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of Ontario

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

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des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 10 April 2013

Mercredi 10 avril 2013

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 10 April 2013

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 10 avril 2013

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE
LE CODE DE LA ROUTE

Mr. Murray moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 34, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act in respect of permit denials and out-of-province service and evidence in certain proceedings and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act / Projet de loi 34, Loi visant à modifier le Code de la route en ce qui concerne les refus relatifs aux certificats d'immatriculation et la signification et les preuves extra-provinciales dans certaines instances, et à apporter une modification corrélative à la Loi sur les infractions provinciales.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Debate?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will be sharing my time with the member from Oakville, who is the parliamentary assistant in the ministry.

As of July 2010, there were nearly \$1 billion in defaulted POA fines. This is not including parking offences; this is serious things like speeding and dangerous driving. These are owed to our Ontario municipalities through offences under 243 acts, municipal bylaws and certain federal statutes.

Principally, we're talking about two pieces of legislation being amended today: the Compulsory Automobile Insurance Act and the Highway Traffic Act. They make up, respectively, 37% and 33% of the total defaulted in this amount; however, HTA represents 47% of total charges in default compared to only 7% under the Compulsory Automobile Insurance Act. We appreciate the challenges faced by municipalities and that this billion dollars—which derives a great deal of cost to government because of accidents; this is loss of life, damage to property and a great deal of the problems we face on our roads and the safety of our streets and the safety of our communities.

I'd like to say right off the top that we're very proud in Ontario to be consistently rated as having the safest roads and highways in North America, which is quite remarkable given how vast our territory is, how hostile our weather can be—especially in the wintertime—that we are able to have safer roads than warmer climes like Arizona or Georgia or places that don't face some of the extreme weather events that we face here.

We will be leading this process, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to just take you a little bit through some of the things we have done. This really started with the 2012 budget, which identified expanding the use of vehicle licence plate denials as a consideration. It was said at the time that, if implemented, not only could this improve municipal collection of defaulted fines and promote the administration of justice; it could also enhance road safety by making those who break the rules of the road and ignore the consequences more identifiable to police.

The ministry is chairing a province-wide municipal working group that has collaboratively identified a specific set of initiatives for further exploration that will improve the collection of defaulted fines. The working group has benefited from the participation of various municipal stakeholders, all of whom have expressed satisfaction with the progress to date. I want to thank my colleague Minister Jeffrey, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, for her leadership and work with the AMO round table in maintaining a very positive conversation between the government of Ontario and our municipal partners as we've gone through the development of this. We could not have done it without her support and without our friends at AMO.

Over the years, the province has given municipalities new and enhanced tools for fine enforcement, in addition to the existing tools. This government has been very active on this file for nine years, incrementally bringing forward new improvements. For example, drivers who fail to pay fines for traffic offences have had their driver's licences suspended until the fines are paid. Previously, plate owners who failed to pay parking or red light camera tickets are not permitted to renew their plate stickers until the fines are paid.

The proposed expansion of plate denial would do the following things: It would apply to individuals whose fine defaults stem from motor-vehicle-related—primarily HTA and CAIA—offences, and will also apply retroactively for a specified period of time to all plates owned by a defaulter in certain circumstances. It would be supported by a simplified payment process that allows the money owed to be collected at ServiceOntario loca-

tions, similar to the current process for unpaid parking tickets.

There are other provinces that have done this. One of the things we've discovered is that sometimes people have multiple plates and they will just substitute the plates out. This will prevent that from happening, because it will cover all plates under the ownership of that person or in that household. Furthermore, by using ServiceOntario, we avoid costs and simplify the system, and take some of the pressure off municipalities and the courts in doing so.

Additionally, the proposal would give municipalities the authority to issue part I offence notices to out-of-province owners of vehicles involved in red light camera and failure-to-stop-for-school-bus offences in Ontario, and ensure that Ontario courts accept certified documents from other jurisdictions for the prosecution of these owner liability offences, as well as for parking infractions.

I just want to take a moment to thank some of our friends: Mayor Watson and the city council in Ottawa, and I want to also acknowledge the Minister of Labour, the member for Ottawa Centre, because this really started with a private member's bill a couple of years ago by the Minister of Labour, with the support of Mayor Watson and the city council in Ottawa. They brought forward this idea largely because they were having great problems in eastern Ontario, in the Ottawa Valley and in the city of Ottawa because of the number of offences that are committed by our friends in Quebec. That's not to take a shot at Quebec; I'm sure it's equally true in reverse for Ontarians in Quebec. This will actually allow municipalities—Hawkesbury, Cornwall, Ottawa, Nepean and other communities—to actively, more effectively enforce their fines. It's a very important first step for border communities.

The same is true—one of the other major advocates for this has been our friend Mayor Canfield in Kenora. Certainly anyone from northwestern Ontario knows the very close relationship between Manitoba and northwestern Ontario. Almost every Winnipegger has their cottage in Kenora or Dryden, and many people there send their kids to school and shop in Winnipeg, a relationship I'm particularly fond of, and remember God's country up there in the beautiful country of northern Ontario.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: That's why we think you're a northerner.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Exactly, because I'm way out there. Thank you for that, Minister Gravelle.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: It's true.

0910

Hon. Glen R. Murray: This will help those communities as well, because I know that for smaller communities in northwestern Ontario that have out-of-province folks—a lot of people from Manitoba—this will actually level—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I'd like to be involved somehow. You're having a conversation with the minister. You might want to go through the Chair. I feel left out. Thanks.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, I would never be able to overstate my fondness for you. My apologies. Thank you very much.

This is good legislation, Mr. Speaker, because it's rooted in the communities that have been affected by this. This has been folks who have heard this. I also want to say I am assuming that our friends in opposition will see this as a positive thing as well. I know that many of them have raised these kinds of concerns with me as minister. This is the kind of good legislation that's not just rooted in communities, but I think it's rooted in the experiences of every MPP in this House who tries to find solutions for their community.

This issue was also raised by the Drummond commission, which pointed out the importance of starting to collect this money, that municipalities were under increasing pressure to make investments in traffic lights and traffic controls, policing, ambulance services and paramedics, and all the things that are very expensive that go as a result of when people break the law and cause damage, death and accidents.

The POA governs non-Criminal Code offences. So we're talking about violations mostly as a result of liquor licence violations, occupational health and safety, the Environmental Assessment Act and things like that. Between 2006 and 2009, several provincial ministries—the ministry of governmental affairs, MTO, municipal affairs and housing, government services and the Attorney General's office—all participated in a comprehensive three-year review of the POA. I want to thank Attorney General Gerretsen for the leadership of his ministry and the help in bringing this forward in a proper legal context, and making sure that we were managing our relationship with the court system in the proper way. The provincial-municipal working group I mentioned earlier had representatives from AMO, from the Municipal Court Managers' Association and from the Prosecutors' Association of Ontario, all at the table under the leadership of the Attorney General. The Ministry of Transportation is coordinating the province of Ontario's efforts to improve municipal collection of defaulted POA fines.

I just want to explain a little bit about the details of what this means. I'm sure that some of this will be the debate: What does this actually mean and how are we applying this? The issue of expanded plate denial is probably the one that will be the most immediate impact of this and the one that Ontarians who have been breaking the law will—attention will be drawn to quite quickly. In order to assist municipalities in collecting the defaulted POA fines, the Ministry of Transportation will be seeking here to expand and strengthen the province's current regime to deny the issuance of renewal of vehicle plate licences, what we generally call plate denial, for defaulted fines. Specifically, there are four things that will result from this. Expanded plate denial will apply to defaulted POA fines for driving-related offences which currently result in the driver's licence suspension on fine default, including all Highway Traffic Act and Compul-

sory Automobile Insurance Act offences. It will apply to the expanded plate denial regime with respect to defaulted POA fines dating back as far as seven years to the date of implementation.

Mr. Speaker, what this means is that municipalities will be able—plate denial will go back seven years. So anyone who, five years ago or four years ago, defaulted on their fines, did not make a payment, would find plate denial. It's not going back forever, but with the guidance of the Attorney General's office and our legal advice, that is the reasonable horizon for doing that. That amounts to about \$350 million in unpaid fines if we get a collection rate which is about 60% or 70%.

The other piece of this that's important—this is quite substantial. This is about \$100 million or more that people are not paying. That money, when it's not paid by people who break the law, is paid by people who obey the law. So the people who cause the greatest amount of police costs and ambulance costs and those kinds of things are really getting away scot-free. Not only are they causing harm to their neighbours and endangering our children and our families and our communities; they're not accepting responsibility and paying for that.

So there's \$100 million more that would be going into small municipalities for critical road construction, making our streets safer, all of that kind of thing because people are scofflaws, quite frankly. We see this as positive. When you realize that 1% of gasoline tax is \$150 million, this is almost like giving 1% of gasoline tax. It's particular to our municipalities.

I've said this several times, and I want to make the point very clearly: We've had debates in this House about whether we should dilute transit funding to distribute it. Well, that may get \$15 million or \$20 million to all of those rural municipalities; this is going to put a lot more money in their pockets.

We have the MIII program for emergency funding, which is \$90 million, which is our down payment. Our applications this year were about \$400 million. Well, some of this money will actually allow those municipalities to establish their own programs. As these programs grow, particularly MIII, we are putting more money into rural municipalities and bridges through this, through MIII, and I think, hopefully, for good use.

I want to thank my friend Minister Leal, the Minister for Rural Affairs, because he very much has been an advocate for two things. He has been a big advocate for community safety, and we all know how important that is, especially if you're in a community by a highway. He has also been a big advocate that these monies go unrestricted to our municipalities. If you don't think the Minister of Rural Affairs is having a big impact on government policy, he certainly is, and you see it in this legislation today. So I want to thank him for his leadership.

There are a couple more things that I want to clarify so that, hopefully, people are very clear about what this will mean. We will be expanding a plate denial regime to all of the plates owned by the defaulter while maintaining

the current single plate denial regime for vehicle-based offences. There are some provinces that have single plate denial; some have multiple plate denial. In the surveys that we did across the country, it was very clear that multiple plate denial is the only way to secure it. It's the only way in which you can—people who are, I think, thoughtless enough to endanger other people in their bad driving don't seem to think twice about substituting plates. This will allow us to do that. And when you think about it, if your licence permit is denied, no one sees that. It's in your wallet and you don't see it, but when you don't have plates on your car, it's a little obvious. So this is a much more significant enforcement. By adding plates, it makes it very hard to drive around without your plates or your stickers.

We're also going to be improving MTO's existing single plate denial system to more effectively collect data on POA fines by allowing the denial of plates other than the plate on the vehicle at the time of the infraction in certain situations. We think that will finally close the door on people's ability to avoid their responsibilities.

What offences would be subject to plate denial under the proposed expansion? So what are these things in these—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Well, folks, it appears there's a lot of noise coming from the opposition side. I don't think the member from Durham is paying attention. I suggest he take it outside if he wants to hold court. The minister—I can't hear him speaking—

Mr. John O'Toole: On a point of order, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): A point of order? What is your point of order?

Mr. John O'Toole: I was paying attention. It was presumptuous of you to think I wasn't. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): That's not a point of order, but duly noted.

Continue, Minister. And a little quiet, please.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thanks very much. I'm hoping that my friends in the opposition are listening to this particularly. I have to say that people in the third party are being very attentive. That isn't lost on me, but I'm kind of fond of those folks over there.

Mr. Rob Leone: I'm actually reading your bill.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you very much. The member for Cambridge, I know, is a friend and a keen observer of this.

But I just want to say something. We took a position that we were not going to water down transit funding and that we were not going to take money out of urban transit. When I say "urban," I'm talking about Orillia and north Quinte bay, communities that get transit funding. We're talking communities of 5,000 and 10,000 people. Well, we're talking about urban, so we're really talking about a lot of what most common-sense folks would see as a rural community. Because we realize that transit funding was really important, and that \$300 million, if diluted, was simply going to undermine the efforts of our municipal partners to do transit.

0920

I've also said that we will not take money from rural funds. We're not going to start spending MIII money in Toronto and Ottawa. That's going to go into the smaller communities across Ontario; we're not going to dilute that funding. This funding is a principle-based funding. It is money going to municipalities, recognizing that people who break the law incur greater costs to our municipalities, small and large, and we're not going to do that.

We as a government have made a very strong commitment, through our Premier, to expand funding for infrastructure. The Premier has shown great leadership, great clarity and great purposefulness in bringing in additional revenue to solve our infrastructure challenges, be they northern highways, rural roads and bridges, or the transit, highway and road challenges we have in our larger cities, causing congestion that's costing us a billion dollars a year.

This isn't disconnected from the larger government strategy; this speaks both to our safety agenda in communities—protecting and continuing to ensure Ontarians have the safest roads in Canada, a remarkable accomplishment—and that the money that we collect is transparent and dedicated. This is a dedicated, transparent sort of revenue. It can only go to municipalities—it's collected; it will go in—but by transferring to municipalities, we know it's going to be spent in our community, and we will not interfere with that as a government.

There are a number of other things that I could say about this, but I really want to talk a little bit about the other aspect of this bill, which is the red light cameras. I'm particularly fond of them; when I was mayor of a city, I introduced these. The fatality rates dropped dramatically. Since 1993—and I want to give some credit to both the opposition parties. The New Democratic Party, when it was in government in 1993 under Premier Rae, introduced graduated licensing, which I think was one of the more visionary and intelligent public policy initiatives. It's something that's worked.

We, in 2004, 2006—10 years later—started higher regulations of driving schools. We're still working on that, but that has continued through the New Democrats and through Conservative and Liberal administrations, and it's really strong. That was something that the official opposition very much advanced and was very supportive of. When you can do these non-partisan things—and you've heard me speak often about my desire to see this as a more non-partisan place; I always think it's better to say that when you're in government, because it means something. It's always easy when you're in opposition to say that this should be a non-partisan place, and I appreciate my friends who share that view.

But let's just look at what that means. We've had a 31% increase in young drivers, in that 16-to-19 group, and up to 24. That's 31% more since 1993, in the last 20 years, and do you know what's happened to our accident and fatality rate in that group? It's down 58%. So if you don't think that the action of 107 MPPs acting on this kind of legislation matters, I would say one of the best

cases for all-party support for this kind of positive legislation—I'm going to take a guess that it's not just a Liberal view; I think this is a shared view between all three parties—is that that was something that we all respected and we brought forward.

There are probably about 60 or 70 people who are alive today that probably would have been killed in fatalities if we had continued with the same accident rate before graduated licensing. This actually takes a stronger measure, continues down that tradition in Ontario and makes it very hard for those same people who are breaking the law to get away with it. It's pretty hard to drive without your plates.

I think this is something, quite frankly, that all three parties in this House share and can take credit for. The fact that Ontario does have the safest roads in North America is a remarkable accomplishment for a four-season community that has such vast roads. If you've driven through parts of northern Ontario in the winter—I've done a lot of driving up to Thunder Bay, Kenora and Dryden, and up to Hearst; those highways, in a blizzard or in a storm, are pretty challenging. The fact that we can do that is remarkable, so I would just like to take a moment to thank previous governments of various political stripes for their continued leadership on this, and I hope that that spirit of collaboration will continue.

Getting back to red light cameras—and again, I want to thank Mayor Watson and Mayor Canfield for their advocacy for this, and to AMO. I have to say that one of the good things that happened that this government has done was our consultative round table with AMO, and the relationship—my friends Minister Jeffrey and Minister Leal, whom I've had the great pleasure and honour to work with around ROMA and around the Ontario Good Roads Association, the last conference we had, I'm sure they would tell you the same—this was an issue that has come up over and over again. It's something that all three of us committed we would act on quickly.

Interjection: Minister Sergio, a great city councillor in Toronto.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Absolutely, Minister Mario Sergio, who always has his finger on my back on safety. For seniors, we don't want to be ageist. We know a lot of our seniors are good drivers, so going to this kind of system means—it doesn't matter whether you're 72 or 22; as long as you follow the rules, you can keep your licence. We want to be fair-minded about that.

Let me get back to red light cameras, because that's where I was going. I was wandering off a bit there. Six Ontario municipalities—Ottawa, the city of Toronto, Hamilton, Peel, Halton and Waterloo—have requested that MTO amend the current legislative framework to facilitate the mailing of RLC tickets to out-of-town vehicle plate owners to enhance the prosecution of RLC offences, which are those road offences I mentioned earlier, by the use of certified records for jurisdictions to establish vehicle ownership before a provincial offences court authorizes it.

Although these RLC municipalities are able to use part III of the charging process, it is not being pursued against

out-of-province RLC offenders as municipalities believe it is too onerous, and these municipalities are missing out on that much-needed revenue. For consistency, the Ministry of Transportation is proposing to provide municipalities with the authority to issue part I POA tickets by mail to owners of vehicles that are registered out of province but were involved in a fail-to-stop-for-a-school-bus offence in Ontario and to ensure that Ontario courts accept certified documents from other jurisdictions for prosecution of part II POA parking tickets. The road safety value and the continued success of the program are contingent on the effective enforcement and administration of justice. The issuance of a part I POA offence notice by mail to out-of-province RLC offenders would ensure that these offenders do not go unpunished. Between 2001 and 2011, a rather large number—381,577—of RLC charges were processed, of which 95% gained a conviction.

How will the government operate with this new legislative power? Under this initiative, the province's role in RLC and school bus ticketing processes would remain pretty much the same. Municipalities would continue to be responsible for all aspects of ticketing out-of-province RLC and school bus offenders, including entering into an arrangement with the jurisdiction that has the plate registering information; developing a mechanism for obtaining the out-of-province plate owner's information and address; deciding whether they would issue a ticket or, in the case of RLC offences, have the Toronto processing centre issue it on their behalf; ensuring that the documents provided by out-of-province jurisdictions are in a form that is acceptable to the court; and finally, determining how to proceed if the out-of-province plate owner defaults on their fine. That will be something we will be monitoring quite carefully to see what the compliance is. If this works in the way we imagine it will work, we should see at least a two-thirds recovery and we will not need to take further action; if we do, then we'll have to consider future action at that time.

Mr. Speaker, we looked at the experience in collecting parking and red light camera tickets. Municipal fine collection experts have indicated that plate denial, right now, is viewed as the most effective fine enforcement mechanism. Based on the results of a jurisdictional survey issued by Ontario to other Canadian jurisdictions, five out of the seven respondents utilize plate denials as a collection tool that applies to all motor vehicle offences under their respective highway traffic statutes. Four out of five of these jurisdictions have multiple plate denial regimes. So we will be the sixth province in Canada to go to plate denial, and we will be the fifth to do multiple plate denial. So we are fortunate to have considerable experience from our Canadian provincial sister provinces in this initiative, and we have a fairly good idea of how this will work.

0930

Mr. John Yakabuski: Are they brothers or sisters?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: These days, they're sisters. We've changed. There are some brothers there too.

The Drummond commission report was quite important to us. Mr. Drummond went through our Highway Traffic Act and went through the Ministry of Transportation. We have taken the Drummond report quite seriously. There are a number of recommendations that we are pursuing quite aggressively. This was one of the most significant recommendations that Mr. Drummond made for our ministry. It is one that we've taken quite seriously.

I also want to thank a couple of folks before I conclude my remarks in the next minute or two and turn it over to my colleague and my friend the MPP for Oakville, who has been a great champion on this. I have benefited from his friendship and his wise counsel now through two ministries. I'm very fortunate to have one of the best parliamentary assistants around. Our shared Irish lineage gives us a fine appreciation of fine Irish beer and whiskey and a few other things.

The Ontario Association of Police Services Boards and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and particularly the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, all came together to advocate for this.

I want to also particularly thank the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards, known as the OAPSB, who were down here and who I know lobbied very heavily for this. I know many of you met with them, and they reported back to us that they got a very fair hearing from members on both sides of the House. I know that without their leadership, we would not have been able to get this this far.

This was a budget commitment last year. It was a commitment of the Drummond report. Our Premier has laid out a very strong commitment to safer communities, safer roads, more autonomy for municipalities and more choices for municipal governments.

We're also committed to making sure that people accept their responsibilities for the things that they do. We also see this as over \$100 million in the future, every year, going into our municipalities to help them keep their streets safe. This meets our budget commission.

I want to thank the opposition parties for previous legislation and leadership they have shown on this issue. I hope this is not viewed as a partisan bill but one that is a good piece of public policy and one that builds on the tradition of all three parties and past governments.

I will, with your permission, turn it over to the MPP for Oakville.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Oakville.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It is a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 34. I think a lot of us come to this House having served in other levels of government, most usually at the council level—on a regional council; perhaps on a town or a city council.

From time to time, I think, during the 18 years I served at that level, I wondered if I was working with the province or if the province was working against us. That applied to all three parties, because there seemed to be some very obvious things that could be done, in partner-

ship and collaboration, that would make the operation of good government in the province of Ontario, at all levels, something that could be accomplished much more easily if the two levels of government worked together.

I like this piece of legislation particularly because it doesn't just impact us here at the province; it impacts those people, those elected officials and those taxpayers and constituents, in all the communities around the province of Ontario that are dealing with the issues surrounding road safety.

Those members who have served on council, I think, anywhere in the province—I think this is true of all communities around the province. Despite us sort of waxing quite eloquently about our political philosophies, if you've served on council, you'll know the number one phone call you get is about speeding and red lights and people not stopping at stop signs in particular neighbourhoods. It's the practical, everyday stuff that they expect of a councillor, they expect of their council, they expect of the mayor, and anything we can do to assist in that regard at this level of government, I think, is something that is of tremendous advantage to all citizens of Ontario.

I guess what we have in the province of Ontario is a bit of a social contract. In order not to have people travelling 200 miles an hour in our neighbourhoods, we agree to travel at 50 kilometres an hour. In order not to have people driving through stop signs, we agree that we will stop at stop signs. We also put in a system of justice to administer that, and we agree that if the police pull us over or we get caught by a red light camera and the charge is justified, a good citizen will pay that fine, and say, "I was wrong." The price we pay for having everybody else act safely is that I act safely myself.

What's happening right now in the province of Ontario, and probably in other jurisdictions around North America, is what appears to be a growing problem, to the tune of about \$100 million a year. Some people are just choosing to ignore the fines that are being administered by the justice system, just choosing to walk away from them, and if they're from another jurisdiction, they are choosing to drive away from them. Because of the fact that perhaps the offence happened in Ontario but the person happens to live in Quebec or Michigan, they seem to think that once they cross that border, the offence they committed in the jurisdiction somehow doesn't apply to them anymore, that they shouldn't be subject to any further action, that they can just leave it in their past. Other people continue to drive in the province of Ontario and continue to just decide that they're not going to pay that fine.

It seems to me that one of the ways we can compel people to do what the rest of us are doing and paying any fine we're issued, if we do receive an offence which we are guilty of, is to say when you show up on that day to renew your plate, your sticker, that the province of Ontario says, "No, it's time to pay up now; you pay up now or you don't get your sticker." It's a very practical way of doing things, something we can do through our Service-Ontario offices and, more importantly, something that's

going to provide revenue for people in the province of Ontario and for those jurisdictions in the province of Ontario that since the global economic turndown have been looking for ways to be able to continue to provide services to their ratepayers and constituents, but have also been understanding that the competition for funds out there right now, including the taxpayer's wallet, shows that we are operating in a changed world since the middle of this decade.

So this provides that extra revenue stream. It's the right thing to do; it's the moral thing to do. I think it enhances road safety. As all of us are driving around, the vast majority of us submit to the system and say, "Yes, if I get caught by the police and I've done something wrong, I will pay that fine before its due date." A minority in the province of Ontario have decided that somehow those rules don't apply to them, that they can do what they want, they can drive any way they want, and when it comes time to pay the fine if they have been caught and tried, they simply ignore it. This puts a roadblock in the way of those people who would choose to ignore the law. Those people who decide they're not going to stop for school buses, for example, those people who decide they're going to run the red light and put other people's lives in jeopardy, shouldn't be allowed to run around the province of Ontario unfettered. What we're essentially saying to these people is, "You don't get your sticker." If you don't get your sticker on your plate, it's easily identifiable by the police in the province of Ontario if you're driving with an expired sticker. It's an immediate sign, an immediate red flag to our police services.

Incidentally, this legislation is supported very, very strongly by the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards. The headline of the news release they put out was very simple: "Ontario Association of Police Services Boards Welcomes New Measures on Unpaid Fines." What they're saying is that we're expending money at the local level, at the regional level and at the provincial level to provide for policing in this province, and what is happening is, the police are doing their work: They're going out and finding people on our streets who are disobeying the laws, and what they are saying to those people is, "Here's a ticket. You have a chance for your day in court. We'll decide whether you are innocent or guilty, and if you are guilty, you'll be required to submit a fine."

0940

So we go through all that expense. We provide the funding for the police. The taxpayers at the local level provide the funding for the police. Then, when it comes to the end of that process and it's time for the convicted person to pay up, somehow we feel we don't have a system in place that compels some people to do that. That seems to me to be very silly. It seems to be something that the Ontario police service boards also find silly, and it has been asking for action in this regard.

Here's another quote that I want to read. It says, "These problems are not new. Municipalities, courts, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders have been

advocating for decisive action for ... years. The persistent problem of unpaid” provincial offence “fines undermines the justice system, frustrates law enforcement officers and municipal fine collection agents, and denies municipalities and the provincial government desperately-needed revenues.”

I don't think it could be put any more clear than the Ontario Association of Police Service Boards has said in that quote. I think it wraps it all up very, very nicely. It gives us an opportunity to do something that other organizations, other levels of government have been asking us to do so that we can work together and we can enhance the relationship we have with towns and cities, municipalities around the province of Ontario.

It's no small problem. Most people, I think, in my community of Oakville—and certainly yours, Speaker, in Hamilton, I think are very similar people—would be very surprised to realize that there's about a billion dollars that's outstanding out there. It's not a small problem; it's no small problem. It's a billion dollars that could be put to very, very good use.

I need services in my community. People need enhanced services in my community. That's true, I think, of every member here. If we can get more money into the hands of our local government from people who owe that money, from people who should have paid that money in the past, I think that nothing but good can come from that.

I think it really enhances the reputation we have and the standing we have as either the safest road system in all of North America or one of the safest road systems in all of North America if people who are using those roads know that they're going to be held accountable for their actions on those roads. I think it makes them drive safer. I think if people come to the understanding that, “You know what? I might get caught by the police doing something I shouldn't. I'll speed through a residential neighbourhood; the police may or may not pick me up. But it doesn't matter because I'm not going to pay that fine anyway. And it doesn't matter if I pay the fine or not; I can still continue to drive, and the chances of me being caught driving around with unpaid fines is very low, so I'll simply ignore the system and I'll continue to do whatever it is that I shouldn't be doing. If I see a school bus, I may think, ‘Well, I'm just going to drive right by the thing because the chances of there being any consequence for me in the end are very, very low.’”

By passing Bill 34, what this House is saying is that the chances of that consequence being something that the offender would be subject to are increased. It becomes higher. Someone, when they're making that decision to break the law as either a speeder or someone running through a red light or any one of a number of traffic offences that make our communities more dangerous—when people make the decision to do that, they'll know there will be a consequence.

When they are making that decision, when they're going through that decision process in their mind and they think, “You know what? I'll probably get caught if I

do this. I probably won't be able to renew my plate if I do this. So maybe perhaps I shouldn't do this,” I think it just enhances that reputation that we have in the province, and I think throughout all of North America, that this is a safe place to drive, in the province of Ontario, and that if you choose, by your own individual actions as a motorist, to make it a less safe place to drive, you will be held accountable by the justice system.

When you look at the amount of charges that are in default in the province of Ontario—and this dates back quite a number of years; I think over 40 years—it's still a large number of outstanding offences. These are offences where the police system or the traffic system have done what we asked them to do, have done what we paid them to do, have gone out and found somebody on the streets doing something dangerous and have issued them a ticket. There are close to 2.5 million outstanding charges; charges that are in default dating back to around the 1970s. Those charges could be any one stemming from an offence under 243 pieces of provincial legislation. Sometimes it's a bylaw in a municipality and sometimes it even applies to the federal level.

There's a number of reasons why people don't pay their fines, but at the end of the day, fines need to be paid. If the justice system has determined that a person is guilty, then certainly the next step, I think, as a good citizen in the province of Ontario, as a safe driver, is to step to the bar and to pay that fine.

According to the most recent data we've been provided by the Ministry of the Attorney General, approximately 75% of the total amount of fine payments in default is from the period from 2000 to 2010. When you look at that, you realize that we've got an increasing problem; that during the last decade people in increasing numbers have decided that somehow they can get away with this. Somehow, between 1970 and 2000 people were doing it, but not in large numbers. What you've seen is a huge acceleration in the past decade of people who are just walking away from that process and deciding that somehow this doesn't apply to them. We're seeing, as I said, the problem increase by about \$100 million a year.

We've already provided some tools to municipalities to enforce Provincial Offences Act fines. They are responsible for the enforcement and the collection of Provincial Offences Act fines. They decide themselves, at the local level, when and how they're going to apply the various fine enforcement tools that are available to them. All three parties, I would hope, Speaker—we'll find out as we hear more from the other parties on this—I hope there's some sort of unanimity in the House that this is a tool that we can extend to our brothers and sisters in the different levels of government to allow them to do their job better, to ensure that the money that is due to them from people breaking the law is, indeed, much easier to collect.

We have already implemented a few new initiatives to help. We've got online fine payment systems now so that when the time comes to make that fine payment, you don't have to take time off work and visit an office. You

can go online in the evening and you can make arrangements for that. We've made it easier for the people. We've given access or provided information for those people at the local level who are trying to collect fines to access the Ministry of Transportation database. That helps them find people who perhaps have moved. Some municipalities have decided that they're going to use agencies instead of doing this. They developed guidelines; they've developed best practices.

So, simply what we're saying is that the municipal collection of fines should be a priority for this government because it's going to promote the administration of justice in the province. It's going to ensure that those who break the law and ignore the consequences are held accountable.

I'm going to end there, Speaker. I know I have some time left but I think some bills just become self-evident, that it's a sensible thing to do when you've got support from the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards, when you've got support from municipalities, from towns and cities. Perhaps it's time that we move ahead on this bill.

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

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's a privilege to stand before the Legislature this morning and to address Bill 34, an act to amend the Highway Traffic Act in respect of permit denials and out-of-province services.

The Minister of Transportation actually made a very compelling argument whereby tightening the rules to collect outstanding offences could in fact have these finances going back to municipalities, and that money could in fact be used for road repair, bridge repair and so on. To me, that's a very compelling argument, because we know the state of the current economy per se.

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The member from Oakville, as well as the Minister of Transportation, did also comment on the fact that we have the safest roads in North America, and I do want to believe that as well. However, I will say with slight tongue in cheek that I recall back in 2007 there was an election promise—imagine that; an election promise—to enhance the 401 between Ridgetown and Tilbury whereby they were going to put in the cement barriers to minimize accidents whereby transports and cars would cross over the median. Unfortunately, that hasn't happened yet. We're still waiting on the 2007 promise. Unfortunately and regrettably—and I'm sure they would also agree: regrettably—there have been some fatalities, most recently last year, where a mother lost her life when a transport crossed the median and killed her and, I believe, a sibling as well.

However, again, I do agree with the minister with regard to this bill, Bill 34. I like the fact that it can go back seven years and collect, I believe the minister stated, \$350 million, based on a 60% to 70% collection rate. Therefore, I commend them for this act.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: It is with pleasure that I rise to speak to this bill.

When I was first elected, I always said that where something was good, I would highlight it; where there were good ideas, I would give credit where credit is due. This is absolutely something that municipalities have been asking for for a very, very long time. This is something that will benefit their communities, and I absolutely agree with some of the comments that the prior member said as well: It will go toward their bridges, their repairs, their infrastructure, their water treatment and so on and so forth. So this is a good thing.

The concern is: Is it just a one-liner? I appreciate the fact that the member actually made a comment indicating that this is good. He kept his comments short. I'm hoping that this will progress and move forward so we can actually have those discussions at the committee stages so we could actually implement this, because that is certainly one of the concerns that the municipalities had: How is this going to be implemented? How are the regulations going to be developed? How much of it is going to be municipally governed? What is going to be our responsibility? Is this going to be a one-liner that we're going to see in tomorrow morning's paper which is going to be great, fantastic news and we get all these fuzzy-wuzzy feelings about it?

This is a good idea; this is a good initiative. We need to push it forward and we need to get it to a level that will assist these municipalities so that we can give them the tools that they need in order for them to collect those funds so that they can actually get the support they need and they can do the changes and implement the infrastructure they need.

I am looking forward to this debate. I'm listening very attentively, along with our caucus as well. We definitely need to push this to committee so we can have the discussions that are needed to assist the municipalities with the regulations of how this is actually going to be implemented.

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: I think we heard a number of positive comments this morning from the Minister of Transportation/the Minister of Infrastructure and, of course, my colleague the member from Oakville.

Over the years, I've contributed mightily through the POA office in Peterborough. I'm notorious for getting parking tickets. I remember that when I was a city councillor, I'd be at agency meetings with various groups in Peterborough. The meetings always ran over time; I always got parking tickets. It was interesting: I had a straight path to the finance department in the city of Peterborough. Every week I had to make a contribution through my accumulation of parking tickets.

Certainly, this goes back. When David Crombie did his work in the late 1990s through services that were delivered at the municipal level, he looked at the Provincial Offences Act as a source of revenue to assist municipalities with their ongoing obligations in terms of

bridges, roads, and expansion to waste water treatment plants. This bill, Bill 34, has the support of AMO, I suspect. I know it has the support of Mayor Bennett in the city of Peterborough and of J. Murray Jones, the warden of Peterborough county. This was an issue that was brought to us at ROMA.

There's a real opportunity to collect those fines and provide those dollars back to municipalities. Mr. Speaker, it would be my hope that we could really reach a consensus with House leaders, have a minimal time of debate, get this bill in committee, get this bill past royal assent, and really help out our municipalities with another revenue tool that they would like to see in place very quickly.

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

Mr. John O'Toole: I recognize the minister's statement this morning on Bill 34, and his parliamentary assistant, the member from Oakville.

I think it's important to put things in perspective. Some would say, "What took so long?" Some would say, "Could they not have handled this in regulation?" But the history of this, under the Provincial Offences Act and Highway Traffic Act offences—back in 1998, Premier Mike Harris, when they were looking at municipal alignment of services and revenue, made the change which committed this revenue to the municipalities. In many cases, law-abiding citizens do pay these fines, and he's never once been thanked for giving that new revenue to municipalities.

So in that context, I think, in regulation they can, under some offences today, impound the car, suspend licences. That's available today under impaired driving. These changes are important, and I believe our critic, Frank Klees, will be supportive of that, as well as our leader, Tim Hudak. It's getting the job done.

Again, going back to the simple part of it, without being too contrary about it, what took so long? This bill itself is about one page long. It's in two languages. We could get on with more important things: getting to the bottom of scandals, getting to the bottom of making sure that we can afford the future for our children. This province is out of control.

I don't want to change the topic totally. This is one small administrative piece that has taken them 10 years to deliver on. It's an example of a government with no plan and no vision for Ontario.

I would think we'd be supportive of this, and I'm sure our critic, Frank Klees, the member from Newmarket–Aurora, will make it very clear.

But I want to leave one more thing—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. The member from Oakville has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It's a pleasure to rise in response. Thank you to the members from Chatham–Kent–Essex; from Algoma–Manitoulin; the Minister of Rural Affairs, my colleague; and the member from Durham.

Most of the comments, I think, were quite constructive, and there seems to be a willingness in the House to make sure that this moves forward. Like the member from Algoma–Manitoulin, I want to see it move forward quickly. I don't see why it shouldn't, if all three parties co-operate and if we hear some of the comments that we've heard from the government, saying that the opposition has done some good things in this regard. The opposition remarks, for the most part, maybe except for the member from Durham, were fairly positive comments and designed to move this legislation forward.

I think if we approach this issue through the government House leader's office and the offices of the House leaders of the other two parties, this is something that we should be able to do in fairly quick order, in my opinion.

I think municipalities, ratepayers, constituents at all levels would be happy to see us working together, not only amongst ourselves but between the levels of government, because certainly this is something that is fairly simple, in my mind. I think what it says, quite simply, if you had to describe it to somebody, is that if you're not paying your traffic fines, you're not going to get your plates next time. And it's not just for the car that you committed the offence on; it's for any vehicle you own. So when you show up at the MTO office, when you show up at the ServiceOntario kiosk and you ask for your plate to be renewed, they're going to tell you, "No; you pay your fines or you don't get your plate." It's that simple.

For anybody from out of the province, out of the jurisdiction that we drive in, if they commit an offence here, it will also make it easier for us to track those people down and to hold them accountable, the way that Ontarians are often held accountable in other jurisdictions.

There's a little chirping from the opposition, but I think most of this, most of the comments, I think, we've heard this morning have been positive ones, and this bill should move forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move adjournment of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? That's carried.

Second reading debate adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day.

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 0959 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am delighted today to welcome Ontario's paramedics to the Legislature. It's

their first Queen's Park day, and I know all members of this Legislature are delighted that paramedics are with us today.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I would like to welcome paramedic Gil Kisielius from Peel emergency services. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's my pleasure to welcome James Downham to the House this morning. He's representing the Waterloo-Wellington Community Support Services, who are taking the lead on a centralized referral system for all community support services in partnership with community care access centres, the first of its kind in Ontario. Welcome, Mr. Downham.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Page captain Morgan Palmer's family is here today. We've got Janet Palmer, Aaron Palmer, Paige Palmer and Brock Palmer. I believe Aaron Palmer grew up in Newbury, so he's an ex-constituent of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex—of Monte McNaughton. Welcome today.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's my pleasure to introduce and welcome today Smokey Thomas, the president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, some of his executive members and other members of the union: Eddy Almeida, Roxanne Barnes, Jamie Ramage, Marnie Niemi Hood and Gord Longhi, as well as Kyle Vose.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm looking forward to a meeting with the Ontario paramedics' Marvin Austin and also a constituent person, Alex Greco, who will be in the Legislature here today.

Miss Monique Taylor: Today it is my pleasure to welcome Ryan Baird here. He's a student at Ryerson, in public policy and administration. Welcome, Ryan.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. Can you explain to the Legislature the compelling provincial interest to impose a \$60 trades tax on a part-time hairstylist?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The compelling provincial interest in establishing a College of Trades, Mr. Speaker, is that we want an industry-driven governing body. We want to make sure that people who work in the skilled trades will have decision-making over the matters that affect them. We share the opposition's commitment to encouraging young people to enter the skilled trades. We also believe, Mr. Speaker, that skilled trades should have the same authorities, privileges and autonomy as teachers, doctors and nurses—all of the people who have professional colleges.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Those are different professions—

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, the member opposite says that those are different professions. We would like to say that we think that the same status, the same

respect should be accorded to all of the people who work in the skilled trades. That is the provincial interest.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I don't think I heard an answer to my question, which is: What is the compelling provincial interest in assigning a new trades tax of \$60 to part-time hairstylists, to young men or women who want to be apprentices in a skilled trade, just coming out of school with tuition bills, who will be hit by a new \$60 tax? Why would you impose a \$120 tax on small business?

It's basic economics, really. As you know, Premier, if you tax something, you get less of it; if you lower taxes, you get more of it. Clearly, if you wanted to create more jobs in the skilled trades, the worst thing you want to do is impose a new tax on those very same trades. Please tell me that you do oppose the new skilled trades tax, from hairstylists to electricians.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I support is an industry-driven governing body that allows young people in skilled trades to have the opportunity to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm going to jump right to individuals. Quite frankly, yesterday was an opportunity for us to improve. We will improve today.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

What I support is young people in skilled trades to have the same privileges and the same autonomy as people in other professions.

The member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, positions himself as someone who supports the skilled trades. I would think that he would support the same status and privilege and autonomy being accorded to people in skilled trades as people in other professions, and that he would recognize that there is a provincial interest in putting that status in place and making sure that the same respect is accorded to people who work in skilled trades.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: I'm proud to be part of a party with somebody as strong as the member for Simcoe North, Garfield Dunlop, who knows this industry inside and out.

I stand with Garfield and what he says. This is a guy who is a plumber by training, ran his own business and speaks from the heart, as you'll hear shortly. He has compassion and passion for the sector, and he knows we need to clear aside obstacles to help young people get in the trades, clear aside obstacles to help small business do better.

In this environment under the McGuinty and Wynne governments, where Ontario is first in debt and last in jobs, why in the world would you bring in a new bureaucracy and a new tax to punish those very same young people whom we're fighting for to open up opportunities? Why do you want to shut them down in the skilled trades? Why do you want to impose a new tax on hard-working women and men and small business owners in the province of Ontario?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I am not going to engage in the kind of denigration of Ontario that the Leader of the Opposition—I'm just not going to go there. I actually have a lot of respect for the member for Simcoe North, and I know that he's passionate about his—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm going to pass the test.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I actually have a lot of respect for the member for Simcoe North. I know that he's passionate about the causes that he takes on and I know that he works very hard in his constituency. I share his desire to help young people know what the range of opportunities is to be able to develop the skills and to be able to get into a skilled trade. But I think those people in skilled trades should be accorded the same respect, they should have the same privileges and the same autonomy to work with their peers and to have a college in the same way that other professions do. That's why I'm supportive of the move to have a College of Trades.

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier: Quite frankly, there is no respect shown when you slap a brand new tax on the backs of working people in the trades. There is no respect shown when you put new obstacles in the way of people advancing their careers, starting their own business and getting job opportunities. In fact, this shows tremendous disrespect for hard-working men and women in the province whom we want to help succeed—more take-home pay and good jobs.

The Premier's only defence now seems to be that there is widespread support for this issue, but I will tell you, Premier, the coalition opposed to the trades tax involves 5,000 small and medium businesses representing 130,000 workers across the province. The unions have expressed their concern and their opposition to this.

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When there was a college of physicians or nurses, there was broad-based support in the employers and the professions. That does not exist anywhere when it comes to the College of Trades. There is no support in the industry. Premier, will you do the right thing and stop this College of Trades in its tracks?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you very much. The Leader of the Opposition's description of the College of Trades is simply completely inaccurate. His rhetoric, frankly, is an insult to every hard-working skilled tradesman and woman in this province.

It comes down to this: We believe that our skilled tradespeople are very capable of regulating themselves, like countless other workers do. The Leader of the Opposition, unfortunately, arrogantly believes he knows

better; his party knows better. We don't agree with them. Why does the Leader of the Opposition believe that teachers, physiotherapists, chartered accountants and social workers—

Interjection.

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

Minister.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you, Speaker. Why does the Leader of the Opposition believe that teachers, physiotherapists, chartered accountants and social workers are capable and smart enough to govern themselves and have their own regulatory body but not skilled trade workers?

We support the skilled trade workers in this province. We believe in them. We believe they're ready for self-governance—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: What is disappointing to those of us on this side of the House is how increasingly, day after day, week after week, the Liberal government sounds an awful lot like the Dalton McGuinty Liberal government in heading down their paths.

Premier, you said in the last couple of days that agencies like the Ontario Electronic Stewardship, the Ontario Tire Stewardship, Waste Diversion Ontario—in short, the agencies you created, these arm's-length agencies to be self-governing. You've raised concerns about the eco tax. You want to have a conversation about the eco tax going forward.

Your record with these arm's-length agencies, including Ornge, has been far from stellar—in fact, quite the opposite. Why don't you stop this newest agency in its tracks? Why don't you avoid a future conversation and make the right decision starting now, starting today, and stop this College of Trades and its tax grab right in its tracks?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The Leader of the Opposition is going all over the map on this, so let me go back to the College of Trades, which was his original question.

The idea of the College of Trades is to provide greater consumer protection. Why would the PCs be opposed to this? The idea of the College of Trades is to help combat the underground economy and create a level playing field for our skilled tradespeople. Why would the PC Party be opposed to that? It will also make important decisions regarding standards like apprenticeship ratios.

The PCs simply believe that these decisions ought to be made here at Queen's Park by politicians with whatever agendas those politicians may have. We have confidence that the skilled tradespeople across this province will have the expertise to make the right decisions to drive the skilled trades forward in this province to a new era where our skilled trades will rise way above where they're at—

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier—I'm just going to ignore the minister and his tiresome talking points

because I think our guy from Simcoe North knows what he's talking about. He talks to the workers. He knows the path we have to head down to create good jobs in our province again.

Premier, may I remind you that your experiments to date with arm's-length agencies, from eHealth to the eco tax agencies to Ornge, have been a dismal performance? You yourself are starting to question the new taxes imposed by the eco tax agencies. I think you should cut to the chase here and stop this in its place.

I'm going to argue this, too: The so-called College of Trades is not exactly off to a good start. They're going to have 75 bureaucrats working at the College of Trades. That's why they're imposing this tax on working people. They're going to hire 150 trades police to go into hair salons and electricians' shops to inspect and see if they're paying the tax. Do you think that an agency with 75 bureaucrats and 150 tax police is off to a good start, or should we just end this thing before it gets going?

Interjections.

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

Hon. Brad Duguid: Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric of the Leader of the Opposition on this issue is absolutely beyond belief. What we see through his rhetoric is that it's pretty obvious that that leader and his party do not believe in worker safety across Ontario, do not believe in the importance of enforcing safety standards, do not believe in the importance of our skilled trades sector to tackle the underground economy.

We believe that we want to put a level playing field in place for our skilled trades workers across this province. We're listening very carefully to what our skilled trades workers across the spectrum are saying to us. They want a level playing field, and they want us to tackle the underground economy. They want to ensure that they have safe and healthy work environments.

I think the Leader of the Opposition should want those things as well. I'm surprised it appears that he doesn't.

CANCER TREATMENT

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. This morning, we learned that the company that provided Ontario hospitals with diluted chemotherapy drugs has been operating without any oversight or regulation. The consequences, Speaker, have been disastrous.

Can the Premier explain how her government has allowed this to happen?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Health will want to speak to the supplementary, but I just want to reiterate what I said before: that it is unacceptable that the doses of chemotherapy would not have been accurate. That's why we have put in place an expert panel. That's why we have asked an independent third party to review our cancer drug system.

I'm very pleased that Dr. Jake Thiessen will be leading that review and I thank him for that. He's a pharmacy expert; he's the founding director of the University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy.

We need to get to the bottom of this. We absolutely need to talk to everyone who is an expert in the field who understands how this should work. That is why we have asked the people that we've asked to take a look at it and get to the bottom of what happened.

It is unacceptable, and my thoughts are with the patients and their families who are having to deal with this. It never should have happened.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, this is a fundamental question of safety, and it's a question that should be easy to answer. As Canadians, we cherish our public health care system, and we expect the government to make sure that it provides safe and reliable treatment when people need it. This didn't happen for hundreds of people receiving cancer treatment, and that is simply unacceptable.

Ontario's Ombudsman is the person who has the tools and the tenacity to look at what caused this mess. Will the Premier let him do that?

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you for the question. I can assure you that ensuring the care and safety of patients is my first and highest priority. Patients cannot and should not be caught in jurisdictional squabbles about who is responsible. They deserve to have confidence in our health care system.

This morning I met with the College of Pharmacists. I am very pleased that they are prepared to do everything possible to get answers to questions that have been raised. I will work with the College of Pharmacists to give them the tools they need to get answers to the questions that we all have.

Health Canada has a very important role to play. They are partners in this, but I am not prepared to wait. It is urgent that we act now.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It is clear that there is no regulatory framework whatsoever for these cancer drugs and who knows how many other drugs here in the province of Ontario. This is a systemic issue that the Ombudsman should be looking at.

Here's what patients see in Ontario: A for-profit company has taken over a critical part of our health care system. People's lives are literally in the balance, and the government doesn't provide any oversight whatsoever. Over the course of an entire year, a serious error put hundreds of people's lives at risk. This isn't acceptable.

The government cannot sweep it under the carpet. Will the Premier admit we need a real investigation and let the Ombudsman investigate?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We are in complete agreement that a real investigation must take place, Speaker. That is already under way. We have brought together the working group of the affected hospitals, the Pharmacists' Association and Health Canada. We're inviting New Brunswick to be part of this as well.

Every single person in our health care system has the same determination and passion to understand what hap-

pened. I'm delighted that Dr. Jake Thiessen, an eminent person who understands health care, who understands drugs, who understands cancer drugs, has agreed to step up and lead this investigation. He is exactly the kind of health care leader who wants to make it right for patients. I am delighted he's taking this on. He is the right person with the right credentials, the passion and determination—

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you.

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

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TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's disconcerting to watch the giggles on the other side of the room during the questions, Speaker.

My next question is to the Premier, and it's about the budget. People know the province is facing some pretty tough times, but they also want their government to recognize that they are facing tough times too, and that's while some people are doing better than ever. So people are having a rough time, but some people are doing really great in the province of Ontario.

Many people, however, feel they're being squeezed right out of the middle class. They want a balanced approach to this upcoming budget. Does the Premier think it's balanced or fair to cut taxes for Ontario's wealthiest corporations in tough times?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I certainly agree with the leader of the third party that we need a balanced approach as we write this budget. I'm very clear that we need to take into account that people have been through a rough time, that there are people who are looking for jobs across the province. We need to make sure that we put in place the supports, for example, for small businesses, because that's where the job creation is happening.

That's why it has been really important for me to take part in discussions around the province—11 different discussions—with people who are at the forefront of creating those jobs. We need to make sure that small businesses, small manufacturing and large manufacturing have the supports that they need and have the conditions in place.

That's why infrastructure is so important to me, that we have the right infrastructure across the province so that businesses can thrive, because they are where the jobs are created, and that's the most important thing we can do to grow the economy.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: We're hearing a lot of the same old talk and a lot of the same old excuses from this government, and we're not seeing a lot of fairness here in Ontario.

The CEO of the Royal Bank, and the chair of the government's Jobs and Prosperity Council, got a seven-figure raise this year and is now contracting jobs out of

Ontario. I know Gord Nixon. He's a nice guy, but his bank does not need a tax break right about now.

Will the Premier commit to putting the brakes on the reckless giveaway that's coming down the pike with the corporate tax giveaways?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the question from the opposition member. But let's be clear: You're talking about input tax credits, which is something that is part of our value-added tax system. It is not a tax loophole. It is something that has been part of our initiation.

We are doing everything possible to close those loopholes and ensure that tax avoidance is curbed. We've been working closely with the federal government to that effect, and we will continue to be diligent in that initiative, because we are taking a balanced approach to our budget. We are looking at our fiscal impacts, and we are looking at making this also a very fair society. Thank you.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: No matter how you slice or dice it, it's a corporate tax loophole; it's a giveaway. Whatever the heck it is, it's making the rich richer in this province.

People are worried about the loss of good jobs in their own communities. They're worried about finding jobs for their kids and the growing cost of living for their families. When they look at their government, they see more of the same policies that leave them falling behind while those who need the help least seem to be getting all the handouts.

CEO salaries in the public sector keep growing, the government plows ahead with more corporate tax giveaways, and people fall further and further and further behind, like they've done for a decade under the Liberal government's leadership. It doesn't make sense. It hasn't made sense for a long time. We can do better than that, here in this province.

Is the Premier ready to take some basic steps towards fairness in this budget by capping CEO salaries and putting the brakes on the plan for more corporate tax giveaways?

Hon. Charles Sousa: We are doing everything possible to make this a very balanced approach. We recognize how important it is to stimulate economic growth and to stimulate job creation, and we do that by providing incentives in the creation of those jobs and by providing for investment in Ontario. We want to attract more of that to come to this province, to create those jobs, not only for our skilled labour but also for our youth.

In the end, we also don't want to leave anybody behind. We recognize how important it is to support our fair society; we're taking those steps as well.

Three reports that you mentioned, that are so important in our budget: One is our jobs and prosperity agenda that you talked about. Another one is the Sheikh-Lankin report about reforming our social initiatives. And of

course, we have the Drummond report, which we're acting upon as well.

Altogether, we're taking initiatives necessary to provide growth while at the same time supporting our communities.

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, I listened to your answers to my leader, and I'm not really sure where you got some of your facts. It certainly wasn't from any of the 125 meetings I've had with tradespeople across the province.

Minister, can you tell the House today what the cost is to the tradespeople of Ontario—because that's who is paying for this—to hire 150 new trades cops, complete with their vehicles, that the College of Trades has now approved? It's real simple: How much money for the trades cops?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Again, the rhetoric, Mr. Speaker. The College of Trades has been up and running now for—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm sure the member from Prince Edward–Hastings does not want to be warned—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):—nor does the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke want to be warned.

Hon. Brad Duguid: The College of Trades has been up and running for a very short time. They've already made some great progress when it comes to reducing apprenticeship ratios, something that governments of all stripes have not done a great job doing. In fact, the member's party itself—when they were in power, do you know how many apprenticeship ratios they reduced? Zero, Mr. Speaker. The College of Trades has already reduced six apprenticeship ratios.

My advice to the member opposite—and I know he didn't like this College of Trades idea from the beginning: Give the college a chance. Give our skilled—

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

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Thank you, Minister. Well, that's really not much of an answer to my question.

But let's look at what's actually happening at the College of Trades. The college has been created without the knowledge or the permission of the tradespeople of Ontario. The membership tax is mandatory, and the increase is 676% higher than the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities fees. And if you don't pay it, you lose your licence.

The tradespeople have to pay for 150 trades cops, their vehicles, and probably a commissioner, for all I know, and even you don't know what the cost of that is—at least, you referred it. There is no transparency, and you

can't even tell me when the tradespeople will get to vote on their own board of directors.

Minister, you should be embarrassed by this boondoggle. We, on this side of the House, feel you can fix this by abolishing the College of Trades. Minister, will you do that today, and will you stand up today and apologize to the tradespeople of Ontario for this colossal tax grab?

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll wait. Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a number of things that the member said there that were inaccurate, absolutely inaccurate. In particular, when it comes to the voluntary trades and losing their certificates of qualification: not the case; not factual at all.

But I think where the disrespect comes here, Mr. Speaker—it's disrespect from the party opposite for our hard-working men and women in the skilled trades. I don't know for the life of me why it's okay for audiologists in the province to have their own college but not for auto mechanics to have a college representing them. Why is it okay for dental hygienists to have their own college, but the PCs don't think that our skilled tradespeople—for instance, our agricultural equipment technicians—are capable of governing themselves?

What they want is a double standard. They're suggesting that our skilled tradespeople don't have the talent and the intelligence to be able to govern themselves. We disagree. We have confidence and respect for those individuals.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: To the Premier: Yesterday, the former chief of staff to Ministers Duguid and Bentley testified at the justice committee that he had deleted all his emails relating to the Mississauga and Oakville gas plant cancellations—all of them.

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Premier, that looks like someone who is protecting the Liberal Party and not the people of Ontario. Will the Premier admit that it's wrong to protect the Liberal Party by destroying public records?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: The government takes its obligation to produce documents very seriously. In fact, there is a committee of the Legislature which the member is part of, which is right now looking at the production of documents last year about the gas plant issue.

But what I find very strange is that when motions have come forward for the production of supplementary documents, government members have always supported more transparency, but when we went forward at the beginning of the committee hearings and offered the committee, through a motion, production of all documents

across government, including ministers' offices and the Premier's office, to my absolute astonishment, they—including that member—raised their hands in the committee and voted against it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Premier, there are rules about the way records should be handled. The common records series says, "Records of Ontario cabinet ministers ... and their staff provide documentary evidence of the development of government policies and programs and form an important part of the historical record of government." That includes "records in electronic form." In fact, budget and planning files, which include "materials connected with budget planning and other ministry planning," should be kept for five years and then sent to the Archives of Ontario.

Is destroying evidence standard practice for Liberal political staff?

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, you know, we expect from the official opposition those sorts of drive-by smears. I'm a little bit upset to hear it from the third party.

The fact of the matter is, as I've said before, I would like to let the committee do its work, but let's get into the weeds a little bit. We have had a series of requests from the committee for very specific documents. The Liberal members of the committee at the beginning went forward and put forward a motion for an across-government search, with a very wide timeline, for documents that were produced not only within the bureaucracy but within ministers' offices, the Premier's office and the Cabinet Office, and that member, along with opposition members, raised their hands and voted against it.

When it comes to transparency, when it comes to access to documents, I think that member has a lot of explaining to do.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Mr. Phil McNeely: Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Minister of Education. Many of my constituents in Ottawa-Orléans are new to Ontario. They come here looking for new opportunities and a better life. They also come to Ontario because they know that our schools are amongst the best in the world and that their kids will have access to a world-class education. I know that through many of our investments in our schools, our students are achieving great results and that more students are graduating than ever before.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Could the minister inform this House on how our investments in education are contributing to student success?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you to the member from Ottawa-Orléans for his continuous advocacy for programs which help students graduate from high school.

I'm pleased to say that for the eighth straight year our high school graduation rate has grown. Since 2003, our graduation rate has increased by 15 percentage points, from 68% in 2003 to 83% in 2011-12. What that means is that over 115,000 more students have graduated from

Ontario high schools than would be the case if we hadn't put in place our student success programs, programs like the—

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

Mr. Phil McNeely: Mr. Speaker, once again, through you, my question is to the Minister of Education. I'm very glad to hear that more of our students are graduating from high school.

It is also important to note that in order for our students to do well in school they must feel safe and accepted in their classroom. As many members know, today is the International Day of Pink. Today is a day where we wear pink to stand up against the destructive effects of bullying in schools. We've all read in the last 24 hours about a young lady from the east coast, where the bullies followed her to her next school, and she took her life. When our students don't feel safe, they do not do well in their studies.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Education, can the minister please inform this House on the work that is being done to ensure that our students can succeed in a safe and inclusive environment?

Hon. Liz Sandals: The member is absolutely right. When students are bullied, the consequences are often very tragic. If students are going to succeed in school, they need to be safe. Every student has the right to feel safe and accepted at school. If students don't feel safe, they can't do their best. That's why we're committed to building a safe, inclusive environment in our classrooms. I'm proud to say that our government passed the Accepting Schools Act last year to make sure that every school must take measures to prevent bullying and support students who come from all sorts of different, diverse backgrounds, and to support the students who want to work by events like pink day to support other students and to take a stand against bullying in our schools.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Victor Fedeli: My question is for the Premier. At the justice committee yesterday we had our most revealing day yet. Your deputy energy minister corroborated the testimony of the OPA, who stated that the government knew there would be massive costs to the Oakville relocation in addition to the \$40 million you claim. He swore to the justice committee that he told the minister the Oakville cancellation would cost hundreds of millions of dollars more than the \$40-million figure.

Premier, you've known this for months—months—yet you sit there and pretend you didn't. Will you drop the act and tell us the total cost of the gas plant scandal and who ordered the documents to be withheld?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I think members are aware that we have asked the Auditor General, an officer of this Legislature, to examine the issue. It is my understanding, through a letter that I received from him, that the Auditor General will be making his report public next

week. That will be an opportunity for the members of the opposition, members of this party or government, to take a look at the Auditor General's report. It's certainly within the power of the committee that has been struck to examine that report in detail and in fact, if they so desire, call the Auditor General before it.

In terms of document production, we have undertaken in good faith to provide the committee with all documents it wants, but again, I remind members of this House that the government took the initiative to come forward and offer a government-wide search of relevant documents far beyond anything that had been asked, and that member and his colleagues voted against it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: It was also revealed that the Liberal staffers will go to any extreme to keep us from getting to the facts. Several times yesterday I asked Craig MacLennan, the energy minister's chief of staff, about a \$1.4-billion Oakville price tag that he was very concerned with. He repeatedly swore under oath that he had no idea what I was referring to until I showed him the urgent document he wrote. Then, eureka, he remembered it. We got him red-handed.

Last week, David Livingston, the former Premier's chief of staff, either didn't know or couldn't remember 22 times in that short testimony. Let's remember that he was a \$367,000-a-year bureaucrat. Premier, do you really think this type of behaviour is acceptable, or is amnesia a prerequisite for your job in the Liberal government?

Interjections.

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

Government House leader?

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Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, the drive-by smears continue. Individuals are coming forward before the committee. These are witnesses who are being called by the—

Interjections.

Hon. John Milloy: These are witnesses who are being called by the Progressive Conservative Party. They are coming forward. They are being asked questions—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Cambridge, second time.

Hon. John Milloy: —related to a long time frame. They are answering under oath to the best of their ability.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about Mr. MacLennan's testimony, the honourable member spoke about documents. Perhaps we should review what he told the committee about documents. He said, "Ultimately, legal counsel, as I understand it, advised that it would be difficult to release these documents while negotiations were still under way. Ultimately, as I understood it, the minister accepted that legal advice."

Mr. Speaker, as has been discussed in this chamber on many occasions, the former minister and his staff tried to find a balance between the competing interests of the

public and the requests of the committee, and that became very clear yesterday.

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Michael Mantha: My question this morning is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. The Ring of Fire presents endless opportunities for northern Ontario and the province; however, instead of seeing development and job creation, the past years of Liberal government have been marked by job losses in the north. Look no further than Xstrata in Timmins to see that we are losing good, value-added jobs and crippling our workforce for years to come.

Will this government start focusing on policies that create jobs in northern Ontario so the province can capitalize on what the Ring of Fire has to offer?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you very much for the question. It's a good one in that we are, of course, very committed to seeing job creation continue in northern Ontario. I certainly note you did not reference the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp., which is one of the great job creators in northern Ontario, one that would be a benefit to your riding as well.

May I say, there's lots to talk about here, Mr. Speaker, but the province remains very committed to, certainly, sound strategic development in the Ring of Fire, perhaps one of the most exciting economic development opportunities in the province that we've seen in over 100 years. We continue to move forward with that project as well as many other opportunities we see in both the mining and the forestry sector in northern Ontario.

Again, we could discuss this all day in terms of those opportunities. We're seeing the forestry industry return in northern Ontario. We're seeing opportunities, particularly with the purchase of the mill in Terrace Bay, the opportunities that have been there in the forestry sector as well as in—

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: My question again is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. In the Ontario Mining Act, it is stated that companies must ask for an exemption to ship resources outside of the country. But our competitors come from other provinces, provinces like Manitoba, like Quebec, whose price of electricity is half that of ours in Ontario.

If this government is serious about stimulating the economy and creating new jobs, will they commit to supporting the refining of minerals and ores in Ontario?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, I'm certainly looking forward to debating the member's private member's bill tomorrow afternoon. We are, obviously, always looking for value-added opportunities in the mining sector—why we're excited about setting up a diamond-processing facility in Sudbury, Ontario; why we're working, obviously, in terms of the opportunities you see for the processing facility that may be there with the Ring of Fire in terms of Capreol.

But let me tell you, you're walking on very dangerous ground here, may I say, and I think the member knows that. He knows that indeed the amount of processing materials that come in from outside the province into the province of Ontario and that provide employment for hundreds, if not thousands, of people would be threatened if indeed the member moved forward with that legislation.

Interjection.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Oh yes, it would. So let's agree that we will have a good, thorough debate tomorrow afternoon and one where indeed I hope that members of the House recognize that this is dangerous ground you're on. Having said that, there is nothing that's more important, that wants to see the value-added opportunities in the mining sector, let alone the—

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

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mrs. Laura Albanese: My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. Our government is making record investments in public transit, and two of these major transit projects go through my riding of York South–Weston.

Residents and businesses that have been waiting for years for rapid transit on Eglinton—ever since the original subway was cancelled in 1995—were pleased, Minister, to see you on the construction site yesterday and to know that the work is progressing.

However, another neighbourhood in my riding, Weston, where construction for the GO expansion and the UP Express is in full swing, has brought forth serious concerns about extended construction work hours. These are not acceptable to the community.

Speaker, through you to the minister, I ask how we can address these concerns.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The Eglinton crosstown line—I really want to commend the member from York South–Weston on it, because she has been one of the biggest advocates for that. Very few people who have sat in this House have been such unqualified advocates for transit and transportation investments.

This is a \$4.9-billion project. It is the largest single transit project in 50 years in Ontario—this one project alone. It is one of seven projects that are now under way of 15 under the Big Move. By 2021, 53 million people will be riding that line. This is a remarkable step forward in transit investments.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you to the minister: In a public meeting held yesterday, my constituents expressed serious concerns with the accelerated construction schedule being proposed for spring and summer along the Weston corridor. Crews working every day from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. and from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekends all through the spring and summer is really extremely disruptive to the quality

of life of the residents, especially in the immediate surrounding area. This is not acceptable to the community.

Speaker, through you to the minister: How are we going to make sure these concerns are addressed?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The member raises a very good point. I hopefully would like to give her a bit of comfort on that. First, the work in this area is limited to the area of King between John and Church Streets, and that will focus on the Weston tunnel excavation.

Metrolinx is moving forward on this so that the road can be completed for the school year, and the work is being done four metres underground. We anticipate that the noise levels will be what they are, Mr. Speaker, or lower than they are right now.

The proposal is to have them run between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. Monday to Friday and 7 to 7 on Saturdays, and only on Sundays if necessary for limited amounts of time.

I would like to commit to the member that I will review this construction schedule with her and her constituents to ensure that we mitigate anything, and I'm quite prepared to work with her to achieve adjustments, if necessary.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Frank Klees: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, it's almost two years to the date that the first question was asked in this House about why names had disappeared from the sunshine list of senior executives working at Ornge. Two years later, we look at the sunshine list, and there are still senior executives missing from the sunshine list. Bruce Farr, the acting operations manager; Jim Feeley, the VP of aviation—79 employees being paid in excess of \$7 million are nowhere to be seen on the sunshine list.

I'd like to know from the Premier: Is this her idea of full disclosure? Is this her idea of transparency? Why are these people not listed on the sunshine list?

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It is almost two years, and what a two years it has been, Speaker. Ornge is a much, much stronger organization now: new leadership, new protocols—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —focused on patient care. It is a—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I just want to make sure you heard that. The member from Nepean–Carleton, come to order.

Carry on.

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Hon. Deborah Matthews: I would like to take this opportunity, Speaker—we have paramedics in the House, and I want to focus on saying thank you to the front-line

staff at Ornge, who have worked so hard, despite difficult times.

I look forward to the supplementary, but I have directed that Ornge must comply with the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act. That's why I made sure it was in the new performance agreement that has been in place for over a year. When the new board was appointed at Ornge, one of their directions was to wind down the for-profit companies.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, obviously, the minister has been as ineffective in the last few months as she was for the last two years, because there continue to be three for-profit companies that are employing 79 employees, none of whom have been able to be convinced to allow their names to be disclosed for the salary disclosure that we in this House were promised by the minister.

I would like to know, from the minister: Why are we still faced with a list of 79 employees who are being paid more than \$7.5 million of taxpayers' money? We have no idea who they are. Why has this organization not complied with the directive the minister told us here that she has given them?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As I was saying, Ornge is winding down those for-profit entities as quickly as is responsible to do so. I am sure the member opposite would not want Ornge to do anything that was not responsible.

Speaker, the member is correct. There are currently active for-profit entities that employ some of Ornge's pilots and management. They do not fall under the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act. However, they are posting publicly the positions and salaries for all of those who are not covered by the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act.

I would say that if the member opposite wants to see progress at Ornge, he should pass the legislation, get it to committee, and let's continue the job that has already been well started at Ornge.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. The Premier likes to describe the crisis in manufacturing in Ontario as a myth. Maybe she hasn't heard the one about the emperor's new clothes. That myth is about what happens when a leader ignores the obvious.

One thing is very obvious, Speaker, to 5,000 workers and their families in southwestern Ontario: They've lost good-paying manufacturing jobs over the last year.

When will the Premier face the facts and deal with manufacturing job losses in London and across the southwest?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question from the leader of the third party. The reality is that important investments that this government is making, like the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, which was approved and passed in this Legislature last fall—it's

such an important program to address precisely the issue that the leader of the third party is talking about.

When we think of the nearly 400,000 jobs that have been created since June 2009, since the bottom of the recession, many of those jobs were created in the manufacturing sector as well, and many of those jobs were created in southwestern Ontario.

We are focused on continuing to find new supports, better supports, to make sure that this important sector in Ontario, which contributed so much to our economy and our society—that we continue to invest in making sure that it continues to thrive.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, over the last 10 years of Liberal reign, 18,000 manufacturing jobs in southwestern Ontario have disappeared. London now has the third-highest unemployment rate in the country. London workers are reeling from manufacturing job losses at Electro-Motive, Diamond Aircraft, and the list goes on and on and on. London families don't want to hear bedtime stories. They want to see a jobs strategy that actually works.

When will the Premier take some real action to protect and create good-paying manufacturing jobs in London, in southwestern Ontario and, in fact, across this province?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Again, it's important, I think, that we remind ourselves of the success that is going on in this province. In fact, Ontario, including in manufacturing, is leading in many sectors. I just want to say that, for example, our auto sector is producing more vehicles in this province than any other subnational jurisdiction in North America. We have the fastest-growing green energy sector in North America as well. We have the best-rated banks in the world. We have the second-largest financial services sector in North America, next to New York. We are the mining finance capital of the world. We are in the top three in North America in terms of the film industry as well. And importantly, we have Canada's largest food processing industry.

In the manufacturing sector, there's work to be done, of course. The recession hit hard; it hurt this sector badly. We're working hard to make sure that it continues to thrive.

TOURISM

Mr. Vic Dhillon: My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Supporting local festivals and cultural events is very important. In my riding of Brampton West and all across Peel region, we are fortunate to have many cultural celebrations. The government's Celebrate Ontario program is an important tool that helps local community groups run programs and events and showcase their culture and heritage. It has helped with events like Carabram and the Mosaic South Asian heritage festival, which were wildly popular and well-attended events in Peel. Showcasing the diversity and heritage of Ontarians not only makes

Ontario a popular tourist destination, but it also generates business for the local economy.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell us how the Celebrate Ontario program benefits Ontarians?

Hon. Michael Chan: Thank you very much to the honourable member for Brampton West for asking.

Celebrate Ontario is a great program in my ministry. It's an important program, because it pulls people together. It attracts tourists; it creates jobs. Every year, festivals generate more than 22,000 jobs in this province. This year, through Celebrate Ontario, our government is providing support to 203 events.

Let me give you examples: Celebrations like the upcoming Tall Ships 1812 Tour will have \$450 million in visitor spending while drawing 1.2 million attendees, including 500,000 tourists.

Local festivals and events make Ontario a great travel destination and encourage Ontarians and visitors to explore and experience all our province has to offer.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Easy does it, the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Supplementary?

Mr. Vic Dhillon: [*Inaudible*] Ontario, which will generate local business and help create jobs. I heard that our government also enhanced the blockbuster category of Celebrate Ontario, allowing London to host the 2013 International Skating Union World Figure Skating Championships in March, as well as Ottawa's 2013 International Ice Hockey Federation world women's championship, which just ended yesterday.

Can the minister indicate what else the government has done for festivals and events in Ontario?

Hon. Michael Chan: That was a very good question.

I want to congratulate the Canadian women's hockey team, which won a silver medal in Ottawa last night. I am sure the next time around, they will get a gold medal.

I am proud to say that since 2003, our government has invested over \$260 million to support more than 4,600 festivals and events across Ontario. Since 2007, Celebrate Ontario has helped enhance close to 1,000 festivals, supporting our priorities to help grow the economy and create jobs.

Our government is dedicated to supporting Ontario's festivals and events through programs like Celebrate Ontario, and we will continue to do that.

TEACHERS' COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the Premier. Premier, I want to read something you said in question period yesterday; it intrigued me. This was in response to the \$63-million price tag on retirement gratuities with the OSSTF. You said, "The savings that was found, \$1.8 billion, is the same money that was saved at the end of this contract."

Well, I think this member, of course, as Premier, knows that the Ontario PC caucus has been calling for an

across-the-board legislated wage freeze that would be far more comprehensive than what they're doing, and that would save \$2 billion. She's now trying to tell us she spent \$63 million more but she has \$1.8 billion in savings. Speaker, I know math scores are down in this province, but it appears that she has taken it to a new low in her office.

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What I'd like to ask the Premier is, can you stand up and give us a detailed explanation right here, right now, on where you found those \$1.8 billion in savings, or is it just like the power plants that are costing \$40 million?

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

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm very happy to respond to this question, because I think what's absolutely clear in all of this is that while the party opposite has an attitude which—I think one of the members, the other day, in question period, referred to teachers as terrorists. That is totally unacceptable, and we have a very different attitude. We think teachers are our front-line professionals, and we make absolutely—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Liz Sandals: We make absolutely no apologies for working with our front-line professionals to come to an agreement. We actually think working with our teachers to come to an agreement and having peace in the schools and extracurriculars is a good thing.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I heard her make an accusation about the member from Thornhill, but she did not tell me what \$1.8 billion of savings was added up from, because there aren't, Speaker. We know this deal has cost us an extra—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I would appreciate it if everyone got a little softer.

Please finish.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: If this government actually knew the details of their own agreement, they'd be able to table in this chamber what that cost. If they're talking about \$1.8 billion in savings, this side of the House wants to know why it hasn't been applied to the debt and the deficit. We want to know why it has not been applied to our front-line classrooms for textbooks, technology and the portables where we see our kids in suburban communities right across this province.

So I ask this minister one more time—

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I want to remind the member that when I stand, you sit.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Pardon me? I can't hear you.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You can't hear me because you were talking.

Minister.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Speaker, I'd be delighted to explain how we got over \$1.8 billion in savings. In fact, Minister Duncan, when he was Minister of Finance, I believe, explained it in quite a bit of detail. In the 2012-13 fiscal year, which we are just completing, there was over a quarter of a billion dollars in operating savings. In the fiscal year that we are about to begin, there is over half a billion in savings. There are also ongoing fiscal savings of \$1.1 billion in terms of long-term liability. So when you add it all up, there in fact is \$1.8 billion in savings. And just as there was \$1.8 billion in savings in January, there are \$1.8 billion in March.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Residents in Kingston are very concerned about the fact that St. Mary's hospital is being planned as a P3, a private-public partnership—so concerned, in fact, that this weekend they are holding an unofficial by-election on the issue.

P3s have been shown by the Auditor General to waste taxpayers' money, as they transfer responsibility for a public hospital to a for-profit corporation with no accountability, with no oversight.

Financial experts have said that this P3 is going to cost \$100 million more—\$100 million that should be spent on improving patient care, Mr. Speaker, but the minister says that it is cheaper. Why, then, has the minister refused to release any of the supporting documents that make the case for this P3, and how can the minister justify ignoring the voices of the local residents of Kingston in justifying this P3?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I can assure you that the residents of Kingston are delighted at the investments that are being made in hospital infrastructure, and I applaud the member from Kingston and the Islands, who has been relentless in his advocacy for capital projects in his riding.

The alternate financing plan that is building hospitals across this province is delivering hospitals on budget and on time. We simply would not have been able to replace our hospital infrastructure if we had used traditional methods of financing. We are getting very good value for money. We're getting projects built. They're coming in under budget and on time. The result is, we have a highly renewed hospital infrastructure across this province.

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

The House recessed from 1136 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Michael Prue: I have five guests here today to observe the introduction of a bill later today. My guests are Daryl Chezzi, Sean Hamilton, Amanda Barchard, Bruce Katkin and Julius Varga. Welcome to the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome. Thank you for being here.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

VIMY RIDGE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. Robert Bailey: I stand today to recognize the 96th anniversary of the Canadian Corps assault on the German troops occupying Vimy, France, between April 9 and April 12, 1917. In capturing that critical foothold in northern France, soldiers from all four divisions of the Canadian military corps stood side by side for the first time as a nation, united, at one. In doing so, 3,598 young Canadians made that ultimate sacrifice with their lives, and another 7,000 returned wounded from that battle.

Vimy Ridge stands as a memorial in perpetuity to those 11,285 Canadian soldiers who fought and were killed in France during the First World War and have no known grave. In 2011, I was fortunate enough to join a group of 1st Hussars from Sarnia and London to visit the memorial at Vimy Ridge, Juno Beach and the Commonwealth cemeteries in Europe. Together, we travelled to those sites to honour our brave soldiers, who have selflessly fought for our country with the hope that theirs would be the last generation to face the violence and the atrocities of war.

I ask that today, as we tend to the business of our individual lives, each of us takes time to reflect upon that past service and sacrifice of our fellow Canadians at Vimy Ridge and in all conflicts across the globe.

RURAL AGRI-INNOVATION NETWORK

Mr. Michael Mantha: The Rural Agri-Innovation Network, or RAIN, is holding sessions across many communities in Algoma-Manitoulin between April 18 and May 7 that will help strengthen the agricultural sector in northern Ontario.

RAIN is a collaborative organization for improved producer success and business growth in the agricultural sector. This valuable organization will improve the capacity of Algoma producers for rural-based crops and commodities and create value-added products and services. Through these sessions that will be held in Echo Bay, Huron Shores, Prince township and St. Joseph Island, RAIN will gain input from local community members so that they can effectively develop market opportunities, get access to information, and research Algoma-specific needs and opportunities.

Northern Ontario is not only a leader in primary sector industry, it has positioned itself to become a knowledge-based economy, building on its traditional strengths and expanding in the areas of innovation and collaboration. Northern agriculture is important to the health, economic viability and diversity of northern communities. RAIN is pursuing research that will develop and support the growth and sustainability of the industry so that the

northern Ontario agricultural sector will be better able to thrive and realize its full potential.

I applaud the efforts of this organization and encourage community members to attend these sessions so that research can be properly tailored to the needs of local producers and agricultural communities can be strengthened through innovative practices.

NATIONAL ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR AWARENESS WEEK

Ms. Soo Wong: I would like to take the time today to recognize April 22 to 28 as National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week 2013. At this moment, more than 1,500 people are waiting for a life-saving organ and tissue transplant in Ontario. One person on this list dies every three days because the organ they need is not available, but the organs of just one person can save up to eight lives.

While Ontario's organ and tissue donation registration is 22%, Toronto's registration is 14%. Scarborough falls well below this number, at a mere 10%. For this reason, the Scarborough Gift of Life Association was formed in September 2012. The members and the volunteers of this association live in Scarborough, and many have personal connections or interests in organ and tissue donations. They are local community donors, recipients, neighbours, advocates, friends, partners and supporters, including my constituent Mohan Bissoondial, who is a friend as well as an organ recipient and a founder of the Scarborough Gift of Life Association.

Mohan and his team have increased the registration rate for organ and tissue donation in Scarborough, working in partnership with Trillium Gift of Life. The Trillium Gift of Life network designates April as Be a Donor month.

I want to applaud the association for all their hard work and encourage each one of us here in the House and in the community to be a donor.

A.O. SMITH

Mr. Ted Arnott: Once again, I wish to update the House on the situation in Fergus related to the A.O. Smith, formerly GSW, manufacturing plant closure.

Upon hearing the news, I immediately reached out to township of Centre Wellington officials, company and union representatives, the Premier's office, the offices of the Ministers of Economic Development and Training, and many others. I also joined Mayor Joanne Ross-Zuj to visit the plant on April 4, the day after the announcement.

The Premier and the Minister of Training returned my calls to their offices. I asked both of them in turn to call the mayor, and they did, which I appreciate. However, the government's response to date, as a whole, has been less than satisfactory. Yesterday in this House, the Minister of Economic Development claimed during question period that an action centre had been "opened" to respond to the crisis.

Mr. Speaker, as of yesterday, that was not true. In fact, when I contacted the company yesterday to double-check, I was told that the company hasn't yet heard from the government. The minister needs to correct his record in this House.

The 350 A.O. Smith workers need a compassionate community response in the first instance, and this is happening in our community right now. But they need the support of the provincial government as well.

I call upon the Minister of Training to immediately activate the Second Career program and other relevant training programs and give my constituents fair consideration to help them with their retraining needs. Secondly, I call upon the Minister of Economic Development to immediately reach out to the township of Centre Wellington, offering all available resources to support our township, county and chamber of commerce's efforts to create new jobs in our community to replace the ones that we will be losing on July 1, Canada Day.

Working together, we will meet this challenge head on, support our neighbours and continue to reach out to the promise of the future.

RON SCHLEGEL

Ms. Catherine Fife: This past weekend I had the distinct pleasure of attending the mayors' dinner in support of the Working Centre in Kitchener-Waterloo. This event celebrates individuals who have made outstanding contributions to our community. It is worth noting that the Working Centre itself deserves celebrating as it is a progressive model of social entrepreneurship, generosity and compassion and for many years has been the social net that catches our most vulnerable citizens when government institutions have failed them.

This year, the Working Centre honoured and celebrated the life, work and vision of citizen Ron Schlegel. Mr. Schlegel is a hugely influential volunteer, businessperson and academic in Kitchener-Waterloo. Perhaps most importantly, we all celebrated his vision of a society as a village. Mr. Schlegel believes that each of us, using our talents and working with each other, can achieve a common goal of building a better community. His vision of a village informed his academic work on aging and his successful retirement communities and long-term-care facilities, where dignity, nutrition and engagement are at the centre of senior health.

In his work as a faculty member at the University of Waterloo, Mr. Schlegel helped establish the health sciences and gerontology department. His ongoing commitment to promote new and better ways of providing service for older adults led to the founding of the Schlegel-University of Waterloo Research Institute for Aging in 2005, along with the Centre for Applied Health Research and the Murray Alzheimer Research and Education Program.

Mr. Schlegel has been described as a visionary who has built his philanthropy into each of his business models. Indeed, we are very fortunate to have not only

Mr. Schlegel recognized as a leader, but the Working Centre of Kitchener–Waterloo to serve the citizens of the great riding of Kitchener–Waterloo.

LEDBURY PARK ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr. Mike Colle: First of all, I'm proud that so many members of the House today are wearing pink for international pink day in solidarity with the young lady who died in Halifax, Rehtaeh Parsons. I'm just reflecting on that before I talk about my students at Ledbury Park elementary school.

Ledbury Park is an amazing school in my riding. Mr. Speaker, you would know this, as a former educator. They became the winners of the Canadian National Mathematics League contest—that's right across Canada. The students at Ledbury Park placed third overall and first among all public schools. That's quite an achievement.

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About 200 private and public schools competed in this rigorous time test of mathematical and problem-solving skills. The students had to solve 35 difficult questions in 30 minutes. Cedric, a top-ranked grade 8 student at Ledbury, has been invited to attend the math league finals competition in August at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

I'm very proud of Ledbury Park school—the staff, principals, parents and students—for doing so well in this national mathematics league contest. Congratulations to all at Ledbury Park. You deserve a real clap for your achievements.

ROBERT ELGIE

Mrs. Julia Munro: I would like to take this time to acknowledge the passing of Robert Elgie, who served as a member of this Legislature from 1977 to 1985. He was a cabinet minister in the Progressive Conservative governments of Bill Davis and Frank Miller.

Bob was a very ambitious and dedicated man, having received a law degree and practised medicine as a neurosurgeon prior to his pursuing his political career. Even later in life, Bob was an active community member, having been appointed as chair of the Ontario Greenbelt Council in the summer of 2005.

I knew Bob personally as he was also a constituent of mine. He was well known in my riding of York–Simcoe as he was a keen supporter of many activities and events in the community. He would frequently attend church dinners and community fairs and accompany his grandchildren to events.

Bob was a great supporter and a friend, always someone that could be counted on for advice or support in my role as the MPP. Our province has lost a great man and so has our community of Georgina. I would like to offer my condolences to his wife, Nancy, and their five children and grandchildren.

ROUGE VALLEY HEALTH, AJAX–PICKERING

Mr. Joe Dickson: I rise in the House today to bring the assembly's attention to a part of my riding that I hold very near and dear. Rouge Valley Health, the Ajax–Pickering site, has made tremendous improvements over the past decade and several years as well to better serve our rapidly expanding community. In addition to the \$100-million, 140,000-square-foot expansion, the Ajax–Pickering site has invested in innovative and high-tech services to continually improve the access and quality of patient care for the residents of Ajax–Pickering and the entire Durham area.

Patients now have world-renowned cardiac care, follow-up appointments via Skype, prehab services, demonstrative YouTube videos, a \$5-million MRI unit, a new ambulatory care unit and a substantial increase in bed space. Decreasing wait times, increasing services and diversifying the specialties of our physicians and numerous specialty surgeons are key components in the future vision of our hospital.

It is an ongoing saga as we continue to care for and provide higher levels of health care locally at the Ajax–Pickering hospital. We congratulate the staff, who continue to excel, and that certainly includes our very special associate chief of staff, Dr. Romas Stas.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: The College of Trades is an expensive Liberal bureaucracy supported by the NDP. It is imposing new taxes on tradespeople and small businesses. They just want to feed their families, not Liberal bureaucracies. If the Premier would just have a conversation with my constituents, she would know that. But her government is choosing not to listen.

They are not listening to Linda and Sara, two constituents from Stratford who recently wrote to me. Sara, a licensed hairstylist, has been asked to pay \$120 a year. To add insult to injury, she will have to pay tax on top of that tax. Sara works at a long-term-care facility. I quote from the letter: "They cannot and will not raise their rates to seniors on fixed incomes." Where will Sara find the extra money?

The government is not listening to Bruce, an electrician from Listowel. He writes, "I cannot see how this new tax will benefit anyone."

They're not listening to Rob, who owns a small business in Stratford. He wrote to me, "You add this to the new WSIB rules, and it makes you wonder why you would want to be in Ontario as a business."

I have spoken up for my constituents many times on this issue. I've taken part in a forum with the Stratford home builders. I've written many letters, most recently to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, asking him to take back his unfair fees. Just last week, we welcomed Garfield Dunlop to Mitchell, where he spoke to about 25 tradespeople who want no part of this Liberal bureaucracy.

My constituents know the government is not listening to them. They know the Liberals are failing them.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROTECTING EMPLOYEES' TIPS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PROTECTION DU POURBOIRE DES EMPLOYÉS

Mr. Prue moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 49, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 with respect to tips and other gratuities / Projet de loi 49, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne les pourboires et autres gratifications.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Michael Prue: The bill prohibits employers from taking any portion of an employee's tips or other gratuities.

POOLED REGISTERED PENSION PLANS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LES RÉGIMES DE PENSION AGRÉÉS COLLECTIFS

Mrs. Munro moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 50, An Act to require the introduction of legislation to allow for pooled registered pension plans / Projet de loi 50, Loi exigeant la présentation d'un projet de loi afin d'autoriser les régimes de pension agréés collectifs.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mrs. Julia Munro: This bill requires the Minister of Labour to introduce a bill in the assembly to allow for pooled registered pension plans.

SECURITY FOR COURTS, ELECTRICITY GENERATING FACILITIES AND NUCLEAR FACILITIES ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LA SÉCURITÉ DES TRIBUNAUX, DES CENTRALES ÉLECTRIQUES ET DES INSTALLATIONS NUCLÉAIRES

Mrs. Meilleur moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 51, An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act with respect to court security and enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013 / Projet de loi 51, Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics, modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers en ce qui concerne la sécurité des tribunaux et édictant la Loi de 2013 sur la sécurité des centrales électriques et des installations nucléaires.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Mr. Speaker, I will make my statement during ministers' statements.

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STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

COMMUNITY SAFETY

SÉCURITÉ COMMUNAUTAIRE

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to encourage my colleagues in this House to support the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013.

The act, if passed, will repeal and replace the Public Works Protection Act, ensuring we strike the right balance between protecting Ontario's courthouses, electricity generating plants and nuclear facilities, and respecting the civil rights of the people of this province.

La loi actuelle a été adoptée au début de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale afin de protéger les centrales électriques de la province, ses barrages, ses ponts et autres infrastructures publiques essentielles contre le sabotage.

Concerns were raised about whether the PWPA, which became law in 1939, is too broad and outdated. In response to these concerns, the government asked the Honourable Roy McMurtry, a former Ontario Chief Justice, to review the legislation. In his report, Judge McMurtry recommended its repeal and replacement.

The new legislation, the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013, is more modern and focused on necessary security at courthouses, nuclear facilities and large electricity generating facilities. It also includes a more transparent process on how we go about protecting key infrastructure in this province.

The PWPA is only used in limited circumstances. It is used daily to provide security for courts, nuclear facilities and certain electricity generating plants. That's where the new legislation is focused. In December 2010, the Ombudsman produced a report that raised important questions about how the PWPA works and how it was used at the time of the G20 summit in Toronto earlier that year.

In light of both the Ombudsman's and the McMurtry reports, we are repealing the PWPA.

Aux fins de l'élaboration du projet de loi, le gouvernement a organisé des consultations à grande échelle afin de déterminer les mesures qu'il faudrait prendre pour préserver la sécurité si la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics était abrogée. Nous avons sollicité les commentaires et conseils d'exploitants d'installations nucléaires et d'organes de réglementation du secteur, de producteurs d'électricité, de partenaires de la justice et de municipalités. Nous avons également consulté des défenseurs des libertés civiles pour être sûrs d'atteindre un bon équilibre entre les besoins de sécurité et la protection des libertés civiles.

Nous proposons à nouveau la loi après la prorogation de l'Assemblée législative l'an passé. La loi proposée vient compléter le projet de loi original en incorporant les commentaires que nous avons reçus. Nous avons tenu compte des commentaires reçus des intervenants pendant les auditions publiques et l'examen du projet de loi par le Comité permanent de la justice, surtout en ce qui concerne les accommodements religieux dans les palais de justice.

The proposed legislation has achieved that delicate balance and generated a broad consensus among all key stakeholders. The proposed legislation will do the following three things: repeal the Public Works Protection Act; set out a legislative amendment to the Police Services Act to address court security; and set out stand-alone legislation respecting security and prescribed electricity generating and nuclear facilities.

The proposed legislation is aligned with the current powers granted to court security guards under the PWPA. The legislation will provide security staff with the ability to, where reasonable:

- require any person entering or inside a courthouse to identify himself or herself and provide information to assess their security risk;

- search, without a warrant, any person, property or vehicle entering or attempting to enter premises where court proceedings are conducted; and

- search, without a warrant and using reasonable force if necessary, any person who is in custody where court proceedings are conducted or who is being transported to or from such premises, or any property in the custody/care of that person.

I would like to emphasize that the legislation does not compel a person entering or attempting to enter a courthouse to submit to a search, identify himself or herself, or provide information. A member of the public can simply walk away. However, if they persist in entering the courthouse after refusing to provide information or submit to a search, court security personnel can refuse entry and/or demand that the person leave the premises, and use reasonable force, if necessary, to exclude or remove the person. If a person continues to try to enter and/or refuses to leave, they could be arrested.

In terms of other facilities, we've narrowed the list of public works to electricity generating and nuclear facil-

ities. The legislation will apply to prescribed electricity-generating facilities and prescribed nuclear facilities. The act designates security personnel at these facilities as peace officers with the power to require any person who wishes to enter or is on the premises to produce identification and provide information for the purposes of assessing the person's security risk, and search any person, property or vehicle entering or on the premises.

Comme les dispositions applicables à la sécurité des tribunaux, la loi n'oblige pas une personne à se soumettre à la fouille, à produire une pièce d'identité ou à fournir des renseignements. Elle peut décider de s'en aller.

Toutefois, si la personne insiste pour pénétrer dans les lieux après avoir refusé de fournir des renseignements ou de subir une fouille, le personnel de sécurité peut refuser de lui permettre de pénétrer dans les lieux ou lui ordonner de quitter les lieux, et employer au besoin la force raisonnable pour l'empêcher d'y pénétrer ou la faire sortir. Si la personne continue d'essayer de pénétrer dans les lieux ou de refuser de quitter les lieux, elle peut être arrêtée.

It is important to note that this act covers very limited categories of infrastructure. Adding additional categories of infrastructure will require amendments to the act, not just a new regulation. It would, therefore, be open to debate in the House. The process for changing an act is very transparent and open, and the content of any proposed amendments would be subject to public debate.

There is one important aspect of the PWPA that we have not replicated. The PWPA gives guards the authority to exercise their powers in the "approaches" to public works. The "approach" to a facility was a concern for Judge McMurtry and civil liberties groups, because it is vague and hard to define. Under our proposal, guards could exercise the specified powers only on the premises. These powers would not apply off the premises. Since the "approach" falls outside the premises of the nuclear facility, any security issues should be addressed in partnership with the police of the jurisdiction.

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Pour terminer, j'aimerais ajouter que les habitants de l'Ontario valorisent et célèbrent les droits de la personne et les libertés civiles. Notre gouvernement est bien conscient de sa responsabilité à assurer la protection des tribunaux et de l'infrastructure essentielle.

We must always balance the need for security with respect for civil liberties like the freedom of assembly and the principles of an open and transparent justice system. I believe that this legislation does indeed strike that necessary balance.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues in the House to support this legislation.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PINK

Hon. Liz Sandals: Today I am pleased to stand in recognition of International Day of Pink. The International Day of Pink was started a few years ago when a young man in 9th grade was bullied for wearing a pink

shirt in a Nova Scotia high school. Two other young men at the school saw what happened and took action: They bought pink shirts and handed them out to friends to wear to school. To their surprise, hundreds of students wore pink to show support for the bullied student. By doing so, those students demonstrated the importance of not being a bystander to bullying. They stood up against bullying and showed that it would not be tolerated at their school.

I want to thank all the members who are wearing pink today in support of this great cause to raise awareness of the harmful effects of bullying and to help put a stop to bullying in our schools. I would also like to recognize all of our young people who have organized pink shirt days in their schools across Ontario today. Together, we are part of one voice that says that we will not tolerate bullying, discrimination or hatred in our society.

Mr. Speaker, any student can be bullied at any time, at any age. In fact, according to one study, about 29% of Ontario students report being bullied while at school. Students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or questioning are too often the target of homophobia at school. Sadly, bullying can lead to intense feelings of loneliness and isolation.

For some, the pain of bullying and depression can even lead to tragic consequences, including suicide. We think of the young student in New Brunswick, 17-year-old Rehtaeh Parsons, who took his own—

Interjection: Halifax.

Hon. Liz Sandals: In Halifax?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Yes, in Halifax.

Hon. Liz Sandals: In Halifax, sorry, who took his own life this week. Once again, we—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Her.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm sorry; I'm trying to decipher the notes here—her life in Halifax. So often we see that, when a student doesn't have a place to turn, that can become the ultimate consequence.

Speaker, we know that for our students to do well in school, they must feel safe. For this reason, I am proud that our government passed the Accepting Schools Act last year as part of our comprehensive action plan for accepting schools. Ontario school boards must now take preventive measures against bullying and support students who want to promote understanding and respect for all.

We need the whole school and the entire community involved in the fight against bullying and discrimination. That's why it's important that our schools work with parents, students and staff in developing policies to prevent bullying in our classrooms.

As a complement to our efforts on accepting schools, our government is also expanding supports for children and youth with mental health issues. Through Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, we are hiring new mental health workers across the province to make sure mental health services are available where and when they are needed most.

We're also partnering with Kids Help Phone so that our young people have access to 24/7 telephone- and

Web-based professional counselling services, because we know that when kids are depressed, when they're upset, when they're bothered by bullying, they often feel like they have no place to turn. If they can access a service like Kids Help Phone and get professional advice at the end of the phone, that's also often what can lead them to feel that somewhere there's a person who is willing to listen to them.

Today, Speaker, we are united in our stance against bullying. We're united in our belief that every child should have a safe, inclusive and accepting school environment where they can reach their full potential. Once again, I thank all members today for their support of International Day of Pink.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Statements by ministries?

Responses. The member from—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. That's me.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to respond today to the statement by the Minister of Community Safety. I thought I was having a flashback when she said, "introducing a bill for the first time," because it's not actually for the first time. This bill came before this House last year. The bill went through second reading and committee, and it was ready. It would be proclaimed today had the government not decided that we needed a holiday, we needed a little break, and prorogued the House and let all those bills die. Had we not had that prorogation, this bill would be implemented and we'd be acting upon it as we speak, as opposed to bringing it back to the Legislature for a new introduction and further debate.

The minister did make a passing reference—just a passing reference—to the G20 in her statement. Folks, let's be very, very clear. I don't think anybody over there knew what the Public Works Protection Act was until the G20. And then it was used so inappropriately during that meeting of world leaders that all of a sudden somebody had to stand up and take notice and say, "Whoa, we're taking a sledgehammer instead of a fly swatter to take care of a small problem. We're using the Public Works Protection Act." It turned out to be the wrong kind of enforcement that was passed behind closed doors by the cabinet without this Legislature even being made aware of it, even though this Legislature was sitting at the time that decision was made. So I don't think we should lose sight of the fact as to why this change was brought forward.

Having said that, I want to be fair: The change is long overdue. The Public Works Protection Act dates back to the War Measures Act of 1939, so it requires some upgrading. But the shame of it is that something as serious as the wrongful use of it during the G20 was what got the government's attention.

So let's bring the bill to the House. Let's have a good look at it. In principle, we support what they're trying to do here, and we hope that at the end of the day, this can get passed and make it better for us all.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): My apologies to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I would never forget his riding.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PINK

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: I'm pleased to be taking part in and speaking to the International Day of Pink initiative that is taking place today. This is a day on which we can all celebrate the great diversity of our multicultural province and a day on which we can all join together to stand against all forms of bullying and discrimination.

Every one of us here is well aware of the irreversible damage that bullying can do to young people's lives. It can impact students on both a mental and a physical level, which consequently also leads to a resulting decrease in academic performance by students.

Ultimately, it can lead to the needless loss of a life. On Sunday, a young woman named Rehtaeh Parsons, just a few weeks before her 16th birthday, tragically took her life after having faced relentless bullying. It is unacceptable that someone should have to endure the negativity and pain resulting from discrimination, regardless of the form it takes.

Increasingly, bullying takes place away from the classroom and the school playground. It now often takes place online, making it difficult for an adult to step in, leaving kids feeling alone. For this reason, it is important that we ensure that these children know they are not alone, and that they have somewhere they can reach out to for help.

1540

Wearing pink today, we are showing our solidarity and indicating that we do not tolerate any form of bullying. We are showing that we want to create a society in which all people can feel safe, respected and accepted.

Today, as we take part in this initiative, we are following the example of students from Nova Scotia who stood up to discrimination and started the day of pink. Their idea quickly became a great success and their initiatives swept across not only Canada, but the United States as well. This success story had just one simple but powerful message behind it: Anyone can bully, anyone can be victimized by bullying, but together we can stop it.

I would also like to congratulate our local students who are taking part in various anti-bullying events in their schools today. Through education, I am confident that we will one day get rid of the needless voices of discrimination, not only in our schools but everywhere across the province of Ontario.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PINK

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I'm pleased to rise in support and celebration of the International Day of Pink. My thanks

to all of those activists who put heart and soul into combating bullying across this country; in particular, my congratulations to those who have organized these events all over Ontario.

As has been said by my colleagues, those who have spoken today and those who have spoken on other days, bullying damages people's psyche, leads to injury and, in extreme occasions, can lead to death.

Everyone in this House has been touched in one way or the other by bullying. Everyone in this province, either in their own personal lives or in the lives of those who are close to them, who matter to them, has had to encounter and deal with bullying.

Speaker, it's entirely right and proper that today we take a moment to think about those who have been bullied and to celebrate those who have the courage and strength to take on the issue.

Last year, this Legislature took a small step forward with the Accepting Schools Act. But I say to you, Speaker, I've been made aware that it's still the case in some Ontario schools that, even though there's interest in and demand for gay-straight alliances, they are not being formed, that students who are concerned to organize, to make their schools safer, are not getting the support that they need.

I'm concerned as well, because in the course of the debate on that bill, I had the occasion to do the research, to look at the background, and it was clear that having a good number of adults in a school helped make those schools safer. We've seen reductions in education budgets in the last budget and, with the recent announcement of grants for our school boards, further reductions. That means more young people at risk. That's the wrong direction. And my hope is that, collectively, we will move to correct that.

My thanks, again, to all the young people who have stood up, taken a position, spoken out against bullying, and a recognition today, Speaker, that there is far, far more to be done in this province.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of the Ontario New Democratic Party to speak about the reintroduction of the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, which is a bill that is a direct result, as we've heard already, of the issues and concerns that have been raised around this government's extreme measure, extremely aggressive approach, towards those who gathered in peaceful protest around the G20 summit in 2010.

Mr. Speaker, the act repeals the Public Works Protection Act, which was a measure brought in in the 1930s, in an era where our national sovereignty was certainly thought to have been at risk, an era where war was imminent, an era where the enemy was a foreign enemy and we were fearful that our borders could have been breached.

The government decided in 2010 to take the full scope of that act and to implement it on its own citizens here in

downtown Toronto. It only became apparent that they trampled civil liberties in the use of this act after the damage was done. We heard stories of those who gathered in peaceful protest. One gentleman was a 57-year-old from Thorold, Ontario, who was also an amputee and was kettled. His prosthetic was taken away from him and he was dragged into a police cruiser. This is how far this government was willing to go to fight peaceful protest and a democratic process that should be fundamental in this province.

We certainly agree that this Public Works Protection Act should be dismantled and never see the light of day again. We do agree with the reduced scope of what the new bill does, and we look forward to debating again to ensure that no government in the future can ever enact those types of really strong-handed measures on its people ever again.

PETITIONS

HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

Mr. John O'Toole: It's always good to be first.

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: I say that with the greatest degree of modesty.

A petition from my riding of Durham reads as follows—and I support this one, really, without any excuse:

“Whereas the United Senior Citizens of Ontario has expressed its concerns over the high costs of parking at hospitals in Ontario on behalf of its more than 300,000 members; and

“Whereas thousands of Ontario seniors find it difficult to live on their fixed income and cannot afford these extra hospital parking fees added to their daily living costs; and

“Whereas the Canadian Medical Association Journal has said in an editorial that parking fees are a barrier to health care and add additional stress to patients who have enough to deal with;

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

“That Ontario's members of provincial Parliament, and the” Kathleen Wynne “government take action to abolish parking fees for all seniors when visiting hospitals.”

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for

several years ... faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with developmental and other related disabilities; and

“Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs, developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

“Whereas today over 30% of developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

“Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

“Whereas in some cases services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a ‘custodial’ care arrangement; and

“Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

“Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential supports, day program supports and other programs province-wide;

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

“(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have in effect been cut;

“(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

“(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce;

“(4) To provide adequate new funding to agencies to ensure that the growing number of families on wait lists have access to accommodation supports and day supports and services.”

I couldn't agree more. I'm going to give it to Theodore to be delivered to the table.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I have a petition from the York–South Weston community and residents, who petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Whereas there have been several incidents of violence and crime related to the illegal sale and service of alcohol in our community; and

“Whereas we, as a community, want safety and peace of mind and know that giving law enforcement better tools to combat criminal actions will help meet this goal;

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

“We respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 8, the Liquor Licence Amendment Act (Serving Liquor in Certain Places), 2013, into law.”

I agree with this petition. I will sign it and hand it over to page Louis.

1550

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the” unacceptable and “unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the ... government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

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

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

I totally agree with this petition, and I affix my name. I’ll send it with Amina to the desk.

GREENWATER PARK

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

“Whereas the present government of Ontario should reverse the closure of Greenwater provincial park in Cochrane, Ontario;

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

“That the government of Ontario reverse the closure of Greenwater provincial park, to allow the park to remain fully operational and open to enable people from all over to enjoy camping and visiting on its” beautiful “grounds.”

I fully agree, attach my signature and send it down with Annie.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mrs. Jane McKenna: Stop the trades tax petition:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with new membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year;

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

“That the Liberal government stop their job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

I wholeheartedly support this petition, and I sign it and give it to page Jack.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): If I had known it was going to be this loud, I might not have gone to you.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas northern Ontario will suffer a huge loss of service as a result of government cuts to ServiceOntario counters;

“Whereas these cuts will have a negative impact on local businesses, and local economies;

“Whereas northerners will now face challenges in accessing their birth certificates, health cards and licences;

“Whereas northern Ontario should not unfairly bear the brunt of decisions to slash operating budgets;

“Whereas regardless of address, all Ontarians should be treated equally by their government;

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

“Review the decision to cut access to ServiceOntario for northerners, and provide northern Ontarians equal access to these services.”

I agree with this petition and will present it to page Glory.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the” McGuinty-Wynne “government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

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

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

Mr. Speaker, I agree wholeheartedly with this petition, and I’ll affix my name to it.

Interruption.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I'll take this moment to remind our guests in the galleries that you're not to clap or make noise. Thank you very much.

Further petitions?

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that says:

"Whereas Avastin is approved for use in the treatment of glioblastoma by Health Canada; and

"Whereas Avastin is currently covered for this treatment by the provincial governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia; and

"Whereas in a clinical study Mr. Kevin Graham had a positive response to this medication and his tumour stopped growing; and

"Whereas Mr. Graham and other glioblastoma patients have not had positive responses to other chemotherapy drugs currently covered by the government of Ontario;

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

"We respectfully request that Cancer Care Ontario be directed to reassess the importance of funding Avastin for brain cancer patients in Ontario to ensure equal access for Ontarians to the benefits of this treatment."

I fully agree with this petition. I will sign it—I wish Mr. Graham all the best in his treatment—and I will present it to the Clerk through Nicholas.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. Todd Smith: I also have a petition here, a "stop the trades tax" petition that was collected during a very successful Quinte Home and Renovation Show over the weekend in Belleville. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with new membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year;

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

"That the Liberal government stop their job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately."

I agree with this 100% and send it to the table with Jason.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. Robert Bailey: I appreciate the opportunity.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with new membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year;

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

"That the Liberal government stop their job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately."

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

DOG OWNERSHIP

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Whereas breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Whereas problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

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

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and to instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

I couldn't agree more. A thousand dogs have already died this year. I'm going to sign this and give it to Callum to be delivered to the desk.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Joe Dickson: This is Hospital Day in Ajax-Pickering.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Rouge Valley, Ajax and Pickering hospital campus was expanded and opened one and a half years ago, with the largest expansion in our community's history; and

"Whereas the new growth in this area creates added pressures to the system; and

"Whereas the rapid changes in modern technology create the need for infrastructure upgrades;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, sign this petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and ask that the government of Ontario continue to invest in our Ajax-Pickering community hospital by adding additional services on an ongoing basis so our residents can continue to receive the best care in this province."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

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

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encour-

aging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the” McGuinty-Wynne “government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

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

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

I support this and will be signing it. Thank you.

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ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

Ms. Soo Wong: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough’s oldest and most well-established community; and

“Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough–Agincourt share unique interests; and

“Whereas historically Agincourt’s electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

“Whereas communities, such as Scarborough–Agincourt, with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

“Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough–Agincourt; and

“Whereas ‘community of interest’ is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

“Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough–Agincourt riding; and

“Whereas the commission’s report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough–Agincourt community; and

“Whereas the residents of Scarborough–Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain, in its entirety;

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

“To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough–Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include a protected Scarborough–Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401.”

I fully support the petition, and I give it to Jarrod.

VISITORS

Mrs. Julia Munro: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I’d like to take this moment to take the opportunity to introduce three constituents, Sherry Eglas, Brenda Clair and Kathy Simpson, who are here to join us for this debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I’ll let that go but, of course, that’s not a point of order.

OPPOSITION DAY

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I move that, in the opinion of this House, whereas the McGuinty-Wynne government’s decision to create the Ontario College of Trades will impose yet another job-killing tax on hard-working tradespeople by levying millions upon millions of dollars of new fees that have no clear benefit and that will go to a new government bureaucracy that is not accountable, resulting in increased costs of trades services upon everyday Ontarians; and,

Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople already pay fees for licences and other government fees, the new Ontario College of Trades will merely become yet another government bureaucracy that no one wants or needs and will make life more expensive for all Ontarians and make everything from getting a haircut, to hiring a plumber, to buying a new home, to getting your lights or heating fixed or to having your car repaired more expensive; and

Whereas Ontario has struggled enough under 10 years of deliberate decisions that have increased taxes and overspending in Ontario and a failure to attract more people, especially young people to skilled trades, the imposition of the Ontario College of Trades is nothing more than a jobs tax that will make job creation more expensive and it will drive even more Ontarians out of the trades or out of Ontario;

Therefore, the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals should abandon their misguided job-killing trades tax and abolish the College of Trades.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Mr. Dunlop has moved opposition day 3. Mr. Dunlop.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to bring this opposition day motion before the House today.

I want to first of all thank all of my colleagues that are here. I want to welcome everyone here that has come out in support to abolish this. You might have heard that little baby crying in the background there earlier today. That’s Amanda Walker.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Samantha.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: What is it? I’m sorry. I’ve got her name: Samantha Walker. She’ll be a fifth-generation electrician in a company up in Midland, Ontario, and she’s already mad about this College of Trades and this tax hit. That’s why she was crying up there.

My comments today—I’ll limit them to a few minutes—are based on a consultation I did over the last 15 months. I do appreciate the fact that our leader, Tim Hudak, gave me the job as critic for skilled trades and apprenticeship reform. When I really got looking at this College of Trades, the reason I decided to get out and

talk to people in the communities was because no one else was doing it. I didn't hear MTCU doing it. I didn't hear anything coming out of the House here. I certainly see nothing from the Ontario College of Trades. So I decided to hit the road. I'm quite proud of this, Mr. Speaker: I've been in over 120 communities in the province. That's not saying I spent all my time in one riding or something like that. I've been to Fort Frances and Cornwall. I've been to Ottawa, Windsor—

Interjection: Manotick.

Interjection: Sarnia.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: You guys don't need to tell me where I've been. The reality is, we have covered the province.

Mr. Speaker, what I've learned in that time is that people do not want the Ontario College of Trades. Although the previous two ministers, along with the current minister, all talk about the College of Trades and how wonderful it is, I don't know who likes it, other than a few—there are a few people who are in favour of it. Certainly, there's no question that the Working Families Coalition group likes it. The business managers of the major construction unions like it, the Ontario Construction Secretariat likes it, and a few people in COCA like it.

Who's opposed? Well, the Ontario Construction Employers Coalition, representing over 200,000 people; the Canadian Federation of Independent Business; community colleges—last night I talked to a number of people from community colleges and they're shaking their heads on this thing; they just can't believe it—and the Ontario career colleges. One of the new partners in this whole program has been the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association, representing over 47,000 employees in Ontario working in automotive. They're opposed to it as well.

Why are they against it? The messaging that has come from the Ontario College of Trades—they keep changing their minds about what they really represent. First of all, they were all about helping young people get into the trades. That didn't really work out too good because everybody is helping the young people getting into trades—and we're actually finding, between ratios and the actual College of Trades, it's a barrier. So they've changed their messaging on that.

Then they moved into the safety feature factor. "You know what? It's all about safety. These people who are out there today are mean, and they're not treating our young people right. It's a safety feature." Well, that doesn't fly at all. We know all the data on that; it's complete hogwash.

So, what are they doing now? Consumer protection—about all these mean guys. They must be talking to Mike Holmes every day. It's all about consumer protection.

The reality, Mr. Speaker—and I've seen this right across Ontario—I don't think we've ever seen a time in the province when our roads, our bridges, our high-rises, our subdivisions, all the developments we do were built

better than they are today by these people right here. So we have—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): A second reminder to the gallery: No clapping, no making noises. Unfortunately, if you do, I'll have to have you removed. They get to make the noise, unfortunately. That's the way it is.

Continue.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Well, they really like me, Mr. Speaker.

Why are they against this thing? Well, first of all, the governance fees. When you increase fees by 676%, there's something wrong with the picture. They're thinking that everybody is making hundreds of thousands of dollars. Do they understand that there are a lot of people out there scraping by, whether they're apprentices or journeypeople or businesses? Ontario is suffering, and hitting people with those kinds of rates is absolutely incredible and is the wrong thing to do. The reality is, we don't hear enough about it.

This is my next thing: governance. We've got Mr. Johnson, the chairman of the board of directors and the board of governors, in place right now. The tradespeople are asking me, "If we're paying \$120 of our membership for this, when are we going to be able to vote for our own chairman and our own board of governors?" They want to know that. I asked the minister that this week. He had absolutely no answer at all. We want to know that, and I'm going to tell you, we're going to keep hounding you until we get that date. It's completely ridiculous to think that these people would pay for a board of governors and not in fact have a chance to vote on who they're putting on there. That's what you call democracy.

Then, the trades cops: 150 trades cops. Apparently, they all want vehicles. The vehicles will probably be like an OPP cruiser, only there will be different colours or something, and they'll have different kinds of hats. The reality is, they're \$30,000 or \$40,000 a vehicle, and there are 150 of them. That's \$7 million right there.

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Ron Johnson, only a few weeks ago, was saying, "We can operate the whole thing on seven million bucks." That's hogwash. That's what they're going to pay for. For what? These guys are going to be paying for the trades cops to go in on their own places. That's shameful, and it's wrong. I can tell you right now that we're going to continue to fight this thing all the way, based on those two principles alone, Mr. Speaker.

The boondoggle continues. We've seen over and over again the comments coming from the public. I got a couple, Mr. Speaker. Here's one that was sent today. I'm not going to give the guy's name, in case, you know, they go after him or something:

"Good day. This college creation is preposterous in the way it has been brought forth. When I called to find out how the college will work, benefit and mainly how it is implemented, I was told that a contribution could have

been made at the public input stage. This is where it becomes ridiculous.

"I questioned the fact that I could be informed of the creation of the college but was not notified of the public input stage of its potential creation. To this I'm told, due to freedom of information they did not have access to the mailing lists of the trades in order to notify us of the potential change; it was only when the college was created that they could have access to the lists.

"This whole thing stinks of underhandedness, a manipulation to force through a program that would see much opposition had it been done in an open manner.

"What I would like to see is the financial accounting behind this. Why was the old system abolished, and what is the cost of this newly created bureaucracy?"

We know that right now, because we know that somewhere around \$80 million a year is what it's costing for this new bureaucracy. That's a fact. And then as we compulsory certify all the other trades—remember, guys, there's 157 trades altogether. Only 22 are compulsory certified right now and only the people with CFQs are actually getting their membership fees. I think all of you guys probably got some of these things. I got one as a plumber, and proud of the trade. And you know what? Some of the other folks I know haven't even got them yet.

But what I want to say is, this thing seems to have gone off the rails very, very early, and now the tradespeople in the province are going to be expected to pay for it. What I'm asking all the members of the House to do is think of these people. Think of the 200,000 people that the Ontario Construction Employers Coalition represents. Think of the 47,000 people that the Trillium Automotive Dealers Association represents. Think of the fact that they're taxpayers here and this is an abuse on them.

I'd ask everybody in the House to abolish this nonsense. It's got to go. And the bottom line is this: The sooner the election, the better. You know what? Tim Hudak and the PC caucus will abolish the College of Trades. It's a done deal. I'm proud of that, and I can tell you right now, as a tradesperson and as someone who has visited 120 communities this year and talked to thousands of people, that that's what they want to happen. They want this College of Trades abolished. It's a mistake.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to all the other comments.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: I want to preface my speech with this: All of us in this House agree that our diverse talent pool of people is the foundation of our economy, and it's what gives Ontario a creative edge. But if innovation is the key to helping Ontario grow and prosper, then we on this side of the House suggest that government must do everything possible to ensure its policies support, not hinder, our greatest resource. To us, reaching that potential means breaking down silos of bureaucracy, not building more; modernizing, not antiquating, the appren-

ticeship system; and organizing our economy in a way that will remove, not add, barriers to job creation.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The opposition is very loud when their member is talking. I can't even hear him, and he's representing you. A little quiet, please.

Continue.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thanks, Speaker.

To us it is important, indeed crucial, that all reforms not inhibit, but support, job market flexibility and competition. Therefore, the College of Trades and the trades tax are the wrong choice of reform for Ontario and should be abolished. In fact, I suggest to you that the College of Trades is utterly pointless and the trades tax is just another Liberal tax-raising scheme, so much that it's difficult to think of a more effective method of destroying jobs than raising taxes on workers and skilled trades—electricians, plumbers, bricklayers, hairdressers and so on.

I urge my colleagues in the other two parties to step outside the Queen's Park bubble and take a look outside. These electricians, plumbers, bricklayers and so on are working in the midst of Toronto's great building boom. I recently read there are 190 high-rise buildings in the works right now, and that we have more towers under construction than both New York and Mexico City, cities that have three times Toronto's population. To that end, it's hard to imagine this government chooses not to work in parallel worlds with them.

As our member from Simcoe North and apprenticeship reform critic said—and Garfield Dunlop, a skilled trades plumber, knows—he has toured just about every corner of Ontario as part of the Stop the Trades Tax campaign. Tradespeople are rejecting the Liberals' tax grab and saying no to the College of Trades scheme. They don't want the Liberal-imposed astronomical membership fees: \$60 annually for apprentices, \$120 for journeypersons and employers and sponsors, resulting in a 600% tax increase.

If you, the Liberals, care to deliver meaningful reform and to work in parallel and as a true partner with our skilled tradespeople, then level their playing field with the rest of the country. Change the apprenticeship ratio from 1 to 1 to 3 to 1. The fact is, the government urges young people to enter the skilled trades at the same time it keeps them from working by sanctioning the highest apprenticeship ratios in Canada.

A constituent in my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound recently explained her plight to find employment. All she wants is a job as an apprentice electrician but cannot find anyone to hire her, not because there is no demand—the demand is abundant—but because the Liberal government refuses to ease this ratio.

But there is some positive news for the members opposite. Easing the ratio involves a simple administrative step by your Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. So instead of doggedly rallying around this tax-raising scheme to fund a new silo of bureaucracy—

kind of like what the old Soviet commissars used to do before their economy went belly-up—own this mistake; fix it so that young people get a chance, a real shot at working and earning a wage as an apprentice in Ontario. To go with the status quo would be simple ineptitude, the equivalent of Premier Wynne and her Liberal government shrugging and saying oops to the 600,000 unemployed Ontarians, underemployed or those who have given up looking for work altogether. The question you have to ask yourselves is this: Is this how you want your legacy summed up?

Stop the trades tax today. I implore you. Stop the trades tax today.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'm eager to speak to this motion moved by the member from Simcoe North on the College of Trades. The College of Trades is not a unique concept by any stretch. Nurses, doctors, insurance brokers and lawyers all participate in regulatory bodies that set standards and regulate their professionals, yet we don't hear the opposition clamouring to abolish those bodies.

Here we have the College of Trades as a brand new organization that is strongly supported by both the construction trades and most large construction contractor-employers. It has the ability to be a very important vehicle for breaking the impasse on a number of decades of old apprenticeship policies and issues, and offers protections to the public as well as trade workers.

It seems to me that this particular motion is motivated not by the need to ensure that our trades have a voice that helps to regulate a largely unregulated industry but is rooted in the opposition's need to tear at the seams of anything supported by a union. Quite honestly, I am disappointed in the same dance from this opposition over and over again, which is, if it's a union, bash it; if it's a service, privatize it—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Well, I hate to say this, but the third party and the government were very quiet when you were speaking. It appears you're not giving them that courtesy. And I'll tell you one thing, first warning to the person, and next time they're gone.

Continue.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'm not sure where you cut me off, Speaker, so I'm going to repeat the important part I want to make sure I get across.

Quite honestly, I am disappointed in the same dance from this opposition over and over again, which is, if it's a union, bash it—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Lanark is named—first warning.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: —if it's a service, privatize it. And if there's a pension, take it away. I think our tradespeople deserve more than the same old lines from this opposition—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Lanark is named.

Mr. Hillier was escorted from the chamber.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Speaker, that's why we have freedom of speech and our own opinions, and I think we should respect those.

I think our tradespeople deserve more than the same old lines from the opposition that have been used over and over again. There are real issues at stake and reducing this discussion to simply “no” demeans our tradespeople and the people of Ontario, who are entitled to more diligence from us in this chamber.

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I disagree with the opposition's motion to abolish the College of Trades. I say this because I genuinely believe in the idea of what the College of Trades was meant to be. Back in 2009, when the government introduced the legislation on the college, my party supported the idea of creating an arm's-length body to streamline approvals of industry recommendations which included proposing new compulsory trades, reviewing journeyman ratios, updating curriculum and other important matters. Among the many duties of the college outlined in the original legislation was reviewing the compulsory trades application, review of apprenticeship ratios, enforcement of apprenticeship standards and discipline.

Back in 2009, we also expressed our concerns over the creation of the college because it wasn't clear if the new structure would truly be industry-driven or whether the new college's cumbersome structure would be merely a substitution of one bureaucratic barrier for another. At the time, the government did only a meagre job of communicating what the province's apprentices and journeymen would get from their membership fees; today, that remains fundamentally a challenge that the college has yet to address. The college needs to remember that the long-term benefits flowing from their work are not even close to obvious to its members or the general public. It is essential for the college to improve its communications with the membership to demonstrate the benefits that will emerge from the college's work.

Personally, I am concerned with the broad approach the college has taken by mandating both compulsory and voluntary trades into their membership. By claiming both types of trade groups as members before structures and services to both categories of members are ready to be rolled out seems like another McGuinty-era “If we build it, they will pay” initiative.

Much like the gas plants, eHealth and Ornge, this government can't seem to stop off-loading their mistakes in governance to the people of Ontario. Since 2009, the provincial government has shelled out as much as \$22 million per year for the college, and now they are looking to off-load those costs to any and every tradesperson they can find. In fact, according to a report in the Windsor Star today, the cost of the college now sits at approximately \$30 million per year. While fees are an important part of membership to any organization, most important is the part to ensure that the membership

understands what they are paying for. Membership implies benefits, and these have yet to be communicated in an effective way to the membership. Quite frankly, enough public money has been spent while this government farmed out oversight and responsibility to outside agencies and then claimed ignorance. Tradespeople deserve to know what the college is and the benefits of their membership. It should be a professional association they understand and are proud of.

In fact, the college has done much work since its creation. Their efforts toward apprenticeships are very important work that should not be taken lightly. Under the Mike Harris government, the apprenticeship system in Ontario was split in two by placing industrial trades in a new act and leaving construction trades under the old Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act. These actions deregulated the system and shifted the focus from apprenticeship as an employment relationship to apprenticeship as an education and training relationship. It removed the enforcement of the regulatory provisions that regulated wage ratios and wage rates, and it removed entry levels and duration from the legislation.

The NDP believes that skill sets must not replace whole trades. While there must be flexibility to recognize genuine trades as technologies change, this must not be an excuse to fragment existing trades into partial components or skill sets which are then treated as new trades in themselves. The Harris changes redefined the work of the specific trades to that of simple skill sets, which resulted in an increase of multi-crafting and multi-skilling and further fragmented existing trades. The splintering of trades compromised the health and safety of workers, as well as consumer safety and environmental protection. It is leading to a generation of workers who lack an understanding of the complete trade and an overall deskilling of Ontario's workforce.

My party has a different idea about the role the college can play in protecting the public good that our colleagues in the opposition don't seem to share. The NDP believes that the college can also play an extremely important role in enforcing trade standards for consumers as well as act as a disciplinary body for tradespeople who have consistently violated industry standards. Any consumer will be able to lodge a complaint with the college if they feel that work done for them does not meet acceptable standards. And that's not an urban myth; it actually happens. It happened to me.

Ontario New Democrats continue to support the valuable work the college is doing in reviewing the compulsory trades and apprenticeship ratios and look forward to further reports from the college on these and other vital apprenticeship issues.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Interjections.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. They start before I even get a chance to begin.

This week, the Ontario College of Trades launched as a fully independent regulatory college and opened its

doors to its members. For the first time, people who work in the skilled trades will have the power to decide what matters most to them. These are the people who build our homes and our office buildings. They're the people who ensure that our cars and buses get us safely to where we need to go. They bake our bread and prepare our meals. They keep our homes heated and our water running properly, and they make sure that we have the electricity that we need in our homes and our businesses.

Our government believes that the people who work in our skilled trades deserve the same privileges and respect that we afford to teachers, to doctors, to nurses, to dentists, to accountants, to veterinarians, engineers, social workers, lawyers and architects, and the list goes on and on. All of those occupations have their own regulated colleges, so why should the skilled tradespeople across this province be treated with any less respect?

The PC Party disagrees with that; I get that. Through this motion today, what they're saying to skilled trade workers across Ontario is that they don't think they're important enough to have their own regulatory college. I respectfully disagree. The PC Party doesn't think that skilled tradespeople are smart enough to make decisions that impact their trades. Well, I'll take the views and experience and expertise of our skilled trade workers across this province ahead of the simplistic, negative, inaccurate and politically motivated views of the PC Party any time.

This College of Trades is a very important step forward. The college will allow those who know the industry best to effectively enforce their own standards and ensure that both Ontario's consumers and workers are protected. The College of Trades will move the skilled trades into a new era of credibility, accountability and prestige. As I said, it's a very important step. As my colleague opposite said, it's already up and running. To suggest today that we should kill it before it even has a chance is simply irresponsible and, frankly, an insult to every man and woman working in the skilled trades across Ontario today. This is not the time to retreat, as the official opposition would want us to do; it's the time to move the skilled trades forward, time to move the skilled trades ahead.

For generations, the skilled trades in Ontario have been one of the few major professions without their own regulatory body. Rather than make decisions for themselves, they've had to rely on the ebb and flow of politics—to put it more bluntly, the political priorities of politicians and bureaucrats, and that's of all political stripes. With the College of Trades, those days are now, thankfully, over.

The Ontario PCs believe that they know better than the skilled trades sector how to regulate their industry. That's what I call arrogance. We in this government respectfully again disagree with their approach. We believe that apprenticeship ratios and industry matters are best left to the industry to decide—not politicians, not bureaucrats and not special interest groups.

I'm sorry to tell my friends in the PC Party that their political agenda is now going to have to take a back seat

to the interests of the skilled trades. That may be bad news to the PC Party's political objectives, but it's good news for the skilled trades industry across Ontario.

The College of Trades will have value for consumers as well, and that's very, very important. The College of Trades will help ensure that when the people of Ontario need the services of a tradesperson, they get the skilled, well-trained and accountable workers they expect and the quality services that they deserve. This will help to protect the safety of not only the public but workers and apprentices as well. A public register will allow consumers as well as employers to check to see if the person that they're considering hiring is a member in good standing—

Interjections.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I guess you ignored my statement. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke—last warning.

Continue.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The College of Trades will also serve to ensure that our skilled workers don't face unfair and unqualified competition. That's important as well.

There will also be a neutral, independent forum where consumers can go with complaints or concerns about services they've employed. I'm pleased today to introduce Peter Silverman, who happens to be here with us today watching the proceedings. Most of us, I think, in this chamber and outside of this chamber know Mr. Silverman as one of the great advocates for consumers across Ontario. We're pleased to have him here, and we're pleased that he's here in support of the College of Trades.

If you believe in consumer protection, then you should be supporters of this new College of Trades. Our government took the bold move to establish this new regulatory body, the first of its kind in North America, as a way of ensuring a strong future for the trades. The decision to establish the college was not taken lightly. It does represent a bold step forward, but the work is not yet done. It will take hard work and commitment by all parties in the trades for the college to realize its full potential.

My colleague from the NDP, I think, spoke of her aspirational views of where she wants this college to go, and I hope the college will be what it can be. It is going to take some time. It's new, it's the first of its kind, and it will no doubt have some growing pains. It will take some political will and understanding in order to see it through. So I want to thank the NDP for their support of the College of Trades. I think that's very important.

I say to the PC Party, it's time to put the interests of the skilled trades ahead of your own political interests. I call on all stakeholders and colleagues to be constructive and patient as the College of Trades emerges as a strong champion of this vital sector. Our skilled tradespeople deserve the respect this college will bring them, and they deserve the respect and support of all parties and all Ontarians.

Let me end by saying why all members of this Legislature ought to be supporting the College of Trades. If you believe in enhanced consumer protection, you ought to be supporting the College of Trades. If you believe in promoting the skilled trades as a career opportunity for our young people, you ought to be supporting the College of Trades. If you believe in providing protection to certified, skilled tradespeople from the underground economy, then you also ought to be supporting the College of Trades. If you believe that decisions impacting skilled trades should be made by skilled trades experts, based on building a strong skilled trades sector, as opposed to by politicians, based on political interests, then you ought to be supporting the College of Trades.

Let me close by saying this: I just want to say thank you to Tim Armstrong, Ron Johnson and their team and many of the people here today, for the great work that they've done in making the College of Trades a reality. Their leadership and vision will help build a stronger skilled trades sector that will contribute to building a strong economy and a stronger province for each and every one of us.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member for Huron–Bruce.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I proudly stand here today as a member of the only party in this House that is indeed standing up for the interests of our skilled trades behind us.

This is hogwash. I am disgusted and I'm disheartened by the ill-advised coalition that we've seen form in front of our eyes this afternoon. It's absolutely disgusting. How much consultation has happened here?

I have to thank Garfield Dunlop, who has spent 15 months travelling this province. He has listened to so many people. We know what's going on; we know what matters most. Garfield came into my riding of Huron–Bruce last July. He visited with H. Kerr Construction in Wingham and JMR Electric in Exeter. Most recently, last week, in a snowstorm, he travelled to Walkerton, to Huron Tractor.

Time and time again, Garfield gets it because he relates to the people and he understands what the issues are. This coalition is absolutely off base, and we need to start listening to the people, because guess what? This College of Trades is not necessary, nor is it wanted.

When I speak to Glenn Hays, an electrician from Teeswater—Hays Electric. He is an employer of upwards of 20 people in a small village in my riding. Time and time again he says that this government—and now, sadly enough, the third party is falling right in line with them—is doing nothing but setting up hurdle after hurdle for small business. They're doing nothing but driving our most valuable resources out of this province. In that regard, he was citing the number of young people who are leaving our communities and heading west. This is absolutely not acceptable.

I also think about the Reinhardt family that Garfield and I met at Huron Tractor in Walkerton. Mr. Reinhardt is a mechanic at Huron Tractor. He's very proud of his

wife, who is an electrician. And guess what? They're going to get the Wynne double whammy. Because of the number of licences the two of them hold, they're going to be taxed over and over again on their skills. This is unacceptable.

I also can't help but reference the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. I went on their website at lunchtime today. I took a look at their Q and As, specifically to memberships. I find it interesting, because sadly enough there are a lot of people playing word games in this particular House. You know, it was referenced that as membership in the college is not required for employers, each employer can determine whether or not they wish to join the college at this time. Conspicuous by its absence is the fact that as of January 1, there's going to be a mandatory tax per employee. I can tell you that employers like JMR Electric out of Exeter, who employs 225 people in that town, he is going to short-circuit. He is going to snap.

I have to ask again, how much consultation has really happened here? Do you really understand the negative impact this is going to have on our small business across this province? You know what? It's totally unacceptable. In my riding of Huron-Bruce, which I'm so proud to represent, more and more people get nervous and get their guard up when they hear that the Premier wants to continue to reach out, because sadly enough, they've concluded that the only reaching the Premier wants to do is into their pockets to take the scarce dollars they have left. It's totally unacceptable. Once again, this College of Trades is not wanted nor needed. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Essex.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm really pleased to join the debate today. From the outset, I want to thank the initiator of the motion, the member from Simcoe-North, for the work he has done. As, I hate to say, a former tradesperson, because as a tradesperson, you always carry your working roots with you. You carry that knowledge with you in each and every career you go along, whether you leave it or not. The things you learn add to your knowledge base and hopefully make you a better worker and a more productive worker. I want to thank him sincerely for, I think, touching on some of the real, concerning issues that have come out of the College of Trades.

Number one, the consultation process—

Interjection: A mess.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: It has been a mess. It was our hope from the outset—I heard one of the members of the opposition talk about various trades or various unions that have come to a new realization. That is true. We all had hopes from the outset that the communication strategy would be clear, direct and would show the mandate quite clearly under the college: what you're going to get for sometimes the money you're paying and what you were going to get for that type of representation. That has clearly not been done. As we today, those who were

affected by, or involved and encompassed under the umbrella of the college now, still have no idea about what it will do for them and what it can do, that's a complete failure in the communication strategy, not unlike what we've seen through other entities that have been governed by this Liberal government.

I would like to touch on other things. I want to tell those who are here today that I am a member of the Labourers Union Local 65 in LIUNA in Windsor, and proud to be a construction worker. I spent nearly 10 years in the field in the heavy sector, building bridges and sewers and overpasses and culverts, and trudging through the mud on different job sites that were always exciting provided me with a really great career—in a union environment—one that I made a great wage at, one that I had wonderful benefits working at, one that I knew that I was safe at because of the training that I got through my union, one I was able to raise a family on.

1640

My union dues were certainly a small percentage of what I got back in terms of representation. That connection between what I got for being a union member and what I had to pay was very clear. It afforded me my first house with my wife, my first car, the ability to have two kids, and to not worry about paying the bills.

I can easily make, and I will always make, that argument for anyone who's questioning whether they should be a unionized member or not. It's worth it. It certainly was for me. But is it worth it to be under the umbrella of the College of Trades? For some compulsory trades, I would say yes—the regulation side of it, the enforcement side of it, and specifically the fact—I have to touch on this—that your ratios under the apprenticeship are taken out of ministerial purview.

Here's why I support the concept of the College of Trades. In our sector, in the construction sector, those ratios are set through dialogue, through communication between union representatives and our contractor partners. They do it through local apprenticeship committees. They negotiate what the ratios are, dependent on labour market demand. So if there's a lot of work going on, then maybe they can take on some new apprentices. But I can tell you, by and large, the demand from our contractor partners was minimal in terms of wanting or needing to take apprentices on, because their jobs are time-sensitive. They need high productivity. They need to know they're going to get it right and get it done fast, right, on time, on budget and safely. That's what we were able to—not provide, not invoke, not direct—negotiate; that's what we did there. And it works. That model, under the College of Trades, is one that I believe in. Through consultation with those in the industry, whether they be executives or business folks or those on the union side, come to a dialogue in a dynamic way, a flexible way, and always make sure that that is a moving target for them.

Where I come into really direct conflict with the PC plan is that, of course, yes, they're pointing out some of the failures of the College of Trades, and I will agree with many of them, but there's no plan to replace it with anything else.

The other thing they're doing, and you hear it quite clearly, is that they want to go to a 1-to-1 ratio across the board; for all trades, all sectors, 1 to 1. I'll tell you, there are lots of people who are protesting the College of Trades. There will be triple, quadruple the amount of journeymen who are going to be in here protecting their careers, because they put—and you here, you who are journeypeople, have put years in the field, and you're not going to want to compete, you can't compete, nor should you deserve to compete, against apprentices. You're there to train them, you're there to get them into the job, but you shouldn't be competing with them, and that's what this motion is going to force you to do as journeypeople.

As a member of LIUNA, I brought in our training delivery model—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Just to remind the member from Essex that he should be going through me and not talking directly to the crowd. Thank you.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I apologize, Speaker.

I brought in the training delivery model for LIUNA, where we initiated our construction craft worker apprenticeship program—level 1, level 2—as well as the pre-apprenticeship program, which is a gateway into the apprenticeship program. It has been incredibly successful. We have a 95% retention rate and success rate. It's a wonderful program that I'm incredibly proud of. Speaker, it's a model that actually works and one that I think the college should learn from and apply to.

My point, Speaker, with some time on the clock that I certainly need to share with my colleagues, is that this is a dynamic aspect. There is no rigid formula that will address our apprenticeship program. It has to be fluctuating, it has to be responsive and it has to be flexible.

I want to talk about the fees. We, on the NDP side, have a real problem with the fee structure and the communication of the fee structure. We don't understand how a hairdresser, who doesn't have the ability to make as much money as a journeyperson electrician does, can afford that measure of membership fee. We think it's inadequate. We think it's actually a hindrance to their careers. We certainly need that to be addressed, and I think that's a practical, logical thing that anyone who's discussing the apprenticeship issue in the province should be talking about: How do we make it affordable and provide value?

What we see on that side is what we've seen on this side: a one-size-fits-all model, and I am not in favour of that. I'm not in favour of one size fits all. I'm in favour of a scaled model. If you're making \$30,000 a year in your career as an apprentice or as a journeyperson, you shouldn't have to pay the same membership fee as someone who has the ability to make \$120,000 a year as a journeyperson. That doesn't make sense to us at all. This is an issue that can be addressed through the ministry. It should be addressed through the college, but yet their communication strategy has been lacking—absolutely opaque in the process.

I think it was the member from Simcoe North who talked about voting for the boards of directors. I agree wholeheartedly that if you're a member, you should have the ability to vote. I think that structure works. I'll tell you why I think it works: because as a union member, I get to vote for my union leadership, the ones you want to dismantle, the process you want to dismantle. So, if you think you like membership fees, or you think you like voting—the democratic process—please understand that in labour unions, in trade unions, that is a democratic process. You call them “union bosses.” I call them duly democratically elected officials who represent us.

Obviously, there's a hardline approach on both sides here. There has been a failure in the implementation of this college. We agree that this should have a whole lot more oversight on it and a whole lot more direct involvement on the government side, but it should happen through dialogue. It should happen through a clear process, not a top-down approach.

Interjections.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I want to get back to the ratios. The thing that the college does is take the decision to change ratios or to make ratios—Speaker, I'm talking right directly through you, not to these good people here. He can't even hear me. It takes that decision-making out of the ministerial purview, and I think that's a good decision. I think it's right. You know why? Because I don't trust them to make the right decision, and I certainly, certainly do not trust those guys to make good decisions as well, because we know it's 1 to 1; we know it's nothing over there. Let's put that decision-making into the industry's hands, into those contractors' hands who know the industry, who know the labour market demand and know what they require for their workplaces.

I want to talk about safety, because I'll hit on the 1 to 1. In my trade, we have a 3 to 1 ratio. That means that when I walk onto the job site as an apprentice, I know there's going to be at least three journeypeople around me to make sure the workplace is safe. When I'm walking onto an active construction site such as, let's say, a bridge, I'll walk on one day and we'll have inclement weather. The hazards are everywhere. I don't know what they are, but I have a journeyman here, a journeyman there and another one to point out those hazards to me and make sure I'm navigating them correctly, and also make sure that the process I'm working in is done appropriately. That's what the apprenticeship program is about. It's about learning from your peers. And the more peers you have on the job site, the safer you're going to be as an apprentice. But what is being proposed—the only proposal—is that a jobsite is going to be half rookies and half veterans. I'll tell you, that's going to just cause a calamity on important ICI and heavy construction sites. I can only speak for them.

1650

The best way to get apprentices out the door, trained and experienced, is to ensure that our economy is blossoming and employers are hiring. That's why the government should listen to the New Democrats when

we say, “Let’s bring in an employer tax credit,” where, if you’re going to create a job, you can go to work. You’ll get a tax credit.

I think I’ve been quite clear that both sides of the argument have some validity. There are some valid arguments here. It’s not a cut-and-dried issue. Anybody who’s looking at this seriously—and it is a serious issue—knows that it is not a cut-and-dried issue and it is not a one-size-fits-all model.

Our commitment, Mr. Speaker—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Continue.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Our commitment is to make the process better, to work with all parties involved—to work with the contractors, to work with the apprentices, to work with the journeypeople and to work with our safety experts and our industry experts—to make sure that this system works. We’re committed to doing that. We will do that on an ongoing basis, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you very much for the time and attention today.

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

Ms. Soo Wong: I’m pleased to be given an opportunity to discuss this very important issue.

Our government is committed to protecting consumers and every Ontarian in this province, and to ensuring the integrity of Ontario tradespeople. I want to thank and recognize the current and former ministers for their leadership as we opened the Ontario College of Trades earlier this week.

I know this initiative will ensure that the decisions affecting tradespeople will be consultative, fair and transparent. I also want to say that tradespeople are now on the same, equal footing as other self-regulated bodies like doctors, teachers, nurses, accountants, architects and many others.

As a registered nurse, I know the importance of a professional college. The College of Nurses is an excellent example of how an industry has been able to succeed in our province when they are given the ability to make their own decisions. As a registered nurse for almost 30 years, I’m aware of the role and the responsibility of the College of Nurses. The only mission of the college, and any college in Ontario, is to protect the public. We have approximately 40 self-regulated colleges in Ontario, 26 of them in the health profession sectors. They are independent, and furthermore, they create their own standards of practice.

Let me remind the members of this House: We have members opposite who belong to the College of Pharmacists, members who belong to the College of Nurses; we have members who belong to the Law Society of Upper Canada. I don’t believe that they see their membership fees as corporate taxes. I have never, as a regulatory member, ever seen my membership fee as a corporate tax, and I find that tone and the message offensive, okay? Let me be very clear.

The Ontario College of Trades is improving accountability. Whenever a resident of Ontario puts their trust in

a tradesperson, they need to know that the tradesperson is being held to a high standard and that the standard is being enforced. They also need to know that their interests and their wallets are being protected. That’s the responsibility of the College of Trades. Furthermore, the establishment of the College of Trades ensures the process of dealing with complaints; the appropriate disciplinary body is there to ensure the protection of the consumers and Ontarians.

Every day in my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt I hear about fraud stories. I hear about being taken to the cleaners by different tradespeople. For the first time, we now have a regulatory body that allows the consumers—Ontarians—to report.

Let us not forget, there was an article recently, on March 9, 2013, in the Toronto Star about this frail senior whose house has been wrecked by an unscrupulous contractor—her life savings gone, and she was nearly starved to death. So let’s not forget those tragedies. My constituents tell me every day that when they hire a tradesperson, they want the tradesperson to be qualified and ethical. Under the protection of the College of Trades, they now have confidence that every tradesperson, whether it’s a mechanic, electrician or contractor, is regulated and accountable.

Furthermore, we have statements from the industry. Jeff Koller, an industry compliance officer at the Ontario Construction Finishing Industries Alliance, recently wrote in the Toronto Star: “For the first time, homeowners who have been subjected to shoddy workmanship or defrauded out of money will have an avenue of restitution and compensation without having to resort to the costly and cumbersome court process.”

By establishing a complaints, investigation and discipline body, like any other independent, self-regulated body, the Ontario College of Trades will be able to combat fraud and better protect Ontarians. The Ontario College of Trades will further strengthen their reputation and improve their ability to provide quality services for Ontarians.

The college will also give industry a greater role in recruitment, governance, certification and apprenticeship training. It gives tradespeople decision-making power for decisions that are important to them. We all heard today from the members for London–Fanshawe and Essex earlier about the fact that they will now have an ability to set the training standards, the ratios, the apprenticeships—this is what the college will be able to do, no different than my college, the College of Nurses. These are decisions best made by the people who know the industry and work with the industry, not by the government. We all said that, and I know that members opposite have said it in the past. The PC Party used to believe that a self-regulatory body is the best way to address this issue, and now they’re changing their tune. I don’t understand.

At the end of the day, the College of Trades is here to protect Ontarians. When I came to the Ontario Legislature, my job is to protect every Ontarian, and my role in

this House is to ensure that every Ontarian's work has been protected. More importantly, we are now recognizing the trades as not just building Ontario; we recognize the trades as a profession. They have a self-regulated professional body to regulate, to educate and provide the support that is necessary.

Let me conclude my remarks by quoting someone from the industry. Steve McClinchy, who is from Sault Ste. Marie, has been working in his industry for 30 years and says, "OCOT can instill the value of good-quality work and professionalism.... Tradespeople are pillars of a community, they provide a service just like a doctor in a community, but it isn't always seen that way."

I want to thank the members from the third party for your understanding and support of the Ontario College of Trades, because we in this House all believe that protecting Ontarians is the reason we're here.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. The member for Prince Edward–Hastings.

Mr. Todd Smith: I'm so pleased to be able to stand here alongside my colleague Garfield Dunlop from Simcoe North, who has done an outstanding job, as he has referenced earlier, travelling the province. He has consulted with tradespeople across the province, and we can't say the same for the current minister, the previous minister or the current Liberal government. They haven't consulted with tradespeople, because if you did, you would hear that 88% of them don't want anything to do with the College of Trades. They don't want it.

I can tell you that I was at the Quinte sports show, the home and renovation show last week in Belleville, and I spoke with dozens of tradespeople in my region. They don't want the College of Trades. I can tell you I sent out a flyer; this is just a small portion of the flyer responses that I got two weeks ago: "We don't want the College of Trades, Mr. Smith. Get rid of the College of Trades." I'm so pleased to be able to stand here and support Mr. Dunlop, because we do need to stop this trades tax.

The members on the other side and even the members in the third party often talk about the fact that we need to create jobs in the province. Do they not understand that the College of Trades is a job-killing tax? It's not creating jobs; it's killing jobs in the province of Ontario.

Let's start with how insane it is to lump all these different tradespeople together into one regulatory body because they all went to a trade school somewhere. That's like dumping doctors and lawyers and engineers and lumping them all together because they went to a professional school. It's not the same thing. There are probably more lawyers who are trained as engineers than there are barbers who have been trained as electricians, but you're lumping them all into the same trades school. It doesn't make any sense to me.

1700

You know what? This is obviously you catering to your special-interest groups on the other side. We see through it. The tradespeople who are see through it. They know what this is: This is payback to Mr. Dillon and your Working Families Coalition. That's obviously what this is.

I can't believe that the members of the third party are actually supporting the College of Trades. I'm not sure if the member from Essex—I didn't quite know where he was coming from, but I can tell you that the Labourers union that he is a member of is against the College of Trades. They're against the College of Trades. Do you know what? The PC Party would give him an option to opt out of that union because he doesn't believe the same thing, apparently, as his union members do.

I can tell you that the member from Sarnia–Lambton is sitting here right next to me, and the member from Sarnia–Lambton has heard from hundreds of tradespeople, unionized tradespeople in the Sarnia–Lambton area: bricklayers, pipefitters—the labourers. They don't want the College of Trades. These organized labour unions don't want the College of Trades.

Let's move on to the myth that the college is, in any way, going to slow down the underground economy. They've made that claim over there. It won't. Uncertified people are still going to perform tax—tasks—that they're not qualified for. Sorry; I just keep saying "tax" because that's what this is. But they're going to still be performing tasks that they're not qualified for. Many local tradespeople have actually told me that they intend to protest the college by refusing to pay the tax. These tradespeople, who have been licensed for decades, know that the college isn't going to add any value to how they perform their jobs.

This is just a tax grab. The system has already been tried in Quebec. The results are obvious there for anybody who has been paying attention to the news headlines. Quebec is not the model that we want to bring to Ontario, and we're headed down that slippery slope there. It has caused projects in Quebec to increase 10.5%. It has cost the economy \$3.4 billion, and they say it has cost 50,000 jobs in Quebec. And we want to bring this to Ontario. These are not the models that we should be bringing in here—not to mention Bill 119, the WSIB increases; that's another matter altogether.

This is another bureaucracy that's being created by the Liberal government. They're famous for creating these useless bureaucracies. When these guys took power 10 years ago, there were 150 agencies, boards and commissions in the province of Ontario—150. Do you know how many ABCs there are in the province of Ontario right now? Six hundred and thirty of them. So let's create another one that's going to cost us jobs.

It's unbelievable what's happening over there. We already have enough useless government agencies at the provincial level. The last thing that we need to do now is create another one that's actually killing jobs; it's increasing the cost of haircuts; it's increasing the cost of oil changes; it's increasing the cost of renovations to our homes; it's increasing the cost of building a home.

Kill the College of Trades now. The labourers' unions are against it; associations across the province are against it. It appears that the only party in the Legislature that's against it is the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to stand in this House to debate this important motion. I too would like to thank the member from Simcoe North for the consultation process that he has exercised. Clearly this is an issue he cares passionately about, and I'm sure that whatever happens here today, the information that he has learned hopefully at one point would inform the college and make it stronger. I think that a fundamental difference that we have over on this side of the House is that this isn't a cut-and-dried issue. It's not a blue issue; it's not a red issue; it's not an orange issue.

We do have a real problem in this province around skilled trades and the training of those workers, and safety and consumer protection. This is, in our minds and our vision, a way to deal with those issues, although I think we can share some of the concerns. Certainly from a communication and an implementation strategy, it has not been carried out as well as it should be. There's definitely room for improvement.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think also we have to remember that a college is not a unique concept. When I first started working at the University of Waterloo, we were investigating the new college for social workers in the province of Ontario, and throughout that process we learned what was good about the college and what was not. Quite honestly, there was a proven need that we didn't know about around ethical investigations and around training and around safety and around standards. When you're dealing with people in the public, you need some standards. Some people don't agree, but certainly we do.

We also have to look at the resistance. What is the resistance to the college? It seems that there's a lot of fearmongering out there from the community at large and certainly from the party. They want to kill it. Even the language, "kill it"—I mean, we are here to serve the public. We have the privilege to sit here in this House and try to make life better for Ontarians. But this talk of "kill it" and also the entire approach, even the throne speech and the budget that they haven't even seen yet, there's a real issue here. It's a credibility issue. You haven't seen the budget, and yet you're not voting for it. You didn't vote for the throne speech, and you didn't try to make it better. We are committed to getting real results for Ontarians, and that includes tradespeople in the province of Ontario.

I think, actually, we just need to take a step back and look at the potential of the college. Certainly, when you look at the people who support it, the construction trades have come out and supported it. Most large construction contractors have supported it. You need to listen to those voices as well. They're important voices. They have the experience of being on the front line.

We believe also that the potential of the college is to break the impasse on the number of decades-old appren-

ticeship policy issues. There are long-standing issues in the apprenticeship field. Also, it's a way to offer protection to the public, as well as trades workers. There's proof that there's a need for the college; it's well documented. Just a quick search—CBC from March 23, "Contractor Facing Fraud Charges Still Working." Who's looking at that? Nobody. "Under-the-table Contractor Jailed, Fined for Tax Evasion." This is in the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* from Friday, September 30.

When you look at the Ontario Construction Secretariat, they've raised a number of concerns around the underground economy, which the minister has also raised. Everything from revenue losses to the income tax system to GST revenue loss to CPP and EI contributions lost: Those are revenue streams that are pushed underground, because we don't have a clear idea of where the tradespeople are, who's working, who's subcontracted out. I think there's a need for clarity on this; I really do.

In some respects, this also comes down to, in a very, very real way, consumer protection as a concern. You can't look the other way on this issue; you just can't. You shouldn't ignore it, just like you shouldn't ignore the throne speech, just like you shouldn't ignore the budget.

We believe in the College of Trades for these reasons. We believe in a review in compulsory trade applications. We believe in the review of apprenticeship ratios. We believe in the enforcement of apprenticeship standards. We believe that, when necessary, discipline is needed, especially when the rights of consumers have been compromised and standards are not upheld.

In many respects, we're here today because this is a little bit of a Mike Harris hangover. When Mr. Harris sat here under the so-called Common Sense Revolution, the Harris changes redefined the work of specific trades to that of simple skill sets, which resulted in an increase in multi-crafting and multi-skilling and a further fragmentation of existing trades. This splintering of the trades compromised the health and safety of workers, as well as consumer safety and environmental protection, and it is leading to a generation of workers who lack not only the education but an understanding of their complete trade, and to an overall deskilling of Ontario's workforce, consumer protection and worker safety included.

We have a different approach—very different, actually—from the party to the right of us in how to get results. We don't want to throw it out. We don't want to stamp it out. We don't want to kill it. We want to make it better. I think the people of this province actually expect us to make it better.

Interjection: Get results for Ontarians.

1710

Ms. Catherine Fife: To get results, yes.

But moving forward—it's not a complete *carte blanche* here—it was our hope that the college would implement an aggressive communications plan to ensure that the province's tradespeople understood the value and the role that the college could play in their lives and to the economy at large. Unfortunately, it is still not clear to us that the college has effectively communicated the

important role it can and should play in promoting and regulating the skilled trades in Ontario. We strongly urge the college to implement an aggressive campaign to explain the benefits of membership to Ontario's tradespeople.

You know, really, at the end of the day, we want the lived experience of tradespeople to be part of the conversation. I know the "conversation" word is a little overused, but they have the expertise. Why not reach out to tradespeople in the province of Ontario? Why not include them and their work experience in the life that they have in this province?

Ultimately, we want to recognize that trades require the same level of governance as some of the other colleges in the province, the professional colleges. We regard them as professionals, we respect them as professionals and we want their input through the College of Trades.

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

Hon. John Milloy: I think it's appropriate that I stand and just add to the debate for a few minutes because it was a number of years ago that, as Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, I had the pleasure of bringing forward the legislation which in fact established the College of Trades.

Interjections.

Hon. John Milloy: Thank you very much for that vote of thanks from the opposition.

I thought it was worthwhile putting this in a little bit of historical context. When I became Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, there were a number of outstanding issues when it came to the trades in the province of Ontario. One of them had to deal with the issue of compulsory certification. I think members are aware, and I know there's been a lot of back and forth today about the trades, that there are a number of trades in the province of Ontario—one could think of electrician as one that's often brought forward—where someone needs to be certified in order to practise that trade. In other words, it's compulsory that they have the proper certification.

The question was raised with me as minister, how does a trade in the province of Ontario become compulsory? Mr. Speaker, you may be surprised, and in fact members of the Legislature may be surprised, that up until the establishment of the College of Trades there was absolutely no process in place to make a trade compulsory or, if one even wanted to go to the hypothetical, to take a compulsory trade and make it that it was voluntary, as they call it, a voluntary trade. We had absolutely no system in place for that. The last time it had been done, if memory serves me correctly, was when Bette Stephenson was Minister of Education, I believe, in the late 1970s or early 1980s. It was basically done on the basis of lobbying of a minister.

I think we would all agree that we needed a system in place to make that very important decision. So we asked the leading expert in the field, a gentleman by the name

of Tim Armstrong, a former Deputy Minister of Labour, to look at the entire issue of compulsory certification.

At the same time, there was a lot of debate going on, particularly here in the Legislature, over the issue of apprenticeship ratios: What should be the proper number of journeypersons who can instruct an apprentice? What should that ratio be? As you're aware, Mr. Speaker, this is about making sure we have proper standards, to make sure that apprentices are given the right education, the right training, and are not, quite frankly, exploited.

There was a lot of back and forth at the time, and in his report Tim Armstrong spoke about the issue of ratios, the number of things that needed to be looked at across the board in terms of making that determination. He looked at the issue of compulsory certification and he came to a conclusion, and the conclusion was this: that we have in the province of Ontario a series of skilled trades, and if memory serve me correctly, there are about 150 different ones in this province which have reached a level of maturity where we needed to give them the responsibility and the power to start to make decisions about their own trades, around issues such as compulsory certification, such as ratios.

We also had and continue to have a challenge in this province of not enough young people wanting to go into the skilled trades, not enough young women wanting to go into the skilled trades, not enough aboriginal young people wanting to go into the skilled trades. When you started to add some of these challenges up, around ratios, around compulsory certification, around bringing young people into the trades, reaching out to groups that weren't overly represented; when you start to look at some of the issues around making sure that the apprenticeship program reflects the needs of the workforce, that we have a proper system in place where apprentices are being respected and moving forward, where we have young people, particularly in the voluntary trades, who are finishing their training in order to get that qualification and can move on with it, what Tim Armstrong said is that the system is mature enough right now. They should have ownership and responsibility of this, just as the lawyers, through the Law Society of Upper Canada, have ownership and responsibility of their profession; just as the nurses do, as the teachers do. What he proposed was the formation of a College of Trades which would recognize the importance of trades to this province, which would raise the profile of trades by making it a respected profession, on par with all the other professions that have self-governance and self-regulation. By giving them that responsibility, they could begin to deal with some of these issues around compulsory certification, ratios, making sure that the training is done properly across the board; making sure that particularly in the voluntary trades, people complete their training; making sure that consumers are protected so they know that if they're hiring a journeyperson, if they're a member of the College of Trades, they have that stamp of approval, and they would have a way to go forward if there were complaints.

We worked with Mr. Armstrong. Subsequently, right after that, we worked with Kevin Whitaker, now a respected judge of the federal court, who put forward a report which became the basis for the legislation which we brought forward in this House and which is the basis of what we're talking about today.

A lot of work has gone into establishing the College of Trades, making sure that it's responsive to the many challenges that are being faced by the skilled trades here in the province of Ontario.

As the minister has spoken about, both in question period and in his speech today, the college has been officially open for, I believe, two days, or three days, depending on how you want to count it.

I'm very proud of what we've accomplished. I think members of this Legislature should be supportive of the College of Trades. It has a great deal of work to do. It will, over the coming months and years, find its feet and become a very, very important part of a very important sector of the economy, the skilled trades.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, being fully in support of the College of Trades, I plan, as do all my colleagues on this side of the House, to vote against this motion that's being put forward today.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to participate in this debate. I want to bring it back to what we're actually talking about here. We have skilled trades workers in the province of Ontario who are already regulated and are already licensed. All you're doing with this overlay—a College of Trades—is an additional expense and an additional cost to their ability to earn a living.

This College of Trades tax could actually make a difference between whether a skilled tradesperson stays in Ontario or moves to another province—shameful. What we should be talking about in this chamber is how to grow jobs, how to make jobs. All you're doing is putting up additional barriers to ensure that people are frustrated and want to move elsewhere.

Does this fee encourage people to hire apprentices? Of course not. Does it create jobs? Absolutely not. Why are we doing it? I have no idea, and I wish you would start to see the light.

Garfield Dunlop, when he talks about how he has travelled across the province—he's been doing your consultation for you. You should actually listen to what he's been doing. He's the one who's had respectful conversations with the skilled trades across Ontario, and in less than two months, he has collected 7,000 signatures that say "stop the trades tax." If that is not an indication that people are concerned, that people want you to take a left turn, a U-turn and actually stop this, then I don't know where that respectful conversation is coming.

I would like to share with you a few comments that I received from my community, from the people who are going to be impacted by these changes. Here's one that says, "I feel that there are more questions than answers and if you talk to anyone, whether they're a tradesperson

or a customer, no one knows about this tax. I want to know where the cost of this tax to us tradespeople comes from. Who came up with the cost? Is there a guide? And who is to say that it doesn't go up every year?!" Excellent question. "If it was incorporated with the licence every three years for us hairdressers—\$60 every three years and divide 120 a year to \$40, that you might think it's too much. I have been in this business for 35 years and my customers have always been my regulator. If I do bad work, they either tell me or they stop coming to me and tell their friends. This keeps me humble and my training up to par." Excellent explanation.

1720

Here's another one: "As tradespeople, we already pay an annual fee for our licence(s). Now the government wants us to pay an additional fee ... in order to keep our licence(s) in good standing. This additional" fee "will not provide us with any service or training that we don't already have. It is unnecessary. It is a blatant tax on the tradesperson! This is ... more about the government ... interfering and wasting time and money. We already have a self-governing body ... they are called customers."

If we don't start to understand that there is a public sector free trade enterprise operating in Ontario that allows us to regulate who we choose to do business with and who ultimately is going to succeed, then you're missing the point. You really have to start to understand that when this many people are concerned—7,000 people within two months—you know you're doing something wrong.

I would urge you, Minister, to pause, reflect and stop the trades tax.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: I also want to extend my compliments to the member from Simcoe North. When I come to this House, I like to relate the issues back to how they affect people in Algoma-Manitoulin. I'm going to do that, but it's obvious that he's done that himself. He's done his homework, he's done his research, and it's important to use that information and improve what the Ontario College of Trades has actually implemented here.

The one thing I don't believe in is a reference that I use back home that people can relate to: the white paintbrush syndrome, where you're just going to paint everything and it's going to disappear, and not actually work at it and get the benefits that are potentially there for the individuals.

I'm going to talk about two particular individuals back home which really relate and bring a name to this place. I'm going to talk about a hairdresser. Let's say her name is Cindy. Cindy contacted me, and she was frustrated that she has to pay an exorbitant amount of fees in order to continue cutting hair, just to maintain her licence. She is frustrated with that process, and why the heck would she do it? She enjoys going to cut the hair of the elderly who are over at the hospital. She enjoys the fact that she can

continue to cut hair for individuals that are around her area. She's not doing this for a profit, but in order for her to maintain this, she'll have to pay this fee. There is a problem with the fee. There absolutely is a problem with this fee.

The other issue that I want to slightly touch on is a particular individual—she's a wonderful, strong woman. I actually worked on her file prior to being an MPP. I was a caseworker. I worked in the office, and I dealt with her case and the frustration that she had, because she was working, trying to cut corners, to bring a nice, comfortable home for her child who was in a disabled position, and the fact that the work was so—sorry, I've got to watch my words here—terrible that she is now fighting in order to recoup some of her monies, not only from that individual who came in, but because she went underground and got it done without the proper investigations or the proper reports. She now has to fight the government in order to get the monies that she's rightfully entitled to getting this project done. So there are problems.

I love the fact that this House today is filled with tradespersons who are here. You're an actual benefit to our community. But the problem that we have is there are individuals out there that put a black mark on your industry. You hold a lot of pride with the work that you do. A lot of you have done it where you had to go back on a job site and fix somebody else's job which was improperly done in the first place. That's what we can get out of the Ontario trade college. That's some of the processes that are there in place. It's a black eye on you as the industry who is out there working on this. That's why we need some of these regulations that are in place: in order that there's accountability that is done, so that there is not a black eye and so that everybody can be proud of the work that is being done.

It's always easy for me to come in and relate this to back to home, because these are true things that have happened. I have no problem going back to my constituents and facing them and telling them that these are the reasons why I'm supporting this. I have no problem whatsoever.

There is a problem with this process; yes, there is. There was no consultation—limited consultation that was not relayed. There is a problem with the fees. We need to fix that. What I've heard from the government across the way is, you are thanking us for supporting this. But listen to us when we're saying that there are problems with it, and fix the damn problems.

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

Mr. Steven Del Duca: It's a real pleasure for me to stand in the House today to speak against the motion that's being put forward by the member from Simcoe North and to speak in favour—strongly in favour—of the Ontario College of Trades.

Over the last number of minutes that I've been sitting here in the chamber today and even over the last number of weeks when I've heard members opposite, particularly

from the PC caucus, ask questions of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, I've heard, definitely today, this theme over and over again about a lack of consultation with the industry and with people across the province of Ontario.

It really struck me as something that frankly doesn't ring true. I wanted to spend a little bit of my time this afternoon, because I can remember a time, before I came to this House and before I had the privilege of representing the good people of Vaughan in this chamber, in a previous aspect of my life, when I was working in an area that's somewhat related to this particular industry—to the community of skilled trades.

The former Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, the member from Kitchener, our government House leader, talked a little bit about this a second ago when he was up speaking. I can remember a time when individuals such as Tim Armstrong, who was charged with the responsibility to do a review of compulsory certification by our government—when Mr. Armstrong, someone who's extremely well respected in the industry, travelled right across this province, conducted public hearings, frankly in every corner of this province. I think that I might have actually been in attendance for every single one of those consultations that Mr. Armstrong participated in and led. I will tell everyone who's here today that the conversations that took place in those consultations were fascinating. There were dozens and dozens, if not hundreds, of women and men from the community of skilled trades, representing various trades and various viewpoints, representing construction, industrial, motive, service and all of the different divisions that we have. People who came forward spoke honestly and spoke forcefully about why they are passionate to be working in the trades. It was through that process of extensive consultation that Mr. Armstrong was able to put together a proposal for the concept of creating something like a College of Trades to permit the community of skilled trades to belatedly, to ultimately, become self-governing.

Then, after Mr. Armstrong was done his consultation, this government appointed Kevin Whitaker to do an implementation report. Again, Mr. Whitaker engaged in extensive consultations in every part of this province. The funny thing for me, the curious thing for me, is that while I hear the members opposite talk about a lack of consultation, speaking as someone who actually attended many of those particular discussions and those meetings around the province, I can't recall seeing any one member of the Ontario PC caucus at any one of those consultations. I can distinctly recall that the member who has put forward the motion today—that I recall, anyway—was not in any one of those consultations. I find it very curious.

Here we are, a few years later, after so much work has gone into this and after there has been extensive consultation, and I see the members opposite standing up and frankly, from my perspective, acting like they are the great defenders of the community of skilled trades. To

me and the people that I represent, that claim, that ground that they're staking out, rings a little bit hollow because they weren't there through those consultations. The concerns that they claim to be expressing for the people who are in our galleries today and people who might be watching at home—they weren't there making those same claims three years ago, four years ago.

1730

I wanted to begin by saying that I think there has been a decent amount, an extensive amount of consultation done on this. I think the reports that came forward from Armstrong and from Whitaker were very strong reports. They laid the groundwork for our government to move forward with a fantastic concept, which is to finally demonstrate that we have an appropriate level of respect for those men and women who work in the skilled trades in our province; for the first time ever here in our province to say that we understand that you have the ability, that you are mature enough as a sector to govern yourselves. We want to put you on an equal footing with all of those other people in our province who practise their profession: doctors, teachers, nurses, as was mentioned; in fact, as was mentioned by my colleague from Scarborough—Agincourt, members opposite who are standing in their place today to oppose the College of Trades, to support this misguided notion—people who are actually members of their respective colleges, who think that it's okay for nurses to be self-governed but not for people who are working in the skilled trades.

On this side of the House, Speaker, we believe that the people who are working in skilled trades deserve that level of equality and that level of respect of this chamber and this Legislature and this government. That's why we've moved forward; that's why we've moved forward with this specific idea and concept.

The work is now beginning. The work has gone on for a number of months, and the folks at the College of Trades are working extremely hard to make sure that whether it's ratio reviews, whether it's the rest of the stuff that takes place within the mandate of the College of Trades, they are doing their very best to make sure that they're representing the views of the people who are going to be affected by this.

I did listen closely to some of the members from the third party and some of the concerns that they've been raising over the course of the debate today. And I'm going to say, the members from the third party have actually raised some very interesting comments. I don't think I would be the only one on this side of the House saying that no entity that any government creates on day one is necessarily 100% absolutely perfect; I think it's fair to say. There has been an extraordinary amount of work over a relatively short period of time that has been poured into creating this. But from my perspective, speaking as someone who, as I said earlier, was there towards the beginning of this process, I think this is evolutionary. This is about making sure that we get to where we need to be as it relates to the community of skilled trades.

But what's most important about this evolutionary process for me and for the people that I represent is that it's a process. It's an evolutionary process driven by those people that it will affect. It's not driven by politicians, and I have a great deal of respect for politicians. It's not driven by faceless, nameless bureaucrats, necessarily—and I have a lot of respect for those in our public service—but it's driven by the people who understand the industry, who understand the community of skilled trades because it affects them.

The last thing I'll say, Speaker: The one thing that I think is missing from this whole discussion that I've heard so far in the chamber today is that in many respects, the College of Trades was created and has been created to provide those individuals who have, frankly, yet to take on a career in the skilled trades. I have two young daughters, a five-year-old and a two-year-old. I don't know today what their future will hold for them, what profession they might take on, what occupation they might take on. But I want to make sure that while I have the privilege of serving in this House, I continue to support those undertakings that will provide them, should they choose to pursue a career in the skilled trades, any one of the more than 100 skilled trades that are regulated in the province of Ontario—should they choose to pursue a career in one of the skilled trades, I want them to have a direct say and a direct hand in shaping their future and in shaping the way their particular trade evolves over time.

With the College of Trades, we are empowering those currently in the industry and those, most importantly, who are yet to enter the industry, yet to enter the workforce as skilled tradespeople. We are providing them with the tools to be empowered and be enabled. That's why I strongly oppose this motion and I strongly support the College of Trades.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Nepean—Carlton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It is a great pleasure to rise in debate today to support not only my colleague Garfield Dunlop, who I think has done a tremendous job, travelling our province, speaking to workers and defending the common person in this province who is trying to make ends meet. I owe you a debt of gratitude. We all do.

I'm also proud to be here today because there are people who have travelled that five-hour trip from the city of Ottawa to be here. That's not an easy feat for the constituents that I have. They have other things to do: you know, run a business, pay their bills, raise their families.

My friend John Herbert from the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association is here. We've been friends for a very long time. I'm so happy he made the trek. I know that up here we have some friends from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, including our candidate Roxane Villeneuve Robertson, who has been steadfast in her defiance with this piece of garbage legislation—

Interjection: Rubbish.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Rubbish.

My colleague from Leeds–Grenville has two sons who are in Fort McMurray, and he attributes the policies by this Liberal government, and the College of Trades being one of them, for having his sons leave this province. This used to be the province people from around the world came to; now we're exporting the next generation to Alberta, and we're doing it because of destructive policies like the College of Trades.

I think my colleague from Dufferin–Caledon said it most eloquently: For these people, their customers are their regulators. We have forgotten, at a basic level in this province, how to create jobs but, more importantly, how to maintain the ones we have. That is the fundamental flaw in what this government has done.

They talk about fees. Right now, I think we know that many of the people we represent are having a rough time paying their hydro bill, let alone figure out, if they're a small business or a small business owner like a hairdresser or a catering chef, how to find that extra fee to pay the government of Ontario and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and Pat Dillon and the Working Families coalition, and that front group of the College of Trades. They don't have that kind of money. They don't, and they shouldn't have to pay for it.

You want to talk about consultation. Why are 31 major organizations, major employers, in this province opposed to your bill? Mostly because of lack of consultation. They have not been part of the process, and they have been usurped. Why does my colleague have 7,000 names and signatures on petitions being opposed? Why did he have to go to 125 different communities across the province? Because you did not do your job.

This is going to be the official agency of the Working Families coalition, something I have personally fought against in this assembly and outside of this assembly for many years, something my colleagues have been impacted by, and a group that all they want to do, in terms of their existence, is one thing, one thing only, and that is to attack my leader, Tim Hudak. I think emboldening that union organization, that front group for the Liberal Party of Ontario, by giving them the College of Trades says so much to the people of this province that this is the wrong thing to do, it is the wrong time to do it, and that is why I encourage other members of this assembly to support us.

In closing, I say this, because I see my friend John Herbert who has come here from Ottawa, and I see Roxane Villeneuve and all my friends from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell who will be watching Mr. Crack's vote at the end of this day. I say to them that we adhere to the great words of Ronald Reagan. The nine most terrifying words in the English language are this: "Hi. I'm from the government. I'm here to help."

Well, I can tell you something. The College of Trades will not be a help, but I will tell you this: A Progressive Conservative government under the leadership of Tim Hudak will be here to help. We will get rid of this College of Trades under the leadership of Tim Hudak.

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

Interjections.

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

The member for Oakville has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to join the debate. It has created some controversy, and it should create controversy, because it's a very important issue. Most issues, I think, that are important to the people of the province of Ontario will garner a variety of opinions, and we're hearing that today. I think we're having a very healthy debate. I certainly am standing, right from the outset, to tell you that I'll be opposing this motion. I want to tell you why and I want to tell the people on TV why and I want to tell the people in the audience why: because what we're debating today is the continued existence of what has become an industry-driven governing body.

The idea is that we're going to help to modernize skills training in the province of Ontario. The reason we need to do that is that when we took over from the previous government in 2003, there were only 60,000 apprentices in the province of Ontario. Today, nine or 10 years later, we've managed to increase that to 120,000. We should be extremely proud of that, but the fact is, Madam Speaker, that it's simply not enough. The demand for skilled trades in the future in this province is going to exceed what we've done in the past. We need to do better.

1740

We asked people who are experts in the field in the province of Ontario on labour issues, on apprenticeship issues, people who have served under all three parties, who are respected by all sides on this issue. We asked them to go out into the community. We asked them to examine other jurisdictions in the world, and we asked them to come back to us with the best advice they could possibly give us. What they came back and they said to us was that the skilled trades in the province of Ontario have reached a level, have reached a state of maturity in their evolution that they should be able to take charge of their own destiny, that the people who have chosen to go into the skilled trades—which I think is a fantastic choice. I come from a family where my father was a skilled tradesperson. I think young people in the province of Ontario who have made the choice to go into the skilled trades have made an excellent career choice. What they need to do now is, they need to have control over their own future.

We're saying that, should decisions about your trade, about what you do every day for a living, whether you're a plumber, a steamfitter, whether you're an electrician or a hairdresser—who knows more about your industry? Who knows more about your job than you yourself? Is it a bureaucrat? Is it the government? It's not. It's you yourself. So what we're doing is, we're giving the College of Trades a greater role in the—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. Just turn it down.

The member for Oakville, continue.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you, Speaker.

What we're doing is, we're giving the industry itself a greater role in how their particular industry sets standards, what the apprenticeship ratios should be, whether the trade should be a compulsory trade or not. These decisions in the past weren't made by the people in these seats today, Speaker. They were made by people in backrooms. They were made by politicians. They were made by bureaucrats. The best people to make these decisions are the people who are sitting in the seats here today.

When I look around the chamber today, I see members who are members of the College of Pharmacists. I see members who are members of the College of Teachers. Some members are from the college of doctors. The engineering society is here with us today. The law society is here with us today. Who from the other side is standing up and saying, "Let's get rid of the College of Pharmacists. Let's get rid of the College of Teachers. Let's get rid of the Law Society of Upper Canada"? No. In a very elite way, they're saying, "Let those colleges remain, but don't let any one of the people who have joined us today have their own college." Madam Speaker, that is shameful. That is shameful.

What we're saying is that this is a very important issue. We need to improve the number of apprentices we have in the province of Ontario. If the future economy is going to flourish, we need to get more young people into the skilled trades. Who knows better how to do that than people who are in the skilled trades themselves who have made that decision themselves? They are the people who I think should be making the decisions that we have before us today.

There's another aspect of the college—before I close, Speaker—that hasn't been talked about today. We've been joined today in the House by Peter Silverman. Everybody, I think, from every side and every party in this House knows the work that this man has done to make sure the consumers in the province of Ontario get a fair shake. What did Peter Silverman do? He called us and said, "You know what? I'm in favour of this. I've seen what happens on a daily basis by unscrupulous people in the province of Ontario"—not the people who have joined us here today—"people who will go out and cheat consumers; people who will go out and misrepresent themselves." What Mr. Silverman tells me and is telling all of you is that this province needs the College of Trades.

Any move to try to destroy the College of Trades at this time is simply self-serving politicking. I think these guys can see through you.

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

Mr. Rob Leone: You know, Madam Speaker, I came to this Legislature with a great deal of optimism, but I unfortunately feel very disappointed by what I've heard today. I'm hearing lots of examples, lots of members from the Liberals and the NDP talking about being "taken to the cleaners." Why are the Liberals and the NDP focusing on the negative? Why aren't they focusing

on the promise of our trades, building schools, building roads, building bridges, building hospitals? They're doing a great job for the people of the province of Ontario. If someone isn't doing their job, we don't need to create more bureaucracy to fix it. We have to strengthen consumer protection. So if that's really the issue that you want to focus on, why aren't you strengthening consumer protection?

I want to talk about two constituents in my riding. Their names are Paul and Angela. Paul came to this country in 1968. I know a lot of people in this Legislature have heard similar stories about people who came overseas with very little—basically the shirts on their backs. He came to this country with a trade. He met his bride, Angela, and they built a family together. They had two children. They lived in Ontario. They built a good life for their family. They lived, and continue to live, in a modest home. They put their kids through school. They bought cars. We had a good life.

Paul and Angela's oldest son ended up becoming an engineer. He married an anaesthesiologist. They have two kids.

Madam Speaker, their other son graduated too. He married a psychologist. He finished a PhD and, at the age of 32, that son became the member for Cambridge. I owe a lot of success because my father had a trade, and he didn't need a College of Trades to build that life. What he needed was a job. He came in 1968 and retired in 2007. There was no College of Trades. There was a strong Ontario—a good job that was able to provide a good, solid foundation for me in my life as an MPP.

We don't need a College of Trades. We need to get this province moving again so people who are in despair can finally have a job to provide for their kids, to build a life that I had as a person—and I hope that people understand that it takes a lot of effort and a lot of sacrifice, moving halfway around the world to build a solid life so that your kids could have a better future. That's what I want for my kids.

I have to say, Madam Speaker, that there's a lot I could say about this very issue, but I want to conclude on this note—because the member for Simcoe North has done a tremendous job supporting the trades, supporting apprentices, supporting young people who actually want to work and provide a good life for themselves and their family. So, to the people of Ontario, I think we all deserve to stand up and give praise to Garfield Dunlop, the member for Simcoe North, who's done a tremendous job.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Mr. Dunlop has moved opposition day motion number 3. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1749 to 1759.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Dunlop, Garfield
Elliott, Christine
Fedeli, Victor
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael
Hudak, Tim
Jackson, Rod

Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Leone, Rob
MacLaren, Jack
MacLeod, Lisa
McDonell, Jim
McKenna, Jane
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norm
Milligan, Rob E.
Munro, Julia
Nicholls, Rick

O'Toole, John
Ouellette, Jerry J.
Pettapiece, Randy
Scott, Laurie
Shurman, Peter
Smith, Todd
Thompson, Lisa M.
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakabuski, John
Yurek, Jeff

Bradley, James J.
Brotten, Laurel C.
Cansfield, Donna H.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob

Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gerretsen, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hoskins, Eric
Jeffrey, Linda
Kwinter, Monte
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Mantha, Michael
Marchese, Rosario
McMeekin, Ted

Oraziotti, David
Piruzza, Teresa
Qadri, Shafiq
Sergio, Mario
Sousa, Charles
Tabuns, Peter
Takhar, Harinder S.
Taylor, Monique
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those who oppose the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura
Armstrong, Teresa J.
Balkissoon, Bas
Bartolucci, Rick
Berardinetti, Lorenzo

Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
DiNovo, Cheri
Duguid, Brad
Fife, Catherine

McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milloy, John
Moridi, Reza
Natyshak, Taras

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 35; the nays are 48.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There is no further business. This House stands adjourned until 9 tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1802.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Millroy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor–Tecumseh	

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Grant Crack, Kim Craitor
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman
Soo Wong
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Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qadri
Jonah Schein
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson
Steve Clark, Mike Colle
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod
Bill Mauro
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qadri
Jagmeet Singh
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof
Margaret R. Best, Vic Dhillon
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha
Jane McKenna
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

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