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Wednesday 10 April 2013

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 10 avril 2013

**Standing Committee on
General Government**

Traffic Congestion

**Comité permanent des
affaires gouvernementales**

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES

Wednesday 10 April 2013

Mercredi 10 avril 2013

The committee met at 1605 in room 228.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll call the meeting to order of the Standing Committee on General Government. We will continue deputations on the study relating to traffic congestion in the GTHA.

TORONTO CENTRE FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The first presenter is the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation: Nancy Smith Lea. Please come forward. You've got five minutes to present, and then we'll switch to questions. Each party is allowed five minutes of questioning. You can start.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to Mike Colle for the motion to consider cycling as a means of relieving traffic congestion.

Interjections.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: No problem.

I'm speaking to you today on behalf of the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation. We are a project of the registered charity the Clean Air Partnership. TCAT's mission is to advance knowledge and evidence to build support for safe and inclusive streets for walking and cycling. We believe that active transportation plays a critical role in creating environmentally and economically sustainable cities.

I have three main points that I wanted to make to you today.

The first one is about the primary cause of congestion and the need for a new way of doing things. I'd first like to acknowledge that of course traffic congestion is clearly a pernicious problem that needs to be addressed, but the elephant in the room that doesn't get the attention it deserves is that the key ingredient in pretty much each and every traffic jam is the fact that there are too many single-occupancy vehicles. As Canadians, we're pretty polite, and it's kind of considered rude to point out that pretty obvious fact.

In the solutions that so many of us propose, we talk about the need for balance, accommodating all road users and providing options, and that's all good. But I think that we just need to be clear and keep our eye on the ball

that we need to shift a significant number of trips that are currently being made in single-occupancy vehicles to other modes. It's not just about balance; it's about prioritization.

We have a fantastic policy base that has been developed here in the city and also in the province. We have the city of Toronto's official plan, we have the Places to Grow Act, transit supportive guidelines and the Metrolinx Big Move regional transportation plan to name just a few, all of which recognize the importance of getting people out of their cars.

Yet on-the-ground change has really been happening much too slowly as we continue our long legacy as a province that builds highways and expands roads and only accommodates public and active transportation where it fits in around the edges. How can we realistically expect people to get out of their cars when we continue to invest billions of dollars each year to expand our highway network?

What's so striking to me is how we generally ignore the mounting evidence dating back to at least the 1940s that new roads fill up not with diverted traffic from congested nearby roads, but with all sorts of new trips that weren't there before. Expanding our highway network each year most certainly creates more congestion in the long run than is alleviated.

Last year, two University of Toronto economists released a comprehensive study that told us what we know already: that building more roads does not ease traffic congestion. A 2012 research paper by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute showed that roadway expansion impacts negatively on other modes.

What we clearly need to do is approach this problem in a different way than how we've done things in the past. As the old saying goes, insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. We need to build a transportation system that goes beyond accommodation and balance towards one that prioritizes walking and cycling and other healthy, low-polluting and cost-effective modes of transportation that do not contribute to traffic congestion, environmental damage, health care costs and social isolation created by single-occupancy motor vehicles.

Right now, the primary criteria that we use to make transportation decisions is whether or not it speeds up the flow of motor vehicle traffic. We need to expand the parameters of our decision-making process to include

equity, health, the environment and fiscal responsibility. There are frameworks currently being developed to accomplish this. For example, last week, Toronto Public Health adopted an evaluation framework for transportation infrastructure priorities that recognizes the importance of improving the convenience and safety of walking and cycling and supports the implementation of complete streets which provide safe, equal access to all modes of transportation—sorry?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have one minute left.

1610

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: One minute? Okay, I have two other points. My second point is about the fantastic opportunity that we have here in front of us to make big improvements. Canadians make an average of 2,000 car trips of less than three kilometres each year, and the Big Move identified that 17% of the trips in the GTHA are walkable, so under two kilometres, and 40% are bikeable, under five kilometres. Yet currently walking and cycling account for less than 5% of work trips in the GTHA.

It's a very significant but very solvable problem. Active transportation isn't just a nice-to-have add-on; walking and cycling are important transportation options in their own right but also serve an extremely important function in trip chaining. When planned for well, they're critical components of a public transportation system for that first and last mile.

My third point is about the need to invest in the solutions in the big—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I have to cut you off because we've got to get the question in. I'm sorry.

Mr. O'Toole?

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes, thank you very much for your presentation, Ms. Lea, as well as bringing your voice to the practical solutions like walking and cycling. I'm sort of a supporter of that. I take the GO train and I walk up from Union Station every morning and I think it's tied to better healthy outcomes as well.

I'm going to ask you an unusual question. Your presentation here is—here's what I'm kind of listening to, as they say: All roads lead to Rome. If you keep building the infrastructure to accommodate getting more people here, you're never going to solve the problem. It's kind of a riddle. It will always be after the need arrives you'll address the need, which then becomes aggravated by increasing the number of trains to Toronto.

Do you have any idea of maybe making other nodes, more preferential destinations like Mississauga or York or—break it down a bit? Maybe even take the ministries out of Toronto. I would wonder, why are people going to law firms? Why don't they log on at some node? That's what I would sort of advocate, change “this has to be bigger is better.” I think it ruins the quality of life for the people who currently reside here, by all these people coming in and using the restaurants—no, that's the economy. I'm sorry about that.

Maybe you could just respond. I'm not trying to be casual here. I have three children who all work in differ-

ent countries and none of them go to work every day—none of them. They're in marketing, law and another is a sort of test pilot kind of guy.

My point is, the idea that people have to, for 40 hours, go somewhere else to do something is prehistoric. When I worked at General Motors, the 5,000 employees had to go there at 7 and leave at 4. That's history as far as I'm concerned. And if you're looking for solutions for the future—live, work, part of intensification—let's have some really novel new ideas of development and growth.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: I agree that there could definitely be more with telecommuting and I agree that there's a lot of trips right now that don't need to be made. I think that there could be—

Mr. John O'Toole: Seventeen per cent.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Yes. But I think that it's really not beyond us to plan a better transportation system. There are centres all over the world that are planned better than we're planning our centre.

An urban core is really essential for lots of reasons and so I don't think we should just give up on it. That was really—

Mr. John O'Toole: It has to be integrated and I'll tell you why. I just got back from Hong Kong. My daughter lives there. They have one card and with that card you can pay for parking, a sandwich, a taxi, transit, everything, and it's totally integrated.

This is where we have Hazel saying something and Mayor Ford saying something and Bill Fisch saying something. It needs to be totally integrated and that starts with the governance model itself. I think I appreciate what you're saying, but I'm looking at the governance model, which creates redundancies, where, “No, we can't pick up on your side of the street.” Those kinds of problems are politically made and they create the problem by the governance model we've set up.

I appreciate your innovative approach to this. I think saying something new would really be helpful at this time, because gridlock—if we keep doing what we're doing, we're going to have the same problem. It will just be more money.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll move to the third party. Mr. Marchese?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I just want to congratulate you on the work that you and a lot of people who work with you do.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Thank you.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I think more and more people are beginning to think in those ways for a variety of different reasons. It's about lifestyles, health and the environment. So, I think the focus is important. It has taken a long time to change that culture shift, and that includes politicians, ministers and governments. I think we're getting there. You've done a lot of work and held a lot of conferences on complete streets, which is good. I'm assuming the participation is always big?

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's probably getting bigger.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: These changes, I think, involve having to review the Highway Traffic Act; you probably agree with that.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: If we were to do the review of the Highway Traffic Act, what do you think should change?

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Well, we've actually made some comments about that. There are a lot of things that could be changed with the HTA. For example, there's the three-foot passing law that has been put forward as a recommendation. There are a lot of issues around clarification about the right to take the lane, if cyclists need to take over the lane for their own safety—whether or not that's actually permitted in the HTA—there's some confusion around that. I think that needs to be clarified. We've made a lot of detailed recommendations about that I'd be happy to share with you.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: A lot of people are saying that it seems like there's almost a voluntary approach right now to complete streets, and that's not enough. That kind of volunteer approach is not going to take us too far. Do you think whatever the government is about to propose—and hopefully it'll come soon—needs more teeth?

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Are you talking about Toronto?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: In general, the province.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Right. Well, that's why my third point—I think it's so critical that we do fund the Big Move and that we get some new revenue tools in. In the Big Move there is \$60 million set aside for cycling and walking and some other initiatives. So I think that political will is an issue for sure, but we also just don't have enough funding for the things that we need to do. You know, the walking and cycling projects are much lower-ticket items. It could be done much more quickly than the big-ticket items, which we also need to fund, but I think that we need to make sure that we get that funding in place and then that those active transportation projects get funded.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thanks, Nancy.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government side?

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, a lot of thought-provoking comments by my colleague from Durham there and your response, because I think he made a lot of very interesting points that we've got to sort of try to grapple with, and I'm sure you've been grappling with.

I mean, the thing about single-occupancy vehicles, first of all, that is a real almost habit. I know if you stand on any corner—I sometimes have to cross the street at Allen Road and Eglinton. As I'm waiting at the light, 90% of the cars have one person in them. How do you get those people coming down from York region, coming into the centre of the city? I know they used to talk about carpooling. That was going to be the big saviour, carpooling and all this stuff. Well, basically it has been a total flop. So, how do we get people that come down two or three in a vehicle, God forbid, how can we do that?

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Yes, I mean, I'm surprised to hear you say it's a flop. My understanding was that that's been going well with the Smart Commute programs. Again, I don't think they're getting a lot of funding; they're a pretty small initiative still. But, yes, it's a very difficult problem. You know, the municipalities around the GTHA have the worst active transportation rates in the country. Nine of the 10 cities that have the worst active transportation rates are in the GTA. So I think that there are just so many things that we need to do, it's hard to know what to do first. I think that each of the municipalities need to really make sure that getting to and from the GO stations—that the public transit is really easily accessible by walking and cycling. I think that once people get in their cars it's just habits. We're all—you know, by habit we're going to just keep driving. If that's what we're doing, we're going to—

1620

Mr. Mike Colle: Hard habits to break.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: There's a lot that needs to be done, but—

Mr. Mike Colle: Sorry to interrupt, but the other thing is about the telecommuting and people who work at home.

Ms. Nancy Smith Lea: Yes.

Mr. Mike Colle: I know when we used to debate building subways back in the 1980s at Metro Toronto council—I think Greg Gormick, who is here, remembers—there used to be some opponents of building transit infrastructure. They used to say, “Well, in the year 2000, everybody will be working at home on their computers. They will not leave their house. They can work from home.” God, look at what has happened as computers, the Internet etc.—there are more people on our roads. In fact, Google now is telling people, “Get out of your house and get to work,” because this telecommuting stuff isn't working. It doesn't seem to be the answer, this telecommuting fairy tale.

The other thing is hours of work. That was another good point my colleague from Durham made: Why are we still stuck—you know, he comes every day at the same hours. He goes home at the same time. Why can't we have companies and governments get beyond that 9-to-5 clock?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 30 seconds.

Mr. Mike Colle: Are you going to answer that? How can we get away from the 9-to-5 rush hour? If we were able to shift people to different hours—it's supply and demand. They're all using the same roads at the same time. God forbid we come in to work at 11 o'clock.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I like that.

Mr. Mike Colle: Oh, God forbid, and we go home at 7. Imagine: There would be riots in the streets.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. I'll have to move on to the next deputant. Thanks very much for being here with us, and thanks for your input.

TRILLIUM AUTOMOBILE DEALERS
ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The next one is the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association, Frank Notte. You have five minutes to present, and then we'll turn to questions: five minutes from each party.

Mr. Frank Notte: That's great. Thank you. Thanks for the opportunity.

My name is Frank Notte, and I'm the director of government relations for the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association. Trillium represents over 1,000 new car dealers in Ontario, with every manufacturer's brand and franchise. That's roughly one third of all new car dealers in Canada. Our member dealers don't just sell cars; they provide well-paying jobs to over 47,000 women and men.

I had the pleasure of presenting to this committee last year and welcome the opportunity to do it again right now.

I'm just going to go into the five recommendations. You'll see them in the handout, so I'll just quickly touch on those and then talk a little bit about the Big Move. Essentially, we have five recommendations that we think the government should consider to break traffic congestion in the GTA. One is to reverse the 2012 Ontario budget cuts of \$229 million over the next six years to previously approved highway expansion and high-occupancy-vehicle lane projects. On March 13, 2012, the Minister of Transportation at the time announced higher vehicle and driver fees that will generate an extra \$340 million annually for the province. Clearly, we feel the added revenue covers that budget cut.

Number 2 would be to move forward on the GTA west corridor study. The Brampton Board of Trade is concerned that a 15- to 20-year timeline to initiate the project is too long for businesses and municipalities to plan accordingly.

Number 3 would be to build the Niagara-to-GTA highway to properly accommodate future population growth, help foster economic growth and prevent traffic congestion in the region. A report done said, "By 2031 ... the existing transportation network within the Niagara-to-GTA study area will not be able to support the additional transportation demands that correspond with the projected growth."

Number 4 would be to examine how existing infrastructure, mainly in the downtown cores, can be better utilized to increase traffic flow and allow vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians to move more efficiently.

Number 5 would be to review the city of Toronto's downtown transportation operations study, upon completion. The province should consider what best practices or ideas the study contains.

For some, the silver bullet to alleviating the GTA's specific traffic congestion is investing only in public transit at the expense of roadways and drivers. We feel this is an irresponsible policy and fails to recognize that the vast majority of people need and want to drive auto-

mobiles. Trillium estimates that 90% of Ontario residents 18 years of age or over are licensed drivers. Trillium is not surprised that almost every adult in Ontario feels they need to have a driver's licence.

I do want to put on the record that Metrolinx's Big Move will help to alleviate traffic congestion. However, Trillium challenges the notion that massive tax increases are needed to fund its \$50-billion plan. Appendix A in the submission shows that drivers pay \$15 billion per year in taxes and fees related to owning and operating a vehicle. Those funds are collected through an astonishing 16 different taxes and fees. It's hard to think of another item that is so thoroughly taxed.

To simply conclude that higher taxes are needed to fund the Big Move assumes every dollar of the \$126-billion provincial budget is spent wisely or properly allocated. Some ideas to fund the Big Move could include better allocating the \$10 billion in provincial government revenue from drivers; using the \$1 billion per year Ontario could collect, as identified on pages 412 to 417 of the Drummond report; and possibly using some of the approximately \$1.5 billion generated per year, thanks to the HST being applied to gasoline.

We challenge the Ontario government to continue to find ways to fund the Big Move without tax increases.

If there are any other questions, I'd be happy to take them. I didn't want to take up too much of the time.

Mr. John O'Toole: Chair?

Interjection: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Just one second. Okay, the third party.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Frank. It's good to see you again. We like to have meetings on a regular basis. When people repeat things twice, we hear them a little better, I think.

I understand some of the points you make, and to some extent, it makes sense. On the other hand, the needs of the province get bigger and bigger, and a whole lot of people are saying, "We need to be able to cut to be able to bring in other priorities," and I'm not sure how we're going to do that. We're going to have to have a discussion of what's fair and what's affordable, and how does a province raise money in a fair way so that we can do the things that we need to do as a community? Because while some people like the whole idea of individualism, many of us think of our community and how we protect ourselves and how we help ourselves.

But can I ask you a question about how we make better use of our existing highway structure? There are a whole lot of people saying, "We can't continue to build more and more highways." While there might be a need for us to do that in some areas, there's a growing resistance to creating more and more highways in our system. I don't know whether you take that into account as you present these arguments, but I think your organization has to balance these things out. Can we use the existing highway infrastructure better? One question is—speeding up the implementation of the HOV lanes is something that some people are recommending. Some people are

saying it works, and shouldn't we be speeding that up as a way of giving people better options and better opportunities to move along? Is that something that you've been thinking about?

Mr. Frank Notte: HOV lanes?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes.

Mr. Frank Notte: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Could we be speeding that up?

Mr. Frank Notte: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Should we be speeding that up?

Mr. Frank Notte: Absolutely. I know the presenter before me said she believes that the problem is too many single-occupancy vehicles. If people can commute with other people and carpool, that's a great thing. But I think the reality is the other options aren't that attainable or easy to do in everyday life. I think the alternative to that is not favourable for most people.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But how do you respond, Frank, to some of the concerns that others are saying: "We should be building a better railway system across the province and the country;" "We shouldn't be building more highways, necessarily, because that's not the way we should be doing it in a modern society, especially where there are environmental concerns." Does the organization think about those questions?

Mr. Frank Notte: We do think about those questions.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And what is your response to what people say about that?

Mr. Frank Notte: Our response is, we want the debate to move past the public-transit-versus-driver argument. When I drive by the GO stations, there's a lot of people who actually drive there and then take the GO train to downtown. I think both have to be supported.

I'm not here to bash public transit; I know there's a vast majority of people who use both modes to get to work or get into the city on the weekend. Do I think both have to be supported? I don't think you can choose one at the expense of the other.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, I don't think you can either. I think there's a need for us to create a better transit and transportation system in the whole province. The question will be, shortly, how we're all going to pronounce ourselves as political parties and how we're going to do that. But there is no question in many people's minds that we've got to create a better system and wait and see what we all have to say about that in a short while.

1630

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You've got a minute left.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thanks, Frank.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government side.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you for your presentation. I think we have a few things in common. I come from a riding that's got an automobile assembly

plant in it, Ford. So I want Ford to make as many cars as they possibly can.

Mr. Frank Notte: Absolutely.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I want Ford to employ as many people as they can.

Yet I agree with Nancy, who spoke before us, that when I drive in the HOV lane in the morning if I've got somebody in my car, I fly past hundreds of thousands of cars that have a single occupant.

So how do you justify or how do you balance the interests of Ontario being the largest auto-producing jurisdiction in all of North America with the fact that people, I think, are making a very valid point that we have too many cars on the road? You sell those cars. You have people who are employed in selling those cars. That's how they put food on the table. The workers at the Ford plant are the people who assemble those cars. They export two out of three cars, and we import a number of cars. So how do you balance the interests of an industry that's under some criticism—or not criticism; the use of its products is under some criticism, as we could utilize those products better. How do you balance that against the obvious economic advantages of having a strong auto assembly industry and auto sales?

Mr. Frank Notte: I think the balance would be for Ontario to continue being the number one jurisdiction to build cars. The government's support of that is well noted and should be continued because I think people in Oakville and the surrounding areas will benefit from that.

But I do think, at the same time, if people have a choice of driving into downtown from Oakville or want to get on at the Bronte station, both of those should be supported. So if you've got a hockey tournament downtown, chances are you're going to probably drive and not take the GO train. Or if you were heading to a game at BMO Field, it's pretty easy to take the GO train, and there's the Exhibition stop right there.

That's why I'm trying to change the debate. I know it's in vogue to talk about cars and cars against public transit. But I think if you make investments in both, people will ultimately choose what's best.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: One final question, and that is, I know that Ford in Oakville makes great use of rail. It ships an awful lot of—in fact, I think almost all of its products get shipped out by rail, or I think a very high percentage of them do, anyway. But they always end up at a station somewhere, and they've got to be trucked to the dealership. I often see their trucks on the QEW at rush hour.

Is your organization doing anything to foster late-night delivery or 3 in the morning delivery to its member lots? Anything along those lines?

Mr. Frank Notte: Our association, no, and the reason for that is many of those decisions are made by the manufacturer themselves so often. The dealerships will make a request for a certain vehicle that might not be on the lot, and then it's really out of their hands as to when the manufacturer is able to deliver them. But I think one thing that dealers have done on a grassroots level, like

Budds' in Oakville, is to try to be in a common space so that the trucks aren't going all around Oakville; they're just going to pretty much one area to try to relieve that.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I think Donna had a question.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I just had a very quick question, and it really picks up on what Mr. O'Toole has indicated. When you read your brief—and I appreciate that you're a dealership, so your heart is towards your dealers and the manufacturing of cars. I also appreciate that it's the world we live in. I mean, 94% of the people in this province live on 6% of the land mass.

That goes to Mr. O'Toole's question around the issue of employment lands and residential lands outside of a core, so that you actually start to distribute that population. Yet I don't see that as a part of the thinking, because you can sell a car anywhere.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): One minute left.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: So part of your thinking is sort of thinking outside the box for your dealers in terms of those employment and residential lands outside of a core like downtown Toronto, because there are many ways to relieve congestion. Any thoughts?

Mr. Frank Notte: On how to move that out of—

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Or just to get that discussion going more amongst your dealerships.

Mr. Frank Notte: I don't understand the question, though. I'm sorry.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Okay. You have dealerships all over the province.

Mr. Frank Notte: Yes.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: So why could you not have a discussion on not just more roads, whatever, but moving the demographic out into a broader GTAA or GTHA, whatever it's called, so that you move that population, so you're not just looking at trying to relieve the congestion by building more roads or more whatever, but actually moving the vehicles outside of—and providing more opportunities for alternatives. I don't see that as part of your discussion. I'm just curious as to why it wouldn't be there.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Sorry, but we've run out of time. We'll have to switch to my good friend Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you very much, Frank, for your presentation. You've really precipitated some interesting comments from my colleagues around the room. You represent the auto industry, and from where I come, Frank, there's no single solution, as you said in your presentation. There is a mix of choices, and the choices include road, rail, cars. I take the GO train, but I have to take the car to the GO train. The car sits there all day, kind of taking up space, which is not taxed properly. Do you understand what I mean? It isn't well integrated at all, even by the nodes themselves. Do you understand? There are different drop-offs. It doesn't encourage carpooling to the terminus for the transit system.

I sort of think of it this way: As different problems have different solutions, density—urban or rural—is very

important. In fairness to what Ms. Cansfield said, the government does have a plan; it's called Places to Grow. Places to Grow is really predicated on the suggestion that Ms. Cansfield is making, which is trying to drive growth—live-work organization. That's kind of what it's about. It's density. Transit only works with density. Transit does not work in linear urban form. It works in Europe. It's very important; in the study of transportation issues, it's called Christaller's central place theory, a very old theory. I took urban geography in university.

Europe was developed on concentric circles, and transit accommodates density specifically where you have nodes and nodal development and mixed uses. We're not developed like that, and we're trying to change it by some infusion of money, doing the same thing: building more of what we've done. We're all pretty well saying that.

We're looking for something quite new, and I would say that even the current policy on the distribution of gas tax provincially—it must go to transit, which is forcing Durham region, as an example, to have buses running all over the country, past sheep farms with nobody in the buses, to qualify for the gas tax money.

Federally, they give it to—because our transit system in rural Ontario is roads and bridges. We would probably like to have transit, but you can't send a bus down a rural road for five kilometres to maybe pick someone up. It doesn't work. The car is essential.

I will ask one question: On the record, your response to the importance of green vehicles—the combination of electric recharge stations and all that kind of stuff—and slow moving vehicles, SMVs. This is a very important policy decision. Ms. Cansfield is a former minister of this business, and we can't even prove cars that are made in Canada—they're called SMVs, slow-moving vehicles. That's the future. That is the future: an urban form, smaller footprints for vehicles; the Smart cars and those are examples from Europe that could be solutions, along with a bicycle. Not everyone can pedal a bicycle in the wintertime; I get it, but they could use that small avenue on the side of the road if they respected certain speed limits.

Do you have any comments, Frank, on that kind of thing?

Mr. Frank Notte: On green vehicles or slow-moving vehicles?

Mr. John O'Toole: On slow-moving vehicles and new forms of vehicles, which have been mentioned by a couple of people

Mr. Frank Notte: Yes, it's always better to be green if you can; right? I think, at the end of the day, if Ford can't make enough vehicles and sell them, then the consumers are telling them something. Yes, it should be supported, but at the end of the day, I don't know if there are going to be enough people buying those vehicles.

Mr. John O'Toole: Well, I think there are prohibitions right now on it, because the ZENN car, made in Quebec, is not able to be sold in Ontario, and it is a commuter-based car that does 60 to 100 kilometres. The

province, in fairness, did provide a tax credit for purchase of electric vehicles—i.e. the Volt.

Mr. Frank Notte: Yes.

Mr. John O'Toole: And that was \$10,000. Now they're going to have to build infrastructure for charging those vehicles. That's a good way of collecting tax, because those vehicles, when charged—we'll have to put a meter and pay the meter money, just like a parking meter, to give them electricity. It's not going to be free, and that tax could be turned into improving the infrastructure for SMVs, electric cars and all this kind of stuff. These are things that aren't on the presentations that I see, something envisioning a new approach to this.

1640

Now, in all fairness, this and all the advertising, starting from Metrolinx, is a push theory that's \$50 billion—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. I have to move on to the next presenter. Thanks very much for being here, Frank.

ECOLOGY OTTAWA

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Our next presenter is on the phone. It's Mr. Geoff Stiles. Can you hear us, Geoff? Hello?

Mr. Geoff Stiles: Yes. I can hear you fine, thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay. Geoff, it's the Chair of the committee, Bas Balkissoon, and we have all the members here. I understand you might have someone else with you, so what I would ask you to do is, when you speak, at the beginning identify yourself so the members know who is speaking to them.

We have five minutes for your presentation and then we will go in rotation by the various parties, five minutes for questioning by each party. We have handed out your material to everybody, so you can start now. Thanks.

Mr. Geoff Stiles: Thanks. Just by way of introduction, I'm a volunteer on the Ecology Ottawa transportation committee. With me is Trevor Haché, who is the policy coordinator for Ecology Ottawa. When we get to the question period, Trevor will be available to answer questions, as well as myself.

I'll try to get through this as quickly as possible, and I apologize for having to read it. Ecology Ottawa is a not-for-profit, grassroots, volunteer-driven organization working to make Ottawa the green capital of Canada. We focus on climate change as the key environmental challenge facing the city and have identified smart growth and sustainable transportation as one of our key priorities. We aim to help Ottawa adopt a sustainable urban form based on compact, complete and public-transit-supported communities, and as that would suggest, our emphasis in this presentation is on the national capital region.

The presentation to the committee today is focused on asking the government of Ontario to give the city of Ottawa the legislative and regulatory tools it needs to shift towards a user-pay approach to roads in an effort to discourage as much private automobile use as possible. This is consistent with the city of Ottawa's existing

policies of encouraging more environmentally and financially sustainable modes of transportation.

Our starting point is the recent suggestions by Premier Wynne, and Don Drummond prior to that, as well as the Toronto Board of Trade and Metrolinx, that congestion charges, road tolls and other innovative revenue sources based on the user-pay principle could potentially be used to fund new public transit investments.

Ecology Ottawa supports the introduction of such options as part of a broad package of sustainable transport solutions. We see user pay as a way of ensuring that the costs of transportation are in fact more equitably distributed. We note as well that this is a more economically efficient means of funding public transportation, and addresses the criticism that inner-city residents in Ottawa are being made to bear a disproportionate share of the financial burden of reducing traffic congestion, which is caused primarily by the influx of automobiles from suburban commuters.

We also recognize, however, that user-pay systems cannot be successfully implemented unless they are part of a larger planning process which ensures that other preferred, non-private automobile transportation policy options are available and that infrastructure exists to encourage them.

Ecology Ottawa's own research suggests that ongoing dependence on and subsidization of private automobile transport is at the core of the city of Ottawa's problem. A not-often-discussed but critically important point is that the construction of new roads in Ottawa is largely covered by development fees, but the funding source for the operation, maintenance, repair and retrofitting of those roads is primarily the property tax system. This means that these costs are shared across a broader spectrum of Ottawa citizens than those who use the roads most frequently and cause the most damage to them. Through their property tax payments, Ottawa residents, whether they are motorists or not, fund the operation, maintenance, repair and retrofitting of 5,000-plus kilometres of roads that the city of Ottawa operates and maintains.

Ecology Ottawa feels that using the existing tax base to pay for the ever-expanding road network here is not sustainable unless taxpayers and politicians resign themselves to major property tax increases in the years to come.

Currently, the city is updating its official plan as well as its transportation, pedestrian and cycling plans. It is our hope that this opportunity will be used to achieve a better balance between road expenditures designed primarily to benefit motorists and expenditures to encourage the preferred and sustainable transportation options such as public transit, cycling and walking. If we can encourage more use of these options, we will also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and related health care costs.

We're very encouraged by the fact that the city of Ottawa, in its preliminary policy proposals—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have about a minute left.

Mr. Geoff Stiles: Fine—related to the 2013 update of its official plan and transportation master plan has committed to exploring a range of user-pay approaches to funding transportation infrastructure.

I'll just summarize briefly the last part of this. You can read it if I don't have time.

You'll see that we also are very active in a number of other areas that are complementary to the user-pay issue: development of a complete streets policy, promotion of transit-oriented development and limiting further expansion of the urban boundary in Ottawa. We are very concerned and feel the need to call for the full life cycle cost of road projects to be factored into the decision-making process at all levels. We think these funding decisions should also be made with full consideration of the many negative social and public health ramifications of the private-automobile-centric status quo.

In conclusion, I just want to repeat what I said at the beginning. We're asking the government to give the city of Ottawa the legislative and regulatory tools it needs to shift toward a user-pay approach for roads in an effort to discourage as much private automobile use as possible. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We will move to questions. We'll start with the government.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you very much, Geoff, for being involved. It's MPP Mike Colle. I'm happily married to a young lady from Ottawa, so I know a little bit about our nation's capital.

As you know, Ottawa to me is really a leader in Canada in many ways: what you're doing with your cycling policies and you're basically a very, very active city—a lot of walking and jogging. On the other hand, it's a very schizophrenic city. You made the huge mistake of moving your railroad station out to Alta Vista. That was probably the greatest planning blunder in the history of Canada; you should've never done that, although you did something good by making Sparks Street a pedestrian mall. Then you had the double-clutching of the light rail project. I don't know where that is at right now. I think Ottawa represents a lot of the same things that we're all going through trying to make up our minds on how we're going to solve our transportation problem. Then you have an expressway right through the middle of the city, which is bizarre. Then you have the canal. Anyway, sorry, Geoff. That's what I mean: Ottawa has got a schizophrenic planning history.

But I do want to ask you the key question in terms of revenue tools. You talk about the life cycle of building highways. How do we incorporate that? That's the issue. It costs so much money to build the highways, but then as you know, there's the constant repair given our climate with the ice and snow and salt etc. How do we get an understanding of the long-term costs of maintaining highways, and how do we incorporate that information into our discussion?

Mr. Trevor Haché: If you wouldn't mind, Mike—it's Trevor, the policy coordinator at Ecology Ottawa—I'll take a crack at answering that.

Certainly we think that the Metrolinx suggestions in terms of investment tools short list that they've come forward with earlier this month related to the Big Move are a variety of things that would help the city of Ottawa pay for the full life cycle costs. Unfortunately, right now the government of Ontario has not given the city of Ottawa the legislative and regulatory tools to implement these various investment tools. Certainly we think that the city of Ottawa is filled with very mature and knowledgeable citizens who can and should be allowed to engage in an adult debate about sustainable transportation and how to fund public transportation and the various road networks moving forward.

What we're hopeful for is that the government of Ontario will move forward with something similar to what you've done for Toronto in terms of giving the major city of Ottawa a little bit more in terms of legislative and regulatory tools for its toolbox to use to deal with these issues.

Mr. Mike Colle: So basically, Trevor, what you're saying is the committee should look at the fact that the one-size-fits-all approach may not work. What may help in Toronto may not help in Hamilton or help in Ottawa, so we should be looking at that kind of flexibility in letting some of the local regions decide some of the best ways of dealing with their transportation realities rather than having everything done from a cookie-cutter approach from Toronto.

1650

Mr. Trevor Haché: Certainly, it would seem that each city across the province, each municipality, is different, and so investment tools that might work in Toronto may not work in Ottawa. At the same time, they could very well work here.

What we're trying to emphasize is, give the city the legislative and regulatory tools to move forward with any number of these investment options and let them decide. There would obviously, I'm sure, be a fulsome debate that would occur. But right now the city is kind of handcuffed in terms of having these massive investments that are needed to operate and maintain the roads and yet not really currently having any way to raise the money to do it.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We have 30 seconds left.

Mr. Mike Colle: And I guess you still have that issue about all the Quebec construction workers coming across the border every day, clogging up Ontario roads. They're not paying any taxes of any kind. How are you ever going to get them to share in the cost?

Mr. Trevor Haché: There's certainly a lot of cross-border traffic, and that's a problem. Hopefully, with some of these investment tools, whether it's a property tax or highway tolls or bridge tolls or fuel tax, maybe some of those things would have an impact on that cross-border traffic.

Mr. Mike Colle: At the Champlain bridge you've got to start, I guess.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We have to move on. Geoff and Trevor, thank you very much for your input. We'll just move to the next party, the questions from the Conservatives. Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes. Thank you very much, Geoff and Mr. Stiles. It's a pleasure to meet you and in a general sense just to acknowledge your presentation. Thank you for the printed form. It's very important.

I don't think you'll find too many people disagreeing with the goal of the greenest city in Canada. It has all the money. They collect it. That's a bit of humour.

I would say that the sustainable urban form is an important discussion from a city perspective. I think the city of Toronto ranked amongst a number of leading cities in the world. I think Ottawa—I'm quite familiar with Ottawa as well. It's a laudable goal to try to rally people around a vision. Jim Watson served here as Minister of Municipal Affairs, and it has been a long battle about transit in Ottawa and trying to sort it out.

But I think you mentioned the key words to it all: the intensification, densification, shared-use residential and commercial. That cultural buy-in is very important. Education is where you're at now, and I think you have to educate the people, especially my generation, perhaps Mr. Colle's generation, Mr. Bartolucci I suppose, too. They like a bit more space.

I am familiar with density and intensification, having just been in Hong Kong. There's seven and a half million people in a space smaller than metro Toronto. It's the most efficient place I've ever been in my entire life. It's doable, but it's a cultural thing. We're a long way from there, to be honest.

Now, on the user pay thing, I probably agree with that too, because some of the material I've read on this is on charging people by vehicle miles travelled; it's called VMT. I think that's going to be one of the future models. It makes sense.

It's going to be difficult to tax—because it is a tax—people for infrastructure they think they've already paid for. But they don't realize, and they think—this is where the government, the Ministry of Transportation is here, has a job to do as well.

I'll give you an example. Gasoline: When they initiated the HST, if they had any vision at all, they could have realized that with every gallon of gas sold, and diesel as well, the government was getting 10 cents more. People were calling my office and saying, "How come gas has gone up so fast?" It was the HST. That's right. And not only that, it's a tax on a tax. That's about \$2 million.

I'm going to ask formally for Mr. Richmond, an excellent researcher, to get us the number, how much has been collected in gas just on the HST portion alone. The reason I say that is we have to allocate existing money. If I talk to my 128,000 constituents in Durham riding, which is a mix of urban and rural—it's typical of most ridings. Mr. Bartolucci is a former minister, and he lives in the Far North. You couldn't get anywhere without a car. You'd die; it's that simple. In my riding, 60% of the

area of the riding is rural. The average footprint of a farm is over 1,000 acres; some are 6,000 acres. On a concession where you had 10 families with 100 acres, now you have one farm with 1,000 acres. Small-town Ontario can't support this new tax base. There couldn't be an agricultural dealership, because you'd have one inventory and it would be a million-dollar tractor. So it has changed.

The fact is that they must have vehicles and sustainable roads, because that's where the infrastructure is.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): One minute.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm giving them the picture that there's no simple solution here. You need tagged money for users pay, but all I'm hearing right now is that Metrolinx wants 50 billion new dollars for metro. That's not Sudbury; that's not Ottawa; that's not Durham.

I'm saying I think you've got a great vision. You get Mr. Chiarelli and other members up there—Lisa MacLeod—to commit to some of the money here in Ontario from the HST on gas, and you'll be well on your way to having a sustainable source of revenue. Keep up the good work.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We're going to move to the third party. Rosario?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Geoff and Trevor. I appreciate the argument you're making around shifting toward a user-pay approach for roads, and also your support for the development of a complete streets policy, promotion of transit-oriented development and limiting further expansion of the urban boundary. I think all of these things are happening, perhaps at a very, very slow pace, but they are happening, and I think there is growing support for a lot of these ideas.

One of the things that I wanted to ask you about—it's true that when we think about Metrolinx and their proposal, there are a lot of big-ticket items that are going to be very costly, that we're all going to have to deal with. It's a \$50-billion investment that we're going to have to make over a 25-year period, plus \$20 billion of operational expenses, and I suspect that number will grow as we get on with the jobs. These are just projections we're making, but it's going to be a lot more expensive than that, I suspect.

But as we talk about these big-ticket items, sometimes what we miss are some other suggestions or incentives that we could give or provide by way of government initiatives or by way of business initiatives that are fair and would make it easier or more affordable for people to leave their car at home. Have you given any thought to what some of these ideas might be?

Mr. Trevor Haché: Certainly. It's Trevor speaking again. Thank you for the important question. There are a lot of cities and jurisdictions around the world that are actually experimenting with free public transportation to really drive up usage. If the city of Ottawa were given more regulatory and legislative tools, it could, for example, reduce the cost of public transportation if it chose to do so, if it was really interested in dealing with gridlock and sustainable transportation and encouraging that as much as possible.

Our concern is that right now the city does not have those legislative and regulatory tools to raise that initial money, and yet there's a responsibility, I would think, within Ontario. We're one of the wealthiest jurisdictions in the country and in the world. When you look at the global south and the fact that people there are experiencing the worst consequences of climate change, we really have a responsibility here in Canada, in Ontario and in the city of Ottawa to do our part to reduce our carbon footprint. So our priority is asking the government of Ontario to give the city the regulatory and legislative tools that it would use to really drive up the use of public transportation and cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

If you look at the city of London, England, for example, the Conservative mayor there has recognized the cost-effectiveness of investments in cycling infrastructure, and recently announced a plan to invest over a billion dollars over the coming years in cycling infrastructure. If the city of Ottawa were given more tools to raise funds, it could perhaps do something similar. There would be a co-benefit of that in that it would encourage a lot of people to get on their bicycle, and that would lead to more active lifestyles and fewer payments in terms of the government of Ontario having to deal with the health care costs—not only associated with obesity and inactive lifestyles, but also, we need to remember that air pollution from tailpipes, that we all are contributing to when we drive our cars, is costing the government of Ontario massive amounts of money to treat premature death and disease related to air pollution coming out of the ends of our tailpipes. We've certainly got nothing against motorists—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We have one minute left.

1700

Mr. Trevor Haché: I myself am a motorist. It's very clear that people in some circumstances need their cars, but what we want to ensure is that the full life cycle cost of providing them the infrastructure to use those cars is factored into the decision-making process with regard to which types of road projects are funded by the Ontario government.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thanks, Trevor. We don't have much time, but I did want to ask you about the transit-pricing approach that's used in Ottawa. Can you tell us briefly how that is holding up? What are the pros, the cons—who's happy, who's sad, who's mad?

Mr. Trevor Haché: As far as I know—I'm not sure if I understood the question, but the cost of a cash fare to ride the bus here in Ottawa is amongst the most expensive in the entire country. I understand that there are other jurisdictions that are really trying to make public transit more affordable for people to ride on, and we would certainly like to see the province give the city the tools that it needs—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Geoff, it's the Chair here; I have to cut you off—Trevor, I should say. I just want to—

Mr. Mike Colle: Can I add that they should have also built the hockey arena downtown—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I have to keep time on the clock.

Mr. Mike Colle: That would have helped the traffic problem.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Geoff and Trevor, I want to thank you very much for your input. We have to move on to the next presenter. Thank you very much.

Mr. Geoff Stiles: Okay, thank you.

TRANSPORT ACTION ONTARIO

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The 5 o'clock deputant has cancelled, so we'll move to the 5:20 deputant, Transport Action Ontario, Mr. Peter Miasek. I hope I pronounced your name correctly.

Mr. Peter Miasek: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I understand you want to take a photograph, so if you could do it discreetly, quickly, that would be great.

Mr. Peter Miasek: I'll start talking. Will this count on my time or not?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Yes.

Mr. Peter Miasek: Okay. I'm Peter Miasek, president of Transport Action Ontario. We are Canada's oldest and largest non-government organization focusing on sustainable transportation. We spoke to you last year on a different topic.

You've got our brief in front of you. You've heard a lot about urban transit as a solution to congestion; we want to talk about the other side of public transit, namely intercity passenger rail and bus. Briefly, it's a shambles. VIA Rail implemented serious cutbacks last year, on top of the cuts they did in previous years. Service is now drastically down from what it was in the 1980s, and you'll see that in our brief. Of course, Ontario completely killed the Ontario Northland route up to Cochrane. Intercity bus is also in decline, as Greyhound keeps cutting back.

This has caused a lot of hardship. There is economic hardship and there is personal hardship. There was an article in the Toronto Star on March 17 about various folks in Welland who can no longer work in Toronto because they can't get there in time via rail or bus. The problem is even worse up north. It's hard for us to fathom why these declines are happening. All the stars and planets seem to be aligning in favour of more intercity passenger service: increased urban congestion; increased corporate tendency to locate where there's good transit and good intercity connectivity; aging demographic—folks like me with gray hair who don't wish to drive and would rather take the train or bus; increasing energy costs and costs of auto ownership; and increasing environmental concerns. Canada is the only G8 country that is not investing heavily in intercity rail. Why are we going backwards?

We, Transport Action, initiated a public awareness campaign last summer called National Dream Renewed. It's designed to educate the public and elected officials that it doesn't have to be so. We've been holding town

hall meetings across the province, normally hosted by a local member of Parliament or a mayor. We've been to Sarnia, Stratford, Kitchener, Welland, Kingston, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay, and we'll be in Toronto next Saturday. What we've heard is very sobering: individual commuting challenges like the folks in Welland and real cases of personal tragedy as family connections are lost. Also, mayors are very concerned that their cities are being isolated and will lose jobs or residents. It's just incredible, for example, that Stratford does not have a convenient train service for theatre-goers from the GTHA. We've definitely tapped into a major groundswell of public discontent. Our goal is to make this an election issue, both federally and provincially.

Okay, so what can the province do? Four specific recommendations: First, formally declare a provincial interest in intercity passenger rail and start working together with the feds on an agreement on passenger rail. Normally the province has backed away from VIA Rail; that's a federal responsibility. But there are precedents in Ontario and good reasons why the province should get more active. There's a very nice model in the States that Amtrak has where they work together on agreements. It has been very successful, and there's information on that in our brief.

Second, create a Metrolinx North to plan and coordinate rail, bus and ferry operations in the north. The vision we see is a rail spine with bus feeders. Also included would be mobility hubs. For example, it makes no sense that Sudbury has two VIA stations, one Greyhound bus station and a transit terminal, all many kilometres from each other.

Third item: Declare a provincial—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have a minute left.

Mr. Peter Miasek: One minute? I think I can just make it. Declare a provincial interest in all future short-line rail abandonments. The major freight railways are shutting down their branch lines, and often no level of government is stepping in to preserve these, so they get converted to trails and are lost forever. CP's branch line from Smiths Falls to Mattawa—when you lost that, that was a national tragedy. All of CP's freight now goes through next to two nuclear plants and through the GTA. We ask rhetorically: Why would the province ever allow this? They would never abandon a highway corridor, and they shouldn't.

Our last point describes various ways that VIA Rail and GO Transit can work together operationally to reduce costs, consistent with the Drummond report.

So, four specific recommendations, all of which are doable, and we urge the province to get working on all of these. I'm done.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We'll move to questions. The opposition: Mr. Milligan.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Yes. Thank you very much for coming here today. It's greatly appreciated. I have a couple of questions. I'll try to get through a few of them. One of the first questions I have is, we've heard a lot

about the importance of the Ring of Fire and the development of what that potentially could be for the province of Ontario. What would you say would be the best mode of transportation—the most cost-effective, environmentally sound and socially responsible—road or rail?

Mr. Peter Miasek: I think, in general, rail has got it beat on all counts. This would be part of the Metrolinx North agency, of course, to figure out where to put it, where it connects to, etc. If my colleagues have anything to say on either of these items, please chip in.

Mr. Greg Gormick: The Ring of Fire is an obvious one for rail service. This is a green field, if you like. So, what? We're going to go and do what we did all over here? We're going to put the highways in and we're going to obliterate the environment and we're going to have a system that doesn't operate at maximum efficiency? It has to be rail. It could be connected directly to our poor, beleaguered Ontario Northland, which sure could use some help right now.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Okay. Another question I have here is: Has anyone done a recent cost-benefit analysis on intercity passenger rail or bus?

Mr. Peter Miasek: We figured that might be asked, so I'll have Greg answer that one.

Mr. Greg Gormick: Not in Canada. We have fallen way behind in studying these things. It's funny, though, for the land of free enterprise, look south. If you'd like, I'll send you some of the material. The one I always think of is a thing called the Downeaster, which is a service from Boston to Portland to Brunswick, Maine. There have been full studies done on that that have shown the impact. The one thing I always mention—I know it's nice to talk about the environment; it's important. But trains are economic builders. That's the whole point. I wrote the concept plan for the Conservative MP—I'm not of any party, I should mention; I've worked for all three of you at different times—from Peterborough. He's a car dealer, as a matter of fact. He wanted a plan to bring service back to Peterborough. I called it This Train Means Business.

The US Department of Commerce will tell you that in any rail passenger project, for every dollar you put in, you're going to see three to four dollars' worth of economic development. People always say, "Oh, rail passenger service: It requires a subsidy." I heard something here earlier about some investment in highways, but that was an investment. Why is a subsidy what we talk about with the railway? Railways are economic builders. We get a lot back.

1710

Mr. Peter Miasek: We would certainly support a cost-benefit analysis. You have to put in the intangibles like less accidents, less air pollution, less congestion. Those all have costs that need to be included in a cost-benefit.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Okay, good. Would you be able to tell me a bit more about your National Dream Renewed campaign?

Mr. Peter Miasek: Greg is the program manager.

Mr. Greg Gormick: That's the campaign I've been running. We had advanced notice that the federal government was going to cut VIA's budget, and VIA in turn was going to cut services. So we decided, because rail passenger service has always been at the core of Transport Action—we were formed in 1976 as Transport 2000, on the recommendation of the head of the railway transport committee of the CTC. Rail passenger we see as being the spine of any national transportation system. Knowing the cuts were coming, we realized most people don't understand the VIA situation. It's very complex; it's very political. We figured it was time—this is really the last time. In 1976, when the CTC had their transcontinental rail passenger hearings in advance of the creation of VIA—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have one minute left.

Mr. Greg Gormick: —the word that came back from the people was, "Rail service is at an irreducible minimum." It's below that now.

We're out there to try and educate the public and get feedback because in the end, since government hasn't done it ever, we're going to create a vision plan, a blue-sky vision for VIA, so that we can be part of the group of G8 nations who are all investing in rail passenger service logically and wisely.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We're going to move to the third party.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to congratulate and thank Transport Action Ontario for all the great work that you do. Obviously, five minutes or just 10 minutes isn't enough for people like yourselves, who have so much expertise.

I appreciate the presentation. By the way, I like the idea of a Metrolinx North. I'm not going to ask you about that, because I already read it and it's a good idea.

Mr. Peter Miasek: I don't think they'd be operators, but they'd certainly be coordinators.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I like the concept. But I want to ask you something that many of you have expertise on. Are there low-cost ways to make better use of existing rail lines?

Mr. Greg Gormick: Absolutely. Part of the problem we have in Canada is that we haven't—there are two parts in any public transportation system. The first thing you have to establish, and I think we're all mature to finally admit it: Every form of transportation in this country and in every nation somehow runs with a subsidy. We have completely blurred the lines. I have people say to me, "Oh, a subsidy for rail passenger service? It should be profitable." There's no such thing as a profitable rail passenger system. Certain lines, or any highway, or any air system or any public transportation system: If we followed that line of reasoning, I could get rid of a lot of things and it would save us money. Let's get rid of police, emergency services, hospitals, education. It's what they put back into our communities.

The problem we have with rail passenger service nationally is that we've always given them subsidies to operate the systems without modernizing them. It's the old song Love and Marriage: "You can't have one without the other." If you're going to run a system that is continually aging and not being renewed, it's going to get more and more expensive, until you get to the point where someone can say, "It's just out of line." That's exactly what happened with Ontario Northland. That service should have been modernized decades ago. Instead, the operating costs went sky-high. There are horses for courses. We need modern equipment.

Take a look at the TTC. Look at how they invest, the increasing investment. Look at GO Transit. GO Transit runs modern equipment. If they were running that service with that crummy old single-level equipment, which got stuck on Ontario Northland, that was built in the 1970s—the costs of running GO Transit would have gone through the roof.

We need to invest. It can be the most cost-effective form of intercity transportation, but this iron horse needs to be fed. In Canada, it hasn't been well fed for decades.

Mr. Peter Miasek: And there's a provincial role in that.

Mr. Andrew Schulz: Can I just add one comment to that? A previous deputant from the automobile dealers association was advocating building more highway infrastructure. We have existing rail infrastructure. I agree with your premise: Let's use it. If you go along many rail corridors, they're highly underutilized. People died in the 19th century building these things. Let's honour their memory and use them adequately, before we go off and build something brand new from scratch.

Mr. Greg Gormick: And a double-track railway with signalling has the capacity of a 16-lane highway. Can you imagine what would happen if we didn't have a four-track main line heading west out of Toronto with those GO trains? It would take 32 lanes of traffic to duplicate what GO Transit delivers every hour.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Tell me, you probably had discussions with government people over the years, maybe over the last 10 years, about high-speed rail. Have we made any progress?

Mr. Greg Gormick: No, and we've done it the wrong way, because we always talk about big bang high-speed rail like we're suddenly going to have the shinkansen system all over southern Ontario. Well, if you look at the rest of the world, they knew you had to walk before you ran. We have a minimal rail passenger service even in the Quebec-Windsor corridor.

If we were to do what the Obama administration is doing now, they're saying "higher-speed rail." We want to go from 80 miles per hour to 110, then from 110 to 125, and at that point, we electrify. And then when we get to the point where we have saturated those lines, then we talk about the new route segments. But they've taken an incremental approach. Instead, we have this idea that we're suddenly going to build these huge new systems—\$30 billion to \$40 billion to build a high-speed electrified

line just in the triangle between Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. But that kind of money spread across the system on various corridors—there are other corridors in this country that would justify investment, and it's frequency, it's speed. I call it "higher-performance rail."

A colleague of mine in the United States has come up with this concept and he says: "You know, an airline doesn't just sell speed. They sell comfort, ticket price, frequency." That's how we need to look at the improvement of rail passenger corridors, to work towards that day when we can, perhaps, have a 300-kilometre-per-hour service. We need to hit a few steps before we get there.

Mr. Peter Miasek: And I just want to remind you the province needs to declare interest in intercity rail.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. I have to move on.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you very much.

Mr. Greg Gormick: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government side, Mrs. Cansfield?

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you very much. Thank you, gentlemen, for your enthusiasm, It's delightful to listen to you.

I had the pleasure of working with Cliff Mackay for many years, an extraordinary gentleman. I think of the first time we met. I got on a train that he had arranged in Ottawa, with cargo, and up in the engine—I thoroughly enjoyed myself. And I ended up with a whistle to boot, which was nice.

It's interesting when you talk about the investment and the need for rail. I can share with you that the reason I had met with Cliff in the first place was that as Minister of Transportation—and it is the Liberal government that put in the concept of multi-modal and hubs and looking at the whole concept of how to improve transportation through the hub idea—is that we actually had to put rail and air back into the Ministry of Transportation because the previous government had removed both of those desks. In fairness, part of the reason really was more—and I will say this—on the issue of cargo movement than it was on passenger movement when we were talking about rail. And it was the logistics industry that we were working with because we knew how much we could move by rail. Of course, there are some things you can move by rail—or by boat—that you can't move by truck.

So we embarked together on how we could work with Transport Canada. Because as you know, they play an integral role in the whole railway system. It's not like Ontario can unilaterally make these decisions.

It was interesting to note that in your deputation that federal presence has to be there or in fact we cannot proceed, and know whether it's on rail or whether it's on air or whether it's on that H₂O highway—all of them. But I did like your concept and, again, I share with you because it's one we adopted on the multi-modal. I would be interested—and I think Minister Bartolucci would share with you the work that he has done in the north, in particular on that whole concept, and I believe it's still

well under way—on how to improve the challenges facing the north for transportation.

So I really would be interested on your concepts of hubs. When I look at hubs, I mean really, truly "multi-multi-hub," so rail, air—because we have the Great Lakes—obviously the train system and of course the road system for logistics, and how you see an interconnection especially in the north and how that can be improved.

Mr. Andrew Schulz: Can I give an example of two cities that I'm familiar with in the north: Sudbury and North Bay? Sudbury, as Peter outlined earlier, has four terminals: two VIA stations; an intercity bus terminal—I believe on the Greyhound set-up; and its municipal transit terminal, which are all located in different locations.

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North Bay, Ontario, is much better, because the province invested there many years ago to put in a station for the Ontario Northland railway, which also serves as a terminal for intercity buses. I believe we should use models like that, where the province puts an effort into maybe setting aside some infrastructure funding to construct terminals like this, and they should ideally be located downtown.

Mr. Mike Colle: Unlike Ottawa.

Mr. Andrew Schulz: Yes, exactly. Actually, in North Bay the intermodal terminal is not downtown. It would be better if the city's municipal terminal were also there.

Mr. Peter Miasek: Let me just pick up on that. We're a poor NGO, so we'd certainly be thrilled to work with MTO on our ideas or present them. I don't think we have the resources to do a full study without more expertise and money than we've got at this point. So as a follow-up, what do you recommend we do as a next step? Contact someone in MTO?

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Absolutely. As we move forward on the whole multi-modal process—and it is ongoing—I think what you have to offer is of significant value in how we proceed with transportation in the north.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 30 seconds left.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: We spend a lot of time on gridlock in the south; there's a different kind of gridlock in the north.

Mr. Peter Miasek: We'll send you an email and start a dialogue, and you can flip it on.

Mr. Mike Colle: Is the VIA train from Toronto to Brantford still running?

Mr. Greg Gormick: Yes. Through Brantford the service is okay, but the service up through Stratford and Kitchener is a shambles, and we now have places like Sarnia where they've gone from four round trips a day several years ago to one round trip, and they've lost their bus service. I've seen this, because I've been across the country—at least from Halifax to Thunder Bay on this campaign. All across the country, the bus system—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): My apologies. I have to move on. Thanks very much for taking the time to be here.

CARPENTERS' UNION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Our next presenter is from the Carpenters' Union: Mr. Mike Yorke. You can introduce your guest. You have five minutes for your presentation, and then we'll go to questions—five minutes from each party.

Mr. Mike Yorke: All right. I'll do that. To the members of the committee, thank you very much. My name is Mike Yorke. I'm the president of Carpenters' Local 27, and with me is Andy Manahan of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario. I'll do a short presentation and Andy will probably pick it up for one or two minutes, and then we'd field the Q and A together.

First, I'd like to say that the Carpenters' Union is glad to be here to urge the provincial government to take immediate and direct action that's required to alleviate the tremendous traffic gridlock in the GTA. We feel that the streamlined implementation of the Big Move, proposed by Metrolinx, is the most effective way for government to do this.

You may understand that I'm the president of Local 27 in Toronto, but our organization is clearly provincial. We have over 22,000 members in the province, working in all sectors of the construction industry. Feel free to take a look at our materials both here and later on. You can get a good sense of what the Carpenters' Union does and our commitment to training, our commitment to youth, our commitment to the future of this industry through developing training programs that, of course, are for our young people but also for returning Canadian soldiers under the Helmets to Hardhats program, and we have a great training program for youth from communities at risk, known as CHOICE, which is parallel to the building trades Hammer Heads, which you may have heard about.

In terms of the congestion and the traffic gridlock, government and many groups have all looked at this, but based on many studies and reports, we know that the average commute for Torontonians has risen to 80 minutes. Toronto is now one of the worst places in North America for commuting, if not the worst, equally bad or maybe worse than Los Angeles. Also, pollution caused by traffic congestion has led to about 400 premature deaths annually and 1,700 hospitalizations in the city on an annual basis.

The OECD has released a report that determined that the annual costs for commuters in our region have reached about \$2.73 billion, and our Toronto Region Board of Trade has highlighted the lost productivity, which is estimated to be about \$6 billion annually. Over the last number of years, these reports have made clear what many people of Toronto already know: We really need to do something about traffic and gridlock congestion.

The Carpenters' Union would like to recognize the work done by Metrolinx—that's an agency created in 2006 by the Ontario government—and we hope that a number of its proposals can be implemented. A \$50-

billion transportation plan adopted by Metrolinx called the Big Move represents the most substantive and ready-to-implement plan currently before us today. We know that the government has already committed over \$11 billion to implement the plan, and we encourage the government to continue to invest.

In terms of construction jobs, we agree with Metrolinx statements that it will create thousands of jobs in terms of the 19-kilometre Eglinton cross-town LRT.

Other upcoming projects within the Big Move include the Sheppard East LRT, the Finch West LRT and the Hurontario-Main LRT. We recognize that that will create thousands of jobs and spin-off in the economy that benefits all Torontonians—and, in fact, actually, all of Ontario.

To ensure the most bang for the buck in terms of Ontario's economic benefits, we believe that there are a number of other proposals that need to be looked at as well.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You've got another minute.

Mr. Mike Yorke: Another minute? We would say that contracts should be awarded to Ontario-based companies or consortiums, ensuring that employment opportunities which arise from awarding these contracts are provided to Ontarians, and possibly to require project labour agreements. Also, proponents and successful bidders must be made to ensure that their job site personnel have proper health and safety training.

There's probably another group of proposals that we can deal with under the questions and answers, but I'd like to give Andy a little bit of time to make a few comments.

Mr. Andy Manahan: Last Friday, I gave a pre-budget submission to Minister Sousa, and I've been banging the drum on this for the last couple of months. I know the committee has heard a lot. The dedicated funding is very important to get the public onside with whatever the revenue tools are. My suggestion is that in the upcoming budget, an account be created where the funds, once they've decided—once Metrolinx has submitted its investment strategy and once there has been some more dialogue on which ones are the best ones to go forward with—that that account could be used to be a transparent—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'm sorry. I have to stop you here and go to questions.

Mr. Andy Manahan: Okay. Maybe we can get that during Q&A.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The third party?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, both. It's good to see you again, Michael. You're everywhere these days. I don't know how you divide yourself into so many parts.

I agree with the comments you made about construction jobs. It's not just construction, but if we have money for subways, and when we build subways, it's good, and when we build trains, it's good for jobs as they relate to trains—buses as well. It's a big creator of jobs all around, and we agree with you on that.

I don't know that you got a chance to talk about this: "Ensuring that the contracts for the building of these systems are provided to contractors that hire local workers, provide the best health and safety training, and benefit local communities..." You didn't get a chance to talk about that. I wanted to ask you about that. So, please, if you have something more to add.

Mr. Mike Yorke: We think that that's a real advantage for the Ontario economy. We have many world-class contractors, but also we've made a strong commitment to health and safety training. Many of the contractors that are locally based have made a real, clear commitment to employing returning Canadian soldiers under the Helmets to Hardhats program, as well as opened the door to young people in our communities through the Choice program, through the apprenticeship program, and through what we call in the building trades the Hammer Heads program. In partnership with many locally based companies, we feel that we bring excellent value and quality to the equation, and we think that that needs to be recognized.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So, tell me, you've probably had discussions with Metrolinx, and maybe the ministry and the minister as well, around these items, including local workers. Is there any positive feedback you're getting?

Mr. Mike Yorke: I think there is positive feedback. In fact, actually, we spoke at a public meeting recently with Metrolinx and there was very good feedback from Bruce McCuaig to say that that was going to be part of the overall approach. I think that there's some implementation of that in the York-Weston area currently. There's some ongoing communications with the community groups there, and I think that that plays real value into the local communities.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes. I'm strongly supportive of that. That's why I was glad to see it and glad to know you were pushing it and promoting it.

You also had down the page, "Contracts should be awarded to Ontario-based companies or consortiums," and I don't think you had a chance to speak to that. Could you comment on that?

Mr. Mike Yorke: Well, let's put it this way: Our organization has been partners—we've been around this city for 130 years. Many of our contractors have been in existence for close to that, so they've made a real commitment to the health and the economy of this area, and we feel that there needs to be some recognition, as we're expending billions of dollars—\$50 billion in the Big Move.

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In fact, there's a very good comment by a journalist by the name of John Lorinc of Spacing and the Globe and Mail. What he looked at was the expenditure of over \$50 billion in the Big Move. After the shooting in the Danzig Street area, he proposed that the idea would be to take a look at employing young people from these at-risk communities, that maybe there's an opportunity there to send these young people on the right path. If we give them a

decent career in the construction industry and associated industries, that's a better career path for these young people.

There's no reason in my mind why we shouldn't take some of that equation and say, "Look, if we're spending \$50 billion, let's make sure the maximum people in our society benefit from that."

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Do you have a position on private-public approaches used by Metrolinx?

Mr. Mike Yorke: In the Carpenters' Union, no. Well, our position would be that we believe that in the funding of the construction, that's acceptable to us, because there is a track record in the health care system in Ontario. In terms of the operations and maintenance, we would have some concerns about that. But in terms of the funding of the construction, we don't have an issue with that.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thanks, Michael.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): To the government.

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, just one correction here. On your brochure—you think we don't read your brochures, eh?

Mr. Mike Yorke: Uh-oh. Don't tell me that.

Mr. Mike Colle: An old history teacher, I used to live on Hocken Avenue—I think Greg Gormick would know this.

Mr. Mike Yorke: Okay. What do I need to correct?

Mr. Mike Colle: He was the mayor of Toronto, and he ran on the platform of building the decking underneath the Prince Edward Viaduct. He lost his first election. But he was the guy who had the foresight to say that when you're building that viaduct, some day in the future—back in 1913, he said it—maybe there might be a subway that would go across the Danforth across the Don River. Mayor Horatio Hocken stuck his neck out. Eventually, they did deck the viaduct underneath, so in 1964, when they came across the Bloor-Danforth subway, lo and behold, they had the decking done by good carpenters, and they were able to get across the Don River. So please ask your brochure maker to include Mayor Horatio Hocken, Toronto's mayor in 1913, for his foresight.

Mr. Mike Yorke: I gave all the credit to R.C. Harris. I'm sorry.

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, too much to him. It was Horatio Hocken. I know that because I lived on Hocken Avenue. Anyway, that's a little bit of history.

The other thing is about the jobs in construction on building transit and transportation. How do we get people to understand that it's not just a tunnel boring machine—all the complex hard labour, the grit that goes into building these stations, moving utilities. I don't think we've done a good enough job over the years. It's the same with building highways. We never explain to people the number of good, high-paying jobs that are created when we build our highways and when we build our subways. Can we do a better job of trying to explain it to people? And it's not just—I know; I visited the site of the new Humber River Hospital. There's 2,000 people working on the site in the temporary offices doing all the

AutoCAD stuff, working in an office beside the guys pouring cement etc. for the hospital. How can we do a better job of explaining to people? Because people say, “We don’t want to spend this money, because what’s in it for us?”

Mr. Mike Yorke: You’re absolutely right. That is a concern of ours. A lot of times, folks will look at the construction industry and say, “Well, those are just temporary jobs. Why do we need to make that investment?”

But as MPP Rosario Marchese also pointed out, we recognize that our industry is an incredible job generator. Every dollar spent in construction generates five or six other dollars throughout the economy, whether it’s in the manufacture of facilities such as hospitals or in the buses or the transit systems.

I recognize what you’ve pointed out, and that’s one of the reasons why we put together this brochure. We wanted to take a look at the history of our organization. We’ve been around for 130 years. People may not know that; they may not be aware of that. We wanted to point out that we’ve been around this city. We’ve contributed a lot, our members, over the years. But we also wanted to point out that we’re involved in some fantastic projects. So when money is spent in the economy on transit, we’re there. We’re there from the beginning to the end. We also wanted to recognize the great work of the engineers and the architects and the other contributors to making a better society, and more green, infrastructure-wise. If it’s going to be the focus on the transit side, absolutely, we want to play a role in that.

Mr. Mike Colle: I think also—

Interjection.

Mr. Mike Colle: Go ahead.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I just wanted to ask a question, because you identified in this wonderful Congestion Management and in your other—I think right at the end—

Mr. Andy Manahan: The Kitchen Lindsey report.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Yes—a number of strengths and weaknesses of the revenue—

Mr. Andy Manahan: Yes.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Have you decided—and I chuckled because I learned something I didn’t know before, the tragedy of the commons—

Mr. Andy Manahan: Overgrazing.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Overgrazing.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have one minute left.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I wonder what the sheep are going to do.

Having said that, have you decided on what you think the best revenue instruments might be?

Mr. Andy Manahan: We’re still having that discussion right now, but we have a general preference for user-pay, so dynamic road pricing, shaving off the peak hour. You’re not going to really impact, for example, congestion through sales taxes or other measures like that. It has to be more direct.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Great. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We’ll go to the opposition.

Mr. John O’Toole: Thank you very much, Mike, as well as Andy. I appreciate the thoughtful input. There are really two separate issues here.

I recognize, too, that the work that the Carpenters’ Union has done and the importance of jobs and the creation of jobs. We could argue about whether they’re protected by the kind of organizations you’re with or not. I think we get by that if we really try hard enough to recognize we want safety, skills and efficiencies. We want all those things done in a safe manner.

Mr. Andy Manahan: Sure.

Mr. John O’Toole: And it’s important. You need skilled trades and you need methods of training and all the rest of it. I am very familiar with the Hammer Heads program. I’m working with people in my particular riding. I spoke to them this past week about educating youth at risk. There’s a lot of work being done; Alvin Curling is involved and others. I can tell you right now, I know a fair amount about it because I have a constituent in my riding, a skilled tradesperson, two trades, who has done it in Brockville, Windsor, all over the place.

This should be in the budget, frankly. I’m serious. They could get Andrea on side very quickly, and I’ll tell you why. You have the infrastructure in place. We have the youth who have no employment; it’s the highest single unemployed group. Skilled training and apprenticeships are the answer. We can get that done. They could put in the budget and it would solve one of the NDP asks for the budget.

But to get to the issue before us, I do recognize there’s been some work done, Andy. I’ve looked at the report, as Donna has as well. One of the suggestions is congestion pricing. It’s actually a significant idea. It’s called demand-side management, technically. It’s the same as they’re doing with smart meters, really; it’s the same deal. You manage activities by using different tools. They’re not smart enough here to do that. The 407 does it; they have some movement of volumes by using tolling peaks.

Now, GO Transit could fill all of the trains by changing the price. Look, I use Presto; I use the trains. I talk to Bruce McCuaig pretty well every week.

Mr. Mike Colle: Who hasn’t?

Mr. John O’Toole: No, no, I talk to him on the policy, not politics. Politics is 90% baloney.

But here’s the real issue: I said to him that you cannot get on some of the trains at Oshawa, and they’re full at Ajax or Pickering. I said, “If you change the price by five cents, you’ll change behaviour. They’ll take the 7:20 train.” Do you understand? That’s what you call demand-side management and that’s—

Mr. Andy Manahan: At the back of the report, the Congestion Management report has a section on intelligent transportation systems—

Mr. John O’Toole: ITS is part of it.

Mr. Andy Manahan: —and that's to have open-source, using the wider universe of people to come up with apps that would tell you the train is congested now; you might want to try another time, and all sorts of things—

Mr. John O'Toole: And you could have an app on the iPhone.

Mr. Andy Manahan: All of that.

Mr. John O'Toole: There are people out there who have solutions. We had one the other day here, a group that was called the Chip group. They had a terrific idea and I hope somebody on the government side picked it up. It's also a tool that could be used to feed to the app about what trains are late or what—all of it could be done—

Mr. Andy Manahan: Could we call that the O'Toole?

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes. No.

Mr. Andy Manahan: Pun intended.

Mr. John O'Toole: There are two things I want to respond to—

Mr. Andy Manahan: It's late in the day.

Mr. John O'Toole: One of the tools they're going to have to use is user-pay. There's already work being done on it. It's called vehicle miles travelled. That has to be one of the tools that this committee, if they're going to do any genuine work—

Mr. Andy Manahan: I only have one for each party. This is—

Mr. John O'Toole: I've actually read a couple of reports online.

Mr. Andy Manahan: This is from the Rand Corp. It's about how to implement VMT or VKT, so I'll give one to each party and you can decide how you want to—

Mr. John O'Toole: I always say these things, Andy, because—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): One minute left.

Mr. John O'Toole: —I'm not hearing much of innovation. I'm hearing, "Let's keep doing what we're doing." Well, it doesn't work. It's all retroactive. It's all after the problem is out of control. Now, \$50 billion? Are you kidding? There's a lot of money being spent on advertising—

Mr. Mike Colle: Remember Horatio Hocken. They threw him out of office—

Mr. John O'Toole: I understand that, but this is \$50 billion. That's half the operating budget of Ontario.

Mr. Mike Colle: Remember Horatio Hocken.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All right.

Mr. John O'Toole: Please, it's my time.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Let's have order.

Mr. John O'Toole: I only put it out there because you have put a lot into this, both the presentations. The innovation part of it is the congestion management—that's very important—and also the skilled trades part. That's a given. You can't just have Joe Blow build this stuff.

The other one is the ITS. ITS could be—if you're going to toll roads, it has to be integrated with ITS. That's the only way you can move the volumes there, too. And there's a way of doing it—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I have to cut you off.

Mike and Andy, thank you very much for coming. Thanks for your input.

This committee stands adjourned until Monday, April 15, at 2 p.m.

The committee adjourned at 1741.

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