



Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 30 October 2013**

**Mercredi 30 octobre 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



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Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 30 October 2013

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 30 octobre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**SCHOOL BOARDS COLLECTIVE  
BARGAINING ACT, 2013**

**LOI DE 2013 SUR LA NÉGOCIATION  
COLLECTIVE DANS LES CONSEILS  
SCOLAIRES**

Mrs. Sandals moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 122, An Act respecting collective bargaining in Ontario's school system / Projet de loi 122, Loi concernant la négociation collective dans le système scolaire de l'Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mrs. Sandals.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Speaker, I stand in the House today to speak in support of the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, and I will be sharing the time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough–Rouge River.

We are rising in support of this bill that will, if passed, provide an improved legal framework for collective bargaining in the education sector. It would ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all parties are clear at the outset of the new collective bargaining process, and it would continue our efforts to repair relationships with our education partners, to put previous challenges behind us and, most importantly, to move forward.

Since I was first appointed Minister of Education, rebuilding relationships with our education partners has been my number one priority. We made great progress in the spring, as our partners in public, elementary and secondary schools returned to providing extracurricular activities. We made further progress by reaching memoranda of understanding with all of our education partners that helped build a positive start to the current school year and keep our collective focus on improving student achievement in our schools from now until the expiry of the current contracts in August 2014.

This bill is a critical next step in the progress we have already made. We need to ensure a clear and consistent labour framework that works for all parties involved, and I'm confident that the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act would put that clear framework in place. For too

long, we have worked with a bargaining process that was outdated and did not reflect the current realities of the education system.

Legally, local school boards bargain with local unions. But back in 1998, under the previous government, local school boards were stripped of their taxation powers while maintaining their status as the employer in collective bargaining. Meanwhile, the province became the sole funder for the education system, yet did not have a formal legal role in collective bargaining. In other words, local boards recruit, employ and supervise teachers but rely on provincial funding to run their schools, yet the government has no statutory role to bargain over issues that are inextricably linked to funding. This was obviously unsustainable and needed to be addressed. As a result, our government then created the provincial discussion tables and, through these voluntary forums, made significant investments and improvements in the education sector.

In 2004 and 2008, working together with federations, unions and school boards, our government facilitated agreements that benefited employees and boards, while ensuring peace and stability for students and families. The PDTs, or provincial discussion tables, helped bring the unions and school boards together, with the government acting as a facilitator to reach province-wide framework agreements on major issues of province-wide significance, such as compensation and benefits.

As a result of the PDTs, and our commitment to invest in publicly funded education in Ontario, things changed. For example, the 2004-08 PDT agreement resulted in: funding for 2,630 elementary specialist teachers; funding for 1,900 secondary student success teachers; and zero learning days were lost due to full-time teacher strikes.

Building on that, the 2008-12 PDT resulted in: funding for 2,300 elementary specialist teachers; funding for 220 grades 7-8 teachers to support literacy and numeracy initiatives; and funding for 650 grades 4-8 class-size reduction teachers; funding for 890 secondary teachers; 400 additional professional and paraprofessional staff; 215 additional office support workers; approximately 500 additional custodians; and eight school years without a full-time teacher strike.

These were solid investments to ensure our schools had the resources they needed to help students succeed. However, this forum for negotiating, the voluntary provincial discussion tables, were just that: voluntary. The province supplemented the local process with a central process, and that helped. But it was still an ad hoc process, one that worked better when investments in education were increasing.

Now we are in a time of fiscal restraint and facing a challenging mandate. In order to produce an improved process more ready to deal with the coming challenges, we want to move to greater consistency. The process should be made into a legal framework that more clearly recognizes boards as employers and provides a clearer role in bargaining for the government as the funder. And in our 2012 budget, we pledged to establish a new legislative framework for provincial bargaining in the education sector.

That is why we have proposed this groundbreaking legislation. If passed, it will move beyond the voluntary discussion tables and establish a clear legal framework, with clear roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in negotiations. And it will allow the government, as the funder of the public education system in Ontario, to have a prescribed role at the negotiating table where it can bargain directly.

The relationship between all parties involved in education sector negotiations has grown more complex, and we need a process that reflects that increased complexity.

In addition to providing the government with a clear role at the central table, there is a newly prescribed role for central employer bargaining agencies: to negotiate legally enforceable provincial agreements on behalf of all school boards. This recognizes the important role of trustee associations in this process. As for individual school boards, they would remain the legal employer and continue to negotiate local agreements that would address local matters.

Speaker, this proposed legislation is of vital importance because virtually all collective agreements in the education sector expire in August 2014. That is why we need the provisions of this bill in place well before next August. The next round of bargaining is around the corner, and a structure that recognizes the government's role at the table, along with the trustee associations representing school boards and the provincial unions, will be essential.

**0910**

Speaker, the proposed model for labour negotiations would establish two processes for negotiations: a central table for significant province-wide issues and a local table at each school board to address local issues. Negotiations would take place at each level, guaranteeing that all issues, whether large or small, would be discussed in a clear, consistent and focused manner.

The central bargaining table would see the negotiation of key issues with province-wide impact, such as compensation. Issues that affect the implementation of education policy or that could result in significant costs for one or more school boards can also be negotiated centrally. Management representation at central tables would be made up of both the government and the provincial trustee associations. Employees, of course, would continue to be represented by their provincial unions or federations.

In the case of local bargaining, the structure would remain the same, as it currently exists, describing local bargaining. Local issues would continue to be bargained

by local school boards and local employee representatives, and would be allowed to happen concurrently with central bargaining. The provisions of centrally negotiated agreements, combined with locally negotiated provisions, will make up the final collective agreement.

This new structure, if passed, would enshrine for the first time a clear, legally defined role for government at central tables. It only makes sense that since the government has a strong interest and obligation in the outcome of negotiations, it should likewise have a formal role at the central table.

Another big difference from the previous process is the creation of legally recognized central voices for school boards. Historically, there was no legal status for the trustee associations to provide central representation for the school boards. This now needs to change to better reflect today's reality.

We are also proposing changes to the ratification process. This is one of the more innovative aspects of this legislation: three-party ratification for central bargaining. This means that a central settlement, which will be part of the collective agreement, will only be reached if all three parties—government, trustee associations and unions—agree to it. I repeat: No central settlement can be reached without the agreement of each of these three parties.

Speaker, this is truly a made-in-Ontario approach to collective bargaining, and different from the status in any other provincial bargaining scheme, where the school boards, as represented by their associations, have no role in the ratification of the central agreement. It's a home-grown solution that shows that we listened to stakeholders who wanted clarity, accountability and consistency during bargaining.

With the proposed model, we'll have a process that ensures all parties have a clear role and are accountable during the negotiation phase, while also ensuring that everyone plays an essential role in the final outcome. Also, this process would formally recognize the trustees' role as elected representatives by naming the trustee associations as central bargaining agencies. With the newly prescribed role for government at the central table, we, as the funder of education in Ontario, will be able to bargain directly about issues that are connected to funding.

Speaker, this simply makes sense. The funder, the employers and the employee representatives will all sit at the central table, and each of those three parties will have a critical role in how and when central agreements are reached. I'm optimistic that the addition of three-party ratification will lead to a more effective and consistent bargaining process for everyone involved. It ensures that all parties are 100% clear about their role and, similarly, 100% accountable for the outcome.

I would also like to talk about how employers and employees will be represented at the central tables. The proposed legislation names the following parties as the statutory central bargaining agencies for collective bargaining for teachers: AEFO, the French teachers; ETFO,

the public elementary teachers; OECTA, the English Catholic teachers; and OSSTF, the public secondary teachers. They continue to be identified as the permanent central teacher federations. For employers, the permanent central bargaining agencies include ACEPO, which represents the public French boards; AFOCSC, which represents the Catholic French boards; the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association, representing English Catholic boards; and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, representing English public boards.

As mentioned before, this means the role of trustee associations is prescribed in the legislation. The trustee associations will be required to establish their own policy and procedures to fulfill their duties and functions as employer bargaining agents. I have full confidence in the trustee associations' ability to perform this role.

Support staff unions, such as CUPE, will also have access to central tables but on a voluntary basis. If a union representing more than 15 support staff bargaining units wishes to participate in central bargaining in any given round, the Minister of Education would have authority to designate a union or bargaining council of multiple unions to represent support staff in schools. We do anticipate that that is what would happen in most cases on the support staff side. What it means, for example, is that office staff, early childhood educators and maintenance workers, represented by unions such as CUPE, ETFO and OSSTF, would be eligible for a central bargaining table.

Once the union is designated as a central employee bargaining agency, it's the responsibility of the minister to create a central table by designating a council of trustee associations as a central employer bargaining agency. The significance of that technicality is the fact that if we think of CUPE, for example, it has bargaining units in all four school board sectors, so we need to have all four trustee associations represented at the management side of the table.

I would like to speak more about what this newly prescribed role would mean for the bargaining process. Currently, the government has only been party to voluntary central negotiations, despite having the legal responsibility for funding elementary and secondary education. This proposed legislation would change that. The government would have a direct, formal role in central negotiations and will work to coordinate all central tables. The province would work with the trustee associations to set the bargaining mandate for the management side at the central tables, and it would help determine which issues would be bargained centrally. Of course, with three-party ratification being a requirement, the crown also plays an essential role in ratifying the central agreements. But to be clear, the government would continue to have no role in local bargaining. The proposed model continues to respect the existing local collective bargaining process as the best process for addressing purely local matters.

With the introduction of a new structure, this legislation, if passed, would require all parties to agree on which issues will be negotiated centrally versus locally.

This will be determined at the outset of the bargaining process before negotiations begin and could vary from contract to contract, from round to round, even from table to table. This makes sense, as we need to know which issues will be negotiated at which bargaining table before negotiations can begin.

While the issues to be negotiated at each table are not dictated by the legislation, there are some general guidelines. In general, major monetary items and items with major policy implications would be discussed at the central table, and the Minister of Education would have authority to reserve certain matters for the central table. Such matters would include those that could have a significant impact on the implementation of provincial education policies or a significant impact on the expenditures of one or more school boards.

#### **0920**

The proposed legislation also provides a process to resolve an impasse over what issues will be bargained centrally. If, after a fixed period of time, all parties cannot agree on what issues will be bargained centrally or locally, any party may turn to the Ontario Labour Relations Board for a final decision. This means that no issue can be negotiated at both the central and local tables in a particular round of bargaining. It has to be one or the other table.

As I have stated, this innovative legislation would require three-party ratification at the central table, and ratification between employers and employees at the local level. Any resulting collective agreement would be comprised of the centrally negotiated terms and the locally negotiated terms, but local terms would obviously apply only to the specific school board for which they were negotiated.

The duration of education sector collective agreements are also prescribed in this proposed legislation. Collective agreements can only be set to terms of two, three or four years in length, while common expiry dates will be retained; that is, the August 31 expiry date that we currently are using. These pre-set terms are also part of our goal to establish a clear and consistent process for all parties involved.

Speaker, with the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, we are proposing a framework to move beyond past challenges and to look into the future. We want to build on the work we accomplished at the voluntary central tables and establish new rules for all parties involved in the process. This clarity, consistency and efficiency will improve negotiations and help put previous challenges behind us. That has been a top priority for me since becoming Minister of Education: to rebuild the relationships with our stakeholders and to move forward. That is why we have worked very hard, over many months, to get feedback from key education stakeholders.

Speaker, this made-in-Ontario approach to collective bargaining was developed through extensive consultation with our education partners. Five informal rounds of consultation took place this past summer and early fall with trustee associations, teacher federations and support staff

unions. This valuable input helped shape this proposed bill, and we included elements in this legislation that were asked for directly by education stakeholders, both trustee associations and unions.

We heard in those discussions that a return to purely local bargaining is not a viable option. Nearly everyone we consulted also raised a number of key points on the role of employers and the government at the central table. We heard that the trustee associations should be the statutory bargaining agency for employers, with the legal authority to bind local school boards to a central agreement. We also heard that the crown should have a clearly prescribed role. We heard that employer bargaining agents needed to have the ability to bind their member boards to provincially negotiated agreements. And we heard that, since the government funds education in Ontario, it should participate directly in negotiations over the terms and conditions of employment.

All parties we consulted supported a bargaining structure that included central and local tables, and virtually all parties agreed that major monetary items should be negotiated at a central table. At the same time, it was agreed that mechanisms should be in place to ensure that local bargaining remains meaningful. We also heard that central and local issues should be agreed upon by all parties at the beginning of each round and not prescribed in legislation. And, finally, everyone we consulted supported access to provincial negotiations for support staff.

Speaker, this is not just our government's proposed legislation; this is a made-in-Ontario approach to improving collective bargaining in this process. We did listen to our stakeholders, we valued their input and we heard what they asked for. While it's impossible to satisfy everyone with every clause in one piece of legislation, we do believe that the proposed legislation balances the interests of all parties and proposes a model that responds to the unique characteristics of Ontario's education system. That is why we are confident that this legislation will help modernize collective bargaining in the education sector. It's a bill that reflects our need to find a better way to negotiate, and it's a bill that reflects and respects the needs of our stakeholders and of all Ontarians.

Speaker, I've outlined why we need this legislation, what it will do and how it will help improve relationships with our education partners. It's a bill that helps build on the great progress we have made in education. It's a bill that will bring clarity and consistency to provincial-level bargaining for publicly funded education, and it will do this by establishing a framework for negotiations that will replace previous discussions that were voluntary. It will do this by allowing all parties in negotiations to work together and work toward a common goal. That is why we are proposing this new model for negotiations.

As I've said, the voluntary process we engaged in previously at the provincial level created challenges. Now is the time to adopt a new model, a new process, where everyone has a formalized role at the central table. This is essential as we remain in fiscally challenging times.

The current method of collective bargaining may have worked better when school boards had taxation powers,

and during periods when investments in education were increasing. But in these times of fiscal constraints, we need a model that encourages creative, collaborative discussions where everybody works together to find solutions to challenging issues.

As mentioned, Mr. Speaker, the next round of bargaining is approaching fast. Current contracts in the education sector expire in August 2014, meaning that the collective bargaining process will need to begin early next year. That is why it is so important to have the provisions of the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act in place before the next round of bargaining. It is critical that we have this new process in place quickly, to ensure that everyone at the bargaining table has an opportunity to put in place the structures that would be required to successfully implement the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act.

The School Boards Collective Bargaining Act will help establish such a process, and I look forward to the support of all the members of this House on this very important piece of legislation. By passing this groundbreaking bill, we can deliver a made-in-Ontario approach that improves the way we negotiate in the education sector.

Speaker, in the spirit of partnership, I urge all MPPs to stand up and do what's best for our education system. Without question, we need a collective bargaining process that is clear and consistent for everyone, and the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act will help us do just that.

Thank you, Speaker, and I'm now going to share my time with my parliamentary assistant.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Scarborough–Rouge River.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to add my comments in support of the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act.

As the minister pointed out, this proposed legislation needs to be in place before the next round of negotiations. We are proposing this bill to help formalize in legislation the relationships with the educational partners as it relates to collective bargaining. This will help build on the great progress we've made in education, in a system that is already recognized as being among the best in the world. We are seeing great results, results that we can all be proud of. These accomplishments are directly tied to the hard work and dedication shown by our teachers, students and school administrators each and every school year. These are the people who help Ontario lead the pack in publicly funded education.

**0930**

Since 2003, Ontario has made great strides in helping students succeed and reach their full potential. This has given our province an international reputation for innovation and excellence, and rightly so. I'm very proud of our sterling record on education. It is a record that has delivered tremendous results for our province.

While there are many ingredients that have contributed to our success, we are always guided by three core pri-

orities: increasing student achievement; closing the gaps in achievement for students struggling within our system; and increasing confidence in publicly funded education. Since 2003, these core principles have delivered very positive improvements. In 2002-03, only 54% of children in grades 3 and 6 were achieving the provincial standard in reading, writing and math. That number has jumped to 71% of children in grades 3 and 6 meeting the provincial standard in literacy and numeracy. This is an impressive increase of 17 percentage points since 2003.

Similarly, our graduation rate is up significantly. In 2003, only 68% of our students were graduating, but now that number stands at 83%. That is a 15 percentage point increase in this short time. This means that over the past 10 years, an additional 115,500 students have graduated who would not have if the graduation rate remained at the 2003 level. We have come a long way in the last decade, and we have our educators, students, parents and many community partners to thank for these great improvements in student achievement in our school system.

As I mentioned, Ontario's publicly funded education system is one of the best in the world. Time and time again, international studies show this to be true. Scholars from around the world, including Australia, China, Denmark, Japan, Sweden, India, Finland, Northern Ireland, the Bahamas, Germany and the United States, have visited our great province to learn of our success. That world-wide excellence was evident in 2012 when Ontario was once again recognized as a leader in education.

A report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, explained that our government's emphasis on solid education has achieved real, positive results towards increasing literacy and numeracy comprehension, improving graduation rates and reducing the number of low-performing schools. This adds to the previous OECD reports that ranked Ontario students among the best in the world at meeting or exceeding international standards. Speaker, this is astounding progress.

Of course, one of our proudest achievements has been full-day kindergarten—one of the most significant transformations in our education system in a generation. We are giving students the best possible start with full-day kindergarten, the benefits of which can last a lifetime and lead to a successful future.

Full-day kindergarten continues to roll out as planned and is now offered in approximately 2,600 schools across the province. That means that about 184,000 of Ontario's four- and five-year-olds are benefiting from full-day kindergarten this school year.

By September 2014, full-day kindergarten will be available to all of Ontario's four- and five-year-olds. We know full-day kindergarten is worth it because the program is already producing great results. But full-day kindergarten is just one way we are transforming our world-class education system.

We're also working hard at the elementary level. There, we've looked at new ways of improving literacy and numeracy, and we're also focusing on the develop-

ment of higher-order skills. Creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills are all part of our modern world. This means that educators increasingly have to teach students how to use information to think independently.

At the secondary level, we're helping students gain real-life, hands-on experience in the workplace. Students gain valuable experience in co-op programs, while earning credits towards their high school diploma. Our Specialist High Skills Major program means students can match their personal interests and skills with a career path.

Seven years ago, when we launched the Specialist High Skills Major program, 600 students enrolled. This year, more than 42,000 students are in the program. These priorities are benefiting Ontario students and putting them on a solid path to success. But we recognize that our work is not done.

We must ensure that we continue on this road to success. That is why we're looking at ways to take our education system from great to excellent. We must continue to raise the bar and take student achievement to new heights. To this end, we are currently engaged in consultations around the province on the next phase of our education strategy.

Our world is rapidly changing, and the evolution of technology is creating a greater demand on our system. So we have been asking education stakeholders and non-traditional stakeholders for their ideas. We have been leading, hosting and encouraging provincial, regional and community discussions to create an updated vision of our education system. This direct feedback has been invaluable.

We are hearing from a wide range of sectors, from education to business, not-for-profit, research and innovation, and more. This diversity of perspectives and wide range of opinions will help us identify ways to take our education system even further. We want to know how front-line educators envision our education system over the next 10 years. We want to hear from business leaders on what they expect from the next generation.

Parents, volunteer organizations and our aboriginal partners, among many others, are also contributing to this exciting new vision. Of course, we're hearing from students, for whom everything we do in education is focused—to help them succeed in school and far beyond.

These consultations will help build a powerful future for education in Ontario, a future that depends on all of us to ensure we continue to live in a prosperous Ontario. Most of that prosperity is tied to the investments we continue to make in our education system by supporting it with stable funding.

The Ministry of Education, with an overall budget of \$25 billion, is the second-largest ministry, and provides a vital public service to all Ontarians. As part of our commitment to full-day kindergarten, we're providing about \$963 million for the 2013-14 school year to support the ongoing rollout of full-day kindergarten. This combined investment of the Grants for Student Needs and full-day

kindergarten is almost \$22 billion, but our current fiscal reality means everyone in the public sector needs to be financially responsible.

**0940**

School boards are benefiting from funding that has increased by \$6.4 billion, or 44%, since 2003, and per-pupil funding now sits at \$11,200, an increase of more than \$4,000, or 56%, since 2003.

We also continue to make sound capital investments in our schools and communities. Since 2003, our government has provided \$11.6 billion in capital funding to school boards, including funding to support 610 new schools that have either been opened or planned or are under way currently. This funding helps build new schools or expand, refurbish or repair older schools being renovated, closed or replaced. We're also investing in green schools that use modern, environmentally friendly technologies. We will continue to make these investments so our schools can provide the best possible learning environments to support students' success.

Nevertheless, we must also remain mindful of our current fiscal climate. We live in a time of global economic uncertainty, where we have to count our coins and stretch our dollars.

That brings me back to this proposed legislation, where we are looking to establish a new model of collective bargaining in the education sector. As the minister said, if passed, it would provide a made-in-Ontario approach to labour negotiations, with clear and accountable roles for all parties involved in collective bargaining.

Since the government funds education in Ontario, it puts us at the central table, where issues tied to funding are discussed. This will be essential as we move forward in our time of financial constraints. We need to protect our world-class education and find a better way to negotiate while working within our fiscal parameters.

As such, I urge all MPPs in this House to join Minister Sandals and myself as we support this bill. The School Boards Collective Bargaining Act is necessary and important legislation. As the minister said, we need to have this legislation in place long before August 2014. It is in everyone's best interests that it be passed and in place before this next round of bargaining.

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

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of Education and the parliamentary assistant, the member for—I'm just looking here right now—Scarborough–Rouge River.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the minister and the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education have offered a number of points with respect to this legislation, and I particularly respect the fact that their goals are to increase student achievement, to reduce the gap between underperforming students and underperforming schools with the top-performing ones, and improve confidence in public education. I think that members on this side of the House certainly would applaud the government for that and agree with the government that those are worthy causes of discussion.

I know that through the course of my response—I will be having an hour lead on this. I'm going to reserve many of my comments for that period in time. But what I will say, Mr. Speaker, is it is interesting to hear that the government has presented this particular piece of legislation that focuses on the process of collective bargaining. This bill, more or less, is about process; it's not about the politics, it's not about improving test scores. It's simply about outlining and laying out a framework and a process for negotiation.

Certainly, on this side of the House, we have a number of perspectives on how to improve education. We would like to be talking about those pieces of legislation, but I know, through the course of debating Bill 122, that we will be stuck talking about the process by which collective bargaining will take place.

So there is an opportunity, I think, to talk about this process and framework, but what we really would like to talk about on this side of the House is how we can actually improve student scores, how can we actually improve the education system, which this bill simply fails to do. This is simply about process and not about improving quality of education.

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

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I'm pleased to rise today as MPP for London West, but also as someone who has been involved in the education sector since 2000. Really, it was the chaos of Bill 115 that led me to put my name forward, to seek elected office at the provincial level and stand before you here today as MPP for London West. In my 13 years in the sector, we saw each round of collective bargaining was basically reinvented by the government, depending very much on the personality and the priorities of the minister of the day, and I don't think the sector was served well by this constant change in process.

I'm very pleased to see that there is an effort to bring forward a legal framework to guide collective bargaining and define the roles of each of the parties. It's especially important to give provincial trustee associations a formal legal role in the process. I think this will help very much, but we also have to be very cautious. I heard both the Minister of Education and the member from Scarborough–Rouge River talking about the need to move expeditiously and put this legislation into place. As always, with legislation, the devil is in the details.

We need to get this legislation to committee, ensure that all stakeholders have ample time to review the legislation, to respond to the legislation, to bring forward amendments, because we absolutely owe to the students of this province a commitment not to put them into the kind of chaos that we saw last year with Bill 115. We owe it to the students of this province to have a quality public education system that is framed by a responsible collective bargaining process.

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

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I just wanted to reflect on the comments by the minister and the parliamentary assistant that, ultimately, getting this right means that we get it

right for students and parents. Really, that's the bottom line. We've got to remember that it's not just the teachers. As you know, Mr. Speaker, my father was a caretaker in the school system. The support workers are critically important because they all come together to do something that sometimes we don't pay enough attention to, day in, day out.

I visit schools regularly—I was at Baycrest school in my riding the other day—just to see the incredible care that the staff and teachers take for our kids. I've got Forest Hill Collegiate. It's as good as any high school in the country. I've got Dante Alighieri high school. The kids have been in 20 portables for the last 15 years, yet the teachers and staff carry on and take care of these kids.

Sure, our education system always needs improvement. We know that. But the amazing thing is that the tens of thousands of teachers, support staff and the parent councils, the CSACs, are doing this on a regular basis. This is our attempt to make sure there's a framework where the schools work for the community, for the students, for the parents. That's why this framework has to be connected to the kids and to the workers in the schools in a way that's fair. I think the minister has spent a lot of time—she has got a proven track record of working in our schools. She has a real love of our schools and our kids. I think we've got to try to find a way of building this proper framework, and I think that's what this is about, in terms of everyday people.

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

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'm happy to provide my two minutes on the leadoff for Bill 122, the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act. I know that I'll listen with interest as my colleague Rob Leone, the member from Cambridge, who I know has dove deep into this issue as the new critic for education, enlightens members of this House as well as Ontarians on where we stand with regard to this issue.

0950

I think, first, it's quite unanimous that our intent here is to ensure that our kids get the highest quality of education possible in the province of Ontario to ensure that they've got a bright future ahead of them. Education is an important part of that. I will say that not only what happens in the classroom is important, but outside the classroom, after hours or even before the school day starts, is an important aspect.

I recall the students that I had into my office last fall, who were denied a lot of those extracurricular activities that are so important to a part of their school day. You know what? Some strong students who organized their colleagues and wrote letters to the minister came to see me in my office and said, "Hey, don't use us as bargaining chips here." These are important activities. I know students who were preparing to go to college getting a bit of extra help in the morning or those participating in after-school activities who were really shut out from that, while their counterparts on the Catholic side were able to continue those extracurricular activities.

We talked about clearing the decks and bringing forward a jobs plan that would address jobs and the economy. We know we have a major situation there. We talked about amending reg 274, something that's extremely important to ensure that the best teachers are in the classroom and that when hiring is on the books, those folks get the best possible education they can.

Thanks for the opportunity. I'll await the member—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. The Minister of Education has two minutes.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you to the members from Cambridge, London West, Eglinton–Lawrence and Kitchener–Conestoga.

I want to focus on what the member from London West had to say, because her observations were quite correct, that the provincial discussion tables were an ad hoc arrangement, an ad hoc process—that each process was different. I can assure her, because I, too, was a trustee, that before we went to provincial discussion tables, the process was also quite difficult, the time when we were doing local bargaining in the years between losing taxation rights and attempting to do a provincial discussion table.

So I think what we're both reflecting is that there is frustration in the system with a process that's legally fine but that doesn't match reality, and that that frustration is shared by the unions, it's shared by the school boards and it's shared, quite frankly, by the government.

In response to the member from Cambridge, that's actually why we have put so much effort into the process. I do need to assure you that the consultations that we did with both the unions and the trustee associations were very much focused on the details of exactly how this legislation works. We have been talking here today about the broad strokes, but there's been a lot of discussion going into every clause and how every detail of this should work.

For my colleague from Eglinton–Lawrence, thank you for recognizing the support staff, because the education workers are also an important part of this scheme. They too can have access to the central table.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It's good to have an opportunity to speak to this bill, Bill 122. It is certainly an improvement over Bill 115. I know that many Liberal MPPs are relieved with Bill 122 because it is an attempt to reach out once again to the teachers, who they hurt badly under Bill 115. I know that many Liberal MPPs were profoundly nervous about what had happened and that they had broken the wonderful relationship they had with teachers that they had built for a long, long time.

Recall, Speaker, that the former Premier was touted as the education Premier. That is what he wanted to be known as. His wife was a teacher, of course. He himself had a love for teaching, teachers, children, and when they came out with Bill 115, most of the members were horrified—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You have to stand down the lead. Say, "I'd like to stand down the lead," or you're—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It's exactly what I thought we had to do.

Speaker, with your indulgence, can we have unanimous consent to stand down our lead, please?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Trinity–Spadina has asked for consent to stand down the lead. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Continue.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you very much, Speaker. These are the rules that we normally follow. I didn't know how they could have been done any differently.

You will recall that the Premier was the education guy. Imagine the horror of this opposition party. Imagine the horror felt by so many Liberal members who themselves are teachers, who themselves were close to the teaching profession, some of whom might have been school trustees as well. They just couldn't quite understand how they could have moved away from virtually 10 years of good relationships with the teachers to bring down a bill that essentially violated that relationship with the teaching profession and disrespected school boards—because they obviously overrode the agreements, overrode the powers of school boards, overrode and dismissed the relationship they ought to have with the federations, and they did get punished here and there, and they felt it. Each and every one felt it.

What I said in a speech that I made—it seems quite a long time ago—is: Why would you do that? Why would Liberals do that? Why would the then-Premier do that, and why would that caucus allow the Premier and others, whoever they are, to do that? It made absolutely no sense.

I understand how things work. I know that the Premier has tremendous power. We know that. And we know that the chief of staff of the Premier has tremendous power. Between the two of them, the power is immense. It is absolutely immense. It's possible that one or two cabinet ministers—maybe three—have some influence on the Premier, but on the whole, they have none. Where others might say, "But where were you?"—and they do say that: "Where were you? You could have said no. You could have resigned." You could have insisted that Bill 115 was wrong, and together you would have been mighty; if you had 30 or 40 of you saying no, the Premier would have had to back off. So the question is: What happened?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Like Bob Rae.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Similarly. Similarly. People could say that of the social contract as well—absolutely true. Which is why I say to the Minister of the Environment, because he's always the one who reminds us of these things, "Have you learned nothing from that experience?" That's the point I make.

It doesn't mean that if you had a bad experience 20 years ago, you could then do the same and learn nothing from bad experiences. The idea is that you learn from something that was truly difficult, problematic, for politicians and the professions that were affected by it—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** "Social contract." Say the words.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That was the one.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Say the words.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That was the one.

**Interjection:** He won't say it.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I obviously don't want to hurt someone who's a friend of yours and was going to be the leader of the federal Liberal Party. Clearly, it would not be useful to hurt you even more. The point is to learn from the past.

Bill 115 was truly damaging to you, and it was good that it damaged you, because what you did is to simply overwrite contracts. Contracts meant nothing. What you did was to simply—but I just told you that you had a lesson from 20 years ago.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Good judgment is based on past experience.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Good judgment is based on past experience, and the point is that you learned nothing from it. The idea was that you treat the federations with respect, that you have them at the table, and you treat school boards with respect, and you have them at the table. With Bill 115, you did not do that.

**1000**

You're trying to recover lost ground, and I understand. God bless; it's good that you're doing it. Now you've got the federations onside, so to speak, at least having them at the table. That is good. You have the boards onside, which is good. So you have them on board, so to speak, at the table, which is good. And at least you're able to, hopefully, negotiate reasonably, amicably, respectfully with the teacher federations and the boards of education. It's all they want. It's all they deserve. It's all they expect.

But when I hear the member from Scarborough–Rouge River talk about all the wonderful things you've done in education, it makes me vomit, from time to time. Please, please, please. It's almost revolting. I exaggerate. Speaker, I exaggerate. I don't want to hurt them too much.

Some of you may not know, but some of the ex-Toronto trustees know this very well—I will not mention them by name or by their riding—they do know that most boards have deficits. I think you know that. The way they deal with deficits is to find various cuts to make in order to balance their budgets. What has the Toronto board done for years now? They have a maintenance budget, a capital budget, and boards of education, particularly the Toronto board, have had to raid that budget to balance the budget. What does it mean to raid the capital maintenance budget? It means our schools are falling apart. It's like the Dufferin line, that has no clean buses going up Dufferin. It's similar to that, right?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** All the smog.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What would it take, to help the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, to bring some clean buses going up Eglinton so that he doesn't have to suffer the smoke of—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I've been unusually lenient for myself today, and it's getting out of hand. The member knows that he has to go through me and not have conversations across the floor with the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, and the member from Eglinton–Lawrence knows better, especially being the veterans you are. So let's have a little decorum—a great word, I know—in the House. I'd appreciate a little quiet, because the Speaker is getting a little upset about this. Thank you.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Speaker, if you noticed, I am making a tremendous effort to look at you as often as I can; I am. While you were looking away, I was looking at you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I must admit, from past experience, the member from Trinity–Spadina has improved immensely with his ability to go through the Chair. And I love it when you look at me.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That's what I was doing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thanks very much.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** And I just wanted to emphasize the tremendous effort that I have made. So while I was distracted momentarily, I had to look at him briefly, but I quickly turned to you, as you might have noticed, because of the respect I have for the Chair and your position, of course.

Speaker, the point that I make to the minister and to the member from Scarborough–Rouge River is that we have tremendous fiscal problems at the boards level. So the Toronto board raids their budgets, the maintenance budgets and their capital budgets, on a yearly basis to balance the budget, as they try to maintain their dollars for essential programs that they deem to be important for the board of education. What it means is that elementary and secondary schools are falling apart. It is important for some of you—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I was distracted.

It is important for some of the members to actually do a little visit of some of their schools in Scarborough—that would be useful—and in the old Toronto. I think it would be very, very useful, because, remember, the old Toronto is old schools, and if we don't repair them, they are in serious trouble.

So for years, we have taken from that budget to balance our budgets because, by law, boards have to balance their budgets, and to do that, they have to take money from different programs, rob-Peter-to-pay-for-Paul kind of programming. That's what has been happening for years. Boards have raided the ESL programming for years. I remember the then minister, Monsieur Kennedy, who gave \$120 million for ESL, and it was understood that that money could be raided by boards in order to be able to balance their budgets and move money around, and it didn't go directly to all those needy kids coming from different countries, who desperately needed ESL. How do you square that? How do you defend that? You could say money is going to ESL, and you could say

loads of money are going to boards, but the money isn't there—money desperately needed for needy children, who don't get the ESL.

The French language program: They don't get the dollars that they deserve either. Money is raided from that program as well, to be able to balance their budgets. Music programs have been devastated. We used to have, a long time ago, what we used to call gym teachers, that are now called physical education teachers. We used to have a heck of a lot more physical education teachers, and we needed them. We needed them then, and we need them desperately now, because young kids are overweight—some are obese. We desperately need to get kids moving, and we need teachers who have knowledge of how you teach kids health, what we eat and so on, but physical health in particular. And now only 30% to 34% of our schools have physical education teachers. That is a serious deficiency in our system, and why is that so? Because of underfunding.

If you don't have the funding, you cut away, you chip away at various programs that are important. I am a big supporter of full-time JK and SK—a big supporter of that program. Our party talked about this in the 1999 election as a very important thing to do. We don't shy away from its importance, but what I said then was that if you don't invest properly, there are going to be problems in that program, and that will hurt the program, not help it or save it.

Principals were very, very nervous about it because more responsibilities were put on their heads and their shoulders, and they knew that once that program came in, they would have to find the dollars to fund that program, because the program is not adequately funded. The government quickly moved in to put those programs where there was space, and when there was no space any longer, they had to scramble to deal with the problems that they faced in schools where they had to build additional space for those children. That's why we still don't have a program that is fully complete. Where you have full-time JK and SK, you don't have a seamless program in the morning and in the evening. That problem is everywhere across Ontario. Most parents cannot afford the early child care and the late child care, which means some parents are using it if they can afford it, and some are not. That's a serious problem. So that seamless day that was supposed to happen in the schools is not happening.

We have tremendous problems in our system, and while this government, in 10 years, has made some effort to improve our educational system, we have a long, long way to go to make it the best possible system that we can have.

We talk about math. Math is another issue that we have not addressed as a government, and I am one of the few who believes that we should bring specialized teachers into grades 7 and 8, because it is incredibly important that we have teachers who are experts in the field to be able to pass on that important skill to the kids. If the kids are afraid of math and they don't learn it properly, half of

the possibilities in our lives are eliminated by the mere fact that we don't have the math skills. So I'm a big fan of having specialized teachers in grades 7 and 8, and to the extent that we can bring in more specialized teachers teaching math, it is something that we should be looking at. It's another issue of big concern that I believe we should be addressing, and until we do that, I don't know that we've done the job.

**1010**

Bill 122 is a bill that obviously has brought the stakeholders together, and that includes the federations and includes the boards. They, I suspect, might have some questions based on the legal component of this bill and/or other elements. Clearly, they, and we, want to bring this bill into committee for debate and discussion, and we want to be able to hear from them and others about what they think is good about this bill and what they think might need improvement. But this goes a long way to improve what we had by way of Bill 115. It goes a long way to improve the relationship between the federations and the school boards and the government, and I believe this is a good thing.

So I'm looking forward to having hearings on this bill, Speaker, and I'm happy to have had the opportunity to speak to it.

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

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise in support of Bill 122. I heard intently this morning the Minister of Education kick off her remarks about Bill 122. As a former school board trustee before I came to the House, Mr. Speaker, I can speak of one item that's so important to my constituents in Scarborough–Agincourt. Education is the foundation of the growth of this province. Through Bill 122, it will provide, as the minister talked about, a made-in-Ontario model framework to talk about protecting the public education system that we know we're so proud of across the province.

My colleague from Scarborough–Rouge River, the parliamentary assistant to the minister, also spoke eloquently this morning about the success and the gains we have made for over 10 years in terms of public education.

I know that the member opposite from Trinity–Spadina does not want to echo those comments, but I can tell you that the reading and numeracy numbers—it's factual. The fact that our schools are leading the way in terms of internationally—we are all proud of our public education system.

Through Bill 122, we address the whole issue of how to continue to move forward in public education, to make sure the system is strong and stable and to address the issue of collective agreements, and we will be having two-tiered bargaining. There will be a central tier. At the same time, we will also have a local tier to allow the local school board, along with their employees, to bargain local issues.

The other piece here is that the minister spoke very passionately this morning, as well as the parliamentary assistant, about the time sensitivity of this particular bill.

We all know in this House that August 2014 will be upon us, and it's incumbent on this House and this chamber to pass some type of legislation to provide the framework for the next round of bargaining.

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

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I want to congratulate the member from Trinity–Spadina on his remarks today. I know that he and I shared a very special moment on Monday afternoon while we were looking for some Italian cheeses. We had a road trip, and he showed me the goods on Corso Italia and Little Italy. I very much appreciated that outing, and I appreciate that we're going to be doing it again.

Mr. Speaker, I think the member from Trinity–Spadina raises a number of important points. One of the key points that he made is a point that I would echo, in that this is a very highly technical bill, a bill that likely will have labour lawyers debating the nitty-gritty and the technical aspects of the bill, but ignoring largely some of the policy objectives that the member has outlined. Particularly, I know he referenced the declining math scores that are in our schools. I think, perhaps maybe with a bit of disappointment, he is suggesting that we could be talking about those items which, because this is a technical bill, we won't be debating very much at all.

This is an important aspect. I think there are a lot of issues in education. I think that providing the rules and formalizing the negotiation—obviously, it's very important for all parties to understand and listen. But I get the sense that the member from Trinity–Spadina would like to be talking about other issues with respect to education, and he wants to move on addressing some of the concerns that he has, not only for the system as a whole, but those issues that are particular to his riding and to the municipality and city of Toronto in which he lives.

So I look forward to participating in this debate, and I want to thank the member for his comments today.

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

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I wanted to comment on some of the remarks that were made by the member for Trinity–Spadina. He's obviously a very passionate advocate for public education and someone who has seen a lot of change in education over his years here in this Legislature.

I think he raised a really important point when he spoke about ESL and the importance of ESL in his riding. What that really reflects is some of the differences between school boards in terms of the priorities they place on local issues. I think that one of the challenges we may see in this legislation is around the definition of what is a central issue and what is a local issue, particularly when it comes to funding. We know that school boards across this province are all very different. They have very different sets of priorities. Sometimes, what boards want to advance at the local level as a local priority requires provincial funding. We need to ensure that there is an appropriate process in place to allow that

definition of what is a central issue and what is a local issue.

I'm pleased that the legislation includes that opportunity because that is going to be very important to the province moving forward in terms of having a fair collective bargaining process.

Once again, I want to say on behalf of our party that we believe that this framework is necessary. We would like to hear what stakeholders have to say as it moves forward to committee.

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

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I must say, in response to the member from Trinity–Spadina, I share his passion for looking at teaching math. That's also something that we are looking at, although that doesn't require legislation. What we're debating here today is Bill 122, a change in the legal labour relations framework for the education sector, which does require legislation.

But somewhere in the member's comments, he did say something quite relevant, which was the observation that school boards are not legally able to run a deficit. From a technical point of view, that is because if a school board does run a deficit, it is actually reflected back on the province's books and increases the province's deficit, which is why that prohibition is there. But that's very relevant to this discussion because the reason that the government has come up with these various forms of voluntary provincial discussion tables is that when you looked at just simply doing local bargaining absent taxation power, it made local bargaining almost impossible because the school boards didn't know how much money they would have beyond a one-year GSN announcement. The unions obviously would have liked to get raises periodically, and it's awfully hard to figure out how to give a raise that won't cause a deficit if you don't know how much money you're going to have, which is why both the boards and the unions said, "Government, we need you at the table because you're the only people who know how much money you're willing to spend."

So the comment from the member for Trinity–Spadina about school board deficits and school board financing is actually absolutely essential to understanding why we're doing what we're doing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Trinity–Spadina has two minutes.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you, Speaker. I was very sad when a previous government, in the past, removed the power of local levees, because local levees allowed boards to be able to reflect their own needs in their own areas. When the government that shall remain unnamed did that and centralized education financing, that took away local power. It took away the powers to be able to negotiate even agreements with unions in a way that reflected their own needs. And once power was centralized, it gave so much influence to the provincial government.

For all intents and purposes, we've had provincial negotiations for the last 10 years, really, under the Con-

servative government and under the Liberals. For a long, long time there was the sense that perhaps we were negotiating locally, but really the power lies on central governments, and that is scary sometimes. It can be hurtful.

I was reminded about the needs of our special education kids. This is a growing, growing phenomenon and a growing problem. So many of our kids are not getting the special attention they deserve. So many of our kids are now into the regular classroom without educational assistant support. It is unbelievably difficult, and I don't know how families are making do. I don't know how teachers survive it, really, because it's hard to teach a classroom where there are no needs and then all of a sudden you've got four or five kids in your classroom with specialized needs that you can't deal with on your own. Teachers are doing that at the primary level. We have many, many difficulties we need to address. This bill addresses some problems of fixing Bill 115. God bless. I'm happy to debate that.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. It being 10:20, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1021 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like the members of the Legislature to look to the visitors' gallery. I want to introduce my constituents Clint Cole, Stan Kuzma, Jim Sullivan and Pedro Pelletier, who are members of the Clarington transformer group. I welcome them to Queen's Park. They're having a video this afternoon, if you want to join us at 2 o'clock.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I'd like to welcome Filomena Ferraro from the York region OECTA to today's proceedings. Welcome, Filomena.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** This is an exciting day in the Legislature, as I'm joining the Ontario Mining Association in hosting our annual Meet the Miners Day here at Queen's Park, an annual tradition going back 25 years.

We have a number of important members of the mining industry in the gallery, and I want to introduce them: Kelly Strong from Vale, and also the Ontario Mining Association chair of the board; Rowland Howe from Sifto—welcome, Rowland; Larry Sparks from Omya Canada; and Tess Lofsky from North American Palladium. Did I mention Duncan Middlemiss—I don't believe I did—from St Andrew Goldfields? Thank you very much—and Phil Bousquet, who is manager of industrial and government relations with the Mining Association. Welcome, all of you. It's going to be a great day.

May I say, Mr. Speaker, that there's a reception this evening in rooms 228 and 230 from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., and we invite all the members of the Legislature to join us there this evening.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You may not say that.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thank you.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I'm pleased to welcome to the gallery today my friend and former colleague Rae Gropper. She is an education and health consultant who works with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like to welcome Alex Wellstead to Queen's Park today. Alex is a constituency assistant in my Oakville office.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I'm delighted to introduce, in the east members' gallery, Kelly McGiffin from First-Ontario Credit Union; and from Central 1 Credit Union Helmut Pastrick, Kelly Harris and Katie Rochefort. I welcome them to the gallery and welcome them to Queen's Park. I hope they have a great day.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to introduce Dave Bryans, the CEO of the Ontario Convenience Stores Association, as well as Ron Funk, who is the chair of the board of directors of the Ontario Convenience Stores Association. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport—for page Sarhan Shafaque: her mother, Masoom Shafaque, and father, Abdul Shafaque, are here in the galleries. On behalf of the minister, thank you very much for joining us today.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** A number of people have joined us from the Fort Erie area. They're arriving now. As I mention their names, I'm sure they'll be taking their seats: Jim Thibert, general manager of the Fort Erie Race Track; Ted Mansell, executive vice-president of SEIU Local 2; Elissa Blowe; Harry Eder; Jackie Eder; Braydon Eder; Justine Eder; Kayla Alderson; Ryan Alderson; Claudia Whalen; Henry Whalen; Conner Whalen; Miranda Whalen; Michelle Crawford and Drake Crawford—all wonderful people involved with the Fort Erie horse racing track.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier on the motion that we've tabled with the Chair. I do want to say, in light of the Premier's position on Bill 74—I've been in politics for a long time. I've seen people take two sides on an issue. I've never in my life seen somebody take three sides on an issue, and that's not the kind of leadership we need in the province.

It's just further evidence that we definitely need change in our province. We've seen the cancellation of the Oakville gas plant, the \$1.1 billion to put forward the interests of the Liberal Party ahead of the taxpayers. We've seen 10 months of indecision. We've seen 36 panels.

I've just got to ask the question: In light of the lack of decisions, except to save Liberal seats, why should we trust you to run the province of Ontario for even one more single day?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Before I call the Premier, I'm going to make mention of the fact that I'm hearing something that you know I don't like to hear, and you will be reminded for all of you. You mention people by their riding or by their title. I will not tolerate anything else.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Yesterday, I had the privilege of being at Centennial College and being part of an announcement about an investment into a program that is going to allow young people to get experience in the aerospace industry, which is an absolutely leading and important industry in this province. In fact, 14 of 25 manufacturers in the aerospace industry—14 of 25 in the world are here in Ontario. That investment in a facility at Downsview Park is going to play to our strengths as a province.

I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition would have been supportive of that kind of job creator, that kind of investment in people and infrastructure that is going to help the economy. It's going to help people get into the economy. It's going to create jobs. I would have thought that he would have been supportive of that.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, I just want to see a government that's not corrupt. I want to see a government that's not morally bankrupt, that's what I want—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm just going to caution: Let's stay away from the kind of language that could be inflammatory. I would ask the member to follow that request.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier continues to put the interests of the Liberal Party ahead of the interests of hard-working taxpayers. We put a motion on the floor of the House to say that we simply cannot trust the Liberals to run the province of Ontario. Clearly, that's what I hear from Ontarians around this province. We're losing jobs. We're losing more manufacturing jobs in Hamilton. We have folks at the Fort Erie Race Track who are facing closure and, quite frankly—despite the NDP protest—that track would not be closing without the support of the NDP for the Liberals over and over and over again.

So the question is, if the NDP actually suddenly agrees with us instead of siding with the Liberals in each and every vote, if they say they're on the side of Ontario families and agree with us that we can't trust the Liberal government, instead of being patsies for the Liberals, will you then say, "Let's go to the people; let's actually let them decide. We can forge forward to a better Ontario."

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What we want to do on this side of the House is give people the opportunity to get the training that they need, make sure that communities have the infrastructure that they need, so that we can continue to bring business to the province. We want an economy that's going to thrive. We have a plan to make those investments, and we are executing that plan.

What we are not going to do is make a 180-degree turn and cancel the services that people need, fire work-

ers, close hospitals, close schools. We have done that. So the reality—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Rural Affairs, come to order. The member from Nepean–Carleton, come to order. The member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, come to order, and I'll catch the rest of you the next time around.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The public policies that we are putting in place, including those around the horse racing industry—and I know that the leader of the third party has a new-found interest in horse racing in Fort Erie, but the reality is that the public policy that was in place, as a result of their government, was not transparent. It was not accountable. It had to be changed. We have changed it, and my hope is that the race tracks across the province will have a sustainable future.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement-ary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Well, frankly, the Premier caused the crisis, and she signed the document that sold the province down the river to the tune of \$1.1 billion—and quite frankly, the NDP sold their soul to prop you up.

**1040**

Here's the reality across the province: Hydro rates have doubled; we've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs; people are worried about keeping their job, let alone the pay raise that they need in this province in the private sector; the horse racing industry is in jeopardy. The reality is, to get anything done, you need two parties in our Legislature to support that agenda. So far, the Liberals and the NDP have been hand in glove in driving forth its agenda that has resulted in doubling hydro rates and the closure, potentially, of racetracks across the province. If the NDP changes their mind and says, "You know what? We're actually saying enough is enough. We can't trust this Liberal government"—if they support our motion, will that mean you'll actually put the vote to the people of Ontario to decide to move forward—

*Interjections.*

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

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to pick up on something that the Leader of the Opposition said. You know, I acknowledge that we are in fragile economic times. If you look around jurisdictions around the world, we are in fragile economic times. So I do not believe that firing 10,000 education workers and 2,000 health care workers and putting in place right-to-work legislation that would drive down workplaces to the lowest common denominator and, in fact, kill jobs—that is not the route that I believe is responsible, so we're not going to take that route. That is the route that is laid out by the Leader of the Opposition.

We believe that the investments in people and in infrastructure and in a business climate that will bring business to the province is where we should go, which is what the announcement yesterday was about. The aero-

space industry is one of our strengths. That's the kind of strategic investment that needs to be made in order for this economy to thrive. We're going to continue on that path.

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm actually telling everybody to stop heckling.

New question.

## GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question, as well, is to the Premier. Speaker, the Premier has no mandate from the people of Ontario. She is presiding over the largest political scandal in Ontario's history, and a new opinion poll says Ontarians want an election over the gas plant scandal. It says somebody should be thrown in jail over this \$1.1-billion scandal, and I believe those results, Speaker, because when I'm in Osgoode or Kars or North Gower or Nepean, the same people who are being asked in these polls are telling the same thing to me. They think they ought to be thrown in jail.

Voters have lost confidence in this Liberal Party. It seems the only person with any confidence in this Liberal Party is the leader of the New Democrats—who by the way sat idly while that party cancelled the Slots at Race-tracks Program in Fort Erie and at Rideau Carleton.

My question is, if this Legislature adopts our opposition motion next Wednesday that says that voters have lost trust in your party, will you call an election?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** You know, Mr. Speaker, it's a little bit much that the Leader of the Opposition and the members of the Progressive Conservative Party have stood up and made all this noise about wanting to clear the decks and get on with legislation involving employment, involving creating jobs for Ontarians. Right now, we have Bill 105 in front of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, and instead of finishing the debate on Bill 105 and allowing it to proceed to the next stage, they're engaging in all sorts of efforts to delay. They're bringing forward these mischievous motions. The honourable member knows that under the standing orders of this Legislature, this is simply a stunt by the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, it's time that the opposition started to focus on jobs for the province of Ontario. Let Bill 105, which lowers taxes for small business, go through, and stop—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplement-ary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'd like to go back to the Premier of Ontario, because this relates directly to the confidence and the trust the people of this province have in her.

The Forum Research poll was quite clear: People don't view them as a trusted government; they view them as a bunch of criminals. That's why it's important that

this goes to a vote. It is why it is important that this motion be listened to.

This is a Premier who would prefer to set up panels across the province, so that everyone in the province is on one, so she can feel that she's having a conversation. But what we learned in those conversations, particularly at the justice committee, is that their government is at the very root of a very corrupt scheme in Oakville and Mississauga, and—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock for a moment, please. I'm trying to do my job, so I don't need armchair quarterbacking. I heard what the member said, and I'm not impressed again. We will stay away from any references to any member in this place as involved in criminality, and I'm asking the member to stay away from that.

Carry on.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thanks. Now that the Liberals are ignoring Ontarians and their wishes, and the NDP continues to prop them up, I'd like to know what she has promised the NDP in order to prop them up. Next Wednesday, when our party puts forward our motion, I'd really like to know, Premier—

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** —if you are going to listen to that motion—

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

Be seated, please. Thank you.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, they can't have it both ways. They can't stand here in the House and say over and over again that the cancellation of the power plants was the worst thing to befall civilization since the plague or the Macarena and forget the fact that they stood up in the campaign aggressively and said, "Vote for us and the power plants will be cancelled," that their candidates had robocalls and flyers and tweets, that they went door to door saying, "Vote for a Progressive Conservative government and the plants will be cancelled."

Mr. Speaker, it was a promise they made and a promise we kept. It was a promise that was made by every single party in this Legislature, and the honourable member cannot deny that fact.

*Interjections.*

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

Final supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Back to the Premier of Ontario, who—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, come to order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** —owes it to Ontarians to respond to the opposition's questions over a very important matter of trust and confidence. She has lost their confidence and never was able to get it in the first place because she has no mandate from the electorate.

Not only will I debunk what this government House leader has said with respect to the Oakville gas plant, I have the words from the Auditor General, as do the rest of the people of this province. You are behind that Oakville power plant cancellation. You cost the taxpayers of this province \$1.1 billion.

I want to know from the Premier's own mouth: Will she listen to our confidence motion next week? Will she tell the people of the province that she will listen to them when they don't trust her?

Premier, yes or no? Will you have the courage of your convictions to stand in your place and tell us you'll respect the vote of this House next week or not?

**Hon. John Milloy:** First of all, Mr. Speaker, it's not a confidence—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings, second time.

Carry on.

**Hon. John Milloy:** First of all, it's not a confidence motion, and the member knows that.

Mr. Speaker, I direct the member to go to the website of Mayor Rob Burton of Oakville. He has a section called "Timeline" related to this. Let me quote—you'll want to hear this.

"On September 25, 2011"—I'm quoting—"PC leader Tim Hudak says the Oakville power plant"—

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. John Milloy:** —"cancellation 'cost \$1 billion' and suggests"—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Because you were yelling so loud, you didn't hear me, even with my mike on. The member from Stormont will come to order.

Carry on.

**Hon. John Milloy:** —"and suggests the Mississauga power plant cancellation 'may cost another \$1 billion.'"

"On October 5, 2011, on the day before the provincial election, in front of the still under construction Mississauga power plant, PC leader Tim Hudak promises to stop the power plant if he wins the election, after only days before warning that he's sure it 'it may cost another \$1 billion.'"

That is the testimony of Mayor Rob Burton of Oakville, and I invite the honourable member to check out that website.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Today, we're joined in the Legislature by four horse families from Fort Erie. They're wondering why the Premier is killing racing in their community and whether it's just so that the Liberals can help out—

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. If it continues, I might jump right to warnings. We will have civility here.

Finish your question, please.

1050

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** —and whether it's just so the Liberals can help out the newly privatized Woodbine track pad their profit margins—the kind of track that the Tories prefer as well, Speaker. Is the Premier ready to meet with these people face to face today—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Huron–Bruce is warned.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** —and explain to them why she thinks the Fort Erie track should not have a future of racing in Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I welcome the folks from Fort Erie here today, and I would just say that the leader of the third party is absolutely wrong. I want there to be a future for horse racing at Fort Erie, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I want us to have a robust and sustainable horse racing industry across the province. That is not what we had in place. There was an unaccountable, untransparent system in place. It had to be changed. When I came into this office, I said that I was going to make sure that we had an integrated system with the OLG so that horse racing across this province would have a future, because I believe that it is an important part of our culture. It's an important part of the culture in rural communities around the province, and it's important to the province.

I want Fort Erie to have a future. It may not be exactly the same as its past, but I want it to have a future, and the plan we've got in place will allow for that.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, the Liberals are gambling on the future of horse racing, and the Premier should know that the stakes are real.

Henry and Claudia Whalen are here today. They've had to meet with the bank about how they can keep their home, and the stress has caused Henry to have a heart attack. The government is pulling the rug out from under them, but still trying to roll out the red carpet for private casinos, even while community after community rejects those private casinos.

The Premier has admitted that the government's so-called modernization plan was a mistake. Will she let families like the Whalens pay for that mistake? Or will she back away from a plan that just is not working?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, as I said, I have been clear from the outset that there is a future for Fort Erie. The reality is that the track will need to work with the Ontario Racing Commission, as the other tracks will need to, Mr. Speaker, to make sure there is a plan in place.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Rural Affairs is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We are putting \$400 million into horse racing over the next five years, Mr.

Speaker, and each one of the tracks around the province has the opportunity to work with the Ontario Racing Commission to make the case for a business plan. That is the responsible way forward. We want a horse racing industry that is sustainable and for which the success is tied to usage by people who go to the track. We want that to be the benchmark. There was no benchmark under the slots program; there was no benchmark. There was no transparency. We need that transparency. That's—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Twelve-year-old Kayla is with us today too, Speaker. Her dad and her brother have had to move to Florida to find work.

Kayla grew up on a farm, and horses have been part of her life since she can remember. But instead of working with families like Kayla's, the Premier has taken away their livelihoods and her livelihood. Kayla asked to put this question to the Premier, and so I'm going to do it. What does the Premier think is going to happen to the horses that have been raised and trained by families like hers when there's nowhere to race those horses, and those families can't afford to keep them anymore?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm not sure where Kayla is, but I want Kayla to know that the tracks that I have visited, the horse families, the racing families that I've spoken to, the people I've spoken to in the horse racing industry are exactly the reason that I was so committed, when I came into this job, that we would put a plan in place that would allow the tracks, like Fort Erie, to work with the Ontario Racing Commission.

So I want Fort Erie to have a future. I want horse racing to have a future. It was one of my priorities. It's one of the reasons I took on the role as Minister of Agriculture and Food. I want the people in this gallery to know that there is an opportunity for Fort Erie to work with the Ontario Racing Commission and to put in place a sustainable plan for the future. That is why we wanted to bring the plan out early, so that people who are breeding horses would know that the plan was in place: \$400 million over the—

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. New question.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. The Premier said that she killed racing at Fort Erie because the Slots at Racetracks Program wasn't affordable or transparent. She just said that earlier this morning.

Jim Thibert, the CEO of Fort Erie Race Track, is here with us today. Jim made sure that the track at Fort Erie opened their books to auditors and to the public. Will the Premier ensure that the newly private Woodbine Race-track has to open its books so Ontarians have the same level of accountability and transparency for that track?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Absolutely. I think what the leader of the third party is alluding to is the reality that, as we went into the transition, there were audits that were done of each of the tracks in the province. Those audits contained commercially sensitive information, and so they were confidential, and that was the agreement with the tracks.

There is currently an audit being done by the Auditor General of the Slots at Racetracks Program. Obviously, when that report comes out, that report will be public and will be available to all members of the Legislature and the public.

But make no mistake: We needed to make a change to the program that was unaccountable and that had been put in place by the previous government. We're making that change, but we're making it in a way that horse racing must have a sustainable future, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The government did conduct an audit of racetracks to see how SARP money was being spent, and Jim Thibert and the folks from Fort Erie gladly opened up their books, but the Premier is keeping the Woodbine audit under wraps. She is not making that information public because it's commercially sensitive, Speaker? That sounds like the gas plants to me. That's why they didn't let that information come out, because it was commercially sensitive, and look where that landed Ontario.

She says she wants to be accountable and open. In fact, she's got a panel to tell her how exactly to do that. Do I need to be a member of that panel to suggest that she release the Woodbine audit?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, if you'd like to be part of that panel, you may be part of that panel.

But the reality is, as I have said, that in order to work with tracks, to go through a transition so that we could redesign a program that would be sustainable, there were audits done of each of the tracks. Those were done confidentially. That was the agreement with the tracks, and there is commercially sensitive information as part of those audits. There is currently an audit that's being done by the Auditor General, and that report will be made public. If there had been misconduct discovered in the third-party audits, then that would have been sent to the authorities. That did not happen.

Going forward, we have put a sustainable plan in place. I think it's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that I have heard absolutely no strategy from the third party on how they would make horse racing sustainable—

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

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Gee, Speaker, I think what the Premier is saying is, "Just trust us. Everything in those audits is tickety-boo." I don't think the people of Ontario buy that from the Liberal government.

You know, when people go to the track, they expect a fair race. Not-for-profit tracks like Fort Erie have opened up their books—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, come to order.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:**—and people are wondering if the privatized Woodbine will do the same. The government has put the livelihoods of the people here today and in rural communities across Ontario at risk. At the very least, she should be giving them the openness and the transparency that she likes to harp about but rarely delivers. When will she open the books?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I said, there has been no plan coming forward from the third party on how they would make horse racing in this province sustainable.

The suggestion that underlies the leader of the third party's question is that somehow everything was fine under the previous regime, that the Slots at Racetracks Program was fine, that it was good public policy. That's just not the case, Mr. Speaker, and Fort Erie was struggling under that plan as well.

The reality is that we have worked very hard with all of the tracks in the province to put in place a plan that's going to allow them to have a future. My hope is that the people at Fort Erie will work with the Ontario Racing Commission. I want Fort Erie to have a future, not because that's the politically expedient thing to do, but because people's jobs rely on it and because horse racing is an important part of our culture. That's why we're putting the plan in place.

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Kimm Fletcher, a Milton mother with two young children, is asking for more time, more time with her nine-year-old son and seven-year-old daughter. After being diagnosed with stage 4 terminal glioblastoma multiforme, she has been told that she has only two months to live.

**1100**

Kimm's doctors have told her that Avastin will give her more time—in fact, up to 18 months more time. Minister, you and your ministry have denied funding for Avastin for uses other than for colorectal cancer, but, in fact, studies show that the use of Avastin with both colorectal cancer and brain cancer is the same: It gives patients more time.

If Ms. Fletcher lived in British Columbia, Saskatchewan or Manitoba, Avastin would be covered. Will you commit today to giving Kimm Fletcher more time, and commit to funding Avastin for her care?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** This is a very heart-breaking story. I have followed this particular patient. I have been on the website. I have seen the pictures of Kimm Fletcher, her husband and her two gorgeous little children. I cannot help but imagine if they were my own children. It is a heartbreaking story.

We have passed a law in this Legislature that takes the politics out of drug funding. It would be against the law for me to intervene in a particular case for a particular drug.

We do have in place the Committee to Evaluate Drugs. It has twice reviewed the evidence on using

Avastin for this particular condition, and twice it has rejected it for lack of evidence.

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

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I respectfully disagree with the minister. There are several programs under which there is an ability to fund drugs for compassionate purposes, either the Exceptional Access Program or the Case-by-Case Review Program under Cancer Care Ontario. Surely, you have to agree that Kimm Fletcher's case is one of those cases where compassion should be administered.

In fact, this is why we pay taxes in the province of Ontario. Unlike some other expenditures that have been made by this government, people want their tax money to be used for their fellow Ontarians in their time of need.

Minister, Kimm Fletcher and her husband are here with us today. Will you do the right thing, extend compassion to this family, and extend Avastin for her care?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** This is a family going through an absolutely heartbreaking event in their life. All of us want nothing but the very, very best for this family and for this individual.

I do have the Committee to Evaluate Drugs report. These reports are publicly available on their website. As I say, it has been reviewed twice for this condition, in July 2010 and June 2011. The recommendation is that it not be funded for the treatment of this disease, on the basis that treatment has not been proven to improve survival. I will happily pass this over.

The Committee to Evaluate Drugs will always review new evidence. As a result of their work, we've added 300 new drugs to the formulary. They do hard work. These are very difficult decisions. These are not political decisions.

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Some 30% to 50% of operating costs for the mining sector is the price of electricity, and the threshold for the global adjustment program still stands at one megawatt, which penalizes mid-sized producers.

In Thunder Bay, the government doesn't even realize that the electricity supply is not sufficient to support new mining developments. Will the government commit to a real plan for mining development in Ontario by coming up with a plan to increase electricity supply and to deal with the sky-high price of electricity, so that mining companies can create good jobs?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** To the Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We have just received, in the last couple of days, the report from the task force for northwestern Ontario, based out of Thunder Bay. They're responding to a plan that's on the OPA website to invest billions of dollars, literally, over the foreseeable future in

northwestern Ontario for electricity and transmission. From the mining industry point of view, they will have power when they need it. We've given that commitment. We're talking to the people from northwest Ontario, in particular, on that particular issue.

In addition to that, we have introduced supports for energy prices in the north. We have the Northern Ontario Energy Credit, the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program and a number of other programs. We are going to deliver. We are delivering for northwest Ontario. That includes Thunder Bay. I'm happy to talk to the member personally—

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

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Again, my question is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Ontario's mining sector has created 27,500 direct jobs and tens of thousands of indirect jobs. The development of the Ring of Fire and numerous other projects in the northwest will require a skilled workforce by 2020, yet this government refuses to play a role in training programs. Mining companies can create jobs, but they need the right competitive factor, including a trained workforce.

Why is this Liberal government not investing in a training program so that the people of Ontario can benefit from the immense economic opportunity that mining can create?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm really pleased to respond to this, particularly in light of the fact that we have invested so many millions of dollars in terms of skills training and upgrading related to the great potential of the Ring of Fire. We recognize that there are many components to the development of this plan.

Clearly, our work with the First Nations—we've recognized how important that is, and it's ongoing in a positive way.

As the member points out, quite accurately, we have a mining sector in the province of Ontario that is employing more people than it ever has. We are the leading jurisdiction for exploration and for production in our mining sector in all of Canada, and one of the top 10 investment jurisdictions in the world.

Certainly, in terms of the training aspects, through a number of programs, through a number of investments, we are preparing the workforce in northwestern Ontario—in fact, in all of Ontario—to be prepared and ready for when the Ring of Fire development moves forward. We're continuing to be committed to that. That's one of the aspects that's so crucial. We certainly agree, and we're all on the same page in that regard.

#### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is to the Minister of Research and Innovation, and it deals with the importance of supporting new, thriving companies.

In my riding of York South–Weston, my constituents strive for quality and well-paying jobs so that they can provide for their families. They also want their children to have a good university or college education so that they can be ready to be the leaders of our future.

Ontario's capacity to compete in the global knowledge-based economy depends on how well we can utilize our research strengths and provide the support that our entrepreneurs and their businesses need to prosper. We need to ensure that Ontario benefits to the full extent from our knowledge-based economy because our future success and that of our children depends on it.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: How is our government helping new, upcoming companies thrive and succeed?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member from York South–Weston for that important question.

Our government recognizes the importance of assisting new companies. Actually, my ministry has helped many new start-up companies to compete in the global market. For example, we helped Client Outlook. This is a Waterloo-based software company that allows hospitals to share digital X-rays and save some money instead of spending money on setting up workstations. In Ancaster, we helped a company called Fibrecast, which harnesses its technology for purifying drinking water and the treatment of waste water. Fibrecast now employs 70 people in the region.

I'm proud of our government's track record in helping small, innovative companies develop products and services that are helping Ontario and also helping people's lives.

1110

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

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Thank you to the minister. The backbone of any strong economy starts with providing the necessary support that small and local companies need to thrive. Small companies across our great province provide the most jobs to Ontarians, and our ability to help them turn great ideas into successful businesses and new employment opportunities is of paramount importance to our economy. When Ontarians have well-paying jobs to support their families, they can take comfort in knowing that future generations are well-positioned to prosper and succeed.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Could you speak to the initiatives that our government is taking to help small, local and innovative businesses thrive?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank again the member from York South–Weston for that question.

Mr. Speaker, our government is taking strong action to ensure that Ontario companies remain globally competitive and have the necessary tools to succeed. For example, Bill 105, the Supporting Small Businesses Act, is one of the very many steps that our government is taking to help small businesses. This will aim to help small businesses in Ontario, but much to their detriment, it's being delayed in this House.

I urge the opposition to stop stalling the passing of Bill 105 so that we can move forward in helping the small

businesses in this province. When innovative businesses succeed in our province, our local economies are going to succeed. We can make this happen by letting this bill proceed to the committee in order to help our small businesses across the province of Ontario.

## MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** To the Premier: Premier, yesterday, US Steel announced that the massive blast furnaces of the former Stelco plant in Hamilton will shut down permanently by year-end. It will be the end of an era in Canadian industrial history.

At peak in the 1980s, more than 14,000 people earned a good living at Stelco. They built a proud city and helped make our economy strong.

This spring, you insisted that the jobs crisis in Ontario's manufacturing sector was a myth. Do you still believe that today?

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

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Of course, we in the government are disappointed that US Steel has made this decision, unfortunately, to end certain operations that have, in fact, been idle since 2010.

We understand that Hamilton Works's coke-making and finishing operations will continue to operate. It's important to note as well that no immediate layoffs will or have occurred. We understand that the company plans to reassign the 47 individual employees that are impacted by this regrettable decision.

Mr. Speaker, over 80% of Canada's steelmaking happens in this province. We're very proud of that. In fact, the sector employs more than 17,000 people across the province, and indirectly more than 50,000 more. But we will continue to work proactively with the entire sector to spur innovation and attract investment and create jobs.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before I call on the member from Burlington, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke will come to order.

Supplementary, please?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I didn't get my answer, so, anyway, I'll continue on.

Premier, across the bay from my riding, skilled workers have been making steel for over a century. Your party has been in office for a decade. In that time, Ontario has lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs.

The manufacturing crisis is no myth, Premier; it is real. Your government has a role to play, and that role is strong leadership. Could we have changed headlines with a plan that offered more affordable industrial power rates? Would a tax deduction for investments in plant and equipment have saved jobs? We believe it would and truly wish you would take our plan.

Premier, if we have to wait until the 2014 budget to hear your jobs plan, will there be any manufacturing jobs left?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I agree with the member opposite that the steel sector worldwide is facing challenges right now. In fact, the economy, as we know, in this province is facing challenges. But it's important to remember that since the bottom of the recession, we have created almost 500,000 net new jobs, many of them in the manufacturing sector, 95% of them full-time jobs and the overwhelming majority of them in the private sector as well.

When you compare it to other jurisdictions around us, the pace of job creation in this province far exceeds that in United States. In fact, it exceeds that substantially among our competitors in the Great Lake states as well.

We have a plan going forward. We're creating jobs, and that includes in the steel industry. We will work hard to make sure that those workers who are displaced have the support they need.

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Steeltown got its name from the iron works and steelworks that defined Hamilton for more than a century. Yesterday, US Steel announced the permanent shutdown of their iron- and steelmaking operations.

Since 2010, US Steel has said they could restart their operations if the economy turned around. In that time, New Democrats have proposed a job-creator tax credit, getting sky-high electricity rates under control, and an industrial investment tax credit, which could have helped to add a hot strip mill—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Glad to see the Tories now actually accept our ideas. The problem is, the Liberals have stuck with the status quo.

New Democrats believe that Hamilton can come out of this stronger, so why is this government simply throwing up its hands?

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

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I know the leader of the third party agrees with me in saying that I'm so proud of Hamilton and the work that they've been doing over the past years to actually reach the stage where they are the number one jurisdiction in all of Canada for investment in commercial, residential and industrial activity. The work that is being done and the leadership that's being demonstrated by that city is nothing short of remarkable.

I want to mention as well that we've been working closely with Hamilton Works for a number of years, with US Steel, to support those workers who unfortunately have faced layoffs in that difficult sector of steel right now. In fact, the colleague behind me, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, since 2011 has supported an action centre with the Hamilton steelworkers to make sure that those laid-off employees are getting the support that they need. We'll continue to do that.

I'm proud of the work that Hamilton has done. I have no doubt they are going to be able to overcome—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, the minister's facile boosterism isn't enough. The government can try and pass the buck or they can stand up for Hamiltonians. Mayor Bratina talked about—and this is his words—his “worst fears come true.”

The government is standing on the sidelines and watching as those fears come true. They can waste a billion dollars on cancelling gas plants to save a few Liberal seats in the GTA, but they won't fund a manufacturing investment tax credit that could help businesses across Ontario invest and grow.

Hamilton is filled with smart, dedicated, hard-working people who can come out of this stronger. Is the Premier going to stop standing by and watching as Steeltown loses its steelmaking works, or will she start listening to New Democrats and focus on job creation instead of her own political self-interest?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** You know, we are investing in Hamilton. We are supporting the leadership in Hamilton as they work their way through transitions, including the likes of what we're hearing in the steelworks. But I want to say that we are investing in manufacturing right across this province. In fact, we've committed nearly a billion dollars to support 170 projects in the province's manufacturing sector since 2007.

We've been providing tax relief, as well, to our manufacturers. Of course, we paralleled the federal government in the budget earlier this year to extend the accelerated capital cost allowance. That is a value of nearly a quarter of a billion dollars over the next several years. Of course, through the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund and other mechanisms, we're investing in the manufacturing and other sectors throughout that region of Ontario. We're proud to work with the local leadership to do that.

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO HERITAGE FUND

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and has to do with the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund. Minister, one of the chronic, constant complaints we hear, as northerners, from our political opponents is that northern Ontario doesn't have a voice and that their voice is not heard. Obviously, as a northerner, I emphatically reject that premise.

Our investments through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund and our increases in funding—it's important to note that taking that fund from \$60 million to \$100 million annually is just one very clear indication that in fact the north is being heard and that northern members continue to deliver for their ridings.

I know that very recently, Minister, you made an announcement on a bit of a renew, relook and refresh of the programming within the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund. I'm wondering, Minister, if you could share with

the House exactly what this programming is going to do to continue that wonderful trend in northern Ontario.

1120

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thank you so much to the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan. We're so very proud of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. in terms of the jobs that it has created: 22,000 jobs created or retained over the last 10 years, and thousands abroad; \$890 million in investment.

Two weeks ago, we decided we needed to look and say, "Can we make the program even stronger?" We had the opportunity to announce five new programs to basically enhance how the heritage fund works. What we recognize is that we want to tie it into the priorities that were identified in the northern Ontario growth plan—existing and emerging sectors in the economy, the ones that are the real priorities for the north.

What we've done is, with the new programs, the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. has aligned programs with those sectors that will maximize benefits for northerners and even work better than it has in the past. We've been working with northern municipalities, aboriginal communities, certainly industries and the private sector to get a stronger, more diverse and sustainable northern economy. I'll look forward in my supplementary to perhaps providing—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I'm going to ask the minister: Next time, wait for me to acknowledge you before you start; your microphone won't be on.

Carry on. Supplementary.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Minister, thank you for that response. As mentioned, since October 2003—over \$860 million towards more than 5,800 projects, leveraging over \$3 billion in investment. I can tell you that in my riding alone, there has been tens of millions of dollars of investment through hundreds of projects, creating or maintaining close to 1,700 jobs.

Here are a few examples in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan. Nu-Tech Metals: \$300,000 to expand a fabrication shop for a high-definition plasma table, allowing them to bid on jobs they previously couldn't and to hire more people. Rubin Business Park in Murillo and Olive Paipouge: over \$500,000 for an expansion of their industrial park with serviced lots. Thunder Bay International Airport Authority, the third-busiest airport in all of Ontario: \$1 million to continue the great trend that we see there on the business expansion of Thunder Bay International Airport.

Minister, can you please share with the House the new programming—specifically how we're going to see that continue what has been a great trend through NOHFC all across northern Ontario?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thank you so much again. This is why aligning the programs with the growth plan is so important, because the growth plan calls on us to strengthen the north's competitive advantage. Our program changes are focusing investment on existing and emerging sectors that have strong potential for significant growth across the north.

As part of our government's plan to strengthen the economy and support a dynamic and innovative business climate that attracts investment and helps create jobs, the NOHFC wants to continue to partner with northerners. The five new programs at the heritage fund are building the themes of private sector job creation, supporting northern community infrastructure, enhancing economic development capacity, stimulating commercialization, innovation and productivity, and, of course, attracting and retaining talent.

We look forward to continuing to work with all of our northern organizations to keep building jobs, creating jobs, in northern Ontario.

## CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question this morning is to the Premier. As you're aware, Premier, your government has managed to pass just four pieces of legislation since your Liberal coronation. Of course, my Bill 74, on which you flipped and flopped by first supporting and then opposing and then just outright hiding, was defeated yesterday. Premier, you demonstrated cowardly, weak leadership.

This morning, though—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm not going to accept that. It's not what I would call elevating the debate, so the member will withdraw.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I withdraw.

Premier, you demonstrated weak leadership.

This morning, I'd like to ask you about Bill 69, the Prompt Payment Act. Bill 69 is an important bill that has broad support from all three parties in this House. The Prompt Payment Act is also supported by industry stakeholders such as the Council of Ontario Construction Associations and the Ontario Road Builders' Association.

Premier, is Bill 69 a priority for your Liberal government? And if so, when do you expect to move forward on this important piece of legislation?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to thank the member for Vaughan for his efforts in this area. I realize there's interest in this piece of legislation on both sides of the House. The bill will move through the normal course of the process in the Legislature. There will be an opportunity for debate and a vote.

I'm focused on making sure that we make the investments in people and in infrastructure and in a business climate that's going to bring business to this province and is going to work with the private sector to create jobs. This piece of legislation will have its day in the House, and I look forward to the debate.

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

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Premier, enough with the song and dance. You're delaying this legislation.

The construction industry employs over 400,000 men and women, approximately 6.5% of Ontario's total workforce. Prompt payment legislation will correct the existing inequity, so that small and medium-sized construction firms have the ability to invest, grow and create jobs.

Premier, prompt payment legislation already exists around the world, in the majority of US states, the UK, the EU, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. One month ago I questioned you about this important piece of legislation, and last week I wrote to your office, urging you to move forward with Bill 69.

Premier, it's obvious that you have no desire to move forward on prompt payment legislation. Have you told your MPP from Vaughan that his Bill 69 isn't going anywhere in your Liberal government?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** The member is being a little mischievous. He understands more than anyone that this is a private member's bill. It is right now before committee, and there will be an opportunity for discussion at committee. He knows that for private members' bills there is a tradition that their movement to third reading, when it does happen, happens after a discussion between the parties. As a result of agreements, his particular one came forward due to a programming motion that was put forward. There are others that have come from a consensus between the House leaders. He knows that that's the process to follow.

But if he wants to talk about support for small businesses, maybe he wants to stand up and explain why the Conservative Party is filibustering Bill 105, which would cut taxes for small business, and not allowing it to proceed to committee so that it can have the positive economic effects we know that it will bring.

#### CATARACT SURGERY

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, yesterday Londoners learned that your ministry is cutting cataract surgeries to save money. In London, the wait time for cataract surgery is nearly 200 days and rising, which, as we know, affects seniors the most.

This government didn't listen to the Eye Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario when they said that these cuts will "have dire consequences for patients requiring cataract surgery." Why is this Liberal government cutting back cataract surgeries for seniors who need it to be able to see?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** When it comes to cataract surgery, this government has a remarkable record. Across the province, wait times for cataract surgeries have been cut in half. As of August 2013, 93% of cataract surgeries were being completed within our targets.

Province-wide—and I'll need my glasses for this—we've cut 163 days off cataract surgery. We've more than cut in half the wait times. The member opposite might remember this: At St. Joseph's Health Care, when we started measuring cataract surgeries, it was 495 days—a year and a half. We have reduced that by 60%, and we are almost at the target.

We have a great success story. I would love to talk about it more in the supplementary.

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

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I appreciate the minister's response. However, Shirley Hazelwood is 77 years old and lives in my riding of London West. She is on a wait-list and won't have cataract surgery until September 2014. That's a wait time of almost one year, more than double the target this government promised. Shirley can no longer read or watch TV, and is now considering going to the US to have surgery.

Shirley and seniors in this province need cataract surgery to be able to see. They shouldn't have to leave the country to get their vision corrected.

Is this Liberal government trying to make up the \$1.1 billion wasted on the gas plants scandal by forcing seniors with cataracts to wait longer as their eyesight deteriorates?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I think it's important to acknowledge that ours was the government that started to measure wait times. We are the government that publicly reports wait times. We are the government that's making strategic investments to bring down wait times and to hold them below target as we address the backlog.

We have a great success story. The volumes are allocated according to the wait times. We manage by wait times. I understand that different physicians would have different wait times. But in the southwest, the wait time for cataract surgery is 171 days, so certainly this particular person could go to a different physician and get a lower wait time, Speaker.

1130

#### TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. My constituents in Ajax-Pickering tell me that every day, as the roads become more congested, they are turning to public transit. As a government—I'm just going to have to talk a little louder so my friends can hear—we are making record investments in public transit to make sure it's more reliable. I'm pleased that public transit has been a priority for this government.

There is a distinct need to reduce gridlock and continue to improve air quality and to build stronger communities. GO Transit is a large part of this strategy. Unfortunately, I was troubled to hear recently that the Leader of the Opposition proposed to cancel these planned transit investments, specifically some of the BRT—that's the bus rapid transit projects—in the Big Move. As a member with a BRT project currently under way, I was hoping that the minister could provide a current status of the Durham Pulse project—

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

Minister of Transportation?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank the member for Ajax-Pickering, who has been a particular champion for a very important project, which is the Durham Pulse project, Mr. Speaker, which is going to take students all across Durham region to U of T Scarborough. We're working with Roger Anderson and the folks to extend it to Centennial College.

On this side of the House, we actually think the 905 wants and understands transit, likes transit and LRTs, and that students at Centennial College and U of T Scarborough actually want affordable transit and that those families shouldn't have to have three beater cars in their driveways for their kids.

Mr. Speaker, we have a problem right now, though. The official opposition is proposing to cancel most of the 15 LRT and BRT projects. That would be catastrophic for Bombardier. It would mean a massive loss of jobs in Thunder Bay and Barrie, where these plants are. It would mean—

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

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Thank you to my minister for the update on the Durham Pulse. It's good that we're working so closely with municipalities across Ontario to deliver this service. I know that the people in my riding of Ajax-Pickering will be pleased to hear that our unprecedented transit investments are working to reduce congestion in our communities.

An important part of our transit strategy is also to invest in highways. It's important that we are committed to building all transportation infrastructure that is necessary and suitable to the needs of our constituents. That includes investments in roads and highways. Could the minister please update the House on our investments in the highway infrastructure in my riding?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'd be very happy to. I want to again thank the really remarkable member for Ajax-Pickering, whom I refer to as Father Joe, my spiritual leader, and the Minister of Consumer Affairs, because they have delivered big-time for the folks that way: \$567.13 million for transit—the biggest investment in transit in the history of Durham region. We're proud of that record. In addition, there's \$329 million for highways, including over \$100 million for Highway 7 and Highway 401; half-hour all-day GO service, which is allowing the mayors along those corridors to actually see new commercial clusters and unprecedented growth in jobs along the GO corridor because they're accessible now to downtown Toronto; plus the important extension of the 407.

This government is acting on mobility. The opposition wants to cancel it all, Mr. Speaker.

ONTARIO SOCIETY  
FOR THE PREVENTION  
OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, Ontarians know it was time to put the OSPCA on a shorter leash by legislating the oversight and accountability that's non-existent today. Instead, you let them right off the leash with a \$5.5-million windfall. OSPCA board chair Rob Godfrey told the Toronto Star that he can't even get basic details about investigations made public. He tried, but the board shot him down.

We know that the board chair himself is powerless to provide even the tiniest bit of transparency. Doesn't that prove I'm right: that it doesn't matter if you stick a ministry staffer at the end of the board table; it does nothing to give the accountability that the OSPCA needs?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'm very proud of the work that the OSPCA is doing, and the community at large is very proud also, because they receive a lot of donations from the community. With this announcement last Friday, we have this \$5.5 million that we have provided to the OSPCA that will improve the care of animals in Ontario, because it will establish a 24/7 centralized dispatch service to ensure that an enforcement officer can respond effectively. They will be creating a squad of specialized, trained investigators who will crack down on puppy mills and kitten mills. They will be delivering specialized livestock training for investigators in the agriculture sector.

In the supplementary, I will—

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

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Back to the minister: I'm shocked that you can't see the problem here. You barely finished your announcement and the OSPCA had already started bragging about flexing its new muscles.

You claim the new zoo registry is voluntary, yet the OSPCA says that anyone that doesn't sign up can expect a surprise knock at the door. I'd ask if using a voluntary registry to target people is right, but even if you didn't like it, you can't do anything about it.

Again, Minister, can you explain to Ontarians why you expanded the powers of this private police agency without putting anything in legislation that gives you any say whatsoever on how they wield their power?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Mr. Speaker, with this announcement came more accountability for the OSPCA. They have an agreement now with the ministry that stipulates that the OSPCA will produce two full reports per year for the government. We will have someone from the ministry sitting on the board of directors, and they will ensure that the government receives progress reports from the OSPCA.

But you know what, Mr. Speaker? I'm not going to take advice from that party who recently moved a motion to strip the OSPCA of the power to oversee animal welfare on the farm. They want no OSPCA to look after and to oversee what is being done on the farm. We voted against that—

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

**DEFERRED VOTES**

WIRELESS SERVICES  
AGREEMENTS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LES CONVENTIONS  
DE SERVICES SANS FIL

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

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 / Projet de loi 60, Loi visant à mieux protéger les consommateurs en ce qui concerne les conventions de consommation portant sur les services sans fil accessibles au moyen d'un téléphone cellulaire, d'un téléphone intelligent ou de tout autre appareil mobile semblable.

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

*The division bells rang from 1138 to 1143.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On October 29, Ms. MacCharles moved third reading of Bill 60.

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

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harris, Michael	Milligan, Rob E.
Arnott, Ted	Hatfield, Percy	Milloy, John
Bailey, Robert	Hillier, Randy	Moridi, Reza
Balkissoon, Bas	Holyday, Douglas C.	Munro, Julia
Barrett, Toby	Horwath, Andrea	Murray, Glen R.
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoskins, Eric	Naqvi, Yasir
Bisson, Gilles	Hudak, Tim	Natyshak, Taras
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Nicholls, Rick
Campbell, Sarah	Jackson, Rod	O'Toole, John
Cansfield, Donna H.	Jaczek, Helena	Oraziotti, David
Chiarelli, Bob	Jeffrey, Linda	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Chudleigh, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Piruzza, Teresa
Clark, Steve	Klees, Frank	Prue, Michael
Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sattler, Peggy
Crack, Grant	Leone, Rob	Schein, Jonah
Damerla, Dipika	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Del Duca, Steven	MacLaren, Jack	Sergio, Mario
Delaney, Bob	MacLeod, Lisa	Shurman, Peter
Dhillon, Vic	Mangat, Amrit	Singh, Jagmeet
Dickson, Joe	Mantha, Michael	Smith, Todd
DiNovo, Cheri	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
Duguid, Brad	Matthews, Deborah	Taylor, Monique
Elliott, Christine	Mauro, Bill	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	McDonnell, Jim	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	McKenna, Jane	Wilson, Jim
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeeekin, Ted	Wong, Soo
Forster, Cindy	McNaughton, Monte	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fraser, John	McNeely, Phil	Yakabuski, John
Gerretsen, John	Meilleur, Madeleine	Yurek, Jeff
Gravelle, Michael	Miller, Norm	Zimmer, David

**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 96; 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 from York–Simcoe on a point of order.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome the students of Holy Trinity from Bradford, Ontario.

They were here until the count for the vote—but I'd like all members to welcome the students of Holy Trinity.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Windsor–Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'd like to welcome the uncle of page Evan Tanovich, who we'll be treating to lunch today. His uncle Chris Paul has joined us this morning as well.

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

*The House recessed from 1147 to 1500.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to introduce guests that will soon be here, two professors from the University of Guelph G360 project: Dr. Jana Levison and Dr. John Cherry, who are joining us today to give a presentation in the media studio.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's my pleasure to introduce friends and family of Will Ferguson: Gail Bebenek, Gary Ferguson, Wanda Hoffman, Wendy Ignor, Corrie Ferguson, Kyle Patteson, Henry Ignor, Jody Lindner, Dylan Eckhardt, Ethan Eckhardt, Noah Lindner, Zack Lindner, Mike Ramsay, Cindy Dellow, Peter Di Franco, Greg Hamara and Chris Mockler. Welcome to the House.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'm pleased to announce today that we have Mr. Bill Laidlaw with us in the west members' gallery. He is the executive director of the Ontario Association of Food Banks.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Founded 50 years ago by His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award encourages personal development and community involvement in young people. These awards challenge young people from age 14 to 25 in four areas—community services, skill development, physical fitness and adventurous journey—that help ensure our youth grow up active, healthy and involved.

More than half a million young Canadians have taken the challenge since 1963, and among the award's recipients this year were two of my constituents: Alana Lisik and Whitney Way. Alana has focused her energies on working to address global poverty and social injustice. Whitney is working to explore and protect our precious natural environment. Both are proof positive that the next generation is ready to meet the challenges of the future with passion and purpose.

I would also like to celebrate the good work of another of my constituents, Frances Wentges, who was recently named one of Ontario's Senior Achievement Award recipients for 2013. An active volunteer for Burlington's

Good Shepherd Centre, Frances contributed to the successful establishment of Good Shepherd Square, which helps vulnerable members of my community develop resilience in the face of abuse and poverty.

I congratulate all three women on their achievements.

#### JOHN WHITE

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I rise to pay tribute to a true Canadian hero that my community lost in July of this year. John White was a member of the Essex and Kent Scottish Regiment. John served in World War II with the Royal Canadian Artillery. He worked as a security guard for Seagram distilleries, where he was instrumental in securing a union.

Over the years, John enjoyed boxing and was also a talented horseman and original member of the Southern Ontario Horseman's Society, where he won many championships competing in the barrel racing events with his famed horse, Shadow.

A lover of laughter and literature, John is famous for reciting by heart the humorous and foreboding tales of *The Shooting of Dan McGrew* and *The Cremation of Sam McGee* with the same dramatic intensity that Robert W. Service would have yarned them with himself. To hear John recite, you'll know of that deep, resonating voice that reaches inside of you, grabs you and holds you tightly. Never have the words of *High Flight* or *In Flanders Fields* been so bold and full of life as they were when spoken by the very man who epitomized their cause.

John wrote his first poem as a young soldier serving in the Second World War in Holland, which he fondly titled *Pleasant Memories*. It would be nearly 50 years later before he would bring pen to paper again to compose over a hundred poems.

Receiving the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, and writing and publishing at 90 years young, John leaves his mark on the world as an inspiration to embrace life, the people you love, and to make the most out of every day you've been gifted.

Prior to John's passing on July 8, 2013, it was his expressed wish that his book be a lasting legacy that he wanted to share with the world. Per his wishes, the proceeds from his book will be donated to the other family that he had at Legion Branch 157 and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

John was a gift to our nation and to the community of Amherstburg. I want to thank his family for sharing him with us for so long.

Lest we forget.

#### FRIENDS OF THE GUILD PARK AND GARDENS

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** I'd like to stand today to recognize an organization in my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood—the most recent winner of the Heritage Toronto Award in the Community Heritage category—the Friends of the Guild Park and Gardens, led by

president John Mason. This organization was established in 2012 and formally founded in the summer of 2013. They are dedicated to preserving one of the longest-standing historical sites in Scarborough, the Guild Park. The Friends of the Guild Park strive to improve, enhance and protect the Guild Park, a 22-acre park and historical site located in Scarborough-Guildwood.

I've had the pleasure of speaking to the members of the Friends of the Guild Park on several occasions, and their passion and commitment are part of what makes my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood such a wonderful place to live and work.

The people of my riding are lucky to have the Friends of the Guild Park and Gardens working to preserve this site for future generations of Torontonians and Ontarians. I'm honoured to recognize them today as one of the winners of the Heritage Toronto Awards, an award that is given to people of this city who are here to preserve the great history of our city.

#### GREY BRUCE AGRICULTURE AND CULINARY ASSOCIATION

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** This past weekend, I had the pleasure of attending the Field to Fork gala held by the Grey Bruce Agriculture and Culinary Association. This association is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting and increasing public awareness of fresh, local food in the community. They promote local food through education, marketing and networking. Their members include farmers, restaurant owners, food processors, food distributors, farmers' markets and cooking schools.

The Grey Bruce Agriculture and Culinary Association works collaboratively with the Grey and Bruce counties and others to help these counties develop as a culinary destination. Well, let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, they have succeeded at this. Grey and Bruce counties have some of the best farms and farmers' markets in the province—and restaurants, I should add. I encourage everyone to go and visit the area, if you have not already.

The purpose of the Field to Fork gala is to raise public awareness about what is available locally, and a friendly little competition between several local chefs, who cook up a storm, never hurts as well.

I would like to congratulate two local individuals who were given awards for promoting local food through education, marketing and networking within their facilities. Their names are Nicole Wise—she operates Harley's in Mildmay—and Hugh Simpson, who has a wonderful restaurant near Eugenia.

I would also like to thank all the restaurants who donated to the gala. They made the night amazing. And to the culinary and agricultural association, thank you for inviting me. I commend everyone involved. Let's support local food.

#### ALL TRIBES CHRISTIAN CAMP

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I would like to take the opportunity to highlight an organization in my riding called the

All Tribes Christian Camp, which was formerly known as Crystal Springs Farms. This property was taken over by Millie Jacobs in 1963 and has become a retreat place for people to come, build, guide and renew their spirits.

The once-thriving orchards were left abandoned and overgrown with weeds, and the barns were left falling apart. News of this beautiful campground has been spreading, and people have united together to rejuvenate the land.

The camp's name reflects the owner's deep commitment to eradicating racial discrimination, as well as honouring her own Cherokee heritage. "All Tribes" refers to the biblical 12 tribes and reflects the camp's interdenominational orientation. The camp is open to groups from all faiths and churches.

As this camp grew larger and demand increased, so did the facility. In 1987, they began building the camp's centrepiece, the Edna Lee Lodge, named after the owner's good friend. The camp is furnished with beautiful furniture made by local Mennonite families. The building and improvements continue. All Tribes Christian Camp is now a well-recognized multi-purpose recreational centre.

I want to congratulate All Tribes, who celebrated their 50th anniversary this summer. Many came out and shared the memories with this beautiful place in Algoma-Manitoulin, and it was truly an honour to share that special day with them.

1510

#### SENIORS' IDENTITY CARD

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** This is a message for seniors and their families about the identity cards that seniors carry. If your parent or grandparent lives in a managed-care home or a seniors' residence apart from the family, it's important to review what form of identification your senior is carrying.

It's unfortunately too common to find a senior with an expired driver's licence or a licence that shows a residence at which the individual has not lived for years. Such a primary piece of identification is worse than useless. It gives the bearer a false sense of security that he or she has a valid form of identification, when at the very moment that ID is needed to vote, to board an aircraft, to open a bank account, the person will find that the out-of-date or incorrectly addressed ID is not accepted.

Seniors who no longer drive should consider getting the Ontario photo ID card. It is as good as your driver's licence for government-issued identification. Whether for non-drivers or for seniors, this is the card to carry in your wallet. The Ontario photo ID card is available at ServiceOntario centres.

I would ask people to review what your parents and grandparents are carrying as ID and ensure that each senior has one government-issued, valid piece of identification.

#### FOOD BANKS

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my gratitude to the members of the Standing Committee on Social Policy, who last night adopted the PC amendment to the Local Food Act, based on my private member's bill, Bill 68, Fighting Hunger with Local Food Act, 2013.

The amendment will create a tax credit for farmers who donate agricultural products to Ontario food banks and community food programs. The adoption of this amendment is a great day for food banks, food programs and especially those they serve.

There are many Ontario families that simply cannot afford to put food on the table. They rely on these food banks to help them. Over 413,000 Ontarians, including 160,000 children, used food banks every month in 2012, an all-time high for this province. The increased demand has placed a lot of pressure on food banks and community food programs to increase their food supply, especially the supply of fresh, nutrient-dense foods like fruits and vegetables grown right here in Ontario.

We are joined today in the Legislature by Mr. Bill Laidlaw, executive director of the Ontario Association of Food Banks. On behalf of Mr. Laidlaw, the food banks and meal programs across Ontario and the people who must access them, I strongly encourage the government to immediately call the amended Local Food Act back to the House for a third and final vote.

Let's begin to fight hunger with local food.

#### PARC ROYAL 22<sup>e</sup> RÉGIMENT

**M. Phil McNeely:** Nous sommes à Orléans le berceau d'une des plus grandes communautés francophones à l'extérieur de la province du Québec. La région d'Orléans s'est aussi avérée, au fil des années, un endroit de choix de plusieurs militaires pour s'y installer avec leur famille.

C'est pourquoi lorsque le major à la retraite Jean-Claude Allard, président de l'Association du Royal 22<sup>e</sup> Régiment, succursale Ottawa-Gatineau, ainsi que le major à la retraite Élisabeth Allard, tous deux résidents d'Orléans, m'ont fait part de leur démarche pour la dénomination du Parc des Aînés de Cumberland au nom du Royal 22<sup>e</sup> Régiment à l'occasion de son 100<sup>e</sup> anniversaire, je ne pouvais que saluer leur initiative et leur donner un appui inconditionnel.

Je suis donc très fier d'annoncer que le Parc des Aînés de Cumberland, situé sur le boulevard Centrum à Orléans, a été officiellement désigné, lors d'une cérémonie tenue le jeudi 24 octobre, le Parc Royal 22<sup>e</sup> Régiment.

Je me dois de mentionner la présence à l'évènement de deux vétérans de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, le colonel Ernest Adolphe Côté, âgé de 100 ans, et l'adjudant Roland Lalonde, âgé de 90 ans.

Grâce à la ténacité d'individus comme Élisabeth Allard et Jean-Claude Allard et à l'appui de plusieurs

ânés, nous avons maintenant un endroit reconnaissant la contribution des militaires canadiens français à la communauté d'Orléans.

#### TRANSFORMER STATION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Mr. Speaker, I stand today to inform members of a news conference that was hosted today and sponsored by our critic on the environment, Michael Harris, and myself, to support the Enniskillen Environmental Association, bringing forward information about a mega transformer project in my riding. This is a Hydro One transformer project, and it's on top of the Oak Ridges moraine.

At the news conference, members of the association introduced an independent study by a team of three distinguished scientists who reviewed the Clarington transformer station Class Environmental Assessment Draft Environmental Study.

Dr. Jana Levinson and Dr. John Cherry, who were in attendance and gave remarks, and Dr. Beth Parker—all from the University of Guelph 360 project—concluded in part that insufficient site-specific hydrological study characterization has been conducted to ensure safeguarding of the groundwater in the area. Mr. Speaker, this is in line with what local residents such as Clint Cole, Stan Kuzma, Jim Sullivan, Doug Taylor and Pedro Pelletier have been saying for some years.

This House knows, from the Oakville and Mississauga gas plant experience, what happens when major projects are approved without input from the public. Haste makes waste—\$1 billion, in that case.

I urge the members to support my private member's resolution requiring a moratorium on projects like the Clarington transformer station, and I support a moratorium until there have been complete reviews of the Oak Ridges moraine conservation plan. I urge all members to support me.

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

#### WILL FERGUSON

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to pay tribute to Mr. Will Ferguson, former member of this Legislature from the riding of Kitchener, who served from 1990 to 1994, with a representative from each caucus speaking for up to five minutes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader has requested unanimous consent to pay tribute to Will Ferguson. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** It's a real honour for me to pay tribute, on behalf of the Liberal Party, on behalf of the government caucus, to one of my predecessors here in the Legislature as a member from Kitchener, Mr. Will Ferguson. I'd like to express my welcome to his family

and friends who are gathered here today, who have come to hear the tribute that's being offered.

Will, as members are aware, and as has been stated, served in this Legislature from 1990 to 1994. Even though I only met him on several occasions, I was certainly always aware of him as a political force in our community. Will came to Queen's Park as part of the Bob Rae sweep and rose through the ranks, initially serving as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In the summer of 1991, he was elevated to cabinet and became Ontario's Minister of Energy, a post he held until early 1992. He later served as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Will was a fighter who loved politics. He made his first bid for Kitchener city council in 1972 while an 18-year-old high school student at Cameron Heights Collegiate. Although unsuccessful in this early attempt, he eventually won election in 1979 at age 24, making him the youngest city councillor in Kitchener's history. Will's municipal career spanned almost 12 years, and there are numerous stories about him. All of them centred on his passion and his drive to help the little guy, the underdog and the marginalized.

Among his causes was the work of the late Anna Kaljas in our community. Anna, a legend in Waterloo region, ran a home for what we would call the hard-to-house today, those who, due to mental health and addiction problems, were unwelcome even in our community's homeless shelters and hostels. Will stepped in and helped get Anna financial assistance from the region to continue her operations.

Will was tenacious. A tribute in our local paper at the time of his passing quoted Wayne Samuelson, retired president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, who served as a Kitchener city councillor with Will. Samuelson told the story of Ferguson trying to get action from city hall about gravel being laid down on the streets in his ward. He asked the city to spray the streets down with water so that the dust from the gravel wouldn't blow into people's homes. His requests were ignored, so one day Will brought a big sack of the same gravel into the council chamber and dumped it onto the table. Dust flew everywhere, and action was taken.

No biography of Will Ferguson can ignore the troubles, challenges and, indeed, tragedies that he faced both politically and personally. Allegations about an incident that had happened years earlier forced his resignation from cabinet and from the New Democratic caucus. Although he was later acquitted and reinstated to the caucus, friends and observers note that it seriously affected Will and tempered some of the incredible drive that he brought to every role.

Will's later life was not easy. He died far too young at age 57, and like each and every one of us, he had his own share of demons. But he also had much to be proud of.

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I had the opportunity to attend a memorial mass in his honour following his death, and in the course of a few

hours it became clear the legacy that Will left to our community.

Despite the fact that it was a beautiful summer evening, the church was packed, and although the usual collection of politicians and dignitaries was there, for the most part it was full of ordinary people; in many cases, individuals you knew had not been dealt the best hand in life.

People had seen in Will a champion, someone who cared about them, who fought for them, who was determined to make a difference in their lives.

I think members will agree that one of the greatest compliments you can give a politician is to recognize that they got into politics for all the right reasons, or, in more direct terms, to note that what drives him or her is the simple desire to offer a helping hand to those who are trying to deal with the system that's not always designed to help those who are not well connected or wealthy.

As I looked around the church that night and heard the many Will Ferguson stories during the reception that followed, I realized that Will Ferguson had gone into politics for all the right reasons.

Mr. Speaker, our province has lost a fighter, an advocate and someone who wasn't afraid to stand up for ordinary people.

On behalf of the Liberal caucus, I express our deepest condolences and sympathies to the Ferguson family and pay tribute to an outstanding member of this Legislature.

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

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I, too, rise in the Ontario Legislature today to pay tribute to a hard-working Kitchener politician who was always known for looking out for the little guy.

My colleague from Kitchener Centre just presented his five minutes on behalf of his party. My colleague to the left, Catherine Fife from Kitchener-Waterloo, will have her opportunity. You'll likely hear some of the similar stories that the member from Kitchener Centre expressed, and I, too, will as well, but I know that after speaking to the family, some of those stories can be told time and time again, and I'm sure it'll bring smiles to the faces of family and friends when they hear the stories of Will Ferguson, a member of this Ontario Legislature from 1990-94. In fact, he was born February 13, 1954, and lived a life dedicated to helping those around him.

Although we may not have shared the same political stripes, I want to take this time to honour his commitment to the people of Kitchener and those of all of Ontario.

I know he tried his first time in elected office at the young age of 18, while a high school student. However, that first time didn't prevent him—it was unfortunate that he didn't take a seat then. He did get elected at the age of 24 and, in fact, became the youngest city of Kitchener alderman in our city's history.

Mr. Ferguson was known for spending long days at the office and around the riding, ensuring that his constituents' concerns were being addressed. No matter who called or who wrote him, he did all he could to help, even if it meant taking risks. His constituents remember him as being an MPP who wasn't afraid to pick up the

phone personally and take the time to help them find a solution to their problems.

From his work in Kitchener and Toronto, and from places as far away as Nunavut and South Africa, Mr. Ferguson fought for what he truly believed in.

As a member of the New Democratic Party, he represented the riding of Kitchener from September 6, 1990, to October 8, 1994. During that time, he served in many important roles, including Minister of Energy, parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation, and parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

As Minister of Energy, Mr. Ferguson maintained the philosophy that the cheapest, most environmental kilowatt of energy spent is the one not used. He took it upon himself to help Ontarians conserve energy in their homes by handing out energy-saving light bulbs to replace the old light bulbs in most of our homes. He believed that if each of us took it upon ourselves to save energy in our own homes and businesses, we could save plenty of tax money on energy infrastructure.

Prior to being elected to come to Queen's Park, he also represented the Rockway-St. Mary's ward in Kitchener and served as a regional councillor for 12 years. Mr. Ferguson was known there for stirring the pot, always putting his constituents ahead of politics.

As we heard an example previously, Mr. Ferguson, as a councillor, had received several complaints about gravel being laid down on the streets of his ward. People were complaining that the dust was getting into their homes and making a mess of their neighbourhood. At the time, the city wouldn't agree with the request to spray the streets down with water to reduce the dust from blowing all over the place. So, to fix the situation, he marched into the council chamber with a large pail of gravel and dumped it everywhere. As soon as the dust settled, council, of course, changed their minds.

This is just one example of the creative ideas Mr. Ferguson used to catch people's attention and resolve a lot of contentious issues. Many residents in Waterloo region admired this quality, which is why he served in politics as long as he did.

Coming from a large single-parent family, Will Ferguson knew how important it was to preserve the family budget. While he was still a city councillor, he took it upon himself to reduce the size and cost of city hall so that residents' taxes could be lowered. Among all of his colleagues and staff against his protests, he fought on to advance his constituents' interests.

Speaking of his family, of course, I know many of them are here today, and I'd like to recognize his family for being here: Mr. Ferguson's daughter, Corrie Ferguson, and her fiancé, Kyle Patteson; Mr. Ferguson's triplet siblings—yes, that's triplet siblings—Wanda Hoffman and Wendy Ignor, who is here with her husband, Henry; his twin siblings, Gail Bebenek and, of course, his brother, Gary. I know that I read—and I spoke with Gary, who just waved there, and he said that at times they liked to compare themselves to the Kennedys,

as a family of politicians, but the Kennedys had a lot more money. Of course, I recognize the many nieces and nephews here today.

Speaker, I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak about a celebrated local politician, Will Ferguson, in our community of Kitchener-Waterloo. On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, our deepest condolences.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's my pleasure to speak today about the life and public service of the Honourable William "Willie" Ferguson, MPP for the riding of Kitchener from 1990 to 1994.

Many of his family and friends are with us today. Their presence speaks to the impact Will had on those who knew him, and I want to thank them for sharing him with us, with the people of Kitchener and with the province of Ontario.

From those I have asked and from what I've read about him, Will had a deep connection to his community, built during the time he spent serving his fellow citizens. Will was known as a scrapper, as a fighter, as someone who saw a problem and thought only of how to solve it, no matter what. He never backed down from a challenge, and he was never afraid of anyone or anything.

This seems the right time to mention that Will was a staunch New Democrat. His sister Wanda, who is here, asked me to mention that, because Will would have wanted it on the record.

Although he wasn't a large man, pound for pound, Will was as tough as they come. In fact, he was an amateur boxer. He earned a silver medal as a middle-weight at the 1970 Ontario Winter Games. His mother, Mary, said she was happy when he chose politics over boxing. "I was kind of afraid he might end up being a professional boxer," she said. "Politics is much safer." I'm not so sure about that.

Will never played it safe. He decided to get into politics very early and didn't pull a punch during his career in public life. He first ran for Kitchener city council in 1972, when he was 18. He didn't win the election, but he won plenty of admirers for doing so. By 1979, with a little more experience, he became Kitchener's youngest alderman, at 24 years of age.

From 1979 until 1990, Will represented Rockway-St. Mary's and earned a reputation as a hard worker, someone who never gave up and who made sure the needs of his constituents were being met.

While serving on council, he was sometimes oppositional—we've heard the story of the dust; it's legendary—because it takes a lot of backbone to bring your constituents' needs right to the council chambers.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Physically.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Physically, yes.

Will had an ideal vision of leadership that he strived for, shaped by his experiences and the hardship of his youth. His mother, Mary, raised five young kids on her own. As he said in 1991, "At that age, I recognized some of the real injustices we faced. The reason we were in the position we were in was obviously not our fault." Will

lived by that ethic as he spent his political career trying to help those who needed it.

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As a councillor in the 1980s, he took on the challenge of finding municipal funding for Anna Kaljas, the Kitchener humanitarian who, in her boarding houses, helped people with mental health challenges who could not stay in homeless shelters or ordinary group homes. Will understood the importance of the issue and he helped Anna get a grant for her three boarding houses. This was an act of true compassion. Will was ever vigilant to respond to calls for assistance from the people he took an oath to serve. This translated into his work here in the Legislature.

I believe Will Ferguson's political career tells us an important story about building from strong constituency work at the local level. It is a great opportunity to learn about our system of democracy and to be reminded of who you work for. When politicians are connected directly to their community, they can foster feelings of understanding and loyalty from their constituents. Will Ferguson was connected, and he experienced that better than most, as the local newspaper printed many supportive comments from people in Kitchener after he resigned as Minister of Energy.

Will served in interesting times at Queen's Park, winning his seat in 1990 and entering cabinet in 1991. While I did not know Will Ferguson myself, I can tell you that the transition to this place, to Queen's Park, is not without its challenges for every person who decides to do so.

As I prepared to deliver this tribute today, I spent some time looking at his file in the legislative library, flipping through stories from the early 1990s. It gave me an opportunity to think about what it means to be an elected representative, to become a politician. It takes strength and it takes the courage of your convictions to decide to run, and it takes a great deal more of both if you're lucky enough to win an election. So often we lose sight of the person behind the politician; we shouldn't forget that. For all the scrutiny we receive and all the ink that's spilled about what we say and do, we are all just like anyone else. Each and every one of us who sits in this House, who serves as the voice of thousands of Ontarians from places we call home—we are all just like anyone else. Some of us understand the importance of this responsibility and the weight of this responsibility. Will Ferguson understood this very well.

Will was a regular guy who had an above-average desire to find out the challenges facing his neighbours and come up with ways to make their lives a little better. By all accounts, he did a very good job of that as city councillor and during his time in the Legislature.

Will Ferguson came from Kitchener, and everywhere he went, Kitchener came with him. He was tough, he never backed down, and occasionally that got him into a little bit of trouble. Sometimes it gets us all into a little bit of trouble. He knew what he wanted to get done and he wasn't afraid to do what was necessary. He didn't choose politics because it was safer; just like many of us

here today, he chose politics because he thought he could get something done for the people in his community. He had the courage of his convictions and he acted on them. And when the dust settles, our province and the people of Kitchener are richer for the time Will Ferguson spent with us. Thank you very much to the family.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their very heartfelt words. In a bittersweet way, it's a wonderful tribute as we come together, remove our shackles of partisan politics and honour one of our own. But more importantly, to the family, we thank you for the gift of your loved one.

As is the tradition, we will make a copy of Hansard and a video DVD available for the family. Thank you very much.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption.

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

Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013 /  
Projet de loi 36, Loi édictant la Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux,

The title of which is amended to read:

Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013 and to amend the Taxation Act, 2007 to provide for a tax credit to farmers for donating certain agricultural products that they have produced /  
Projet de loi 36, Loi édictant la Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux et modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les impôts pour prévoir un crédit d'impôt pour les agriculteurs qui font don de certains produits agricoles qu'ils ont produits.

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

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated October 3, 2013, the bill is ordered for a third reading.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

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

Bill 32, An Act respecting the Human Resources Professionals Association /  
Projet de loi 32, Loi concernant l'Association des professionnels en ressources humaines.

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

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated October 3, 2013, the bill is ordered for third reading.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I beg leave to present a report on the review of the Aggregate Resources Act from the Standing Committee on General Government and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Crack presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I'd like to commend all the members of the committee, legal counsel Mr. Jerry Richmond and Clerk Sylwia Przedziecki for all the good work that they have done. They have travelled the province, and came up with an excellent report that thoroughly takes into consideration a lot of the input that was received by the committee from stakeholders, and also following the tours of many of the great aggregate facilities and sites around the province.

I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Crack moves adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Mr. Speaker, I beg your indulgence that I can introduce Paula and Evan Davis, who are here because they have an interest in this bill.

### 434753 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2013

Mr. Balkissoon moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 434753 Ontario Ltd.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

### ELECTION AMENDMENT ACT (MPPS' RECALL), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI ÉLECTORALE (RÉVOCATION DES DÉPUTÉS)

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 124, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to the recall of members of the Legislative Assembly / *Projet de loi 124, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne la révocation des députés à l'Assemblée législative.*

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, the Election Amendment Act (MPPs' Recall), 2013, amends the Election Act to provide a process by which a member of the Legislative Assembly may be recalled and a by-election held to fill the vacant seat. An eligible voter in a member's electoral district can apply to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issuance of a recall petition. No application for the issuance of a recall petition may be made during a year following the member's election or one year before the next scheduled general election

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A proponent of a recall petition has 60 days to return the petition to the Chief Electoral Officer with the signatures of eligible voters in the electoral district who represent at least 25% of the total number of votes in the last election held in that district. In that case, the seat of the member of the assembly becomes vacant. A by-election is then held to fill the vacancy. The recalled member is free to be a candidate in the by-election.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### MINING INDUSTRY

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Today, I'm honoured to be joining the Ontario Mining Association as we host Meet the Miners Day at Queen's Park. Meet the Miners Day, as I think many of you will know, is an annual tradition dating back more than 25 years that gives members of the Legislature and senior mining executives the opportunity to exchange ideas to help continue to build a healthy mining sector.

This year's theme is "Mining Builds Communities," something our province has excelled at by working with the mining industry to strengthen the economies of diverse communities across the province. Our government has worked very hard to advance our province's standing as a preferred jurisdiction for mineral development. We're working very hard to ensure that mining remains an important contributor to the provincial economy.

Here are some of the facts: Ontario is among the top-10 mineral investment jurisdictions in the world. As a result, 24 new mines have opened here over the last 10 years. That's more than anywhere else in Canada. There are some notable examples. I could go on, but certainly

we think of the De Beers Canada's Victor diamond mine, Ontario's diamond mine near Attawapiskat; the extraordinary Detour Gold project near Cochrane, one of the greatest gold deposits in North America; and the AuRico Gold Young-Davidson mine near Matachewan as well comes to mind—great examples of projects that are creating extraordinary employment.

The fact is that currently Ontario is home to 41 operational mines with a total mineral production valued at an incredible \$9.2 billion last year. I think many will recall that in 2011, our government pledged to support the opening of eight new mines over the next 10 years. I am certainly very pleased to report that four new mines have already opened since then. With an additional six new mining and mine expansion projects in Ontario expected to be operational by 2017, the future continues to look very, very bright.

Our government's record on mining is a very strong one. Let's go back to 2003. Exploration expenditures in the province of Ontario were \$193 million, and that was an impressive figure at the time, perhaps. But in 2012, we reached over the \$900-million mark, which simply says that we are the leading jurisdiction in Canada for exploration.

In terms of mineral production itself, I referenced it earlier, but the value of mineral production in 2003 was \$5.7 billion. In 2012, we reached \$9.2 billion. Again, Ontario is the top province in Canada for mineral production. More activity at our metal mines has increased the total number of direct jobs in mineral production from 24,000 in 2003 to 27,000 in 2012. And there are an additional 50,000 jobs associated with the manufacturing and the processing of mineral products.

Exciting discoveries in the Ring of Fire area in northern Ontario hold the promise of being Canada's first world-class chromite deposit, with strong potential as well for nickel, copper, zinc, gold and other minerals. Certainly, in consultation with First Nations and the companies that are involved with these projects, as well as undergoing the necessary approvals, we look forward to unlocking the potential of this region and creating thousands of jobs for Ontarians.

Our government continues to work very hard to maintain a superior investment climate for the mining industry and especially, may I say, for communities in the north.

In accordance with our Mineral Development Strategy, which we brought forward in 2006, the Ontario government is committed to advancing mineral development for the benefit of all Ontarians. This includes working in consultation with stakeholders to modernize elements of our Mining Act to promote sustainable mineral activity that respects the environment, aboriginal and treaty rights, communities and individuals, and brings clarity and certainty for the industry, something they are always calling for. It also involves providing a tax regime that supports a dynamic and innovative business climate that will help mineral development companies succeed, as well as attract more investment and opportunities to Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, our work is absolutely paying off. We have in place a number of government initiatives, one of the most significant ones being the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program, that have helped mining companies in northern Ontario reduce their electricity costs, sustain jobs and maintain their global competitiveness—very vital aspects. There are currently seven mining companies in the province representing 13 facilities that participate in that program, which is helping to support a thriving mining sector in Ontario.

Speaker, we are also working to implement the Mining Act modernization process that began with the passage of the modernized Mining Act in 2009. We brought a 100-year-old piece of legislation into the 21st century by introducing rules and structures that will improve how exploration activities are carried out in the province.

Modernization of the Mining Act and the supporting regulations very much is the result of very comprehensive consultations. Between January 2010 and January 2012, two years, over 70 discussions and consultations were undertaken with aboriginal groups and communities, industry stakeholders, environmental organizations, and municipal representatives.

Currently, Speaker, we are in phase 3, and we are proposing to make changes to the Mining Act that will allow us to implement online staking.

We have also very strongly supported the Strategic One-on-One Export Marketing Program, a training initiative that helps companies develop sound strategies to gain access to new global markets. To date, 53 companies have graduated from that program, and their innovative products and services from Ontario are finding their way around the world. I had an opportunity to be at one of the graduation ceremonies, and it was remarkable how excited they all were. These were major companies that were involved in this process.

Measures like these promote long-term sustainability and global competitiveness in Ontario. Our work in advancing mining reflects our government's very strong commitment to supporting a dynamic and innovative business climate that will help companies succeed while also drawing investment and opportunities to Ontario.

Speaker, Meet the Miners is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Ontario's thriving mining sector and also to learn how this remarkable industry, led by so many remarkable people, contributes to Ontario's prosperity. Certainly, I do want to invite all members to join us this evening at the Meet the Miners reception in rooms 228 and 230, I think starting sometime after 5 o'clock. I can assure you that you will meet some amazing Ontarians.

On behalf of our ministry, I want to say to everybody who is here today how much I am looking forward to continuing working with all stakeholders to make Canada's greatest mining jurisdiction even greater.

#### CHILD CARE

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm pleased to stand in the House today to celebrate Ontario's dedicated child care workers

and early childhood educators. Today marks the 13th annual Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day here in Ontario.

This is a special day to recognize the important role that child care workers and early childhood educators play in the healthy development of our children, and to show our appreciation for the countless hours they spend enriching our children's lives and preparing them for success in the future. They are true leaders in early learning. Each and every day, they provide quality child care and guidance to children across the province, focusing on each child's physical, intellectual, social and creative development.

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Our government is working to modernize child care so that it is high quality, seamless and responsive to parents' needs. Child care workers and early childhood educators are valued partners in our ongoing efforts. Through their passion and commitment, they give our children a strong start in life. Our child care workers provide us parents and grandparents with peace of mind, knowing our kids are getting the guidance, support and encouragement they need to flourish and reach their full potential. They make it look easy and natural, but I know how diligently they work to support our children.

With their training and work experience, early childhood educators are critical in full-day kindergarten classrooms, where they work alongside teachers as a team to support children as they begin their journey of learning.

A recent study with Queen's and McMaster Universities showed that students who attended full-day kindergarten improved their readiness for grade 1 and accelerated their development in every area. Results like these show us that this transformational program is giving Ontario's children a better start in school and preparing them for success in grade 1 and beyond.

And approximately 7,000 early childhood educators working in the 2,600 schools that offer full-day kindergarten across the province are vital to that success. By the time the program is fully implemented in September 2014, more than 10,000 early childhood educators will be working in all of the province's publicly funded elementary schools, making a huge difference in the lives of more than one quarter of a million children each year.

On this special day of recognition, I want to thank all of the child care workers and all of the early childhood educators in Ontario for contributing to a strong, publicly funded education system and a high-quality child care sector. Through their hard work and commitment, they're giving our children a brighter future, providing families with the support they need and building a stronger Ontario.

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

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Norm Miller:** It's my pleasure to rise in the Legislature today on behalf of the PC caucus and our

leader, Tim Hudak, to welcome the Ontario Mining Association and all the miners here to Queen's Park today for Meet the Miners.

The Ontario Mining Association—of course, that includes Chris Hodgson, former MPP, who is the president of the Ontario Mining Association—was established in 1920 and is one of the longest-serving trade organizations in Canada. The mining industry has historically been an important driver of economic growth in Ontario, and it continues to do so today. Cities like Sudbury and Timmins were built on the mining industry, and the Ring of Fire development has the potential to be a major driver not only for northern Ontario, but for the entire province.

Advances in technology have made mining more efficient and safe. Current market conditions have even allowed previously closed mines to be revisited and reopened. In my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka, Ontario Graphite has reopened the Kearney Mine, which will result in renewed economic growth and bring new jobs to the community. The Kearney Mine is expected to create 80 full-time jobs and up to three times more spinoff positions through the 30 years that it's projected to be in operation. It is clear that the mining industry has been an essential part of Ontario's history and will continue to be an important part of its future.

But in the short two and a half minutes I have to respond to the minister—we can do better. He talks in glowing terms of the new mines that have been opened. I would say it takes a long lead-in time to open those mines, and I suspect next year's figures won't be as good as the ones that were talked about from last year. I would just list off quickly the fact that in the short time this government has been in power, the negative policies they brought into effect will have a negative effect going forward—like tripling the diamond tax just since the first new De Beers diamond mine was about to open. Right now they're contemplating an increase in the mining tax. The Far North Act: They put half of the Far North off-limits, and we don't know where we're going to find the next new mine. That's a real blow for the mining tax—and on and on it goes.

We can create an environment where Ontario can lead again, as it once did, back in the time when our current leader, Tim Hudak, was Minister of Northern Development and Mines and Ontario was rated number one in the world for mining exploration. I look forward to that day.

#### CHILD CARE

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I rise on behalf of the PC caucus and our leader, Tim Hudak, in recognition of Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day, to thank child care workers and early childhood educators for giving Ontario's youngest learners the best possible start.

The first piece of legislation that I introduced in this Legislature was the Protection of Child Care Centres Act. It was a bill designed to help our child care centres in Waterloo region face the effects of full-day kindergarten

in our region and to protect their existence. It's something I care very deeply about. I know that each and every day, our young children are in the care of our early childhood educators, who help nurture our kids' natural curiosity for learning, for playing and for doing all the things we expect of our children.

My kids have used, and continue to use, our child care centres in Waterloo region. They are an essential service to my family and to many families right across the region. To Brittany, Kellie and Debbie, who are our current child care providers; to Jo and Judy, who are the administrators of our child care centre; and to all early childhood educators across the province of Ontario, I want to offer our sincere gratitude and our sincere thanks for the good work they do each and every day in helping our children get through the day and become successful learners when they get into school. On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, once again, I'd like to thank our early childhood educators.

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** First, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all my friends from the Ontario Mining Association and their affiliated members to Queen's Park today, on behalf of our leader, Andrea Horwath, and our NDP caucus members.

Over the past few years, I have been fortunate enough to meet with many of these companies and tour their mines and facilities. I always look forward to these tours and to meeting the hard-working men and women in the mining sector. This is always a great learning experience for me.

As mining is one of our economy's important engines, the province needs to pay more attention to the needs of this industry. Mining has created tens of thousands of jobs across the province, but there is an opportunity to do more, and we should be doing more.

But in order for mining companies to come and invest in Ontario, they need to see that the government has a clear and concrete plan for mining in this province. The Ring of Fire offers First Nations, the north and the province huge economic opportunities and much-needed jobs. Because of this rare discovery, Ontario continues to attract the largest share of mineral exploration in Canada.

Despite all the potential, there are still challenges when it comes to developing the Ring of Fire and the mining industry in general. Government and industry need to work together to ensure that barriers to developing mining are removed so that badly needed jobs are created and our economy is reinvigorated.

Over the past few weeks, we have seen what can happen when the government's unwillingness to take real action is threatening billions of dollars in northern investment and leaving communities that are dependent on resource development out in the cold. Members of this government have repeatedly paid lip service to the important role the government plays in developing resource commodities by working with industry, affected

communities and First Nations, but have so far failed to take concrete action.

As mining critic, I will continue to push this government to take action. It's so obvious that we need a plan; we need a framework; we need guidelines. Mining companies, First Nations, northern communities and citizens of this province want to see this project moving forward so that everyone can reap the economic benefits.

I extend my thanks to the many companies who have made their way here today, and I look forward to chatting with them over a few drinks tonight.

#### CHILD CARE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's my honour to rise and speak to Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. As you probably know, parents and children who are able to access high-quality, licensed child care are very happy to have access to it. It makes a huge difference in their lives. For children, it can be incredibly enriching. It gives them a head start in life. For parents, it makes the difference between making ends meet and not making ends meet. The dedicated women and men who take care of our children day after day expand their horizons, make sure they're safe and nurture them through the day. Those women and men deserve our appreciation.

**1600**

I've had the opportunity in my own riding to go to Dandyion daycare centre for a meeting with the board, the administrators and some of the child care workers, and it was a typical child care centre meeting. There was a group of us adults in the centre on very small chairs, with very low tables, eating some food, while children ran in circles around us. They said, "Just get used to it. That's the way we meet here." I said, "It's the same with me. I have the same experience at work." They were comforted to know that they weren't alone in the way they met.

Boulton Avenue Child Care in my riding: I went to their fundraiser a few weeks ago. It's a small child care centre; it operates out of the Royal Canadian Curling Club. They are raising money so that they can finance the transition as all-day kindergarten comes forward. It's posed huge challenges for them. But those parents and those child care workers have come together to make sure that those children are looked after.

All too often, Speaker, parents, families and children that need licensed daycare can't get it. As you know, only one in five children who needs care is in licensed care. As you know, the cost per child can be \$1,000 and more per month, which is an extraordinary burden on people. Too many parents rely on an unlicensed system where, as we know, we have seen tragedy in the last year to two years.

On behalf of the NDP, I want to express my thanks to those child care workers and early childhood educators for all that they've done for the children of this province and urge all of us to support a larger licensed non-profit child care system.

#### PETITIONS

##### DARLINGTON NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to present a petition on behalf of my constituents. It reads as follows:

"Whereas approximately 20% of Ontario's electricity is produced at the Darlington generating station" in my riding of Durham;

"Whereas in addition to refurbishing the four existing reactors at the Darlington the building of new capacity is important for the future of Ontario's manufacturing sector and for jobs and investment in our Ontario;

"Whereas a study by the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters in 2012 concluded the building of a new two-reactor plant at Darlington would directly employ more than 10,000 people and would support employment for an additional 10,000 others in Canada for approximately a five-year period;

"Whereas Ontario's Ministry of Energy says Ontario Power Generation has already spent an estimated \$180 million in preparation proceeding with the two new Darlington reactors;

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

"That Ontario's elected MPPs and the provincial government reaffirm their commitment to the complete refurbishment of all four units at the Darlington generating station and that the Ontario government reinstate the original plan for the completion of two new reactors at the Darlington generating station."

I'm pleased to sign and support it and present it to Sophia, one of the pages here.

##### MINIMUM WAGE

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** If you'd indulge me, Mr. Speaker, a point of order: I just want to introduce two people who are here in the gallery, James Thompson and Paul Codd, who are from the ODSP Action Coalition and Workers' Action Centre.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Yes, welcome.

Now to the petition.

"Petition to raise the minimum wage:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's minimum wage has been frozen at \$10.25 an hour since 2010, and some workers earn even less due to current exemptions in the Employment Standards Act; and

"Whereas full-time minimum wage workers are living at nearly 20% below the poverty line as measured by the Ontario government's low-income measure (LIM); and

"Whereas minimum wage should, as a matter of principle, bring people working 35 hours per week above the poverty line; and

“Whereas an immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$14 per hour would bring workers’ wages 10% above the LIM poverty line; and

“Whereas raising the minimum wage will benefit workers, local businesses and the economy by putting money in workers’ pockets to spend in their local community;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately increase the minimum wage to \$14 per hour for all workers and thereafter increase it annually by no less than the cost of living.”

I’m adding my signature and giving it to Benjamin to be delivered to the table.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** “Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

“Whereas small businesses not only employ thousands of Ontarians with well-paying jobs, they also play a vital role strengthening Ontario’s economy; and

“Whereas providing tax relief to small and local businesses strengthens the economy and creates a business climate that attracts investment and helps create jobs; and

“Whereas the government has taken several other initiatives to making Ontario the most attractive place to do business in North America;

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

“That the members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 105, Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013, introduced on September 24, 2013, by the Ontario Minister of Finance.”

I send this forward with Anal.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the purpose of Ontario’s Environmental Protection Act (EPA) is to ‘provide for the protection and conservation of the natural environment.’ RSO 1990, c. E.19, s. 3.; and

“Whereas ‘all landfills will eventually release leachate to the surrounding environment and therefore all landfills will have some impact on the water quality of the local ecosystem.’—Threats to Sources of Drinking Water and Aquatic Health in Canada;

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

“That section 27 of the EPA should be reviewed and amended immediately to prohibit the establishment of new or expanded landfills at fractured bedrock sites and other hydrogeologically unsuitable locations within the province of Ontario.”

I affix my signature. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for allowing me to present this petition.

#### TENANT PROTECTION

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas escalating rental costs are making Ontario less affordable and leaving many tenants financially insecure or falling into poverty;

“Whereas tenants living in residential apartments and condominiums built after 1991 are not protected by rent control guidelines;

“Whereas this has created an unfair, two-tier system of tenant protection in Ontario where some tenants have no protection from large and arbitrary increases;

“Whereas fixing this simple loophole in the law will help protect tenants and help make housing more affordable and secure for thousands of Ontarians;

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

“That the province of Ontario acts to protect all tenants in Ontario and immediately move to ensure that all Ontario tenants living in buildings, mobile home parks and land-lease communities are covered by the rent control guidelines in the Building Code Act, 1992, and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006.”

I support this petition and I will give it to page Benjamin.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly signed by a number of individuals from Toronto and Hamilton. It reads as follows:

“Whereas small businesses not only employ thousands of Ontarians with well-paying jobs, they also play a vital role strengthening Ontario’s economy; and

“Whereas providing tax relief to small and local businesses strengthens the economy and creates a business climate that attracts investment and helps create jobs; and

“Whereas the government has taken several other initiatives to making Ontario the most attractive place to do business in North America;

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

“That the members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 105, Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013, introduced on September 24, 2013, by the Ontario Minister of Finance.”

I agree with this petition. I’ve signed it and I will send it down with page Christina.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Carleton Place and District Memorial Hospital (CPDMH) has been appealing to the Ministry of Health for redevelopment funding and approval since 2003; and

“Whereas population growth and demand for services at the hospital have increased beyond the hospital’s ability to serve under current conditions; and

“Whereas both the community and neighbouring municipalities have demonstrated their support for this redevelopment through the donation of land and other financial contributions; and

“Whereas continued delays in the approval and funding of this redevelopment will have a severe negative impact on the delivery of health care services not only for the people of Carleton Place, but also for people in Beckwith township, Mississippi Mills, Drummond/North Elmsley, Lanark Highlands, as well as negatively impacting Stittsville and Kanata;

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

“That the Ministry of Health and other involved agencies approve funding for the development of CPDMH before these communities find themselves facing a crisis situation.”

1610

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

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

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

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

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

“We ... petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through Health Sciences North, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of” the northeast, including my good page here, Jack, who is also from my riding.

I will sign it and ask my page to bring it to the Clerk.

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly.

“Whereas Scarborough residents north of Ontario Highway 401 and east of Don Mills are without a rapid transit option; and

“Whereas a strong transit system is critical for increasing economic development and tackling income disparity; and

“Whereas this geographical area continues to grow and the demand for strong rapid transit continues to increase; and

“Whereas Sheppard Avenue is a major artery for automobile traffic for commuters travelling from suburbs

to downtown Toronto, and travelling from suburb to suburb; and

“Whereas ground-level rapid transit would increase traffic, restrict lanes for automobiles, and add further risk for pedestrians and commuters at dangerous intersections along Sheppard Avenue; and

“Whereas demands for underground rapid transit along Sheppard Avenue have been part of public discourse for over 50 years; and

“Whereas the province of Ontario previously approved a plan from the city of Toronto to extend the Sheppard subway line from Downsview to Scarborough Centre; and

“Whereas an extension to the Sheppard subway line will require contributions and co-operation from the city of Toronto, the province of Ontario and the government of Canada;

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

“To support the extension of the Sheppard subway line east to Scarborough Centre; and

“To call upon the government of Canada to contribute multi-year funding for the construction and operation of an extension to the Sheppard subway line.”

I fully support it and I will give my petition to page Victoria.

#### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I have a petition here from some residents in Belleville in my riding.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning to delist OHIP physiotherapy clinics as of August 1, 2013, which represents cuts in physiotherapy services to seniors, children and people with disabilities who currently receive care at designated OHIP physiotherapy clinics; and

“Whereas people who are currently eligible for OHIP physiotherapy treatments can receive 100 treatments per year plus an additional 50 treatments annually if medically necessary. The proposed change will reduce the number of allowable treatments to 12 per year; while enhancing geographical access is positive, the actual physiotherapy that any individual receives will be greatly reduced; and

“Whereas the current OHIP physiotherapy providers have been providing seniors, children and people with disabilities with individualized treatments for over 48 years, and these services have been proven to help improve function, mobility, activities of daily living, pain, and falls risk;

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

“To review and reverse the decision to drastically cut OHIP physiotherapy services to our most vulnerable population—seniors, children and people with disabilities; and to maintain the policy that seniors, children and people with disabilities continue to receive up to 100

treatments per year at eligible clinics, with a mechanism to access an additional 50 treatments when medically necessary.”

#### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas a healthy connection to our food system is vital to the health and environmental, social and economic well-being of all people in Ontario;

“Whereas too many young people in Ontario do not have access to nutritious food and grow up without basic food literacy or food skills;

“Whereas food bank use in Ontario is at an all-time high and over 412,000 individuals every month cannot afford to feed themselves or their families;

“Whereas poor diet and lack of access to nutritious foods is a leading cause of poor health and growing health care costs in our province;

“Whereas urban sprawl and poor planning continue to destroy valuable farmland, water resources and local food systems;

“Whereas sustained investment in local food and increased support for Ontario-grown foods will strengthen our food and farming sector and create jobs in Ontario;

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

“That this government strengthen the Local Food Act as part of a broader provincial strategy to put food first;

“That the government develop a provincial strategy that recognizes the importance of food to our environment, health and social and economic well-being.”

I support this. I’ll affix my name to it and give it to page Jack.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

“Whereas small businesses not only employ thousands of Ontarians with well-paying jobs, they also play a vital role strengthening Ontario’s economy; and

“Whereas providing tax relief to small and local businesses strengthens the economy and creates a business climate that attracts investment and helps create jobs; and

“Whereas the government has taken several other initiatives to making Ontario the most attractive place to do business in North America;

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

“That the members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 105, Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013, introduced on September 24, 2013, by the Ontario Minister of Finance.”

I support the petition. I affix my signature, and I give it to Christina.

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** This one comes from the Frankford and Trenton area in my good friend’s riding, but somehow it ended up on my desk.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

I agree with this petition and will send it to the table with Nicholas.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Enbridge Canada is proposing to reverse the flow of the Line 9 pipeline in order to transport western oil and tar sands oil through the most densely populated parts of Ontario;

“Whereas this pipeline project proposes changes to the pipeline that merit serious consideration, like the increase in oil carrying capacity and the transport of significantly more corrosive oil through the pipeline;

“Whereas this pipeline passes under cities and major rivers and a spill would risk the drinking water and health of millions of Ontarians and cause permanent damage to ecosystems;

“Whereas Line 9’s reversal will have impacts that must be analyzed beyond the National Energy Board hearings held by the federal government;

“Whereas the government of Quebec has already indicated its intention to conduct an independent review of the line reversal impact, including the flow of oil sands crude into Quebec;

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

“That the province of Ontario acts in the best interest of the health and environment of the province and conduct a full environmental assessment of Enbridge’s proposed Line 9 reversal and capacity expansion projects.”

Speaker, I agree with this. I’ll put my name on it and give it to page Jack.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES ACT, 2013

##### LOI DE 2013 VISANT À SOUTENIR LES PETITES ENTREPRISES

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 29, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 105, An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act / Projet de loi 105, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'impôt-santé des employeurs.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate. Further debate. Last call for further debate. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to give the governing Liberals an opportunity to debate their own bill, but they seem to have lost interest in their own piece of legislation. I have not.

It's interesting. Bill 105 does a little bit. Basically, it will mean to a business that has a payroll of \$450,000 that it raises the exemption for OHIP. They call it the small business some kind of act when, in fact, it's An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act. They call it the small business improvement or something. That's just Liberal words to try to imply that they're actually doing something positive. I'm going to talk a little bit about the negative things that they've been doing for small business in this province. But I don't think they've brought out a bill to commemorate their work.

Anyway, this does a little bit of good. It will amount to some \$900 of savings to the business if your payroll is at the \$450,000 level. I suppose that if you hire, if you kick that up to \$455,000, there's no more exemption. So it's kind of like it's almost a negative for hiring new people if you're right at the threshold. But they don't think of those things. They like to throw this stuff out there and try to pretend that they're trying to help small business and somehow they're in favour of it.

**1620**

In the 10 years that I've been here, I have yet to speak to a small business person in this province who has said to me, "I really like what the Liberals have done for small business." I have not met one. I'm not talking about I haven't met many; I haven't met one. Even the ones—you realize there are some out there who vote Liberal anyway because it's just the way they are. They cannot for the life of them find something positive to say about the Liberals' record when it comes to supporting small business.

I want to give you a little example of what they've done to small business and business in general. You know, when you're out on the street, I think it's fair to say that one of the things that just galls people the most is the absolute disaster they've made of the energy system, because they've got this myopic view that they've got to build these inefficient, costly wind turbines. Then they try to pretend that these wind turbines have gotten us out of coal, when there's not a single person who has an ounce of grey matter when it comes to the energy sector who would agree with them. What we do have is about 10,000 megawatts of gas that we didn't have before. We've got around 2,000 megawatts active in wind, but it's extremely inefficient.

I'll give you an example. This morning at 10 o'clock the Ontario demand for electricity was 16,928 megawatts. Of that, 11,342 were coming from our nuclear

generators; 4,542 were coming from hydro, our water power; 1,450 megawatts were coming from natural-gas-fired plants—ones that they haven't cancelled; 141 megawatts were coming from coal; and wind—

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** How much?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —50 megawatts. Fifty megawatts were coming from wind, and yet, most of those wind generators get paid every time they produce a megawatt even when it's not at the optimum time. They've made some changes; not enough.

The global adjustment this month: 5.18 cents per kilowatt hour. Last month, it hit a record at 8.74 cents—a record—8.74 cents per kilowatt hour.

Let me just tell you what that means to business in Ontario. I have a letter here from a businessman in my riding. I'll have to put on my glasses, because the printing is rather small.

The printing is small, but the numbers are large. For the month of September 2012, his bill for 120,771.97 kilowatt hours—he's a supermarket, a grocery store—was \$12,084.46. The provincial benefit, or the global adjustment—

**Interjection:** It's not a benefit.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, it's not a benefit. They stopped calling it—even the Liberals couldn't get away with that one anymore.

The global adjustment was \$4,625. So on a \$12,000 bill, \$4,625 was the global adjustment. But that was 2012. In September 2013—this is how they're helping business in this province; this is the Liberal plan for helping business—his consumption was 116,831.05 kilowatt hours. So his consumption went down by 3.25% from September 2012—

**Interjection:** I bet his bill didn't.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —but his bill for 2013—remember, I said \$12,084.46, his bill in September 2012—was \$17,422.01. The global adjustment portion of that bill: \$10,185.33.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to read his whole email, but to give you some sense of the frustration that this man is going through—and I spoke to him on the phone yesterday and I can assure you, he is beside himself. But he's just representative of every small business out there. This is just one letter, one email. But his final line: "It's too bad we can't have a government shutdown here. It would give us all a break." Imagine that: That's what it's come to—looking for a government shutdown because he cannot take any more of this government.

That's one letter. I've received another one, a copy that was sent to Premier Wynne and to Bob Chiarelli, the Minister of Energy. This is a gentleman that—they run a business, produce tape for hockey, sports, NHL teams. The headquarters are in the United Kingdom. Their energy bill is up over 40% this year. Head office is looking at this operation and saying, "Can we keep this going?" We all know what happened in Hamilton. Is anybody going to try to tell me that the costs of energy in this province are not a factor when companies make decisions that they're going to shut down plants here and

move the production elsewhere? Yes, there's less requirement for steel production right now because of global issues, but when they make the choices, they're going to close the plants that cost them the most to run and operate the plants that cost less to run.

The energy policy in this province is a disaster for all businesses: small, medium and large. If we're ever going to capture and get Ontario back to where it once was, to be the leader in this Confederation, the leader in Canada, we have to have energy security. We have to be able to say to businesses, "This is the place to establish your business. We have reliable power at a reasonable price." This government has taken that away. Shame on them.

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

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I think it's impossible not to react to the sense of frustration that has been expressed by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He does express frustration very well, I will say that. Actually, we share some of the anger and the frustration on the lack of action on the energy file. There's no doubt about it that as a file and as a factor in contributing to the economy, the energy file has been completely messed up.

Actually, we've tried to draw attention on several fronts to the Liberals, and we're going to continue to do that. With respect to Bill 105, though, and how it affects small businesses, obviously we've said from the outset that we want to see this bill get to committee so that we can actually build some real plans into it. We lobbied for components of it. We've said on several occasions that it's unfortunate that the bill didn't come to us in the first place in a different form—stronger on a number of issues; youth unemployment, for instance.

In Kitchener–Waterloo, there are 1,000 start-ups. A majority of those are started by youth and new graduates from university, and they're looking for some assistance. From a confidence perspective, they're looking to this House to come to the table with some ideas. We've certainly brought that forward through the budget process. We're pleased that the government actually listened to the stats on youth employment.

**1630**

The unemployment rate for youth in Ontario has hovered between 16% and 17.1% in 2013, much higher than the national youth unemployment rate. We're going to be bringing this lens to the committee session on Bill 105, and I look forward to continuing the debate and the discussion for the rest of the day.

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

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** It gives me great pleasure to respond to the member from Nipissing–Pembroke, especially to talk about his party's glorious time in energy in Ontario.

We all remember when we had the blackout, and we also remember the brownouts. It was not their fault. I also was told that the Premier at the time was playing golf. It was very hard to get him back to town to make

sure that he addressed the Ontarians who were stuck with no energy at all.

If you think that the increase in electricity is costly to industry, I'll say to you that no electricity is a lot more costly to industry. We have a reliable energy system in Ontario thanks to this government, and I know that the business community in eastern Ontario, in my riding, is very pleased. When we want to attract new industry to Ontario, the guarantee that they will have electricity for their industry is very important.

Mr. Speaker, 55 members of the Legislature have already spoken on this bill. Everything has been said. When they say that we're not interested, we are interested in this bill moving to committee.

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

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I really appreciate the passion and the sense of obligation that our member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke brings to the House. He has just hit the nail spot-on when he speaks about the real issues affecting small business in Ontario, and that is operating costs. The number one line item, if you will, in that issue is energy costs.

I find it really rich, because you know what? When families of seven today have their hydro turned off because they can no longer afford their energy costs, they don't give a hoot about the history lessons that this government chooses to lay on this House with regard to what happened over a decade ago. It doesn't matter. What matters is today and how we're going to move forward.

Bill 105 only really tinkers around the edges in terms of bringing real relief and support for small business. We need to pay heed to what's coming from the opposition side in terms of addressing what really matters. We can't turn a blind eye to the escalating costs of energy.

I tip my hat to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for recognizing the issue that the green energy mess has created. We tried to talk about this in a committee yesterday, and all of a sudden, the crowd went wild and we got shot down because we determined that they're incredibly embarrassed by the extra costs that the Green Energy Act has created throughout this province for small business, manufacturing and our families.

We draw attention to the fact that at one point, the Premier said that job loss was a myth. But look what happened with US Steel yesterday. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to join the debate on Bill 105. It's called the Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013; it could just as well be called the small bill supporting small businesses act, 2013.

Like many bills we've seen in the last two years in this government, this bill takes a step forward that will support small businesses. It takes a bigger step forward when it comes to communications on the part of the government to further their own cause, which is a problem that we've seen in this House.

I don't often agree with the official opposition, but I do agree with the comments made by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, when he suggests that he hasn't—I think we probably share something in common. When I'm talking to people in my community of Davenport, I don't hear from them a loud message—in fact, I get no message—saying, “Thank you very much. What you're doing is helping us survive as a small business community.”

I do hear from small businesses that they're having an incredibly difficult time in Toronto. I hear from my community that they want to support their small businesses, and yet small businesses are closing every day.

The debate here has apparently turned into a conversation about energy costs, which I think is one part of the equation and something we should talk about. The history lesson is important, too, because, quite frankly, we've been on the wrong path for a long time. I think that both the government and the official opposition have pursued a path of private power that has made some people very, very wealthy and has left the people in the province paying the bill. That continues to happen over and over again. We've seen it most recently with the gas plant scandal. There is a crisis when it comes to energy planning in this province. We look at the government across the way, and every day it seems like they've got something else to do, and every day it's the people in this province who get stuck with the bill.

Speaker, small businesses will do far better when we support people in this province, to actually be able to have something to spend in their small businesses, and that is something we need help with at this point.

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

**Mr. John Yakubski:** I want to thank the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the member for Huron–Bruce and the member for Davenport. I can't comment on them all, but I do want to thank them.

I did want to touch on—because that seemed to be the one that was a little out there—the response from the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I would ask her to do me a personal favour. I would ask her to provide me with those emails or letters from those people who are thanking her for this government's policy on electricity. I must caution you: They cannot come from your staff or members of your riding association. I want them to come from actual, real people on the street, paying a hydro bill or trying to run a small business, either a homeowner or a small business. I want those to be real, true letters—true confessions, as they used to say. And I'll tell you what I will do in return. For every letter you give me from someone saying they're happy about this government's energy policy, I will bring you a hundred from people who are sick and tired of the disaster that this government has made of energy in the province of Ontario, and sick and tired of what they're doing to the hydro bills of hard-working families who are trying to put bread on the table and can't afford their

electricity. A hundred to one: That's my pledge to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services—because I know that in the real world, those people don't exist. They don't exist in Ontario.

There's no one who pays a hydro bill who believes that this government's energy policy is on the right track. It is a disaster. I don't think they have the gumption to reverse it. We'll do it for them.

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

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'm pleased to add my voice today to champion the cause of small business in the House.

It seems to me there really isn't anything small about small business; the people who are willing to start one dare to dream big. It's a big deal to start a small business. Many of these risk takers—and, yes, when you are starting a small business you are taking a big risk. According to the CBC—and I might say that's the large crown corporation where I had the privilege of working for 30 years—back in 2005, 115,000 new small businesses were started in Canada, and in the following year, in 2006, 100,000 small operators went out of business. Not all of those were part of the 115,000 that started up the year before, but you get the picture, Speaker. Opening a small business is a risky proposition. Yet it's accepted by almost everyone that small businesses are the backbone of our economy in this province and indeed right across our great nation. No one really disputes that. That's because when you look at the statistics—and they're pretty easy to find—at least to the end of 2010, the ones that I saw, the number of businesses in Canada with at least one employee on the payroll totalled more than a million; to be exact, 1,138,761. I didn't count them all; I just looked at the number. In round numbers, that's more than five million people working for small business, and that is more than 48% of Canada's entire workforce—48%, nearly half of the people working in Canada, earn their living in what we call a small business. Obviously, when we in this House hear those kinds of numbers, we'd better be paying attention to the importance of the issue in front of us here today.

**1640**

It takes a lot of guts to take the risk of opening up your own business, to put your name and reputation on the line, to pour your heart and your soul into a project, to work those extra long hours needed to get it off the ground, to make those tough hiring decisions, to live your dream, to take a chance, to breathe new life into a creation of your own and to hope, and sometimes pray, to break even. Never mind turning a large profit; let's hope you can pay the bills and just break even in your first year or two.

There's an interesting quote I came across from *Go Broke, Die Rich: Turning Around the Troubled Small Business*, by William Manchee. He says, “There are few experiences in life as painful and brutal as the failure of a small business. For a small business conceived and nurtured by its owner is like a living, breathing child. Its loss is no less traumatic than losing a loved one.”

To be perfectly honest, I've never owned a small business. I was a journalist for most of my working life. As a city councillor for seven years, I spent four years on the Olde Riverside Business Improvement Area. In the last three years on council, I served on the business improvement area advisory committee. We have nine BIAs in Windsor. There's the Downtown Windsor BIA, the Olde Sandwich BIA, the Wyandotte Towne Centre, Walkerville, Ottawa Street, Erie Street, Pillette Village, Ford City and Olde Riverside. And I'd be remiss not to mention the BIA in the town of Tecumseh as well.

I learned so much from the business owners on these BIAs: government red tape, high taxes, high energy costs, high rents, lack of incentives, lack of encouragement, little or no recognition for the community and the charitable work they do. It's almost universal. Small business people, those who drive our economy, say they could do much better and create more jobs if they had more respect from the three orders of government for the role they play in stimulating and growing our economy in Ontario. I find it tough to argue with that.

These are hard-working people who went out on a limb to start a business and who struggle to meet a payroll. They have no guarantees in life, no gold-plated pension plans like the people who are hired to run our large corporations. These are people who sometimes have to crawl out of their sickbed to get down to their storefront and open up because no one else is going to open the door for their valued customers. I believe we in this House have an opportunity today to do more for our small business owners in this great province.

Let's face the facts. More than 70% of all family businesses do not survive through the second generation, and 8% don't make it to the third. Small business owners are a special breed. They take enormous risks, and we should respect that. I know we in the New Democratic Party have enormous respect for small business owners. We believe in standing up for them and doing our part to help them achieve their dream.

Is there a magic wand out there to make all of these challenges go away? No, and I don't believe anyone on either side of the House would honestly say there is, but eliminating some of the taxes they've been forced to pay is a good start. Small business owners need to see that the members of the Ontario Legislature believe in what they're doing. In fact, I'm reminded of the insight provided by my friend and colleague from Parkdale-High Park in the House two days ago. She reminded us that while government members were patting themselves on the back for lowering the small business corporate income tax from 5.5% to 4.5%, the NDP government of Manitoba has zero tax on small businesses—none at all. And why? Well, that's because they recognize that small businesses create 85% of the new jobs in their province.

There are 60,000 small businesses in Ontario. Sure, we can have them pay less money in the employer health tax. We can even get rid of the small business tax for some of the smaller ones, and we can remove some of the red tape and regulatory burdens, but is it enough? Can we do more? That's the question.

Let me mention a small business in the city of Windsor: Patio Palace on Howard Avenue. Paul and Lucy Fanson started selling patio furniture and backyard barbecues while they were still in university about 25 years ago—business students with big dreams, a lot of ambition and very little money. They worked 18 hours a day at times, they worked seven days a week at times, and they built up a good base of loyal customers over the years. It's hard work, because they sell quality goods, Canadian-made products which must compete with the goods sold at Canadian Tire and Walmart—their products from China and elsewhere. But the Fansons survive because they offer quality goods and quality service.

People appreciate quality, and they like to be able to ask questions of someone who's been in the business for a number of years, as opposed to trying to get answers from someone who normally works in the garden shop or electronics. Small business owners can adjust their prices and delivery times to close a deal, unlike someone in the large chain stores selling foreign products.

But they face trials and tribulations like the rest of us. About eight years ago, Paul Fanson was at death's door. He needed a liver transplant, and time was running out. His kids were in their teens, he had all kinds of pressures on his business and on his health, and then, almost at the last minute, a donor was found and Paul's life was saved.

This is an exceptional case; I realize that. This is why we need more people in Ontario to sign up to become organ donors, but when he recovered, Paul Fanson went on to enjoy life all the more. His golf game improved; I know that for a fact. His wife, Lucy, cofounded a charity group which raises money for health care in the Windsor-Essex county area. That was their way of giving back to their community for supporting their business, but more importantly for helping Paul get a new lease on life.

I know them well, because my wife, Gale, was the co-founder, with Lucy Fanson, of the Do Good Divas. They met when Gale was working at the Canadian Liver Foundation. Yes, the Do Good Divas—I've mentioned them before, but what a great name. They raise about \$50,000 a year, and every penny goes into worthwhile health care projects in our community. It could be the cancer centre or one of the hospitals, but it's another example of a small business giving back to the community.

The profits from a small business stay in the community, as well. They don't go to a board of directors in some foreign country. Small business people support their own communities. That's why this bill is important. That's why this bill should be supported. That's why we should spend time discussing improvements to the legislation.

It's the right thing to do, it's the right time to do it, and I certainly support it, because small business is where jobs are created. If we lower their taxes and give them less paperwork to fill out, they'll have more time to boost their sales, more money for themselves and more opportunities to spend quality time with their families.

I hope we can all agree with this. I hope we can all agree in the legislation today that small business is a big deal.

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

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, I agree with everything that the member for Windsor–Tecumseh has said. Let me tell you one other thing: It takes six and a half hours of debate for a bill to be referred to committee. This bill has been debated for 14 hours. Speaker, it's time it saw the inside of committee in order to be improved any further. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Comments?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** It was a pleasure for me to listen to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh speak to this bill. One of the things that came through loud and clear to me was that the member for Windsor–Tecumseh is far closer to the Conservative benches than just the few feet that are between our desks, talking about the red tape and the trials and burdens that small business people are faced with in this province and what this present government is failing to assist them with.

1650

I think the other important thing that I heard in the member from Windsor–Tecumseh's speech, it reminded me of this adage—it's a fairly new adage in Ontario—and the adage goes something like this: How do you start a small business in the McGuinty–Wynne Ontario? The answer is: You start with a large one and it will be a small business soon enough. That is really the message that this government has been dealing out—a bad set of cards for the business people in Ontario.

It's also interesting how the Liberal responded to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh's comments, and that is that he considers this debate a filibuster. He considers this debate to be worthless—and worthwhile in that we should just run every bill to committee after six and a half hours of debate. To hell with small businesses; to hell with learning what their problems are. Let's just get it to committee so they can get their press release done. No thank you.

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

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to rise and speak. I want to commend my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh who, we should acknowledge, has just been in this House for a few short months and I think has already captured the imagination of people here. It's not often that people are actually listening to speakers in here.

We had the rapt attention of the Conservative Party over here—which is good to see, and good for you to hear the policies of the NDP. In fact, this bill that we're debating here today, the substance of it was brought forward by the NDP, and we said, "We need to support small businesses, of course." If you'd been listening for all this time, you would have heard that. Hopefully, with the contributions of our new colleague here, you'll be able to hear that message, and we want people across the province to hear that.

The NDP is on the side of small business. What we want to stop in this province is to see the kind of gaping holes in our tax system that allow the biggest corpora-

tions to walk away with our hard-earned revenue. That was part of our initial recommendation here. I'm glad to see that that been brought forward in this legislation to make sure that we're actually providing support to small business, to the folks who are generating jobs, to the folks who are on the ground, who care about their communities, and that we're not just giving a free handout to those who couldn't care less about their community—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** And about jobs.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:**—and don't care about jobs.

I'm pleased to hear your comments though, Percy, because it shows me that you are in touch, that you are thinking about the people who are struggling. If you go around this province, you'll know that the people running small businesses are doing it because they love what they do. They love their communities, they're taking care of their families, and they're happy to employ somebody. That is something that we need more of. We need a government that cares as much as the small business owners in this province about creating jobs.

We will be supporting this legislation. We will be sending it to committee after it's had its full debate, and we'd like to strengthen it and make sure that we are supporting small business across this province.

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

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I thought the member from Windsor–Tecumseh made an enormous contribution to the debate this afternoon. He talked about a small business operator in his riding.

I just want to make a plug this afternoon for my good friend John Walsh. John Walsh owns Peterborough Landscape Supply; it's on the old Keene Road, just outside of Peterborough, close to where I live. Right now, Peterborough Landscape Supply has a 40%-off sale for all remaining stock in that business. So anybody who is listening today, and members opposite, go to the Peterborough area: John Walsh, Peterborough Landscape Supply. A good deal; a good small business operator. I recommend him highly.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Kitchener–Waterloo.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I just want to say that Mr. Walsh and his wife, Debbie, are very involved in the Ennismore Eagles hockey association. They've been sponsors of teams; their twin sons play. It just goes to show you, as the member from Windsor–Tecumseh said, how small businesses do great things in their community, give back to the community.

Let's support Bill 105 to help the small business in the member from Windsor–Tecumseh's community and John Walsh of Peterborough Landscape Supply.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Windsor–Tecumseh has two minutes.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you, Speaker. I don't know quite how to—I'll get to it in a minute, I guess. Thank you, Minister.

Yes, to my good friend the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, who mentioned how

close we are in our chairs: I agreed with the member on Bill 74, the so-called EllisDon bill. I want him to know that, as well.

It's an interesting process to stand up and do your two minutes, and I believe my friend from Davenport reminded us all that the NDP is on the side of small business and has been on the side of small business.

I mentioned earlier that I used to work at the CBC. And I worked in private radio for a while, where they would say, "We'll be back in a minute after these commercial messages." When the Minister of Rural Affairs, from Peterborough, was commenting about—and I appreciate it. Thank you very much for the commercial plugs for people in your riding. Hey, fair game, but I hearken back to those days where we would say, "We'll get back to regular programming after these commercial messages."

What we're saying to small business is that they can take what we say here today to their municipalities and say, "Look, the province is behind us. How about we sit down with you and have a discussion about what you can do for us in a joint partnership at the municipal level?" Then after those discussions, small business owners can go to Ottawa and Parliament Hill and say, "Look, we're working with the good folks at Queen's Park. We're working with our good friends in our municipalities. Now we need to work with you on Parliament Hill to come up to the table too and help us jump-start this economy." Because if anyone is going to jump start the economy, it will be the small business communities and small business owners in Ontario and across this country.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate. The member from Nepean—Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much, Speaker. Good afternoon. I hope you're having a wonderful time in the chair with this enlightened debate on An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act.

Before I get into the meat of my remarks, I would like to acknowledge the work by my colleague, my seatmate from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, not only in his opposition to the health tax when it was implemented, but as you'll recall, he was very vocal in defending men and women in Canada's military who live in his riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, who serve in the Canadian Forces and who are subject to this tax despite the fact that the Canadian government pays for their health care.

I also came to this assembly having a bit of experience with the Canadian military, only insofar as my husband was in the military and also had worked for the department of defence, feeling that it was really important for us to eliminate the health tax for those who are serving in Canada's military, as well as in the RCMP. I supported his call at the time and I actually put forward a motion myself. It's interesting today that we are debating this reduction for small business, which we do support, but I think it is an acknowledgment by this Liberal government that this health tax was problematic. It has been unfair, and it's time to have that discussion in this chamber. I'm glad that here, after eight years, we're doing that with me.

With respect to small business—I think that this is important—our party is on record as saying that we will support this bill that the finance minister has brought forward. But I know, for example, that many small businesses across the province aren't just struggling with the reality of this health tax; they're also struggling with other matters. They're struggling with high hydro rates. In fact, we met with some very big employers in this last hour—myself and my leader, Tim Hudak, as well as our mining critic, Norm Miller—and we talked about some of the substantive problems that are being dealt with by the mining industry.

I would say that their number one concern would be the rising cost of energy. In fact, what they told us—and I'm sure that they have told this to the minister as well as others—is that in terms of doing business in Ontario, anywhere between 15% and 50% of their cost of doing business is their energy rates. I think that signifies a real problem that we have, particularly in the north, when it comes to promoting business, whether that's small business, whether it's big business. At the end of the day, I think that we are all intelligent enough in this chamber to understand that when business thrives and succeeds in the province, our public services thrive and succeed, and therefore our people thrive and succeed. That is a major concern of mine.

**1700**

As you know, I have recently, in the last month, been appointed the energy critic for the Ontario PC Party.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Good appointment.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I appreciate that. It's obviously been a very exciting time. It is the number one issue raised by consumers of energy across the province. That's not just businesses; it's also individual consumers and ratepayers, people who are trying to heat their homes. That's why it becomes much more important for us to have, I think, a discussion on small business that addresses not just one segment of how they do business, but a multitude.

We have, of course, our new critic for small business, Lisa Thompson, who does some work in the energy field with myself on green energy. I think she has some very good ideas, and she will be a very exciting and talented individual for us to put out there, because she'll put the time in to find out what the big issues are. I'll bet you that if she were to speak to this bill today, she would probably raise a number of issues. The health tax is an issue that we have to deal with. Energy rates, as I said, are an issue that we'll have to deal with. Red tape is a major issue for our small businesses.

So while it's important that there is a—oh, I don't know—seven-page bill in front of us that really isn't very prescriptive on how we can fix the small business environment and climate here in the province, I think that when it comes to putting forward small-business initiatives and how we can help them, my colleague from Huron—Bruce will be able to put forward some very substantive ideas. I know we've already done that with our job creation task force, as well as with some of our critics from the various areas in our white papers.

It's really incredibly important that we not just talk about the health tax, but that we talk about the whole picture. Since I've come to this place, I've noticed that not only are we losing jobs by the hundreds of thousands—over 300,000 manufacturing jobs—but we're starting to see rural communities and small towns across Ontario absolutely hollow out. You drive down Main Street, and there are a lot of businesses that were once there and aren't anymore.

I have a beautiful riding, Nepean–Carleton. It's the largest in the city of Ottawa, geographically and population-wise, and I am very proud of the great small businesses that we have there, because they rely, obviously, on a federal civil service town. Many people that they would sell their services or their goods to would be federal civil servants, or even working in the high-tech sector, so in many ways we have been insulated. In many ways we haven't, because of those issues I've raised: the health tax, the energy prices and the red tape. It's been difficult.

But as I drive down Robertson Road, for example, in Bells Corners, we used to be a bustling community, where I once used to work for John Baird, who was the then-MPP for Nepean–Carleton. It was thriving. There were businesses everywhere. And because I lived so close to Bells Corners, I walked and shopped there. I get my groceries there from time to time, and I'll drive down and I'll notice so many businesses, small mom-and-pop businesses, out of work.

I can't begin to tell you how that hurts me as their public representative, because I see a failure in public policy as the root cause of their failure. It bothers me, because if I look back 10 years ago, when I was working for John Baird, or even a little bit before that, I would look at these communities as thriving, and that's not the case.

I look, for example, at another place, one of the fastest-growing communities in all of Ontario. I also represent it. It's a few kilometres away from Bells Corners; they were both in the former city of Nepean. Barrhaven is growing very, very quickly. We have a lot of businesses coming from the rest of the city of Ottawa, or elsewhere in Ontario, that want to set up there because of the population expansion and the diversity that we're bringing into our community. One of the concerns I have in Barrhaven is that, if things keep going the way they're going with the hydro increases and the tax increases, it's going to be significantly difficult for many of those new businesses to succeed and stay in business.

I hear it all the time. I hear it from Alex Lewis, who is the executive director of the BIA in Bells Corners. I hear it from Andrea Steenbakkers, who is the executive director of the BIA in Barrhaven. It genuinely gives me concern for the viability of small business, not only in my community but across the rest of the province, because, as I've said, in Nepean–Carleton we are fortunate to be within the city of Ottawa—well, I guess that's debatable on any given day, because we were amalgamated, but we are fortunate to be in the National Capital Region, I guess

I should say more precisely, and that gives us the opportunity to have that base of public servants whose jobs are far more secure than those in the private sector. That is why I like to raise their issues, because if it's happening in my community, it's probably happening, to some extent, in a much more difficult fashion elsewhere.

Myself and my colleague from Etobicoke–Lakeshore are, I guess, the urban members in our caucus, and I look at many of my other colleagues who represent rural communities—and I worry about small business in rural Ontario. I'm proud to represent a variety of rural communities within the city of Ottawa limits. I'm speaking expressly of North Gower, Kars, Manotick, Osgoode, Metcalfe and Kenmore.

In the few seconds I have left, let me talk about North Gower. They're a community that is living this hydro nightmare because they are going to be forced to deal with these wind turbines. They're not a willing host, and they know that their neighbours down the road in Bells Corners that are struggling to stay in business are going to have to pay for high hydro hikes as a result of the government's disastrous green energy policy. That is, I think, a perfect example of the Green Energy Act assaulting rural communities, and just 15 minutes down the road, businesses going out of business. I couldn't make that point more clearly than the businesses that are going out of business, sadly.

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

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to respond to some of the comments that have been made by the member from Nepean–Carleton. I just want to thank the member from Huron–Bruce for reminding us that the Premier, not that long ago, called the job losses in the province of Ontario a myth. It did create a sense of outrage, almost the same level of outrage that we sometimes hear from one of our favourite members over here to the right, and that is, that that suggests a serious disconnect. We definitely will concede that as a party.

But when we came forward with a recommendation through the last budget process, we wanted to make sure that there was an elimination of the loophole that allowed large companies not to pay employee health tax on the first \$400,000 in the payroll, but this piece also implements an increase in the exemption. We are still trying to work with this government. They certainly are not making it easy. The frustration, though, that has been expressed by the member from Nepean–Carleton, I think that has been felt across all of our ridings.

The previous comments from the member from Windsor—

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Tecumseh.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** —Tecumseh that these family businesses that have been traditional cornerstones of the economy in this province are just not surviving past that second generation, and there's a whole host of reasons why that has not happened. Certainly, the energy factor plays into it, as has already been mentioned.

There is an overall lack of confidence in our economy, but we feel strongly on this side of the House that it's our

job to work and build the confidence for the economy. That is why we are going to try to make Bill 105 stronger. We are going to try to bring those local voices of family businesses, small start-ups and the unpaid interns in the province of Ontario to this piece. We use this as an opportunity to get the job done. That's why we will be supporting it as it goes to committee, but we're not letting them off the hook. We're just going to be working in a different way.

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I've been advised that this bill has now been debated for 14 hours. That's a lot of debate. One would think, by now, the opposition would have been able to say anything they can say about this bill. I think it's pretty obvious that the opposition parties are extending debate on Bill 105, and they're deliberately doing that. I guess they can do that according to our rules, but I think it's unfortunate because, frankly, if they cared about jobs, as the member from Nepean–Carleton talked about, they'd want to get on with this bill. This bill will cut taxes for 60,000 Ontario small businesses. They want to see those tax cuts. We want to move on that; I don't know why the opposition would want to stall that.

1710

The one thing I would say, though, is I want to correct the member for Nepean–Carleton. She absolutely wrongly stated that this province is losing jobs. You shouldn't be talking down our economy like that. We're gaining jobs; in fact, we've increased by a net 477,000 new jobs—a net 477,000 jobs—since the recession. No matter how you add that, that's a gain, not a loss. I think those hard-working small businesses in our economy that are creating a lot of jobs deserve a lot more respect than they're getting from the opposition when they make those inaccurate assumptions.

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

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** One of the unfortunate parts about this government's policy is called the College of Trades and how they've got people so upset with these rates that they have to pay now just to keep their licences. And now they've got the trades police running around; they're going to shut down hairdressers and the people who cut hair. It's just absolutely ridiculous.

I would like to comment on the member from Nepean–Carleton. She comes from a riding that I know a little bit about. In fact, I was welcomed there a couple of years ago by the people in North Gower—and I can actually say that now, North Gower—who welcomed me there to that community, because that's where my ancestors settled, in that area. It's a beautiful part of the country, and it's too bad that they're fighting wind turbines right now: it really is. It's just going to mess up that whole community.

I had a chat with a fellow in our riding by the name of Nuhn—Nuhn Industries—and he said, "For gosh sakes, get out of my way. Get out of my way. Let me do business." That's all he wants—no more regulations. The

\$900 to this man is going to mean two car payments, something like that? But it costs him so much money and red tape filling out government forms just to conduct his business. He said, "Get out of my way. Let me do my business. I'll play by the rules, but no more. I'm tired of this stuff."

I know we're going to support this bill, but really, \$900 to a man of this size—that's nothing. If you could cut down red tape, cut down some of these other regulations that they're forced into, such as the College of Trades, it would save him more money than \$900, and he'd be very appreciative of it.

Hydro rates are a big concern to everybody in my riding, as they are in the riding of the member from Nepean–Carleton.

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

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm disappointed to hear the comments made by the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, as if speaking about the reality in this province and the difficult time that people are facing is speaking down or somehow talking down the province. This is ridiculous—as if it's impolite to talk about what's going on.

I was talking recently to a young man named Joe, who works in the downtown area. This is a young person who wants to work, who loves his work and who spends hours trying to get to work each day.

This bill includes something that we put forward, which was making sure that businesses that have more than \$5 million in payroll are not exempt from paying the health tax and that we are supporting small businesses, but in the process, this government missed an opportunity to actually raise some revenue. There was \$90 million missing that we put forward as the NDP, and that \$90 million could have provided bus service; it could have meant that we would actually have service that starts early in the morning. Not everyone is able to afford to live in the downtown core, and yet people work in the downtown core.

The reality is that there is a problem here. The reality is that young people in this province want to work. The reality is that young people are graduating from universities and colleges with the highest debt in history, that we have the highest tuition anywhere in Canada and that young people are more and more desperate, that they're working for nothing. We haven't had a raise in the minimum wage in years, and beyond the minimum wage, we have people who are willing to work for nothing. We have a problem with unpaid internships. Speaker, if you listened to the other parties in this House, sometimes you would think that people need to be forced into work. People want to work in this province, and they'll do anything to get a job. It's too bad we can't offer some good jobs in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Nepean–Carleton: two minutes.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I would like to first and foremost thank the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, the member

from Wellington and the member from Davenport for, I believe, contributing in a very positive way to the debate over the plight of small business in the province.

I would like to now talk a bit about the member from Scarborough, who is the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. He did a few things that I think need to be discussed here.

At what point does that member think that I should not be allowed to debate on matters that are important to my constituents? The members on this side, whether you agree with us or not, are allowed to stand in our place, allowed to debate legislation and allowed to defend the people who sent us here, and the minute you think we're not allowed to do that is the minute, maybe, you should resign your seat or perhaps not run again, because you have missed the point of being here.

In addition, I would like to point out that he is sadly misinformed with respect to the job losses in this province. If he thinks we are gaining jobs every day, he is wrong. If he thinks there are no financial hardships out there for our small businesses, he is wrong. If he thinks the College of Trades is a good thing for Ontario's small businesses, he is wrong. If he thinks this government's public policies with respect to small business and finances are positive, he is wrong, and that is why we are here.

What I also cannot understand with this minister is how he cannot accept "yes" for an answer. I stood in my place, I explained some of the challenges that my constituents are facing, but I said that, at the end of the day, I would support this legislation. He can't accept that because he is so wildly partisan that he has to manipulate what is being said here.

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

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I will be supporting this bill, but I do want to say a few things about this bill, because, first and foremost, it only scratches the surface of problems that this government has burdened our small business people with in this province. It will do very, very little to stop the hemorrhaging of job losses and business closures in this province.

Just to illustrate that, I got a note the other day from a small business owner in my riding. I won't use his full name, but his first name is Dennis, and he sent me this note. He sent it to me and to the federal member for my riding. He says:

"Can't sleep, too many thoughts. Just thought I would let you and Scott"—Reid—"know that as the owner of" this restaurant, "I have chosen to give up. I am 40 years old, work seven long days per week, and have made many positive changes to the restaurant and the community I live in. My hydro bill now per month is more than my mortgage, with the continued threat of more increases to come. I cannot and will not stand by to watch my customers share the pain with me by increasing my prices over and over again...."

"I'm just letting you know how the corrupt and idiotic decisions made by our government is ruining many

aspirations and local Ontario businesses. I, as well as my 15 employees, may contact you again someday in the EI or welfare offices."

That was a letter I received a little while ago from a constituent. I called up Dennis—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd ask the member to withdraw a certain word he used.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I withdraw.

I phoned up Dennis, and he told me that five years ago his hydro bill was \$400 a month. It's now over \$1,600 a month.

**1720**

I will say that it causes me concern listening to the Liberal government debate this bill. I heard the member from Mississauga–Streetsville, the government House leader and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities all refer to this debate in—they denigrated this debate. They got up and said that there was no need to debate this bill any further in this House; that after six and a half hours of debate, we should not debate any further.

If they had their way, Dennis's message would not have been heard in this House, and his message is every bit as important as the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities' or the government House leader's. I cannot believe that ministers of the crown here would suggest and demand that members do not uphold their responsibility and do not advocate for their constituents and engage in debate on this important matter.

There is much more about this bill, and I wanted to share a couple of views, just to put this in perspective. Between 2001 and 2009—which are the most recent years for data from Stats Canada that's available—the number of people employed in minimum wage jobs in Ontario has more than doubled. We've gone from 207,000 people working at minimum wage to 452,000. That's 45% of every new job created in Ontario in that period of time that was a minimum wage job—45%.

If you compare that to the rest of Canada, the rest of Canada, without Ontario, actually saw the number of people in minimum wage jobs fall by 20,000 people. The rest of this country has seen a reduction of minimum wage jobs. We've more than doubled minimum wage jobs' participation in our economy—absolutely atrocious.

When the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities wants to spout numbers and figures about how well they've done, I'd like him to remember that one, where they've created the most minimum wage jobs in Canada.

One study found that 51% of businesses in agriculture and food processing wanted to expand their workforce here in Ontario in the next five years, but unfortunately, the respondents said that barriers such as zoning costs, the cost of utilities and the lack of a skilled labour force would prevent them from doing so.

Once again, that speaks to their apprenticeship program and their College of Trades programs. We have people who want to hire our young people, like Dennis, like so many others in this province, but they can't because of this government.

I want to share a few other constituents' concerns which they brought forward directly to me. Jamie Wagner owns a small company called Bluewater. He has an innovative new septic system that operates at greater efficiency, takes up less space and is half the cost of a conventional septic system. It has been approved in three provinces and all the American states. In Ontario, he has been waiting for over three years, navigating the bureaucracy. There's still no end in sight and there are still no approvals for Jamie.

How about this one? I received a call from a fellow who owns a company in Ontario called Sparklewash. He has a mobile pressure-washing system, and he goes out and takes graffiti off buildings and sidewalks and what-not. His name is Dave Trefethen. WSIB classifies his mobile pressure-washing system as a demolition and form work contract. Under pressure-washing, he would pay \$3.73 per \$100 of payroll. However, because WSIB says he is into demolition and form work, he pays \$18.31 per \$100, \$15 more per \$100 on his payroll taxes—fighting for years with WSIB.

Richard Bennett—the fantastic job that the Liberals have done informing tradespeople about the College of Trades—along with countless other people, has had his licence suspended for not complying with a requirement he was never properly made aware of, with the new College of Trades.

Speaker, a paper mill in my riding, Strathcona Paper—the global adjustment charge on their energy bill is greater than the energy bill that they get. Over 50% of their energy costs are global adjustments. It's an unknown, moving target every month. Strathcona Paper can't plan. There's no certainty in those jobs, as well.

A couple just recently came in to see me: Malcolm and Peggy Kirkpatrick. They build, service, repair and maintain assisted-mobility devices—walkers, wheelchairs, a host of different products. They came in to see me because they get paid through the Ministry of Health's Assistive Devices Program. They're a hard-working couple. They work and work and work. They do everything by the book. It is commonplace for that program to take over a year to pay their bills to Mobility Care Co. in Perth, Ontario.

I phoned up the program manager and went through these lists of complaints of taking a year for a small business person to get paid by the government of Ontario. He said they're doing a pretty good job and they're doing a much better job than they were doing five years ago. They were actually at 60% of their bills getting paid within six months, and he thought that was pretty good—60% in six months.

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

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'd like to compliment the member to my right from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington for accepting the challenge from the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, when he had suggested that there certainly couldn't be anything else to add to this debate. When you hear about the example

given by the member about hydro rates going up by more than a mortgage payment, and 15 employees about to be in the unemployment line or in the welfare line, it certainly drives home the seriousness of what we're talking about here today.

The business community, Speaker, is primed to do its part. Many of the small business owners are relatively new immigrants to our province. They chose to come here to start a new life, a life based on hope—sometimes a prayer—and a promise and an expectation that if you invest your hard-earned money, if you work hard, in many cases from sunrise to sun-up, if you do it seven days a week, and keep an eye on your money, your business will grow. Sometimes that's all it takes. However, more often than not, that's just not enough. It's not enough because of unforeseen circumstances, bad luck or misfortune, because of government red tape, unwarranted delays, taxes that are too high, rents that are increased without merit or warning, poor hiring decisions or, indeed, because of escalating hydro rates. The reasons are many, and we in this chamber can't smooth them over, and for sure we can't guarantee success. But we can set the stage and do what is within our power to level the playing field, to give an equal opportunity to make sure there are government offices and employees who are able to get things done in a hurry.

We should not hurry the debate on this very important matter.

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

1730

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I don't know what country these people live in. I had the Hamilton Port Authority—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Would the member for Renfrew–Nipissing—whom I have to listen to yell when I'm not speaking—just be quiet for a moment?

Hamilton Port Authority: Twelve new businesses, the highest tonnage ever; they have run out of land. They were in my office because Hamilton's waterfront is exploding with employment and new investment. They're asking to buy land from the private sector to be able to turn it over.

A 163% job recovery, compared to 50% in the US and less than 50% in the UK: 80% of jobs require university, college or a trade.

According to the federal government, 700,000 skilled jobs—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Would you be quiet?

Mr. Speaker, this man interrupts all the time. I sat quietly through his very long speech; I'd like the same courtesy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Minister, I understand your dilemma, but if you get into an altercation with the member, I suggest you take it outside.

I would remind the member from Renfrew that it is nice to listen occasionally to what the minister has to say.

Continue.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** That's not too polite.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** A point of order?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Your comment about the speaker, it's a bit uncalled for—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Would the minister like to explain herself further? I'm confused with her comment.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** You said we like sometimes to listen to what the—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I think you're reading in something that's not there, but that's fine. That is definitely not a point of order, and if you'd like to discuss it with me after, I'd be happy to accommodate you.

Continue.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We've had a lot of carping from the other side about not having debate. I'd like to at least have my two minutes, Mr. Speaker.

In my constituency, Sunil, a friend of mine who credits the university education he got at Waterloo, our health care system, and the amazing quality of life in the city, has taken a company that didn't exist and has created over 1,000 jobs. The average income in that company: \$80,000.

Five per cent of companies generating over 50% of jobs are auto sector—the best ever.

The steel sector is challenging—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. I'm sorry, Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Yes, I spent half my time. Mr. Speaker, I just hope you have a bit more order in here today, thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would like the minister to retract that comment. With all due respect, you threw the first punch at the member over there and you kept it up, so you wasted your time, not me.

Questions and comments? The member from Nepean–Carleton.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** No, Carleton–Mississippi Mills.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure where the member across is coming from either. When I drive to Toronto to come to work here, I drive down Highway 7 and I see closed businesses all the way down the road: restaurants, gas stations, hardware stores. When I walk down Yonge Street once in a while to see what's going on on Yonge Street or have a bite to eat, I see all kinds of small businesses that aren't there anymore—blackened windows that are closed up. So across Ontario, all of us here from both parties know that small business people are having a tough time. They're going out of business; the hydro bills are putting them out of work, like the member from Renfrew–Nipissing explained to us very clearly—and the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington. We've had a very clear picture drawn for us that businesses are having a tough time because of what this government is doing to us, and that's just one of the things.

This bill is doing precious little to help anybody. A little bit of an extension of an exemption for the smaller business is next to nothing; that won't even cover a month's hydro bill. For bigger business, what do they do but put a limit in there so that they get no exemption. Really, it's a negative, I would say. It's a waste of time; it's a very bad bill. It misreads the situation entirely on what's wrong with small business in Ontario—or what's wrong with government; there's nothing wrong with small business. Hydro rates are putting them out of business, red tape is putting them out of business, and this little piece of fluff is doing nothing.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to be able to rise in this House. I think it is an honour to be able to debate in this House and to debate at length. I think some of the comments from the Minister of Transportation—he is also eager to debate in this House. We've had other comments from the Liberal Party, from the government saying that we've had enough debate on this issue, and I think the minister's comments are ample proof that there is debate to be had on both sides.

I'd like to take the rest of my time and comment on the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington. He brought forward issues that are important for businesses in his riding, for people in his riding. He added significant points to the debate in this House. There are issues like that in all our ridings. I mentioned a few days ago Barret from Temagami Electrical.

But I'd like to talk about a different business I have, and it just fits under the small business side. I have a new mine opening in my riding, a small mine. I'm not going to mention the names because it might get them in trouble, actually. He called me up and says, "You know, John, when we're done this project, I'm going to write a book on how maybe you shouldn't start a business in northern Ontario"—because it's not even the rules; it's the attitude. It's not, "How can we help you?" It's "How long can you wait?" That's something that this bill doesn't really address at all. But there's a problem a lot of people in the government seem to have—they're so worried about not taking a risk or making a decision, they make no decisions at all, and that's what's hurting small business.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has two minutes.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I'd like to thank the members from Windsor–Tecumseh, Timiskaming–Cochrane, Carleton–Mississippi Mills and the Minister of Transportation for their comments. I'm sure, had circumstances been different, the Minister of Transportation would have been able to provide some thoughtful insights into this in his comments, except he was cut short for unforeseen reasons.

However, what he did say I think needs to be addressed. We have to recognize that each member in this Legislature represents a certain area and has certain

perspectives that may not be shared elsewhere. But that doesn't diminish their perspectives; that's the purpose of having 107 members, to share those experiences.

As the minister said, yes, there are some good things happening down in Hamilton—not necessarily for Stelco, obviously, in Hamilton, but there are good things happening in different places. What I'm trying to impress upon this Liberal government is that they may be the exception, not the rule, throughout our smaller communities in rural and northern Ontario.

That statistic that I delivered, where people working at minimum wage in Ontario have doubled—we're the only jurisdiction that has seen that. The rest of the country would have had a reduction in minimum wage participation.

I would like the Minister of Transportation, if he is listening right at the moment during his other conversations, to take a look at those statistics about minimum wage. What are we going to do about that, Minister? What are we going to do to help alleviate the burdens and the hardships that small businesses are experiencing in Ontario, not just the big guys down in Hamilton or elsewhere?

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

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 105. The Progressive Conservatives realized the need to reduce the burden on small business in 1996 when we first announced the \$400,000 employer health payroll tax exemption. Although the goal of this new bill may remain to help small businesses with this exemption, it's obvious that the purpose of the act does not achieve that end.

The government claims that this bill will help small business by increasing the employer health tax exemption by a mere \$50,000—one employee. But the members on the opposite side fail to realize that if the current tax-and-spend culture continues to exist, there won't be any small businesses to help.

Small business is the key component of Ontario's economy. I understand how difficult running a small business can be. I ran a small business in Oxford for nearly 30 years, but I never had to endure some of the hardships that the small business owners today experience.

**1740**

Since the summer of 2011, the government has increased hydro rates four times, the latest increase coming later this week. For businesses that are struggling to make ends meet or for entrepreneurs who are trying to start a business, every dollar counts. These hydro increases can singlehandedly limit the growth and even cause small businesses to fail.

The most recent hydro increase is a direct result of wasteful spending and the Green Energy Act. The government pays other jurisdictions roughly \$500 million to use excess energy Ontario shouldn't have produced. They wasted \$300 million by giving wind priority over hydro and another \$180 million in wasted nuclear efforts.

Couple that with the \$1 billion lost in relocating gas plants, and it's no surprise that hydro rates are forecast to increase 46% by 2017.

It's no surprise that 97% of Ontario's farmers reported that they are affected by the recent increases, and 60% of Ontario farmers reported that their operations would be significantly impacted. The point is that increasing a tax exemption for small business by \$50,000 is nowhere near enough when the government is increasing operating costs for those same businesses by a lot more.

Try and tell the farm supply stores in Oxford that they'll have to pay more just to stay open from 9 to 5. Then tell them, when they finally get home to make dinner, do the dishes and laundry, that the increases are high even for non-peak hours. Business owners are already doing all they can to save costs, but there's no escaping the hydro increase.

Mr. Speaker—and welcome to the chair—the Premier's telling agribusiness to double the rate of growth of their output, yet the Premier has done nothing to address the high price increases in their inputs. These entrepreneurs need government action that addresses the larger problem affecting their bottom line, not minor concessions.

It's not just hydro rates. Another large burden on a small business owner is red tape. There are over 380,000 regulations today on small businesses. How is a shop owner, already working tirelessly for every dollar he or she makes, supposed to set aside time to comply with all these different regulations? Every moment that a small business owner spends dealing with red tape is a moment they spend losing money.

Now the members opposite actually claim that an added benefit of this bill is that larger employers won't have to fill out an employer health return. That's not real action to address this. Now, these larger employers they're talking about are those that will move from \$400,000 to \$450,000, and they will not then have to fill out one form.

I think it's amusing that eliminating one of the 380,000 regulations is a selling point when small businessmen and women of Oxford and Ontario can't afford to deal with all the regulations they have. If the government were serious about helping small business owners, they would focus on eliminating unnecessary red tape.

Just last month, the Alliance of Ontario Food Processors released a report detailing their business strategy for the upcoming year. In the report, they list a major obstacle to success as the high and unavoidable costs resulting from increases in energy, water and waste management, making it less attractive to invest in this province. The AOFPP also goes on to discuss the regulatory burden that often obstructs growth initiatives, investment and speed to market.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business is all too familiar with these problems. In fact, in January, they will be promoting their fifth annual red tape awareness week. Red tape suffocating small business is a

massive problem. The CFIB reported that 68% of farmers and 62% of small business owners are discouraged from growing their businesses, while another 28% of farmers claim that they may not have gone into business if they had known about the regulatory burden. On average, an Ontario farmer spends nearly four standard 40-hour workweeks filling out government forms. Can we seriously expect these businesses and farms to succeed with such an amount of regulation?

The red tape affecting small business at times is almost comical. The CFIB reported in a story January this year about an Ontario small business owner and her ordeal with red tape. After filling out two mandatory statistical questionnaires in the same week, she received a third form asking how she felt about filling out government forms. You can't make this stuff up: three in one week.

It's disheartening to know the challenges that small business owners are facing. I know how hard small business owners work. These people are some of the most dedicated workers in the province.

Just this month in my riding, the Ingersoll District Chamber of Commerce handed out the 2013 awards of excellence. The winners included Bob Shelton, Maggie Carter, the Elm Hurst Inn and its general manager, Alon Gurman; Conestoga College; and a local entrepreneur, Dale Hurley.

Dale Hurley is a prime example of a dedicated small business owner. He started off sorting pop bottles and expanded to open his own grocery store in Ingersoll. That family store soon expanded over the next 38 years into a superstore that employs 185 people. I want to congratulate Mr. Hurley on his success.

These winners are just a few of the dedicated and hard-working members of Oxford's business community. It's a shame that despite their continued work and success, they have to deal with the recent hydro increases and the constant regulatory burden.

Dedicated small business owners like Mr. Hurley who have worked their entire lives to grow their business aren't helped by this act. Everyone in Ingersoll knows that Mr. Hurley is a perfect example of a small business, yet he is not eligible for this benefit. Some smaller businesses may be eligible for a slight increase to the employer health tax exemption, but if these larger problems are not addressed, there will be no one to exempt. Raising another sail doesn't do any good on a sinking ship.

Small businesses are being attacked by the government on all fronts. Higher hydro rates and excessive regulatory burdens are just some of the issues facing shop owners. A more recent development deals with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board premiums. Owners used to pay for their own insurance to make sure that their families were protected if they were hurt on the job. Now these same owners are forced to pay more premiums for less coverage. These owners are forced to choose between their original policies they paid for for years or larger WSIB payments forced on them by the government.

Issues like this need to be fixed. Small business owners cannot afford to pay for the mistakes of near-sighted policy.

Right now, times are tough. Small business owners have to be creative to make ends meet. Because of the barriers to small business that exist, that creative spirit could mean moving to another province. We're at a point where businesses are having too much difficulty trying to survive in this province. Because of this difficulty, I'm eager to see the government's fall economic statement.

When you change the rules of the game, you change the way the game is played. If the act is passed, companies near the \$5-million payroll cut-off will intentionally keep their payrolls below \$450,000. The 60,000 employers that will now be covered by the exemption will have no incentive to grow any further. This act will simply stop the growth of Ontario businesses. If the government truly wanted to support small business, they would consider doing so by lowering hydro rates and easing the regulatory burden on these hard-working men and women.

The increase in the employer health tax exemption is a band-aid solution to a systemic problem. I believe that the people of Ontario and small business owners in this province expect the government to put forward a real plan, not just a bill with a good name that does very little to actually help.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to speak this afternoon.

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

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to join the debate today, but first, I wanted to take a moment just to recognize the good work that you've done in the Chair this afternoon. I appreciate the patience that it takes to be in that position and the discipline enforced in this House so that people can actually listen to each other.

That said, with all due respect, I also want to recognize my colleague from Timiskaming-Cochrane who, I believe, just had his first minutes in the Chair and perhaps presided over the most peaceful four minutes that I've ever observed in this House. Maybe he brings a country sensibility to this place, a pastoral sense of peace and calm. Maybe it's the voice of a cow whisperer or a horse whisperer that has been—

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Or Uncle Ernie.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I beg your pardon?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Or Uncle Ernie.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Or perhaps it's a familial bond with a member who is speaking. But I just wanted to recognize that we had a historic moment here today in this House.

Getting back to debate, the member from Oxford put on the record again today the issue of red tape. This is something that we hear time and time again. Indeed, we need to make sure that we put policies in place that support small business, and make sure that there are not undue barriers put in place.

1750

I wonder: If there is so much red tape in this province, where can I go and buy some of this red tape? Where is there a small business in this province that actually sells red tape, if I need some?

**Interjection:** I'll get you some.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Thank you. I'm kidding, Speaker.

Earlier today, we were having a debate between two sides of the House, and one side of the House, the government, said that we do not have a jobs problem in this province. I think other speakers in this House would agree that, in fact, there is a jobs problem.

I was happy to hear the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington talk about the growth in minimum wage jobs in this province. The one thing that would not involve any red tape at all, Speaker, is to make sure that people have enough money in their pocket, when they work a hard day's work, to actually be able to spend it in their local economy—that they don't have to go to the Walmart, that they can support a small business.

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

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I'm pleased to speak to Bill 105, the Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013.

Certainly, we have to look at what is happening in Ontario and what is happening in Canada. We're so much better off than those countries in Europe and most of the states right next to us. We've had a 160% recovery of the jobs lost in 2009, and we've heard that before—that percentage is about correct. Almost half of the jobs created in Canada have been created in Ontario.

Our small businessmen are very much the backbone of the economy in Ontario. Generally, they're doing well.

These are tough economic times. The projection we got on the economic forecast today is that the GDP will be increasing next year, and it looks like an increase is going on three or four years, based on the US recovery. We're doing as well as we can in this economy.

This is a small step in improving things for businessmen. We didn't say it was the silver bullet. It's important legislation. Let's get it through. We've been speaking to it for 12 or 14 hours, people have said. It's a good bill, it's a positive bill, and I hope everyone in the House supports it.

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

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** I want to thank the member for Oxford for pointing out some very eloquent and decisive facts regarding the hardships that the agricultural sector and small businesses here in the province of Ontario are facing under this Liberal government.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to small businesses in the agricultural sector—and I can attest to this first-hand. I just purchased two front tires—not the big tires that go on the back of the tractor, but the two front ones. It was \$1,600 for two tires—\$1,600. Part of the problem, again, with this Liberal government and over-regulation and the policies that they're bringing forward—when I spoke to

Mr. Thompson at the farm supply, one of the challenges that he has is keeping these tires in stock. These small businesses can't afford to purchase these now-large-ticket items and keep them in the backroom, on hand. He has to order them, and it takes a couple of days for those tires to come in. In the agricultural sector, if you're planting or harvesting, with this red tape, if you blow a tire, it could be two days before you get your tire fixed. That could be the difference between getting your harvest off in time and booked or not.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke made a very good point, too—I hear this in Northumberland–Quinte West, in the manufacturing sector and small businesses—about the price of electricity and the global adjustment. This is having a devastating impact on businesses, not only in Northumberland–Quinte West, but across the province.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to be able to stand in this House and comment on the remarks made by the member from Oxford. I've listened to the member many times throughout my life, but I've never listened to the member from the position of the Speaker's chair in the Ontario Legislature. For those two minutes—I must comment on not only our Speaker today—but it's a daunting place to be sitting, Speaker. It's truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Luckily for me, the House was very quiet, and everyone was listening with rapt attention to the remarks from the member for Oxford. He touched on issues that were important in his riding. He touched on red tape. We'll talk about red tape for a second.

Yesterday, in clause-by-clause for the Local Food Act, the NDP put forward a motion which was supported by the Conservatives. We put forward a motion to have one of the goals and objectives of the minister in the local food process be to streamline the regulatory process for small processors so that they could continue to have more access to local food. It wasn't supported by the government, so that amendment died. But it is very important. The member from Oxford touched on it several times.

We're not anti-regulation. We've said several times that regulation has to keep food safe, but regulation for the sake of regulation is killing small business, and we have to always be cognizant of that fact.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Oxford has two minutes.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I do want to thank the members from Davenport, Ottawa–Orléans and Northumberland–Quinte West for their kind comments.

I also want to mention the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, who mentioned the different vantage point in which he was sitting when I was making the presentation. I would point out that it may be the first time that, because of his duty, he actually had to listen to me. I'm glad to hear that when he did that, in fact, it wasn't a negative that came out of it. I'm quite pleased to hear that he actually listened and maybe even appreciated what I said. So I want to thank him very much.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke a lot about the difficulties with this bill—not so much what's in it, but what isn't in it and what it doesn't do. It's such a small part of the challenges that small businesses are facing.

I think we really need to look at what the government is going to do, moving forward, to actually help small business, and I think the first opportunity when we can see that would be the fall economic statement. It's crucial that this statement include a plan for the economy of Ontario and specifically for small businesses. Hydro rates need to be addressed, the regulatory burdens need to be reduced, the books need to be balanced, and a vision to create jobs and further the economy of this province needs to be put forward. The best way to encourage investment in the province is to lead by example. The fall economic statement should be the time to set that example with a strong plan, with a vision to the future. I think that's really where we need to go here.

It's one thing to banter back and forth here about whether we should be debating this bill, whether we have a right to speak our minds here or whether we should move along—I would have thought that this debate could have been completed more equitably if we had actually had a debate from both sides so we could discuss where we were going, instead of just standing here pointing out what's wrong with it. We have nobody here coming across and defending it and putting the defence for this position.

I think we really need to look forward to some better action to help small business across the province of Ontario, from this government.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

*The House adjourned at 1759.*

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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

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<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
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Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
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Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
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	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
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Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
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Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

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Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
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<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
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Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
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<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
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MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
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McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
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<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

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Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
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<b>Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
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Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
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Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
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Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
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Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman  
Rod Jackson, Helena Jaczek  
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Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon  
Cheri DiNovo, Christine Elliott  
Mitzie Hunter, Rod Jackson  
Sylvia Jones, Monique Taylor  
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