folks there, but he still established a good program.

Drive Clean reduces unhealthy emissions from cars by 36%. It reduces automobile pollution in Ontario by more than one third. To put it in a bigger context, Drive Clean cuts smog pollutants by nearly 35,000 tonnes a year.

I can tell you that the Environmental Commissioner said—I just happen to have here before me his exact words from his report—“The Drive Clean program has undergone a number of independent program reviews that concluded significant reductions in smog-causing pollutants were being achieved, but that further reductions could result from program improvements,” including implementation of the new regime. That's Gord Miller.

TUITION

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Yesterday, I visited students at the University of Windsor. They told me how difficult it is for them to afford rising tuition fees and how financial stress is hurting their studies.

Ontario has the highest tuition fees in Canada. Why is this government considering increasing fees yet again by as much as 5%?

Hon. Brad Duguid: We're working very closely with students across Ontario and our post-secondary institu-

tions to ensure that we arrive at a balanced approach when it comes to the potential tuition fee increases down the road and the framework that we're working very hard on, as the member is aware.

But I want to ask the member: Her policy right now suggests that we take our 30%-off tuition grant, which is providing 200,000 students across this province and low- and middle-income families with assistance, and spread it to the richer families across the province. That would be helping rich families at the expense of poor families. Is that still her approach? Does she still want to spread that across to the richer families at the expense of the low- and middle-income families? I'd like to hear that in her response.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the minister my question again, so here we are. Students at the University of Windsor pay the highest tuition fees in the country, and graduate fees are 75% higher than UBC's. Many are graduating with unsustainable debt.

In a region where the youth unemployment rate is over 20%, many students are quite simply losing hope. Will the minister get tuition fees under control, or will he compound the struggles of students by raising tuition fees once again?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Mr. Speaker, we're going to work with students across this province in our post-secondary institutions to make sure we have a tuition framework that's fair and balanced and that balances the need for affordability with the need for quality. But what we won't do is promise things that the NDP are promising that are absolutely impractical. The member opposite in Windsor yesterday said that they were going to waive all debts for students across this province. That's a \$10-billion promise. Where are you going to find the money to pay for that? Corporate tax cuts, maybe?

Mr. Speaker, they want to use corporate loopholes to pay for health care and home care. They want to use corporate loopholes to pay for \$40 billion in public transit investment. Now you're identifying another \$10 billion that you want to spend for students. Tell us where you're going to get the money—

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

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. Phil McNeely: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. It is frustrating that municipalities in Ontario often have a difficult time collecting payment for fines issued under the Provincial Offences Act. This problem began in 2002, when the government at the time chose to download the enforcement of the Provincial Offences Act onto cities and towns across the province. There are now millions of dollars in uncollected funds and outstanding payments. In my hometown of Ottawa, where this is a significant problem, we're happy to hear that the Minister of Transportation is taking steps to

address this issue, delivering on a promise made in the 2012 budget.

1130

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Transportation: Could you please tell the House what actions are being taken to help the municipalities collect unpaid fines and what it will mean for Ontario drivers, families and municipalities?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The Premier has asked that each of us spend more time listening to municipalities and less time talking at them. One of the things that we've heard loud and clear is that the party opposite downloaded roads, collections and fines, and that was unbearable. Minister Chiarelli, before me, took real leadership in addressing this and proposing that we introduce legislation to assist municipalities with that.

I also want to thank the Minister of Labour, who introduced a private member's bill that is actually the foundation of this legislation. This will actually prohibit people from being able to renew their plates unless they pay their fines.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Phil McNeely: I am glad to hear that the minister is taking action on this issue. The legislation he is introducing will help our cities and towns, and make our roads a safer place. But with all new legislation, it is important to know how it would impact Ontarians. My constituents in Ottawa are happy that we are addressing this problem; they want to know more about our solutions.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Transportation: Could he please elaborate on what this legislation will mean to all Ontarians and what my constituents in Ottawa—Orléans should know about it?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to thank the member from Ottawa—Orléans for his leadership as well. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario has worked very closely with the government in designing this legislation. What it will mean is that when you go to renew your licence plates, if you have not paid your fines, you will not get plates. As a matter of fact, you won't even be able to switch plates, because this applies to multiple plates. It also means for communities like Kenora or Ottawa—border communities—when people go through red lights, we will now be able to collect out-of-province fines; that's another big, important thing that Mayor Watson in Ottawa, particularly, has advocated for. This is a very, very positive initiative.

But more important than anything else, this is about saving lives. Any of us who have been in city councils, who have sat there when someone has been run over by a speeding car or an elderly person crossing an intersection gets hit—people don't seem to understand the responsibility—

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

CASINOS

Mr. Monte McNaughton: My question today is for the Premier. Premier, if you really want fairness for all

municipalities—including places like Windsor, London, Niagara Falls and Ottawa—then why has the OLG not corrected its earlier statement that the city of Toronto could expect to receive \$50 million to \$100 million in casino hosting fees? Just so we're clear, Premier, in order to reach a—

Interjection.

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

The Minister of the Environment made a comment that I would not consider parliamentary. Would you please withdraw?

Hon. James J. Bradley: I withdraw.

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

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Premier, just so we're clear, in order to reach a \$50-million hosting fee, a casino would need to generate at least \$7.5 billion in profits, which is more gaming revenue than the entire Las Vegas strip generated in 2012 alone. Will the Premier direct the OLG to correct their earlier statement and will she finally come clean as to the exact amount the city of Toronto is going to get?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the question. It's important to note that the formula is the same right across the province, regardless of the municipality. The Premier has made that clear. That is certainly the consistent message. That is what is being said and that is what is being done.

What is also being done is that a huge amount of money is being proposed to be invested in the city of Toronto. The complex that's being provided is not just a casino. It's also a convention centre. It's also transportation. It's also the hotel. It's a huge resort that's being proposed, so the size and scope of the proponent is what's at question. The amount of generation of revenue will be a positive effect for the city of Toronto should the city of Toronto decide they want to pursue it, and that's their decision first.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Steve Clark: Back to the Premier: That answer is why people in communities affected by the McGuinty-Wynne OLG modernization have lost faith in you. They don't trust you to look after them. First you refuse to give people a referendum prior to a casino coming to their community; now you won't force OLG to reveal what secret sweetheart deal they're discussing behind closed doors.

At this point, there's only one way to ensure OLG isn't stacking the deck, and that's by making details of these deals—and I mean all of them—public. Will you say no to secret deals, Premier, and commit today to make all the details of these agreements public?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Let's be clear: Right now, municipalities are being asked to consider the idea of having a casino, to see if they're receptive to it, after which they have the opportunity to review the proposals, review the proponents, review the siting, and then again make their decision, should they want it or not.

The issue before us in Toronto is much more complex and much grander than is being proposed in other parts of

the province. The purpose, of course, is to generate even more revenue to service health care, to service our education, to service social programs, and do it in such a way that would be cognizant of the social benefits for the province.

I say to the member across the way: We're doing everything we can to be open and transparent in the process, to ensure that we get many proponents investing in the process.

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. Jonah Schein: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Speaker, New Democrats have been working with cycling advocates across Ontario to get our communities moving again. This winter, over 1,000 activists signed a petition asking the minister to clarify the Highway Traffic Act to allow contraflow bike lanes on Ontario's roads.

As a response to community pressure, ministry staff have met with the city of Toronto and arrived at an understanding that will allow Toronto to create opposite-direction bike lanes on one-way streets. But the rest of the province is still waiting, Speaker.

When will the minister clarify the Highway Traffic Act so that municipalities across Ontario can move ahead with their bike plans and install contraflow bicycle lanes?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to thank the member from Davenport for his very thoughtful and timely question. I also appreciate his advocacy on this file and have enjoyed meeting with him to work with him on this.

There's a cycling strategy right now that is at the mid-point in development. It is my intention to take this for consultation, because as a cyclist myself, I know there's a lot of debate within the cycling community about separated at-grade cycling lanes and how we deal with these, and the priorities of how we establish those on our highways. It is the intention of the government to move quite quickly on this in the coming months, but we want to make sure we get it right.

I want to thank him for the question and hope he will continue to play a leadership role in this conversation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jonah Schein: Back to the Minister of Transportation: For years, New Democrats have been pushing for this government to actually update the provincial bike strategy. We're pleased that this is moving forward.

We believe that we need a plan with real targets and real timelines to increase ridership in this province, and an updated Highway Traffic Act that will protect all road users.

Speaker, the current act is ambiguous and has left city planners in Ontario without clear direction. While cities like Ottawa have installed contraflow bike lanes and, after years of delay, Toronto is now moving ahead with one, cities like Kitchener and other cities are still waiting for the go-ahead.

Even without the release of the new plan, will the Minister of Transportation please clarify the Highway

Traffic Act and allow all municipalities to plan safe contraflow bike lanes for Ontarian cyclists?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The answer to my friend from Davenport is, yes, I will review it. I will look at the powers. I've only been in this job a few weeks, so I'm still learning the ropes here, quite frankly. But I will look and see what we can do, short of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank him for his initiative. We have no car in my family. My partner cycles to his job as a nurse every day and works in an operating room where he sees the results of people who are victims of accidents, so this is not lost on me. It's not lost on the Premier. She has encouraged me as well to get a proper policy in place, and I think this is a great place in which our party and your party can co-operate. I think we share some values and some ideas here, and we need to move quickly.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke on a point of order.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier, in a response to the member from Kitchener–Conestoga, the Minister of the Environment alluded to a former member of this chamber in a way that spoke to internal party issues. I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that in a previous session here, you stood and ruled that those kinds of childish interjections and games would not be tolerated—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I listen carefully to all of the questions and make my deliberations as quickly as possible in hearing that. I do not agree with the member's assertions.

USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I do want to make a comment, though, and the comment is, lately I've been hearing individuals make comment about individuals' abilities in this place. I find that offensive, even in jest. I would hope that all members would be respectful of each other's abilities and their capabilities of performing their duties here and in their ridings. So I'm going to be a little tougher on those individuals who make comments about someone's abilities in this House—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would ask the member not to make any other comments while I'm speaking.

I take this very seriously, and in jest I told the members that were making some kind of jest that I still didn't like the comments.

I'm going to challenge all of us to rise above and ensure that we do not make negative comments about anyone's abilities in this place. You may challenge policies; you may challenge the capacity of whether or not you're getting an answer or what kind of question you're getting. But I would offer all of us the challenge to rise above that kind of comment. There is no—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will entertain the member from Timmins–James Bay on a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: Earlier today in question period, the Minister of Finance alluded to the fact that he was sharing his briefing book for question period with the opposition. I would ask him to table that document.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Actually, I kind of figured that one out. It's actually not a point of order, but it is not beyond any minister to submit any documents.

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

The House recessed from 1142 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I don't get guests very often, but things have changed in this session. I have Mr. Marc Bédard—who is the father of Nicolas Bédard, one of our pages—here in the gallery taking in the proceedings. Bienvenue à Queen's Park, M. Bédard.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome. The pages and I had lunch today, and we were really having fun.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

INSURANCE INDUSTRY

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the representatives here today from the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

The business of insurance has a rich history dating back hundreds of years. At a time when the Christopher Columbuses of the world were discovering new continents, the financiers of the expeditions needed a way to protect themselves against the risk of major losses. The insurance industry developed to service this need. Insurance, therefore, was intrinsic to expanding trade, growing economies and developing our modern society.

Today, the insurance industry directly and indirectly employs 63,000 people in Ontario. It contributes \$4.1 billion to our province's GDP, and it provides peace of mind to homeowners, drivers and businesses. Ensuring a vibrant insurance industry is necessary for a well-functioning economy, but also to ensure that Ontarians are fully protected against unanticipated losses.

SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Cathy and Maurice Chauvin of Stoney Point, like thousands of other Ontario families, are doing the very best that they can to support their developmentally disabled child, Joe, and his siblings while maintaining full-time jobs. Joe has very complex needs. He has cerebral palsy, he's legally blind, he suffers seizures and he's confined to a wheelchair.

Despite these challenges, Joe's family has provided him with an enriched life and has kept him in his community.

The small amount of funding through the Special Services at Home program has been an integral part of the family and community supports that the people of Ontario should be rightfully proud to provide. This funding was used to pay support workers to help with Joe's personal care and the occasional outing in the community. The cost of that support is dwarfed by the value it provides to Ontario families.

On April 13, Joe turns 18. An occasion that should be cause for celebration has brought only stress and anxiety. You see, Mr. Speaker, because the government forces families like Joe's to transition from the youth-oriented Special Services at Home program to the Passport program, Joe has to be reassessed and will join many thousands of other Ontario families on excruciatingly long waiting lists. Joe's dad, Maurice, has even had to consider whether to keep his job or not.

There has to be a better way. Across this province, families are facing the prospect of being unable to care for their adult children at home. We are hearing about parents surrendering custody of their adult children with disabilities to long-term-care facilities. Some are bringing their children to respite homes and just not coming back. Without the proper support systems, they cannot meet the demands that are required. These families are being forced to make the horrendous choice to give up. We shouldn't have to accept this current situation as it relates to community supports. We can and must do better.

DILLER TEEN FELLOWS PROGRAM

Mr. Monte Kwinter: Today we welcome distinguished students from the Diller Teen Fellows program, visiting from the Eilat region in Israel. The Diller Teen Fellows program is a 15-month international leadership program for Jewish teens. Dedicated to excellence and education, the program allows North American and Jewish students the ability to participate in educational workshops, community service projects and weekend retreats.

The program includes two distinct seminars. This year, the North American spring seminar involves a 12-day visit from the Eilat fellows, during which North American communities host their Israeli peers. The 2013 Israel summer seminar involves a three-week peer exchange where North American students travel, volunteer and explore Israel with the Eilat fellows and the other 14 Diller groups. Operating in 16 communities in the United States, Canada and Israel, the Diller Teen Fellows program is UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's premier leadership development program for Jewish teens in grades 10 and 11.

In exploring the diaspora relations and participating in hands-on community service projects, students have the opportunity to explore the four Diller pillars: Jewish identity, community service, leadership and Israel. The program creates opportunity for Jewish students of

diverse backgrounds to become effective leaders with a strong Jewish identity and respect for pluralism.

The team fellows showcase a commitment to pluralism, peoplehood, partnership and responsibility to their communities, Israel and the Jewish people.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr. Ted Arnott: The Premier's announcement on the future of horse racing in Ontario a few days ago was a belated effort that fell short of providing details and the long-term certainty the industry needs to ensure its future in coming years. That she chose to come to Elora for the photo op did, however, demonstrate that the government recognizes the Grand River Raceway as the premier track in the province.

That, and the government's promise to integrate horse racing into the province's overall gaming strategy allow us to plan for the coming year, but it does not atone for the fact that one year ago this very month, without consultation or an honest economic impact analysis, the Liberal government showed callous disregard for the tens of thousands of families whose livelihoods are in one way or another dependent on the industry.

I want to acknowledge the hard work of my colleagues in the Ontario PC caucus on this issue, working with our leader, Tim Hudak, as well as the advocacy of the county of Wellington and the local municipalities in Wellington-Halton Hills. Working together, we've supported the people in the horse racing industry, and their combined efforts have forced the government to implicitly acknowledge the huge mistake that they've made.

But last week the member for Oxford demonstrated his vision for a better future for rural Ontario when along with our leader and other members of the Ontario PC caucus, we released *Paths to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario*. In that document, amongst other ideas to seize the opportunities of the future, we recommend new partnerships which will serve to strengthen the horse racing industry, allow it to thrive and not tear it apart.

That is the promise of the future, with a Progressive Conservative government restoring good government to our beloved province.

MALVERN FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I rise today to inform the House of an exciting development in my riding of Scarborough-Rouge River. Malvern Family Resource Centre is a multi-service agency which has been providing a variety of services and programs to my residents in Malvern and Rouge River for the past 30 years. They offer a range of services and programs for toddlers, children, teens, families and seniors. The centre is a place where kids can play games, do arts and crafts, and learn social skills; where young adults can learn chess or join a basketball league; and where seniors can take a computer course, cook or practise yoga. They offer educational and support

programs for young mothers, income tax clinics for families and resumé services for teens.

Over the years my community has grown significantly, both in size and diversity. The Malvern Family Resource Centre often has to turn away new clients due to capacity issues.

Malvern has been identified as one of the vulnerable neighbourhoods by United Way, and I'm happy that our government is working in partnership with MFRC to support them in building a bigger and better centre.

The new multi-purpose, state-of-the-art facility will exceed Toronto green standards by 25%, but more importantly, it will allow Malvern Family Resource Centre to overcome their capacity issues and continue to serve my community.

I had the honour of participating in the groundbreaking ceremony with many other proud members of the community when construction began on February 13. I'm looking forward to the grand opening.

I thank the government for the support, and look forward to the new facilities.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr. Michael Harris: Recently I had the opportunity to speak at the Ontario Waste Management Association's annual general meeting about the importance of getting waste diversion right for the future of our economy and the environment.

1510

I started by talking about the PC plan to replace the Liberals' inefficient and costly recycling programs with a policy framework that provides more accountability and better results. Under our plan, we would first remove the government-mandated control that industry-funding organizations currently have over recycling—electronics, tires and household hazardous waste—by opening up all three sectors to the free market. We do not believe the government should be in the recycling business. Instead, governments should set measurable and achievable waste diversion targets, establish environmental standards and monitor those outcomes. That's it.

I also pointed out last week that the time has come for Ontario to follow other progressive jurisdictions across Europe and, indeed, here in Canada by incorporating recovery into the province's waste hierarchy. Ontario policymakers need to realize that not all materials are recyclable and, with a finite amount of space, we're going to need to dispose of waste somehow. That's why the PC Party believes it's time to move forward.

I want to thank the OWMA for its leadership on this file and offer my congratulations on a recent release of their white paper called Rethink Waste: A Blueprint for Harnessing the Economic Benefits of Resource Management in Ontario.

LONG-TERM CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Mr. Speaker, I want to bring you back to 2003. A series of stories in the Toronto Star

exposed the problem of abuse in long-term-care homes. The nature of that abuse was so brutal that it moved the former Minister of Health to tears. Then, George Smitherman promised a revolution in long-term care.

In 2007 came the new long-term-care bill. When we asked where are the minimum hours of hands-on care, we were told that they would be coming out with the regulations.

We waited a few more years, the regulations come out—no minimum standard of hands-on care to be found.

We asked again. The answer was, "We've asked Ms. Sharkey to look into this." Ms. Sharkey does the report, reports back to the House and, yet again, no recommendation for a minimum standard of hands-on care.

We're now in 2013, Mr. Speaker. It's been 10 years. Last week, a resident in a Scarborough long-term-care home killed another resident and injured one more.

Yesterday, a petition was introduced with over 6,000 names calling on the government for minimum hours of hands-on care for long-term-care homes.

We also look at PSWs making barely above minimum wage. Where is the progress, Mr. Speaker? Where is it?

MISSISSAUGA STEELHEADS

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I want to talk about something fun that we did in my riding recently. March 3 was a red letter day for hockey fans in Mississauga, and you might ask, why? That was because the Stanley Cup was brought over to the local hockey arena, the Hershey Centre.

Interjection.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Yes, it was indeed—for hockey fans, anyway.

It was also a chance for people to take pictures with the Stanley Cup, and I can tell you it was very popular. You might be wondering what the occasion was.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Was Ted Arnott there for a picture?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: He's welcome. The occasion was—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop heckling your own member.

Interjection.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Well, the occasion was that Mississauga's local hockey team, the very well-known, very popular Mississauga Steelheads, was hosting South Asian Day. The reason they were hosting South Asian Day, as you can imagine, is that Mississauga is a very multicultural city, and they want Mississaugans of all cultures attending the hockey games, and so that was the reason that they hosted South Asian Day.

It was, I have to say, very, very successful. Tickets were at a discounted price. People had an opportunity to take pictures with the Stanley Cup. It was really good to see the South Asian community come out and support our local Steelheads.

I wanted to issue an open invitation to hockey fans on all sides of the House. If you ever want to watch a really good hockey game, come over to Mississauga for the Steelheads. I'll take you there.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Camaraderie; I love it.

CANWEST DHI AWARDS

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: There was a big celebration in Bruce county this past weekend, and much of it was celebrating the father-son team of Mark and Josh Ireland of Albadon Farms. They were named the top herd managers for Ontario and western Canada in 2012 by CanWest DHI. And I would dare say their wives, Debbie and Marianne, share in this significant achievement.

Mark and Josh, who milk approximately 165 cows, achieved a score of 998 out of a possible 1,000—absolutely incredible.

As part of the CanWest DHI herd management score award, points are assigned for performance in six different management areas. They are milk value, udder health, age at first calving, calving interval, longevity, and herd efficiency.

One thing they've emphasized at Albadon Farms is cow comfort. In 2009, they expanded their facility and have a new freestyle barn with sand bedding, so it's just another day at the beach sometimes for them.

But the score is an excellent barometer of overall herd performance. It's a great tool for monitoring progress from year to year, and it also allows herds to benchmark themselves against others.

This is a great honour for the Ireland family, and I know they will build on this success. But I would also like to recognize Summitholm, the Loewith family from Wentworth county; and Armstrong Manor, the Armstrong family from Peel region; the 2012 second- and third-place CanWest DHI farm families.

The Loewiths hosted our leader, Tim Hudak, and critic Ernie Hardeman at their farm last week when we introduced Respect for Rural Ontario, and I'm very well aware that the Armstrongs are great agricultural ambassadors.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A thing of—
Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You stepped on my joke: a thing of udder beauty.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

DIETITIANS DAY

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I rise to recognize that tomorrow is the fourth annual National Dietitians Day and that March is National Nutrition Month.

Today is an opportunity to recognize and thank Ontario's dietitians. Every day, these dedicated health care professionals use their specialized knowledge in food and nutrition to improve our health. In addition to highlighting the importance of this profession, Dietitians

Day reminds us that dietitians are the go-to experts for advice on healthy eating.

Our government certainly understands and appreciates the great work of dietitians. That's why we tapped their expertise for our Healthy Kids Panel. In particular, our expert panel benefited greatly from the advice of Phyllis Tanaka, vice-president with Food and Consumer Products of Canada, who is a registered dietitian. I was very happy to receive the Healthy Kids Panel's report and recommendations earlier this month.

Let me say that the panel produced an excellent report. It provides us with invaluable advice on how to address childhood obesity and how to make our kids healthier. I'd like to thank the members of the Healthy Kids Panel for their outstanding work to create a healthier Ontario.

We know that many factors affect children's health. We also know that the issue of childhood obesity is complicated, and it will take a concerted multi-faceted approach to help address it. We need partnership among government, the private sector and the health sector, along with Ontario's parents. It's something that we must address together, because not doing so is simply not an option. Keeping kids healthy today is key to protecting them from chronic illness later in life.

We hope to be able to give kids and their families the tools they need to lead healthier lives now so that they can become healthy adults in the future. Along with my colleague Minister Piruzza, I'm pleased to be co-chairing an interministerial working group that will direct the government's action on implementing many of the report's key recommendations. I can tell you that I'm very excited to co-chair this panel with Minister Piruzza, and I'm looking forward to engaging all colleagues further on this issue.

I know that we can all use a little help to make healthier choices, and dietitians play a critical role in helping people of all ages to be healthier and helping them to avoid chronic diseases like diabetes. They translate the complex science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy eating and disease prevention.

Dietitians can create personalized meal plans to improve weight and help control blood sugar to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes. Their training gives them the expertise to help pregnant moms, people seeking to control their blood pressure, those battling eating disorders, and a host of other health-related issues.

1520

I would encourage Ontarians looking for advice on healthier choices to call or visit EatRight Ontario. Eat-Right Ontario is a great source of information where you can ask nutrition-related questions and receive feedback by phone or email from a registered dietitian. Their website, eatrightontario.ca, has some great articles on food and nutrition, meal planning advice, and healthy tips and recipes. You can even sign up to receive an e-newsletter on a monthly basis. EatRight Ontario is just one of the ways that dietitians are helping Ontarians to make healthier choices.

As we celebrate National Dietitians Day, let's applaud and thank dietitians for helping us make Ontario the best

place in North America to grow up and grow old. I'd like our dietitians to know that we're very proud of their contribution to the health of Ontarians.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It's now time for responses.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I'm very pleased to rise today to speak on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party to mark March as Nutrition Month in Canada. Every year in March, dietitians across Canada remind us of the importance of healthy eating and the positive impact nutrition has on our health and well-being.

This year's Nutrition Month campaign is dedicated to helping consumers make healthy choices at the grocery store, advising us to plan, shop, cook and enjoy healthy foods. Healthy eating starts at the grocery store. It's where we purchase much of our food and where we're faced with a wide range of choices. As part of Nutrition Month, the Dietitians of Canada are providing Ontarians with practical suggestions to adopt a healthier lifestyle. With increasing rates of diabetes and other chronic conditions, the need for access to dietitians' expertise continues to grow.

The recently released Healthy Kids Panel reports that childhood obesity is now a crisis in Canada and Ontario. About 30% of our children and youth—a staggering number, Mr. Speaker; almost one in every three children—are now at an unhealthy weight. The report states: “The problem is serious for everyone, but it is more severe for boys than girls and for aboriginal children.”

The report also warns that “if nothing is done, the current generation of children in Ontario will be the first that has a lower quality of life than their parents. They will develop chronic illnesses much younger and be more affected as they age.”

According to the Healthy Kids Panel, obesity does not just hurt individuals but all of society. In 2009, obesity cost Ontario \$4.5 billion—\$1.6 billion in direct health care costs and \$2.87 billion in indirect costs. Dietitians are valuable partners in limiting health care costs by preventing and managing chronic conditions. During Nutrition Month and all year long, dietitians work to get Ontarians back on track by eating well and living more healthfully. The Dietitians of Canada conducted an Ipsos Reid poll in the spring of 2012 and found that 63% of Canadians struggle with making healthier food choices at least half the time they shop, and more than one third struggle at least 75% of the time.

Dietitians advise that a grocery shopping strategy can help save time, money and make healthy eating easier. Dietitians recommend starting with a meal plan, making a grocery list and sticking with it. They recommend reading food labels and choosing nutrient-rich food, and they suggest cooking meals from scratch, even using shortcuts like frozen fruit, ready-to-go salad and pre-chopped vegetables. This is extremely healthy and helpful advice at a time when the Healthy Kids Panel reports that the proportion of meals that Canadians prepare and eat at home declined from 70% in 2001 to 65% in 2008, and the average Canadian visited restau-

rants 184 times in 2007. Dietitians make these practical recommendations to encourage Canadians to shop and eat well. We know that eating well must be part of an overall strategy to create a healthier Ontario, in addition to a number of other factors.

Dietitians also help provide Ontarians with guidance about healthy eating on the go—a challenge for many families—feeding infants and young children, healthy weight loss, cutting back on salt, and eating well to manage diabetes. Beyond the strategies that dietitians promote during Nutrition Month, they encourage Ontarians to eat healthy all year long, in particular through the program EatRight Ontario.

EatRight Ontario was launched by the Dietitians of Canada in 2007. It provides residents of Ontario with increased access to the advice of registered dietitians by using the contact centre, providing referrals to dietitians in family health teams, community and public health agencies, and private practice. People in Ontario can contact dietitians by email or toll-free by telephone, where dietitians are available to answer questions in over 100 languages about healthy eating.

The EatRight program review found that EatRight Ontario provides a high-quality service that is valued by consumers, intermediaries and stakeholders. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of dietitians across Ontario and all of the valuable work that they do in our province and across Canada.

In addition to celebrating Nutrition Month throughout March, tomorrow—March 20—is Dietitians Day. On Dietitians Day, we recognize dietitians as health care professionals, committed to using their specialized knowledge and skills about nutrition to create a healthier Ontario.

Dietitians of Canada are indispensable members of health care teams, using their expertise to provide advice on proper eating, good nutrition and healthy living. I'm proud to acknowledge and applaud the hard work of dietitians in every community across Ontario.

M^{me} France Gélinas: The month of March is recognized across Canada as Nutrition Month, brought to us by the Dietitians of Canada and thousands of dietitians working here in our province in Ontario.

Studies find that consumers want to eat healthy meals but have trouble navigating the complicated and sometimes confusing information about nutrition. So, this year, Nutrition Month helps shoppers by providing clear advice to support healthy choices at the grocery store and to put their “best food forward”—that's the name of the campaign for this year. Activities are taking place across communities in our province with registered dietitians hosting grocery store tours and promoting cooking events to help Ontarians create healthy meal choices.

Registered dietitians work in many settings in Ontario, from hospitals to community health centres, aboriginal health access centres, a few family health teams—you can find them in many areas of our province. They bring what we call evidence-based nutrition and food advice to consumers, to clients and to patients. As regulated health

professionals, the public can have confidence that somebody who uses the title of registered dietitian has the training and the skills to provide safe, ethical and competent care and advice.

March 21 is the fourth annual Dietitians Day—and it is being celebrated here a day early—to recognize the work of dietitians and the value they bring to our health care system, but most of all to the health of Ontarians. They help prevent and manage chronic disease; they help to promote recovery. Dietitians are what we call a cost-effective investment in the health care system because they help people stay healthy and they help people who struggle with diseases prevent further complications. Promoting access to dietitian care and supporting dietitians to work to their full scope of practice will help us keep Ontarians healthy.

I want to take the few minutes that I have left to talk a little bit about No Time to Wait: The Healthy Kids Strategy, a report that was tabled with us about 10 days ago. In there, there was a three-pronged approach to reducing child obesity. The first one is: Start all kids on the path to health. It basically talks about the importance of supporting pregnant women and their families as well as children after they are born—think breastfeeding. This is something that I have brought forward a number of times into this chamber. We've yet to move on this. I think the time would be great right now.

Second is, change the food environment. This priority basically talks about parents of children that want to give healthy food to their kids, but they often have a hard time because of the environment. So we talk about all the marketing that is done to children, all the point-of-sale promotions, the display of unhealthy food that makes it easy to do impulse buying.

Then, they talk about creating healthy communities. Here, we want to focus on keeping our kids healthy. That looks at things like advancing the Poverty Reduction Strategy, looking at mental health, looking at schools as hubs etc.

1530

So what do I take from this? Well, this morning, Mr. Speaker, we talked about the cancer prevention bill, which is a bill that I had pushed, and the government agreed to give it the push to make it through the finish line, where there are other bills that could do the same. And that would be the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating bill. That's a bill that I have introduced three times. It has passed second reading and was supported by this House, and it would require all big chain restaurants to post the number of calories beside the items that you eat.

Basically, by looking at an item it is impossible to guess which one has the most calories, which ones are high in sodium. This information is available under the counter or on a poster on the way to the bathroom, or on a website. But if you put it right there on the menu board, if you see, "Big Mac, \$2.99, 450 calories," it makes all the difference in the world, because then people have the right information at the right time. The way we have it

now, one in a thousand use the information; put it on the menu board, one out of two will use it to make healthy decisions. I think this is an easy win. Let's go with it.

PETITIONS

AIR QUALITY

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It's now time for petitions and I will not turn to the member for Durham. I will turn to the member from Leeds–Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: I appreciate that, Speaker. I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario's Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

"Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

"Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions is the result of factors other than Drive Clean, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

"Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

"Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

"Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false 'fails,' which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

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

"That the Minister of the Environment takes immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program."

I will affix my signature and send it to the table with page Andrew.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

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

"Whereas the Ontario government has made ... (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 the undersigned 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 fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask our good page Owen to bring it to the Clerk.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. Steve Clark: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas St. Andrew’s United Church Bishop’s Mills is subject to the provisions of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario regulation 319/08;

“Whereas this church and other non-profit organizations in eastern Ontario’s rural communities cannot afford to pay for the expensive testing required by this regulation, or the volunteers to transport water samples to provincially accredited laboratories in urban centres hours away; and

“Whereas public health laboratories have the equipment necessary to conduct the testing required under Ontario regulation 319/08;

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

“That the Minister of Health amends Ontario regulation 319/08 to allow non-profit organizations to have water testing done at existing public health laboratories at no cost.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature and send it to the table with page Ellen.

DOG OWNERSHIP

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

“Whereas currently the law takes the onus off of owners that raise violent dogs by making it appear that violence is a matter of genetics; and

“Whereas the Dog Owners’ Liability Act does not clearly define a pit bull, nor is it enforced equally across the province, as pit bulls are not an acknowledged breed;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly passes Bill 16, Public Safety Related to Dogs Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011, into law.”

Over 1,000 dogs have been killed by this cruel law, and I couldn’t agree more. I’m going to add my name to the thousands of signatures and give it to Nadim to deliver to the table.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Todd Smith: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the 2012 Ontario budget eliminates the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit and the Home Repairs Benefit; and

“Whereas these two programs have been used by thousands of Ontarians across the province as a way of lifting themselves out of poverty and achieving financial independence; and

“Whereas these two programs are in the best tradition of providing Ontarians with a hand up and not a handout when they are in need;

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

“That the government of Ontario find some way to restore the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit and the Home Repairs Benefit that aids the Ontarians who depend on these services without endangering the province’s ability to return the budget to balance.”

I agree with this.

Interjection.

Mr. Todd Smith: Absolutely.

LONG-TERM CARE

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

“Whereas there are a growing number of reported cases of abuse, neglect and substandard care for our seniors in long-term-care homes; and

“Whereas people with complaints have limited options, and frequently don’t complain because they fear repercussions, which suggests too many seniors are being left in vulnerable situations without independent oversight; and

“Whereas Ontario is one of only two provinces in Canada where the Ombudsman does not have independent oversight of long-term-care homes. We need accountability, transparency and consistency in our long-term-care home system;

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to expand the Ombudsman’s mandate to include Ontario’s long-term-care homes in order to protect our most vulnerable seniors.”

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

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: I have a petition here.

“Whereas residents of Ontario want a moratorium on all further industrial wind turbine development until an independent third party health and environmental study has been completed; and

“Whereas people in Ontario living within close proximity to industrial wind turbines have reported negative health effects, we need to study the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines; and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning;

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

“That the Ontario government place a moratorium on the approval of any wind energy projects and a mora-

torium on the construction of industrial wind projects until further studies on the potential adverse health effects of industrial wind turbines, their effect on the environment, the potential devaluation of residential property are completed; and that any industrial wind projects not currently connected to the grid be cancelled.”

I agree with this petition, and I will affix my name to it.

TAXATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from the people of Nickel Belt. It is short, but it is mighty.

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario” to “take the unfair HST off of hydro and home heating bills.”

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

AIR QUALITY

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I have a petition from a very active individual by the name of Ned MacInnis. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

I affix my name in full support, Speaker.

SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’ai cette pétition qui me vient des gens de Nickel Belt :

« Attendu qu’il existe un nombre croissant de cas signalés d’abus, de négligence et de soins de qualité inférieure pour nos personnes âgées dans les foyers de soins de longue durée; et

« Attendu que les personnes ayant des plaintes ont peu d’options, et souvent ne le font pas parce qu’ils craignent des répercussions, ce qui suggère qu’un trop grand nombre de personnes âgées sont laissées dans des situations vulnérables, sans surveillance indépendante; et

« Attendu que l’Ontario est une de seulement deux provinces au Canada où l’ombudsman n’a pas de contrôle indépendant » des maisons de soins de longue durée. « Nous avons besoin de la responsabilité, de la transparence et de la cohérence dans notre système de soins de longue durée. »

Par conséquent, ils demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario d’élargir le mandat de l’ombudsman afin d’inclure les maisons de soins de longue durée de l’Ontario, et ainsi protéger nos aînés les plus vulnérables.

Je suis en accord avec cette pétition. Je vais la signer, et je demande à notre page Ali de l’amener aux greffiers.

WORKPLACE INSURANCE

Mr. Randy Hillier: I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly:

“Whereas beginning 1 January 2013 WSIB was expanded to include groups of employers and principals who had previously been exempt from WSIB and had private insurance; and

“Whereas this new financial burden does nothing to improve worker safety and only drives up the cost of doing business in Ontario;

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

“To repeal the statutory obligations created by Bill 119.”

Speaker, I agree with this petition. There have been over 5,000 signatures, and I will give it to Emily to bring to the table.

AIR QUALITY

Mr. Steve Clark: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

“Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

“Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions is the result of factors other than Drive Clean, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

“Whereas the” Minister of the Environment “has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result

of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

“Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false ‘fails,’ which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

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

“That the Minister of the Environment takes immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature and send it to the table with page Andrew.

SPRINGWATER PROVINCIAL PARK

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

“Whereas we oppose the termination of the operating budget for Springwater Provincial Park in Springwater township on March 31, 2013;

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

“We ask that the park remain operating and facilities such as the animal sanctuary, cabins/shelters, playground equipment and ground maintenance remain intact and operating.”

Madam Speaker, I agree with the petition and I will sign it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. James J. Bradley: On behalf of Mr. Milloy, I move that the Minister of Finance be authorized to pay the salaries of the civil servants and other necessary payments pending the voting of supply for the period commencing April 1, 2013, and ending on September 30, 2013, such payments to be charged to the proper appropriation for the 2013-14 fiscal year following the voting of supply.

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

Hon. James J. Bradley: I have an explanation, if you’d like.

This motion for interim supply would ensure that the government has the ability to pay its expenses while the government’s detailed spending plans or estimates are being reviewed by the Standing Committee on Estimates.

As is stated in the motion, if approved, it would give the government the authority to continue operating and financing important programs. This is a temporary measure, and without it, important payments could not be made to institutions and individuals such as financial and income support recipients, children’s aid societies, hospitals, schools and municipalities. This motion would allow

the government to continue to provide public services which people of this province rely on.

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

Mr. Peter Shurman: I’m surprised to be up so early on this particular subject. We’re debating a supply motion. It gives all members the opportunity to talk about the exigencies of operating the province and discuss how our finances are allocated and disbursed, because a supply motion, especially for those watching us at home, is about doing exactly what the Minister of the Environment just said: allocating funds so that the province can operate.

I’ve got to tell you, given the state of affairs with the current government, I wouldn’t allocate funds to any of them. They’ve got a bunch of retreads over there who have no idea how to monitor fiscal responsibility in this province and they’ve got some newbies who have drunk the Kool-Aid, so I think we have a bit of a problem in voting for a supply motion like that. Right now, I’m thinking I’m probably not going to, and I’ve never failed to offer my vote for a supply motion before. But something is actually incensing me that’s causing the mood that you hear me displaying today, and it has to do with a serious event that does have to do with funds that come from the provincial government or, correctly, should. This event occurred over the weekend.

I was minding my own business, actually catching up on social media on Friday evening, and saw an urgent message to me from a constituent known to me, and I’ll name her because she has given me permission to do so. Her name is Laura Kirby-McIntosh. She’s a real activist on the autism file, and the reason is, she has a 13-year-old boy by the name of Cliff who is somewhat severely autistic. Cliff has been in my office on more than one occasion. I remember him when he was a single-digit young boy, six or seven years old, and he’d come in the office to talk about the autism file with his dad, another activist, Bruce. Cliff, being that he is so hyperactive due to the condition from which he suffers, would be bouncing off the walls and ceiling, so I had first-hand information and first-hand knowledge of what Cliff is about. Cliff was also, however, a smart boy, and showed up at political meetings to ask me, in debates, for example, what the government was going to do about addressing his condition, particularly as he got older. He asked that question as any adult might ask that question. I answered that if I am given the privilege and the honour of being part of the government that’s formed, we’re going to do a heck of a lot more than the government of the day.

I want to tell you what happened to Cliff on Friday night. Cliff had what his mom describes as a meltdown. It has happened before. He’s a great big bruising young man and he becomes violent, violent to the point where he attacks other people. They include his dad and his mom and anybody who happens to be in the way. I think everybody here, in a very serious vein, knows that this can happen. Cliff’s particular incident on Friday occurred

in the Promenade mall in the middle of Thornhill. It wound up resulting in the police being called, the family having to go to Humber River regional hospital, and Cliff being restrained and drugged. This is how we treat an autistic child in the province of Ontario, and make no mistake: A 13-year-old is a child.

The health minister should be aware of this because she knows that this is a file that has been left fallow. The education minister should be aware of this because the same thing is true there. We do not allocate the funds and we do not allocate the services to deal with kids who are betwixt and between. We can deal, to some extent, with adult autistics. We can deal with junior autistics. But a 13-year-old kid who has a meltdown in a mall winds up in a hospital in restraints. How do we countenance that?

1550

I know that some of my colleagues on the opposite side of this House are well aware of this incident, because Laura Kirby-McIntosh—the mom in this case—is such an activist and so devoted to her son and to that community of interest that she pushed every button that she could this weekend to get publicity on this file. If anybody was watching CTV News in Toronto over the course of the weekend, they saw Cliff, they saw the McIntosh family, and they saw what the problem is.

There is a community of interest here that is very large, and the amount of money we're talking about is, in relative terms to what's going on in this province, very small. And yet, when you ask, as the CTV reporter did, a government spokesman to talk about what they're doing on the autism file, they say, "Well, we spent another \$5 million last year." It's always a spending answer. Can we ever get a results answer? Can we do something for people like Cliff? Can we do something for a 13-year-old kid who is not, like the rest of us, in control of what he does because of a condition from which he suffers? This is patently unfair.

When I'm speaking to a supply motion and I'm talking on something like this, I'm talking about money that's in the control of the government. If the government chooses to do what it should do by responsibility, by what it's supposed to do—by all that's right and holy—then there shouldn't be Cliff's in the province of Ontario.

Last time I looked, the way OHIP is structured in the province of Ontario, it can't pick and choose who it's going to deal with in terms of their health, and it can't discriminate between mental conditions and physical conditions. If I look at the Education Act, it doesn't talk about educating normal kids; it talks about educating all kids. I don't think that either of those acts is supporting Cliff McIntosh in the way that he has every right to expect to be supported—in the way that his family has every right to expect to be supported in their hour of need. I'm going to tell you, the hour of need for that family, and many families like it, is 24/7. That's what this government is falling down on.

Now, I have a colleague who sits on my left here in the Legislative chamber, Christine Elliott, the MPP for Whitby–Oshawa, and she's our health critic. If ever there

were a dedicated and socially conscious member of this chamber, it would be my colleague from Whitby–Oshawa. She has pushed so hard for a select committee to be struck on this very issue.

I would want to take this opportunity to urge this government right now, under the aegis of a supply motion though it may be, to take a good, hard look and realize that there are people—it can be partisan or non-partisan; I don't really care how you interpret it. You're letting people down, and you can't do that. You can't call yourself a responsible government and do that. So that's my word on Cliff McIntosh, and I hope that heed will be paid.

Let me take the few minutes that I have left in debate to talk a little bit about my area of responsibility, which, by the way, since it's finance, is equally concerned with supply motions and the control of the dollars allocated by government and the expenditures of the province of Ontario.

This government—the McGuinty-Wynne government, as we call it—is responsible for accumulating the largest debt in Ontario's history; that is an undeniable fact. Interestingly, a couple of moments before I came into the chamber for this debate, I was interviewed by a person from our media gallery. The question was, "How does the federal budget"—which I believe is out tomorrow or the next day—"impact the province of Ontario if, in restraining spending, Minister Flaherty decides to cut back, for example, on transfer payments?" I said, "I can't speak for Minister Flaherty. I can say this: The transfer payments and equalization payments going to the province of Ontario in these days and going forward are at an unprecedented level, for the very simple reason that we're now entering the fifth year of Ontario being a have-not province."

I see a smile over on the other side, but again, facts are undeniable. They're sending more money than they've ever sent to Ontario. Over the course of the past five years, we've become the receiver, not the giver; that is an indisputable fact. And if that's the case, then my friend the finance minister is in a boatload of trouble. I think, frankly, that he is anyway, because we have asked on this side repeatedly, "What are you going to do to eliminate the deficit and bring the budget into balance, which you claim you're going to do by 2017?" If, indeed, you're going to do that, there are only two ways of doing it. One is, you have to cut something by way of expenses. We know that there's unbridled spending over there that goes on under this new Premier, as there was under the old Premier—nine and a half years now, and plenty of debt and deficit to show for it.

We're at a \$12-billion deficit projected for this year. There's still a projection out there that nobody has denied is in force, and that's for \$13 billion next year. That would be fiscal 2013-14, the budget that is going to be tabled here sometime in the next month. That leaves fiscal 2014-15 and 2015-16 as the two intervening years before you get to the fiscal year where you're supposed to come into balance. How do you get it down that far in

that period of time? You haven't provided any numbers showing us, so we have no confidence in your ability to do it. If you're not prepared to say, Finance Minister, where you're going to cut or if you're going to raise taxes, which is clearly a bellwether that you put out there when you talked to the media a couple of weeks ago, we can only conclude that it's a combination of both.

That being the case, Ontarians need to be informed, need to take heed and need to understand what they've got running this province. That is a very important aspect that has to be put on the table today as we debate a supply motion that allows this government to continue business as usual.

Speaker, it's anything but business as usual with this government. For my part, I don't intend to vote for this motion.

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

Mr. Michael Prue: It's my privilege every year, for I don't know how many years now, to stand up and talk about an interim supply motion.

I listened, as I always do, to my friend from the Conservative Party as he spoke and indicated that he may not find it within his heart to be able to vote for this interim supply motion at this time. Of course, he rhymed off a litany of reasons why he doesn't trust the Liberal government, and I must tell him that I share some of those very same concerns.

But in the end, we have no option, in my view, but to pass the interim supply motion. If we don't pass the interim supply motion, the first thing, of course, is this government will fall—and there may not be many tears around the province if that happens. But in forcing the government to fall, there is also no money with which to pay for all of the services in this province that the people of this province demand. If there is no interim supply, then that means that the teachers won't get paid in the schools. It means that the hospital beds will close—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Special warrants, Michael.

Mr. Michael Prue: No; I'll get into special warrants. Hear me out.

It means that all of the things people come to rely upon—the plowing of highways in northern Ontario. You can see, even though this is the last day of winter, that it's still snowing out there in Toronto. If it doesn't pass, all of the services that are rendered in this province—all of the people who work for this province will have a very hard time being paid.

The Conservatives are yelling out “special warrants.” Yes, we can do a special warrant, and yes, the cabinet has the authority, in extreme circumstances, to do that. But I think that the responsibility lies with this Legislature. I, for one, do not believe in government by imperial fiat, where the executive makes the decisions and the rest of us who are elected to represent our ridings do not have a say. It is far better in this place that all of the members who are elected by the people of their riding have a say in the raising of taxes, in the spending of monies, in making sure that government works.

It is very easy to stand up, if you are a Conservative in this province, and say you're going to vote against everything. But voting against something as fundamental as an interim supply motion is to just abdicate the responsibility that they have to their electors and hand it over to the Premier and the cabinet. I, for one, am not willing to that, nor is the NDP.

Mr. Randy Hillier: That's a crutch.

Mr. Michael Prue: That's a crutch, perhaps, to the member from Lanark, who finds this a very difficult concept. But it is responsible government, and we are being responsible.

1600

The motion that has been made by the environment minister is a very simple one: It is interim supply for a period of some five or six months, from April until September of this year. This will give those who want to defeat the government, like my good friend from Lanark here, much opportunity. But it is not an opportunity to stop wages, and it's not an opportunity that he should be seeking to stop people from being paid or for hospitals to be closed or to give up the responsibilities that he has to a Premier that he doesn't support in any way, anyway. I think the Minister of the Environment laid out quite properly in the opening what needs to be done.

I will tell you that we have had an opportunity, some of us on the finance committee, to travel across this province for the last week. We went to Windsor, we went to Timmins, and we went to Ottawa. To the people of Thunder Bay, I want to tell you that I wish we could have gone to Thunder Bay too. There was an editorial on the front page of the paper and inside the paper saying that we should have been in Thunder Bay, and I am in total agreement that the committee should have gone to Thunder Bay, but it was hard to get my colleagues to agree on anything more than three days. If you're only going to go to three days, we picked three hosting communities to which to go, and hopefully, if this budget that the Minister of Finance is going to bring down sometime in the future will come down late enough, perhaps there will be time to travel some more.

I say that with all the greatest respect to the Minister of Finance, because up until this point the finance committee has not been told when the budget is going to be released. We know when the federal budget is coming down; it's coming down in two days. We have known that for weeks and weeks. The finance minister of Canada stood in his place in the House of Commons and said when he was going to release the budget; the finance minister of Ontario has not given us that courtesy. So a group like the finance committee is forced to travel from place to place to place. We are setting up meetings this week—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Finance minister for the coalition government?

Mr. Michael Prue: My friend here talks about the coalition government. He has been more of a coalition to the party opposite than I will ever be.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Oh, take that! Put that in your pipe and smoke it.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I think we should check the voting record, Michael.

Mr. Michael Prue: Well, I have. We have checked that many times. The Conservatives have voted more often with the Liberals over the life of this government, over the nine years, than New Democrats ever have, and that's the way it is.

Anyway, I digress, Madam Chair. The reality is that we have been travelling around and we have been listening to people, and we are going to listen to them some more on Thursday and Friday here in Toronto. You know, people are telling us what they want. They want government to work. They want some very specific things. They're not sabre-rattling like my friends over here, but they are expecting very important things from this Legislature. We were elected a scant—I don't know how many—15 months ago and were told to deliver government for a period of up to four years for the people of this province, and we have an obligation to do so.

We have been listening to students who are talking about the crushing debt load that they have, absolutely crushing, and how they are so fearful of another 5% increase. They have told us of the difficulties they've had and made some remarkable suggestions. They were talking about the 30% grant that the Liberals put out just prior to the last election and which they said was going to solve all the students' problems, but the reality is that less than half of the students actually are eligible for those grants. They've come to us and shown us concrete examples of how if you're a graduate student or a foreign student or if you've been out of school for more than four years, or if you're over 25, none of this applies to you. So people in our post-secondary institutions are not getting the money, and they have said they don't want more money. They understand the difficulties we're having here. But what they are suggesting is, if you're going to give out this grant, give it out to all students, and it would mean that all students would get a 17% reduction. It was a very sensible thing I heard from students.

We had municipalities come forward and say they don't have the tools they need to do the work they need to do and that they're all being starved. We heard problems in the north about MPAC and the big mining companies and forestry companies that have had all of their MPAC assessments reduced to the point that these poor northern municipalities, many of them one-industry towns, are now beggars in their own place. They're going to be forced to go to their residents, and they're going to be forced to have to raise property taxes hugely, hugely, in order to make things meet. They don't want that, and they're looking for help from this government.

We've heard about housing. We've heard about the lack of affordable housing in this province. My goodness, we are dead last—dead last—in terms of affordable housing per capita in all of Canada. Even Prince Edward Island puts us to shame. This government needs to do something. You should be listening about that and it should be in the budget.

But I want to talk about the things that the NDP hopes to see in this budget, because whether this government falls or stays will depend not on us but on you. Where does this government want to go? I have been here for 12 years. I have watched Tories for the first two years and where they wanted to go. I didn't want much of a part of that, let me tell you. It was really quite shocking to see the way that this province was run when I first arrived here. They got rid of one Premier and they got another one, but he wasn't able to really do what he wanted to do either, and there were all kinds of mega-problems. The Conservative Party wasn't too happy with him, but neither were the people of Ontario.

The next thing I knew, we had a Liberal government. I thought, "Well, at least it couldn't be any worse." But you know, over time, I have to say, you've run into the same stuff, the same hubris they had and the same kind of not listening to people that they had. It all comes down to this: You finally come to the conclusion, the 51 of you—and I heard today that Conservatives can't count too well; they said 53, but there are in fact only 51 of you left. There are 51, and that is not in any way a majority. You're going to have to make some concessions, maybe to them, maybe to us.

But if you want to deal with New Democrats, we're asking for five things—five very, very reasonable things. The first thing we want is a balanced approach to balancing the budget. You hired Don Drummond but you didn't listen to him. You hired Don Drummond and you fettered what he was going to tell you, because you said that Don Drummond could only look at the expenditure side and couldn't look at the revenue side.

Well, you know, I've been in governments a long time—12 years here and 13 years in a municipality. For those of you who have been in municipal government—I see my good friend over there, the member from Scarborough East, is it?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Rouge River.

Mr. Michael Prue: Scarborough—Rouge River. My friend from Peterborough: He served on council. You know what it's like to serve in municipal government. You know what it's like, because every budget has to be balanced. Every budget has a revenue side and an expenditure side, and they have to be nearly identical each and every year. We don't do that here in Ontario, and maybe it's time we started acting a little bit more like that. If you value the programs that the people of this province are expecting from you, then you have to protect them. If you protect them, you have to find the money for them. If you don't value the programs—that's the other side of the coin—then get rid of them. Stand up and say you don't want them and then you don't have to have the money for them.

But we think most people in this province like their schools. We think most people in this province like their hospitals. We think most people in this province like the roads on which they drive or walk or cycle, even though in Toronto they're finding it awfully congested. Those things are all government responsibilities. You have an

obligation to do them. So, if you want to continue doing them—and I leave that up to you, because I'll see your budget when some of the back bench sees it, too. When that comes out I want to see where you're going. We believe that Drummond should be followed in much of what he says because Drummond said we have to take issues like the employer health tax loophole and deal with it; we have to deal with that. We have to look at things like the entertainment and the HST, which this government is going to give back to big corporations so that they can go down and watch a Blue Jays game or a Leafs game and write all of that HST off. We think that's a wrong thing to do. We think that if you're going out to blow the wad—all the money on your corporate friends in a box at the SkyDome—you should be willing to spend that money, not the taxpayers. The taxpayers shouldn't be spending that. We have identified some \$1.3 billion of what we call "low-hanging fruit." All you have to do is just have the will to do it.

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We have looked at other things. Let me see. The next one: the five-day home care guarantee. This is absolutely essential. We know that in some places in northern Ontario they have a 262-day wait. Toronto may not be too bad. I understand that Toronto is only 10 or 11 days, but we, New Democrats, think it should be five days across this entire province. We think that people who are frail or elderly or who are in hospital and who need to be released to their homes should have a home care guarantee. We think that having a home care guarantee will be good for the province and, in the end, will likely save money. If you can get people out of the institutions, the hospitals and the long-term-care facilities and put them in their own homes, then that is going to save money.

God knows, a country like Denmark—Denmark hasn't built a single long-term-care facility in the last 15 or 20 years because they, as a country, made a conscious decision to let people grow old and to provide the care in their homes. They have done that, and they have saved much more money than we can even imagine.

But are we looking at that? No. We continue to argue about other things, and we continue not to have a five-day home care guarantee. That's what New Democrats are looking for in this budget as well. We believe that can be done. In the end, it's not going to cost a lot of money, but it can provide a much better quality of life and service to the people of this country and of this province, especially our old, our elderly and our infirm.

New Democrats are looking for on-the-job training for youth. There is a 20%-or-more unemployment rate for those under 25 in many communities in this province. We need to do something. We need to make sure that young people have an opportunity.

Last night, I was here in the Legislature. We went down to the interns, those wonderful people who work for some of us if we're lucky enough throughout the year and who come here with great, great hope and great faith in the system, wanting to learn, wanting to contribute. I met some of the interns from past years and I asked them

what they were doing. Some have been very successful in terms of morphing from this place into jobs as consultants. One was in teacher's college, although she told me quite bluntly that although she's going to teacher's college, the likelihood of her getting a full-time position as a teacher, which is something she has always wanted to do, will take at least five years because that's the way it is—at least five years because of some of the policies of this government in order for her to work her way through as a supply teacher, work her way up through the chain and do all of those things. A bright, personable, smart woman, and that's what's going to happen.

We can change the policies to make that better. We can make sure that people like that have an opportunity.

I met a young man last night who has finished university and is unemployed. He gave me his card and asked if there any work he could do for me or anyone else I knew, free of charge. I look at that and I wonder how many of us in our lifetime would have taken a job with absolutely no pay just to have a chance to be out there, just to have a chance to show somebody what you can do—absolutely no pay. I think people who are stuck in that position are being ripped off, quite frankly. Even if they got minimum pay and went to learn some of the skills, they would be contributing and would be able to look after themselves. But to find yourself in a position at 20 or 25 years of age with a huge student debt, out there without a job, with no prospect of a job, unless you do it for nothing, and that you're going to have to live at home or continue to put money on a credit card, is just unfathomable.

I had a gentlemen come into my office last week. He wanted to know whether I could help him find a job, and of course it's very difficult to help someone find a job. He did not have all the skills that many people have. He finished high school many years ago now; he has just turned 50. He worked in the same factory for nearly 25 years, and the factory closed down. It was a big company. He got a pittance of a severance—he said around \$4,000; he went through that pretty quickly. He is having a terrible time finding someone to hire him. He's having a terrible time accessing career opportunities by going back to school.

He's back living with his parents. He's 50 years of age; he's looking after his father—who has since, just recently, died—and his mother, who is infirm as well. This is his life, and he wanted to know what I thought he could do. I said, "You know, many people are going to Alberta, although that's drying up too. Many people are going to other places. The only place I know in Ontario where there's relatively full employment," I understand from my colleague Gilles Bisson, the member for Timmins–James Bay, "is that the mines in and around Timmins are still hiring." I suggested that to him: That was probably his only option. He was a little reticent to do that, because at 50 years of age he didn't know whether his old body could take it, but he was going to look into that. That is his life.

We are looking for on-the-job training, not only for youth—but we're concentrating on that—but also for the 50-year-olds of this world in Ontario who, through no

fault of their own, have found themselves unemployed and with virtually no prospects. We need to do much more. We need to make companies understand that we expect something of them.

We know that the finance minister of Canada, Jim Flaherty, has often spoken about the hoarding of money by corporate Canada. We know that there are billions and billions and billions of dollars sitting in strongboxes in places in corporate Canada, doing absolutely no good, and we know that this government has followed the Conservative mantra for far too long in talking about corporate tax cuts. Today I heard in question period the bragging that we have the lowest rate in all of North America for corporate taxes. Well, we do, and we have one of the highest unemployment rates in many of our provinces as well. The two do not mesh. The two do not make sense, and I will say that we expect this government to do something about that, or, when it comes to budget day, you cannot count on NDP support.

We also want to talk about the 15% auto insurance. IBC is here today. I expect everybody is going to be downstairs having a glass of wine, perhaps, or talking to them about insurance. It's a pretty noble industry here in the province of Ontario and in Canada. They gave us all a nice little book. I wasn't going to read this into the record, but I think it says some pretty important things, and maybe we should be asking some questions.

Their industry in Ontario is worth, according to them, \$44.7 billion—no, that's just the policies they wrote out. The industry in Canada is \$141.5 billion, and profits for the last eight years have averaged 9.5%. That's after-tax profits—after they paid their employees and everything else. I wonder how many manufacturers in Ontario can say they've made 9.5% profit for the last eight years through a major recession—the biggest recession we've had. How many can say that? That's their own book; that's what they do. The government allows that. I'm sure it's a good thing to make that kind of profit. Maybe some people have investments in those companies. Maybe I do too, though all of mine are through the bank, so I have no idea what they're investing in—and I care not to know, actually, sometimes.

That's the kind of profits that are being made, but this government isn't talking a lot about giving people a reduction in their automobile insurance, and I wonder why. They passed all kinds of laws a couple of years ago. I remember the then finance minister standing in his place and talking about how wonderful it was, how this was going to work, how it was going to save an industry which makes an average of 9.5% profit each and every year for the last eight years and how it was going to end fraud, corruption and everything else. But at the end of the day, insurance rates are still going up and the level of claims have gone down. Ordinary people are asking what's in it for them; we, New Democrats, are asking what's in it for them, too. We expect some huge movement on this file.

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We will be talking to the insurance people tonight. I don't dislike them; I think they're wonderful people and

they are entitled, as any industry, to see a profit and maximize the rate of return for their shareholders. But we have to ask, in an industry which is mandatory—because you cannot drive a car in this province unless you have insurance. We mandate that every single person who has a driver's licence and who drives a car must have insurance. Because they have to have insurance, they have to go to one of these guys, and because they go to one of these guys, the profit is inherent.

We have an obligation in this Legislature to make sure not only that the companies are successful, but more so that people who are ordinary consumers have that same opportunity to pay a fair rate. We pay the highest rates in Canada. This government has to start looking at the consumer in the same kind of way that you once looked just at the insurance companies.

I have promised 15 minutes to my colleagues. Those are some of the things we want to say. We are going to allow the interim supply bill to pass because it needs to pass.

Interjections.

Mr. Michael Prue: I'm sorry to disappoint the Conservatives, but budget day is another matter, and we are waiting to see what you have to say.

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

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I'm pleased to be here today to talk about the motion for interim supply. I just want to compliment my good friend with whom I spent a lot of time at the city of Toronto. In fact, we were seatmates, if I remember correctly. We sat beside each other for many years.

In his opening remarks, he has recognized the importance of this bill and the fact that this is a routine bill that we actually bring forward every year just before budget time. It is a motion that would allow the government, ministries and legislative offices to operate from the beginning of the upcoming fiscal year until the time that you pass a budget.

The motion for interim supply would give the government the necessary spending authority to finance the programs it has set out, fulfill its commitments and put its vision into practice. For example, it would ensure the government can make important payments to institutions and individuals, including nursing homes, hospitals, doctors, schools, municipalities, financial income support recipients, people with disabilities and special needs, children's aid societies and those who rely on various benefit programs, such as the Ontario Child Benefit. Without this interim supply motion being approved, these important payments could not be made.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to remind everyone that this motion is temporary. It would provide temporary spending authority, which is required at the beginning of the fiscal year, and would cover the period only from April 1, 2013, to September 30, 2013. This temporary spending authority is required to allow the government to operate while the Legislature conducts its review of the government's detailed spending plans through the work of the Standing Committee on Estimates.

It is important to note that all expenditures incurred under the authority of this motion would be consistent with the upcoming 2013 budget and the 2013-14 estimates, and eventually authorized in the Supply Act for the 2013-14 fiscal year. When we complete this debate, I'm going to urge all members of the Legislature to support this motion, because without this necessary spending authority, the government would not be able to provide the public services upon which the people of this province rely.

So what does this motion mean for the people of this province? The interim supply motion means the government would be able to continue operating and financing our important programs. It means nursing homes would continue to provide people with the care they absolutely need. It means that doctors would continue to deliver results to their patients. It also means low-income families would continue to receive the Ontario Child Benefit payment to provide for their children. In short, it means the government would be able to continue to provide essential public services province-wide.

I would like to provide a bit of context.

The new government will restrain program spending to reduce Ontario's debt-to-GDP ratio, while recommitting itself to eliminating the deficit by 2017-18.

This year's budget will be about finding common ground. It will be about working with people, organizations, associations and other stakeholders to develop an effective plan that is best for Ontario. We have opened channels for dialogue through our expanded pre-budget consultations and finance committee discussions. We are committed to hearing from Ontarians their views on creating jobs and improving services while eliminating the deficit.

We are also committed to finding common ground among the parties within this Legislature. This year's budget will be about working together to balance fiscal responsibility with fairness for the people of this province.

We are on track to eliminate the deficit by 2017-18. In fact, Ontario's deficit is now \$3 billion lower than projected in last spring's budget. This is the fourth year in a row that we are ahead of our fiscal targets. This is important because eliminating the deficit will strengthen our economy, and a strong economy creates good jobs and builds strong communities across our great province.

The fundamentals in Ontario are very strong. The province has gained 415,500 net jobs since 2009, the recessionary low. In February, employment in Ontario rose by 35,300 jobs. This included an increase in youth employment of 21,000 jobs. In fact, Ontario created nearly 70% of all new jobs in Canada in February and we continue to outperform the United Kingdom, the United States and the Great Lakes states in job creation.

Ontario is home to many diverse and thriving sectors. Our province has the second-largest information and communication technology sector in North America, employing more than 270,000 people and accounting for half of all this sector's work in Canada. Ontario's life

sciences sector is also the second-largest in North America, and right here in Toronto we have North America's second-largest financial services sector.

It is important to recognize the successes of our growing economy, but we still have to keep job creation in mind with every decision that we make. That's why this government has been hosting jobs round tables across the province. These sessions focus on working with businesses, entrepreneurs and local leaders to generate more jobs and opportunities in Ontario communities, and that's the trajectory we have to maintain: open and collaborative discussions to develop more job opportunities for the people of this province.

I'd also like to take a moment to talk about the direction this government is taking. The new Ontario government's central objectives are fiscal responsibility, economic growth and increased employment. This is the foundation upon which we will continue to build the best education and health care system in the world. This is the foundation upon which we will show the world that Ontario's finances are in steady hands.

The new Ontario government is committed to a fairer society. This means that all the people of Ontario should have the opportunity to have good jobs and live in strong communities, and the new Ontario government is committed to boosting innovation and growth.

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The educated, skilled and diverse people of this province are our province's greatest strength. This government's creation initiatives will support the earning potential of all men and women of this province and empower our industries to expand. This is the direction the new government has taken, because this government believes that Ontario is a place of endless possibilities.

I encourage everyone to support this interim supply motion, because it helps to put in place the building blocks we need to provide the best and most dependable public service to the people in our province.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's an honour to rise today on behalf of the residents of Dufferin-Caledon to comment on the government's interim supply motion that we are debating before the House this afternoon.

I would like to start by acknowledging that we are in the sacred chamber of the Ontario people's Legislature, discussing the use of Ontario people's dollars—not the Liberal dollars, but the people's money.

The particular motion before us, moved by the Minister of the Environment, would authorize the Minister of Finance to pay the salaries of civil servants and other necessary payments, pending the voting of supply, for the period of April 1 until September 30, but really what we need to be discussing today is where we're going in terms of where that money is distributed, and how and why. These payments would be charged to the proper appropriations for the 2013-14 fiscal year.

A relatively straight motion, granted, Speaker—basically the government is asking the House's permission to

spend money for paying salaries and making other necessary payments, but I don't want business to continue as usual in Ontario. It's not working. We are just moving ourselves further into debt, and it does not take Ontario on a new path, a path away from the fiscal mess we've been living in for the last eight and a half years.

In the interest of context, I think it's worthwhile to discuss the larger issue at hand, namely, this government's disastrous fiscal policy. We were told a year ago that our deficit was heading towards \$30 billion and our debt would skyrocket to over \$400 billion if we didn't change our current path. We haven't done that, Speaker. Despite what the government memos are saying, the government we have across the aisle is saying that nothing is new. The only thing that is new is the person who is sitting in the Premier's chair. There has been no change in direction, no change in policy and certainly no change in fiscal realities. We see rampant overspending, and still we see a total lack of awareness by the government when it comes to the job crisis in our province.

I would like to focus on the overspending for the moment, because, as I mentioned at the start of my remarks, what we are really discussing here this afternoon is the use of Ontario money. We must never forget that the dollar amounts we discuss in this place—and sometimes the amounts are staggering—that every last cent of these monies belongs to and came from the people. It is their money. Each and every one of us here in this place is entrusted to remain forever vigilant with these precious dollars, and I might add that those precious dollars are becoming fewer and fewer because fewer and fewer people are employed in the province of Ontario under the Liberal government.

Moreover, I would argue that each of us has a responsibility to ensure that the government never spends more than is absolutely necessary and thus allows the people to keep as much of their own money as possible to spend as they see fit. I believe in these principles, because I believe no bureaucrat, no politician, no government can better plan for persons' lives than they can themselves. I believe that each and every Dufferin-Caledon resident, and each and every Ontarian, has their own life to live and their own goals to pursue. I believe that every Dufferin-Caledon family has their own budget to manage and their own home to maintain.

The problem is that every fee this government charges, every tax this government levies, not only takes precious resources away from Ontario families, but also hinders Ontarians' ability to save for their future, invest in a company or even just buy a loved one something special.

The fact is, the government already takes enough money out of Ontarians' paycheques and businesses. That is why it is so alarming to hear the Minister of Finance repeatedly refuse to rule out any new tax increases in his upcoming budget. As recently as today's question period, he would not say whether he intends to increase taxes in the upcoming spring budget. It is unnerving that we have the fiscal reality we have and yet the finance

minister refuses to say, "No. Full stop. We won't be gouging any further money from Ontario residents." The notion that the Liberal government, after first doubling Ontario's debt and now well on its way to tripling it, would have the gall to take yet more money from Ontario families and businesses is outright shocking. It shows plainly that the Liberal government just doesn't get it.

This is best illustrated by the fact that in the government's recent throne speech, the word "deficit" was only mentioned once in the entire speech. Imagine, a deficit that has gone up exponentially under this government, and yet they won't even acknowledge it in their throne speech. For me, personally, Speaker, that was really the final straw.

I would say I was shocked at the level of recklessness when it comes to government spending, but then again, the current Premier was in the previous McGuinty cabinet—no change. So, sadly, I'm not surprised at the total lack of regard for getting Ontario's finances under control. They are simply not motivated to do it.

People contact my office every day with the issues important to them. Many times, these are the issues they worry about on a daily basis. And when they hear about things like the Liberal government wasting a billion dollars cancelling power plants to save a couple of seats, they are disgusted. They're disgusted because they do not understand how the Liberal government could forego all accountability to them, the voters, the people of Ontario.

Allow me to share a couple of examples from my riding that I have recently come across in Dufferin-Caledon. A husband and wife contacted me because their son had been diagnosed with autism—actually, probably very similar to our finance critic—and they need an educational assistant constantly for their son. Their son attends daycare, and at first, he had a full-time educational assistant, or EA, with him. Soon, it was cut to half days only. Then it was cut to two half days per week, which they were promised their son would receive for 12 weeks until March 2013. Yet, in mid-February, they were told that because a staff member left and there was no funding available, their son would now only have an EA for one half day per week. Keep in mind that this was a family that was initially guaranteed an EA every single day, five days a week.

This is the face of rampant overspending and deficits. This boy who our province has now left behind because he doesn't get the attention or the learning he deserves, this boy who now spends his day without assistance—this boy is why it is absolutely imperative that we get reckless government spending under control. We can't help this family if we don't have the money.

This boy is also why the government of Ontario's throne speech ought to mention the word "deficit" more than once. If we do not address our deficit, if we do not reverse the ever-increasing mountain of debt, then the day will inevitably come—and make no mistake, if we do not reverse our course, it is inevitable—when we will have ceased debating on how best to help this boy, because by that time we will no longer have it in our

capacity to assist him at all. On that day, not only will we have failed him, but we will have failed our constituents, we will have failed our beloved province, and we will have failed in our responsibilities here.

But that day doesn't need to come, because there is a party in this chamber that recognizes this central threat to Ontario's future. It is a party that has released a dozen bold, innovative ideas, through our white papers, to turn Ontario around, ignite our economy and get the government back to focusing on what really matters. It is a party that is led by the only leader in this chamber who won't run from the difficult decisions, who will protect the things we hold most precious, and who will do what needs to be done to make sure Ontario will lead again. That leader, of course, is Tim Hudak, and that party is the Progressive Conservative Party. Only Tim Hudak and the PC caucus have a bold plan to rigorously tackle the greatest jobs and spending crisis in Ontario's history. The PC caucus is the only caucus in the chamber with the desire and focus to focus with utter precision on fixing the terrible financial mismanagement of the Liberal government.

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It is because of that disastrous fiscal mismanagement, Speaker, that I cannot support the government motion we are now debating. I refuse to support the fiscal policies of this government. Therefore, I cannot vote in favour of the motion before us.

Time and time again, the PC caucus has proposed bold solutions to get our economy back on track and government spending under control. Each time, the Liberal government, whether it's Dalton McGuinty or Kathleen Wynne, has blinked, looked the other way and refused to support our initiatives to get Ontario back on track. That hardly sends the message of wanting to work together.

Today, I, for one, refuse to support their stubborn insistence to keep Ontario on the wrong track. For that reason, I will not be supporting the interim supply motion.

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

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to speak to this motion and to speak to some of the very serious concerns that I have with the direction the government is taking.

I'd like to start off by saying that I find it very unfortunate that the members of the Conservative caucus are trying to turn this routine motion into a political issue and an opportunity to defeat the government. You know what? I think it really speaks to their priorities. They want an election, pure and simple. There's nothing else. I think it's unfortunate, not only for all of us here but for the people of this province, that the official opposition is continually trying to disrupt the House. They have intentionally tried to create dysfunction, not because it serves the interests of the people of this province but because it serves their own narrow, partisan interest.

It's a double standard. I sat here and I listened to the member from Dufferin-Caledon talk about the precious

respect that the PCs had for the tax money that the people of this province pay. All the while, they're racing towards an expensive election without even trying to make this government work. It's upsetting not just because they're not here to represent the interests of those who brought them to this House; it's upsetting because they can't even practise what they preach. They aren't even willing to try to work together to get results.

They're continually up in arms screaming, shouting, accusing the government of wasting taxpayer money for politically motivated reasons—

Interjection: Gas plants.

Ms. Sarah Campbell:—such as the cancellation of the gas plants—proves my point—in Mississauga and Oakville. Yet what are they asking us to do? They're asking us to force an election—not in a while, over the budget, over some principled issues that we're discussing, but they want us to force an election right now that will cost hundreds of millions. Why? That is in hopes of enhancing their own political fortunes.

You know what? It doesn't work for the people of this province. It won't work when we shut down schools, when we shut down hospitals and when we would vote to not pay our obligations. To me that's pretty financially irresponsible.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Sarah Campbell: No, Speaker, I can't hear myself. I'm wondering if you could maybe call for some order in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I ask the members to respect the speaker.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you.

Getting back to the main motion, this motion will allow us to stay the course. It will allow us to keep paying the bills until a new budget is brought forward. But the simple fact is that staying the course is completely unacceptable. For years, we have been flooded with the rhetoric about righting this wayward fiscal ship, about making tough choices. But time and time again, people in the north are left with a very distinct feeling that we are being left to bear the brunt of these cuts while seeing this government and the government before it push our basic needs to the side. When we talk about cost-cutting and scrimping, there's an assumption that our basic needs will continue to be met in the north, that we can continue to count on the essentials being there: access to health care and education, affordable hydro, jobs, that our roads will be safe for travelling in the winter and that we will have access to the basic essential government services provided by ServiceOntario.

In my riding alone, for people living in dozens of communities, in order for them to access their driver's licence, they actually have to take a plane to fly to another community so that they can get their driver's licence. To me, that doesn't sound like fair and equal access. The truth of the matter is that we can't count on it. We can't count on this government to provide the

basic supports for First Nation communities, for municipalities, for business and for other industry, and we can't count on access to provincial parks or protection from dangerous wildlife such as bears—even when they're seen wandering on school grounds—because this government claims it needs to act in a fiscally responsible manner.

We're told this, but we watch tens of millions of dollars being wasted by Ornge air ambulance, a billion dollars being wasted through the mismanagement of eHealth, and hundreds of millions of dollars being thrown out the window to cancel gas plants in Mississauga and Oakville to appease voters during an election. That is what is truly sickening: The government has limitless dollars to spend when it comes to its own political fortunes, but who has to pay? Northerners have to pay, northerners who are struggling and have been struggling for years—

Mr. John Vanthof: All northerners.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: —that's right, all northerners—to keep up with the soaring hydro rates.

I want to put a really novel idea out there right now. If it was people in Mississauga and Oakville who didn't want these plants, maybe it should be the people in Mississauga and Oakville, or even the ministers or the party representatives from the Liberal Party, who should have to pay for the cost of this cancellation. They should maybe put it on the municipal bills or take it out of their salaries, because it is entirely, 100%, unacceptable to ask anybody who is living in the north to pay so much as one cent for the costs associated with cancelling this plant.

If you want to see a really telling picture about the situation that has been created, let's look at the gas plants. In Mississauga and Oakville, people are screaming, "We don't want it! We don't want it!", while in a place like Thunder Bay, they would love to have their gas plant back. They want the jobs. We in the north want the jobs. We want the opportunity and, frankly, we need it, because one glimmer of hope that we have is that the mining sector will take off in the north. But in order to capitalize, we need an investment in energy infrastructure, and we don't have the supply right now to meet the anticipated demand.

Maybe it's time that the government started spending money to build something, not take it away, but in order to accomplish that, we need this government to listen, and that's something that clearly isn't happening. We can't even get the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to come anywhere near our region. In deliberating in preparation for a budget that is supposed to, in theory, benefit the whole province, we can't even get on the tour. The closest stop is 10 or 12 hours' drive away, and they're wondering why we in northwestern Ontario are just a little bit upset? Part of the reason for this is because the Liberal and the Conservative members on the committee don't want to hear what we have to say, because—why? Because it would add an extra day. It would just add an extra day to the hearings, and that is unacceptable.

This past fall, the member from Nickel Belt, who is my party's health critic, toured the region with me, and we held a series of town hall meetings on the status of health care. When it comes to services, aside from maybe education, I think health care ranks pretty high up on that list. In Atikokan, one of the biggest concerns we heard is that families are being forced to travel to Thunder Bay to access maternity services. No friends or family are around to share the joy or offer any kind of support, and sometimes even spouses can't make it. It's because this province says that it's cheaper to deliver those services three hours east.

In Fort Frances, we heard complaints that people are being charged by their doctor to do paperwork, and in Kenora—in all the communities—we heard about how people have waited years to find a family doctor, and they still have no success. They're being referred to emergency rooms for front-line services or, even worse, some are travelling to other provinces as far away as not Manitoba but Saskatchewan to get prescriptions renewed, because the system, based on the southern Ontario model, does not work. Health centres in Rainy River and Ear Falls face closures or the threat of closures because of doctor shortages, and some, like those in Pickle Lake, aren't even operating because the community has been without a doctor for years. In Ignace, where the health centre is doing a phenomenal job—such a phenomenal job that people are driving hours from communities across the region to access their primary health care services there—they're facing a potential crisis because two years ago one branch of government, the Ontario Realty Corp., made the choice to double the rent without any kind of consultation or warning.

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I'll be honest—I see the Minister of Infrastructure sitting across the way. I did sit down with the Minister of Infrastructure and the Minister of Health, and it sounds like they are earnestly and very sincerely willing to work with me to rectify the situation, and for that I am truly grateful. But it does go to show you some of the situations that we're facing, and all of this—

Interjections.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: That's going a little bit too far.

All of this because we're focusing on the bottom line. It's well time that we focused on results, because our basic needs are not being met.

Another issue that we heard when I did my health care town halls across the region with MPP France Gélinas is home care. Home care is an issue all across the north. Some people across the north are waiting up to six months to access home care. If we were to have better access to home care, that would be good for the individual, it would be good for the provincial system and it would be good for the treasury. And it's something that we can do. We can implement a five-day home care guarantee; we just need the government will to do it.

Another basic need is auto insurance, which in the north is an essential service. It's essential for everybody who has a car, but in the northwest and in the north it's

especially essential because we don't have public transit. You have no idea how frustrating it is for people across the north who absolutely must have auto insurance—they must have a vehicle, they must have snow tires and they must have summer tires, and they must have all of these expenses—to see the rate go up in 2010 as a result of this Liberal government, and then to see their coverage go down. It's no surprise that we later found out that the changes that were made to the insurance industry saved auto insurance companies \$2 billion in the year 2011 alone, while at the same time charging northerners a 5% increase. That is simply unacceptable.

It's also unacceptable for people in the northwest to look at the auto insurance rates that are being charged to people living in Manitoba, a one-hour drive in one direction. To see the rate be substantially less expensive is really, really frustrating. We can do something about it. We can and we should reduce auto insurance rates by 15%.

Just last week, I spoke to a young male who was paying \$4,000 a year for auto insurance. You hear that rate and you think, "Oh, my goodness. He must have a whole bunch of accidents or infractions," but he's got a perfectly clean driving record. He has done nothing wrong. This year he'll be turning 25. He's looking forward to the modest drop. I think he said he might save about \$100 a month or something to that effect, which really isn't all that much. He could definitely benefit from an extra 15% decrease. It's something that we simply have to do.

Which brings me to my final point: employment for young people. We have an aging population in north-western Ontario, and it's aging at a rate that's faster than ever. I think the reason why is because we have the loss of so many young people. Young people go away; they leave our communities to attend post-secondary school. In Kenora–Rainy River, we don't have a university institution. We do have some access to Confederation College, but by and large, there are a lot of people who leave their communities and go to places like Thunder Bay or the University of Manitoba or Winnipeg to pursue their education, and they don't come back in the summers. It has to do with the fact that there just aren't the summer jobs there waiting for them anymore, and so when they graduate, they often stay away. Sometimes it's because they continue on with the jobs and the experiences that they have gained while they were away, but other times they stay away because they look for jobs elsewhere. They're not confident that there will be a job for them when they come back.

There are things we can do, like our plan that would provide young people aged 16 to 26 years with an entry point to long-term education. It would create 25,000 jobs over two years. Participants would learn new skills and they would earn \$9,360 in a six-month job. The experience would last a minimum of four to six months. There would be on-the-job skills training, and it would provide them with predictability. There would be 30 hours of work per week and they'd make at least \$12 an hour, which is a fair wage.

We need this. Young people need this. Ontarians need this. But in order to do this, we need the Liberals to come on board. We need to see these results.

I will be supporting this interim supply motion because we need to pay the bills. It would be financially irresponsible for us to say, "You know what? Schools, hospitals, people who are currently working for the government: You don't deserve your paycheque." "Oh, you have a medical emergency? Well, there's no hospital for you to go to."

That is just foolish and it is just political games. It's something we don't deserve. We deserve better in this province, and we deserve real results for the people of Ontario. That's what our caucus will be fighting for.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: As many of you know and some of you have teased me about, I've spent my life in three provinces. I grew up in Quebec; I lived in Ontario for many years; moved to Manitoba and moved back. As I've often said, I spent a lot of my teenage years on a dairy farm my father had in Alexandria, Ontario, shovelling manure, and some days I think it was the best preparation I had for this place.

One of the things that surprised me about elected officials in Ontario is their reluctance to stand up for their own province. To be fair, under Liberal governments, under Conservative governments and under NDP governments in this province, we have a record of spending less on our citizens per capita than any other province in Canada. I'm going to say that again: One of the legacies of this House is that people in Ontario spend less money on education, on health care, on just about everything.

Here's the great unfairness for Ontario of Confederation. When I was mayor of Winnipeg, they were building a multi-million-dollar floodway, which the member from Kenora–Rainy River would be aware of because it's a short drive from her constituency. Do you think there's the tax base in Winnipeg to build a piece of infrastructure that large? There isn't. There's a human rights museum being built there, at a cost of \$360 million. The \$18 million a year in subsidies to operate it are coming from the people of Canada. Every year, the people of Ontario take \$22 billion out of their wallets and they give it to other Canadians.

We have had in Canada recently a tax policy that is not incenting diversity of our economy but is capitalizing on resource exports, whether that's chromite or nickel—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Madam Speaker—or oil or natural gas.

My friend Al Duerr, the mayor of Calgary, used to say humorously to people when he used to meet with Mel Lastman and myself, "It's not too hard for us in Alberta. We put holes in the ground and oil comes up, and we get a cut that is the envy of the country." Yes, Alberta, which is—quite frankly, only in Canada. It's the only country in

the world in which subnational governments like provinces have control and get energy royalties and get the resource royalties. No other country in the world gives that right primarily to its subnational governments. So we do not get the normal benefits of shared energy revenues that—

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: They do not.

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: No; only what they can negotiate with their national government.

You can imagine that Alberta has never been really interested in negotiating with the government of Canada about sharing those oil revenues. And you just have to ask the federal Liberal Party, in the aftermath of the national energy policy, exactly what happens when you try to do that in Canada.

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I really do think that one of the things we can do in a nonpartisan way—anyone who has sat on this side of the House, and that's every party in this Legislature—is acknowledge two things: We are a net exporter of taxes—we are not the have-not province; we are very much the biggest have province—and that we've given a lot of our tax revenue away through our partnership, and that we've always been the most federalist province in this country in some ways. Going back to Bill Davis, to David Peterson, to Bob Rae, to Dalton McGuinty, our Premiers have proudly stood up for this country in the face of separatists next door—separatists who have a child care system and lower tuition and all those kinds of things, often with Ontario tax dollars subsidizing them. Often, immigration and settlement, which we get the largest part of, we get the least help with. Our First Nations people often get less attention from our national government than those in other provinces. I'm not whining or complaining about it. I'm simply saying that we in Ontario should be proud of our government, whatever party has been in power, that we are the most prudent spenders of money—always have been—and spend less money.

Madam Speaker, we have increased spending. Where has that money gone? The biggest cost: \$6.8 billion, to double the amount of money going into our universities and colleges—doubling it. The \$6.8 billion went into colleges and universities. My friends in the third party pointed out earlier today in question period that you could probably put a lot more money in there because students still have high debt levels and there are still challenges there. But we have literally doubled it, after it was reduced by about 20%, 30% or 40%, especially in the north.

My friend from Kenora–Rainy River made some very positive points, and I want to particularly appreciate the point that she pointed out. This is a supply bill. This is usually something we don't even debate. It passes on a voice vote. I think there has been sincerity from the New Democratic Party in wanting to work collaboratively to try to make this Legislature work, and I think we're

trying to respond as a party and as the government to work with you on that, and I appreciate the co-operation and the maturity you bring to this House. She pointed out, how do you politicize a supply bill? How do you, as the official opposition, say to the government and the third party, “We want to work with you, but we're going to politicize the supply bill and have a vote on the supply bill”? This is a complete contradiction. The leader of the official opposition should stop trying to tell Ontarians that he's working collaboratively and wants this Legislature to work, because he's clearly the one person who doesn't.

I was interviewed today by a couple of journalists who asked me what we felt about the desire of the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Niagara West–Glanbrook, to build a highway in the mid-Niagara Peninsula. This is a highway that all the studies have said would have very little traffic on it, is the least desirable of all the options and the most expensive, but it runs through his constituency. The member for Burlington and the member from Halton have both sent letters to this ministry, saying, “We'd really prefer you didn't do it because it would cause horrible traffic problems in our constituency.” It's okay to build a highway to nowhere, that no one needs, in your constituency, at the cost of hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars—

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Yes.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: If the minister could actually stick to debating the motion in front of us and not waver off of—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): He is. The supply motion is very liberal in its breadth.

Continue.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

When everyone talks about cutbacks, they're always talking about cutting back in someone else's backyard—I can tell you, by the number of requests I get and the number of you in this House who are working on trying to replace bridges.

I also want to make one point, as well. Madam Speaker, if you went up to Kenora–Rainy River, London–Fanshawe, Halton—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Don't forget Lanark.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: —Lanark, Quinte, Haliburton, Glengarry–Prescott–Russell and everything in between, you would find, as the official opposition has pointed out, that this government is spending more on infrastructure. We used to spend \$4 billion; we're now spending about \$13 billion a year. I have letters from almost every member of this Legislature that have a bridge in a small town that desperately needs to be replaced. I have letters from almost every member of the official opposition saying “Look, we were really glad that Beaverton got this money for that, but you can't get any money”—

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: But I do from your mayors, my dear friend from Lanark—many from your mayors.

There is no shortage of bridges and roads that need to be replaced. The increase in the roads and transportation budget is 400%. I have great empathy for my friends from the north; when I was mayor of Winnipeg, I used to work with the mayors of Dryden, Kenora, Thunder Bay and the Soo to try and get that northern trade route extended. I just heard them criticize this government; we're spending four or five times more than any other government on northern highways. We have more twinning projects going on on the Trans-Canada Highway and the 11 and 17 than there ever has been in my lifetime.

The problem is, in the old days, that used to be a 50-50 cost-sharing agreement with the federal government. We built the Trans-Canada Highway, and you notice, Madam Speaker, when you get to the Manitoba border it's a pretty nice highway. It's double-lane all the way to Calgary. Go back in the history books and find out how that was funded. It wasn't funded 90% by the province of Manitoba and 10% by the federal government, because on our side of the border, 92% of that is paid for by the people of Ontario through their taxes, way beyond the tax base of the north.

We should be proud of that. I always say this: We have a banking industry here in Toronto, in my constituency. The reason we have that is because northern communities and my uncles in Sudbury opened up mining in the north. If it had not been for mining, there would not be banking in Toronto. If there had not been banking in Toronto and we didn't have Canadian bankers and financiers, we wouldn't have the capital to have opened up the north. We are Ontarians first. You wouldn't have Toronto without the north; you wouldn't have the banks. You probably wouldn't have the mines in the north without the banks, because they'd probably be a pretty skinned-down kind of thing.

We are dependent on each other—rural and urban, suburban and northern—and, quite frankly, there's a spirit of generosity and plenty here. Is it enough? No, but 60% of the tax dollars that we pay in Ontario go to the federal government. Our municipalities and regional and provincial governments exist on 40 cents on the dollar. That 60% is something quite redistributed.

If we had the highest per-capita spending—I'm not even going to get into great detail beyond that, but there were 17 gas plants that were planned.

Interjection: There were five.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: There were 17, and why were there 17? Because this government listened to the experts and the engineers and said, "We needed 17 gas plants." Rather than thinking that those of us who are politicians are smarter than the engineers and the planners, we committed to building them. I'm going to take a wild guess: As has been the habit for 50 years before, no party in power ever said to those people, "Don't build that gas plant." In fact, I can't find once in 50 years where we told the engineers not to build that gas plant, to not put those pipes there. We just don't do that. We listened to it.

I'm going to take a wild guess that if you were over here and the experts came to you—especially when we're on the verge of brownouts; we've got places like Kitchener-Waterloo that have regions that don't have enough energy right now—you would have done the same thing. Whether it was the Red Hill highway or the 407, I could go back through every government that got elected and cancelled a project. We're not cancelling them; we're relocating them because we need the energy capacity. We all agreed in an election that we would relocate them, and we all understood that there would be a cost to that.

My friend from Leeds-Grenville was a mayor; he was a very good mayor. He knows, with the cost of contracts, that if you get elected, if you want to cancel something, it's going to cost you money. This shock and awe that somehow we didn't know there was going to be a price to those commitments that we made democratically—because this place always trumps the bureaucrats, and this place always has to represent people.

When people stand up and say, "We want you to change a decision. We want you to do something differently"—if we had any kind of humility at all, whether it was a freeway in Hamilton that one party cancelled, whether it was a subway that was filled in by another, whether it was a hospital that was committed to that was closed by another government—I take that with a grain of salt, because there are a lot of born-again virgins here all of a sudden, Madam Speaker. No one ever remembered how it happened—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I just ask the member to withdraw—unparliamentary.

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Hon. Glen R. Murray: I'm sorry, Madam Speaker. I withdraw that comment. My attempt at humour failed.

I will tell you as a Canadian that I'm incredibly proud of this government. I'm incredibly proud of the legacy of governments past. We continue to meet the challenges of having to double our university size, to meet an aging population and to build a health care system.

We're still spending less on services than any other government in Canada, and we're still exporting our tax dollars. That's quite a powerful feat of the people of Ontario. The current members of this Legislature and those past should be pretty proud of that. That's a really remarkable accomplishment.

I think all Canadians in this country are in a better place, whether you live in the north, the city or rural, because of Ontario. We've been the best and biggest advocates for this country and this Confederation. We've put our money where our mouth is now for almost 150 years.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm pleased to rise today and speak on the government's interim supply motion, which, for those of you who are just tuning in at home, is an opportunity to focus on the financial management—or what I would like to say mismanagement—of the McGuinty-

Wynne government. Stay tuned; it's something not to be missed.

This is in contrast to how the new Premier and her government have so far squandered probably every opportunity they've had to make a real attempt to deal with Ontario's financial plight and put the province back on the road to recovery. One could say that this government has never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

Instead, what we hear is a commitment to continue the same Dalton McGuinty legacy, the same stale ideas that have mired Ontario in record debt and continue to threaten our collective prosperity, despite what the previous members have said. In the year before the Liberals took office, Ontario's debt was \$132.6 billion. Most of us were horrified by that number. However, the Liberals seem to be saying, "If you think it's bad now, wait till we get through with it." Well, they've lived up to that.

During the Liberal government's reign here, the last nine years, the debt has ballooned almost 78% to \$235.6 billion. If the current trend continues, by the end of the decade, it will balloon to over \$550 billion. None of that is to be taken lightly. That is a lot of numbers that I have put out there. It's a dire forecast presented last year by the government's own hand-picked economist, Don Drummond. But they continue not to listen, and they do not seem to get the crisis that Ontario is in.

We're still waiting for some comprehensive plan to come forward. We're having lots of conversations, though—lots of conversations. We've been urging the government for over a year and a half to legislate a two-year public sector wage freeze. This isn't new. We've been saying it repeatedly. So when they say that we don't have ideas, we have been saying it a lot. There's no doubt they would have heard it. I guess you can turn a deaf ear. It's not itself a solution, but it's a huge step. We've seen the government trying to go after low-hanging fruit, instead of being prepared for the bold and tough decisions which the situation demands.

You have to lead by leadership because there are 600,000 people who are unemployed and are trying to find a job. These aren't just numbers; these are real people. We as a government need to help them get a job. They're not looking for a handout. They want to contribute back to their province and to their communities. They're looking for the government to create this atmosphere, conditions where good-paying jobs will be created by the private sector.

They're looking for the government to do something about the College of Trades. I hear it every weekend in my riding. The College of Trades is enforcing outdated apprenticeship ratios. They're preventing young people, not just my riding but from all across Ontario—and especially northern Ontario needs more tradespeople. They're asking us to send them more young people. We have to change the outdated apprenticeship ratios to one-to-one. We need to change it—again, an idea we keep giving this government, and they don't want to deal with it.

They want to talk a lot about employment for youth, but they don't actually do anything to do that. In my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, and the riding of Peterborough, side by side, which now hosts the new Minister of Rural Affairs, we have higher unemployment than the provincial average. Yet, instead of doing something to create opportunities in rural Ontario, in our area especially, as I mentioned, the government charged ahead and continues to want to eliminate the successful Slots at Racetracks Program—in typical Liberal fashion, done without consultation on who would be directly impacted, knowing what tracks would or wouldn't still be open, affecting tens of thousands of people, but they didn't consult. It was done to eliminate the competition for the OLG and pave the way for the government's plan to build 29 new casinos across the province, whether those communities want them or not.

The loss of horse racing in my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, the neighbouring riding of Peterborough and many ridings throughout urban and rural Ontario is disastrous. We had some of the most successful breeders in North America. We have farmers who support the industry through the growing of hay. We have trainers, grooming people, equipment, feed suppliers—the chain goes down of the economic stimulus. We have veterinarians whose practices are almost entirely dedicated to the industry.

But on March 30, Kawartha Downs is going to have its final race and we could lose up to 800 full- and part-time jobs there, which could have been there with a successful horse racing industry. But again, government policy has decimated that, decimated those people's opportunities. These people paid their taxes. They contributed to their communities. They want to work. They took pride in their work. So for them to transition to a new career, some of them in the later stages of their working lives, is difficult for them. They don't want to be on the government's payroll of the unemployed. It's a human tragedy, but again we keep prodding this.

So I'll say, what about the horses? It's pretty hard for an unemployed racehorse to get good work, and there are some difficult decisions that are going to have to be made out there and thousands of horses are going to have a fate that we don't like to talk about but is the reality out there.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Ten thousand.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes. Over 10,000 for sure will be affected, probably euthanized. So it is disgraceful.

I believe a lot of people were given false hope by the now minister from the Peterborough area that he would be a knight. He thought he had a solution last summer that would save them. Now we see that he's toeing the party line and our racetrack is closing in just but a couple of weeks. So I hope this does not go unnoticed in the next election coming forward.

Interjection: Pass the word.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes. This government's legacy of ill-conceived initiatives—unprecedented. That's one example that I've taken a lot of time about today, but is one that continues to be a top issue in the riding.

We can go on about health care and the need for health care. As my colleague from Dufferin–Caledon said, the people who aren't getting health care, the children who aren't getting their mental health needs addressed, the elderly who aren't getting their home care, who aren't accessing long-term-care homes or the care that they need appropriately are the true face of what's happening when you don't have a government that is responsible fiscally, getting its house in order. Those are the people who are suffering, and if you don't think people are suffering out there, where have you been? Read the headlines. Even listen to a little bit of what we say over here.

But it's okay to spend \$2 billion, I think, on eHealth for a system that we don't have a registry on. Ornge is going on and on. And the power plants—how can we go on to say more about the power plants? We're looking at over \$1 billion already. Could that money not have been better spent? Absolutely. Could they have done their policies differently? Absolutely.

First of all, you just ask the communities about the power plants. Ask communities about the wind turbines. Ask communities about their racetracks. A few examples, but talking about billions of dollars that's wasted, and it's our money. People are upset, and they should be upset. This government cares more about those bureaucracies, those LHINs, those CCACs, than putting front-line health care workers out in the communities and helping our people. You know, when they have to travel miles and miles for blood tests in our rural communities—my colleague from the north has spoken. We have similar issues in rural Ontario. Health care isn't at the door.

Mr. Steve Clark: Doctors and nurses.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes. Doctor shortages exist. Family health teams—there's more out there. But certainly you can talk to them about bureaucracy that does not work in rural Ontario.

Madam Speaker, I could go on and on, but I think the government probably is getting the general idea that I don't like the way they spend their money, most of my residents in Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock don't like the way they spend their money, and we will not be supporting this supply motion.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's a pleasure to speak to this supply motion. I want to first start by taking a little bit of a different tack with this. We've been presented with, in your order papers today, a list of expenditures that are included in this supply motion. I want to draw attention to the coalition member from Beaches–East York when he was speaking earlier today. He said it would be financially irresponsible—

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Mr. Michael Prue: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: If I'm being referred to, I belong to no coalition. I take umbrage at that comment and ask that he be forced to withdraw.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I withdraw—the NDP member for Beaches–East York, who's also, I think we can all see, part of the coalition that's happening in this House.

Anyway, he said it was financially irresponsible not to support this supply motion. He said that we have no choice; we must support this supply motion. I really take a little bit of umbrage with the idea that we don't have choices in this Legislature.

But I do want to say this: We never got or had an opportunity to scrutinize these expenses, of course, because prorogation stopped the estimates committee, stopped the ability of this House to scrutinize proposed expenditures of this government. Now we're faced with a supply motion without any scrutiny of what those expenditures are. So I've been looking through and starting to scrutinize these expenditures that are proposed over the next seven months. Under the Ministry of the Environment, they have a department here—a category 1108: waste. They're going to spend \$64 million wastefully, I think, under the Ministry of the Environment. That's what they're proposing: \$64 million in waste.

There's also \$27 million for the cabinet office for the next seven months. Did we know that? Twenty-seven million dollars for the Cabinet Office. This is all just on page 3 of today's order papers. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services: \$5 million for agencies, boards and commissions. Well, which agencies, boards and commissions are we giving \$5 million to?

Here's one on page 5 for the Office of the Premier: \$2.6 million in the next seven months for the Office of the Premier. Truly, this is how scandals and waste happen: when the Legislative is prevented from providing scrutiny over government spending, things such as the gas plants, Ornge, eHealth and OLG. All these things have happened because the Legislature was not privy to or permitted to see what truly was going on with government spending, and they're doing it again. This is the result of prorogation. It's a consequence of prorogation that we are being asked to just write the blank cheque for this government and give them the authority to spend willy-nilly, however they want, and the supporting party here to my left are going to continue to support it.

I truly hope that everybody, and maybe the members over on the government side—I know some of their ministers don't like to read before they endorse things, but maybe they want to read today's order paper as well. Oh, here's another one: \$6.8 million in political contribution tax credits. Where is this money going and how is it being spent? Is it being spent wisely or is it just being wasted once again?

We have seen the consequences of a government that disrespects people, that disrespects this Legislature in not being transparent and not being accountable. We've seen it with the fiasco with the gas plants. That's going on in our committees right now. Who knows how many real dollars have been wasted there, how many hundreds of millions of dollars? And we're still trying to dig through there and find out what the reality is, just how much waste has gone on there.

There have been so many other scandals with this government. I think one of the biggest ones has just happened as well with Bill 119. How much money is coming in under Bill 119 for this needless, useless new insurance premium that is being placed on our independent contractors in this province? We have no idea. We're being kept in the dark about just what the financial position is.

So I'm not going to support or vote for a supply motion that is the result of—and I'll say purposely keeping the Legislative Assembly ignorant of the financial goings-on of this province. That's what has gone on with this government: Keep everybody from being aware of their actions and their activities. It would be financially irresponsible, in my view, to do anything but vote down this supply motion. If this government truly wants to be accountable, let's roll things back a little bit here and say, "Yeah, we're going to bring our spending estimates to a committee forthwith, right away, and get things scrutinized by the members of this assembly."

I've got to say about these gas plants—because we don't know just where the end is going to be on that, but we do know that, in addition to everything else, they're transferring over OPG property, public assets, to TransCanada Energy for that relocated gas plant in my riding at Bath. I just want to put on the record one more time that they've relocated this gas plant from Oakville—somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$600 million or \$800 million in cost—right beside an existing 2,000-megawatt generating station in Bath that operates at about 5% of its capacity—5% of its capacity. A 2,000-megawatt generating station, gas-fired, is already owned by the public, by OPG. It sits in my riding, and they're going to build another brand-new one, half the size, right beside it. They're giving the land to TransCanada. Just think of this: It's going to cost about \$1.3 billion, I think, for that new plant to be built right beside an existing one that doesn't ever get turned on. Just what would be the benefit? Here we're going to spend \$1.3 billion and get for it absolutely zero.

Interjection: Squat.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Squat, nothing—\$1.3 billion, because we've already got the generating station right

there and it doesn't get turned on right now. Can you imagine if you took that \$1.3 billion and put it into health care, put it into people with developmental disabilities, put it into our social safety nets? There, it could actually provide a benefit for the people of this province, a tangible benefit that would make this province better. Instead, we're just going to build a gas-fired generating station that in all likelihood will never get turned on, just like the one that it's going to be built beside that never gets turned out.

I have to say—and I mentioned this in the House yesterday—that on my way down to Toronto on the weekend, I drove by another abandoned OPG-owned generating station at Wesleyville, 1,700 acres of prime waterfront property—Lake Ontario at Bowmanville—that is owned by OPG and that has a generating station that was constructed but mothballed there, that much closer to the demand for new power, but this government doesn't know anything when it comes to being financially responsible—

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

Seeing none, Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number one, interim supply. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

Pursuant to standing order 28(h), the request has been made to vote on the interim supply motion in deferred votes on Wednesday, March 20.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Madam Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The minister has moved adjournment of the House. All those in favour? Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House is adjourned until 9 a.m. on Wednesday.

The House adjourned at 1731.

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, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
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, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor–Tecumseh	

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Rob Leone, Bill Mauro
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue
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Jonah Schein
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Bill Mauro
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des comptes publics**

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Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri
Jagmeet Singh
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Margaret R. Best, Vic Dhillon
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof
Bill Walker
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Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha
Jane McKenna
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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