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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 26 September 2013

Jeudi 26 septembre 2013

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 26 September 2013

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 26 septembre 2013

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. John Milloy: I move that, notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, there be a timetable applied to the consideration of certain business of the House as follows:

Bill 30, Skin Cancer Prevention Act (Tanning Beds), 2013

That, when the order for third reading of Bill 30 is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 70, Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act (Spousal Exception), 2013

The Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly shall meet for one day of public hearings and one day of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 70, An Act to amend the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, in accordance with the motion passed by the committee on September 11, 2013; and

That upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly on Bill 70, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill one sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013

That following the completion of its consideration of Bill 70, the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly shall next meet for up to two days of public hearings and up to two days of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 55, An Act to amend the Collection Agencies Act, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 and the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, in accordance with the motion passed by the committee on September 11, 2013; and

That upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly on Bill 55, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill one sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties; and

At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 36, Local Food Act, 2013

That the Standing Committee on Social Policy shall, on its next three regular Tuesday meeting days com-

mencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for up to two days of public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Social Policy on Bill 36, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act, 2013

That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs shall, on its next two regular meeting days commencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for one day of public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 74, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 to alter bargaining rights conferred by pre-1980 working agreements in the construction industry; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 74, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the com-

mittee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

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The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 60, Wireless Services Agreements Act, 2013

When debate on Bill 60, An Act to strengthen consumer protection with respect to consumer agreements relating to wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, smart phone or any other similar mobile device, reaches 6.5 hours, or when the member who has the floor at that point has completed his or her remarks, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government; and

That the vote on second reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That the Standing Committee on General Government shall, on its next three regular meeting days commencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for up to two days of public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12:00 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 60, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 77, Hawkins Gignac Act (Carbon Monoxide Safety), 2013

Upon receiving second reading during private members' public business, Bill 77, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 to provide safety requirements related to the presence of unsafe levels of carbon monoxide on premises, shall be referred to a standing committee in the normal way; and

Any proceedings on Bill 77 in the committee to which the bill is referred shall be postponed until completion by that committee of consideration of any other bill provided for in this motion; and

The committee to which the bill is referred is authorized to meet for one day of public hearings on the bill, during its first regularly scheduled meeting the week following the referral of the bill to the committee; and

The committee is authorized to meet for one sessional day of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill, on its next regularly scheduled meeting day during the week following the week in which the committee met for public hearings; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the respective committee on the bill, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 32, Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, 2013

That the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills shall, on its next three regular meeting days commencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for up to two days for public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 32, An Act respecting the Human Resources Professionals Association; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 32, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Select Committee on Developmental Services

That a Select Committee on Developmental Services be appointed to consider and report to the House its observations and recommendations with respect to the urgent need for a comprehensive developmental services strategy to address the needs of children, youth and adults in Ontario with an intellectual disability or who are dually diagnosed with an intellectual disability and a mental illness, and to coordinate the delivery of developmental programs and services across many provincial ministries in addition to the Ministry of Community and Social Services; and

That in developing its strategy and recommendations, the committee shall focus on the following issues:

- the elementary and secondary school educational needs of children and youth;
- the educational and workplace needs of youth upon completion of secondary school;
- the need to provide social, recreational and inclusionary opportunities for children, youth and adults;
- the need for a range of available and affordable housing options for youth and adults;
- the respite and support needs of families;
- how government should most appropriately support these needs and provide these opportunities.

That the committee have the authority to meet on Wednesdays following routine proceedings when the House is in session, and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. when the House is not in session; and

That the committee shall have the authority to call for persons, papers and things, to employ counsel and staff and, as the committee deems relevant to its terms of reference, to commission reports and adjourn from place to place, subject to the normal budget approval from the Board of Internal Economy; and

That the committee shall present an interim report to the House no later than February 26, 2014, and a final report no later than May 15, 2014; and

That in the event of and notwithstanding any prorogation of the House before the presentation of the committee's final report, the committee shall be deemed to be continued to the subsequent session or sessions and may continue to meet during any such prorogation; and

That the committee shall be comprised of: four members from the government caucus, one of whom shall be the Chair, three members from the caucus of the official opposition and two members from the caucus of the third party; and

That the chief whip of each of the recognized parties shall indicate in writing to the Clerk of the House, within five sessional days of the passage of this motion, their party's membership on the committee.

Royal assent

That any of the bills provided for in this motion shall, after receiving third reading, be presented to the Lieutenant Governor for royal assent no later than December 13, 2013.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Milloy has moved government notice of motion number 22.

Government House leader?

Hon. John Milloy: For anyone who perhaps had been tuning in on the parliamentary channel, they might have thought that I was doing my Ted Cruz impersonation this morning and trying to hold up the meeting of the House by reading a motion which I think took about 15 or 20 minutes to read into the record. But actually, while I believe Senator Cruz was trying to delay what was going on in the Senate, in fact, what we are trying to do here through this very lengthy motion is speed up the passage of legislation here in the Legislature.

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I think members of this Legislature are quite aware that we've had a rather rocky number of months, certainly in the spring of this year. We saw the government come forward with a very robust legislative agenda, and it kept getting stonewalled at every course. We saw second reading debates on bills that were supported by all parties in this House go on and on in debate, sometimes as much as 18, 19, 20 hours before they moved forward. So, in a spirit of wanting to make the Legislature work, and work properly, our Premier, Premier Wynne, met with the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party recently where she presented them with a series of bills—six bills, I believe, Mr. Speaker—that reflected the priorities of our government, but also, we felt, the priorities of the opposition, bills where there was a consensus, and asked whether it would be possible for the parties to work together to see a passage of these.

What ensued has been some back and forth between the parties, between the House leaders, and an agreement was reached between us and the official opposition. We invited the New Democratic Party to join, and certainly they've been part of the discussions. But what we have here today is a consensus between the two parties on a number of bills that we would like to see move through the Legislature over the next several months, proceed to committee if necessary and come to a vote here.

What the programming motion does is it outlines a timetable to deal with these. I want to stress to members here that what it does not do is somehow hamper debate. We put forward ample time at all stages for debate and discussion for public hearings in the case of those bills that are going to committee, opportunities for parties to come forward with amendments to strengthen the bill and to consider it. But what it will do is ensure the passage of these bills as we move forward. It will ensure that some of the game-playing that we saw this spring does not happen and that we can rise for Christmas and hopefully, if these bills are deemed to be supported by the majority of members here in this place, we will go forward having achieved a good agenda of bills moving forward.

Just to put it on the record, because there may have been one or two members who weren't following my reading of that motion with the interest that I'm sure that everyone did, I'll read it again. No, I will not. But I will just outline the bills that are included in the programming motion:

—Bill 30, Skin Cancer Prevention Act, or, as it's known, the tanning beds act;

—Bill 70, the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act (Spousal Exception) that came from the member for Leeds–Grenville, a private member's bill dealing with the issue around dentists and the treating of spouses—something very top of mind in many circles. I'm sure all of us have heard of it at our constituency office;

—Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act: again a bill I think we'll find a lot of consensus on

here as it strengthens a number of consumer safety measures;

—Bill 36, the Local Food Act: again, a bill which I think there is a great deal of consensus on to strengthen the use and promotion of local food here in the province of Ontario. It's going to be a benefit to our farmers and a benefit certainly to our food industry, which is such a big, important part of our economy;

—Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act, which was again a private member's bill brought forward to address an anomaly in a particular labour agreement that has been identified by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. There has been certainly encouragement that we may need legislation to settle this issue;

—Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act: In this day and age, everyone with cellphones will certainly appreciate this piece of legislation which will allow individuals to have more protection on their cellphone bills;

—Bill 77, the Hawkins Gignac Act (Carbon Monoxide Safety) that comes from the member from Oxford. It's something that he has pushed for with great passion around the whole issue of carbon monoxide safety; and finally

—Bill 32, the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, again a private member's bill that addresses a desire among human resources professionals to have their own association.

This, I think, is a good list of bills on which you'll find wide consensus, not only within this Legislature but within the public in general. All this motion does—and I want to give notice that we on this side of the Legislature are not going to spend a lot of time debating it, because it's a procedural motion that sets out the type of timetable that can guarantee these bills will receive due consideration and move with the normal type of speed we expect here in the Legislature.

We were a little bit disappointed, because we had asked that two other bills be added to this list: Bill 91 and Bill 105. We have been told by the opposition over and over again that they were looking for an opportunity to talk about jobs and the economy, and although that long list I read into the record does contain many bills that touch on economic issues and employment issues, Bills 91 and 105 specifically deal with a number of areas that we feel are very important to the creation of jobs.

One of them deals with the employer health tax benefit. It was contained in the budget. What we would see is an adjustment to it so that smaller businesses would gain from that tax benefit and be able to have more resources in order to create jobs and make investments.

The other one is the Waste Diversion Act, which I know my friend the Minister of the Environment will be speaking on passionately. What it does is strengthen our oversight of waste diversion and, in doing so, it has the potential to create jobs in the recycling field and also really spur and encourage innovation among a number of

industries, which in turn will create more opportunities for investment and job creation.

We had wanted these two to go on the list. We could not reach consensus, but just to note that we will be proceeding with these bills as well as the list that came forward today.

Mr. Speaker, I've spent seven or eight minutes just outlining what's going on here. This is about making sure the Legislature works a little bit better over the coming months and that we can see progress on a list of bills that, I repeat again, I think you'll find consensus on here in the Legislature, as well as broad consensus and appeal for them. With that, as I say, we're not going to spend a lot of time on this side of the House debating this motion. We feel it speaks for itself in the outline it puts forward. We look forward to debate and discussion on it, and we look forward to moving on with these bills.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Jim Wilson: I, too, am pleased to speak to this motion, which essentially is exactly the motion I presented to this House on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the Ontario PC caucus on Monday, to try to end the gridlock around here and change the agenda to jobs and the economy, rather than the past few years—certainly the past two years, and certainly the past nine months under Premier Wynne, where we've been dealing with mostly social bills.

First of all, I want to say we are not going to take a lot of time either. We'll have two speakers on this side, myself and the deputy House leader for the PCs, Mr. Clark, who has been a tremendous help in this whole process; we couldn't do it without him.

This whole motion stems from the meeting of September 11. The Premier did ask to meet with Mr. Hudak. He met with her promptly, and she gave him a list of bills. It was, I believe, at that time, six government bills and three PC bills that she considered to be priorities. We looked at it, and we thought, "Jeez, from the government side there's no bold ideas to get the economy going, to go to bat for the over 500,000 unemployed women and men who woke up this morning without a job." We have not seen, really, any bold ideas come from the Liberals at all.

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So in order to change the page—to clear the decks, as Tim says so very often—we have, basically, an unprecedented move. The government was creating its own stagnant House here and not dealing with the opposition, at least in the couple of years I've been House leader. The fact of the matter is, they were still operating as if they had a majority. They would come in, basically, to House leaders' meetings saying, "This is what we're going to do this week, boys"—it was mostly men in the room—and never actually negotiate with us. When they did finally negotiate with an opposition party, we were completely shut out of those negotiations, and that was around getting their budget passed. I will give Mr. Bisson, the House leader of the NDP, credit: He kept me informed of what they were talking about, but I was

never part of those discussions, nor their outcome. And of course we ended up getting a Financial Accountability Officer, which we agree with, but I don't think will actually ever prevent scandals like Ornge or eHealth or power plants, so I'm not sure how useful it's all going to be, but we're supportive of it anyway. And again, no job creation requests during the NDP's discussion with the government, so we had to come forward to try and change the agenda here.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario is at a crossroads. Our Legislature has been in deadlock for almost two years now as the Liberals and NDP failed to bring forward any policy ideas that would help put the over 500,000 unemployed women and men back to work in Ontario. We have a Premier who has been an integral part of a government responsible for unprecedented amounts of waste, countless scandals—I mention them again: eHealth, Ornge, power plants and many more—and deficits and debt that continue to burden the middle class. While Kathleen Wynne tries to distance herself from former Premier Dalton McGuinty and his wasteful overspending and scandals, she hopes that Ontarians forget she sat at the cabinet table when those decisions were made.

Mr. Speaker, I forgot to mention that I'll be sharing my time with the honourable member from Leeds–Grenville, and again, we won't be speaking terribly long on this; we want to get these bills passed and the agenda changed here on behalf of jobs and the economy and smaller government as quickly as possible.

Premier Wynne shares responsibility with her predecessor, Mr. McGuinty, for the mess we find ourselves in now. Unfortunately, since the 2011 election, the Liberal government has failed to implement any pieces of legislation that deal with our job and debt crises. Since Kathleen Wynne became Premier, we have seen nothing in the way of a legislative agenda or a mandate to grow the economy and create jobs.

That's why, on Monday, September 23, the Ontario PC caucus took bold action. We put forward this programming motion to end the legislative gridlock and clear the deck so that we can start dealing with the jobs and debt crisis here in Ontario. We have before us in this motion eight bills, and almost all of them were supported by all three parties—almost all of them. Kathleen Wynne, the Premier, prides herself on her willingness to engage in conversations to find solutions, but the Premier hasn't even been able to deliver on her agenda of tanning beds and local food legislation.

I'm here today on behalf of Tim Hudak, our leader, and the Progressive Conservative caucus to propose a solution to this deadlocked Legislature, and get the Legislature working on behalf of the people who sent us here. This programming motion—I'll just do it for the record, as the government House leader did—would see the following eight bills expedited through the House to clear the way for a legislative agenda to deal with Ontario's jobs and debt crisis:

Bill 30, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act (Tanning Beds)—all three parties agree with that.

Bill 70, the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act (Spousal Exception), put forward by the honourable member for Leeds–Grenville, Mr. Clark, is an excellent piece of legislation. It will particularly help dentists and other health professionals in, say, rural and remote areas, where they're the only ones in town. They should be allowed to treat their spouses.

Bill 55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act—we all agree with that.

Bill 36, the Local Food Act—I'd just put the government on notice that while this programming motion doesn't contain the amendment of Mr. Bailey, the member for Sarnia–Lambton, to provide farmers with a tax credit if they donate food that might be a bit—blemished fruit, or something like that that isn't going to be put on the grocery shelves but it's perfectly good to eat and perfectly healthy, to be donated to food banks. They should get a tax credit for that to encourage that sort of behaviour. A lot of farmers are just doing it out of the goodness of their heart, but it does cost them money in terms of transportation and time and fuel to get that food to the local food bank. We'll be putting that amendment forward in committee, and it's my understanding that at least the government side of the House agrees with that amendment. So I hope they'll continue with that agreement when we vote on it during clause-by-clause at committee. We also have a second amendment by the member for Nepean–Carleton, Lisa MacLeod, to deal with food literacy that we'll be putting forward when Bill 36, the Local Food Act, gets to committee.

Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry, which is sponsored by Monte McNaughton, the member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act—we all agree with that.

Bill 77, which is the Hawkins Gignac Act, or the carbon monoxide safety act, put forward by the honourable member from Oxford, Mr. Ernie Hardeman, is an excellent piece of legislation which for new builds would require carbon monoxide detectors in homes.

Bill 32, the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, has been kicking around a long time. It means a lot to human resources specialists and, again, it was in part co-sponsored by the honourable member for Whitby–Oshawa, Christine Elliott, on our side of the House, so all parties agree with that. It's actually a tri-sponsored bill.

I think probably the most important thing on this list is again Christine Elliott, the member for Whitby–Oshawa, finally enacting—some two years ago, I believe it was, this House voted on a resolution from Christine Elliott, the member for Whitby–Oshawa, to set up an all-party select committee to look at the services that government is providing or not providing to people with developmental disabilities. It was quite a comprehensive resolution. It passed unanimously in this House, but typical Liberal government inaction took effect and they failed, as they do on so many occasions, to live up to the expressed wishes of this House, which is their job as government. Only the government can set up, under our rules,

a select committee; the opposition can't do it. All we could do was get unanimous agreement, again, on a resolution—a very good resolution—which they totally ignored.

Tim Hudak, when he spoke with the Premier and presented her with a letter on September 11, not only included the bills that I just talked about—sorry, the Premier included the bills, but Tim, along with a bunch of other stuff that I'll talk about which deals directly with jobs and the economy and shrinking the size and cost of government, demanded that she also include the all-party select committee on developmental disabilities. So good for Tim, our leader, and good for Christine to continually push that, and thank you to the government for agreeing, finally, but you shouldn't have to be pushed in what we consider to be a no-brainer and absolutely the right thing to do. With our aging population, there are so many—frankly, a lot of them are widows or widowers sitting at home and wondering how their adult child with developmental disabilities is going to live after they pass on, after the parents pass on. That's one of the big issues that the committee will be looking at.

When the Premier met with our leader, Tim Hudak, two weeks ago, she put forward a list of government and PC bills that she considered a priority for the fall session. I've just pretty well read them out. Then the government did add two other bills in our discussions this week, and the government House leader, Mr. Milloy, just spoke about them. One was Bill 91, the waste diversion or waste management act, which frankly isn't a jobs act except it creates a lot of jobs for government bureaucrats. It sets up a whole new bureaucracy, and we're not interested in that because someone is going to have to pay those taxes. The more taxes you pay, the more jobs we kill in the private sector. It's just a vicious cycle—

Interjection.

Mr. Jim Wilson: —that we've been on for a decade now, Minister, and we've got to get off it. That's what this whole process is all about today: getting off that old treadmill that you guys are on, job-killing and killing the economy and being last in just about everything in a have-not province in Canada and a complete embarrassment to Confederation. We're trying to break that habit of yours over there.

The second bill that the government wanted included was Bill 32, which actually removes the exemption of the first \$400,000 in payroll for many of our large corporations—so actually their taxes go up. If their taxes go up, as Tim said in his letter to the Premier on September 11 that he handed her, that just kills jobs, as the price of the goods made by those corporations goes up and people aren't able to buy their goods and services. So people get laid off in these companies. That's not particularly helpful to the economy.

0940

The government tried to spin yesterday, and did it again today, that we tried to hold back two of their job-creating bills: one creating a massive bureaucracy that nobody wants, and the other one taking away tax exemp-

tions on the employer health tax, which is a tax we hate anyway. It was brought in by Mr. Peterson when he was Premier, and the Liberals, many years ago. It was supposed to be temporary, and it's still there—so, just clearing the record.

Tim Hudak, the leader of the PCs, has shown real leadership, and he asked me, after his meeting with the Premier, to put together this motion on behalf of the caucus and get these bills passed as quickly as possible. There is a timetable read out in the motion by the government House leader this morning, but we're willing to speed that up, even. We need to change the channel around here as quickly as possible, so maybe we'll see even more co-operation through unanimous consent in the days ahead, and we can move ahead and change the channel.

PC leader Tim Hudak also put a request, as I said, Ms. Elliott's all-party select committee, and I covered that.

I do want to thank the government House leader and his staff. I should do that; I would be remiss if I didn't. When we finally got down to the nuts and bolts on this, there were a lot of people, particularly staff, who worked quite late into the evening and early in the morning. So I thank you, John, for working on this with us. I also want to thank our PC staff; I see Adam Yahn here. Well, as usual, Alex isn't here.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: He's working.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Alex Beduz is working. Sorry, Alex; he'd kill me. But they put a lot of work in, as did Amanda Philip.

Again, I want to thank our deputy House leader, who's just a terrific person with a great background in municipal politics, and a clerk of a municipality, so he knows his stuff tremendously well, and just a great person to work with.

Again, Mr. Speaker, if we don't start to deal with the cost of government, we are reminded by Don Drummond and others that we're heading towards a \$30-billion deficit. We need to have the government start to make some tough decisions that have to be made, or we're on the road to Detroit, as Mr. Hudak always reminds us. The government has pulled from the Drummond report a lot of things that would have saved money, but they've not replaced it with anything that would counteract that, that would—"Okay, we don't like this." Mr. Drummond said if you're going to take something off the table that saves money, like the wage freeze that Mr. Hudak has been calling for, the across-the-board public sector wage freeze that's for politicians and everyone—it will save \$2 billion a year. We'll do it for two years. We start to slow down that debt clock a little bit and get headed in the right direction.

It will give us some breathing room and take pressure off taxpayers. That's the whole idea there, because we are spending, I think, \$10.6 billion a year—the third-largest ministry after health and education. Most of that money goes to China and overseas. It's just pure debt interest, and you get nothing for it. It's just an exchange of paper. There are no services, there are no new develop-

mental services for children, there are no health care services, there are no new drugs being bought out of that money. It's basically shipped out of the country, because there are very few Ontarians who actually hold Ontario paper or Ontario debt paper.

I'll just end with our jobs. Most of these were contained in the letter that Tim gave to the Premier on September 11. They were also contained between that letter and the previous two or three meetings. Tim, every time, does the same thing. He's been consistent, the leader of the Ontario PCs, in pleading with the Premier on a personal level, pleading with the Premier here, pleading with the government and those who will listen, through our 14 white papers and the 167 recommendations we have in those.

We're distilling those down to a party platform now that we'll use in the election. Some of those ideas are for reducing the size and cost of government: as I said, an immediate mandatory public sector wage freeze, reforming a public sector arbitration system that awards outsized settlements regardless of taxpayers' ability to pay, making ministers personally financially responsible for hitting fiscal targets, and enabling competition in the delivery of government services, for efficiency and innovation.

Of course, we were very disappointed that Michael Harris's bill—what riding is Michael from?

Mr. Ted Arnott: Kitchener–Conestoga.

Mr. Jim Wilson: From Kitchener–Conestoga; thank you—was defeated at private members' business a week ago today, which would have meant open competition. There was a great editorial—or a story, I guess—in the Windsor Star, saying “what a missed opportunity” and blaming the NDPs and the Liberals for failing to respond to the pleas of municipalities to get rid of the almost corrupt ways that they are forced to do things now and bring in transparency and openness in our tendering process.

Under reducing the size and cost of government: a top-to-bottom review of all government functions to reinvest savings in health and education. We've also been pushing, in order to power up the private sector and private sector job creation, lower taxes on job-creating businesses. We go into extensive detail on that—a flexible response of regulation and an end to red tape.

Apprenticeship reform, which we know will create almost immediately 200,000 skilled trade jobs—we need to move to a one-to-one ratio. It's ridiculous that we have three to one in many industries, trades; we have five to one. Young people—we've brought them in here before. I did a resolution on it one time during private members' bills maybe a couple of years ago, and brought in a whole gallery full of young people. In this case, they were electricians and plumbers. They were students or apprentices. They brought in the employers that were willing to hire them but couldn't hire them. They had them as a summer student, but then couldn't hire them as an apprentice to go toward the hours they need to get their licence. Every other province but Quebec has moved to one to one. Our

government is so beholden to the union bosses that it refuses to do the right thing.

Finally, I'll just mention the plan to end unsustainable solar and wind subsidies and make electricity more affordable. We couldn't be louder on this side of the House and more consistent for at least two or three years now. End the Green Energy Act; it's a huge boondoggle. Britain recently did the right thing. Their energy minister admitted it was the greatest boondoggle in the history of British politics. Billions on the line; the highest electricity prices in Canada now: 30% higher because of the crazy legislation and the path the government took us on and is still taking us on. Stop signing those 20-year contracts where you get paid up to 15 times the regular price of electricity whether or not the windmill turns, whether you produce any electricity or not. Anyway, we've been pretty clear about that, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, I just want to say that our leader, Tim Hudak, should be commended. He thought of this idea, changed the channel here, cleared the decks, and we just, as the caucus members, did the mechanics of it.

The government should have put this together a long time ago and worked co-operatively with us, but they failed to do so. So, frankly, the only ones showing real leadership in this place and on behalf of people in Ontario and actually addressing the issues affecting the people of Ontario, the real issues, such as unemployment—the greatest dignity you can give a human being is the opportunity for a job, not an opportunity for a government cheque. An opportunity to raise your family on your own and not a handout from government: That's the greatest dignity. That's the social justice we should all be dealing with.

I can remember, in the NDP, Floyd Laughren, and I think the one speech that sticks in my head—on several occasions, he would get up, as finance minister, and tell us how proud he was that one in 10 Ontarians were on social assistance, that the government was able to support them. We used to look at him like, “Wow. You're proud of how many are getting a government cheque?” We're proud of how many under Mike Harris and other Premiers, Mr. Davis and others—our measurement was how many people had the dignity of a job to raise their family, and that's what we've got to get back to.

I hope the government is listening, and I think that this programming motion that we brought forward—but, just so the people at home know, the opposition cannot actually introduce the motion. We tried, on Monday afternoon, to get unanimous consent, and we heard noes from both the Liberals and the NDP, which was a real shame. But, finally, the government did come around, and we do have it before us. We need to vote on it quickly and change the channel.

0950

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Leeds–Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to join in the discussion. I appreciate my House leader giving me a chance to share time with him to talk about this motion. I also want

to talk about him. He mentioned me, but when I was involved in municipal politics, I recall Jim Wilson being elected to this place in 1990. When you're a newer member—and I've been here three and a half years—you get the opportunity to work with a bunch of different people within your caucus, whether it be in committee or out in the community, so I'm quite pleased with the work that Mr. Wilson does as our House leader. He's worked, I think, tirelessly since we began this minority Parliament, and he deserves our caucus's thanks for working so hard on this motion.

Going back to my comments about being a municipal politician, I was a municipal politician when the last minority Parliament took place, and I have to tell you, I don't recall that Parliament working like this one. I have to tell you, with a bit of frustration, that I sit in this place and realize that we went months and months without having legislation passed. The House prorogued, and a number of pieces of legislation dropped off the order paper. We had some frustration leading up to our summer recess, when nothing was passed, essentially, other than the Liberal-New Democrat deal on the budget. Certainly the meeting that our leader, Tim Hudak, had with Premier Wynne didn't equate the same way that the meeting in September of this year did, I think, for our legislative calendar.

I spoke in June, the last day of our session before the summer recess, and I talked about Jim Wilson and the frustration we had on this side of the House, that there were a number of pieces of legislation we were interested in being able to clear off. I made a speech and mentioned some of those bills and also some proclamations that we couldn't even seem to agree upon, which made me sad, and certainly I felt that our constituents weren't well served by the 107 representatives not being able to find some common ground on some issues that in the House and in private members' business we seemed to all agree upon. When I went back to my riding in the summer, people asked me those types of questions: "What is the status of the Local Food Act? What is the status of some private members' business?"

Mr. Hardeman and I, for example—the member for Oxford—are pretty open about our private members' bills. We laid them on the table. Mr. Wilson, very eloquently, at House leaders, laid those bills on the table and said that those were bills that, if the other two parties agreed during private members' business, maybe we could agree upon. In fact, in both those cases, both the Hawkins Gignac bill for Mr. Hardeman and the spousal exception for myself, for regulated health professions, we actually sat down at the table with the respective ministries and were able to amend our bills to reflect what the government ministry wanted. That's unheard of, and no one knew about that choice that we made. There wasn't a peep in any media outlets about that decision on our part. We got absolutely, positively, no credit at all for all that work behind the scenes, and for some of us, that was an extremely frustrating experience.

So hats off to the member for Simcoe–Grey, Mr. Wilson, our House leader, and hats off to Tim Hudak, our leader, for starting this session differently. Mr. Wilson alluded to the meeting that Mr. Hudak and the Premier had and the letter that he penned on September 11 of this year. I just want to read the second paragraph of the letter that Mr. Hudak gave to Premier Wynne:

"At a time when over half a million of our friends, neighbours and colleagues can't find a job, I fundamentally believe that the Premier's first focus should be jobs. Nothing is more important than ensuring each Ontarian has the opportunity to provide for themselves and their family."

I think that was the premise when the meeting in September took place, that when the Premier handed our leader, the Leader of the Opposition, Tim Hudak, a letter and said, "We think there are some bills that we have some consensus on. Would you be interested in these bills moving forward?", that was a different approach.

The other thing I wanted to mention, and I know that Mr. Wilson mentioned it, were the other bills that both the NDP and the Liberals didn't support, that we felt were on the path to create jobs, things like the moratorium on wind turbines, given the frustration that communities have that aren't willing hosts; the bills that members from the PC caucus have tabled and were defeated by both parties—the Fair and Open Tendering Act that my friend the member for Kitchener–Conestoga tabled. Municipalities and school boards have communicated to me, as the municipal affairs and housing critic, that that's the playing field they want. They wanted that bill to pass. Again, when they were in the House, they were surprised that both the other two parties, the Liberals and the NDP, didn't support that.

The arbitration issue: Again, we just came from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August. Almost every single delegation came forward and said they were surprised that Mr. Wilson's bill was defeated, because that's an issue that was at every single council chamber at some point over the last 52 weeks.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Weren't they blaming us?

Mr. Steve Clark: Yes, well, there were some other issues, but I think now we're on the right track back with AMO, and we hope to again have that bill resurrected in some form, to have that respectful conversation, to use some of Premier Wynne's words.

As well, the College of Trades was in that letter. I know that Garfield Dunlop, the member for—Simcoe North?

Interjection: Simcoe North.

Mr. Steve Clark: Simcoe North; I got that right. He travelled all across the province. I know that people in my riding have talked about the trades tax and the College of Trades—very strong reaction, to abolish that body. Again, Mr. Hudak put that on the record when he met with the Premier.

It was quite strange: the regulation—yesterday Ms. MacLeod, the member for Nepean–Carleton, tabled a bill regarding regulation 274. I've heard that as well in my

riding, Speaker, and I was a bit surprised with the manner that the first reading was dealt with yesterday. I can't explain why that happened or whether that's a trend by the New Democrats. I hope it isn't, because I think that in this place, we've had a way to deal with legislation.

Again, the support for subways in the GTA: We put that in writing, through our leader, to the Premier. I know the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Mr. Holyday—I really didn't meet Mr. Holyday until during the campaign. I've come to know him a little bit since he was elected, and I have to tell you, he's a top-shelf guy. I really enjoy talking to him; I really enjoy having him as a member of our caucus. Welcome to the Ontario PC caucus.

We look at this bill—and again, I hope the New Democrats don't hold up this legislation or this motion. I hope that they will realize that in a minority Parliament, you do have to have some discussions. We've had many, many House leader meetings, and I have to tell you, if I was being totally honest with the House, it's very frustrating for me. Speaker, you're a former municipal politician as well, and I think when you're involved in that level of government, you have some compromise and some consensus. You want to get things done. I think what we're trying to do on this side of the House is to present some PMBs, like Mr. Hardeman's and my PMB, that have had some support from all three parties, that have had people in our communities come to us and say they want passed.

I know that the human resource bill was added by the government, the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, Bill 32. I know that it was supported by all three parties. The member for Whitby–Oshawa put her name on it.

The Select Committee on Developmental Services—I have to tell you something. When I went back to the riding after the House rose for the summer, I had a very strong discussion with people who are in the developmental disabilities sector, the Community Living agencies within my riding, really wanting us to put aside partisan differences and establish that select committee.

1000

I have to tell you that I was very proud of Mr. Hudak and Mrs. Elliott when they made their questions last week in the House. They truly represented what I was hearing in my riding. I did an interview yesterday with a media outlet in North Grenville, and they were hearing the same thing: that they hope that we can put these partisan issues aside and establish this select committee. I'm very pleased that it's in this motion.

Again, I don't want the New Democrats to hold this up, because people in my community are saying that we want to move forward with that. People have seen the work that the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions did. I know that the government hasn't implemented those recommendations as fast as certainly some of us would want them to, but it was a good process, and I think we can replicate it on the all-party Select Committee on Developmental Services.

There has been some co-operation. I see the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing across the way, and I think that one of the things that debate does in this House is that it also helps to strengthen bills that are before us. The co-op bill died on the order paper when the House prorogued. The government did a little tweak to it, brought it back under Bill 14, it went through committee fairly quickly with co-operation from all three parties, it came back here, it collapsed, and I believe it's going to get royal assent today. So I think it shows that we can put some things aside.

Bill 21—I appreciate the fact that the bill was amended after it died on the order paper. I happen to think—and others may disagree, and that's their right in this House—that some of the debate that we had, that our members of the Ontario PC caucus had, helped make those changes in that bill.

People may criticize us for having debate, but I want to make sure that I put my constituents' comments on the record. I think that's part of why we're here. It may slow down the process a bit, but I'm not going to criticize democracy taking place in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I'm not going to do that. I think we've seen it in debate here. We've seen it in committee. There have been some exceptional amendments put forward from time to time on bills to help strengthen bills based on feedback we've received in the Legislature, feedback we have in our communities and feedback we receive in committee hearings.

I think we've had a lot of debate on some of these bills. I think we've had some general consensus. It would be a shame if the Legislature would grind to a halt because of this motion, because I think there are a number of bills that have to move forward.

I remember being at the 180th anniversary of the Brockville Farmers' Market. We had a great discussion about local food and celebrating local food, and I have to tell you, somebody took me aside and said, "You Tories aren't delaying that bill, are you?" I said, "No, we want it to move forward." I'm so pleased that I can go back to the farmers' market this weekend and say that that bill was a part of this motion, because that's what the farmers were saying to me. It may not be as substantive as they want, it may not have had all of the components that they wanted, but it was a bill that they thought we should put our differences aside on and move it forward.

I'm so pleased that my former seatmate the member for Sarnia–Lambton's amendment is getting embraced by, I think, all three parties. I'll let the New Democrats speak for themselves, but I certainly heard from some of the members across on the government side that have some favour in that motion. I know a very strong view from food banks in my constituency is that they love this. They think it's a great opportunity to have a partnership between folks in the agriculture community. It's a win-win for everyone.

Again, I'm going to be very pleased to report to some of those people in my riding, because we've got a food bank expansion in Brockville. They just had a wonderful

event in Prescott for the group that deals with the South Grenville area. These are petitions on that amendment that were in food banks all across my riding, and I think that when I go back they'll be very pleased that it's here.

I just want to close with a few comments to echo what our opposition House leader has said. There has been some frustration. We've taken the bills that the Premier has put on the table, some bills that have had all-party support at least publicly during the process. I think it's now time for us to move forward to clear the decks. We've given a number of suggestions on bills that we would like to see go forward. We believe that job creation and getting our economy back is the most important thing we can do in this Legislature.

When I was a kid, this province was the envy of the country. I wore it like a badge of honour that I was from the province of Ontario. We were the manufacturing centre of this country. I want to see the day when we're firing on all cylinders again, that we're no longer the caboose that we now have become.

I would love to have Ontario be the economic engine and be able to provide employment and get those half a million people back working and get the province of Ontario to be what I want it to be, and that's the best province for this country. I'm very passionate about it. I get so mad when I'm in my riding and I have industries show me letters from New York state, chastising our province for the horrible energy rates that we now have. I just think we need to get back to basics, focus on the economy, focus on creating jobs and get some of these bills that we talk and talk and talk about supporting and clear them off the order paper and move them forward.

I want to commend our House leader, Mr. Wilson, for helping to get that process moving.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I certainly want to speak to this motion for a number of reasons, but let me just start with this: It's really kind of passing strange that the Conservatives are having to time-allocate themselves in moving business through the House. There's a certain humour that we have to take in that, saying that it is kind of odd.

So where are we at? The government has a number of bills on the order paper to which both the New Democratic Party and Conservative Party have said, "We don't have any huge opposition." I just want to go through some of them to make my point.

The government has France Gélinas' Skin Cancer Prevention Act, Bill 30. Every party in this House has said that we support it. We actually fast-tracked the legislation into committee. The committee has had its hearings. It has done its amendments to the bill. I'm not sure there were any amendments, but they went through clause-by-clause. The bill is going to get ordered to the House, to which every party has said, "We're not going to put any speakers up and we're going to pass the bill."

I've got to take it at face value when the government House leader says, "I'm not going to put up any speakers." I have to take it at face value when the Conservative

House leader says, "I'm not going to put up any speakers." There are not going to be any speakers, or a limited number of speakers. But what we've got here is the Conservatives—and I kind of understand what the government is doing, because they don't quite trust the Conservatives. Essentially, the Conservatives are saying, "The only way you can trust us is to time-allocate us. So we're going to time-allocate ourselves on bills on which we already agree." It's a ridiculous situation that we're in.

If you look at the other bills, the next on the list is the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, Bill 55. The Tories have put 30 speakers up on a bill that they've said they support. They've been filibustering since that bill has been at second reading. We, as New Democrats, put up, I think—I don't know. There weren't a lot. I'd have to take a look at the number. I've got the list here. Bill 55: I think we put up—I don't know—five or six by the looks of it, and we have not debated the bill. We've said, "We agree; we're done. Let the bill naturally go into committee." The Tories kept on filibustering the bill. Even though they said they supported the bill and even though they said they don't have a problem with the bill and everybody was in favour and they were going to vote for it, they time-allocated it.

My point is, here we are time-allocating in this House a bunch of bills to which the parties all agree. So I've got to come to the conclusion—and it's kind of silly, because what you've got are Conservatives time-allocating themselves because even they can't trust themselves to hold to their own agreements within their own caucus. It's absolutely ridiculous.

1010

So I've talked to the government House leader and I've talked to the opposition House leader, Mr. Wilson—I respect both of them immensely. They are my colleagues as House leaders, and I will not say that I have anything but respect for the positions that they have and the job that they try to do, but it is kind of passing strange. I made this point to Mr. Milloy; I'm not sure I made it to Mr. Wilson, but I'll make it here in the House. This House functions when we trust each other. This House functions when the government House leader, the opposition House leader and myself as House leader for the New Democratic Party are able to trust each other's word. When we get to the point that the Tories have to time-allocate themselves, it tells me that this place is breaking down. I think that one of the dangers that we're heading into with this kind of move of time allocation, where the Tories are time-allocating themselves on bills that, quite frankly, they agree on, is it's going to put us in a position of souring up the milk.

I'll just give you one example. Yesterday, Madame Madeleine Meilleur introduced a bill that was put forward by my colleague previously, Madame France Gélinas, in order to make the commissioner of French language services an officer of the House. We thought that that is a good idea. All of the parties in the House agreed.

We had a bit of a dilemma yesterday because when the Financial Accountability Office bill was being ordered back to the House, it comes reported back on reports by committees. The government House leader, the Tory House leader, myself and the Clerk never clued in that if the bill got ordered back into the House by committee, and by way of the programming motion we had this spring, it would have blocked the ability for the member to introduce the bill and have our ministerial statements. So we as New Democrats said, “Listen, we could be playing games in this House and do the things that we see the Conservative Party do, but we live to our agreement.” I had said to the government House leader that we supported that particular initiative, so we amended our own programming motion in order to allow that debate to take place. That was the right thing to do. I would still do it today even considering what happened yesterday.

But what happened yesterday is—and this is the point that I want to make to my two honourable House leader colleagues—the two of you colluded after we did that so that the committees would not sit because you would not support each other’s unanimous consent motion to allow the committees to sit. The result of the motion yesterday was that the committees could not sit, because we didn’t get into orders of the day because it was reports by committees by which we were debating the Financial Accountability Office. None of you had contemplated that the committees would not sit, but because the milk got soured in this House as a result of this programming motion, Mr. Flynn got up and asked for unanimous consent, to which a Conservative member said no. Then, when Mr. Wilson got up for unanimous consent, a Liberal said no.

I have to say that you guys worked that out pretty magnificently, but the point was that this place did not function. Our committees did not sit yesterday as a result of that. Those are the kinds of things that happen around here when you get into these kinds of situations.

I’m going to get a chance to talk about the programming motion from the first year of session and the second budget, and I’ll get a chance to talk to that later. Unfortunately, I’ve got three minutes. I want to end on this point before I start again the next time that this bill is called: Let’s realize what’s really going on here. The government and the Conservatives have gotten together in order to allow a boutique bill that’s going to favour one employer in this province within an industry to not recognize a collective agreement of those workers. That’s what this is all about. The Conservatives and the Liberals know well that that is not good for workers and it is certainly not good for employers, for a whole bunch of different reasons. We’ll talk about that later.

So they’re saying that if we can have a time allocation motion and cause a bit of a row in the House about time allocation, while people are looking over here at the time allocation motion, maybe there will be less attention paid by the media to the fact that the government and the Conservatives have colluded together in order to favour one employer to not recognize the rights of the workers

that are in a collective agreement. And why? Because Richard Brennan—I don’t know if this is the truth, but Richard Brennan has been pretty clear about it in his articles: It’s in order to curry favour when it comes to financial contribution to the Liberal and the Conservative parties. And I say to you, shame on you. This is just a game. Do the Tories really want to hold up skin cancer prevention bills? Do the Tories really want to hold up Steve Clark’s bill for treating spouses? Do the Tories want to hold up Madame—what’s her name?—Elliott’s special committee she wants to create? Does the government want to hold up the food act?

You guys don’t want to hold up any of it, but you’re time-allocating yourselves because the Tories can’t trust themselves. But I think the bigger issue is, as everybody talks about time allocation, the media is not paying as much attention to what you’re doing in regard to the EllisDon bill.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Bill Walker: It’s my privilege to invite and welcome Ken and Mary Frook, retired teachers from my riding, who live in beautiful Sauble Beach—seven miles of the greatest beach you’re ever going to see. Welcome, and enjoy Queen’s Park.

Miss Monique Taylor: I would like to welcome our page Gabrielle Le Donne’s family today. In the gallery, we have her father, Dino; mother, Alfreda; grandfather, Italo; grandmother, Nina; and sisters, Bridget and Claire. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: In the east members’ gallery are my good friends Marg Andre, immediate past president of the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce and director of onrichmondhill.com, and her husband, Dr. Kurt Andre, a pediatrician practising in Richmond Hill.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I’d like to introduce two gentlemen from the Association for Reformed Political Action, James Van Gorp and Brian Hiemstra.

Hon. Reza Moridi: It is my pleasure today to welcome grade 10 students from Langstaff Secondary School in my riding of Richmond Hill, in the public gallery over there. Please join me in welcoming them.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Today in the Legislature we have students from Victoria Park Collegiate Institute, from the beautiful riding of Don Valley East. I’d like to welcome them to the House.

Mr. Jonah Schein: I’d like to welcome Caitlin Fitzgerald to the gallery today. She’s a social work student from Ryerson University and working in my office.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I’m delighted to welcome to the gallery today Michael Fletcher, chair of the board of directors of the Canadian Cancer Survivor Network;

Jackie Manthorne, the president and CEO; and Mona Forrest, who is secretary to the board of directors, also of the Canadian Cancer Survivor Network. We had a great breakfast this morning. We're delighted you're with us today.

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

On behalf of the member from Newmarket–Aurora: Here to observe James Prowse, our page, are his mother, Michelle Prowse; father, Ian Prowse; and brother, Nicholas Prowse. Welcome to the Legislature today. We're glad you're here.

As well, in the Speaker's gallery today, we have a wonderful delegation from the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, members from the Senate Public Accounts Committee, the House Public Accounts Committee, the Civil Society and Donors Agency, the Federal Inland Revenue Service, and the high commission, and from the Parliament of Ottawa as accompanying people. We welcome our delegation for being here.

They did ask me how the Speaker could be so neutral. I explained it. I explained it.

There are no further introductions. It's now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. On Monday I asked the Legislative Assembly to clear the decks of legislation that we had all agreed to, to move forward with a programming motion. I understand that our House leader has come to an agreement with your House leader. I'm happy to see that. The goal was to clear the decks so we could focus on the big issues: jobs and the economy.

This weekend, we put our final touches on our plan, our Paths to Prosperity, to make Ontario first in jobs and last in debt. Premier, now that we have cleared the decks, where is your plan? What are you putting on the table to make Ontario rise again?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I appreciate the work of the Leader of the Opposition. This is, to my mind, how minority government has to work: There is co-operation. I'm very glad that he has responded to my proposal that we move ahead some pieces of legislation where there is agreement. Thank you very much for that.

The work that we are doing on youth unemployment, the investments that we are making to make sure that young people have support, that they get the skills training they need, the investments that we're making in infrastructure, and the supports that we're putting in place—the Minister of Finance and I had an opportunity to meet with some financial leaders this morning, talking about the single regulator, the national regulator, the agreement we've come to with British Columbia and the federal

government. That's the kind of work that needs to go forward.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: So I guess the Premier's answer is no jobs plan.

The whole point of the programming motion was to clear the decks and to put aside—I know your initial priorities were around teenagers' access to tanning beds, and regulations around door-to-door water heater salesmen. We've agreed to those. We're now moving those aside so we can focus on jobs and the economy.

The problem I have is that I see no new ideas coming from the Liberal benches. There are a lot of young people who have their degree, their diploma. They're full of life and expectation, looking forward to getting on with life—buying a home, advancing their career—but they're back home on Mom and Dad's couch.

Premier, respectfully, all we see from you are warmed-over NDP ideas. You've increased business taxes. You've brought in a new tax rate on income earners, a new tax bracket in the province. That's going to cost us jobs.

Let me ask you this: Why do you want to go back to the era of the NDP, when Ontario went backwards? Why don't you move forward with a new jobs plan? If you have no ideas, please take some of ours. It's time to get on with the job.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, it's very interesting that Janet Ecker was standing beside us this morning, and she was so supportive of the single regulator that we are advancing. She knows that that will create jobs. Confidence by international investors in the country, and in Ontario specifically; understanding that we are getting our jobs, getting our act together; understanding that there's that kind of stability—that will create jobs.

It's unfortunate that the Leader of the Opposition doesn't understand that that kind of confidence is exactly the kind of business environment that will bring investment and will create jobs.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: I stand here and I congratulate Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and the federal government for bringing forward the single securities—

Interjections.

Mr. Tim Hudak: It's fantastic. But what I'm not asking you, Premier, is to copy the federal Conservatives' initiative—and it's good it's moving ahead; I congratulate the finance minister—nor am I asking you to copy Andrea Horwath's program, because I think the NDP's plan to increase taxes and drive spending through the roof is dangerous for our province; it's a reckless policy. We need to go in the opposite direction.

You're either a carbon copy of the NDP or you're vacant of ideas, so let me suggest one to you. Energy is one of the most important costs of doing business. It's going through the roof on the Liberal plan. Your penchant for forcing wind turbines into communities has divided the province and, really, it's taking us over the cliff when it comes to economic policy.

So if you're out of ideas—we've cleared things aside—take one of ours. Will you stop the wind turbine movement in the province of Ontario and get energy rates under control?

Interjections.

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

Previously—

Interjection.

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

Previously, I had made a ruling and made a comment on using names instead of titles. I would ask and remind the member to do that, please. It raises the debate instead of lowers it. Please adhere to that, because it is very functional when we do it right.

Premier, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, two things in response to that question: First of all, the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that the promotion of and advancement of a single securities regulator was in our budget. We said we were going to do it. We have done that; we followed through.

The second thing I want to say is that we actually proposed a couple of job-creating bills in the programming motion: the Supporting Small Businesses Act, which would actually relieve some of the pressure on small businesses and give them more capacity to hire people, and the Waste Reduction Act, which will create jobs, and neither of those was agreed to.

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I hope that once we get the programming motion through, and those bills that we can agree on, they will support us on those, because I understand they say they want to support and create an environment where jobs can be created, but we're not seeing that. So I hope they will join with us and support legislation that actually will create that environment.

TEACHERS

Mr. Tim Hudak: My second question is to the Premier about regulation 274. On her point that she made last, it's pretty clear that if something creates jobs or reduces spending, we'll support it, but we're not going to support NDP-lite policies that are going to kill jobs and raise taxes in the province of Ontario.

Premier, I listened to your answers closely yesterday on your new policy to have seniority rating for the only reason to hire new teachers. Let me ask you this, Premier: Can you tell us exactly how many instances of rampant nepotism you've seen that caused you to move forward with regulation 274? What exactly is the number?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I have said, it's very important that Ontario's teachers have a fair and consistent hiring process across all school boards. That's the fundamental principle upon which we have to base our policies. Last year, what we heard was that this was not the case, and we took action. The regulation now

ensures that teaching candidates are chosen by school boards based on a number of criteria beyond just seniority. But what we've said—

Interjections.

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

Between the member from Renfrew and the Attorney General, I'm having a hard time hearing the question, so I'm going to ask both of you to tone it down, please.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What we've said is that we're open to improvements to the regulation. Honestly, I'm not sure where the conflict is here, because we've said that we took action; we put reg. 274 in place as part of a negotiation. We believe that there are problems with it, which is why the Minister of Education is working to get input in order to make the changes and implement those changes.

I think the Leader of the Opposition needs to take yes for an answer.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: The Premier says that this is fair and consistent.

Interjection.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, there's nothing fair about the teacher of the year being bumped down to 820th on the list because of your unfair hiring policy. She says, "It's consistent"; if anything is consistent, it's consistently unfair to sideline the best teachers because you made a backroom deal with the unions.

Clearly, you couldn't answer my question about how many complaints there are on nepotism. I think that is, quite frankly, a phony excuse. It was part of your cave-in to the teachers' unions, which—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Northumberland, come to order. He's asking the question.

Mr. Tim Hudak: —and brought in a very unfair hiring policy.

You used the word "overcorrection." I see by the minister's comments that now you have working groups and you have an expert panel to study regulation 274 to death.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.

Mr. Tim Hudak: You talk about an overcorrection. Why do you need two or three panels to study this? Why don't you just do the right thing? Pass Lisa MacLeod's bill. Let's move on and put the best teachers in the classroom before our kids—

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

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I said was that we need the hiring practices to be consistent and we need them to be fair. We've said that we believe there are some issues with reg. 274 that need to be corrected, so what the Minister of Education is doing is gathering the input that she needs so we can get it right, and we will get it right. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition, even though the question that he's asking is designed to undermine the relationship between government and organized labour—that's really what is at the heart of the question, but I hope the Leader of the Opposition understands that we are willing to make changes to reg. 274, that we are gathering that input and that we will implement changes, but we are going to get it right.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: The question is, why didn't the Premier get this right in the first place? Why did you bring all this in? What do we want to see? We want to see an Ontario where the teacher of the year actually can be in a job and teaching our kids, not put to the bottom of the list because he doesn't have the right connections with the teachers' union. It's just a ludicrous policy, and quite frankly, Premier, your use of the language of "over-correct" sounds positively Orwellian. I don't think you actually can demonstrate there was a problem to begin with, but if there was, why don't you solve that problem?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration will come to order. The Minister of Energy will come to order.

Please finish.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Overcorrection: That kind of double-speak could make Orwell blush. You could just do the right thing—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You have to withdraw that.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Really? You're not a fan of Orwell? Aldous Huxley? All right. I'll go with Huxley instead of Orwell. I withdraw, Speaker.

So Premier, let me just ask you directly. Instead of overcorrecting, studying panel after panel, with study after study, just do the right thing: Put the teacher of the year to work in a classroom helping other kids. Do the right thing.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The reality is that, on this side of the House, we really believe that publicly funded education can continue to improve, which is why we've made the investments that have allowed kids' test scores to go up; we've got 82% of kids graduating from high school. The plan on the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Now it's the member from Northumberland's turn.

I want to make a point very quickly that I've kept track of who I've asked a couple of times. The next one will be a warning.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The reality, Mr. Speaker, is that the opposition's plan for education would fire

10,000 people from the system; would cancel full-day kindergarten, which is already demonstrating benefits for our youngest students; and would cut funding across the system. That's how they would improve education. We've seen that before. We know what happens to the education system when the Leader of the Opposition is in charge. We don't buy into that. We believe in the publicly funded education system. We believe in those relationships, and we believe that it can continue to improve.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My first question is to the Premier. Early today, the Liberal government put forward a motion that would ram a bill through the House at the behest of a single company, EllisDon, one of the Liberal Party's biggest donors.

Can the Premier explain why she's supporting shutting down debate to ram this bill through the House?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Thank you to the leader of the third party for the question.

What we're engaged in right now is trying to make the minority government work. The leader of the third party knows that in the spring she and her party voted for a programming motion, because she understands, I think, fundamentally, that in order for the Parliament to work in a minority situation there has to be an agreement to move legislation ahead. So that's what we're doing. We're moving ahead bills like the Local Food Act and the act that would protect kids from getting cancer in the tanning bed situation. We're moving ahead with consumer protections, including wireless contracts. Those are the kinds of things that need to move ahead.

There are a number of different kinds of bills as part of the programming motion, and it's true that the Conservatives put up a private member's bill. We're going to work to make sure this legislation gets to the point where it can be debated and it can go to committee. That's how you make minority Parliament work.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, yesterday New Democrats asked the Premier who she had met with regarding Bill 74, a bill to help one of the Liberals' biggest donors. We didn't get an answer to that question, so can the Premier tell us today who has been lobbying her to support this bill?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I will just say that there is a range of bills as part of this programming motion, Mr. Speaker. I'm on the record saying that this particular piece of legislation is about an anomalous situation that was created in the 1950s, but it needs to go to committee; it needs to be debated. We need to have a full discussion of it, so we need to move it ahead. That's what the programming motion is about. That's why the leader of the third party voted for a programming motion in the spring, because she fundamentally knows that that's how minority Parliament has to work.

We will continue to work to get legislation through to the point where it can be debated, where there can be public hearings, and I look forward to their input.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, media reports indicate that lobbyists with connections in the Liberal and Conservative Parties put this bill together to ensure quick passage for their client. The Conservatives would propose the bill—that's the way it was supposed to work—and the Liberals would help them pass it. Can the Premier tell us whether this in fact is the case?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be very helpful for us to be able to get these pieces of legislation—there's a full range of them—to the next stage.

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Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll be an equal opportunity Speaker, because there is equal opportunity heckling going on—including the clock.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think it would be very helpful to get these pieces of legislation to the next stage and get them to the point of having public hearings, and then I look forward to the input of the NDP and the people who are lobbying them about other pieces of legislation.

The reality is that everyone in this House meets with people from across the business and labour spectrum. We meet with people all the time, every single day, people who bring their interests to us, and we, together, have to sort out what is in the best interests of the people of Ontario. That's how government should work and that's how we're trying to make this minority—

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

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier, and it's a question about the government's priorities. People who elected us expect us to work hard and deliver results for them. Today, they're wondering why the Premier is bending over backwards and using extraordinary measures to ram through a bill to help one, single company out of their obligations to their employees. It looks to them like the Liberals and the Conservatives are working together to help well-connected insiders deliver for a big donor. Does the Premier have any other explanation?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. If you haven't figured it out by now, I'm trying to bring it down.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm surprised at the use of language like "extraordinary measures," when the NDP voted for a programming motion in the spring because

they understand that in a minority Parliament, in order to move legislation forward, that's what needs to be done. I am the first politician to say that I want public debate and I want an opportunity for the public to have input into legislation, which is why I want to get these pieces of legislation to the next stage, so that they can have that public input. I hope the leader of the third party fundamentally understands that that's how we need to make minority Parliament work, and I'm glad that there is the opportunity to move these pieces of legislation where there is agreement forward.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Mary Billon is working hard to make ends meet. She's here in the Legislature today with us. Like a lot of Ontarians, she was told that her auto insurance rates would be coming down. It's what the Premier promised in order to pass the budget. Mary was awfully surprised to see her insurance rates go up instead of down, from \$1,850 to \$2,000 a year. At the same time as Mary was working hard to pay her bills, EllisDon made more than \$2.5 billion in revenues.

Why is the Premier working with the Conservatives to help put a well-connected, billion-dollar construction firm ahead of people like Mary who make this province work?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The reality is that government has to be able to do more than one thing at a time. In fact, we are working on bringing auto insurance rates down and we've spoken on that many, many times. At the same time, we need to see pieces of legislation go through.

One of the key words that the leader of the third party used there was "construction." There are thousands of people working in construction in this province right now. I want that to continue and I just bet that some of those workers have made donations to the NDP. I just bet that they have supported the leader of the third party, and I want them to have jobs. I want them to work. I want infrastructure spending so that we can keep them at work and I would think she'd want the same thing.

Interjections.

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

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, people elect their politicians to deliver results for them. I've been clear. New Democrats are going to continue to put people first. But this is what they see from Liberals: The government tells drivers they need to wait for relief. The government tells seniors they need to wait for their promised home care improvements. But when it comes to well-connected insiders and donors, the government—the Liberal government, with the help from the Conservatives—works overtime to help them out.

Why is the Premier's priority working with the Conservatives to help out their well-connected friends rather than getting the results that Ontarians deserve?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Ontarians deserve jobs. Ontarians deserve to have opportunities to support their

families, and we are working very hard to make sure that we create the environment where business can thrive so that those jobs can be created. My guess is that some of the people, like the member for London–Fanshawe and the member for London West, would have a perspective on this, and it would be one that they might want to share with the leader.

The other reality is that we all, as members of political parties, meet with people—a range of people—all the time, and having those supporters make donations is part of what we do. My understanding is that there are many companies that have donated to all three parties, including the company in question, who has donated to all three parties.

AGGREGATE RECYCLING

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, as you know, the committee reviewing the Aggregate Resources Act is wrapping up and expects to release our report within a few weeks—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek will come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek will come to order a second time.

Ask your question, please—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs will cease.

Carry on.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thanks, Speaker.

One issue that came up very early in our review that surprised many of the members is the fact that the word “recycling” is actually not in the ARA. We’ve seen the stockpiles of aggregates, and we understand that if we allow recycled product, we can take some pressure off the need to constantly find new product. It’s good for the environment. It’s good for business. It’s good government policy.

Do you agree that encouraging the use of recycled aggregates is good policy for the government to adopt?

Hon. David Oraziotti: I’m pleased to respond to the member’s question. I’m certainly well aware that the member has a private member’s bill advocating for this, and I thank her, in fact, for the work that she’s doing on the committee, as well as the other members who are on the committee who took the time to visit many places in Ontario and hear first-hand from residents, from businesses and other organizations and individuals about the importance of modernizing the Aggregate Resources Act.

Speaker, what I would say, with respect to the committee’s report: I’m pleased to have their final recommendations and their review completed. Our ministry will review these recommendations and look forward to presenting changes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thanks, Minister. As you said, I am debating, and I hope people will participate in, Bill 56, Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, this afternoon. It would ensure that publicly funded projects cannot exclude the use of recycled product.

We all understand that MTO is actually doing a very good job. What we need to do is let the MTO’s best practices be transferred to municipalities and other publicly funded institutions.

Can I get your assurance, Minister, that you will support my private member’s bill, but that you will also move quickly to ensure that recycled product can be used for all taxpayer-funded projects?

Hon. David Oraziotti: I don’t want to say specifically, with respect to the contents of your bill and the way that it’s worded with respect to everything that’s in it, but what I will say is—and the member quite correctly recognizes the provincial government’s, and other levels of government’s, efforts to use recycled aggregate in the construction of new highways and other roadways. It’s very important that we increase and continue to increase the use of recycled materials to reduce the impact on the environment and to reduce other negative effects on the environment.

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So what I will say is that we are committed to doing everything we can to support municipalities, to support the use of recycled material in the construction of various projects throughout the province. I think it’s certainly very important to do that. We look forward to bringing back recommendations that everyone in the House can review.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Premier. Earlier this morning, when speaking to the media, you insisted that the EllisDon bill was a Conservative priority and that’s why you were using extraordinary measures to ram this bill through the House.

We all know there are some Conservative members who have raised very serious concerns about this bill. I know that your government House leader has been trying to get this bill passed—as your government House leader. It was the Liberal caucus that showed up en masse in this Legislature to allow this particular bill to pass when it was at second reading.

Does the Premier seriously expect people to believe that the Liberals had nothing to do with this bill?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: I don’t know where to begin in terms of correcting the record of what the honourable member just said. No one is ramming anything through the House.

This morning I stood in this place and introduced a programming motion which deals with eight bills and the formation of a select committee that would look into the developmental services situation here in the province. What the motion does, as all programming motions do, is

it sets out a pathway, an agenda moving forward for debate, discussion and voting on all these issues. Nothing is being rammed through. It is a schedule that's going forward. As the Premier said, there will be plenty of opportunity for debate, discussion and votes, and in many cases, including the bill referenced by the member, public hearings into the matter.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing different from what we did this morning to what we did last spring with the support of the member who just asked the question.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Premier, you said that you were going to do things differently. You said that you would not ram bills through this House and, specifically, you would not trample on workers' rights. But suddenly, you're doing the complete opposite, and the beneficiaries happen to be one of the Liberals' biggest donors in Ontario.

So I ask again: Why has the Premier suddenly decided to cut off debate and ram this bill through the House?

Hon. John Milloy: I find it a little strange that this was the member who supported the government when we put forward a programming motion to pass the Financial Accountability Officer Act. At that point, when he spoke to it, I never heard him call it "ramming through the House."

We have put forward a programming motion that deals with eight bills and the creation of a select committee. In the process of examining those eight bills, there will be plenty of time for discussion, for debate and, in the case of the bill that he's speaking about, public hearings. There will be votes on the floor of this Legislature. I speak as a House leader and a parliamentarian, Mr. Speaker: Nothing gets rammed through here. There will be a vote. There are more of them than there are of us, so we're going to have to see where the chips fall on all eight of these bills that come forward. Nothing is being rammed through.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Steven Del Duca: My question today is for the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. We all know how important trade is for helping expand Ontario's economic reach and the province's presence on our global stage. I also know, in my role as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance, just how crucial Ontario's trading relationships are with respect to helping to stimulate our economy. Millions of people across Ontario benefit from the goods that Ontario imports, and businesses across Ontario benefit from the goods they export abroad. Recently, our government announced a new trade strategy at a reverse trade mission held right here in Toronto.

Speaker, through you to the minister, could the minister please provide an update on the recent trade announcement and what this will mean for Ontario's economy?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Thank you to the member from Vaughan for this question. I'm more than happy to inform the House today about the announcement I had the opportunity of making early this week, alongside the Premier, on Monday at the province's first-ever global export forum, attended by more than 600 businesses from across Ontario.

Our trade strategy is going to enhance Ontario's export potential through a four-pillar approach. First, we will diversify our markets, especially to emerging economies. That's where the growth is taking place and that is where we need to be. Second, we will encourage more and more of our companies and we will support them to export, especially our small and medium-sized businesses. Third, we will build Ontario's brand abroad. Lastly, we will streamline our resources to make it even easier for our businesses to trade. This strategy will help ensure that, through trade, we can grow our economy and create jobs in communities right across the province.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Steven Del Duca: I thank the minister for that update. While it is great to hear how our government is strengthening our global presence through the trade strategy, there are many businesses in my riding of Vaughan that are an example of the strong network of relationships which exist with respect to international trading. Therefore, I know that many businesses located in my riding will wonder what this trade strategy might mean for them and how they may benefit from what our government is doing.

Speaker, could the minister please speak specifically to how our trading strategy will help businesses in my riding of Vaughan and the businesses across the province of Ontario?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Thank you again to the member from Vaughan and for the opportunity to speak to the specific benefits for businesses across the province.

Diversifying the markets where we export makes good business sense. It will allow companies to gain further market access to new economies, helping their businesses grow. By expanding our reach through trading centres like the upcoming opening of our international marketing centre in Brazil that's coming in January, our government helps to facilitate the trading potential of companies from Ontario.

We'll continue to help companies like North American Stamping Group, located in Woodstock; Armo Tool, in Middlesex county; companies like Conestoga Meat Packers in Breslau, a successful co-operative exporting already to 30 countries around the world; and Elmira Pet Products—four companies in southwestern Ontario that have benefited from funding from the government from the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund.

WINE INDUSTRY

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: My question is to the Premier. In June 2012, federal Bill C-311 became law. This piece of legislation removed the federal criminal offence for

consumers ordering and/or transporting wine across provincial borders. British Columbia, Manitoba and Nova Scotia since have removed restrictive provincial barriers.

BC's Liberal Premier, Christy Clark, has even asked you personally to remove legislative barriers to inter-provincial wine trade in Ontario. Ontario has fallen behind other wine-producing provinces due to the lack of action by your government. Presently, your government is restricting adult Ontarians' freedom of choice while hindering our tourism and the small family-owned businesses that make up the vast majority of our wine and grape-growing industry.

Premier, do you think it's right that Ontario consumers do not have the same market access to wine as other wine-producing provinces?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the Minister of Finance is going to want to comment on some of the specifics, but what I want the member opposite to know is that when Premier Clark and I had our conversation at the Council of the Federation, we talked about wanting to see the wine industry in Ontario and BC and across the country grow. We want to see it expand; we absolutely do.

We are working on a new wine strategy, and I am very eager to put forward some ideas that I think would expand our industry. As part of that, having an ongoing conversation and continuing to work with the government of BC is very much on our radar.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Ontario is the largest wine-producing province in the country. The grape-growing and wine-producing industries are of immense importance to this province. The two industries combined provide Ontarians with over 14,000 full-time jobs and provide the province with an annual tax revenue of \$444 million. In addition to this, every bottle of Ontario wine sold generates spinoff benefits worth \$40 which spread over sectors including tourism and agriculture, creating jobs and pushing our economy forward.

In British Columbia, wine sales increased after they changed their law to allow for interprovincial wine shipments. Will you support Bill 98 this afternoon and allow for Ontario wineries to benefit from interprovincial trade?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I think the member opposite, in some respects, responded to his own question by citing the fact that in Ontario, as a result of some of the parameters we've put in place and the expansion strategies that the LCBO has made to increase access and distribution—and promoting local VQA wines here in Ontario—we've been able to develop an industry. That's why we just recently opened special Our Wine Country boutiques in LCBO outlets, featuring over 500 quality wines right here from Ontario.

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We're opening these stores right across the province. We're going to continue supporting the wine industry, because you're right: This is a valuable industry for On-

tario. To provide access right across Canada, we are more than willing to buy those wines and distribute and share with the rest of Canada—and the rest of the world, for that matter.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, an insurance expert showed that—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Sorry; this question is to the Premier. An insurance expert showed that auto insurance profits have been five times more than this government has claimed, and now the Premier is ramming through a Conservative motion designed to help one large corporation—particularly, a construction corporation. Ontario's large insurance and construction companies have been for decades some of the largest donors to this Liberal Party.

Why is this government continuing to support the rich and powerful over the ordinary Ontarians who are struggling to make ends meet?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Again, the member is talking about promoting and insuring and protecting consumers. That's why we've taken action for many years now to find ways to reduce the costs of claims, to fight for our consumers and protect drivers right across the province. At the same time, of course, we're dealing with a multitude of issues to promote economic growth, to promote construction and to promote jobs in this province, and that doesn't come at the exclusion of any other opportunity.

I'll say this to the member. Here is a quote from the CAA: "CAA Insurance Co. (Ontario) has applied for a rate reduction with Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) to help keep its auto insurance costs down for good drivers.... 'We applaud the provincial government on this initiative and look forward to working collaboratively with them to help bring some relief to the pocketbooks of Ontario's motorists. We share the same vision of the government to help keep insurance costs manageable for everyone.'" And it's working.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: To Ontarians, this is what the priorities look like: It seems like this government is ready to do whatever it takes to benefit large corporations—large corporate donors—but they continue to ignore the benefits or the concerns of Ontarians struggling to make ends meet, Ontarians like Mary and Mike Billon, whose insurance policy went up by 6%, from \$1,852 to \$1,995, this summer, at a time when these folks had no insurance claims, no accidents and did not change their car.

The Liberals promised to reduce auto insurance over the summer, but instead the Billons saw their insurance rates go up. At a time when millions of Ontarians are struggling to make ends meet, struggling to pay their end-of-the-month bills, why is it this government's prior-

ity to continue to shovel more favours towards its largest donors?

Hon. Charles Sousa: One of the things that we are doing, as opposed to just talking and creating uncertainty and misinformation—the fact of the matter is that rates are going down. Here it is: The Co-operators General Insurance Co. has said “rates for private passenger automobile clients in Ontario, effective October 15,” are going down. “The Co-Operators was in a position to pass on savings to its clients due to the positive impact of the auto insurance reforms in Ontario.”

That’s not talk. That is action, action which your party acknowledges by way of a memo. I quote the NDP: “We cannot truthfully say they’ve broken a promise,” because we’re delivering results for all Ontarians.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Ms. Helena Jaczek: My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation. In this knowledge-based economy, investing in programs and projects that support research and innovation is critical. Research and innovation translate into jobs and economic growth, and provide the answers to our questions.

The path from research to commercialization is a journey with many steps along the way. As a government, it is important that we invest in all stages of research, from basic research to the commercialization and marketing of products and services.

Ontario has an impressive record when it comes to research. It is the birthplace of many important discoveries that have had huge impacts—not only in Ontario, but around the world—such as the discovery of insulin by Banting and Best.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation, what is our government doing to support research so that important and innovative breakthroughs are possible?

Hon. Reza Moridi: I thank the member from Oak Ridges–Markham for that question. Our government recognizes the importance of research and innovation for the economy of our province. Our investments include a \$126-million commitment to the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Waterloo that supports cutting-edge research in foundational theoretical physics. Through the Ontario Research Fund, we have invested \$1.3 billion to build research facilities in this province.

Our Early Researcher Awards program has enabled researchers to build their research teams and also train over 1,200 highly qualified researchers for this province. I am proud that our government investments have made our province a research powerhouse, not only in Canada but in the world.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I’m so glad to hear that our government is taking steps to support innovation that will drive Ontario’s future economy and create jobs. In this global economy, it is critical that we promote collaboration and build on our research strengths. Investments in

research will help Ontario remain competitive. Our government does recognize that bringing leaders across sectors together is one of the best ways to drive innovation. Through collaboration, best practices can be shared, ideas can be exchanged and important resources pooled together.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation, what is our government doing to promote collaboration across sectors so that our research can be translated into commercial products and services that help create jobs and economic growth?

Hon. Reza Moridi: Again, I thank the member from Oak Ridges–Markham for that question. Our government recognizes the importance of investing in the research to commercialization life cycle. By bringing together our world-class researchers, leading research institutions and also a strong private sector, we are helping to turn great ideas into products and services that the world market needs and wants.

Since 2003, our government has invested approximately \$493 million to support Ontario Centres of Excellence, which are helping connect industry to researchers in our academic institutions. Also, in June 2013, we announced the Collaboration Voucher program which will help businesses of all sizes to develop and refine their products and services.

Our government is ensuring that Ontario remains the powerhouse of research in Canada and in the world.

NATURAL GAS

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question is to the Premier. Premier, this afternoon there will be a vote on Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013. Bill 97 promotes the use of cleaner and more affordable liquefied natural gas as a transportation fuel for heavy-duty freight vehicles in Ontario. South of the border, private investment has spent hundreds of millions of dollars building fuel stations and developing the next generation truck engine technology that will take advantage of this clean fuel. B.C., Alberta and Quebec have already taken legislative action to support their truck industry and the economic benefits that come from it.

Premier, Ontario is late to the game. Will your government support the Natural Gas Superhighway Act and help put Ontario back in the fast lane?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I thank the member for the question and certainly for the initiative. There has been a lot of action with respect to gas and oil transportation and additional usage in the economy. We are listening to the stakeholders. We are going to look at your private member’s bill very carefully. It’s a private member’s bill, so obviously each member will be able to make their own choice on that. But there is a resurgence of the interest in natural gas for transportation. We’re following it very carefully, and we’ll continue to listen to the industry.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Robert Bailey: Back to the Premier, but through to the minister if that's the way she likes it. Minister, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles make up just 3% of the vehicles on Ontario highways today, yet they contribute over 30% of the greenhouse gas emissions that come from on-road sources. Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, by promoting the use of liquefied natural gas, a cleaner, next-generation transportation fuel, will help this sector of the transportation industry by cutting those emissions by over 30%.

Minister, your government talks a lot about doing what is right for the environment, but the Natural Gas Superhighway Act is where the rubber meets the road. Will you commit today to paving the way forward to the Natural Gas Superhighway Act and cleaner air for Ontario?

1120

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The principle of the private member's bill makes a lot of sense. However, we're talking about significant infrastructure investments. We're looking at the possibility of public-private partnerships. We have a lot of industry stakeholders who have spoken with the Minister of Infrastructure and with people in the Ministry of Energy. The additional use of more liquefied natural gas is an agenda item that needs to be dealt with seriously, and we are taking it seriously.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre is bursting at the seams. The hospital has been forced into Code Gridlock more than 15 times since January. Nine months after the problem was supposedly fixed with a plan from the local LHIN, the situation only continues to get worse. While this government puts all of its energy into passing legislation that will benefit one Ontario construction company, more and more patients in Thunder Bay are getting care on gurneys in alcoves and waiting areas because every bed in their hospital is full. Is this the government's idea of transforming health care in the north?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As the Premier said earlier, it is possible to do more than one thing at the same time, and that's what our government is doing. The member opposite knows that we're really working hard to improve care across the province, including Thunder Bay. In Thunder Bay, since 2003, we've built 668 new long-term-care beds. We've redeveloped 134 beds. Through the Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors' Services, we are in the process now of constructing a 544-bed long-term-care home in Thunder Bay. We're investing more in community care so that people can get the care they need in the most appropriate place—home, whenever possible.

I know that this is an issue that the North West LHIN and the people of Thunder Bay are working hard to resolve. We're not there yet, but we're on the way.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The reality is that hospital overcrowding is nothing new under this Liberal government. In Thunder Bay and across the province, hospitals are stuck between a rock and a hard place. Patients who should be in long-term-care facilities or getting care at home are stuck waiting in a hospital, while the patients who need to be in hospital beds are stuck waiting on gurneys in the hallways.

Will the Premier please tell us why her government is more focused on passing a bill to benefit one of their biggest donors than it is in meeting the health care needs of the people of Thunder Bay?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think the leader of the third party would be interested to know about the progress that's being made in Thunder Bay. The ALC rate in Thunder Bay regional—that's the percentage of patients who are in hospital who could be and should be served elsewhere. There's been a 38% reduction in ALC patients between September 2010 and April of this year. We've also seen an increase of 25% in discharges to the community with supports. The right changes are being made.

This is a work in progress. The job is not done, but I can tell you that we are very much focused on reducing ALC pressures in Thunder Bay and making sure that the people in northwest Ontario get the care they need.

JURY SELECTION

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: My question is to the Attorney General. In February of this year, the province received Justice Frank Iacobucci's report, First Nations Representation on Ontario Juries. My riding of Scarborough–Guildwood is home to one of the largest urban aboriginal populations. The report made a number of recommendations, the top two of which were the establishment of both an implementation committee and an advisory committee. Addressing the under-representation of First Nations people on juries is vital to ensuring equal access to and faith in the justice system.

Speaker, through you to the minister, what steps have been taken to act on these recommendations, and what has our government done to ensure enhanced First Nations participation in Ontario's justice system?

Hon. John Gerretsen: Thanks to the member for this very, very important question. Ensuring equitable access to justice is critical to the building of a prosperous Ontario for each and every one of us. Upon receiving the report last February, my ministry immediately set to work to try to implement, as the member has already mentioned, the two main recommendations, that of setting up an implementation committee and an advisory committee.

Now, recognizing that the solutions to increasing First Nation representation on jury rolls can only occur by working directly with First Nations, we immediately met with them. We appointed a committee just last Thursday right here in Toronto made up of two co-chairs. One of the co-chairs is Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler and

the other co-chair is Irwin Glasberg, an assistant deputy minister.

It's an 11-person implementation committee with a vast variety of backgrounds and expertise. It will allow them to contribute to the development of innovative, practical ways of getting more aboriginal folks on juries. The committee is made up of an equal number of—

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

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: It is good to hear that this government is taking meaningful steps towards effecting a real, positive change in the way First Nations participate in Ontario's justice system, specifically in enhancing participation on juries. It is important to the people in my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood that focus and attention be given to get this right.

In Ontario, First Nations people are significantly over-represented in prisons, yet they are significantly under-represented on juries, as well as among all those who work in the administration of justice in this province, whether as court officials, prosecutors, defence counsel or judges. I also know that in my riding and throughout this province, aboriginal peoples constitute the fastest-growing population within our population, with a median age that is significantly lower than the median age of the rest of the population.

Given these realities, will the minister further tell this House what the government is doing to address these issues and ensure First Nations people receive equal access to justice?

Hon. John Gerretsen: I'd like to refer the supplementary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. David Zimmer: Speaker, ensuring equitable access to justice is critical. It's fundamental to building a fair and prosperous society in Ontario. I have every confidence that this committee, with such very strong First Nations involvement, will provide the best advice and the best leadership to ensure that First Nations have meaningful representation on juries.

But Speaker, it goes beyond just ensuring greater First Nation representation on juries. The work of this committee is equally important in supporting all the efforts to ensure that First Nations individuals know they are a necessary and a vital part of the administration of justice. The administration of law and of justice begins with faith in the justice system. Without faith in the system, all else fails.

I'm supporting entirely everything the Attorney General is doing to ensure that First Nations have adequate representation on juries.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. It's important for us to spend within our means. That way, we can afford the things we care about. Every dollar wasted, every dollar in debt interest, wouldn't go into priorities like helping out special-needs children or building

new hospitals, like the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital, or a new hospital in south Niagara.

On May 3, 2012, Dr. Kevin Smith came up with his report around the Niagara Health System, and I commend you. I think Dr. Kevin Smith was an astute choice in that position. One of his recommendations was to build a new south Niagara hospital. I think of my parents, who are in good shape but will eventually need those services, and their neighbours and friends. Down the road, they're going to need a hospital that was actually built in this century, not halfway through the last—a modern facility that will do justice to the incredible skilled nurses and personal support workers we have in our hospitals.

I support the new hospital in south Niagara. Why, after a year and a half, haven't you?

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, this is a stunning change of position and one that I welcome. I do want to acknowledge the exceptionally fine work that Dr. Kevin Smith has done in the Niagara Health System. I think it's fair to say now that the people of Niagara are getting better care and feeling more confident in their health care system.

The issue of the hospital—I think some of us will remember that it wasn't very long ago where the position of the Leader of the Opposition was to not build any more hospitals, including the one in West Lincoln, because there just wasn't enough money. I do remember very clearly that there was a budget we voted on that included funding for capital projects, and the party voted against that bill.

1130

I welcome the support. This is great news. We will continue to work to improve care in Niagara.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: It's unfortunate that the Minister of Health makes remarks that she knows are not in keeping with the facts, Speaker. I remain a champion of the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital, of the south Niagara site. I've been on the record for that. The problem is that you waste so much money, you don't set priorities, or you fund projects simply in Liberal ridings.

Let me make this case: I'm puzzled as to why the Liberals and the NDP are opposing the south Niagara hospital. Dr. Kevin Smith has said that an investment of \$850 million over the next 30 years is cheaper than spending \$1.1 billion to refurbish the Welland, Fort Erie, Port Colborne and Niagara Falls sites. He also makes the case that it will save \$10 million a year in operating expenses by consolidating, which means better health care for patients.

Let's stop making decisions based on politics. Let's set priorities. Why don't you move ahead with the West Lincoln? At the same time, after a year and a half of dithering and delay, why don't you get behind the people of south Niagara and say yes to a hospital built in this century, not halfway through the last?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I welcome the new and improved Leader of the Opposition, who actually believes in investing in capital infrastructure.

The member opposite knows that there are many steps that must be taken in order to make a big decision about a big capital investment like a new hospital, and there is a very lively conversation under way. I think the member from Welland would say that there's not unanimity around the decision to build a single hospital in south Niagara.

As NHS gets the new leadership in place, we will be looking for proposals from the hospital, from the LHIN, on what services would be included in a new hospital. No decision has been made because no proposal has been received. But we do know there's much conversation happening in Niagara. I'm happy that the Leader of the Opposition has weighed in to this debate.

ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Toronto's chief planner is conducting a planning study of the Bathurst Street area in my riding. RioCan, a developer, wants to bypass the planning process and has asked the Ontario Municipal Board for an exemption from the interim control bylaw. It wants to push ahead with a big-box retail development, with a massive parking lot, on one of the most congested streets in Toronto.

My question: Why are developers and construction companies like RioCan and EllisDon able to rush to the head of the line with this government while communities must wait for much-needed reforms of the Ontario Municipal Board?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I want to thank the member from Trinity-Spadina for the question. Obviously, he knows I will not be speaking about a case that's before the OMB currently.

I appreciate the conversations we've had about the Ontario Municipal Board and about the planning system and his desire to make the system stronger. Certainly, we believe that the OMB plays an important role in land use planning issues and hearing those appeals, and certainly we try to provide some balance to land use planning around the province.

I look forward to any advice he has with regard to the consultation we will have on land use planning going forward.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The Ontario Municipal Board recently approved a 26-storey tower on Front Street East, in part of the historical old town of York. It overruled the city's planning staff, city heritage experts, as well as the city's design review panel. The Ontario Municipal Board dismissed the planning expertise of some of Toronto's most respected architects, planners and historical conservationists.

When will the government rein in the arrogant and unaccountable Ontario Municipal Board and put com-

munities first, not large construction companies and developers?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: Obviously, you're talking about a specific issue, and I appreciate the question from the member. We believe that local government has an opportunity to set up local appeal boards if they choose, and we've created a number of tools for our municipalities.

But we also recognize that there can be opportunities for a better process, and that's why I look forward to hearing from community groups, from municipalities, from a number of stakeholders. I heard from BILD and OHBA last Friday about their concerns with the Ontario Municipal Board, and I look forward to your advice going forward into the consultation in the fall.

CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATION

Ms. Dipika Damerla: My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. As you know, I represent the downtown core of Ontario's third-largest city, so it's no surprise that I have my share of condominiums in my riding, and I also get my share of complaints from condo owners. A number of those complaints seem to revolve around the condo manager. Anybody who has lived in a condominium knows that a good condo manager can make a building and a poor one can break it.

Given the key role condominium managers play in the lives of condo owners, how do we know these individuals are qualified to be in the positions they are in? The job of a condominium manager comes with great responsibilities, so how does one know that their manager is qualified and effective in that role?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: The member from Mississauga East-Cooksville is quite right to be concerned about qualifications of condo managers, also known as property managers. They have a huge role to play in condominium communities.

As she mentioned, in stage 1 of our process to review the Condominium Act, this is a concern that was repeatedly raised—the issue of property managers, or condo managers—and the property managers themselves have raised this issue. They want to see standards and licensing for people in this area. That's why our government took an early step in the condo review to announce our intentions to establish these kinds of standards, to modernize the Condominium Act.

On Tuesday of this week, we released stage 2 of the condo review process. It's on track. The qualifications of property managers were highlighted in that review. This is very important to Ontarians, because property managers do affect the quality of life for condo dwellers, and we have to ensure they have the right qualifications to carry out that responsibility.

So we're moving forward, we're on time with this, Speaker, and I look forward to reporting more to the House later.

DEFERRED VOTES

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
OFFICER ACT, 2013LOI DE 2013 SUR LE DIRECTEUR
DE LA RESPONSABILITÉ FINANCIÈRE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 95, An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer / Projet de loi 95, Loi créant le poste de directeur de la responsabilité financière.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1137 to 1142.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Would the members take their seats, please. All members take their seats, please.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It could be a rush to be last.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll wait and see, too.

On September 25, Mr. Del Duca moved third reading of Bill 95.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Milligan, Rob E.
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gerretsen, John	Milloy, John
Arnott, Ted	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Balkissoon, Bas	Harris, Michael	Naqvi, Yasir
Bartolucci, Rick	Holyday, Douglas C.	Nicholls, Rick
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Horwath, Andrea	O'Toole, John
Bisson, Gilles	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Hudak, Tim	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Campbell, Sarah	Hunter, Mitzie	Pettapiece, Randy
Chan, Michael	Jackson, Rod	Piruzza, Teresa
Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Prue, Michael
Chudleigh, Ted	Jeffrey, Linda	Sattler, Peggy
Clark, Steve	Jones, Sylvia	Schein, Jonah
Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Scott, Laurie
Coteau, Michael	Leone, Rob	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Shurman, Peter
Damerla, Dipika	MacLaren, Jack	Singh, Jagmeet
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Smith, Todd
Delaney, Bob	Mantha, Michael	Sousa, Charles
Dhillon, Vic	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
Dickson, Joe	Mathews, Deborah	Taylor, Monique
DiNovo, Cheri	McDonnell, Jim	Vanthof, John
Duguid, Brad	McKenna, Jane	Walker, Bill
Dunlop, Garfield	McMeekin, Ted	Wilson, Jim
Elliott, Christine	McNaughton, Monte	Wong, Soo
Fedeli, Victor	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fife, Catherine	Meilleur, Madeleine	Yakubuski, John
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Miller, Norm	Zimmer, David
Forster, Cindy	Miller, Paul	

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 89; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore on a point of order.

Mr. Douglas C. Holyday: In the members' west gallery, it's my pleasure to introduce Rida Ali. Rida is the secretary of the University of Toronto Campus Conservatives. She's an absolutely delightful, charming young lady. She helped in my campaign, and I'm just delighted to see her here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton on a point of order.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'd also like to introduce Mary and Mark Billon in the gallery today, who are guests from my riding.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Mississauga East–Cooksville on a point of order.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce my guests from the Gujarati Seniors Samaj of Mississauga, who are in the west lobby. I think there are about 30 of them there. Welcome.

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Toronto–Danforth on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I have a point of order: More than 24 sessional days have passed, and I am still awaiting an answer for written questions 299, 300 and 301 from the Minister of Energy on the cost of refurbishing the Darlington nuclear power plant.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Save and except that point of order, the others were not a point of order, but we welcome our guests.

That's a point of order, and I'm going to encourage the answers to come forthwith. We'll see to that answer.

This House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1148 to 1300.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PITT HOPKINS SYNDROME

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: September 18 marked the first annual International Day of Recognition for Pitt Hopkins Syndrome. Pitt Hopkins syndrome is a neurodevelopmental disorder caused by a spontaneous alteration of the 18th chromosome. There is currently no known cause or cure.

To improve awareness of the 18th chromosome, the Pitt Hopkins Research Foundation chose September 18 as the first annual awareness day.

We are told there are approximately 250 diagnosed cases of Pitt Hopkins syndrome worldwide.

Mitchell Hainer, one of my young constituents from St. Marys, is one of the 250 diagnosed cases of Pitt Hopkins syndrome. I understand that Mitchell is one of only four children in Ontario with Pitt Hopkins syndrome. Mitchell and his family, Lynn, Rick and Johanna, have been champions of awareness and accessibility.

Today, I want to recognize the town of St. Marys, where council unanimously declared September 18 as Pitt Hopkins Awareness Day. September 18 will now commemorate the challenges and achievements of Mitchell Hainer and all those who live with Pitt Hopkins syndrome.

I hope all members will join me in supporting the first annual International Day of Recognition for Pitt Hopkins Syndrome and all of the tireless advocates working towards a common goal of a cure.

I also want to thank my colleague the member for Whitby–Oshawa for her leadership in addressing the need for improved developmental services.

I am disappointed that, last week, the government further delayed establishing a Select Committee on Developmental Services. However, I am encouraged by the—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.
Members' statements.

RUN FOR VAUGHAN

Mr. Steven Del Duca: It is a pleasure for me, as always, to rise in the House today to update folks across the chamber regarding a wonderful event that is happening in my community of Vaughan this coming weekend.

This Sunday, September 29, marks the ninth annual Run for Vaughan. I remember when this particular event was first launched back in 2003; that's a year that means a lot to those of us on this side of the House. That happened to coincide with another first—the first year that the Liberal Party took back power here in the province of Ontario. It's been an incredible decade ever since, but I digress.

The Run for Vaughan itself was an incredible idea, developed by people in my community from the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, to bring together people across the riding in support of a very important cause, the future Mackenzie Vaughan hospital. At the time of its first introduction, the hospital project was merely a dream for our community. As the current member of provincial Parliament for Vaughan, however, I am proud to say that this hospital is now becoming a reality. With the addition of the \$49.7-million planning grant we received on April 10 of this year, our hospital in Vaughan is well on track to go to tender in 2014-15.

This particular event, the Run for Vaughan, is very near and dear to my community because it brings together, as I said, residents from across the community of

Vaughan to support the development of our future hospital.

Over 1,000 participants run in the 10-kilometre, five-kilometre and one-kilometre family fun run every year, and since its inception in 2003, this event has raised \$325,000 for the future Vaughan hospital. I want to thank all the organizers and volunteers, and I wish them all the very best of luck—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.
Members' statements.

DAVE NICHOL

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's my pleasure to rise today and say a few words to honour a great man born in my riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex. Dave Nichol, former president of Loblaw supermarkets, passed away on Sunday with his family and friends by his side.

The Chatham, Ontario, native appeared in TV ads promoting President's Choice and No Name brands in the 1980s and 1990s. It was during that time that Mr. Nichol helped solidify a brand that changed the way Canadians eat, encouraging us to expand our horizons beyond the usual meat-and-potatoes diet. A constant visionary, he travelled the globe and brought wonderful food and products from exotic markets to our dinner tables.

The PC brand endures to this day, and many products that Dave Nichol introduced still find themselves at home on Loblaws shelves. In fact, the President's Choice The Decadent Chocolate Chip Cookie enjoyed its 25th anniversary this year.

Just last year, my hometown of Chatham won a nationwide President's Choice contest for a 5,000-person community barbecue event. While we may not have realized it at that time, a truly iconic Canadian brand had come home that day.

Dave's trail-blazing spirit and commitment to hard work will serve as an example for all of us of great things Ontarians can achieve.

Prior to my political career I was a speaker and a trainer, and I was often asked, especially in the Toronto area, if Dave Nichol was my brother. With a gentle smile on my face, I would say, "No, we're not related. The spelling is different."

To the brother I never had—and on behalf of Tim Hudak and the entire PC caucus, we extend our most sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr. PC, Dave Nichol.

ONTARIO RANGER PROGRAM

Mr. John Vanthof: I rise today in the House to ask the government to reconsider the decision to cancel the Ontario Ranger Program. For those unfamiliar with the program, it was initiated in 1944, and since then, over 78,000 young lives have been changed because of it. Seventeen-year-olds could apply to be placed in camps to spend the summer far from home in parts of the province they had never seen.

It was no summer vacation. These kids worked for their pay and they paid for their board. They did maintenance in provincial parks like Esker Lakes, picked up litter, and dug latrines. In our area, they did cleanup on some of our beautiful canoe routes like the Wendigo chain. They learned how to camp, how to fish and how to make s'mores, and they formed lifelong friendships and bonds that have helped unite our province.

The unique aspect of the program was that kids who lived in the south were placed in the north and kids who lived in the north were placed in the south. Someone who had never been outside Toronto could hear the call of a loon for the first time and see the majestic old-growth eastern white pines, our provincial tree. Likewise, some of the kids from the north got to see traffic or the CN Tower for the first time.

Some of the members here have been part of the program.

Really, in our era of regionalism, programs like this brought people together when they were young.

I'd please urge the government to reconsider. This is a program that united our province.

NORTH REGION BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I rise today to recognize a non-profit organization that is doing an outstanding job serving the youth in my community of York South-Weston. On September 21, I was pleased to officially recognize the hard work of the North Region Basketball Association, which has received a grant from the Ontario Trillium fund.

The North Region Basketball Association is delivering an innovative after-school program that combines tutoring with sports to benefit the health and well-being of our youth. This program allows our youth to build self-esteem and learn social skills and the importance of teamwork.

The program also gives opportunities for youth looking to gain skills in mentoring, coaching and officiating. In addition, it will help youth who want to pursue potential career opportunities through post-secondary schooling but lack the financial means to do so.

I want to personally thank Nick Biagini and Joe Gagliardi, who founded this non-profit sports organization. Through their collective efforts, over 500 youth between the ages of seven and 18 will now benefit by having access to after-school tutoring, fitness, and youth job training.

The program will be delivered at Chaminade College School, Amesbury Middle School and Immaculate Conception Catholic Elementary School, among others.

I am proud to have the North Region Basketball Association as part of the York South-Weston community.

WELLESLEY APPLE BUTTER AND CHEESE FESTIVAL

Mr. Michael Harris: This weekend is the 38th annual Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival. Since 1976, the township of Wellesley has welcomed guests from far and wide to sample local apples, butter and cheeses. As the MPP for Kitchener-Conestoga, I have been proud to attend this festival for the past few years. I do have to say with some local pride that the festival's products are some of the best around. There's nothing quite like the taste of farm-fresh apples and local cheeses.

I would like to commend all the groups involved, including the board of trade, which hosts the pancake and sausage breakfast, which I'll be serving at on Saturday at 7 a.m.; the Optimist Club, serving schnitzel on a bun; the Lutheran churches, which, of course, sell apple dumplings; and the Mennonite churches, which sell delicious apple fritters along the main street during the festival.

One of my favourite parts of this event is the smorgasbord dinner of Waterloo county, which includes a wide variety of home cooking, such as pigtailed, roast beef, spareribs and sauerkraut.

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I am so proud to have this wonderful festival in my riding and to see the sense of community it inspires by bringing local farmers together with their urban counterparts to put on a great and unforgettable time.

I encourage you all to come on out to Wellesley this weekend and enjoy the 38th annual Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival. My colleague federal MP Harold Albrecht and I will be serving pancakes at 7 a.m., and we hope to see you there.

ART IN THE PARK

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: It is my privilege to share with the members of this Legislature the details of the second annual Art in the Park festival that took place in London-Fanshawe at Kiwanis Park this past August.

Last year's festival was a great success, but this year was even more successful, with more vendors and even more local talent. Art in the Park gives local artisans an opportunity to showcase their arts, crafts and talents with people in the community. We were lucky enough to have two local artists promoting their newly published novels. J.A. De Yoe was there with *The Weight of Innocence*, and Michelle Proulx with *Imminent Danger* and *How to Fly Straight Into It*.

Of course, this fun festival would not be successful without the many volunteers who generously donate their time to bring arts and culture to our community. I would like to acknowledge Rev. Paul Browning and the Trinity United Church, Nancy McSloy from Discover Argyle, the Argyle Community Association, and the city of London. Also, I want to acknowledge the many volunteers who turned hot dogs on the barbecue all day in 35 degree weather, along with various bands who entertained the crowd throughout the day.

The day concluded with a movie in the park at dusk. Families were able to bring their lawn chairs and blankets and were provided with a free movie and a chance to spend some time with their loved ones.

I would again like to give a big thank you to everyone involved with organizing this festival, and I would like to express how fortunate we are to have events like this in London–Fanshawe to enjoy.

TRANSCARE COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise today to speak about TransCare Community Support Services, a registered charitable organization providing quality care and compassionate services in Scarborough.

For 30 years, TransCare Community Support Services has been a leader in helping seniors and adults with disabilities. They provide a range of services that often make a difference as to whether someone can continue to live in their home instead of a long-term-care facility.

Recently, TransCare received funding from the Healthy Work Environments Partnership and Innovation Fund. Through this fund, TransCare developed a new DVD for caregivers that demonstrates exercises and their benefits for individuals with dementia. The DVD is available in both English and French.

Last Friday, I had the pleasure of attending the TransCare annual volunteer and staff appreciation celebration. At this celebration, I had an opportunity to thank the many volunteers and staff for their hard work and dedication providing quality care in Scarborough. The evening celebration also included recognition of their executive director, Odette Maharaj, who has worked for TransCare for 30 years. I want to congratulate Odette for her dedication as well as her leadership.

I want to thank and congratulate the TransCare board of directors, under the leadership of president Royston Heywood, Odette Maharaj and her entire team for delivering quality, effective and affordable care for all of Scarborough.

ROB AND LINDA BEYER

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I wanted to speak about one of those briefings that one doesn't readily forget. This one took place in September 2010 at the Canadian consulate in Nairobi, Kenya. What they told us there was, "Don't trust anyone. Don't trust the taxis. Don't trust the banks. Don't trust the hotel. Don't trust the police. Don't take public transit, and if you have to take public transit, take only JimCab. Upon entering the vehicle, immediately roll up your windows and lock all your doors. Tell the concierge where you're going, how long you'll be and the route you're taking."

Who would want to live in a country like that? Who would want to live in a country where the houses are all surrounded with 10-foot concrete walls, with broken glass cemented on the top and electric or barbed wire

fence above that? Well, I'll tell you who would want to live there. Canadians, Ontarians, Ontarians who want to make a difference, Ontarians like Rob and Linda Beyer.

Rob Beyer, the headmaster at the International Christian College in Nairobi, Kenya, is also the Canadian evacuation warden for district 9. Think of that. I contacted Rob Beyer after I heard what happened in the Westgate mall. Rob informed me that he was at the hospital, that one of his students had been shot and her father had been killed.

Linda Beyer works with the UN, convincing mothers to breastfeed in Langata and Kibera. Kibera is the largest slum in the world, where 1.2 million people live in absolute poverty. In Langata, where I worked, there are no adults over the age of 40; they're all dead from disease. She's trying to convince the mothers to breastfeed because there's no clean water to wash their sippy cups and baby bottles, and so the kids are dying from the bacteria that's in there.

Canadians are reaching out around the world to make a difference, Ontarians are trying to show the world what happens in our great province. To all those Canadians and to all those Ontarians, we thank them for taking the time and making a difference around the world.

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

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

CULTURE DAYS

Hon. Michael Chan: On behalf of the Ontario government, I'm pleased to invite Ontarians to participate in an important initiative taking place this weekend. Culture Days is a grassroots movement that invites the public to create, participate and celebrate culture in communities in every province and territory in Canada.

Here in Ontario, more than 1,000 Culture Days activities are taking place in over 150 communities. This hands-on, interactive event demonstrates the infinite possibilities for Ontarians from all walks of life to connect with culture in all its forms—bringing the creator and the public closer together to build understanding and appreciation for the arts.

Now in its fourth year, the Culture Days movement continues to gain momentum and boosts recognition that the culture sector has a direct impact on the health and stability of our society.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud to support Culture Days because we recognize that an investment in our culture sector is an investment in our future. Our government understands that the potential and strength of our culture sector lies with our artists and content creators—people whose work breathes life into our communities and whose imaginative expression drives innovation and helps to grow our economy.

Ontario's culture sector generates about \$23 billion annually in our economy and supports over 250,000 jobs.

The success of the world's economies is increasingly measured by their level of creativity, and Ontario can proudly boast one of the best culture sectors in the world. We are fortunate to have people who care deeply about the value of creativity and who are eager to share their talents and passion with the people of this great province.

This weekend, Speaker, as artists share their talents with us, it is our time to give back. This weekend, our government is marking Culture Days by proclaiming September 28 and 29 as the province's Celebrate the Artist weekend. To broaden the reach and scope of Celebrate the Artist weekend, we have aligned with the nationwide Culture Days movement. Now is the time for each of us to recognize Ontario's artists and content creators for the invaluable contributions they make to our communities, our economy and our everyday lives. As individuals, we play a leading role to celebrate our artists.

I would like to recognize the Ontario Arts Council's efforts to support Culture Days.

I invite everyone to visit on.culturedays.ca for more information on where and how to get involved with Culture Days.

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I'd also like to highlight that nominations are now being accepted for the 2014 Premier's Awards for Excellence in the Arts. Anyone in Ontario can nominate an Ontario artist or organization. Today, there are almost 57,000 professional artists in Ontario who entertain, enlighten, educate and inspire. This weekend, as the people of Ontario participate in Culture Days, I encourage everyone to think about an artist who inspires you. And don't delay; nominations for the Premier's Awards close December 2.

The faces of our culture sector belong to inspirational artists, producers, innovators, creators and performers, whose work enriches our lives. They deserve our attention, our applause and our gratitude. We need to support and celebrate our strengths—our artists—so that we can unlock and bring forward our full potential.

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

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: On behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the entire PC caucus, I rise today to respond to the minister's statement on Culture Days in Ontario.

Culture Days takes place this year from September 27 to 29 throughout the province of Ontario. During that time, thousands of free activities are offered across Ontario for everyone of all ages. Culture Days promotes inclusivity, awareness, participation and engagement in arts and culture for all Canadians. Artists participate and give their time freely during Culture Days to promote a wider understanding of their work and the diversity of our society.

Culture Days features individual artists, diverse cultural groups, organizations, municipalities and festivals that come together to inspire greater participation in the arts and culture. This is seen through free, hands-on inter-

active activities that invite the public to the behind-the-scenes world of artists, creators and heritage workers.

Culture Days creates bridges between communities, highlighting the notion that arts and culture are for everyone, regardless of age, geography, background or income.

As a leading voice for the active and engaged cultural life of all Ontarians, Culture Days provides tools and resources to a wide variety of artists and cultural organizations to help them unite our communities through engagement in culture.

In Ontario, more than 1,000 activities are being presented in over 150 cities and towns across the province by approximately 700 different artistic, cultural and community organizations. Ontario Culture Days is organized and supported by a volunteer task force of over 80 volunteers across the province. These volunteers are from local arts councils, municipalities, libraries, museums and major arts institutions.

In my riding of Halton, Culture Days plays a significant role across the entire region. In Halton region alone, over 100 free activities are scheduled to take place, making it the second most active area in the province after Toronto. A variety of different sites across Halton will feature cultural and artistic offerings, including the Queen Elizabeth Park community, where the cultural centre in Oakville has events planned in collaboration with the town of Oakville and the Oakville Arts Council.

In Milton, the Milton Centre for the Arts hosts a number of activities in partnership with the town of Milton, the Milton Public Library and the staff and volunteers of Arts Milton. I encourage everyone to join local Milton artist Aparna Rangnekar in the painting of a large-scale community mural that will grow to represent how we cultivate culture in our community. The Arts Milton community mural project will take place on Saturday, September 28 and Sunday, September 29, on Main Street in downtown Milton.

Saturday morning, September 28, you can also enjoy one of the most active farmers' markets in Ontario on Main Street in downtown Milton.

If painting isn't your specialty, come and be a puppeteer at the Milton Public Library. Try your hand at making puppets and putting on your own puppet show while being inspired by different shows from library staff and the teen advisory group in Milton.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, these are but a few examples of what to expect from Ontario Culture Days this year.

Again, I encourage all members of this House to take some time and become involved with the Ontario Culture Days activity in your own riding, while helping to celebrate Ontario's rich culture and artistic heritage.

Mr. Paul Miller: As the NDP critic for tourism, culture and sport, I have learned about many new cultural activities, not only in my own riding, but around our province.

The culturedays.ca website states: "The fourth annual Culture Days campaign is under way. This grassroots

Canada-wide movement aims to raise awareness, participation and engagement in the arts and cultural life of our communities.”

I want to quote another from the website fact sheet that will bring quickly into focus how important and significant Culture Days has become:

“An estimated 600,000 artists and cultural organizations voluntarily welcomed 1.6 million Canadians to their 7,000 registered Culture Days activities in 850 cities and towns across the country during the 2012 event.

“Culture Days represents the largest-ever collective public participation campaign undertaken by the arts and cultural community in Canada.”

That’s very, very impressive, Speaker.

This weekend will be overflowing with cultural and arts activities right across our country. In fact, on the Culture Days website, it states that there will be 1,520 Culture Days activities across our province alone—quite an extraordinary number that will not only attract local participants but will attract many visitors and tourists.

In southern Ontario, there are four featured activities on the website, all of which look interesting and very exciting, Speaker. The Museum of Inuit Art is holding an event called Identifying Inuit Art, which will have an Inuit art specialist examine participants’ objects and identify them as genuine Inuit art and perhaps correct art that has been misattributed.

On Friday in Guelph, there’s the Guelphonography Mobile Photography Contest. This event not only shows the work of mobile phone photographers, but it taps into the new way that people take pictures with their mobile phones rather than traditional cameras.

Also on Friday in Windsor, there’s Scattered Ecstasies, an interplay among poetry, art and drama. It’s an interesting concept, Speaker, where a poet will read their poetry while sketchers will create a visual depiction of their poem.

In Aurora on Saturday, there will be a Human Library, where the books you sign out are real people with real stories to share. What a tremendous idea. At this event, you can ask questions of the creative authors, musicians and journalists, while enjoying an opening performance by slam poet Sterling Dillinger. You might even learn about what a slam poet is.

I wanted to highlight these four events, Speaker, from the Culture Days website because they show the tremendous diversity and the cultural activities that go on in our province.

In my own hometown, in Hamilton, there are activities ranging from historical and art walks and tours through to the improv boot camp workshop to an all-ages art workshop.

I suggest you go to the Culture Days website and click on “Find Activities,” then choose a search for your liking or your interest. I’m sure that you’ll be amazed at the number and variety of events, activities and communities where Culture Days is held.

The real bonus, Speaker, for so many Ontarians is that Culture Days activities are free. So even if things are

financially tight, you can take your family to enjoy one of these activities for gratis.

The thing about Culture Days that makes it an even more attractive set of events is that it’s a grassroots organization; it doesn’t seem to rely on large government or large corporations, but on those in the cultural community.

When I first thought about Culture Days, what came to mind was Doors Open in May each year. Doors Open focuses on our built and natural history, opening buildings and sites that would otherwise not be accessible to the general public, and it is a wonderful beginning to the summer season.

Culture Days, likewise, opens our minds to activities that we might otherwise not have even considered. It likely even informs us about activities we would not even have thought existed, and it brings our summer to an interesting learning end.

I congratulate and thank all those who put their time and effort and energy into Culture Days and are making it yet another Canadian national treasure.

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

PETITIONS

WATER QUALITY

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Durham.

Mr. John O’Toole: Mr. Speaker, I’m about to get my petitions out here. I always have them. Thank you very much for this opportunity to represent the people of Durham.

The petition reads as follows:

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“Whereas, under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario regulation 319/08, public health inspectors are required to undertake risk assessments of small drinking water systems”—these are like wells;

“Whereas many of these small drinking water systems are located in homes operating bed and breakfasts in rural Ontario;

“Whereas private homes that are the sites of bed and breakfasts already have potable drinking water used by the homeowners and their families every day;

“Whereas many of these bed and breakfasts have established the quality of their drinking water through years of regular testing;

“Whereas these home-based businesses are facing high costs to comply with the new requirements of regulation 319/08;

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

“That the Minister of Health amend Ontario regulation 319/08 to give the testing track record of a small drinking water system greater weight in the risk assessment pro-

cess. Furthermore we, the undersigned, ask that bed and breakfasts operated within a private home with a drinking water supply meeting all the requirements of a private home not be subject to regulation 319/08. Furthermore we ask the minister to work with the bed and breakfast industry to find simplified, safe solutions for smaller operations (three or four guests.)”

I’m pleased to sign and support it and present it to Jasper, one of my favourite pages here.

TAXATION

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I have a very important petition here.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

“Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

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

“To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Katherine to deliver it to the table.

PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a petition here relating to the callous cuts that the government is implementing in physiotherapy.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning on eliminating OHIP-funded physiotherapy services that are being provided to seniors in a retirement home as of August 1, 2013. This service has been proven to help seniors improve mobility and decrease risks of falls. One out of two seniors over the age of 80 years fall each year. The residents who live at Supples Landing, a retirement home in Pembroke, average 88 years of age;

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

“Ask that the Ministry of Health consider allowing the physiotherapist to continue to provide their services in the retirement homes with the same payment structure. We ask that you extend the deadline until other arrangements can be made. At this time we are not aware of where in the community the group sessions will be held. If we do bring in physiotherapists to lead exercise classes and one-on-one, who will absorb the cost?”

I affix my name to this petition and send it down with Peyton.

MINING INDUSTRY

Ms. Sarah Campbell: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s mineral wealth belongs to the people of Ontario;

“Whereas the people who collectively own these natural resources should stand to enjoy their benefits;

“Whereas Ontario’s Mining Act presently calls for resources mined in Ontario to be processed in Canada, yet allows cabinet to grant exceptions to the clause;

“Whereas these exceptions ensure residents of Ontario are told why our resources are being shipped elsewhere—information that can be used to better plan for infrastructure and job training needs to ensure a more competitive environment;

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

“To amend the Mining Act to ensure that people living in Ontario maximize the benefit of their natural resources.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Aly to deliver to the table.

RURAL SCHOOLS

Mr. John O’Toole: I’m pleased to present my second petition, and it reads as follows. This is from the riding of Durham, of course.

“Whereas Cartwright High School is an important part of the Blackstock and area community; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised in the 2007 election that he would keep rural schools open when he declared that, ‘Rural schools help to keep communities strong’; and”—

Interjection.

Mr. John O’Toole: The Minister of the Environment should stop interrupting, because I’m representing my community.

“Whereas schools in rural areas are community places; and

“Whereas Cartwright students, families, friends and staff have created an effective learning experience that emphasizes a community atmosphere, individual attention and full participation by students in school activities; and

“Whereas the framework of rural schools is different from urban schools and therefore deserves to be governed by a rural school policy; and

“Whereas the McGuinty government found \$12 million to keep school swimming pools open in Toronto but hasn’t found” one dime “to keep rural schools open in communities such as Blackstock;”—shameful.

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

That the Dalton McGuinty government—request that they support the Cartwright High School community and suspend plans to close Cartwright High School.

I'm pleased to sign and support this.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Sarah Campbell: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

“Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

“Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

“Whereas electricity generated and used in northwestern Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

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

“To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation.”

I support this immensely, and will sign my name and give it to Gabrielle to deliver to the table.

TIRE DISPOSAL

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have petitions here from the folks in my riding.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

“Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

“Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

“Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

“Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

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

“Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-

the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs.”

I sign this petition and send it down with James.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I have another petition, which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

“Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre's operations; and

“Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses ‘market rent’ for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

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

“To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community's needs.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Taylor to deliver.

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ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a petition regarding the boondoggle that is the College of Trades.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

“Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has no clear benefit and no accountability as tradespeople already pay for licences and countless other fees to government; and

“Whereas Ontario has struggled for years to attract people to skilled trades and the planned tax grab will kill jobs, and drive people out of trades;

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

“To stop the job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

I affix my name to this petition and send it down with William.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Another important petition here.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

“Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

“Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

“Whereas electricity generated and used in northwestern Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

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

“To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation.”

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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

“Whereas Ontario is one of the few provinces that does not have independent oversight of child welfare administration; and

“Whereas eight provinces now have independent oversight of child welfare issues, including child protection; and

“Whereas all provincial ombudsmen first identified child protection as a priority issue in 1986, and still Ontario does not allow the Ombudsman to investigate people’s complaints about children’s aid societies’ (CAS) decisions; and

“Whereas people wronged by CAS decisions concerning placement, access, custody or care are not allowed to appeal those decisions to the Ontario Ombudsman’s office;”

“Therefore, be it resolved that we support the Ombudsman having the power to probe decisions and investigate complaints concerning the province’s children’s aid societies (CAS).”

I affix my name to the petition and send it down with James.

TAXATION

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I have such an important petition that I want to read it again to make sure that everybody is listening to it.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

“Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

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

“To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Ian to deliver to the table.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Ms. Sarah Campbell: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

“Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre’s operations; and

“Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses ‘market rent’ for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

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

“To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community’s needs.”

I support this petition, will affix my signature and give it to page Pratah to deliver to the table.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS'
PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**INTER-PROVINCIAL IMPORTATION
OF WINE, BEER AND SPIRITS ACT, 2013**

**LOI DE 2013 SUR L'IMPORTATION
INTERPROVINCIALE DE VIN, DE BIÈRE
ET DE SPIRITUEUX**

Mr. Milligan moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 98, An Act respecting the importation of wine, beer and spirits from other provinces / Projet de loi 98, Loi concernant l'importation de vin, de bière et de spiritueux provenant d'autres provinces.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: It's always a privilege to rise in the House, as it is today for the second reading of my bill, which will amend the Liquor Control Act. This bill will remove the unnecessary interprovincial trade barrier that undermines our economy by stifling investment and inhibiting job creation. The implementation of this bill will allow Ontario's wineries to grow their sales domestically through interprovincial trade opportunities. Furthermore, it will grant Ontario consumers the same market access to wine as residents of other wine-producing provinces already enjoy.

The wine industry is of immense importance to the province of Ontario. It is a huge employer, giving over 14,000 Ontarians jobs and having an economic impact of nearly \$3.34 billion for the province. This amount is generated from a contribution of \$2.3 billion worth of business revenue from the Ontario wine and grape industry, tax revenues of \$444 million and wages of upwards of \$593 million.

If we take leadership in promoting the abolishment of this interprovincial trade barrier, the benefits to our wine industry here in Ontario can be enormous. Wine growers in our province all unanimously agree that there is a huge appetite for Ontario wine in Quebec. Many wineries in the province are giving multiple tours in French every day to accommodate their guests from Quebec.

Once taking the right step and allowing our residents to purchase wines from other provinces, we must encourage the remaining provinces to do the same, Mr. Speaker.

When you give it some thought, you quickly realize how unreasonable and outdated laws prohibiting interprovincial wine sales are. A winery in Ontario can ship wine to anywhere within the province, but as soon as you hit the provincial border it becomes illegal. Nevertheless, that same winery is free to ship wine to most countries internationally.

The other day, I held a round-table meeting with stakeholders, and they were telling me how they can freely sell and ship a few bottles of wine to someone living in Hong Kong or just about anywhere else in the

world. Meanwhile, it would be illegal for them to ship wine to a visitor from Montreal.

The interprovincial wine trade barriers currently in place have a significant restraint on the growing of the wine industry. They result in less than a third of wine consumed in Canada coming from domestically produced wines. The federal government has instituted changes through Bill C-311 to rectify this situation. Now it's up to the individual provinces that must take action and change their own liquor regulations in order to conform with the federal changes.

We must take the same steps that other provinces have already taken in opening their borders and demonstrating leadership in the process, as we have, by far, the largest wine-producing industry of any province in the country.

We should be confident in the wine industry we have here in Ontario. Our wine producers certainly are confident in their products, and feel that they can compete with the best wine products available internationally and here in Canada.

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The consumption of wine is rapidly increasing in the province. Just last year, Ontarians consumed an estimated 84 million bottles of Ontario wine; I might have had one or two myself. That's over 420 million glasses of only Ontario wine. According to an economic impact study, every single bottle of wine produced in Ontario creates spinoff benefits worth \$40.

In addition to this, the beautiful wineries we have here bring nearly two million tourists into Ontario each and every year. That number of visitors is almost three times the number of people that visited the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. These two million visitors generate an economic impact of \$644 million in tourism-related fields, according to the wine growers' association of Ontario.

The Ontario wine regions have developed a large and loyal following. Many visitors to these regions end up returning again and again after the experience that they have had at our great wineries. Moreover, as opposed to most tourist attractions, tourism in the wine region is not limited to the warm summer months. The icewine festival is a huge hit every winter, bringing people into the Niagara region from all over the country and abroad for a taste of delicious local cheeses and icewines.

We can help make festivals like this an even greater success. If interprovincial wine trade barriers are abolished, we will be able to bring even larger numbers of people into the region to taste the wines and have a few cases of wine shipped back home.

In Paris, wine shows are attended by people from across France. They come to Paris to try different types of wines, and they then order the wines that they fancy and have them delivered back home. How great would it be if we provided Ontarians the same luxury, where they could go to a wine show anywhere in Canada and then order a few bottles of wine, to have them shipped home?

The second-largest producer of wine in Canada, after Ontario, is the province of British Columbia. They are

producing great wines in the Okanagan region, and there is no reason why we should restrict Ontario consumers from purchasing these wines. We know that Ontarians love wine, and we should make this legislative change to allow them to import the wines they want.

After British Columbia eliminated their out-of-province wine prohibition, their provincial wine sales actually increased. In order to serve the wineries of Ontario, we should allow them the same opportunity to grow their brands and maximize their sales.

The grape growers and vineyard owners of Ontario make up a significant portion of the agricultural and horticultural sector in the province. Currently, we have approximately 478 grape growers operating on over 15,000 of planted vineyards and four primary viticultural areas: the Niagara Peninsula, Lake Erie North Shore, Pelee Island and, of course, Prince Edward County, next to my great riding of Northumberland—Quinte West.

Every year, these vineyards are increasing their grape production to keep up with demand. Just last year, for wine alone, 65,000 tonnes of grapes were processed. To allow the grape growers across the province to continue expanding their business, we must allow wineries to expand their sales beyond our provincial borders.

As elected officials, our job as public servants is to listen to our constituents. Surveys show that 83% of Ontarians believe that they should be able to order wine online. We must listen to what the citizens of this province want, and allow them to order a bottle of wine from another province and have it shipped to their doorstep.

Our Ontario wineries offer a distinct wine to the market. There is a huge demand for the product they have to offer. In the past, the LCBO has indicated that it is open to the idea of getting rid of interprovincial trade barriers, and other provinces are willing to do the same. As I have mentioned, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Manitoba have already done so. Now it is our turn.

Premier Wynne met with other Premiers in Ontario's wine region during the annual Council of the Federation gathering. There was a lot of talk about freeing up the wine market in Canada and taking down provincial trade barriers. In fact, the Premier is quoted in the *Toronto Star* as saying, "Premier Clark and I had a good conversation. What we talked about was how we can continue to work together to grow the Canadian wine industry and to expand our markets." Well, Premier, it's now time to turn those words into action and pass Bill 98. This bill is firmly supported by wine growers in the province and most Ontarians. I hope that all parties will support this bill today as well.

I would also like to thank our federal cousins, who actually unanimously voted in favour of Bill C-311, which was brought forward by MP Dan Albas. Thank you very much to our federal cousins for taking the lead on this. We're just bringing our Bill 98 online into the 21st century, controlling this.

I want to thank all members for their time, and hope to see this bill pass into committee as soon as possible to

provide our grape growers and winemakers some good news during their busy harvest season.

I also want to thank Shirley-Ann George of Free My Grapes, who is here this afternoon. Shirley has been instrumental in realizing the potential of what we have as a jewel in the fine wineries and grape-growing producers here in the province of Ontario.

I would hope that all parties realize how important this bill is for our province and the economy, and I encourage each and every one of you to come down to Prince Edward—Hastings, go to the north shore of Lake Erie and out to the Niagara Peninsula. Of course, the fine member from Prince Edward—Hastings who will be speaking to the bill a little later on, has some of the finest wines in the province, right next door to me—and has a huge impact on our riding.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the time given here today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Colle: I thank the member from Northumberland—Quinte West for bringing this forward. I think we all agree that there are all kinds of antiquated inter-provincial barriers to trade that are sometimes more severe than barriers between countries. So a lot of these long-standing trade barriers between our provinces need re-examination.

In the beer industry, I know that for many years you couldn't sell Ontario beer in the Maritimes; it had to be produced in the Maritimes. I'm just wondering whether that's still in place. Quebec beer, too, had to be brewed in Quebec; therefore, you had to have a plant there and you couldn't ship beer across provincial boundaries. I'm not sure if that's still there, but I know it was. I think this kind of blockage is not good, considering we're a country with open borders.

I just can't quite understand, and maybe the member or other members can explain to me—we are trying to promote the consumption, the sale, the growth of Ontario grapes and wines. Our job is to make sure we do whatever we can as MPPs and government to make sure people are aware of the incredible fine quality of Niagara grapes, Niagara wines.

I know they've got over 40 wineries in Prince Edward county. They're just starting out and blossoming. I think Niagara had over 140 wineries at last count.

Those of us—can remember how people used to sort of scoff at Ontario wines and say, "Well, you've got to drink French wine or American wine or Italian wine."

It has really been an Ontario success story. The fact is, our Ontario wineries are now as good as any in the world, and that has taken a lot of entrepreneurship; you know, Pillitteri and all those great people in the Niagara region who worked from nothing when the Niagara region was famous for growing Concord grapes, I think. You can see, with their hybrid version of different grapes, they've done an amazing job, and the partner in that has been the Ontario government. It has not just been our government; it's the legacy of many Ontario govern-

ments, who brought in the VQA system, that in many ways used the LCBO as a conduit to grow an industry.

1400

It wouldn't have been possible without the LCBO. You know what would have happened? People would have always gone and bought the cheap American wine or the cheap Hungarian wine. I remember there used to be a Hungarian wine called Szekszárdi Vörös. I think it was going for \$2.75 a bottle when I was going to university. Anyway, that's what people were drinking. They were drinking Four Aces and all these other awful, awful wines.

The Ontario wine industry really deserves a lot of credit. They overcame incredible international competition—but it came with the partnership of the Ontario government and the LCBO. If you go to any LCBO store in Ontario, they feature Ontario wines, local wines and VQA wines prominently, to everyone's advantage. That has been an incredible success story.

I just don't know how this really helps. I'm not going to say that I'm going to vote against it, but I just want that explained to me: how buying BC wine is going to help basically grow the Ontario wine industry—and nothing against BC wine, the Okanagan Valley; we know it's great quality. But I just hope that we can make sure that we spend a lot more time promoting Ontario-grown wine, Ontario-made wine. They still need help, because they have very stiff competition from all the dumping of wine that happens from Australia, the wine that's dumped—

Hon. James J. Bradley: Chile.

Mr. Mike Colle:—from Chile, from Argentina.

It always baffles me how they can ship a bottle of wine from Chile that's three-year-old, four-year-old Chilean wine—shiraz, or whatever it is—and they ship it all the way to Ontario. They bottle it and so on and so forth, and they can undercut, undersell an Ontario-made wine. I don't know if they pay anybody in Chile to make wine, and why Chilean wine or Argentinian wine can cost \$8 a bottle. It just boggles the mind.

We have to know that the Ontario wineries, the Ontario grape growers, the Ontario wine industry are still battling the international forces. They're not just battling BC. They're not really in competition with BC or some other provinces that are into wines.

We have to be cognizant of the fact that the LCBO is always there to try and do its best. It's not perfect. We know that the LCBO is undergoing some changes now that I think are very interesting. I asked the Minister of Finance the other day about the new boutique wine stores, Our Wine Country.

I hope that they continue to allow some breakthroughs where we can buy local wines at the local farmers' markets. That's one area that, hopefully, we'll investigate so that we have more availability.

I know we've got some kiosks in some grocery stores where you can buy Ontario wines, but it's very hit-and-miss. You can only buy from that one company—Inniskillin, or whatever it is, which, by the way, was one

of the pioneer wine-making companies. Inniskillin was an incredible success story.

Château des Charmes, I remember—my colleague here from Brampton, which has a lot of people who know a lot about wine, will know that we have some of the finest wines in the world called icewines that are being copied. The Japanese and the Chinese are now claiming they have icewine, which isn't icewine. It's basically wine with sugar in it, and they put an icewine label on it.

In fact, I have a friend who used to be a barber. Mr. Speaker, you probably knew him. He used to be a barber on Annette and Runnymede—Joe DeMaria. He bought 15 acres in Beamsville, and he decided he was going to put that 15 acres into cultivation for icewine. Everybody said, "You're a barber. What do you know about wine? You're a barber from Toronto. What do you know about wine?"

Anyway, Joe DeMaria and his wife, Charlene, took their life's savings and took out a second mortgage on their barbershop to produce an icewine that has won international competitions all over the world.

In fact, he tells me that he took one bottle of his wine—Joe DeMaria, the barber—by plane to New York to sell to someone for \$22,000. Despite the fact that he was battling the big winemakers—he was battling the LCBO to get shelf space—Joe DeMaria is an example of the incredible entrepreneurship, the creativity, the excellence of Canadian winemakers and Ontario winemakers.

So, sure, let's bring in BC wine, but all I say is, let's protect an incredible, successful industry that is second to none in the world: the Ontario wine industry. Ontario wines are second to none, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that tonight, when you go home—don't take out that cheap Italian wine. Buy a good bottle of Ontario wine.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mrs. Jane McKenna: I'd like to thank, for all the hard work, our member from Northumberland—Quite West.

I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 98, the Inter-Provincial Importation of Wine, Beer and Spirits Act. Bill 98 proposes to eliminate Ontario's regulations preventing the interprovincial sale of wine, and potentially beer and spirits, for non-commercial consumers. It arrives none too soon. Canada's dusty-sounding Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act is an artifact of the Prohibition era. Not just that, but our liquor regulatory system is arguably out of step with the wider world.

The North American Free Trade Agreement has been in effect for almost 10 years. We travel around the world, lowering barriers to trade and opening new markets—recall that the former Premier undertook four missions to China and two to India—yet Ontario adults are unable to freely purchase wine, beer and spirits from other jurisdictions within their own country.

Last year, the federal government amended the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act, which governs the interprovincial sale of wine products between provinces, lifting a long-standing barrier. Bill C-311 made it legal

under federal law to take wine between provinces. But C-311 defers to the provinces themselves. Its powers are limited by the law in the province to which the wine is being imported. Every province must therefore amend its own legislation to legalize interprovincial trade, and that's what Bill 98 proposes to do.

The bill eliminates the ability of the LCBO to bar the importation of wine from other provinces and is part of a cross-Canada effort to encourage all provinces to make similar changes. Bill 98 also makes provisions for the same process if and when the federal government moves to eliminate its legislative barriers to the interprovincial sale of beer and spirits.

Bill 98 is part of the Ontario PC Party's commitment to cutting the red tape that is stifling investment, thereby creating jobs and boosting tax revenue for the province. It also expands customer choice, which we can all agree is a positive step.

The Premier herself has admitted that this province has some of Canada's most restrictive and outdated laws around the sale of alcohol. The Minister of Economic Development has been talking up Ontario's fantastic craft brewery sector, a sector that includes small businesses like Burlington's Nickel Brook brewery.

I would hope that we will be able to come together and support Bill 98, a positive step that will increase the visibility and prosperity of this province's wineries, breweries and distillers, and the satellite businesses that support them. Lowering importation restrictions is part of creating the right climate to create jobs and grow the economy. Wineries across this province have said that eliminating interprovincial trade barriers will have a positive impact on their sales.

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Finally, there is speculation that the federal government is about to adopt measures similar to C-311 for beer and spirits. Bill 98 makes a provision for the same process if the federal government eliminates their legislative barriers to the interprovincial sale of beer and spirits.

Changes such as these should help free up the Canadian market for domestic wines, beers and spirits; drive job growth; increase tax revenue; and expand consumers' choice. Cheers to that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Prue: I want to state at the outset that I rise in support of this bill. I don't think there should be any question of the members in this House—although I know there are some concerns that we need to support this bill because we need to be proud Ontarians.

Not only do we need to be proud Ontarians, and proud of the products that we produce here; we also need to be very proud Canadians and to support people from one end of this country to the other. Just as we make good wines and spirits and beers, so are good wines and spirits and beers produced in all parts of the country.

As Canadians, we owe it to ourselves to support our fellow Canadians so that they, too, can have a good lifestyle. I embrace each and every part of this country. I

have travelled to all of it. I am as proud of the people who live in Newfoundland and British Columbia as I am of the people who live here in Ontario.

This is an anomaly that we're talking about here today, an anomaly that goes back generations because we were trying to protect the jobs in Ontario. There was a good reason to protect them in those days. There was a good reason because Ontario was the heartland. Ontario was the only place that wines were produced. By and large, most of the spirits and beer that were produced were centred in Ontario, in the Toronto and London area, as well as some of the beer, of course, being produced around Montreal.

Today we produce world-quality products in this province. Wherever you go, you can find world-class products produced in Ontario, but you have a hard time finding those products on the shelves in other provinces, particularly those that have not signed on to the accord.

I remember a time, not too long ago, when Ontario wine was perhaps not the best. I remember reading, about 40 years ago in a wine magazine, that someone discussed Ontario wine with some disgust because they said that the Ontario wine had a foul gasoline taste. It was, in fact, because of the grapes we were using. Most of it, in those days, was Concord grapes. It had what is called in wine parlance a foxy taste. It wasn't very good.

One of the first pioneers to come in and say, "We can do a better job," was a guy by the name of Don Ziraldo. Don is still alive, and Don still has, I think, a share in some of the wineries in the Niagara area: Château des Charmes, which was mentioned, and Inniskillin. I'm not sure which one he's associated with today.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Inniskillin.

Mr. Michael Prue: Inniskillin.

He said he could produce better wine, and he went out there and started to show that he could do it. He was from Algeria, of all places, and he tasted the wine in Ontario and said, "We can produce better wine than this," and he went out and proved to the world that they could.

Today, Ontario wine wins international awards, and if anybody pooh-poohs Ontario wine, they certainly don't know what it's all about. In Britain, they had blind tastings of Chardonnay between the best Chardonnays from the Chablis region of France and Ontario wines, and we won them all.

If you go around the world and you have blind tastings of icewine that is made in Germany, which invented the wine process, and Ontario wines, they don't have a chance. If you go and you taste some of our wines and spirits, no matter where you go around the world, where Ontario products are put forward, we compete with the best, and, in fact, we can beat them.

Some of my favourite wineries in Ontario that produce wines of exquisite quality—I don't know whether I should be naming them, but it's a free plug for them. Foreign Affair here in the Niagara region produces wine by the ripasso method, and they produce wines that are exquisite. In fact, the wine that is our red wine here in the Legislature is a Foreign Affair Winery ripasso-method

red. I happen to have thought as well that the white should have been our white wine, but we chose something else. But the method that they use certainly brought it into world-class standards, and it can be purchased anywhere.

I have a cottage that's down on Lake Erie, just south of Windsor. It's a long way to go to a cottage, I know, but my wife likes the area around Amherstburg, and there are many wineries down there. We have some favourites, and the wineries are producing some very good wine that's relatively cheap and that Ontarians should get to know. Some of my favourites are Muscedere and Aleksander; I'm just trying to think of them all. We go over to Pelee Island, to the Pelee Island Winery. Those are the ones we like. We like them so much, and we buy our wines down there.

We also have 31 craft breweries here in the province of Ontario that are producing excellent beer. If you go into the Legislature, you will find that those beers are on sale in our restaurant, that we use them at all of our receptions. They are superb beers, beers that I wish Ontarians knew a great deal more about.

I don't want to leave out our fruit wineries either, because we produce a lot of fruit wine here in the province of Ontario.

We produce spirits of international repute.

In this province, we have hundreds of millions of dollars of sales every year of our wines and spirits and alcohol and beers, and we should be very, very proud of that.

But we are not alone in Canada. We have to think about what is happening out there. Ontarians want to taste other products too; just as we want to taste their products, we know that they want to taste our products. If you have a chance to travel around, because it's hard to find here in Ontario—the wines produced in the Okanagan of BC, especially their Pinot Noirs, I think are starting to become world-class. Certainly the Pinot Noirs of British Columbia can challenge some of the best of Washington state and of Oregon. They can really challenge them—and even of California. They need to be tasted by Ontarians who like and want to taste these.

Nova Scotia is not to be forgotten, because this is something very few people know about at all: Nova Scotia has started to produce amazing sparkling wines. They grow almost exclusively Chardonnay and Riesling grapes, and they make sparkling wines. I don't want to call it champagne, but it is made with the méthode champenoise. When it is blind-tasted against Dom Pérignon and blind-tasted against Veuve Clicquot, we've actually shown that the Nova Scotia wines win. So Canadians in Ontario want to taste those, too, but you can't get them here. You have to go down and fly to Halifax and travel around to find them. Just as I am proud and I want them to taste our icewine, just as I'm proud and want them to taste the wine of our three growing regions in and around the north shore of Lake Erie, in Niagara and in Quinte, I want them, as well, to

taste the wines. I also expect Ontarians will want to taste their wines as well.

It's trying to break the deadlock. It is absolutely time for Ontario to say, "We're going to do it." Already, the two other wine-producing regions of any renown, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, have said, "You can import wine into our province." They've already broken that deadlock. It's us; it's Ontario that hasn't done it. We need to step on-board and we need to do it. Once that happens, people across this country will be able to examine and taste and understand and appreciate the industry that goes on here.

We hire, and we have about 14,000 people who grow grapes and are vintners, and we need to have that leap of faith. We need to have a leap of faith in our grape growers, who grow wonderful grapes, and sometimes have too many. I know that, because every year—I belong to a little group, and we go out and we try to find grapes that can't be sold to the wineries in Ontario, because sometimes there are too many. We buy the juice. I do make my own wine. I make it from Ontario grapes, and I'm very proud of the result of what we get.

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We need to be proud of the vintners who have blended and made and done all of the right things by oaking the wine and making it excellent to the taste.

We need to be proud of the brewers who know how to use the right kind of yeast, who know how to mix the right grains and experiment occasionally with oatmeal and other fruit flavours to impart beers that are unique to Ontario.

We need to be proud of the distillers and what they distill and the kind of liquors that they're able to make here that are unique to Ontario and unique to the world.

We need as well to be proud of the distributors who take all of that and sell it and take it around and let people experiment and take it to the far-flung corners of the province. And I dare say we need to be proud of the LCBO for being part of all of that.

In saying that, why do we stop there? Why do we say we are afraid—or why are those who are afraid to let Ontario compete? Are we protecting an industry that needs to be protected? I don't think anymore that that is the case. Most of the people who I know who are involved in this industry think the time has come for us to spread our wings and the time has come for us to compete. We have shown that we can compete and beat some of the best in the world, where people a generation ago would not have thought that it was possible.

We need to understand that the reason all of this has happened, particularly in grape-growing, is because Ontario scientists have been able to develop strains and vines that are impervious to the cold and don't die off in the frost. There was a time when we had to hill it all up. We don't have to hill it all anymore. There were times when we saw huge vine die-offs every spring because of the cold snaps that hit. That doesn't happen. The development in Canada of Baco Noir grapes and the

development in Canada of Marechal Foch have ensured that our vine survives.

Now we have to look to markets. It's necessary to translate into immediate sales. We should not have the fears. I have heard a fear expressed here today that they're worried because the word "domestic" is not in this bill. Maybe it should be in the bill. At least at first, it should be in the bill. But I'm asking the members, particularly those who have some fears, to support the bill. If the word "domestic" needs to be put into the legislation, surely that can be added in committee. I am asking that we not fear the loss of revenues. I'm asking that we not fear that others won't follow suit, particularly Quebec. The reality is that the law that exists today is a toothless law, because every time I've left this province to BC or to Quebec and brought back wine, there was nobody to stop me at the border from doing it.

I think we need to understand that what is *[inaudible]* here is to look forward with pride and to make sure that Ontario sells its products and that the other parts of Canada are able to sell them to us as well.

Thank you very much to the mover of the bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, I have a different view from that which has been expressed. I realize there are different views amongst members, of all the parties probably—different variances.

My greatest concern is the effect on domestic wineries and, at the risk of sounding parochial, to Ontario wineries and the wineries in the Niagara Peninsula, I think the concept of interprovincial trade is very good. The key word that is missing in this is "domestic," because what this invites is foreign wineries to set up in Alberta and then send their product directly into Ontario and sell it without the taxes and without the markups that happen to favour Ontario wines. The same thing happened federally. When they asked the Grape Growers of Ontario, "What is your view of this?"—and I realize they represent the viewpoint of the Grape Growers alone; that's fine. They had the opportunity to do that. They said, "Please place the word 'domestic' in any bill that's brought forward." Because I do see that: people who are going to say, "Hey, we've got a sneaky new way of getting foreign wines into Ontario to compete."

There's a quote from a person—you may disagree with the person; I may disagree or not. But one of the quotes I noticed when this was coming forward federally was one that said, "Why should Ontario residents subsidize BC wineries by ordering direct and avoiding taxes and markup?"—Rowland Dunning, executive director, Canadian Association of Liquor Jurisdictions, in the *Globe and Mail* on July 25, 2013. This followed a July 24, 2013, CBC news clip and article where he is quoted as saying, "[People advocating for changes] just want to lobby to get the products into consumers' hands and avoid those consumers and the wineries paying their fair share of taxes and markups." He indicated that provinces didn't want to lose the tax revenue of approximately

\$300 million annually that they get from selling through liquor stores.

The amount of money that this province derives from the LCBO from the sale of liquor—wine, spirits and beer—is very significant. It pays for hospitals, it pays for roads, it pays for social services, and every time we take away yet another source—and it's always popular; I understand that. It's populist and popular to do it, but it has a profound negative effect.

I suspect that there is sufficient support in the Legislature for this bill, because everybody has talked about it as being something that we want, but I must say that I am very cautious on things that look good and popular, and turn out to be detrimental to our industry in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I say to the member for St. Catharines: Jim, you've got to be a little more positive about these things. Ontario is a huge producer of wine. We will do well in a competitive situation. We have nothing to fear from a competitive atmosphere when we've got the best wines in Ontario. Our wines will flow out of Ontario much faster than other wines will fly in.

I take your point that adding "domestic" to our wines would be a good safety valve. I don't believe that other wineries would set up in different provinces to bring into Ontario, but if they did, the word "domestic" would be good, and we could add that in committee with no problem.

I would like to give a little history of this, because I've lived through quite a bit of it, and I was involved with some of it. Prior to free trade, in 1989, Canada had an east-west trading pattern. During that time, many provinces set up trade barriers to prevent Ontario or other provinces from dominating their industry, giving their industry a chance to develop. Therefore, over a long period of time, Canada had developed interprovincial trade barriers that prevented the easy flow of products on an east-west basis.

Once free trade took effect in Canada, that east-west basis changed to a north-south axis. Our main trading partner, instead of being the rest of Canada and internationally into Europe—Britain, in particular—changed, and we had much more emphasis on a north-south trading pattern. When that happened, the trade barriers between Canadian provinces became less important.

In fact, trading with other provinces became an opportunity. In many areas of industry, those trade barriers between provinces in Canada disappeared as a natural thing. It didn't need a lot of push; it just happened, because it was opportune for all the people that were involved in it.

In food and food products, it has been much slower to occur. As it has occurred in various areas, it has been of tremendous benefit to all of the provinces combined. There have been a few people who have been adversely affected, certainly, but overall the positive aspects of

interprovincial trade have been a boon to most of the people who have been involved in it.

I think that same thing would occur if we were to drop the trade barriers that we have with domestic wine, in that Ontario is by far the largest producer of wine, and if these trade barriers continue to drop as they have in BC and Alberta and Manitoba, I think we would see tremendous opportunity for Ontario producers.

A lot has been said about the quality of Ontario wine. When we changed from labrusca grapes, which was what you were referring to when you were talking about Concords; there are six or seven varieties—Fredonias, Niagaras, which are the white grapes, Concords. When we dropped those labrusca varieties and learned how to grow viniferas—the viniferas are not an easy variety to grow, but we started learning how to grow those vinifera varieties, the world wine grapes.

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Once we learned how to grow those grapes, and the balance of pushing for production but not pushing too hard because you weaken the vine when it goes into the winter, our quality has become second to none, as has been stated here today, and that would enhance our ability to trade around the world but, more importantly, to trade within Canada, to the benefit of all Ontarians and indeed to the benefit of all Canadians.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Todd Smith: It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 98, the Inter-Provincial Importation of Wine, Beer and Spirits Act, brought forward by my good friend Mr. Milligan from Northumberland—Quinte West.

As you have heard me say here many times, I come from Prince Edward county, which is a great wine region in Ontario. As I travel around Prince Edward county and speak to the owners of the wineries there, all I hear is, "Free my grapes." I'm happy to represent the fastest-growing wine region in the province, now home to 40 wineries, by the way, and some great names. Some great award-winning wines have come out of this young industry—it's only about 12 years old in Prince Edward county. But it's not just wines; we also have a great craft distillery, 66 Gilead, down there. We have a craft brewer as well, and some great county cider that we promote. All the owners of these industries would love the opportunity to ship their product off to Quebec.

As you are probably aware, in eastern Ontario where we're located, out on Lake Ontario, we get an awful lot of visitors coming from Quebec. They hit the wine tour and travel to the cidery and the brewery as well, and they would love to ship some of the product back home to Quebec. But when the owner says, "We can't ship it back; it's against the law to ship it back," it really doesn't make much sense in 2013, where we are now.

As I meet my vintners and am at events in the county, all they tell me is that they need more access to retail markets. This is a small step that my friend Mr. Milligan is taking by bringing forward this bill, but it is a step that's much-needed for this industry. I have a number of

wineries in my region that tell me they would love to break down our interprovincial trade barriers, and that's exactly what this bill intends to do. Other provinces, like BC and other western provinces, have done this—we've already heard that Nova Scotia has done this as well—because they know we're producing first-class wines and other beverage alcohol sector products as well.

In the county, we have Huff's, Sandbanks, Casa-Dea and Rosehall Run—I'm going to get in trouble for not naming them all. Many of them have won awards, not just in Ontario, not just in North America, but around the world. I can tell you that Casa-Dea's Pinot Grigio and Rosehall's incredible Pinot Noir have become staples on wine lists at the different restaurants we have down in Prince Edward county and also even here in the GTA. You might even find a bottle or two in my office here at Queen's Park. They're usually empty, though.

It can only help our great Ontario wineries to open up access to markets in other provinces. Not every Canadian province has alcohol retail laws that are caught in the Prohibition era like we have here in Ontario. As Alberta and BC have opened up retail opportunities, we've got to make sure we make it easier, not harder, for Ontario producers to access those markets. Our western provinces have already done that.

Some of the best things grow right here in Ontario, but the entire country deserves to enjoy them, not just us here in Ontario. Sometimes even here in Ontario we can't get our hands on products because things are too restricted.

My leader, Mr. Hudak, always tells me that I come from the second-best wine region, in Prince Edward county; he comes from Niagara. But I'm going to have to respectfully disagree with my leader this time and say Prince Edward county is second to none.

Free our grapes. Congratulations, Mr. Milligan. Free our grapes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The member for Northumberland—Quinte West, you have two minutes for a response.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank all members who have spoken to Bill 98 this afternoon. I found the member from Beaches—East York's history and vast knowledge on the subject of wine and grapes particularly interesting. I think perhaps later in the session we'll have to sit down and exchange our insights on the wine industry itself.

I understand there is some resistance from the government side of the Legislature on Bill 98. What I'm hearing is some minor tweaking perhaps needs to be done to the bill. I would encourage the government, if they have any recommendations or minor tweaking they would like to see done to the bill, to get the bill to committee and we can tweak it there. I think this is something that has to go forward. It opens up our economy and gets it going again, and the economic impacts of the wine and grape industry here in the province of Ontario are going to be the true winners, as are the fine connoisseurs of the wines that we produce.

I also heard that we do produce—and I would agree—some of the finest wines this world produces. I would encourage people, having gone to Brock University—I know this weekend is the closing of the grapes and wine festival, so I would encourage any members who are looking to traverse the Niagara region this weekend and enjoy the fall foliage and a nice glass of Ontario wine to please go to the grape and wine festival.

To the member from Prince Edward–Hastings: Thank you very much. Be sure to head down to Sandbanks this summer and do the wine-tasting tour down there.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We will take the vote at the end of private members' business.

AGGREGATE RECYCLING PROMOTION ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PROMOTION DU RECYCLAGE DES AGRÉGATS

Ms. Jones moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 56, An Act to prohibit certain restrictions on the use of aggregates in performing public sector construction work / Projet de loi 56, Loi interdisant certaines restrictions frappant l'utilisation d'agrégats lors de la réalisation de travaux de construction pour le secteur public.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's my honour to rise today to debate my private member's bill, Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act. If I may, I'd like to welcome some guests who are here today to watch the debate on Bill 56. In the members' gallery, we have Geoff Wilkinson and Ashley De Souza from the Ontario Road Builders' Association, as well as Brian Messerschmidt from Aggregate Recycling Ontario and Dan Muys from the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association. Thank you for joining us.

I'm very grateful that all three of these organizations support Bill 56 and that they are not alone. I've also received support for Bill 56 from a variety of important organizations, including the Ready Mixed Concrete Association of Ontario; the Ontario Hot Mix Producers Association; the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association; Mayor Dave Augustyn from Pelham; and from my riding of Dufferin–Caledon, the support of Carl Cosack and the North Dufferin Agricultural and Community Taskforce. All of these organizations' support is in addition to the many, many comments of support I've received from Dufferin–Caledon and across the province.

On that note, I'd like to share one excerpt from an email of support I received from a constituent: "It is practically a no-brainer to use recycled aggregates. If they pass the test they should be used for any construction application which can use them. As an electrician I

worked on construction for almost 55 years and saw millions of tonnes of concrete poured on hundreds of projects. The applications for recycled aggregate is almost endless and with the improvement of techniques, new or used is a moot argument." I love how he phrases it. This brief point sums up well why recycled aggregates and Bill 56 are so important.

I would be remiss if I did not give special thanks to Mayor Bill Hill of Melancthon in Dufferin county. Mayor Hill's support of Bill 56 has been invaluable, and I appreciate his help.

The reason I introduced Bill 56 is quite simple. I introduced this bill because right now in Ontario there are over three million tonnes of recycled and recyclable aggregates sitting in stockpiles, and more is accumulating every day. But you don't need me to tell you this; you can see it for yourself. Did any of you drive along the 401 by the airport recently? Look north. What you are looking at is what Bill 56 is all about. It's just one example of the massive stockpiles of reclaimed aggregates ready to be recycled and used again that are sitting across our province.

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Aggregate resources are the sand, gravel, clay, stone and earth that play a crucial role in just about all of the infrastructure around at any given moment of the day. They form the backbone of things like our roads, subways, homes, offices, schools, bridges and hospitals. With a non-renewable resource as widespread as aggregates, it is important—no, critical—for governments to be aware of the resource and the important factors surrounding its use and development.

As important as aggregates may be, however, that still doesn't answer the question of why aggregate recycling percentages are so low in Ontario. I found this odd, considering how commonplace recycling has become in so many other different settings. For example, it used to be that, once a week, the only thing out in front of our homes to pick up was black garbage bags. Nowadays, it's more rare not to see the famous blue recycling box in front of our homes because recycling has become so common. I think that's why most people I talk to about this bill are surprised to learn that aggregate recycling is not common practice.

Now, over the last number of months, I've received a huge amount of feedback on this bill, and I must say 99% of it has been positive.

You may be asking yourself: What are recycled aggregates? Well, aggregates can generally be divided into primary aggregates, sometimes referred to as virgin aggregates, and secondary aggregates, which are the recycled product.

Aggregates are considered primary when used immediately after extraction. In other words, they're extracted and then they're put to use in our public sector projects.

Recycled aggregates are just that, recycled. These are aggregates that have been reclaimed and are processed to make them eligible to be used again. In short, recycled

aggregates are basically aggregates like concrete and asphalt materials that are reclaimed for various reasons.

Most typically, this sort of reclaiming happens during construction or refurbishment projects. With the proper procedures, these reclaimed aggregates can then be processed into recycled aggregates. It's important because with such large demand for aggregates in Ontario, if more recycled aggregates were used, it would take away some of the pressure to meet the ongoing demand to find primary aggregates, which of course come from our pits and quarries. So increasing recycled aggregate consumption in Ontario is an important goal and one that should be promoted.

I believe that the provincial government should be taking a lead in promoting aggregate recycling, and that is why I have introduced the bill we are debating here this afternoon, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act.

The reality is that the majority of aggregates are still used in the construction industry, and the largest consumer of aggregates in Ontario by a wide margin is the public sector. I believe we should be taking a leadership role in demonstrating that recycling is important and that used recycling aggregate in construction work makes good business practice.

Currently across Ontario, there are dozens of public sector bodies like the Ministry of Transportation, for example, that are doing a good job of incorporating recycled aggregates into their construction work, but we can do more. Right now, the average recycled aggregate use rate across Ontario is 7%. When you consider that the Ministry of Transportation's average amount of recycled aggregate is approximately 20%, you soon realize that we can do more and we must do more. With the public sector being the largest consumer of aggregates, it only makes sense that if we can increase the usage of recycling aggregates across the public sector, we can have a great impact on the use of recycled product across the province.

The appropriate testing procedures and standards already exist to ensure that recycled aggregates are as safe and as reliable as primary aggregates. As I mentioned, the Ministry of Transportation has used recycled aggregates for years, and actually their percentages every year keep going up, so they're doing a good job and I congratulate them on that.

Other publicly funded institutions should be striving to include recycled aggregate as well. The major problem, though, is that currently many public sector bodies award construction contracts with the stipulation that only 100% primary aggregate will be considered. That, of course, means that when the tenders are open, if you have any mention of using and incorporating recycled product, your tender is thrown out and you aren't considered. What basically happens is a public sector body like a municipality will issue a request for proposal through its standard procurement processes but stipulate that only primary aggregates can be used. The obvious effect of this practice is that recycled aggregates are not considered for use in many projects.

As I looked into this, I remember wondering, when there seemed to be such a strong consensus that more recycled aggregates could and should be used, why there was still so little actually being used. But, sure enough, I realized that a big part of the problem is this common procurement process, which rules out recycled aggregates from consideration.

What Bill 56 will do is end this practice of banning recycled aggregates from being considered. Instead, Bill 56's passage will hopefully lead to a more standardized, science-based approach whereby if a contractor can prove that the recycled aggregates they propose to use meet the necessary standards, then they will be allowed to include them in their proposal.

Recycled aggregates have proven to be as safe and reliable as primary aggregates. Guidelines for the proper use of recycled aggregates are already in place, were developed in consultation with provincial and municipal engineers, and are set out in the Ontario provincial standards and specifications.

There is no reason why someone should be prevented from competing for a contract solely because they propose to use recycled aggregates in their work. If a contractor can show that the recycled product he intends to use meets the required standards, then there should be no issue. If an Ontario business wants to submit a bid to build or resurface a road, then of course they should be able to use recycled aggregates in their proposal.

This is not something we should be stopping; this is something we should be promoting. Tonnes of reclaimed concrete and asphalt materials are currently being diverted from landfills to recycling yards, where it is re-engineered for use in many different infrastructure applications. This is a good thing. But with recycled aggregates being banned from so many bids, they end up sitting in stockpiles.

We all know that when it comes to land use questions in our communities, there are always strong reactions on all sides. This is as true for housing developments as it is for resource extraction operations like pits and quarries. I believe that our job as legislators is to be mindful of all sides and ensure that there is a healthy balance between what we want, what we need and what we can afford.

So, at the end of the day, when we know we need aggregates, and we'll always have a demand for them, why wouldn't we promote the use of recycled aggregates and relieve some of the pressure for primary aggregate extraction at the same time?

Promoting the use of recycled aggregates in Ontario by passing Bill 56 is the right thing to do, because it is about helping to address our critical need for aggregates while at the same time helping to preserve the finite supply of land from which we extract it.

I sincerely hope all of my colleagues here today agree with me and vote to support Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, this afternoon. It's good for the environment; it's good for business; it's good government policy.

I look forward to the debate and hope I was able to convince the members that they can support Bill 56.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: I'm pleased to speak today on Bill 56, the aggregate recycling act, and I'd like to thank the member from Caledon—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Dufferin–Caledon.

Mr. John Fraser: —Dufferin–Caledon—I knew I was going to do that—for bringing it forward. Thank you very much for correcting me.

I just wanted to say that, as a new member of the Legislature, my first committee assignment was the Standing Committee on General Government. I got the agenda and it said “Report writing, ARA.” Little did I know that that was the Aggregate Resources Act and that the committee was reviewing that.

I arrived at committee, and it was evident to me that I'd arrived at the end of a very long process that a lot of people had put a lot of hard work into, a lot of effort. I felt a bit like a carpetbagger, because there's all this work coming forward and now my name is going to be on this. But I'm pleased to be there.

Some of the people who worked hard on that bill include the member from—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Dufferin–Caledon.

Mr. John Fraser: —Dufferin–Caledon—I know; I keep doing it the wrong way—and the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock—I'm glad she didn't sponsor this bill, because I never would have got it if I had to do it straight out—and I know the member from Prince Edward–Hastings was here as well.

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I know that they consulted extensively and that they travelled extensively. They also came to my hometown of Ottawa; I learned a few things about Ottawa, that we have the largest number of pits and quarries—which I guess is not surprising in some ways; we have such a big land mass—and that the municipality of Ottawa has managed quarries and aggregate resources really well, and also managed rehabilitation well.

All three parties in the Legislature have worked together on producing this report, and the committee has heard from a wide range of stakeholders on how we can improve the regulatory regime for our aggregate sector and the management of this important resource that is key to our infrastructure and economic growth. I know we all look forward to the report being tabled in the Legislature.

We can all agree that expanded use of recycled aggregate material is something that we can support and encourage. Some of the benefits the member mentioned today are less going into landfill, it's good for business, and it also helps to extend the life of our quarries and pits so that we can better manage those primary resources that we have.

I was pleased this morning that the member mentioned that our own Ministry of Transportation is a leader in terms of using aggregate resources in road building, and

that our government encourages the use of recycled aggregate in aggregate applications wherever possible. The use of recycled material in road building grew substantially between 1991 and 2006, from six million tonnes to approximately 13 million tonnes a year. This represents about 7% of total aggregate production, and about 18% of the total aggregates used for transportation and construction.

Not all recycled materials are appropriate for all applications, in the same way that primary materials are not appropriate for all applications as well. In the right application, we know that recycled aggregates are as good as primary sources. Recycled materials must meet the same Ontario provincial standards as do aggregates from primary sources.

In some cases, recycled materials are not locally available, necessitating longer haul distances, so the environmental benefits aren't as great. So sometimes it's not practical for us to use recycled materials and—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Well, we can do better than 7%.

Mr. John Fraser: That's true; I agree.

Now, if we're going to use recycled content, it's going to require an effective quality assurance program to evaluate the materials, the workmanship and performance for compliance with the specifications, because these materials that we are using are going into crucial infrastructure—roads, buildings—so we want to make sure, from an engineering perspective, that these materials are satisfactory.

In the case of some municipalities, they don't have those resources and the expertise that they require to make sure that this occurs, so we have to work with our municipalities if we are going to go forward on encouraging them to recycle, to make sure that they have these resources, that they're able to manage this. If you don't have an effective QA program, recycled aggregate suppliers are under no obligation to meet minimum standards and may cut corners and reduce costs to increase their competitiveness for work.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is considering opportunities to promote and remove barriers to the use of recycled aggregates, such as:

- improving general public and stakeholder education and awareness of recycled aggregate products;
- encouraging municipalities to consider using and incorporating recycled aggregate products into their own projects and those in their municipality;
- considering opportunities to make recycled products more cost-effective through pricing tools; and
- working with partners to establish strategic research priorities and possible funding to support research that moves aggregate recycling forward.

I would like to thank the member for bringing this bill forward. I also thank her for the work that has been done at committee, not just on the issue of recycled aggregates, but rehabilitation, land use planning—it's a very extensive review, and recycling is an important part of that, and I thank her for that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member for Kawartha Lakes-Haliburton-Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Close enough. Thank you, Mr. Speaker—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I thought I'd intentionally do that to see how you'd react.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm very accommodating.

I'm pleased to rise today to join in the discussion of Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, put forward by my colleague from Dufferin-Caledon.

I've been fortunate for the past year and a half to be a member of the committee on general government, where we have conducted a comprehensive review of the Aggregate Resources Act. During our review, we heard many stakeholders in the aggregate, construction and demolition industries, as well as municipalities and community groups.

I want to also welcome the visitors who are with us here today in the gallery. We travelled to a number of locations in the province, visiting several pits and quarries. I think the women also outnumbered the men in a lot of our tours, which was surprising to our researcher, Jerry Richmond, who did a fabulous job.

One issue that all members of the committee, regardless of the party, agreed on was the need for aggregate recycling and conservation to be embedded into public policy. The member from Dufferin-Caledon has risen to the occasion and is proposing this motion today.

The implications of this legislation reach beyond those directly involved in the aggregate industry. The bill, which was appropriately introduced on Earth Day earlier this year—my colleague is very perceptive—will also preserve the land from which the aggregate is extracted.

By promoting the use of recycled aggregate, Bill 56 will slow the extraction of primary aggregate and increase the value of recycled resources. Proposals for new quarry sites have been a contentious issue in several areas of the province; I think we've pretty much all experienced that. Increasing our usage of recycled aggregate materials will lessen the demand for new quarries.

We have to recognize that aggregate is not a renewable resource but is definitely a reusable one. Recycled aggregate is safe, reliable and a readily available alternative to primary aggregate sources. According to the Ontario provincial standards specifications, recycled aggregates have been proven to be as reliable as primary aggregates.

So if a company can safely and economically complete a project using recycled aggregates, they should be allowed to participate in the request-for-proposal process for public projects. Ontario businesses should not be left out of the bidding process for public sector projects solely because they propose to incorporate recycled aggregate, but that's exactly what happens across Ontario because of many municipal bylaws, which stipulate the projects can only use primary materials. There is not a valid reason for prohibiting the use of recycled aggregate for public contracts. As my colleague said, three million

tonnes of recycled aggregate are readily available in stockpiles across the province.

Let's listen to what residents, industry and municipalities have told us: Remove the barriers to use this underutilized resource. The member from Dufferin-Caledon has taken an important step forward in making Ontario a leader in aggregate recycling, and I want to support her wholeheartedly and encourage the rest of the Legislature to certainly do the same.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I will be supporting this bill, because I think it's a good bill. But you didn't doubt it, I hope.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: No, I didn't. Not for a moment.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No. We have been working on this issue for quite some time—for a long time, in fact. You forgot to mention me. It's okay. The member from Ottawa South forgot to mention that. But that's okay, because I said, "When I speak, I'll just remind the folks that I was there."

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You had it written.

This is not a topic that excites people. I understand that. Because as soon as you say "aggregate," all of a sudden, people watching say, "Get the channel changer. Change the channel." Because the majority of people just don't have a clue what aggregates are. It's true. So you have to begin the discussion by defining aggregates.

Except for the people who are affected by extraction of aggregates, the majority of people just tune out. But the definition of "aggregate" in the act is the following: "gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone"—I had to look it up; it's a sedimentary carbonate rock—"sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other prescribed material." That's aggregate. Once you define it you can say, "Okay, now we can talk about it," I would think.

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This topic of recycling is a very important one because the whole problem of aggregates is that it's a limited, non-renewable resource. You cannot continue to plunder the land forever—you can't. At some point, you have to say, "How do you slow that down?" The way you slow it down is through recycling. We have to commit to greater recycling, and this bill is an attempt to speak to it. But the member knows and we all know that this was the subject of a long discussion in the hearings because there were many, many people who appeared before us who said, "We have to do more of it."

In Britain, they recycle much, much more than we do, and understandably. They've got a smaller geography there. They have to recycle more, and it makes sense. I think the rate of recycling there is about 30%, if not much greater.

We don't do badly here. As the member from Dufferin-Caledon pointed out, at the peak, we recycle 20%, at least through the Ministry of Transportation, which is quite good. It varies from year to year; some

years it's 17%, some years 18%, and at the highest level it was 20%. That's a good thing. It's something that we can be proud of, obviously, but it also means, when we find that only 7% of all of Ontario recycles, that's a low number and that's nothing to be proud of.

We need the ministry to be a leader in this, not just in terms of what it does but what the ministry and the government ought to do across the broader public sector. That's really what we're talking about. We need to make sure that recycling becomes part of what the ministry does, part of what it thinks about and part of what incentives it needs to offer other municipalities or, indeed, the broader public sector to make sure that we do more of this. I think the report does that.

To be fair, we've had a good relationship with all three political parties.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: We worked with the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, who was part of that committee as well. We worked as best as we could. There was some disagreement on some areas, but on the whole, we tried, all three political parties, to do our best to come up with better recommendations to deal with the Aggregate Resources Act. I think, when people see the report in a couple of weeks, they will see that good changes have been made. I know that there will be people who say, "You could go farther"—I know that. But I think this review and what we have done moves the agenda a lot better than where it is at the moment.

What the member's bill does, and she pointed it out very clearly, is it would prohibit certain restrictions on the use of aggregates in performing public sector construction work—and this is a good thing. Why we haven't done more of that in the past is beyond me, but we can't complain about what has happened; we have to move on and talk about what we need to do from now on.

It is good to have the industry on board and it is good to point out that the Ontario Road Builders' Association, with the assistance of the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, developed a best practices guide to promote industry recycling standards for aggregates—and that's a good thing that they have done. When the industry is on board, that's a very useful thing for us all, because it means they're not putting any roadblocks, it means they want to be partners in greater recycling, and that allows the government to go as far as it needs to go to make sure that we recycle a lot more of the aggregates without plundering Mother Earth as much as we sometimes do.

Why is this good? It's good because the current act, the ARA, does not currently contain specific provisions regarding the recycling or conservation of aggregate. The good thing about doing it is that, at individual construction sites, the on-site reuse of recycled materials results in less haulage, which means less disruption to those communities that are affected and it means that there are cost savings. That cannot be a bad thing; it can only be a good thing. And it means savings for public agencies responsible for the maintenance and expansion of public infrastructure.

There have been some cities that have led on this, and we need to say that. The city of Toronto has been good at doing recycling. The city of Hamilton has been doing it for a while. Guelph and the regional municipality of York accept the use of recycled aggregate materials in their municipal construction projects. It's good to mention them because what we want is for other municipalities to jump on board.

We understand that there are technical difficulties. We understand—

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Peterborough is doing it as well?

Hon. Jeff Leal: Starting.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Starting. Well, that's a good thing.

Mr. Mike Colle: Oh, they're late. Peterborough is late.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But it's good to hear that Peterborough is starting.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I always have to get a plug in, just to let everybody know I'm here.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No; if it is true, I wanted to mention it out loud for your benefit, member for Peterborough, so that the people watching say, "What about me?" But it is good that there are other communities that are coming on board.

We understand that some municipalities do not have the technical expertise to assess the quality of that recycled material. If that's the case, it makes it very difficult for them to jump on board. But that's where the government, through the Ministry of Transportation, is able to jump in and say, "We can help you, and how do we help you to do that?" So we need to—

Hon. Jeff Leal: Help is on its way.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Right. I'm glad to hear that.

We need to provide incentives to municipalities to jump on board. We could obviously order that they do it, but that may not be very helpful because they might be upset at that, and there may be some costs that some municipalities may not be able to afford. So we have to, as a government, find the right way to help many of these municipalities that simply do not have the resources or the competence or the expertise to be able to do that.

The report does talk about some of these issues, and this is a good thing, and we recognize that we need to do that. When people see the report, they will recognize that we have done a fairly good job of making recycling a reality in this province.

The provisions contained in Bill 56 are very good, I think. Obviously we have to send it off to committee to get a better sense for many about what the positives are and what the negatives are. If there are negatives, we should know what they are. I personally don't see any, but there are some people who are saying that if we use recycled material, the prices may go up. We should talk about that. Could prices jump up in a way that is artificial as opposed to real? That's something we might look at, and I'm sure there would be people who would be interested in talking to that.

With respect to incentives, it would be good to have municipalities and others come forward to tell us what kind of help they need and what kind of leadership they are expecting from the province that would make sure that many of these municipalities are not left behind but they can come on board as quickly as they can. By doing this, we will alleviate some of the fighting that goes on with each and every aggregate extraction that happens in our communities. It doesn't matter where it is. Wherever it is, whether it's on prime land—and we heard from many people saying that it shouldn't happen on prime land; it shouldn't happen in the Niagara Escarpment. Many communities say that it shouldn't happen anywhere. There are many communities who say that if it goes below the water table, we shouldn't be extracting rock whatsoever, even though we've been doing it for a while. Many say that environmental assessments have been done and therefore it's okay. But people have concerns about water, and right they are, because there are accumulative effects of extraction in many communities that could affect and do affect the water, and we need to worry about that. People are worried about that. We touch on that in the report.

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I think that people will be able to see we have done our best—all three political parties—to advance the agenda on this review, but particularly on recycling as well.

I'll be supporting this bill. We think it's a good bill, and it's for that reason that we mention the member from Dufferin–Caledon in our bill as a way of saying this is okay. We look forward to debating the review as soon as it comes forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Colle: I know that the member from Trinity–Spadina mentioned that we had a very good learning experience, as MPPs, as we travelled across the country as part of the aggregate review committee, and I know that the member from Dufferin–Caledon was on the committee, as well as the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock. I think it was the first time in the history of this Legislature that members of the Legislature actually visited quarries and aggregate sites right across the province. We even went to Manitoulin Island to check their unique extraction method on the island—they ship everything by ship through the Great Lakes and so forth—and we went to the huge ones in Caledon. We were in some restored sites, too, that have been made fertile and green.

So we learned a lot, as MPPs, and I certainly thought the member from Dufferin–Caledon had a real, sincere interest in the committee looking at the increased use of recycled materials in road building etc. It makes ultimate good sense to do this, because when you use recycled materials, you take the pressure off virgin land that doesn't have to be used basically as a pit. You also take the pressure off the road infrastructure. Municipalities claim there is a lot of truck traffic, a lot of dust, a lot of

noise as a result of aggregate extraction across the province, and there is.

But as the member from Trinity–Spadina will tell you, the reality is we need to have aggregate. I used to ask people in my riding—they would have big stone houses, and in front on their lawn they would have a sign saying, “Stop the mega quarry.” I would say, “Well, where did the stone come from for your house and your pool in your backyard? Where did the concrete come from for your pool? Building the school or the hospital or the new road you want along the 407 comes from Ontario aggregate.”

The reality is we have to protect our farmland, we have to protect our watercourses, our aquifers, but we also have to understand that this is a vital industry for Ontario. It's a vital natural resource that should be protected because it's not limitless, certainly not in southern Ontario, especially when it has adverse effects. The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes will tell you about her issues; the member from Caledon will tell you about the trucks and extraction issues.

This is part of the solution. The member from Dufferin–Caledon has brought forward part of the solution. It's a very pragmatic step forward that I would encourage all members on both sides of the House to support, because it means that we start using material that's been taken from cities and former road sites or whatever—it's reused. MTO, the Ministry of Transportation, has proven you can do it. They've been using recycled aggregates for about 40 years. We found out that MTO uses about 20% recycled aggregates in their road construction—20%.

The sad thing is, municipalities are lacking in using recycled aggregates. They all say, “Well, our engineers don't like recycled aggregates,” and we asked them why. “Well, back in 1962 there was a road that wasn't up to par because they used recycled.” Well, the new technology, the testing that is done and the new demands made on quality control make recycled aggregates very appropriate, very safe and of high standards. If MTO can use it on their superhighways, there's no reason why municipalities can't start to use it; as the member said, some municipalities are, like Toronto, Guelph and others, but not enough. Municipalities, I think, are only using about 3%.

Municipal leaders came to the committee, and we asked each one, “How much recycled aggregate do you use?” They had no idea: “Well, our engineers don't know. We don't know. We'll look into it.” I don't know if they ever got back to you.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Or they didn't want to admit it.

Mr. Mike Colle: I don't know. They were playing dumb.

We said, “You know, you could save money. You could take the pressure off farmland by using recycled aggregates. You can create jobs in recycling,” but the municipalities, generally, have been very opposed to using recycled materials. The question is, the carrot or the stick—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you.

Mr. Mike Colle: I was talking about the carrot a bit here; I was just getting to the carrot.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Harris: I'm pleased to rise in support of Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, which my colleague the member from Dufferin–Caledon tabled earlier this year. In fact, the member and I have spent a lot of time together reviewing the Aggregate Resources Act in committee over the last year, and I have witnessed her commitment to this issue—in fact, we will call her our little “rocks star”—and her determination to bring forward a legislative reform that would save taxpayers money, create jobs and protect our environment. So I'd like to thank the member for her hard work on this important bill.

As I had mentioned, last year, when I travelled across the province as part of the Aggregate Resources Act review group, I had the opportunity to hear from many residents, municipal officials and industry representatives. Everywhere I went, I always heard support for using more recycled materials for public sector projects.

Still, there are a number of roadblocks preventing this practice in the public sector. In fact, many municipalities stipulate that they will not accept bids from companies that use recycled aggregates, and that is just not right. I am sure we can all agree that public sector projects should not be limited by requirements specifying that virgin or primary aggregates be used in construction, especially when recycled aggregates have been proven to be just as safe and reliable. I hope we can also all agree that no company should be prevented from bidding on contracts simply because they want to use recycled aggregates during construction.

Well, we have the power to start the process to reform these two problems today, by voting in favour of the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act. Bill 56 would ensure that recycled aggregates are fairly considered for all public sector construction and that no company is barred from this work just because it uses recycled aggregates.

With more than five million tonnes of recycled aggregate materials stockpiled around the province, taking this action just makes sense. These resources could be put to good use, in a way that saves taxpayers money and stimulates growth in the recycling industry while protecting our environment.

That's why, as PC environment critic, I am particularly pleased with Bill 56. It creates the right economic conditions to allow companies operating in a free and open market to deliver real results for our environment. At a time when our province ships roughly a third of our waste, or four million tonnes, to the United States every year, we need substantive policy changes like Bill 56 to improve overall waste diversion.

With this in mind, I would encourage all members in this House to vote in favour of Bill 56.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Steve Clark: It's a pleasure to join in the debate for Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, introduced by my colleague the member for Dufferin–Caledon. It's a bill I am proud to say I support. Ms. Jones has done an exceptional job in outlining all the details of the legislation and why it is a good bill, so I won't spend my time recycling her comments.

1520

Interjections.

Mr. Steve Clark: That was okay; that worked.

I do want to talk about a company in Leeds–Grenville, George Tackaberry and Sons, which celebrated its 55th year in business last year. I'm pleased to call George a friend. You won't find a business owner in Ontario who cares more about his employees or his community. His equipment has built and maintained countless roads in the united counties of Leeds and Grenville, but it's really his heart and generosity that have helped make the communities dotting those roads the places that my constituents love to call home. I could go on and on about him, Speaker, but I'm going to identify some points in Bill 56.

There's no single piece of legislation—certainly not a private member's bill—that can settle the emotional debate about aggregate extraction. However, I want to compliment the member for Dufferin–Caledon. She has done a remarkable job in Bill 56 to bring forward a thoughtful and balanced proposal to help meet Ontario's demand for aggregate.

The growing demand for stone, sand and gravel is a good thing. It's something that all of us want, if we're truly committed to getting the province's economy back on track. You can't grow the economy without aggregate. Roads, bridges and, yes, subways just don't get built with thin air.

To meet the demand, Bill 56 creates an opportunity to use more recycled aggregate in public construction projects. As a number of speakers have said earlier, we know that there are three million tonnes of recycled aggregate now stockpiled across the province. I want to give credit to the heads of the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, the Ontario Road Builders' Association, the Ready Mixed Concrete Association of Ontario, the Ontario Hot Mix Producers Association, and the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association, who stated in a joint letter to all of us here in the Legislative Assembly—I'll just give you one quote: “We know that incorporating recycled aggregate into construction projects makes good environmental and economic sense.”

Both sides of this debate see Bill 56 as a common-sense, practical way to alleviate the pressure on primary aggregate and the land it comes from. So I'm going to ask everyone to consider—when they're getting ready to vote on this—some of the issues that we deal with in this place, some of the divisive and emotional issues, the challenge that the member had to draft a private member's bill that's doing some substantive work by people

who, quite frankly, sometimes can't decide on what the colour of the sky is. At least you know with me that I'm always going to say it's blue.

In this bill, the member has really addressed a need, and I hope and I pray that all members will support Bill 56. Congratulations to the member for Dufferin–Caledon.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mrs. Jane McKenna: I'd also like to thank the member from Dufferin–Caledon, who has been a mentor to me personally as well.

I rise to speak to Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act. If enacted, Bill 56 would prohibit any public sector person or body in Ontario precluding the use of secondary aggregates in public sector construction work. This is not to say that there aren't already public sector bodies currently incorporating recycled aggregate into their construction work. The Ministry of Transportation is a prominent beacon of hope in this regard. But we can always do more. It begins with changing the way we frame the process.

Many, if not most, municipalities specify as part of their RFP process for construction work that only 100% virgin material will be considered. The result of this is a bid process tilted toward primary aggregates. That boosts market demand and means more quarries. The government of Ontario and the MUSH sector—municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals—represent the largest users of aggregate in this province.

Using recycled aggregate obviously eases the burden on our environment. This is why the measures proposed by Bill 56 can have such a positive effect. The fact is that quarries have a huge impact on their host communities, and they are vigorously resisted—the Nelson proposal in the shadow of Mount Nemo or the enormous Highland mega quarry are two recent examples.

While we need aggregate for our new construction projects, the aggregate itself does not need to be new. As Bill 56 points out, there are more enlightened solutions available to us, so I am very happy to support this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Dufferin–Caledon, you have two minutes.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I very much appreciate the feedback I have received on Bill 56. There's a joke in my office that I have no shortage of ideas. Some of them are great ideas; some, not so much. But the reality is, whether I have the idea or not, I need other people to implement it.

I want to particularly thank Jerry Richmond, in legislative research. He was our researcher for the ARA. Jerry and I have spent a lot of time on the phone and in person talking about rocks, and I really enjoyed his counsel.

The other person is my executive assistant. Kevin Weatherbee has worked hours and hours and hours preparing the background material to make Bill 56 a good piece of legislation. I am very proud of what we've been able to bring forward for debate. I really do believe it will actually make a positive change and can improve the situation in Ontario, and I just want to thank Kevin

for all the work he did preparing for this debate this afternoon.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We'll take the vote at the end of private members' business.

NATURAL GAS
SUPERHIGHWAY ACT, 2013
LOI DE 2013 SUR L'AUTOROUTE
DU GAZ NATUREL

Mr. Bailey moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel / Projet de loi 97, Loi visant à encourager l'achat de véhicules utilisant du gaz naturel comme carburant.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'm honoured to rise in the House today and discuss what I believe is a very important bill, Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel or, as I am calling it, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013.

I would like to begin by recognizing the guests who have joined us for the debate today. They are seated in the members' west gallery. Joining us are Mr. Tim Egan, president and CEO of the Canadian Gas Association; Murray Logan and Wayne Blenkhorn, of Faromor Energy Solutions; Ryan Shaw and Paul Ungerman, from Union Gas; and Mr. Ritchie Murray, Mike Tremayne and Rohan Service, from Enbridge. Sending regrets is Ms. Alicia Milner, president of the Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance. Please give them a warm round of applause.

Mr. Speaker, my guests are here today because they care about the direction of our province, as we all do. They believe, like you and I do, that natural gas as a transportation fuel is an opportunity to do what is right for both our natural environment and our business environment. In his recent 2012 report, *A Question of Commitment: Review of the Ontario Government's Climate Change Action Plan Results*, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner reports that because of the sheer volume of cars and trucks on the road today, Ontario's transportation sector continues to be the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the province.

Almost nine million vehicles were registered in the province in 2010, and because of increased trade, the development of supply chain management systems and just-in-time delivery models, the number of large freight vehicles on the road has doubled since 1990. Not surprisingly, this sector has witnessed a significant increase in its emissions. Today, of those nearly nine million vehicles on the road in Ontario, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles make up just 3% of that traffic, yet they

contribute almost 30% of greenhouse gas emissions that come from on-road sources.

If the government of Ontario is serious about reducing greenhouse gas emissions, then it is time that we, as legislators, look at offering real alternatives to those who operate medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in our province. One way we can do that is by leveraging the ongoing development of North America's vast gas deposits.

Interest in natural gas as a transportation fuel isn't new. Past support from federal, provincial and private sector initiatives led to over 35,000 light-duty natural gas vehicles, like buses, being put on the road in Canada many years ago. Unfortunately, because of previous market conditions, the critical market uptake needed to grow that market did not occur. But as we are all aware, in the last five years access to the supply of readily available natural gas in North America has changed that outlook dramatically. New opportunity is being created across this continent. Canada and the United States have been given the opportunity to dramatically shift their current energy supply makeup and, at the same time, stimulate their slow-growth economies. Even in his 2012 State of the Union address, United States President Barack Obama stated just that: "We have a supply of natural gas that can last America"—this continent—"nearly 100 years.... Experts believe this will support more than 600,000 jobs by the end of the decade."

1530

Don't let this message be misconstrued. Natural gas is not going to be the be-all and end-all of energy supply. Rather, it will be a very significant piece of that puzzle, an extremely abundant, safe and affordable piece which has yet to be recognized for its full potential.

Research and product development in the area of natural gas procurement and use is leading to innovative new technologies and product design that have the potential to reshape conventional thinking in many areas, including as a reliable, heavy-duty transportation fuel. In fact, in its assessment of the resource, Natural Resources Canada identified medium- and heavy-duty on-road transportation as the greatest value proposition for natural gas transportation fuels moving forward.

New, reliable truck engine technology that utilizes natural gas is giving North America's hard-hit cargo transportation sector a shot in the arm, reducing emissions, lowering transportation costs and delivering those critical cost savings to industry's bottom line. Heavy-duty manufacturers of trucks like Freightliner, Kenworth, Peterbilt and Volvo have all recently developed product lines to utilize liquefied natural gas, otherwise known as LNG.

The Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013, aims to promote the use of liquefied natural gas as a freight transportation fuel in Ontario by accommodating its advanced engine technology and providing that incentive designed to stimulate private investment in proven lower-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

Specifically, this bill calls upon this Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enable the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations prescribing higher weight limits for vehicles that use liquefied natural gas as fuel. Current road limits restrict vehicles to a gross weight of 63,500 kilograms. The equivalent required to run this cleaner, cheaper fuel can add as much as 1,500 kilograms to the weight of a truck using that fuel, versus trucks using the more traditional fuel.

In a day and age when transportation companies must maximize the use of their equipment to stay competitive, this small variance in weight allowance is enough to keep companies from taking advantage of this lower-greenhouse-gas-producing natural gas transportation fuel. Moreover, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013, would require the Minister of Transportation to table a progress report to this Legislative Assembly of Ontario annually until those regulations are made that support the use of LNG.

Mr. Speaker, we ask for this because we understand that not everything can be done overnight. But all that industry is asking for is that the government—this government—recognize the importance of natural gas as a transportation fuel. With that show of support by this government and this Legislature, I have heard from many private operators who believe the heavy-duty LNG vehicles are the logical choice for their companies. These same companies tell me that they are eager to make investments in Ontario by building the infrastructure such as refineries, refueling stations and maintenance facilities needed to support this next generation in transportation fuels and vehicles.

For an example, one needs look no further than my own riding of Sarnia-Lambton, where Royal Dutch Shell is building Canada's largest LNG facility to support the use of liquefied natural gas as a transportation fuel initially for Ontario's hard-working Great Lakes freighters. They've got one company currently, Interlake shipping, that's going to convert their fleet over time to natural gas. Anyone looking at this should be able to recognize this incredible opportunity that exists in the on-road transportation fuel sector, and marine and rail as well.

This Natural Gas Superhighway Act also proposes to provide for a non-refundable tax credit of half the HST, or 4%, for seven years to those taxpayers and fleet owners who would purchase these vehicles—trucks, ships and trains—that use natural gas, or LNG, as a fuel. This credit is intended as a small incentive to help those fleet owners and fleet operators to transition their fleets from traditional fuels to the new cleaner-burning natural gas, building that critical mass in the industry and speeding the reduction of greenhouse gases from traditional fuel sources.

Thanks to similar incentives and with an expected fuel cost savings of up to 25% to 30%, major American trucking companies are already making this transition. Moreover, the province of Quebec has taken early action by offering fiscal incentives to encourage their commercial fleets to purchase natural gas vehicles. The one main

fleet there is Robert trucking. These tax measures include an accelerated capital cost allowance on new trucks; a program for improving energy efficiency in road, rail and marine transportation which would fund up to \$15,000 per truck for alternative fuels; and investing in the infrastructure for what they call in Quebec the “blue corridor,” which is essentially the Quebec portion of the significant Windsor–Quebec City transportation and manufacturing corridor that also runs through Ontario—the Macdonald–Cartier Freeway.

In addition, Alberta has updated their highway regulations to allow increased weight allowances for LNG trucks on that heavy-haul route from Calgary to Edmonton to keep their oil industry afloat.

British Columbia has also made many investments to reimburse up to 80% of the price differential between a natural gas vehicle and a diesel-powered vehicle.

Robert trucking, as I’ve talked about, has invested in over 180 LNG trucks over three years; those trucks run from parts of Quebec into Toronto already. There’s a company in Alberta that has made a big investment. Waste Management has invested in trucks in both Coquitlam in BC—and 20 in Ottawa. Gaz Métro has invested in five LNG stations along the blue corridor in Quebec. Shell, Encana and Ferus are all making developments. I just heard, as early as an hour ago, that one of the rail operations could run all of their freight operations across all of Canada with, I think it is, five or six refueling stations. So it’s not a matter of, “Will this happen and can it happen?” It’s going to happen. Ontario needs to be at the table and we need to be a big part of that.

All told, these private companies’ efforts represent more than \$350 million of investment in this sector of the market. The business community is ready to step up and do their job. We as government and this Legislature need to step up and do our part.

The main artery of Ontario’s manufacturing economy, the Windsor–Quebec City corridor, has virtually no share of that investment, despite having the largest marketplace and the largest number of industry players ready to take advantage of this. If Ontario doesn’t take steps soon to open its borders to this same type of innovation and investment, it risks being left behind, and our businesses will fall further behind as they lose their ability to get their products to market at competitive prices.

I’ve heard from Loblaws as well; they’re willing to get behind this.

The time is right for the province of Ontario to seriously look at the promotion of natural gas as a transportation fuel. I believe that, after hearing the response of the Minister of Energy this morning in question period to a question I put to him, he also believes the same thing.

I ask members that are here today to support Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013. By doing that, we as a Legislature can move this important piece of legislation to committee, where we can hear from all of the industry stakeholders about the importance of

opening the Ontario market to investment and opportunity. It comes with a clean, abundant and North American energy source.

To reiterate, the intent of the natural gas bill is to ask the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations about weight limits as well as require the Minister of Transportation to make a progress report every 18 months, and to provide for a non-refundable tax credit of half of the HST for seven years to those taxpayers who would purchase those vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the time you’ve allowed me today and I want to thank all of my colleagues who are here today that are going to speak on this bill. I look forward to the rest of the afternoon and a very fruitful debate. Again, I want to thank all the stakeholders that showed up here today. I look forward to the rest of the debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Jonah Schein: I’m happy to rise today to speak to Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013. I want to commend the member, first of all, for the title of this act. It’s one of the better ones I’ve heard; it reminds me of a rock-and-roll album or something.

Speaker, Bill 97 attempts to enable regulations prescribing higher weight limits for vehicles that use liquefied natural gas as a transportation fuel. It would also require the Minister of Transportation to table a progress report to the Legislative Assembly annually until these regulations are made. Bill 97 would also provide for a non-refundable tax credit in the amount of half of the Ontario portion of the HST, which is 4%, for seven years to taxpayers who purchase vehicles like trucks, ships and trains that use natural gas as fuel.

This is an interesting bill. I think it’s interesting in part because, typically, private members’ bills do not have financial implications. I’m curious about this one and what the financial implications are, because it seems to me that there actually would be lots of revenue here.

1540

I do agree with some of the environmental principles behind this bill, but I also have some questions about the feasibility of the incentives that Bill 97 proposes.

Let’s talk about the environmental considerations first. We know that the transportation sector in 2010 was responsible for the largest volume of greenhouse gas emissions province-wide. This sector has also witnessed a significant increase in emissions since 1990, while other sectors—electrical and industry—have seen a decrease.

Medium- and heavy-duty vehicles make up only 3% of the vehicles on the road today, but they contribute 27% of the greenhouse gas emissions from on-road sources. As a transportation fuel, natural gas represents a cleaner alternative to traditional fuels, especially diesel, for medium and heavy trucks, trains and ships. And so, in principle, I believe we need to support the transition to cleaner technologies from traditional fuels like diesel.

As many of you might know, the World Health Organization recently declared diesel-engine exhaust as a group

1 carcinogen—along with arsenic, asbestos and tobacco—and it has now been proven, without a doubt, that exposure to diesel exhaust causes lung cancer. As you know by now too, Speaker, this is one of the main reasons that I and members of my community have serious concerns about the use of diesel trains on the Union Pearson Express air-rail link.

Just to bring the audience into this discussion here, I represent a riding just west of Queen's Park, and it's a riding that could definitely use better transit. The good news is that there is transit coming, and there is transit coming that is going to take people from the airport down to Union Station—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order.

Mr. Jonah Schein: Thank you, Speaker.

But the train that's being built is a train that is not going to serve our communities at all. In fact, our communities are going to—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I will ask the speaker to speak to the Chair rather than the audience. If I could have a little bit of quiet in the room, I would be able to hear what he's saying.

Mr. Jonah Schein: Thank you for the reminder. Speaker, through you to members present today, just to let people know: This is a transit plan, but it's the wrong kind of transit plan. We're having a discussion here about cleaner fuel technologies, and yet the government of the day is moving forward with a transit plan that is not going to reduce greenhouse emissions and is not going to improve air quality. In fact, it's going to make people in the west end of Toronto sick, and it is a colossal waste of money. When we are able to build new transit using clean technologies, the government of the day is choosing a diesel fuel. That is just the wrong path.

In our case, in Davenport and in the west end, where cleaner technology does exist through electrical energy, we should move to use it. I will be curious to see how the government votes on this bill today, when they are clearly on the wrong path when it comes to the diesel trains that they are building right now.

Anyway, getting back to the bill, Bill 97: There are various options for the conversion of heavy transport vehicles to natural gas, and they should be seriously considered. Options should also be considered for the critical importance of on-road freight transportation to our provincial economy. In Ontario alone, the number of heavy-duty on-road diesel vehicles more than doubled between 1990 and 2008. Within the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, between 70% and 90% of freight is moved by truck.

Unlike most other sectors of the economy, the transportation sector relies almost exclusively on a single energy source, which is crude-oil-based fuels, to meet the vast majority of its energy needs. Meanwhile, the price of diesel fuel in Toronto has increased by 165% since 1990, which is another reason why we should not be creating new diesel trains in this situation.

Liquefied natural gas vehicles generate a fuel cost savings of 20% to 30% for heavy transport operators. Those lower transportation costs could mean savings to Ontario businesses along the supply chain. So there are definite reasons to explore options for the use of natural gas.

British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec—these provinces have already adopted legislation to promote natural gas as a transportation fuel, as well as American jurisdictions, such as New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Colorado, California, Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. But the mechanisms that they have used are different than the ones in Bill 97.

There are other considerations with Bill 97. Natural gas still does produce greenhouse gas emissions, just not as much as diesel fuel. While the cost of natural gas right now is lower, we do not know if the cost of natural gas will remain so.

Interjection: Diesel used to be cheaper, too.

Mr. Jonah Schein: That's right.

Fracking technology is primarily responsible for the current low prices in natural gas, and there are real environmental concerns about the use of fracking technology.

Serious questions remain about the potential environmental impacts of shale gas exploration. Concerns include massive water extractions, potential contamination of drinking water and watersheds and significant greenhouse gas emissions. These concerns have been raised by respected individuals such as Dr. David Suzuki and Ontario's own Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller.

In 2011, Quebec put a moratorium on fracking until the province has conducted a detailed environmental assessment. New York state has a moratorium, which they are currently debating extending until July 2013, to allow for environmental studies to occur.

In the fall of 2011, Niagara regional council passed a moratorium on shale gas exploration—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The Minister of Rural Affairs, I'm having difficulty hearing the speaker.

Mr. Jonah Schein: Thank you, Speaker.

In 2011, in the fall, Niagara regional council passed a moratorium on shale gas exploration due to environmental concerns. The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario has raised concerns about fracking—as I mentioned; so has the Council of Canadians and others who are campaigning for a moratorium across Canada due to dangers to water, increased greenhouse gas emissions and dangers to wildlife.

So with these outstanding environmental concerns, we believe that these should be addressed before we go forward with this technology when it comes to shale gas.

In addition to these environmental concerns, it's also not clear if Bill 97 uses the appropriate financial mechanism. In British Columbia, for example, they have taken another route. The government passed a regulation

that allows utility companies to deliver natural gas transportation programs until March 2017.

Under this regulation, the utility companies can offer incentives to transportation fleets that use natural gas, such as buses, trucks or ferries. Companies can build, own and operate compressed natural gas fueling stations or liquefied natural gas fueling stations. They can upgrade these facilities to provide training to safely maintain natural gas vehicles.

The non-refundable tax credit of half of the Ontario portion of the HST—this would require federal amendments to the tax act to make this incentive operational, and we have not traditionally seen a great deal of co-operation when it comes to the provincial government of Ontario and the federal government of Stephen Harper, and we would need to see that co-operation if this was actually to occur. So even if this bill was passed, it would not—from my understanding, anyway—actually be possible without co-operation from the federal government.

Also, the nature of this bill seems to make it a money bill, as I mentioned, which generally is not something we allow in private members' business.

That said, I think it's worth getting this private member's bill to committee, and so we will be supporting it. We definitely want to hear from experts on how the details of a natural gas conversion financial incentive might work and should work.

I think it's somewhat ironic to hear from the other two parties—well, we haven't heard from the government yet at this point—but parties that are all too willing to subsidize some of the energy sector. So when it comes to our nuclear facilities, the real costs of nuclear energy are tremendous. We're going to feel that for generations. It's highly, highly subsidized. We have a government that is paying for an exceptionally expensive fuel when it comes to diesel, a very costly fuel when it comes to the health of the community, with this expansion of the air-rail link, and they have no problems paying for that.

1550

We have an opposition party that resists any kind of support for green energy, and we have both parties, the provincial government here and the federal Conservative Party, that have cut back the most sensible energy plan of all, which is to actually not use energy in the first place. It's to conserve it; to make sure that we're using it wisely. Instead of making the necessary investments when it comes to energy conservation and supporting home energy retrofits, both the federal government and the provincial government have cut those things. That is disappointing, Speaker. Now they're willing to subsidize another energy source here, but as I said, I think there are worthy environmental implications of doing this.

Ultimately, I'll support and agree that there is a benefit for the environment and to our economy in converting from heavy diesel transport to natural gas, so I look forward to the comments from the other parties. I'll stop there.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 97, which is An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel. I congratulate the member from Sarnia–Lambton for bringing this bill forward. When he told me he was bringing forward a bill that involved the use of natural gas as an alternate fuel for vehicles, I was quite encouraged by that.

I will say at the outset that I personally plan to support this bill. There are some issues, I think, with the bill. I'm not sure if the approach that's being taken with the changing of some of our weight allowances is the right way to go, but I don't think as a Legislature we should let that stop us from investigating this bill further because in some other regards, it's got an awful lot of merit.

When you look at the comparison, the potential we have for natural gas vehicles, when you compare to the fuel that's being used, either gasoline or diesel, it emits about 20% to 30% less CO₂ and 70% to 90% less carbon monoxide. Nitrous oxide emissions can be reduced almost up to 100%. PM, particulate matter, can be reduced by 90%, and VOCs can be reduced by 90% as well. When you compare those two fuels together, I think any jurisdiction would be foolhardy to not take a serious look at using it as an alternate fuel.

When we compare ourselves with the United States and with other jurisdictions around the world that have natural gas-powered vehicles, we'll see that the entire country, in my opinion, isn't doing what it should be doing. In the States, for example, depending on what you classify as a vehicle, they claim that anywhere from 120,000 to 260,000 vehicles are used in the United States today that are powered by natural gas. If you look across the continent, and that's primarily in the United States, you've got about 1,000 filling stations that provide the network to provide the fuels for those.

So why would you use natural gas? Well, right from the start, I think, you've got to look that it's cheaper. It's about 50% cheaper when you start to use some of the costs. It's cleaner, as I said earlier; it's got about 80% less particulate matter, 20% to 25% less greenhouse gas emissions. Also, we're finding there's an increased supply. Ontario is well positioned. The storage capacity we have and the market we have will be attracting natural gas from the south, from Pennsylvania and also from the west, where we've traditionally received our supply from. So it's not like we're short of natural gas.

Certainly, when you look at oil, when you talk about peak oil, you start to realize that we do need to go a different way on this. This brings us less soot, less smog, and when you look at the pollution that comes off our highway system, quite often we blame industry for pollution in our society and we kind of forget it's often our own cars and vehicles that are providing the majority of that pollution and of the degradation to our air quality.

It's quite simple, when you look at it. I'm not a scientist or a chemist, but when you look at natural gas, it

simply has less carbon than the other fuels. Natural gas is CH₄: one carbon atom and four hydrogen atoms. Diesel fuel, by comparison, is C₁₅H₃₂. Gasoline is C₈H₁₆. So you've got many more carbon atoms, much higher carbon content in the other fuels when you compare them to natural gas.

I'm suggesting that by supporting this bill, we keep this conversation going. In the province of Ontario, we need to get more natural gas vehicles on the road. The way we do that, I think, is to ensure that we've got a supply route—a supply along the existing trucking routes—and encourage our transit systems to use natural gas as an alternate fuel.

That infrastructure does not exist today. I know there is the one trucking company that stands out above all others in this regard, Robert, and they've put in their own system between Quebec and Ontario that their own trucks use privately. I think they're hoping to expand that.

I think there's enough potential that we need to keep this conversation going. As an individual, I will be supporting this bill; I think some of my colleagues will as well. Once again, I want to thank the member from Sarnia-Lambton for bringing forward what I think is a very good bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Michael Harris: As PC environment critic, I'm pleased to rise again today to support yet another private member's bill that will help improve our economy and, of course, our environment. I'd like to thank my colleague the member from Sarnia-Lambton for the work he's done in the preparation of this bill, and I hope everyone in this House will join me in moving this bill past second reading today and into law.

Like I always say, good environmental policy should also be good economic policy. Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel, follows this rule. Technology is getting more sophisticated every day, so government must keep up with these changes in order to stay competitive. The recent development of vast shale gas deposits in North America has driven up the demand for this low-cost fuel source: natural gas.

Estimates suggest that natural gas will last us well into the next century at a lower cost than oil. On average, natural gas vehicles use 20% to 40% less fuel than conventional vehicles. That's why American trucking companies are transitioning their fleets to run on natural gas. They understand the significant opportunity for cost savings, which can amount to as much as 40%.

Ontario must not fall behind. We need to create the right conditions to encourage Ontario consumers and companies to make the switch. To do that, Bill 97 would alleviate the financial risk of investing in new cars and trucks by offering a time-limited, non-refundable tax credit for the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel. Those who wish to make this investment would receive a tax credit that is equal to half of the HST the

purchaser paid on that vehicle. Purchasers would then have to ensure that they pay back the HST on the truck in seven years.

If implemented, this sound policy change would not only stimulate economic activity, it would also produce real results for our environment. According to the Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance, natural gas vehicles produce 20% to 25% less CO₂ emissions than conventional vehicles. In fact, the alliance also states that one in five trucks is more than 20 years old.

If you take both of these numbers into consideration, one in five trucks will have to be replaced in the near future, so why not encourage companies to choose vehicles powered by natural gas? That just makes sense. In fact, it makes more sense than penalizing Ontario drivers by forcing them to get a flawed and unnecessary Drive Clean test under a program that has become nothing more than a government cash grab.

As we look five years down the road, natural gas vehicles will be able to operate on renewable natural gas produced from biogas from organic matter. In fact, according to Natural Resources Canada, using 100% renewable natural gas will reduce 85% to 90% of our carbon emissions. It is crucial that Ontario takes the lead and starts powering its transit, buses and transport trucks with natural gas.

I think we can all agree that this is a very practical approach to keep Ontario competitive in a global economy and keep our air clean. That is why I would encourage every member in this House to vote in favour of Bill 97.

I'd like to thank the member for Sarnia-Lambton for bringing forward this very crucial and important piece of legislation.

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

1600

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: It's great to stand up and talk in a supportive way about this bill from MPP Bailey from Sarnia-Lambton, my good friend, with mutual friends in Chatham and Oil Springs and our deep connection to a former minister under Bill Davis, Lorne Henderson. His daughter is my best friend. See? We can get along; I'm best friends with Lorne's daughter.

Anyway, I'm up, happily, to talk about Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel. Like the member from Oakville, I am supportive. I think there are some things we need to work through on this, and a conversation that needs to keep going, but in principle, the PMB that encourages the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel by amending the Highway Traffic Act and subsequent regulations, and the Taxation Act, is a PMB that I think is worthy of future consideration and work.

These amendments would address weight issues associated with both compressed- and liquefied-natural-gas vehicles and provide a tax credit or subsidies to the purchasers of such vehicles.

As the Liberal government has made some progress in this area, I think it's important to highlight what some of those are. We have reformed weight laws that took into consideration maximum weights which we could allow on roads while doing the least amount of damage to our infrastructure and maintaining safety. We've made some progress as an Ontario government on this issue.

As we all know, natural gas is indeed safer and cleaner for burning fuel, and good for our environment and good for air quality. It generates significantly fewer greenhouse emissions, particularly fewer carbon monoxide and nitrous oxide chemical components that are very harmful to our health, so I think that's something else we can all agree on.

It is important to note that natural gas vehicles are attracting greater interest, both for intercity and intra-city applications, because of the cost savings around it. However, this kind of technology that we are talking about is still evolving, so there are some issues around reliability, cost, fuelling, infrastructure, dealer support and so on that do require some further research and examination.

Ontario is really, though—it's important to remember—a leader in clean technology. We have a Premier who sees the world and where it's headed going forward in the new economies of the 21st century. With our government's clean initiatives, we are positioning Ontario for the future, ensuring we have that infrastructure in place, be it a smart grid, a sufficient power supply or changing infrastructure. We all want to make sure that Ontario is in front of this and is not left behind.

Overall, I think this is a worthy bill. I know the member from Sarnia–Lambton has put a great deal of work and thought into this, so I applaud him for that. I think—well, I know—that I can be supportive of this, and I hope others will be too.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate. The member for York–Simcoe.

Mrs. Julia Munro: A point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to draw the attention of the assembly that we have with us a former parliamentarian, David Turnbull.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you, and welcome.

Further debate.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: I'd also like to commend the member from Sarnia–Lambton, who has done a wonderful job on this. I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act. This bill seeks to encourage the purchase of vehicles fuelled by natural gas. It proposes to do this by way of a tax credit to taxpayers who purchase certain vehicles fuelled by natural gas. The purchase price for natural gas vehicles can be higher for operators, but the life cycle savings make switching attractive. This credit would lower the cost of entry.

Switching to natural gas offers broad benefits to public and private operators. The trucking sector is a key one, as this bill suggests. Transit is another.

Roughly one in six buses in Hamilton's transit fleet is now powered by compressed natural gas—CNG, for short. That city was an early adopter, starting in 1985. At

peak, half of its buses were running on natural gas. But Hamilton began shifting over to diesel and hybrid diesel-electric models since 2004, because of concerns with early CNG technology. The buses were costly to run and repair, which was burning a hole in the balance sheet.

Across the bay, my home riding of Burlington had about a third of its buses running on early CNG systems in the late 1990s. These were retired between 2002 and 2005 for the same reason as Hamilton.

But the fuel market has changed dramatically in recent years, and so has engine technology. New emissions standards benefit natural gas engines more than diesel engines, because natural gas is cleaner, and life cycle carbon emissions for natural gas buses are about 20% lower than their diesel counterparts. Enormous natural gas reserves have been tapped or identified across North America. The Geological Survey of Canada estimates that our own Arctic region contains a reserve of 97 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

In response to all of this, the market has grown by leaps and bounds. A quarter of all new bus orders in the United States are for CNG vehicles. Major American trucking companies are beginning the transition to natural gas as a fuel source, and a more efficient generation of CNG vehicles has arrived.

Diesel, on the other hand, is not looking its best. Diesel prices have climbed by about a third in the last four years and are projected to climb further yet over the next four years. In that same time, CNG prices have tumbled by about a third and are expected to decline further until 2017, then climb modestly. Diesel prices are much more volatile than natural gas prices. On a life cycle basis, CNG-powered vehicles have become competitive with gasoline-powered vehicles.

Trucking and transit operators in the United States have responded accordingly and, slowly, Canadian operators have as well. This year, Hamilton has taken a serious second look at shifting its fleet back to CNG. In doing so, it joins Calgary, which plans to purchase 200 CNG buses in the next decade.

It's not just dollars-and-cents equations. Natural gas vehicles promote energy security, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and cut pollution and noise at street level, all of this in addition to more predictable operating costs. These are changes we should be encouraging, and I am pleased to support Bill 97.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's a delight to have the opportunity to get a few words on the record this afternoon in support of Bill 97, as presented by my good friend the member from Sarnia–Lambton.

I just want to say I have a long-standing relationship in my part of Ontario, the Peterborough area and eastern Toronto, with Enbridge Gas, who do such a terrific job in terms of providing a great service to both businesses and residents in my riding of Peterborough. I just want to thank them for the great job they do.

One of the leaders of the gas industry in Ontario, I was told, was in Toronto last night, a man who has affectionately been called, over the years, the Duke of Kent, the Honourable W. Darcy McKeough, who represented the riding in southwestern Ontario for many years.

When Mr. McKeough completed his very distinguished political career here at Queen's Park—a minister with Mr. Robarts and Mr. Davis, of course—he was chair of the board of Union Gas for a number of years. Of course, Union Gas was headquartered in Chatham, Ontario.

For those who are interested in political trivia, the Honourable John Robarts was the godfather for at least one of the McKeough children of Darcy and Joyce. That was a long-standing relationship.

I guess I'd better get to the bill here.

Interjection: We're not going to object.

Hon. Jeff Leal: They're not going to object, of course.

The Peterborough Petes are playing tonight at the Memorial Centre, and of course we want to wish them well.

Mr. Steve Clark: Tickets are available?

Hon. Jeff Leal: Tickets are available. I hear the member from Durham. I could get him a box seat, if he wants to take the opportunity—

Interjection.

Hon. Jeff Leal: —and my good friend the member from Oshawa. They could both be there in the box seats together, getting a great view of the Peterborough Petes.

Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I've got to get back to the bill here.

1610

I think this is a great opportunity for extensive use of natural gas in vehicles. Just this afternoon I took a look at that extension of the 407, right at Lake Ridge Road. They're doing a tremendous amount of work there, and as they extend that eastward it would be a real opportunity to have vehicles that are powered by natural gas.

It's interesting, of course, that supply has decreased significantly, particularly from the American Midwest. They've found all this shale gas due to fracking. There's more gas coming into the market, so we've got to look at innovative ways that we might be able to use that product to help us fuel the economy in the province of Ontario.

The member from Sarnia-Lambton, I think, has hit upon a very good idea that we need to explore further. I want to congratulate him. He was one of the leaders, along with the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, with the One Call system that's being accepted right across Ontario. That was a partnership with Union Gas, Enbridge and many other utilities to make sure that we don't do unnecessary digging, but get it right, improve safety and protect citizens right across this great province.

Bill 97 is very consistent with what the member has been doing since he arrived here in 2007—Mr. Bailey, is that correct?

Mr. Robert Bailey: I should have been here much sooner.

Hon. Jeff Leal: He should have been here much sooner.

I still see him as one of the progressive members of that caucus over there, and you can see that with this legislation that he's bringing forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm very privileged to be filling in this afternoon for our energy critic, Mr. Fedeli from Nipissing; by the way, he's our finance critic as well. I want to congratulate Mr. Bailey from Sarnia-Lambton as well because he was very diligent in picking out the right people to comment on this bill. It's been, quite seriously, unanimously supported. It seems like the NDP is somewhat warm to this issue, as well as the Liberal caucus, from their comments.

If you put it into perspective, it is simply the right thing to do. Some of the background that Mr. Bailey has provided for us is convincing evidence, and he's done a great job on a couple of other bills that are non-partisan and have received support of the House. I'm sure we'll hear more about that in the next while under the Local Food Act.

I can only say, too, that this past week I had the privilege of meeting with a number of people who work professionally. I met with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers' Mr. Dave Collyer, as well as the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association's Dr. Brenda Kenny. Dr. Kenny was talking to us about the important advantages—natural advantages, I might say—of natural gas. The Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance is a non-profit organization espousing the use of natural gas and liquefied natural gas, as it is a much cleaner fuel. It is 20% to 30% cheaper and it is actually very friendly to the environment.

You can look at the implications of the alternative for the trucking industry, which is diesel. Diesel itself creates a 77% greenhouse gas increase and 71% growth in energy use; 3% of vehicles but emit 24% of the greenhouse gases from on-road sources; 40 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year if a truck drives 125,000 kilometres. The evidence is clear that we need to provide some leadership for the alternative, the alternative being liquefied natural gas, which Mr. Bailey's bill espouses.

In the detailed part of it, it isn't a huge subsidy or support for the industry, but what it does is allow you, over time, to receive a portion of the HST for the purchase of a vehicle. Companies, I'm sure, want to do the right things by having cleaner vehicles on the highway. There have to be a couple of amendments: one to the Highway Traffic Act, because liquefied natural gas is heavier, as well as the tax credit that you can get over time.

I commend Mr. Bailey from Sarnia-Lambton for the work he's done on this by reaching out and educating the members of all caucuses. I was very encouraged earlier today. Mr. Bailey asked a question of the Minister of

Energy, and it was my impression—you can interpret it sometimes; what they say and what they do are often different things—that he did support Mr. Bailey's question in his response. I think people could look at Hansard to see that doing the right thing actually is the right policy, and the right politics is simply doing the right thing.

Again, this has been a very cordial afternoon and it sounds to me like this will receive unanimous support. I'll certainly be supporting it, and I commend Mr. Bailey and the stakeholders that are here today. Doing the right thing is the right policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Sarnia–Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it's a pleasure. Right now I want to thank all of the legislators that are here, members of the Legislative Assembly that spoke today. Particularly I want to thank the members for Davenport, Burlington, Durham, Kitchener–Conestoga, Oakville, and the Minister of Consumer Services and the Minister of Rural Affairs, who also spoke in support of this bill—or at least general support, if not full support. It was a pleasure to hear their remarks.

I look forward, if this bill is passed and moved on to committee, to where we can take those improvements, we can bring people from industry, bring people in from the general public and get their ideas to make this a better bill, if it's to pass, and do the right thing for the province of Ontario.

I also want to commend the Minister of Rural Affairs. He mentioned the gas stored at Dawn township; we call it the Dawn hub. The member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex and I share that. He's got part of it in his riding; I've got part of it in my riding. It's certainly a well-known industry in our area and they're doing a great job there. There's Enbridge as well. They share the province in the work they do in gas and safety. It was a pleasure to work with them on the One Call bill as well.

Also, I want to mention that 50 years ago today the Robarts government was elected. There were a number of members that came to this Parliament from all three parties. What changes we've made. Just before I conclude, I had a chance to look through that, and it's amazing how society has changed. I looked through it and there was only one woman elected 50 years ago today, so what a great improvement in this Legislature. We have all these lovely women from all three caucuses that are here with us today, and I think it has made the Legislature a better place. I hope my wife was watching back home when I said that.

Anyway, thank you, Mr. Speaker, again. I won't belabour the afternoon. I know everybody has had a long week and it has been tiring. I know the Liberal Party is going to Hamilton. They're going to have a great big convention this week. I'd like to go down there and see what they're up to. Anyway, thank you again to everyone who has spoken in support of my bill. I want to thank my executive assistant, Anthony, who put a pile of work into this, and into helping me, and my former assistant, David

Donovan, who has gone on to bigger and better things with the feds.

Thanks again, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to be here today, and thank you for your support.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

INTER-PROVINCIAL IMPORTATION OF WINE, BEER AND SPIRITS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR L'IMPORTATION INTERPROVINCIALE DE VIN, DE BIÈRE ET DE SPIRITUEUX

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will deal first with ballot item number 40, standing in the name of Mr. Milligan.

Mr. Milligan has moved second reading of Bill 98, An Act respecting the importation of wine, beer and spirits from other provinces.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Milligan?

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Government agencies, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has requested that the bill be referred to government agencies. Agreed? Agreed.

AGGREGATE RECYCLING PROMOTION ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PROMOTION DU RECYCLAGE DES AGRÉGATS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Jones has moved second reading of Bill 56, An Act to prohibit certain restrictions on the use of aggregates in performing public sector construction work.

Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I request that Bill 56 be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member requests that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. Agreed? Agreed.

NATURAL GAS
SUPERHIGHWAY ACT, 2013
LOI DE 2013 SUR L'AUTOROUTE
DU GAZ NATUREL

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Bailey has moved second reading of Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Sarnia–Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'd like it to go to the committee on government agencies.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has requested that the bill be referred to government agencies. Agreed? Agreed.

ROYAL ASSENT
SANCTION ROYALE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the

Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in his office.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): The following are the titles of the bills to which His Honour did assent:

An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer / Loi créant le poste de directeur de la responsabilité financière.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Orders of the day?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Monsieur le Président, je propose l'ajournement de la Chambre.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The minister has moved adjournment of the House. Agreed? Agreed.

This House stands adjourned until next Monday, 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1622.

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	
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
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 civiles 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	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Wellsand	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
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
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
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	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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 Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
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
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
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	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
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 Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales 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

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Michael Prue
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Mike Colle, Kim Craitor
Joe Dickson, Michael Harris
Rob Leone, Amrit Mangat
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
Steven Del Duca, Victor Fedeli
Catherine Fife, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Mitzie Hunter, Monte McNaughton
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield
Grant Crack, Dipika Damerla
John Fraser, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Rick Bartolucci
Laura Albanese, Rick Bartolucci
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Percy Hatfield
Mitzie Hunter, Jim McDonell
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely
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Bob Delaney, Frank Klees
Jack MacLaren, Phil McNeely
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, Steve Clark
Grant Crack, Vic Dhillon
Garfield Dunlop, Cindy Forster
Lisa MacLeod, Amrit Mangat
Michael Mantha
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, Lorenzo Berardinetti
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek
Bill Mauro, Phil McNeely
Norm Miller, Jerry J. Ouellette
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
Donna H. Cansfield, Dipika Damerla
John Fraser, 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
Bas Balkissoon, Ted Chudleigh
Mike Colle, Vic Dhillon
Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman
Helena Jaczek, Jane McKenna
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