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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Monday 24 February 2014

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Lundi 24 février 2014

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 24 February 2014

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 24 février 2014

The House met at 1030.

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

Prayers.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBER FOR NIAGARA FALLS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that the Clerk has received from the Chief Electoral Officer and laid upon the table a certificate of the by-election in the electoral district of Niagara Falls.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): A certificate of the by-election is addressed to Mrs. Deborah Deller, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and it reads as follows:

“Dear Mrs. Deller:

“A writ of election dated the 15th day of January, 2014, was issued by the Honourable Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario, and was addressed to Wayne Campbell, returning officer for the electoral district of Niagara Falls, for the election of a member to represent the said electoral district of Niagara Falls in the Legislative Assembly of this province in the room of Kim Craitor, who, since his election as representative of the said electoral district of Niagara Falls, has resigned his seat. This is to certify that, a poll having been granted and held in Niagara Falls on the 13th day of February, 2014, Wayne Gates has been returned as duly elected as appears by the return of the said writ of election, dated the 21st day of February, 2014, which is now lodged of record in my office.”

It is signed:

“Greg Essensa

“Chief Electoral Officer

“Toronto, February 24, 2014.”

Mr. Gates was escorted into the House by Ms. Horwath and Mr. Bisson.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I have the honour to present to you and to the House Wayne Gates, member-elect for the electoral district of Niagara Falls, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims his right to take his seat.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Let the honourable member take his seat.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a number of guests here this morning, so bear with me, please: from the township of Bonnechere Valley, Mayor Jennifer Murphy; from the

town of Petawawa, Mayor Bob Sweet, Deputy Mayor Tom Mohns and Councillor James Carmody; from the county of Renfrew, CAO Jim Hutton and his friend Tracy Tuttle; and from the township of Laurentian Valley, Mayor Jack Wilson—who this year celebrates 50 consecutive years of elected office—and his good wife, Evelyn. I think I have them all. They’re here at the OGRA/ROMA conference, and they’re in the members’ east gallery, keeping an eye on the government.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I believe we have the unanimous consent for all members to be permitted to wear lapel pins in recognition of Heart and Stroke and Cancer Society lobby day at Queen’s Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care is seeking unanimous consent to wear the lapel pins. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I have some introductions. We are very blessed today to have a number of individuals with us from the Canadian Cancer Society and the Heart and Stroke Foundation in both the public gallery and the members’ gallery.

I would like to introduce Michael Perley, who is the executive director for the Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco; Tom McAllister, CEO of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Ontario; Maggie Fox, Rick Pettit and Navdeep Bains, who are all board members at the Heart and Stroke Foundation; Mark Holland, director of health promotion and public affairs at Heart and Stroke; and Cindy Dunn, vice-president of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Welcome, all.

1040

Mr. Wayne Gates: Speaker, I’d like to welcome my wife, my daughters and grandchildren, my sister and all my friends to the House today.

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, page Michael Sadono is head of the pages today. I want to extend congratulations to him and also welcome his father, Andre Sadono.

Hon. David Oraziotti: Speaker, I want to just take a moment and congratulate the Brad Jacobs curling team from my riding of Sault Ste. Marie, who won gold in Sochi. Thanks, Speaker.

Mr. Todd Smith: It’s a pleasure to welcome the mayor of the municipality of Tweed, Jo-Anne Albert, to the Legislature today, along with one of the councillors from Tweed, Jim Flieler. The reeve from Carlow/Mayo township, Bonnie Adams, is here as well. The mayor of Hastings Highlands, Vivian Bloom, is with us as well, and also Cindy Cassidy from the Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance. They’re all in town for the Ontario Good Roads

Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association conference. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd just take this opportunity, as the sports critic, to congratulate all our Canadian athletes for the fine example. I'm over the moon about our hockey teams and curling teams—absolutely fantastic.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's a privilege again to rise in the House and introduce the mother of page Emily Anderson, Kye-Young Kwon. She'll be in the public gallery this morning.

In addition, I had the opportunity of enjoying a Chinese New Year on Saturday with the Essex County Chinese Canadian Association. Present in the gallery today is Henry Lau, along with Eric Renaud and Josh Chaifetz.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm pleased welcome in the gallery my son, Jon Bradford, who is a political science student at the University of Waterloo and is here today to see democracy in action.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I would like to welcome to Queen's Park today Rob Murphy from Murphy Bus Lines back in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Welcome.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Moi aussi, j'aimerais remercier tous les gens de la Société canadienne du cancer et de la société des maladies du coeur, qui sont ici aujourd'hui pour leur journée.

I wanted to wish everybody who came from the Canadian Cancer Society and the Heart and Stroke Foundation—thank you for your support and thank you for being here.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have with us today in the House two students from the University of Akron Canadian studies work experience program. They're in the gallery up here to my left. Please join me in welcoming Brandyn Costa and Dylan Fonner as they begin their 10-week placement at the Legislative Assembly, working with the members for Vaughan and Davenport. Welcome to Canada. We're glad you're here with us.

Also today in the Speaker's gallery, we have with us the interns from the Manitoba Legislative Internship Program, who are here to meet with our legislative interns. We're glad you're here. Welcome.

Finally, some of you may have noticed that I have left the beard caucus, and I have joined the competition with the member from Niagara Falls on the moustache caucus.

I have to share with you a tweet I received. I said that the beard was coming off if we won the quad, and someone wrote back and said to me, "Let's be Canadiana about it: We scored the double-double."

I know we're all very proud of our Olympians, the staff and coaches and all the parents for the support that they've given. We did a darned good show, and we let the world know that we are not taking second seat to anyone in the world.

OLYMPIC ATHLETES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Premier on a point of order.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know all members will join with me in

congratulating all of our Ontario athletes and our Canadian athletes, quite frankly—all of our Canadian athletes who competed at Sochi Winter Olympic Games. It's been a fantastic few weeks for all of us who have been able to watch as 34 of the 63 Ontario athletes competing in the games reached the podium. But to all of our athletes, thank you for inspiring us and making us proud; and, as the Speaker said, to the coaches and the families for your support; and the communities, quite frankly.

I also want to wish good luck to our Paralympic athletes, who will be competing in Sochi in the coming weeks.

Congratulations again. Félicitations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Leader of the Opposition on the same point of order.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Yes, on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I want to just say how incredibly proud we are of the extraordinary Canadian athletes, the Ontarians, who made each and every one of us stir with Canadian pride in celebration of the Sochi games.

It was a great experience for me too—and I think Lisa and others might be in the same boat—my first time to watch the Olympics with my daughter. We got up early Sunday morning to watch the hockey together. She got it, at six years old. In her school, they had the medal count for gold, silver and bronze—and what that stirred in her as a proud Canadian and—who knows?—maybe a future athlete—not to raise expectations too high. But as a family, it was a fantastic event. Just like Ontarians watching today, I'm really proud to be part of that experience.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I recognize the leader of the third party for the same point of order.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's my pleasure, on behalf of New Democrats, to also congratulate everyone who was involved in the Olympics at Sochi from Canada: the athletes, of course, and all of their trainers, the coaches, the family members. It takes a village to actually raise a child, and it takes a fantastic country to raise such great athletes. I think we've proven to ourselves and to the world that we're that fantastic country.

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

It's now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

JOB CREATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. Premier, as we begin the week, sadly, in Liberal Ontario—the Liberal government's—there are a million people without work.

I recently spoke to a man in Niagara Falls who lost his job at John Deere, part of the 300,000 manufacturing jobs lost. He talked to me about the impact on his ability to pay the mortgage, to pay the bills. Very importantly, first he started out with the impact on his pride as a human being, as a dad, to provide for the family. He did get a

job parking cars for 11 or 12 bucks an hour, but he said, "Can't we do a lot better than this?"

It's because of people like that that I brought forward my plan, the million jobs plan, to create a good million jobs in our province—well-paying, middle-class jobs.

Premier, part of my plan is to lower taxes for all businesses to actually hire in the province again, instead of giving out corporate giveaways to the well connected.

Isn't it time to lower taxes to create jobs and help people like this man in Niagara to get a good job and provide for his family again?

Interjections.

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I absolutely support the notion and we are working very hard to make sure that we make the right investments in people, the right investments in infrastructure, and that we partner with business, that we create those partnerships that will allow jobs to be created.

What I do not see from the Leader of the Opposition is any way in which driving labour down, driving good jobs out of the province, cutting and slashing across government, and not partnering with business, all of which are pillars of his plan—I do not see how those tactics will create jobs.

We have created more than 440,000 net new jobs since 2009. Employment went up last year. We're going to continue on our plan.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I think the Premier mistakes my plan with her own. There's no doubt that the Premier's plan has bankrupted our province. It has cost us 300,000 manufacturing jobs, and you put us deeper and deeper into debt. I think, Premier, if the plan's not working, isn't it time to try something bold, something new, and something that's optimistic and says that Ontario can lead again? That's my plan. That's my Million Jobs Act.

For example, Kellogg's recently announced the closure of their plant in London. You gave Kellogg's a big corporate handout to create a small number of jobs, and in return, we're losing 600 or 700 jobs in London. We don't think that works.

You now have a plan before you—I think you're taking it to cabinet—to do billions more in corporate handouts. You have a question before you of if we should give Chrysler \$700 million or \$1 billion. You've given handouts to Ubisoft and Samsung.

My point of view: Instead of corporate handouts to the well connected, why don't you lower taxes for all businesses in every sector to succeed? That should create jobs and create long-term, middle-class jobs in our province. That's a better way.

1050

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think the Leader of the Opposition knows that taxes have been lowered in our jurisdiction and we are competitive. He also knows that the HST, which was a Conservative policy that we implemented, was done expressly for the manufacturing sector,

and the manufacturing sector knows that was an important move.

What the Leader of the Opposition is talking about is walking away from the people who are working in plants in Oshawa, in Oakville, in Brampton, in Woodstock and in Windsor. He's talking about reversing a policy in this province to work with and support the auto sector that has been in place for decades. I do not believe that he has thought through this policy, because to abandon the auto sector and the auto parts sector in Ontario would lose hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): While I'm standing, I would appreciate the attention given to me by the Minister of the Environment, along with those who want to shout down somebody, so let's cool it.

Final supplementary, please.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, you have created a province of Ontario with higher taxes, unaffordable energy rates, and more and more red tape. That means the only way for a business to open up in Ontario is you have to bribe them with hundreds of millions in taxpayer subsidies. That's basically what it is. I think you should start saying "no" to the corporate extortion that you've got yourself into.

Where are you going to draw the line? I think it is better to lower taxes for all business to succeed, to get affordable hydro in the province of Ontario again, to get the heavy-handed government off their backs so they can succeed.

Now, it's just not me saying that. Your own economist, Don Drummond, said that your corporate welfare policies were not working. He said we should get out of that business, Premier, and I agree. Let's actually create an environment, whether you're in the auto sector, whether you're in agribusiness, whether you're in financial services, whether you're in high-tech—I want to see all rise in the province of Ontario. I want to see them all invest and create jobs. My question is, why don't you?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I would say is, why does the Leader of the Opposition not understand that partnering with business and supporting business—and particularly in this case, we are talking about the auto sector. That partnership is decades old. The naïveté associated with the Leader of the Opposition's position is quite stunning.

I go back to 1996-97, when there was \$746 million put into businesses in the province during the Harris years; 1997-98, \$425 million; 1998-99, \$360 million; 1999-2000, \$414 million; 2000-01, \$717 million.

Mr. Speaker, apparently the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues used to understand that it was important, in order for us to compete globally, that we work with business, that we put those supports in place. Apparently he's lost the thread.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier: Premier, I was there. I was part of cabinet, and what did we do? We

lowered taxes, we had affordable energy rates, we got off the back of business and the results: We created an environment for 1.1 million new jobs in the province of Ontario.

Let me point out your other major economic error that's chasing jobs out of the province. The biggest area of subsidies from the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals is the unaffordable handouts to wind and solar projects. The full tune is some \$46 billion. You thought you would build an industry where everyone could work at a wind farm or at a solar panel factory. We've actually lost jobs. For every short-term job we create, we lose four in the broader economy.

Isn't \$46 billion an awful expensive price tag to actually cause jobs to leave the province of Ontario? Just end that program. I would.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. You tricked me there.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition supports a healthy community. There's nothing more important to our party than the health of our citizens. Health has always been our top priority. Clean energy is helping to replace and has in fact replaced dirty coal. That represents—

Interjection.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —of \$4.4 billion in environmental and health care costs.

Mr. Speaker, we had to build a surplus of energy in this province. We did it by also eliminating dirty coal, and we have built a safer, healthier community as a result of that.

Wind now represents less than 4% of our generation in the province of Ontario. Less than 4% is not the doomsday scenario that that Leader of the Opposition is claiming it is. He's exaggerating, and he's not telling the truth.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Withdraw.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'd like to get to the next question.

Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier: One thing I don't know if you've ever noticed is, it seems like these grants hardly ever go to Ontario companies. They're almost always going to international companies. Maybe it's because you want to cut a very expensive ribbon.

For example, the biggest area of subsidy has been Samsung. Samsung, a Korean-based company, has become incredibly rich. You would never give money to a competitor of BlackBerry, right? You would never tell the people of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge that you would give out hundreds of millions of dollars to their big competitor Samsung. But that's precisely what you've done. I don't know how you can reconcile this to taxpayers and say you're taking money out of their

pockets and taking money out of businesses with your higher hydro rates to hand it over to an international competitor.

Clearly, this is a policy that we can't afford. It's costing us jobs, it's biased for people's investments outside the country, and we are hurting our own companies.

Premier, why don't you abandon this misguided expensive policy and support my million jobs plan to put people back to work in our great province?

Interjections.

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

Ministry of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Frankly, I can't believe what I'm hearing, because a lot of the support goes to those great Ontario-based small, medium- and large-sized businesses. Just last Friday, I was in Cambridge, and we provided support through the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund for a great Ontario company, Cambridge Towel, and I know the people who are aware of that company understand just how important it is. We continue to support that made-in-Ontario company. Another company, Meridian, which manufactures containers for our agricultural industry right across this country—provided support as well on Friday through the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I understand that if the member opposite, if the leader of the official opposition, can't see the importance of those made-in-Ontario investments, it's because his party and he didn't support the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: —which together, in the last year and a half, have created and retained more than 24,000 jobs, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: One of the games, Speaker, my daughter learned in school is hot potato. It looks they're playing a bit of hot potato over there. Everybody is trying to answer the question except the Premier.

The reason it's a hot potato is because it's bad economic policy. Your Green Energy Act subsidies don't make any sense. The jury is in, Premier. It's costing us jobs. There is a better way: to stop the subsidies and get affordable hydro for all.

Also, you're forcing this project into communities that don't want them. You're not even enforcing your own rules. For example, in West Lincoln, the Niagara Region Wind Corp. and HAF Wind Energy Project—those projects are in a state of chaos. Five turbines have been built as part of that wind project, but three of them don't even meet your property line setbacks. They're effectively breaking the law. It seems to me, if somebody breaks the law, then you take out the turbines; you make sure you follow laws in the province of Ontario. You'd think that would make some sense.

Here's the bottom line: It costs us jobs, and it divides communities. You're not even enforcing your own laws.

Why don't you get rid of the misguided, outdated policy and support my plan? It will bring good jobs back and help the former John Deere employee work in the province of Ontario and provide for his family.

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Again, I just don't understand where the member opposite is coming from with this million-job-loss plan. Quite frankly, we already know that if he gets into power, his party is going to cut 10,000 jobs among education workers and thousands more in the health care sector.

He has already indicated he didn't support the Cisco investment, which is bringing 3,700 jobs to this province. We already know that he didn't support the auto sector in 2009. Frankly, if the party opposite had had their way, we wouldn't have an auto sector.

Interjections.

1100

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Northumberland, the member from Huron–Bruce and the member from Simcoe–Grey will come to order.

Finish, please.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I know these are challenging times across the province, particularly in the Niagara region. I acknowledge that. But that's why I was proud to announce just recently two investments, again through the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund: Niagara Piston in Beamsville and Indexable Cutting Tools in Welland. I was at the opening of Original Foods in Dunnville in the Niagara region, as well. More than 100 jobs were created there, importantly, in a community that really needed that help because of previous closures.

JOB CREATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Over this winter, the Premier had numerous opportunities to visit Niagara. How would she describe the state of unemployment in that region?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: First of all, I want to welcome the new member for Niagara Falls. Welcome to the House.

I did have opportunities to visit Niagara Falls before the by-election was announced and after. I know that there is a lot of work to be done in that community and in other communities across the province, which is why we have a six-point plan, which is why we know that investing in infrastructure—I heard about infrastructure investment and the need for investment in Niagara Falls—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Like maybe a hospital.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —whether it's a hospital or whether it is transit, making sure we have the right GO Transit and the right municipal transit. Those kinds of initiatives and investments are very, very important.

That's why infrastructure investment is very much a pillar of our economic plan.

We will continue to work with Niagara Falls. We will continue to work with communities across the province and make sure those supports are in place.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: What we heard from families was that they're feeling the squeeze, that they're worried about jobs. There were over 100 families that relied on a paycheque from Vertis who are wondering how they're going to pay the bills now that the plant in Fort Erie has closed its doors. Ninety people from Redpath in Niagara Falls are going to see an end to their paycheques in May.

Will the Premier tell those people that she thinks her six-point jobs plan is actually working?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I can tell the leader of the third party is that there are situations where companies have made changes, and there have been jobs losses.

There are also situations where jobs are being created. Just on Friday, I believe, the Minister of Children and Youth Services made an announcement in Windsor of an investment in Thomas Canning: \$3 million. There are 40 new jobs in a food processing plant. There are those kinds of investments and the companies that the Minister of Economic Development Trade was talking about; they're Ontario companies. They're small and medium-sized enterprises. They are the kinds of businesses that we know need support in order to be able to invest, in order to be able to expand and create jobs.

That's what we're doing. That's the work that we're doing, and we are seeing those jobs stay and come to Ontario. There's more work to be done.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: For years, the Liberals have insisted that corporate tax giveaways, the HST and private power schemes would bring prosperity to Ontario, and they promised 600,000 new jobs.

Can the Premier produce any evidence whatsoever of those 600,000 jobs?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: More than 400,000 of them have been created since 2009.

I hope that the leader of the third party is supportive, for example, of our wine strategy: \$75 million over five years to make sure that the wine industry in the very region she's talking about is able to continue, that that industry which has grown up over the last 30 years is able to thrive. I didn't hear her endorsement when we made the announcement, but I can tell you that the wine and grape growers were very supportive. They wanted to hear that announcement. They wanted to know that we were going to continue those supports and that investment. I hope the leader of the third party understands that's a critical part of that regional economy and deserves the support of all parties in this House.

JOB CREATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: To the Premier—but I will say I'm glad the Premier had time to read the NDP platform from 2011.

The Premier's no-strings-attached corporate tax giveaways and loopholes are not creating jobs, and people are falling further and further behind. Families in Niagara not only see that but they also feel it. They see Ontario's unemployment is above the national average, and Niagara's unemployment is the highest in the entire province.

Is the Premier ready to admit that the status quo simply isn't good enough for the families in Niagara or, in fact, anywhere across Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm never satisfied with the status quo.

In fact, we had a wine strategy in place in 2011, so it's excellent that the leader of the third party put that into her platform.

It would be interesting to know, Mr. Speaker, what the leader of the third party would put into a platform today. We haven't seen support on minimum wage increases. We haven't seen support on retirement security. We haven't seen support for the Fort Erie plan. We haven't seen support for the wine and grape strategy that we've put in place. We haven't seen support for increased investment in transit.

I am very, very impatient, which is why we have been moving on every one of those fronts, and we will continue. We will not rest on the status quo, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier need not worry, Speaker: The NDP has lots of ideas that the Liberals can mine in the future.

Speaker, for families that are feeling the squeeze, though, it's not just that Liberal policies aren't doing the job when it comes to job creation; it's that the government at Queen's Park seems to be going out of their way to make things even worse. That's certainly the story for the residents of Fort Erie, who are fighting to keep jobs alive after the government's short-sighted attempt to kill the slots at racetracks partnership. Is the government willing to reconsider that short-sighted move?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, as the leader of the third party knows, the Slots at Racetracks Program was not a transparent program. It was not accountable. It was not a program that could be supported or should, quite frankly, have been supported by any party in this House.

We have put in place a plan that, over the next five years, will allow the industry to restructure. There are contracts that are being agreed on right now. The leader of the third party knows that we have been working with Fort Erie for months, long before there were any questions in this House about the racetrack industry, about the horse racing industry. There was not a question in this House. We were already working with Fort Erie. We have an arrangement, Mr. Speaker. There will be a 2014 season at Fort Erie. What we're looking for is a good, solid five-year plan to make sure that that track is sustainable.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, for Niagara region families worried about jobs, the plan they've seen

from this government isn't very impressive at all. Instead of smart tax measures that reward job creators, the Liberals are opening up new tax loopholes and giveaways for companies to ship jobs away. Instead of providing affordable, accountable electricity so businesses can compete, the government blows a billion dollars a year to subsidize cheap electricity exports to the US. Instead of working to protect local jobs, the Liberals went out of their way to kill the slots at racetracks partnership.

Will the Premier agree that the Liberal plan isn't working for communities like Niagara and admit that it's time for real change in this province?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about some of the major investments that have been made in the region apart from the \$75-million investment in the wine and grape strategy.

Cytec Canada: A grant of \$2 million and a loan of \$8 million was provided from the Strategic Jobs and Investment Fund. That supports a total investment of \$125 million to expand its Niagara Falls facility. That project will create 30 new jobs and retain 105 in Niagara Falls, Mr. Speaker.

Rich Products of Canada, Ltd. in Fort Erie: We announced a \$3.9-million Advanced Manufacturing Investment Strategy loan to Rich Products to support a total investment of \$13 million. It will create five jobs and retain 43 jobs, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is that as we make these investments, as we develop these partnerships, there are commitments. There are commitments to retention of jobs; there are commitments to the creation of new jobs. That's the kind of partnership that works for the people of the region and the people of the province.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS

Mrs. Jane McKenna: My question is for the Premier. Premier, in 1998, Honda opened a new plant in Alliston without a government payoff. But in 2014, Ontario can't compete without massive handouts. Your government spent an estimated \$3 billion a year in corporate subsidies, but nine-figure loot bags won't fix the problems with Ontario's economy: job-killing red tape, sky-high hydro rates, taxes, taxes and more taxes.

1110

Ontario's manufacturing sector has lost 300,000 jobs on your Liberal watch. Trying to subsidize those jobs back would cost taxpayers tens of billions of dollars. Wouldn't it be cheaper to get the province's fundamentals right?

Interjections.

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

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

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm very proud that Ontario remains the number one destination in all of North America for foreign, direct investment, and 90% of the time

when businesses choose to come here to Ontario they do that without any government support whatsoever. We have a great investment climate. We have a tax rate that is lower than most of the US states. We have a quality of workforce which is second to none, quite frankly. We have a great health care system—many reasons why businesses would choose to come here. That's partly why we've added 25,000 manufacturing jobs since the recession. We've added 12,500 jobs to the auto sector alone—direct jobs.

I know the member opposite doesn't support the auto sector and if she had her way she would eliminate the auto sector from Ontario. We're not prepared to do that. We support it.

These measures are important and we're actually succeeding. It doesn't mean that there's not much more work to do. We're constantly looking at ways to increase those investments and create jobs.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: Back to the Premier: You can't spend your way to prosperity. Your government should be creating a level playing field for all businesses. GM and Toyota have both said that it is the most expensive place in the world to build a car. The solution isn't to pay those companies to be your friend; it is to make our economy competitive. Paying out huge incentives while ignoring fundamental problems is like getting a new paint job to fix a broken transmission.

University of Calgary professor Jack Mintz says that Tim Hudak's Million Jobs Act is the kick start to Ontario's economy needs. Will you support him?

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Okay. Stop stirring it.

Interjections.

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

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I know that there are many people in that member's party who support the right-to-work legislation that will gut labour across this province. We're not prepared to do that. Frankly, I believe that the Leader of the Opposition still believes in that principle.

I challenge the member opposite to go down to Windsor and tell the 4,600 people who are working at that Chrysler assembly plant that in two years' time they won't have their jobs if the Conservatives get to power. I challenge that member opposite as well to go to the Ford plant in Oakville and meet with any of her own constituents from Burlington and tell them she did not support the Ontario government's investment in Ford last September, when her federal cousins, the federal PC Party, came forward with Ontario in equal measure to support those jobs, retaining those jobs in the future.

I know she didn't support the Cisco proposal to create 3,700 jobs in this province. I know she doesn't support Chrysler—

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

JOB CREATION

Mr. Wayne Gates: My question is to the Premier. Niagara has the highest unemployment in Ontario. For some people it's just a number. I've met those people. I've met with them in the coffee shop, talked with them on the phone, talked with them in the living room, and now I'm standing up here for them at Queen's Park. They're worried about their jobs. They're worried about jobs for their kids and their grandkids. These are real people facing real challenges.

Does the Premier think that her jobs plan is working for the people across Niagara? There are young people across Niagara Falls riding who are wondering—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Oh, I'm sorry.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): In fairness to the member and all new members that will be coming, when I say that, you have about 10 seconds to wrap up—just so that you know from here on in.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I welcome the member, and I know that he is an advocate for his community. Our job is to advocate for all of the people across the province and to make sure that region by region and community by community, we put the right conditions in place, which is why we've made those investments in Niagara Falls and in the Niagara region that I spoke about earlier. Whether it's the wine and grape strategy, whether it's manufacturing plants, it needs support in order to be able to compete. Whether it's the investment in the hospital or the support for the racetrack, that will allow those people—many of whom I have met, who need those jobs and need to make sure that there is a strategy.

I hope that the member is able to work with his caucus and to understand that support for those businesses is absolutely critical; that's why we put that in place. And also, Mr. Speaker, support for policies like the minimum wage increase and like retirement security are things that we have to work together on.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Wayne Gates: There are young people across Niagara Falls riding who are wondering if they'll be able to stay in their hometown, because to stay, they need the kind of good jobs that will let them raise their own families. They want to be able to live, work and raise their families in Niagara. I'm going to stand up for their jobs.

Is the Premier ready to admit the status quo isn't working and it's time for a plan that rewards job creators, cuts small business taxes and gets people in Niagara and across Ontario working again?

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

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I also want to congratulate the member opposite for his election win and representing that important riding here in the Legislature.

I'm glad that he mentioned youth specifically, because apart from the fact that just last month—or sorry, in January—the province created 7,800 youth jobs alone for youth between the ages of 15 and 25, the youth unemployment rate is gradually coming down. It is unacceptably high, but that's part of the reason why we've created our youth jobs initiative, a \$295-million investment over two years, which includes, importantly, our youth jobs fund, administered by my colleague behind me, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Just the latest information on that youth employment fund, which are new hires in businesses across the province: As of February 21, 7,934 young people have received placements and jobs because of that program.

HEALTHY LIVING

Mr. Phil McNeely: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Representatives of the Heart and Stroke Foundation and Canadian Cancer Society are joining us in the House today. I met with four of them this morning.

Every seven minutes in Canada, someone dies from heart disease or stroke. Many of these tests are preventable and the risk factors are well understood. Smoking is one of these risks. Kids are especially vulnerable to its harms. There is a bill before the House now, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, which would help to protect children from harmful tobacco smoke.

I would like to ask the minister, through you Speaker, how important is it that this proposed legislation be passed swiftly?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the member from Ottawa–Orleans, who is a huge champion of these issues. In fact, it's the McNeely amendment to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act that banned power walls. I do welcome and thank the representatives from Heart and Stroke and Canadian Cancer for their life-saving work.

The stark reality is that smoking kills 36 people in Ontario each and every day. That's why it's so important to quickly pass Bill 131. I believe we have all-party support for that. I was pleased that the Leader of the Opposition has written a letter supporting the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, and last week the member from Nickel Belt indicated she'd like to see this bill move quickly.

Unfortunately though, Speaker, Bill 131 is being stalled in this Legislature. We would like to see it moving more quickly and we're calling on all parties to quickly move this bill through the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Phil McNeely: Thank you, Minister. Speaker, I'm pleased to see our government is placing such a high priority on protecting kids from tobacco smoke. I hope that the opposition will work with us to send the bill to committee very soon.

1120

But smoking isn't the only risk factor that can lead to heart disease and stroke. Healthy eating is important in

maintaining a healthy heart, and good eating habits start young.

Our government has taken steps and is always looking at other initiatives to keep Ontarians, especially children, healthy.

Can the minister tell us what our government is doing to help ensure our children are eating nutritious foods?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thanks again to the member from Ottawa–Orléans.

We know that healthy kids grow up to be healthy adults. That's why we created the Healthy Kids Panel and have taken strong action to implement many of its recommendations. We've announced an expansion of the Student Nutrition Program. We've enhanced supports for breastfeeding moms. We've started the Healthy Kids Community Challenge.

Last October, we committed to introducing legislation that would require the posting of calories in large chain restaurants, after consultation with health leaders, the foodservice industry and, above all, parents. I believe this is something all three parties can support. I certainly know that the member from Nickel Belt has advocated menu labelling herself.

As with Bill 131, I'm reaching across the aisle to ask the third party to stop stalling the important bills moving through the House, and then when this bill is introduced, let's get it passed.

ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the Premier. The Green Energy Act has cost this province billions of dollars for energy we don't need at a price we simply can't afford, Premier. The government promised, at the time, 50,000 new jobs in turn for the massive \$4-billion annual subsidies to wind and solar. You stripped away locally based decision-making. The jobs never materialized, but skyrocketing hydro rates have.

The Auditor General went so far as to say that for every job created by the Green Energy Act, four were lost here in Ontario.

Your own Liberal long-term energy plan says that you will subsidize this policy with 42% increases in our hydro rates.

The cause and effect are proven, and it's time to move on from this policy.

Today, we'll have people from rural Ontario here, marching to ask you to listen to them and to stop the Green Energy Act. Will you listen? Will you rip up the Green Energy Act?

Interjections.

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

Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Durham will come to order. As I get quiet, I want quiet. Premier?

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

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I thank the critic for the question.

I know that there were some anti-wind demonstrators outside the Legislature. They were mothers for no wind, I think—or a similar name. I met with them several months ago, and I certainly appreciate their commitment and their concern.

As I indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, green energy has replaced dirty coal. Dirty coal was causing \$4.4 billion in health costs and environmental costs.

On the other hand, their position, on the other side, is very confusing. First of all, the Leader of the Opposition said he will cancel wind contracts. Then he said he would not cancel wind contracts. Now that caucus over there is telling constituents that maybe they will cancel wind contracts.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Mr. Speaker, the thing that's replacing dirty coal is nuclear, gas, hydroelectric; not expensive wind turbines at the expense of freedom in the rural areas of this province.

Your Green Energy Act is bankrupting this province. It is causing us to lose jobs. The World Trade Organization agrees; they say it's a dud. You are the only jurisdiction in all of Canada, the first province, to break international law in the history of our nation.

We haven't even gotten to the environmental and health effects of what's happening to birds, what's happening to turtles and what's happening to humans.

There is no due process for municipalities.

Your Environmental Review Tribunal has become a sham and is disgraceful.

Health Canada and the Waterloo Institute for Sustainable Energy are studying the health effects.

I'm asking the Premier: If she won't scrap the Green Energy Act today, will she at least signal to Ontarians who don't want these wind turbines that they don't have to put up with them and she'll have a moratorium placed across—

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

Interjections.

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

Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Energy?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Durham is using this as an opportunity every time, and I'm going to ask him to stop doing that.

Carry on.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The Green Energy Act has created over 31,000 jobs in Ontario. Several weeks ago, I met with senior officials from Siemens, and we discussed a number of issues, including job creation. They indicated that their Tillsonburg plant for wind turbines is continuing to create more jobs than originally estimated, probably in the order of 200 jobs. I visited Celestica in Don Valley last week, and they're planning on doing expansion in clean energy.

The jobs are continuing to be created. We haven't compiled them all because they're happening across the province. I hear example after example after example of new jobs being created in clean energy, and we have people coming out of our community colleges who are well-versed in clean energy, and they're going to create cleaner—

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

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Wayne Gates: Again to the Premier: The construction of the promised new Niagara Falls hospital can be an important source of local jobs, at a time when families in Niagara are facing the highest unemployment rate in the province. What guarantees can this government give to the people and companies in the Niagara region that the construction of the new Niagara Falls hospital will hire local and buy local?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Health will want to speak to this great project, but I want to just say that we were very pleased to be able to announce \$26 million for a planning grant for the new hospital in Niagara Falls, a firm commitment that we are going ahead with that. We're following through on Dr. Kevin Smith's expert advice.

It was very clear, actually, during the past few weeks that it was not necessarily the position of the NDP to build that hospital. There was a real lack of commitment, and it wasn't clear whether the hospital would be built in Welland or somewhere else, or all the other services would be kept in place and the hospital would be built in Niagara Falls, which would be a particularly irresponsible position.

I'm very, very pleased that we are committed to better health care in Niagara Falls. We're committed to building the hospital, and we're following through on that commitment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Premier, jobs are the most important issue for families in Niagara. When it comes to building large infrastructure projects, this government should be looking to create as many local jobs and opportunities for workers, engineers, architects and contractors, to shore up the local economy in Niagara.

What is this government doing to make sure that the promised new Niagara Falls hospital construction will provide us much-needed local jobs by hiring locally, stimulating local businesses and purchasing locally made products?

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am delighted that we finally have some clarity about where the NDP stands when it comes to the construction of a new hospital in Niagara Falls. I congratulate the new member; he's having an impact already, and I look for further clarity on

NDP positions on, say, minimum wage, coming from the newest member of that caucus.

I am delighted that we have moved forward with the planning grant for the new hospital in the south of Niagara. I know that it will benefit the constituents of the member from Niagara Falls, and members of the whole Niagara region. This is an important step forward to improve the quality of care, and I really do urge the member opposite to vote for Bill 141, which will support local employment.

FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

Ms. Soo Wong: My question is to the Minister of Labour. Minister, as a father, you know how tough it's been balancing work life, looking after your children and working to support your aging parents, or both. That's why I'm proud to support Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act, which seeks to provide Ontarians with three different leaves they can use at times when they are concerned about just being there to support their families.

Having worked as a nurse, I feel strongly about this bill and its intent to ease the stress on the everyday lives of Ontarians. In my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt, residents thoroughly support this bill, and I brought 12 petitions to the House on this particular bill. However, it is frustrating to see that all three parties have worked together in committee to improve a bill that is now stalled at third reading debate. We could easily have passed this bill by now, and—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.
1130

Ms. Soo Wong: Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: What kind of reaction is the ministry receiving regarding this delay in terms of Bill 21?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I want to thank the member from Scarborough–Agincourt for her relentless advocacy with regard to Bill 21 to ensure that we have family caregivers provided for in our province.

Speaker, we have heard from sole caregivers and those in the sandwich generation on the importance of this very important bill. We've heard frustration from many stakeholders—they came to watch third reading debate—that this was being bogged down in unnecessary debate in this House. I'm talking about the Canadian Caregiver Coalition, which is composed of the MS Society, the Alzheimer Society, the Parkinson society and the ALS Society. Representatives from the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society are in the House urging all members to expedite the debate on this very important bill and to pass this bill into law so that we can give the necessary break that our families deserve for their loving caregivers.

I urge and implore all the members of this House, especially the opposition, to vote in support of that bill.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Soo Wong: I thank the minister for the response. I must admit that there's frustration in terms of hearing the third reading debate. When we started third reading

debate, members of the opposition continued to filibuster and use stalling tactics, veering off on different speaking points and recycling speaking points, rambling on different topics on issues not related to Bill 21.

This bill should have been passed, like many of the legitimate bills that were brought before the House, yet the opposition continues to want to make changes at third reading debate.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Can he please explain some of the finer points of this bill that we may have missed?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thanks to the member again. Speaker, this bill is first and foremost about compassion—compassion that we owe to our loved ones and, of course, the families, the caregivers who look after them in time of need. Today, I'm asking the opposition to think about the Ontarians who are struggling every day to balance their work and family responsibilities when deciding whether or not to stall this bill any further.

I'm asking the opposition to acknowledge the support of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Canadian Cancer Society and the countless others who have put their support behind this bill—the same bill they are keeping from becoming law.

It is absolutely clear this is not a partisan issue. The content of the bill is not controversial at all. It really speaks to the core values of our society, where we look after our families, we look after each other to make sure that caregivers have the necessary job protection that they need to look after their loved ones. Let's pass this bill into law so that our families have the necessary supports they need at home to look after their loved ones.

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question is for the Premier. Premier, people across Ontario are gathering on the front lawn today to bring yet another message: Your green energy scheme has failed and the rubber is finally hitting the road as electricity bills are skyrocketing for all Ontarians, urban and rural.

No matter which way they spell it, it's a no-win situation. Your government turns its back on proponents when they break the rules, you take municipalities trying to stand up for their constituents to court, you tell government employees who try to do the right thing to stand down, you ignore the facts determined by your own \$1.5-million University of Waterloo health study. And here's the kicker: Your government actually appealed itself when the ERT did the right thing and said "no" to a proponent.

Premier, will you do the right thing, stand up and have the confidence today to personally go out and address the group that is outside, admit to your corrupt mistakes and call for an immediate moratorium?

Interjections.

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the Minister of Energy will want to comment in the supplementary, but I think the member opposite knows that I have met with folks who have strong opinions about wind energy across this province repeatedly, in community after community.

I know the member opposite doesn't want to talk about the fact that cleaning up the air is at the root of this. I know the member opposite doesn't want to talk about the reality of 31,000 jobs that have been created. But I do think the member opposite should acknowledge that when I came into this office, I said we were going to change the rules about siting energy infrastructure. We've done that. We've done that and we've worked with municipalities—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. The member from Renfrew, the member from Prince Edward–Hastings, the member from Northumberland and the member from Huron–Bruce, who asked the question, come to order.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We have made good on that commitment to change the process whereby these pieces of energy infrastructure are sited, and we will continue to work with municipalities on that front.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary. The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I would like the Premier to answer my supplementary. My constituents and others are currently appealing over the 50-storey industrial wind turbines planned on the Oak Ridges moraine. The moraine is ecologically important because it provides clean, safe drinking water to over a quarter of a million people. It's been protected since 2002.

The community has spoken out against these wind turbines; 2,874 people commented on the EBR posting. The Buddhist Association of Canada opposes the project. The Curve Lake First Nation insists that further consultation take place. Many constituents in my riding have travelled to Queen's Park today, yet again, to protest.

Premier, you've turned your back on the protection of the Oak Ridges moraine and your supposed consultation process. Will you immediately call a moratorium on the wind turbines, especially the ones in the Oak Ridges moraine?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I addressed the issue a little bit earlier. The reality is that the Leader of the Opposition has said he will not cancel existing wind contracts. They're talking about an existing wind contract. What is your policy? Are you going to cancel it? Are you going to expose the province to more liability?

In the group that is outside this Legislature, there are mothers who are concerned about health. I want to repeat the point: By eliminating dirty coal—the health impacts of getting out of dirty coal—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. The member from Chatham–Kent–Essex, second time, second seat.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —\$4.4 billion in avoided health care and environmental costs; 668 fewer premature deaths per year; 928 fewer hospital admissions per year; 1,100 fewer emergency room visits per year; and 333,000 minor illnesses, such as headaches, coughing and other respiratory symptoms, avoided. That's why we're in renewable energy.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Ms. Cindy Forster: My question is to the Premier. When this government pulled the slot machines from racetracks across Ontario, the hard-working families that depend on the racing industry felt like they had the carpet ripped out from underneath them. Now, the Premier has been doling out short-term funding when the timing suits them, which, in the case of Fort Erie, happened to just come in time, during the by-election. Families in Fort Erie can't plan a future based on one-year funding. Will the Premier commit today to a long-term partnership with the Fort Erie Race Track that will give families a future that they can look forward to?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the member opposite is fully aware that Elmer Buchanan, John Snobelen and John Wilkinson formed a panel and worked on a five-year plan in which we are investing \$400 million. So we are putting in place a long-term plan. We want that kind of sustainability.

The snide remark that the timing of the Fort Erie contract deal coincided with the by-election—again, the member opposite knows full well that we were working for months before there was even a by-election called to make sure that every racetrack in this province had the opportunity for a sustainable future. That's the work that we've been doing. We will continue to do that. I made a commitment to put the horse racing industry back on track. We've been doing that.

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's interesting that the announcement actually came when the Liberals were trailing in the polls.

Any business would tell you that long-term planning is crucial, and since the slots were pulled from the Fort Erie Race Track, families who depend on the track had no way to plan for the future—short-term funding and vague promises of a five-year plan that may one day be released. They had to march in the streets. They had to march here at Queen's Park for months before the Premier would listen.

One-time funding and vague promises are not a plan for the families who live in Fort Erie. Will the Premier reinstate the slots at racetracks partnerships so that horse racing can continue in Fort Erie and sustain over 1,000 jobs locally?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We're not going to reinstate a plan that was unaccountable, that was not transparent and that was not in the best interest of the

long-term industry. We're not going to do that. We've been working on putting a better plan in place, and that is what we have done: \$400 million over the next five year years.

1140

The NDP was crying for a season for Fort Erie in 2014. They were screaming from the rooftops that that's what they wanted, when they finally got to the issue, which was long after we had already started working on it. The plan is in place. We are going to continue to work with Fort Erie. The people of Fort Erie who work at the racetrack—I have met with many of them—know that I am committed to making sure we do everything possible. But there will be a business plan, there will be a transparent exchange of dollars as part of that plan, and that is why we are going to continue to work with them.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, in days past, the electricity system in Ontario could be described as a bunch of wires attached to wooden poles, powered by a generator and turned on by the flick of a switch. While I know the electricity system has been modernized with the advent of smart meters and smart grids, to some today, the system appears the same. Mr. Speaker, could the minister tell us how these new technologies are changing how we interact and use our electricity system?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I thank the member for the question. Several weeks ago, I had the opportunity to visit Barrie and the new IBM state-of-the-art world data centre in Barrie. They are analyzing information from smart meters and other information in order to create a more efficient energy sector. Not only that, this is another example of clean energy creating jobs in Ontario.

In fact, smart meters are modernizing our outdated, inefficient energy system. They help Ontarians conserve energy and save money. Since 2006, conservation and our smart grid have saved our energy system over \$4 billion in avoided costs. Smart meters help us conserve and allow local distribution companies to quickly determine when system issues arise and avoid them as quickly as possible. The home of the smart grid in North America is Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I want to thank the minister for his response.

I believe my colleagues will agree with me that we need to continue to do more to promote conservation in Ontario. I know this is important to the people in my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood. I understand that smart meters allow us to control our energy usage during peak times, to help save money and conserve power. I've also heard that, during the recent ice storm, local distribution companies like Toronto Hydro used the smart meter data to assist with restoration efforts.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell us if the ministry has any programs to leverage this new smart

grid technology or if there is any way that I can access this information?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: There's a lot of excitement in Ontario over smart grid and new technology in the energy sector. A few months ago, in partnership with the MaRS Discovery District, we launched the Energy Apps for Ontario Challenge. This is a challenge for people using their ingenuity and creativity to create new tools that can inform the public. These apps will help Ontario households and businesses manage and better understand their electricity use, so they can make informed decisions and save money. Using the smart grid data, energy apps for Ontario will empower consumers by providing easier access to their own electricity data and allowing them to securely share their data with mobile and Web-based apps. They can get all of the data from their meter and use that to help create apps for themselves—new tools to conserve energy.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question today is for the Minister of Training, College and Universities. Minister, a critically important part of your mandate is to uphold and enhance the skilled trades in this province. Your exercise of this responsibility is vitally important to all the fine hard-working men and women in the trades today, whether they are compulsory or mandatory trades.

While we practise politics in this place, I know that you would not want the practice of politics to taint the work being done by the Ontario College of Trades. As such, will you commit today to halt any compulsory certification review before the Ontario College of Trades until after the next election?

Hon. Brad Duguid: What a political question for somebody who just said we shouldn't be playing politics with the College of Trades.

What I will say is this: We're very proud of the work that we're doing as a government and that the College of Trades is doing to promote the skilled trades across this province.

We have our youth apprenticeship fund, which is doing some great work in our high schools to encourage young people to get into the skilled trades, which is so important. As we work with the federal government, we're working at ways to do even more to encourage young people to take on apprenticeships. We've doubled the number of apprenticeships in this province in the last 10 years. We're proud of that, but there's more work that we have to do.

Building a stable environment for the skilled trades across this province, building an environment where those skilled trade workers themselves have a say in those future decisions, is the direction we're going, as opposed to making those decisions in smoky Albany Club backrooms.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: You didn't answer the question, to begin with. One of the greatest powers the

Ontario College of Trades has is to change a trade from a voluntary one to a compulsory one. Minister, the ramifications of such a change cannot be exaggerated. Should any trade be changed into a compulsory one, the process needs to be perfect.

I trust the minister can appreciate the politics of a provincial election campaign—no question about it—and I trust the minister can also recognize that, given your party is likely to be supported with hard dollars from the very organizations seeking compulsory certification, the election is no time to do that. I can tell you, Minister, if you compulsory-certify a trade like carpentry and let these guys do it down there right now, you can cripple the construction industry in the province of Ontario.

So I'll ask you again: Will the minister stand in his place today and commit to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop:—any compulsory certification review, should we go into an election? It's very important, Minister; this is an important question. I don't want you to dance around this. A yes or no would be fine.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Okay. No. Mr. Speaker, the fact is—and the member asked the exact same questions when we were going through the ratio reviews, concerned about process ahead of time, concerned they were going to get it right. They did get it right, because they reduced ratios 20 times more than any other party did over the course of the time that they were in office, including our own. That's a pretty good accomplishment. The process went very well.

Now when they undertake the process for compulsory reviews, they'll do that. But the difference between us and them is that it will not be a political decision. It will not be a political decision made in the backrooms of the Albany Club. It will be a decision made transparently by the College of Trades, by tradespeople themselves, so politicians like yourself, who want to get involved in these decisions, will not have a role to play in those decisions, because they'll get it a lot better than politicians from any parties have got it—

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

GO TRANSIT

Ms. Cindy Forster: The Liberals have told Ontarians over and over that they're going to deliver full-day, two-way GO service on all corridors, but they're nowhere near delivering on that commitment.

Families and businesses in the Niagara region have been clear: They need the service. They don't need higher taxes and fees. The people of Niagara Falls riding could see that the Liberals haven't delivered on their promise, and so they chose to elect a strong New Democrat, who will get results for families and small businesses in our area.

The 12 mayors and the regional chair have also issued a joint statement to the province to tell them to get

moving by 2015 on all-day GO service to the Niagara area.

My question to the Premier: When will you listen to the people of Niagara, Welland and St. Catharines and commit to a date for delivering GO service in the Niagara region?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Clearly, the member from Welland has a sense of humour, which is good to know. Half-hour, all-day GO service runs on the Lakeshore line.

We are taking over from the parties opposite, that made no investment in GO, froze the funding, didn't acquire tracks and let the system fall apart and rot. We have made up \$20 billion in transit infrastructure—\$10 billion. The reason we cannot move faster is because when you were over here, you didn't buy any tracks from CN and CP and you didn't invest in anything. So we're making up for 30 years of neglect, Mr. Speaker.

I would invite the member to come down to Hamilton with me in the near future to see a few announcements about the results of those billions of dollars of expenditure. I'll just let you anticipate what that might be, because it wouldn't be happening if you were sitting over here.

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

Mr. Rob Leone: Mr. Speaker, I was listening intently to question period, and I hope I didn't misunderstand what the government was saying. I'm going to reference standing order 23, because they were talking about family caregiver leave that has not been debated at third reading. I remember, very vividly, speaking positively of the bill, family caregiver leave, at third reading. I wonder what's going on in terms of trying to perhaps mislead, but certainly of naming—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): First of all, you will withdraw, because you can't say that. So withdraw.

Mr. Rob Leone: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's not a point of order for the purposes of question period.

There are no further debates. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1150 to 1300.

ESTIMATES

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I have a message from the Honourable David C. Onley, the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All rise, please.

The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the year ending March 31, 2014, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly. Dated Toronto, February 21, 2014.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I'm very pleased to welcome and introduce four guests who are seated in our gallery today and are either patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis or their caregivers: Michael Jarvis, Larkell Bradley, Laura Lillie and Barbara Barr. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to rise in the House today to join PLTC Homes to recognize the extraordinary efforts of the employees of two long-term-care homes in my riding of Huron-Bruce.

This winter has been a tough one across the province but has been especially tough in my riding of Huron-Bruce. The people of the riding suffered through record-setting snowfalls, record low temperatures, power outages, and ferocious winter storms. In these trying circumstances, many businesses closed and roads were understandably closed, causing people to stay home and wait for the storms to pass.

The employees of the Seaforth Manor retirement living and long-term-care centre in Seaforth and the Queensway Retirement Living and Long Term Care centre in Hensall did not stay home. They went to work when others didn't. They stayed for extra shifts when needed, and they went above and beyond to serve the residents of their homes during this tough time.

I had the privilege to meet with the managers of both these homes last week here at Queen's Park. They shared their many stories of the extraordinary efforts of their employees. Employees at both homes truly showed their commitment to their residents, their families and the community as a whole. They worked double or even triple shifts. They did other people's jobs and they reached out to families directly.

I am pleased to be able to rise in the House today to congratulate and thank the employees of both homes for their dedication and hard work. I know that the residents are grateful, their families are grateful and I very much appreciate their selfless, hard-working commitment. On behalf of the people of Huron-Bruce, thank you for all you do.

EMPTY BOWLS CAMPAIGN

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Today I would like to take the opportunity to speak to the House about London's participation in the international Empty Bowls campaign. The campaign has existed in North America for over 20 years and has since spread to over a dozen countries.

Every year, millions of dollars are raised to help end hunger in countries around the world. Guests of these

events enjoy a simple meal of a chef-made soup and bread donated by local restaurants and get to keep their handcrafted bowl, which is made by local potters and volunteers as a poignant reminder of the international hunger crisis and as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world. It is a collective hands-on project that serves to raise awareness and unites communities and neighbours in a goal to end hunger.

The London Potters Guild held what they call a bowl-a-thon over the past few weeks, encouraging community members to help make scores of these wonderful hand-made bowls. Last Sunday my colleague MPP Sattler and I spent a very enjoyable morning at the Potters Guild headquarters in London in the historic Old East Village, rolling up our sleeves to create clay bowls to contribute to the Empty Bowls fundraiser in March.

The event takes place on Friday, March 7 at the Goodwill centre in London. This year all proceeds will be donated to the Regional HIV/AIDS Connection, which provides a wide variety of services to the London community for individuals living with HIV and AIDS.

I would like to acknowledge the London Potters Guild and the Regional HIV/AIDS Connection for their hard work and commitment to helping alleviate hunger in London.

HEART MONTH

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: February is Heart Month in Canada. Today, more than 90% of Canadians who have a heart attack and more than 80% who have a stroke and make it to a hospital will survive, resulting in 165,000 survivors last year.

The cardiac care program in my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood by the Rouge Valley Health System is providing excellent care. However, no one is safe from heart disease or stroke conditions that can be devastating not only to individuals but to entire families. There is so much we can do to protect ourselves and our loved ones. There are currently 1.6 million Canadians living with the effects of heart disease and stroke.

By addressing the key control factors—physical inactivity, poor diet and tobacco use—Ontarians have the power to make health last. Thanks to the generosity of Ontarians and the compassion of volunteers, the Heart and Stroke Foundation is able to continue making a real difference in reducing death and disability from heart disease and stroke. Over 43,000 Heart and Stroke Foundation volunteers are knocking on doors across Ontario raising awareness about life-saving research, patient support and initiatives that continue to reduce the number of Ontarians afflicted with heart disease and stroke every year.

Speaker, we also need to do our part in our ridings by informing our constituents about the importance of healthy living all year round. This is our opportunity to create environments and communities that make healthy choices for all.

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL AUTOSHOW

Mr. Michael Harris: Speaker, I hope you had the opportunity to attend this year's Canadian International AutoShow at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre at some point during these past two weeks. For 41 years, auto dealers like those who belong to the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association have organized this event, bringing people from all over the world to Toronto to showcase some of our province's finest vehicles manufactured right here in Ontario and sold worldwide. The newest attraction this year was the AutoConnect technology, which gave visitors a glimpse into the future of the autonomous vehicle.

With well over 300,000 attendees this year, I would like to congratulate AutoShow president Frank Romeo and the AutoShow staff for hosting another successful event. This event is a time to celebrate Ontario auto industry's great history and promote its success into the future.

I would like to take this time to thank our auto manufacturers and dealers for their great investment in communities across this province, creating well-paying jobs for all types of skill sets. This year's AutoShow reminds us of the necessary changes that must happen in Ontario to support these businesses—by making our energy rates more affordable, reforming our tax rules on major capital investments, ending the red tape runaround, changing our apprenticeship-to-journeyman ratio and, of course, getting rid of the Drive Clean program, as well as reducing our debt and eliminating the deficit so these key job creators can successfully do business within our borders for years to come.

GASOLINE PRICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I rise today to talk about something that every second resident of Nickel Belt wants to complain about. Everywhere I go in Nickel Belt, I hear people talking about it, and, yes, Speaker, you guessed it, it is the price of gasoline.

Living in the north, we expect to pay a little bit more than southern Ontario, but the reality is that there are huge price differences, and to add insult to injury, there is fluctuation that borders on opportunistic price gouging.

This morning in Sudbury, the price of gas is \$1.32 a litre. You can drive 60 kilometres east to Sturgeon Falls or 40 kilometres west to Nairn Centre and there can be as much as 11 cents or 12 cents' difference per litre.

Gasoline is a necessity of life in northern Ontario. The majority of my riding does not have public transit and they feel that their government should be working to deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices.

There are currently five provinces in Canada that have some type of gas regulation and the sky has not fallen. In fact, the jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to the wild price fluctuation, a shrinking of price discrepancy between urban and rural, and overall annual-

ized lower gas prices. This is what Ontarians want. They want their government to listen to the good people of this province and act. A good start would be to mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline.

1310

SILVERHEARTS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I rise in the House today to recognize the Silverhearts Association. Let me tell you a little bit about them. The Silverhearts Association of Oakville is a not-for-profit organization that seeks to raise awareness about specific cancers that take the form of sarcoma.

Saddened by the loss of his mother, Janice Silver, Alexander Silver, together with his good friend Jacqueline Di Filippo, created Silverhearts Association. The intent was to raise awareness of cancer-specific sarcoma and to advance research.

Silverhearts is now comprised of young professionals with a goal to reach out to the leaders of tomorrow to educate, involve and inspire them to make a difference in the future of our health care system in Ontario.

Alexander Silver and Jacqueline Di Filippo hosted the annual gala for 350 young professionals and partnered sponsors. The event raised over \$13,000 that evening for sarcoma research, facilitated through McMaster University health services. An event such as this proves that the Oakville community is as strong as it has ever been.

I want to congratulate Silverhearts, ask them to keep up the good work, and congratulate the Silver family for pulling together at a time of great sadness to try to get some good out of our community for what was obviously a family tragedy for them and to help advance the cause of cancer research in this province.

IDIOPATHIC PULMONARY FIBROSIS

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I stand today in honour of Rare Disease Day, which is Friday, February 28. I'd like to take this day as an opportunity to speak about a specific rare disease: idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, or IPF. IPF is a rare lung disease that causes a rapid decline in lung function. Tragically, and like many rare diseases, IPF has a very high mortality rate. Most patients die within two to five years of diagnosis.

But there is hope for patients with IPF. Esbriet has been proven to slow the progression of IPF, and it is the only treatment option available to patients with IPF.

Despite the severity of this disease, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has denied funding of Esbriet. When you have a disease with a life expectancy of only a few years, the reality is that you cannot afford to wait for treatment. It's a tragedy that the government is keeping Esbriet out of reach for many in urgent need of help.

The Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation has launched the Ontario IPF patient watch list to help us MPPs keep track of people in our ridings who are waiting

for treatment, and I encourage all members to visit this website.

I am saddened that despite the severity of this rare disease and the strong evidence of the safety and effectiveness of Esbriet to treat IPF, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is denying funding for this drug. In honour of Rare Disease Day, I call upon the Minister of Health to take this opportunity to provide affordable access to care for IPF patients in Ontario.

STUART HARTNELL

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I am honoured to rise in the House today to recognize Chief Warrant Officer Stuart Gordon Hartnell, a resident of York South–Weston who received the Meritorious Service Medal on February 18, 2014, from Governor General David Johnston. The medal goes to people whose specific achievements have brought honour to the Canadian Armed Forces and to Canada.

Chief Warrant Officer Hartnell has served for 28 years in the military, including in the Airborne and special operations. As battle group sergeant-major in Afghanistan from April to November 2010, he was a key player in high-intensity counter-insurgency operations. He was respected throughout the unit as a model for others to emulate. Whether providing advice to the commander or leading soldiers in combat, Chief Warrant Officer Hartnell demonstrated impressive leadership which proved to be critical to the battle group's operational success.

The Meritorious Service Medal (Military Division) recognizes a military deed or activity performed in a highly professional manner according to a very high standard that brings benefit or honour to the Canadian Armed Forces.

These decorations are an important part of the Canadian Honours System, which recognizes excellence and makes me proud to have him as part of our community in York South–Weston. He is a great example of what it means to serve our country, and I would like to thank him for his service and dedication.

LARISA YURKIW

Mr. Bill Walker: Certainly following up on our great achievement at the Olympics, it's my pleasure today to rise in the House to recognize one of the world's fastest skiers and a resident of the great riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. Larisa Yurkiw made us proud when she represented Canada in downhill and super-G in the recent 2014 Olympics. She truly is a champion and a role model in every way.

High off the 2008 FIS Junior World Ski Championships, where she won silver, Larisa faced a horrifying setback after tearing up every piece of connective tissue in her left knee. The injury kept her off the slopes for two years and out of the Vancouver games—what a disappointment. The devastating injury had some thinking

she might never ski again, and also left her off the national team.

But the gutsy 25-year-old Owen Sound native wasn't ready to be counted out. Within a short time, she persevered, and with great personal determination and will, she hit the slopes again winning the qualifiers for the winter games. She also set up Team Larisa and, on her own, recruited sponsors and supporters in her effort to raise \$150,000 that she needed to hire a coach and get herself to Sochi, Russia.

With her steely nerves and go-getter attitude, the young Larisa quickly became a media sensation, inspiring an online campaign with several hundred supporters—I being one of them—who wanted her to be Canada's flag-bearer for the opening ceremonies.

One of the local donors to Team Larisa, Terry Graham of TG Group of Owen Sound, said it best: "In my own life, there was somebody that stood up," he told CTV News. "And when we saw Larisa going through those gauntlet of challenges, it was our opportunity to stand up."

On February 7, Larisa marched with Team Canada.

On Wednesday, she completed a 2.7-kilometre alpine skiing ladies' downhill in one minute and 43 seconds, just two seconds separating her from the gold medal winner. Larisa suggested she was disappointed; however, she is happy celebrating an incredible season and living a dream. It's a dream the world's best and most committed get to enjoy.

Congratulations, Larisa. You are the epitome of someone who pursued their dream against considerable challenges, and inspired a wide spectrum of people along the way. You made us proud, and you are and always will be a champion in my eyes. Thank you, Larisa.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 POUR DES CHOIX PLUS SAINS

Ms. Matthews moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 162, An Act to require certain food service premises to display nutritional information / Projet de loi 162, Loi assujettissant certains lieux de restauration à l'obligation d'afficher des renseignements nutritionnels.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

First reading agreed to.

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I will make my statement during ministerial statements.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

HEALTHY EATING

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm very pleased to introduce our government's Making Healthier Choices Act, and I am delighted that people from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Canadian Cancer Society and the Diabetes Association are joining us in the visitors' gallery.

Families want the information they need to make healthier choices when they buy ready-to-eat food and beverages. That's why we're introducing legislation, which will, if passed, require restaurant chains, convenience stores, grocery stores and other food service establishments with 20 or more locations to post calories for food and beverage items, including alcohol, on their menus.

This proposed legislation fulfills a commitment I made last October, and it takes further action on the commitment our government made to keep Ontarians healthy—the first pillar of our government's action plan for health care.

Improving our children's health is a key part of this commitment. That's why we're stepping up the fight against tobacco use among youth with proposed legislation, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, that I was pleased to bring forward for second reading last week.

Now we're taking another step to improve children's health by tackling the growing problem of childhood obesity. Obesity costs Ontario \$1.6 billion in direct health care costs alone every year, and the costs of not acting will only grow. Indeed, if we don't act, studies tell us that over the next 25 years, up to 70% of today's children will be overweight or obese adults.

1320

To get the best possible advice on how to achieve better health for our children, we have appointed the Healthy Kids Panel. This expert panel heard from many parents who said their lives are busier than ever, they're eating out more often, and they need more help to make the healthy choice for their kids the easy choice every time.

In fact, a recent Ipsos Reid survey found that 95% of Ontarians support requiring fast-food restaurants to list nutritional information on their menus. This is broad support; this is very strong support. But I know that government cannot do it alone. That's why I committed in October to consult with the food industry, the health sector and, above all, parents on how to best move forward. I want to thank them for the thoughtful advice they provided, and I'm pleased to say we're now moving forward with the proposed legislation that I've introduced today.

It would require the posting of calorie information for standard food and beverage items, as defined in the regulations, including alcohol. It would require food service premises to post a contextual statement that would help educate patrons about their daily caloric requirements. The proposed legislation would also authorize public health inspectors to enforce these requirements.

If this legislation passes—and I sure do hope that it does—Ontario will be the first province in Canada to legislate the posting of calories on menus, which will help people make informed choices when eating out or purchasing take-away meals. I want to ensure that families have easily accessible and transparent nutrition information when they buy prepared food, because I know that when they have this information, they are more likely to make the wiser, healthier choice, and companies that sell food may rethink their menus and recipes in response to the consumer preferences.

Knowledge, as they say, is power. Having nutritional knowledge readily at hand will empower people to take better control of their own health, and I think that's something all members of the House can get behind. Each of us wants to help our kids and grandkids have a healthy start to life. That's why I'm confident that, with this legislation, we can reach across the aisle and find support from members in all three parties.

This legislation is the latest in a series of steps we've already taken to implement recommendations from the Healthy Kids Panel report. Last month, the Premier and I announced the Healthy Kids Community Challenge, in which communities across Ontario are working together to make the children in their communities the healthiest they can be.

We're expanding supports for new moms so that every woman who wants breastfeeding support can get it. The Ministry of Children and Youth Services is expanding Ontario's Student Nutrition Program, creating more than 200 new breakfast and morning meal programs for about 33,000 more kids in higher-needs communities. This adds to the almost 700,000 students who benefited from those programs in the past year. And as I mentioned, we recently began second reading debate on the Youth Smoking Prevention Act.

Today, we have the opportunity to take the next step. Working together, we can help parents across the province make the right choices to keep their kids healthy. I urge all members to support this proposed legislation.

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

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I am pleased to rise, as the Ontario PC caucus's health critic, to address the Making Healthier Choices Act, tabled by the minister just a few moments ago.

I've not yet seen the full bill and have not had the opportunity to review it in detail, so I can't speak to the specifics of the bill. I can only speak in general terms of what has already been reported in the media.

This past October, as the minister has indicated, at a press conference at a McDonald's restaurant, the minister

announced that her government would be bringing forward legislation to require restaurants to list calories on their menus and reduce advertising to children. What we've seen coming forward today is the response and the follow-through by the minister on that.

I would say that there's no question that we need to deal with the issue of obesity in Ontario. It is becoming a serious problem, particularly for children, and this does have long-term implications for children in the longer term. They can grow up to develop serious health complications, from diabetes to hypertension to stroke and many other medical complications, and of course it is putting an increasing strain on our health care system as well in financial terms. We do need to take urgent action. It has been said that obesity is the new tobacco in the implications on our health care system and the additional costs related to it, but the question is, what do we do?

We have groups visiting us today, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society, who visited many of us as MPPs. They've been talking about making Ontario the healthiest province. Though they were specifically speaking about tobacco control and caregiver assistance, I think it could be equally applicable to dealing with the effects of obesity.

If you were to have a campaign in schools, for example, and teach children about nutrition and healthy eating habits, what we would end up doing is educating young people to have a lifetime of good healthy eating habits in the long term and to learn how to make good choices. I think in the short term also you would influence parental choices, because if children aren't clamouring to go to fast-food restaurants, I think most parents wouldn't be going there as frequently either. I think that could be something that could be really very effective immediately in dealing with the effects of childhood obesity.

What do we end up with? Well, we've got the menu-labelling legislation that's in front of us right now. While I don't want to dismiss it, I know that it is important that we have nutritional information available. The fact of the matter is, we already have a lot of this information available, and ORHMA, the Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association, has indicated that the restaurant industry has already shown leadership. Many already have nutritional information available at their restaurants on tray liners, posters, pamphlets, QR codes and/or nutritional information apps. Many also have nutritional information available on their websites so that their guests can plan ahead before dining out or ordering.

The fact is that most of this information is already out there, Mr. Speaker. Some people have said that this is really a solution in search of a problem, that we're dealing with a situation that's already been dealt with. However, I would say that I look forward to reading the legislation, understanding the pros and cons and understanding what a huge difference this is supposed to make in the lives of Ontarians, particularly children.

There is one other comment, though. There is an indication that the caloric content of alcoholic drinks is

also included in this legislation. Many have indicated that this should not be included. If this is a bill that's aimed at childhood obesity, then presumably alcoholic content isn't necessary to be listed.

I leave it at that. I look forward to reviewing the legislation in detail and will have further comments when this bill comes before us in a formal manner.

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

M^{me} France G linas: Well, I was rather excited to hear what the government was going to introduce. I feel a little bit deflated when I read in—I haven't seen the bill either, but what I've seen of the bill is that it will only apply to restaurants and chains that have 20 premises in Ontario. I don't understand this. My bill talks about five locations in Ontario because it would cover all of the restaurants that, as my colleague says, already have this information and just make it available on the menu or the menu board.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I've been working at this issue since 2009. In 2009, I introduced the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act. It was Bill 156 at the time, and on April 9, 2009, it passed second reading. We had a debate in this House. The House voted in favour at second reading that the bill go through. At the time, it asked for restaurants with five premises and \$5 million. Unfortunately, the House prorogued.

So on June 2, 2010, I reintroduced Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating, now called Bill 90. Bill 90 required the disclosure of calories on menus and stayed the same: five premises making gross sales of \$5 million. The Legislature again prorogued.

I reintroduced it on May 8, 2012 with the same title, Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating, now called Bill 86. By that time, during all those years, I worked the file, Mr. Speaker. I talked to the convenience stores, to the grocery stores, to food establishments, to a lot of health care providers and to a lot of families. It had moved from putting the calorie amounts on the menu to putting the calorie amounts and a flag for sodium, because so many Ontarians have high blood pressure that can be directly linked to eating too much sodium—too much salt in their diets, directly linked to restaurant food.

1330

Yet again, the Legislature prorogued. Not to be outdone, in October 2012, I reintroduced it, and we all know what happened. Mr. McGuinty decided to prorogue two days before I was going to go for second reading—I took that personally, Mr. Speaker, but it probably wasn't—and I couldn't bring it for second reading.

Then, on Thursday of last week, Bill 149, Healthy Decisions Made Easy, passed second reading. Healthy Decisions Made Easy talks about menu labelling so that you would see the number of calories next to the price on menu items, whether it be food or drinks, including alcohol drinks. You'd be surprised at how many calories there are in alcohol, until you start to look at those things. If you have four beers, you can't eat for the day. Your caloric intake is through the roof.

But anyway, back to last Thursday and Healthy Decisions Made Easy: We had a debate in the House. It

passed second reading, with five locations and \$5 million. That is because everybody who already has standard portions in recipes—so that you know exactly how many calories there are—already has that information and would be willing to go ahead.

I hope that the government takes this into account. There have been six years of work on the ground to move this idea forward. I must be honest: The first time the bill passed, it only passed by three votes. That was kind of a thin margin. It did pass, but I could see that there was quite a bit of a pushback. Now if you go and ask any group of Ontario citizens, you would come back with 90% support for that idea. In my world, 90% support is very, very hard to achieve. There will always be some naysayers; there will always be some pushback. No matter if you offer paradise, there will be some people who don't want it.

At 90%, we know that we have a really strong base of support. We know that the restaurant industry, the bar industry, the convenience store industry and the grocery store industry are ready.

We have been talking—I have been talking, and the NDP has been talking—about this for six long years. Do I look forward to the day when I will go into a fast food outlet and there will be the calories? Yes. The sooner the better. I can't wait.

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

PETITIONS

LYME DISEASE

Mr. Steve Clark: I want to thank Karen and Paul Brown of Mallorytown for their advocacy on Lyme disease in my riding.

I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the tick-borne illness known as chronic Lyme disease, which mimics many catastrophic illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, Crohn's, Alzheimer's, arthritic diabetes, depression, chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia, is increasingly endemic in Canada, but scientifically validated diagnostic tests and treatment choices are currently not available in Ontario, forcing patients to seek these in the USA and Europe;

“Whereas the Canadian Medical Association informed the public, governments and the medical profession in the May 30, 2000, edition of their professional journal that Lyme disease is endemic throughout Canada, particularly in southern Ontario;

“Whereas the Ontario public health system and the Ontario health insurance plan currently do not fund those specific tests that accurately serve the process of establishing a clinical diagnosis, but only recognize testing procedures known in the medical literature to provide false negatives 45% to 95% of the time;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care”—who is here today—“to direct the Ontario public health system and OHIP to include all currently available and scientifically verified tests for acute and chronic Lyme disease in Ontario and to have everything necessary to create public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario, and to have internationally developed diagnostic and successful treatment protocols available to patients and physicians.”

I'm very pleased to sign this in support. I affix my signature. I'll send it to the table with page Jaclyn. Again, I'm glad the minister is here to listen.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. John Vanthof: I continue to get signatures from all across the province on this one.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas a motion was introduced at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads ‘that in the opinion of the House, the operation of off-road vehicles on highways under regulation 316/03 be changed to include side-by-side off-road vehicles, four-seat side-by-side vehicles, and two-up vehicles in order for them to be driven on highways under the same conditions as other off-road/all-terrain vehicles’;

“Whereas this motion was passed on November 7, 2013, to amend the Highway Traffic Act 316/03;

“Whereas the economic benefits will have positive impacts on ATV clubs, ATV manufacturers, dealers and rental shops, and will boost revenues to communities promoting this outdoor activity;

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

“We call on the Ministry of Transportation to implement this regulation immediately.”

I fully agree, add my signature and give it to page Owen.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there are over 8,000 children and youth living under the care of the crown and of children's aid societies in Ontario; and

“Whereas the Ontario Legislature hosted the ‘Our Voice, Our Turn: Youth Leaving Care Hearings’ in the fall of 2011; and

“Whereas these hearings made it clear that more must be done to support these young people and to raise awareness; and

“Whereas by proclaiming May 14 of each year as ‘Children and Youth in Care Day,’ the province would raise awareness and recognize the unique challenges faced by children and youth living in care; and

“Whereas Ontario's children's aid societies, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, and members of

the community, including children and youth living in care, want to officially celebrate 'Children and Youth in Care Day' on May 14, 2014; and

"Whereas Bill 53, known as the 'Children and Youth in Care Day Act,' proposed by MPP Soo Wong, passed with unanimous support on May 9, 2013, but has since been delayed from being called for third reading;

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

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario call Bill 53 for third reading immediately; and

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact Bill 53, the Children and Youth in Care Day Act, before May 2014."

I will sign it.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Simcoe—York—Simcoe. I was spreading the love.

Mrs. Julia Munro: York—Simcoe. That's right. Thank you very much.

This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Health Canada has approved the use of Esbriet for patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF), a rare, progressive and fatal disease characterized by scarring of the lungs; and

"Whereas Esbriet, the first and only approved medication in Canada for the treatment of IPF, has been shown to slow disease progression and to decrease the decline in lung function; and

"Whereas the lack of public funding for Esbriet is especially devastating for seniors with IPF who rely exclusively on the provincial drug program for access to medications;

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

"Immediately provide Esbriet as a choice to patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis and their health care providers in Ontario through public funding."

As I am in agreement, I have affixed my signature to give it to page Anne.

GASOLINE PRICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from B. Thomas Bulldozing. He's on Highway 64 in Alban, in the French River region of my riding. It reads as follows:

"Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

"Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

"Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas-price regulation; and

"Whereas jurisdictions with gas-price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of

price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to "mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition."

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

FAMILY SAFETY

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, I have an important petition that's signed by a great many people from Brampton, Oakville and eastern Mississauga. It's addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly and it's entitled "Safer Families Program in Peel Region." It reads as follows:

1340

"Whereas the Safer Families Program is a successful partnership of Catholic Family Services Peel-Dufferin, Family Services of Peel and the Peel Children's Aid Society ... receives year-to-year funding from the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and is a critical component of social services to families within the Peel community; and

"Whereas the intervention model for Safer Families currently operates with no waiting lists, an important consideration for families experiencing domestic violence and child protection concerns, as they require immediate access to service; and

"Whereas the Safer Families Program is aligned with Ontario's child poverty agenda, is committed to preventing violence against women, and contributes to community capacity building to support child welfare delivery; and

"Whereas currently, Safer Families serves 14% of all domestic violence cases referred to Peel Children's Aid Society and has the ability to double the number of cases it handles;

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

"That the government of Ontario adjust its funding to supply ongoing core funding rather than year-to-year funding, and realign funding to double the percentage of cases referred by the Peel Children's Aid Society and served by the Safer Families Program."

I completely agree with this petition. I'm pleased to sign and support it, and to send it down with page Samer.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Norm Miller: I have a petition in support of Bill 137, paved shoulders on provincial highways. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas pedestrians and cyclists are increasingly using secondary provincial highways to support healthy lifestyles and expand active transportation; and

“Whereas paved shoulders on highways enhance public safety for all highway users, expand tourism opportunities and support good health; and

“Whereas paved shoulders help to reduce the maintenance cost of repairs to highway surfaces; and

“Whereas the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka’s private member’s bill provides for a minimum one-metre paved shoulder for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;

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

“That private member’s Bill 137, which requires a minimum one-metre paved shoulder on designated provincially owned highways, receive swift passage through the legislative process.”

I support this petition.

DOG OWNERSHIP

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

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

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

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

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

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

I’m going to add my signature to the thousands and thousands of people who are still collecting these and give it to page Anne to be delivered to the table.

DISTRACTED DRIVING

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas ‘texting while driving’ is one of the single biggest traffic safety concerns of Ontarians;

“Whereas text messaging is the cause for drivers to be 23 times more likely to be in a motor vehicle accident;

“Whereas talking on a cellphone is found to be four to five times more likely for a driver to be involved in an accident;

“Whereas Ontario is only one of few provinces in Canada where there are no demerit points assessed under the current cellphone/distracted driving legislation currently in place;

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

“To adopt Bill 116 by MPP Balkissoon into law, which calls for each individual guilty of an offence and on conviction to be ‘liable to a fine of not less than \$300

and not more than \$700,’ in addition to a record of three demerit points for each offence.”

I will give this to page Alessia.

PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

Mr. John O’Toole: I want to thank the member from Leeds–Grenville for giving me this opportunity to put on the record this important petition, which reads as follows:

“Whereas current OHIP legislation and policies prevent”—the minister is here, so I’m saying this—“Ontario post-stroke patients between the ages of 20 and 64 from receiving” publicly funded “additional ... physiotherapy; and

“Whereas these post-stroke patients deserve to be rehabilitated to their greatest ability possible to maybe return to work and become provincial income taxpayers again and productive citizens” with pride;

“Whereas current OHIP policies prevent Ontarians under age 65 and over the age of 20 from receiving additional” publicly funded “physiotherapy and rehabilitation after their initial stroke treatment; and

“Whereas these OHIP policies are discriminatory in nature, forcing university/college students” and people in the middle of their careers, “and other Ontarians to wait until age 65 to receive” publicly funded physiotherapy;

“Whereas the lack of post-stroke physiotherapy offered to Ontarians between the ages of 20 and 64 is forcing these people to prematurely cash in their RRSPs and/or sell their houses,” leave their wife and family, “to raise funds;

“Now therefore we, the undersigned, hereby respectfully petition the Ontario Legislature to introduce and pass amending legislation and new regulations to provide” publicly funded “post-stroke physiotherapy and treatment for all qualified post-stroke patients, thereby eliminating the discriminatory nature of current treatment practices,” which are a shame in the province of Ontario, and the Minister of Health should listen.

PROPERTY TAXATION

Mr. John Vanthof: I have a petition here signed by almost everyone in this municipality.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corp.) has failed to provide the appropriate rationale for the significant changes (mostly increases) in the assessed values of residential properties in the township of James; and

“Whereas neither physical improvements nor the general condition of the local real estate market warrant these drastic changes;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Ministry of Finance to engage an independent third party organization to conduct a fair and equitable reassessment of all property values within the township of James immediately.”

I fully agree, affix my signature and give it to page Michael.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. Bill Walker: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

“Whereas the current policies of the McGuinty/Wynne Liberal government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

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

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

I support this, will sign my name and send it with page Jaclyn.

ASTHMA

Mr. Jeff Yurek: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas on October 9, 2012, 12-year-old Ryan Gibbons unnecessarily died of an asthma attack at school;

“Whereas one in five students in Ontario schools has asthma; and

“Whereas asthma is a disease that can be controlled; and

“Whereas it is the responsibility of Ontario schools to ensure asthma-safe environments;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Education to take measures to protect pupils with asthma by ensuring all school boards put in place asthma-management plans based on province-wide standards.”

I support this bill, and I support Bill 135. I’m sure the Liberal government will work hard to get this passed before the next election.

CHARITABLE GAMING

Mr. John O’Toole: “Whereas the government of Ontario, through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, levies the Ontario provincial fee on the sale of break-open tickets by charitable and non-profit organizations in” our communities in Ontario; and

“Whereas local hospital auxiliaries/associations across the province, who are members of the Hospital Auxiliaries Association of Ontario, use break-open tickets to raise” badly needed “funds to support local health care equipment needs in more than 100 communities across” the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas in September 2010, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario,” under Dalton McGuinty, “announced a series of changes to the Ontario provincial fee which included a reduction of the fee for certain organizations and the complete elimination of the fee for other organizations, depending on where the break-open tickets are sold; and

“Whereas the September 2010 changes to the Ontario provincial fee unfairly treat certain charitable and non-profit organizations (local hospital auxiliaries) by not providing for the complete elimination of the fee which would otherwise be used by these” volunteer “organizations to increase their support for local health care equipment needs” in their community,

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to eliminate the Ontario provincial fee on break-open tickets for all charitable and non-profit organizations in Ontario and allow all organizations using this fundraising tool to invest more funds in local community projects, including local health care equipment needs, for the benefit of Ontarians.”

This is a very respectable petition, which I support and sign in support of my constituents and send it with Samer to the table.

1350

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you. That concludes the time that we have available today for petitions. Orders of the day?

Hon. John Milloy: I’d like to seek the agreement of the House to revert to motions, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to revert to motions. Agreed? Agreed.

MOTIONS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I move that, notwithstanding any standing order, the order for concurrence in supply for the various ministries and offices, as represented by government orders 11 through 21 inclusive, shall be called concurrently; and that when such orders are called they shall be considered concurrently in a single debate; and two hours shall be allotted to the debate, divided equally among the recognized parties, at the end of which time the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of the order for concurrence in supply for each of the ministries and offices referred to above; and that any required divisions in the orders for concurrence in supply shall be deferred to deferred votes, such votes to be taken in succession, with one five-minute bell.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. John Milloy: I move that the Minister of Finance be authorized to pay the salaries of the civil servants and other necessary payments pending the voting of supply for the period commencing April 1, 2014, and ending on September 30, 2014, such payments to be charged to the proper appropriation for the 2014-15 fiscal year, following the voting of supply.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Milloy has moved government notice of motion number 42. I again look to the government House leader to lead off the discussion.

Hon. John Milloy: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to begin what is basically a routine matter, which comes before the House every year: the interim supply motion. Just to refresh the memory of members here, as well as those viewers at home, as to what interim supply is, I'll give a brief explanation. If passed, this motion would allow all government ministries and legislative offices to operate from the beginning of the upcoming fiscal year—that is, April 1. This motion is not about introducing new priorities. All expenditures incurred under the authority of this motion would be consistent with the upcoming 2014 budget and 2014-15 estimates, and these expenses would eventually be authorized in the Supply Act for the 2014-15 fiscal year.

While this motion is not about setting out new priorities, it is important. That's because it would give our government the necessary spending authority to finance the programs we have and will set out, including important public services the people of Ontario have come to expect. It would allow us to continue operating, to fulfill our commitments and put our economic plan for creating jobs into practice. It would ensure that we can make important payments to institutions and individuals across Ontario; for example—and these are just a few; there are many more—payments to nursing homes, hospitals, doctors, schools, municipalities, recipients of financial assistance, people with disabilities and special needs, children's aid societies, and those who rely on various benefit programs, such as the Ontario Child Benefit and guaranteed annual income support for seniors. Without this interim supply motion, these important payments could not be made.

I would also like to remind everyone that this motion is for a specified duration. It would provide temporary spending authority which is required at the beginning of the fiscal year and would cover the period from April 1, 2014, through September 30, 2014. This temporary spending authority is necessary to allow the government to operate while the Legislature conducts its review of the government's detailed spending plans through the work of the Standing Committee on Estimates.

As I said, an administrative matter—a very important one, but still one of a routine nature—is before this Legislature. It basically allows the government, if I can

put it in very basic terms, to pay its bills over the coming months. As I think we all recognize—and we can put aside partisan differences—it is important. I gave just a small list. We want to be in a position to flow resources to those who receive them from the government. I gave, as I say, just a short list of those that benefit on a regular basis from this.

Mr. Speaker, there is a period of time that is allotted under the standing orders. We look forward to the debate here this afternoon, but on the government side, I think I basically outlined our position on this matter. As I say, I look forward to the debate and discussion, but I think I've put forward an explanation and obviously our position in support of this important, yet administrative, matter.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to join in the debate. You know, it's funny, some of the comments that the government House leader mentioned earlier. He framed this supply motion as administrative, routine. What he forgot to say was that this motion is a motion of confidence. So it's going to be very interesting, when the actual vote comes forward, to see how our friends to our left, who have supported the confidence of this government over the last year and a bit, will be voting on this matter of confidence. I can't wait to hear some of the speakers.

I did want to tell people who are watching that Monday's session is sort of the longest session we have of the day, where we talk about legislation. Originally, up to about 12:30 today, we were planning on debating Bill 141, which is the bill that the government indicated to us on Thursday they would be calling here at 1 o'clock, so at 1 o'clock, we were planning on speaking on Bill 141. At 12:30, they sent us an email and said that we're going to be dealing with this confidence measure. I guess the question that some of you might want to ask at home is: Why would that happen?

Well, there's a conference taking place at the Royal York. It's a conference that has a long-standing tradition not just in Ontario, in the municipal sector, but also in this place, and it's called the Rural Ontario Municipal Association/Ontario Good Roads Association joint conference, affectionately known as the ROMA/OGRA conference. It's one of the largest conferences—certainly the largest conference in the city of Toronto, because the other conference, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario or AMO conference, travels around the province. This is the opportunity that members of the Legislative Assembly have to interact with their municipal councillors.

There's a tradition in this place that normally on a Monday afternoon, at the start of the ROMA/OGRA conference, we would have what I would deem a corporal's guard here in the Legislative Assembly; we would have some agreements on the bills that are going to be debated so that many of us, myself included, who have a number of municipal officials there, would have the opportunity

to speak to them about issues that are of importance. We have ministers who have meetings, parliamentary assistants, our caucus, members of the third party—we all have meetings with our municipal officials. It's been a long-standing tradition in this place that we have very thin ranks in this Legislative Assembly in the afternoon of the first day of the ROMA conference.

It begs the question: Why would the government schedule a motion of confidence on a Monday afternoon? Well, let me tell you: Because the members on this side of the House—we've got the rural members. We've got the members of municipal councils in these rural communities. That's why the government calls this motion today: to prevent us from going to our scheduled meetings, to prevent us from talking to our municipal officials, only to be mean-spirited by changing the channel at the last possible moment to debate this motion. That's the reason.

1400

The other reason, I suggest, quite frankly, is because this government doesn't have a plan that appeals to the municipalities in this province of Ontario. They've had 11 years to run the province, and they've basically ignored rural Ontario, especially rural Ontario municipalities—because, you know what, Speaker? I'll tell you: One of the first issues that came up this morning was the issue of revenue tools and the issue of the OPP billing reform. Those were issues that came up almost immediately when the bagpipes stopped playing at the Royal York for the start of this conference.

Why would members of the government not want members of the opposition there? Because we've got the story. We've got the concerns. We are the ear of what's going on in rural Ontario. You know what? You just don't like the answer. That's why you're having us stay here this afternoon rather than being able to speak to the—

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: So suspicious.

Mr. Steve Clark: Well, you know what? You may not like the answer, minister of consumer affairs, but that's the fact. The fact of the matter is, we've always had agreement, we've always had consensus and we've always been able to go to the ROMA conference to talk to our municipalities. You've made that decision to cut us off—

Interjections.

Mr. Steve Clark: Very funny. This isn't a joking matter; this is a matter of confidence. We have the message.

I asked a question here on Thursday during question period of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. She's the minister whom I'm the critic for. I had a briefing in November with her staff about OPP billing reform. I looked her staff in the face and said, "It's chaos, based on what you've done to municipalities in rural Ontario." You went out and you've essentially told them where their starting point is going to be. You've now told them what the costing formula will be—where you want it to end, but you

didn't tell them how they're going to get there. You ran around for months as a government, telling people who were going to have significant increases, "Don't worry. We're going to look after you in 2015." That's the message that they've given members of the Ontario PC Party. That's what they told the members of the New Democratic Party. But you know what? That's not the same story the minister said here on Thursday. That's not the same story that's being told at the ROMA conference. They're being told, "Oh, this is just a proposed formula. We're still going to listen to you." You've already told the winners how much money they're going to save, and you've already told the losers how much they're going to have to raise taxes in rural Ontario to pay for their policing. So it's no surprise that you want the people who are standing up for rural Ontario not to be where they need to be, and that's telling people where it is and how you people are handling things.

The other issue is arbitration reform. There are a lot of municipal officials down at the Royal York right now who want to talk about arbitration reform. Our House leader, Jim Wilson, tabled a bill and worked with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. It wasn't perfect. There were some things that I think AMO wanted to change in committee. Again, it was defeated by the government and the New Democratic Party. It didn't see the light of day. Again, municipal officials are asking why that isn't moving forward.

It's no surprise that they're going to use every trick in the book to try to change the channel, to not debate a bill that they want passed, but to flip it over to supply to test the confidence of the Legislature. That's why they did it.

It's shameful. We've always had this co-operative agreement. We've always been able to have some co-operation when it came to this particular conference. Now the government has thrown that right out the window.

Right now, Speaker, I have to tell you that we heard loud and clear from our constituents over the last several months during the recess from the Legislature. There are nearly a million unemployed men and women in Ontario. That's why, in the fall, when we came back from our summer break, the Ontario PC Party made a decision. We decided to clear the decks. We supported some government legislation that we thought had general support amongst all three political parties. We made sure that those pieces of legislation were approved and guided through the House before we left in December in hopes that the government, that Premier Wynne and the Liberals, would table a jobs plan. We've been pleading this case for months and months and months: that the government table a jobs plan and have a plan to create good private sector jobs. The last thing that we need is a government that doesn't have job creation as a primary focus.

Here we are now, six months later. We don't see anything that resembles a jobs plan. We hear that the Liberals and the New Democrats want to raise taxes to businesses and middle-class families through corporate

tax hikes and also through increasing the gas tax by up to 10 cents a litre—which was a panel that the government engaged.

You know what, Speaker? There is one party that wants to talk about job creation, that wants to have job creation as number one in this Ontario Legislature, and that's the Ontario PC Party and our leader, Tim Hudak, the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook.

You know what? If you wanted to play a trick to have us all here and debating, it should be Thursday afternoon, when Mr. Hudak's million jobs plan is being debated here as a private member's bill. That's the bill we need to rally around. It has got a five-point plan that will lower hydro rates for Ontario families and businesses, that lowers taxes and reins in government spending. As we all know, our Ontario debt has doubled since the Liberals took office.

It promotes skilled trades and lowers the apprenticeship ratio—very, very important aspects, that we could make the change now, to be able to provide those good trades jobs. It also eliminates red tape that forces small and medium-sized business owners to spend time filling in paperwork rather than hiring more employees.

Unlike the Liberals and the NDP, the PCs are the only party with a plan. It's called the million jobs plan. It's going to be debated here Thursday afternoon. I really hope that all the parties that are involved will rally together, will put job creation at the forefront and quit the political games.

Again, Speaker, I want to just say how disappointed I am in the government, in the fact that we've always had a long-standing tradition, when it comes to municipalities, that we would provide members the opportunity to leave. To me, it just shows that this government is anti-rural Ontario and anti-municipal government.

Thank you very much, Speaker, for the opportunity to have a few minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: My colleague from Leeds—Grenville, I think, has pretty well laid it out here, that this is abhorrent, what they've done today.

I have a number of people down at Good Roads who were expecting all of our colleagues to be there, to be able to interact. This is something that everyone knows about. The calendar is blocked for months in advance. They've made time to travel—some of them, hundreds of miles—to be here, to be able to interact. And now our whole day changes because, on a whim, this government tries this type of trickery and bullying.

It's absolutely shameful, Speaker. It's a slight to rural Ontario. It's certainly a slight to the hard-working people in those municipalities that came here to be able to dialogue and find a way forward.

I hear every day of the week from people in our municipalities who are wondering where they're going to go. The OPP—this morning, I met with the minister at 7:45 down there, to talk about that with the municipality—they're going to go up \$1.5 million if this new

funding model goes in. It's pretty hard in a community where there are only 5,100 permanent residents.

These types of things—it starts to make you wonder that maybe they're taking a lot of flak down there. Maybe they're taking a lot of serious questions that they just don't know how to answer, because they don't truly have a plan out of the nightmare they've created over the last 10 years with the way they've spent and overspent and got us into the debt and deficit situation they have.

We need to be focusing in this House—there are nearly a million unemployed men and women in Ontario. We agreed many months ago to clear the decks. Last September, we agreed to clear the decks of all the other bills on the table so we could focus on a jobs plan to give people hope, to give them that opportunity that there's a better future, to ensure that our young people aren't leaving to head to the west, perhaps never returning to our great, great province. And yet, from Premier Wynne, there's no jobs plan.

We spend all this time talking in this House, and yet they do something like this that just basically shows disrespect for the whole process. It shows disrespect for the protocols that I believe we normally try to uphold. Our House leader, I know—I can tell by the look on his face how concerned he was about this abrupt change of plan that was sprung on us today. It truly is going to be a confidence—I think my colleague from Leeds—Grenville shared that with us, that this is a confidence motion. This is something that can't be taken lightly. Who knows what ramifications it could have?

What we need right now in Ontario is a jobs plan. We need to create jobs and attract businesses to this province, rather than the multitudes that this government is responsible for chasing out of our province and, with it, that hope for the future for our kids, those people sitting in front of you and serving us, this new crop of pages who are here day in and day out, serving us.

Our leader, the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook, Tim Hudak, has that plan. It is being debated this Thursday. Again, it starts to make me wonder: Are they trying to just change the focus as we lead up to that? Because this week, we should have been talking about it, we should have been openly debating—the third party, the government and us talking about a jobs plan.

1410

I'd be remiss not to say, Speaker, we're the only party on record with a plan. There's nothing from the NDP, other than platitudes; there's absolutely nothing other than same old, same old from the Liberals, and we know what that has done in the last 11 years: It has driven us to having one million men and women unemployed in this province.

We have a pretty simple five-point plan. It would lower the hydro rates for Ontario families and businesses. Everyone out there is screaming and hollering about hydro rates. The business owners—I met last week with Ice River Springs in my riding. They're facing a potential \$1.5-million increase in their operating, just as a result of hydro alone. How can they incorporate that into their business plan with no thought process, Speaker?

Families every day—the United Way is screaming out there. They're pleading and begging for mercy for the people they represent who can't afford to turn on the heat, to turn up the heat—in some cases, have no heat or they're choosing between food and/or heat. So that's a huge dilemma.

I bet you a buck right now down at Good Roads, or this morning, when those ministers were down there—I bet you they got an earful about that and the OPP issue that I was talking about earlier. We need to lower taxes and rein in the government overspending that has doubled Ontario's debt over the last 10 years.

I wonder how many people listening today or on this side of the House—the people who support them—understand that we spend \$10.3 billion on interest payments. What could that do for the less fortunate of our society? What could that do for our hospitals, our schools, those people with mental health challenges, those people who have not got housing that they need, affordable housing? There are multitudes of things, from the social services side of things, that we could be doing.

We need to increase trade with the provinces across Canada. We're in a global economy, but even in our own backyard we need to be opening up those trade agreements so we can easily transport goods across borders and ensure that we have jobs and viability going forward, and we need to eliminate the red tape. I hear it every day ad nauseam from small businesses, big business, that this government has done nothing but put more in there.

It's very interesting to me that we have lots of platitudes about this, and today what I had prepared for was to talk about the infrastructure, Bill 141. The minister talked a lot about what this infrastructure bill could do for community projects, such as the building of new hospitals, and what long-term infrastructure planning could do for the economy, such as the creation of 800 new jobs. But no such specific or practical measures are in this Bill 141.

If you look at infrastructure backlog in my riding—the great people of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, and particularly in the Markdale catchment area, raised \$12 million for a new hospital, and they're still waiting to this day to get approval. Just think of the jobs that one project alone would create in a small, rural community, not to mention the long-term benefits of health care that would be there and the jobs and long-term sustainability for that community. Frankly, this government—they have no plan, and that scares me.

Hospitals are just one of the problems; a fair share of the gas tax for rural transportation is another. My colleague John Yakabuski put this on the floor seven times, I believe it was, before he finally got it through. If that money would flow, we would be there.

That brings up—in this House, just before the recess, I introduced my private member's resolution to strike a committee for rural transportation in northern Ontario and rural transportation. I'd like to ask the government today where that is in their priority and what they've done with that, because everyone agreed to that and said, "This is a good idea. We need to do it."

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: They don't care, you're right, or it would already be in place. I've heard nothing from the government since the day I tabled it in this House with any idea that they will make that a priority.

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: Exactly. Good point, Mr. Yurek.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other things that I can talk about. The Warton airport, now owned by the townships of South Bruce Peninsula and Georgian Bluffs—it's a joint collaborative; it's a federal airport that has been there forever; it's a very viable and needed, necessary component of our infrastructure—needs a new runway and upgrades. Is this government committing to do that? That would create jobs. That would ensure again the economic viability. We hear nothing about that. The feds are prepared. The feds are at the table and prepared to do some of this, but we need the province to be there.

The Markdale Hospital, as I've already mentioned—\$12 million sitting in the bank doing nothing to help people. They're cancelling two hip surgeries in my riding. Last week I heard about it. These people were ready to go, and they cancelled because there's not enough money in the system. So where is that happening, Mr. Speaker?

Bridges alone in Bruce and Grey county—I believe there are 150-plus bridges that need to be replaced. Think of the work and employment that would create, if they would put just a little bit of a ripple out into rural Ontario.

Georgian College's marine education program: We have the opportunity right now—it's being divested by the federal government; it's currently in Port Stanley—to move that to Georgian College in Owen Sound. We have the best simulator in the country. We have the Great Lakes that we're surrounded by. We have the shipping industry. We have a niche market there that could ensure—but you know what's going to happen, Mr. Speaker? If this government doesn't get off their hands and actually help out with this—now, they have provided, in fairness, a little bit of one-time transition funding, but this infrastructure funding on a pretty small scale is probably the best bang for the buck they could get to ensure that there are long-term economic opportunities in our community, a thriving community, and ensure that those students have something to look forward to, not to mention promoting a sustainable industry such as shipping, which has had such a huge background in our community.

I just can't say again that it deplores me that this government would play these sneaky games, take us off topic and they're not coming out with anything credible on the jobs plan. A million people wake up every morning wondering, "What's going to happen to me? What's going to happen to my children?" We need to ensure that every day we're in this House we're looking at jobs. We need to be lowering taxes, lowering hydro rates and ensuring that this great province gets back on its feet.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate.

Mr. Toby Barrett: As we're now all aware, we're presently addressing the supply motion. We're not addressing Bill 141, the infrastructure legislation. Personally, I consider this a bit of a betrayal. I understand there was agreement probably made last week to follow a legislative calendar for the coming week. In my view, planning is very, very important. To spring something like this on this Legislature at the last minute is obviously a very clear indication of poor planning and lack of foresight, lack of any semblance of management or adequate administration. Maybe it falls into the category of jiggery-pokery. I've seen enough of that over the past 18 years in this Legislature. If this is an example of wedging or jiggery-pokery, if there's something beyond just merely incompetence, I really find that disgusting.

With respect to the supply motion and the allocation of money—and I recognize it focuses on the allocation of tax money to pay civil servant salaries; not only salaries but the broader compensation package. It does raise the question in this Legislature, given that half the Ontario budget goes towards public sector compensation, how much of this kind of allocation is subtracted from so many other valuable projects, construction projects, operating budgets in our hospitals, our infrastructure for hydro transmission and power generation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'm sorry. I have an obligation to point out to the member that the word "jiggery-pokery" is unparliamentary, and ask him to withdraw that word, "jiggery-pokery."

Mr. Toby Barrett: I do withdraw the expression "jiggery-pokery." Maybe someone can give me a synonym for that word.

At any rate, we're talking about the allocation of money, the allocation of scarce resources. I won't dwell on the process that we're involved in right now, but I do ask all present to consider also the bigger picture. Of course, public sector salaries, and pensions, and perks, and holiday time and early retirement—this is all very important. But let's think about some of the other things that our tax dollars are allocated towards. Just imagine our country without the pipeline network that we have for oil and natural gas. Imagine our country without CN Rail lines, the CP lines or the Trans-Canada Highway.

At the time and over the years—many of these projects go back 100 years—much of that money went back to the actual construction, not so much to the human resources or the paying of the salary itself. Unfortunately, over the past few years, wasteful spending has held so many of these good projects at ransom. Essentially, the projects are dependent on borrowed money. We know that the deficit this year is coming in at something close to \$11 billion. We don't know yet. So when you're looking at a deficit of \$11 billion on \$125 billion in overall spending, it just begs the question: Are we doing a good enough job at allocating these scarce tax resources?

1420

As we debate what I consider a last-minute supply motion, we should all keep in mind the fiscal projections from this government's own hand-picked economist, Don

Drummond. He has given us a road map. His projection is now that four years down the road we will be staring down the barrel of a \$30.2-billion deficit. Four years from now—and this is based on his economic projections and fiscal projections for this present government, I do wish to point out—we will be looking at a debt of \$411.4 billion. So let's keep this debate on allocating money to civil servants in context as we talk about this government's budget and supply decisions.

The decisions we're discussing today—there is merit in investment, obviously, when you've got well over \$100 billion or \$125 billion coming in every year, to boost the economy and build our communities, whether they're in the city or in the country, and generate jobs. We have to look at these kinds of decisions and really follow a matrix or certain principles.

First of all, are we getting adequate and long-term return on our investment in Ontario's civil servants? Is this investment in salaries, wages, pensions and perks stimulating productivity and economic competitiveness? It obviously maintains public sector jobs. Is it creating private sector jobs? Does it maximize tax assessment value? Does it grow our tax base, this spending of money on civil servant pensions?

Our present debt is something in the order of \$278 billion. As I mentioned, we're probably adding another \$11 billion this year on top of that, and we're heading down the road to \$411.4 billion. When you're dealing with that kind of ever-growing debt, what kind of reputation do you have in the rest of the country? What kind of reputation do you have in the rest of the world? Have we acquired a reputation, say specifically in the investment community and the business community? It begs the question of people who are in the business of producing goods and services. The question is: Why come to Ontario—or why stay in Ontario, for that matter—with such poor finances and with such a less-than-adequate fiscal reputation with respect to Ontario government spending?

When you're spending too much, it can only smother the long-term integrity of this province's fiscal health, its infrastructure and its potential for the additional creation of jobs. Ontario spends something like \$12 billion a year on capital projects. That's close to what we spend every year in interest on the debt. That doesn't even hold a candle to what we are spending, as we will be finding out through the supply motion, on wages and salaries and public sector compensation.

When we talk about the allocation of money, we're all certainly aware of the multi-millions of dollars of wasteful spending that takes place, again, because of poor planning. I used the example today of poor planning by springing this motion at the last minute. Obviously, there must be some kind of good reason that somebody didn't know about why this motion should be debated this afternoon.

Wasteful spending occurs because of a lack of oversight, and we only need to reflect back on the Ornge air ambulance scandal to see the price you pay for a lack of

oversight, certainly a lack of transparency and a lack of control. Control is another major function of management, as is planning; again, anybody who's in the business of government administration should be aware of that.

I feel that this government, during our debate—I see the Liberal members so far haven't been standing up to debate their own motion—should be explaining why it cannot reprioritize a part of this money. I use the example of \$12 billion for projects, building hospitals, schools and long-term-care facilities—building bridges and what have you. We're focusing on the government human resources that work in those hospitals, schools and long-term-care facilities. We also have to bear in mind maintenance, improvement to the infrastructure—new build when appropriate.

Again, I wish to wrap it up there, Speaker. I'm certainly aware that the speaker following me is anxious to contribute to this debate. I appreciate the 10 minutes of time on the supply motion debate. It's regrettable that we can't be doing the normal business of the House this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I want to commend our initial speaker, Mr.—

Mr. Steve Clark: Clark.

Mr. John O'Toole: —Clark. The reason is that he made the point very clearly that—he is our former critic for municipal affairs, and he made very clear the unfair tactic being used today.

The viewers today should know that there was a bill—I believe it was 141—that was supposed to be debated, and members came prepared to speak on Bill 141, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. That's a shame. It's a misuse of members' time here.

But Mr. Clark from Leeds–Grenville, I think, would have been much more comfortable this afternoon working with his municipal leaders to listen to their concerns and represent them effectively and fairly. I know how passionate he is, as our former critic in that area and a former mayor as well. I'll only say this, too: All the members on all sides are being shortchanged today because of the tactic used by the government.

One must ask for the motive. First of all, you should look at why they would do that. They don't want us to have the chance to tell them, as Mr. Clark said, about the downloading of responsibilities for policing and infrastructure issues, as well as the jobs and economy issues that we're all faced with in our ridings, specifically in rural Ontario.

They don't want us to tell the story that the municipal leaders will want us to hear, about the plight of the economy itself. I've heard it myself in my riding. It includes Uxbridge, which is a smaller community of under 20,000 people, as well as Clarington, which is a larger community of about 80,000 people made up of a number of municipalities, as well as Scugog and Port Perry—just under 20,000 people as well. I know that the

leaders there have the same issues as the other members are hearing, but are they telling the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Health about the issues within their riding? We should be at those conventions, listening to the locally elected, front-line political people, duly elected people representing their constituents. That's a shame for the people of Ontario, to know that there's been a tradition—as Mr. Clark said as well in his opening remarks—of this day being set aside so members, especially from rural Ontario, could attend the ROMA/Good Roads convention. I myself am intending to go down after the normal debate for this afternoon at 6 o'clock, to be down there to meet with my constituents and municipal leaders.

I think the issues that we're hearing are high hydro rates—we saw today a demonstration that the minister almost chuckled at, in disrespect for the demonstration that was here at noon from the women who are concerned about the health of their children. It was called, I believe, women against wind energy. That demonstration is an effective way for politics to be brought into our Legislature by constituents who are living with their concerns. That issue, I believe, is another case where we should be listening to our constituents more effectively.

1430

Energy: Over the last few months, both the price of propane and the price of fuel oil have skyrocketed, much under the watch of this government, without tipping any of them off to get ahead and look at supply—and also the high hydro rates, and then the Ontario Hydro One billing screw-ups. It's tragic how they've been fighting with constituents who normally pay their bill—they didn't get the bill, so they didn't pay it, obviously—and then sending them one that's triple the amount that they're expecting to pay, and then blaming them, charging them, what they call having an account set up in case they don't pay their bill. I forget what that's called.

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: A reserve fee being put in so that they can protect—this is the way this government has gone.

I'm surprised—over the next few months, we've got this concurrence in supply motion here today and the estimates motion that are being debated, and I say to you this: These are just tactics that are being used. There's a convention here that these bills will be paid and have to be paid; they are on the order paper and will be paid. Yes, there's a debate set aside; it's 40 minutes. More surprisingly, though, not one Liberal member has stood up. I'm not supposed to say this, but there are very few of them here. I didn't name—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I have to ask the member to withdraw.

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: Well, there's only five here, though.

I withdraw.

I think that if the people of Ontario only knew—I wonder if I could ask the people on the camera to shine

the camera over there. The camera will tell the truth of what's going on here.

Now, where are they? They're down there feeding them the lines—I say “spinning the lines” down there: “Trust me, it will be okay.” I think it's shameful, the last while.

If you look at just one of the recent—I'm going to finish off with this. This is fairly simple—an article from the paper. It's not some crib notes. I'll just read it. If you listen, this will be a good editorial on—here it is here:

“The Year of Wynne Low-Lights List.” It's from the Toronto paper on February 12—just recently—2014. I'll read it here, with your indulgence:

“(1) Running for cover:

“Whether it was the \$1.1-billion gas plant fiasco, the Pan Am Games expense scandal or the child porn charges against her close confidante on the education file, Ben Levin, the Premier has proven adept at trying to sweep her ties and her involvement with anything the least bit contentious under the rug.” I'm reading this. This isn't something I'm making up. I'll send a copy to the members on the other side—the five or six of them.

“(2) Buying votes:

“A Scarborough subway for \$1.4-billion to ensure Mitzie Hunter wins a summer by-election?”—what a tragedy. It's like buying an election. I'll continue here—“Done. Re-opening teacher contracts at a possible cost of \$500 million to buy labour peace and shore up teacher union support?”—I'm reading this; I'm not saying one way or another—“Done. Another \$100 million in goodies for the Niagara Falls area to garner support in the Feb. 13 by-election? ... There's no group this Premier won't buy to stay in power.

“(3) Debt denial:

“Proving she's a tax and spendaholic at heart, Wynne recently admitted she's prepared to abandon her party's short-lived austerity agenda by spending her way out of Ontario's deficit-ridden troubles (meaning right down the road to Greece).” Remember, I'm reading this. It's not something I wrote. It's such a statement about the kind of government you have—

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: Hang on here. You brought this up today to give me this chance to say it; now listen to it:

“(4) Cutting on the backs of seniors”—I'm one of them, and I'm starting to feel the pain. So is Phil McNeely here.

“They call it transforming the health care system. But what Wynne, and her BFF”—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order, member from Mississauga-Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: My colleague from Durham has repeatedly flouted the House's accepted practice of referring to members by either their office or by their riding, and I would appreciate the Chair reminding him that he is not to use the name of a member.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would remind all members of the House that it is our convention and our preferred approach that when you're referring to

another member of the House, you talk about their ministry responsibility or their riding and not use their name.

The member for Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole: The member from Ottawa-Orléans is a good friend of mine. I have some time for him. He's an engineer.

“(4) Cutting on the backs of seniors:

“They call it transforming the health care system. But what Wynne, and her BFF Deb Matthews”—

Interjection: BFF.

Mr. John O'Toole: Her best friend. Anyway, that's a BlackBerry code language. I'm not making this up.

This is what has happened under her watch, the follow-up for McGuinty—“much-needed services for vulnerable seniors like OHIP-funded diabetes strips and physiotherapy. Home care”—and for stroke victims—“is still a mess.”

I couldn't have written it any better, and I'm going to send a personal thank you to the author of this article for the time that they spent on it. It wouldn't take much time, because everything they do now is trying to buy an election.

This bill today—I expect that we would approve of a proper debate on issues as important as concurrence in supply and estimates. This isn't happening, because they are not participating in the debate, and they use it as a treacherous way to make sure that we can't attend the ROMA/Good Roads convention. It's a tragedy in Ontario today, what's happening.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I wanted to listen to the debate from my friends from the Conservative Party before getting up, because I would be the only speaker in this particular debate and I didn't want to use the full 40 minutes.

Let me just say a couple of things at the top of this debate. I agree with them on the one part, and I disagree with them on the other. I think they're right, in the sense that we had met at House leaders' last week. We had set the agenda last week, on Thursday. We had set the agenda so that this House sits Monday through Thursday and we would know what the order of the business of the House is.

All of us know, and I think the point is well made, that all of our municipal representatives are here from across Ontario, meeting at OGRA as we speak today. I had meetings that I was scheduled into, and now I have to be here because of this procedural motion that's before us in regard to interim supply and concurrence. As a result, all of these municipal people that we were supposed to meet with are essentially left high and dry because we have to be here because the government decided to change the order of business in this House for this week.

I think that's not a good thing to do, on all kinds of fronts, but I would agree with my friends from the Conservative caucus in this sense: Did the government really want to do that as a way of being able to stop members from the opposition from being at OGRA? Because they

are in a position where a lot of these municipalities are mad at them for all kinds of issues having to do with some of the downloading that has happened and some of the issues that are currently facing our communities, from energy policies to what's happening with hydro prices etc., was it part of the government's strategy to try to keep opposition members away from OGRA? Now, I hope that's not the case, because we know that OGRA is going to be meeting again tomorrow, and we hope that the government is not going to try to do something else tomorrow that would put us all in the position of having to be back here again, in order not to meet with those municipalities.

But I've got to say that when I got the news from my honourable colleague the honourable House leader for the Liberal government—as I told him, I said I was disappointed. I thought we were pretty clear, as a caucus. We had said that we would support interim supply, that we would support concurrence in supply, because without that, this would be like American politics. It would be like the Tea Party doing what they did in the United States: deciding to roll the dice and to play around and play political games so that in the end, you would have no authority to be able to spend money this year or next year. That has nothing to do with this; this is a routine motion that this House deals with all the time. The responsible thing to do is to allow the motion to go forward, because at the end, if the government in this House does not pass the interim supply motion, there's no mechanism to spend money into the next year. Once this House—

Mr. Norm Miller: Good.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: See, this is the problem. The Conservative member says, "Good," but here's the problem that we're faced: If, in fact, we were to vote it down, the LG, the Lieutenant Governor, would be in a very hard place to undo the will of the House. Then what? No money to pay for hospitals; no money to pay for air ambulances; no money to pay for our schools; no monies to pay for Elections Ontario to run an election, because they would not have the authority to spend money.

You know, the Conservatives are really good at playing games here and saying, "We're the big defenders of whoever, and we're going to just do everything we can to bring the government down," including putting this government—not this government, this province—into chaos in the same way that the Tea Party in the United States did when it came to what the Republican Tea Party was doing with the budget process in the United States.

1440

I agree with you. There's a time and a place for elections. It will be the people who will have the final say about who the next government is, but while we're here, we need to exercise our responsibilities in this Legislature in a way that's responsible.

Let's be clear: This is an interim supply motion to give the authority for the spending of money from April 1 until the end of September. If this motion fails—you're right; it's a matter of confidence—the government would

fall, but you'd be trying to fight an election without any ability for the government to pay its bills. So while we'd be out there knocking on doors, Elections Ontario couldn't set up a voting mechanism because they couldn't spend money. The hospitals wouldn't be able to operate. Our air ambulance system would be grounded, and what kind of election would that be? The people would be looking at us and saying, "Who are you, you bunch of boobs?" At the end of the day, we have a responsibility to do what has to be done so that people are able to get the services they want.

Let's be really clear what we're voting on here today. It's an interim supply motion to allow the expenditures to go out from April 1 till six months later so that the province is able to run the administration of government as we go into an election, should there be an election this spring. For the official opposition to take the position, "We're voting against, and you guys should vote against, too. This is the only way to do it. We're opposed to the Liberals, and we're going to show we're true to our word"—what you're really showing is that you're pretty darned irresponsible. You lack leadership as a party and you lack leadership when it comes to understanding what your responsibility is in this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear. New Democrats will vote in support of the interim supply motion because it is a procedural issue, number one; and number two, it is the responsible thing to do because if we don't, the province of Ontario's services will stop as of April 1. There will be no mechanism to get those monies back because the LG would not undo what the decision of this Legislature is, and it would put this province into chaos.

Mr. Speaker, there are times for elections and there are times for elections, but I think we need to take our responsibility correctly here in this Legislature and pass this interim supply motion, a motion that we've always passed normally by voice vote because everybody has understood this is strictly a procedural motion that is normally passed by a voice vote. But in this case, the Tea Party of Ontario—or, should I say, the American Tea Party that's working here in Ontario—wants to make a statement, and if that's what they're doing, I don't want any part of it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Milloy has moved government notice of motion number 42. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

I wish to inform the House that I have received a deferral notice from the Ontario PC caucus deputy whip. As such, this vote will be deferred until tomorrow during the time of deferred votes.

Vote deferred.

CONCURRENCE IN SUPPLY

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I recognize the government House leader again.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I move concurrence in supply for the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport; the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; the Ministry of Transportation; the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs; the Ministry of Energy; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Infrastructure; the Ministry of Children and Youth Services; the Office of Francophone Affairs; and the Ministry of Consumer Services.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Milloy has moved government orders 11 through 21 inclusive.

I again recognize the government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: My remarks today on this series of motions will be as brief as those in the previous motion about supply. Although these are extremely important matters before the Legislature, and the votes themselves are very important, they do have a routine or administrative aspect to them.

Mr. Speaker, I'll begin by giving members and those watching on TV some background on what concurrence in estimates is. Concurrence represents the Legislature's approval of estimates for a fiscal year. In this case, we are discussing the 2013-14 fiscal year. Concurrence is required for all ministries and offices that have been selected for review by the Standing Committee on Estimates. Estimates of ministries and offices not selected by the committee are deemed concurred in by the Legislature. In this case, the committee selected 11 ministries and offices for review, and you've heard both the Clerk and myself, as I moved it, outline what those 11 are. We had a motion earlier that we can deal with them all together in the course of this debate.

In November 2013, the committee reported on its review of selected estimates to the Legislative Assembly. The assembly's concurrence in estimates which we are speaking about today represents the approval of these selected ministries and offices estimates.

The Supply Act would be introduced following orders in concurrence and estimates and, if passed, would represent the final statutory authority for spending by the government in this assembly. So today's discussion and vote are important steps in approving government spending for this fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, I'll now take a moment to remind members where we are in the fiscal cycle. Our estimates volume 1 was tabled in May 2013. The estimates set out a comprehensive account of the government's intended expenditures for the fiscal year and include details of the spending plans that were presented in our 2013 budget. As we near the end of this fiscal year, we will soon be introducing the Supply Act, should concurrence in estimates be reached. So today's concurrence in the estimates discussion is required to move towards finalizing the review of estimates that has taken place.

Although a very important matter before the Legislature—obviously, this is concurring in the operations of

these ministries of government and allowing them to pay the bills—this is a routine matter, an administrative matter which the Legislature is called upon to deal with from time to time.

As in the debate before, I'm merely going to refresh members on what we're dealing with today. We look forward to the debate and discussion.

As I say, from the perspective of the government side of the House, this is a routine administrative matter, and I think my remarks will serve as our statement on the record and, obviously, our support for this important mechanism to allow us to govern.

With that, I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and look forward to other debate and discussion from the opposition.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate.

Mr. Rod Jackson: It's always a pleasure to stand up and speak in this House, but unfortunately, speaking to this is somewhat alarming to me. The House leader mentioned that this is an extremely important but routine matter. I don't think there's anything routine enough that we should not consider it important enough to have wholesome debate about.

I'm not sure what about this debate the government is afraid about having—that they're not willing to have a full debate with everybody in the House. We know full well that the tradition of this House is that when a certain convention is on, members are more free to attend it and nothing important or that is of a critical nature will generally happen in the House, especially by surprise, Speaker. The fact that this bill has been brought forward at a late date, today, by surprise and by this government shows that, again, there's something to hide; there's some sort of transparency issue that this government has. Although they call themselves open and accountable, I find it very alarming. Notwithstanding that, Speaker, I find it cheap; I find it cheap politicking.

1450

It's taken a lot of us away from business that we had planned for today that was quite important. I just walked away from a Family Service Ontario meeting, where I was actually getting some excellent information to do with my critic portfolio, that I had to cut short, half short, so I could to make sure I was down here to help support some of my colleagues who have to be somewhere else to support their municipalities in their ridings, at another location.

I'm lucky. I'm glad that I had the opportunity to be here and to be able to speak to it on their behalf, but I think it really shows a distaste, a disdain, that this government has for rural Ontario, to be able to actually put in place this bill and force some members to be here when they have important business to do somewhere else—and they know it; the members opposite in government know this. That is cheap politicking.

You know what? Frankly, it's pathetic, and it reeks of a government and a Premier that is clinging to power every single minute they possibly can. No new leader in a credible democracy works this way. No credible leader,

no leader of a government, behaves like this, and it is very alarming that we are being manipulated like this.

Here's the other thing, Speaker: Part of the reason that this supply motion even has to exist is because several weeks ago—a couple of weeks ago, anyway—the finance minister wrote to the Clerk of the Legislature to confirm that he would not be tabling the third-quarter Ontario finances by February 15, which is a deadline that's required by the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act. So, to be clear, the Minister of Finance wrote a letter to the Clerk stating that he would not be abiding by the government's own act. What does that say, when the government isn't willing to play by the rules? It isn't willing to play by tradition or parliamentary tradition that allows government to act and behave smoothly, and give the opposition ample time for preparation and for debate. Instead, the government wrote that he would instead be tendering those numbers along with the budget, in the 2014 budget.

We're in a place, in a stage in this government, where we're just full of scandal. It happens over and over again. I don't even know where to start. You can go back as far as eHealth, Speaker. We can go back as far as Ornge and the gas plants and the Pan Am Games—ongoing. We still don't have all the questions answered about that. I'm sure we'll be hearing a lot more about that in the coming days. Really, it is troubling that we're not having the opportunity to be able to debate these things with the people in the House, I think, who would like to be here for this. It's troubling. Just the whole procedure of it is troubling.

I also think it's kind of rich for the socialist party—sorry, I mean the NDP party of Ontario—to accuse us, the PC Party of Ontario, of playing games when it's the government that is full-on playing a game with the timetable of this House and taking full advantage of a situation that's happening outside of here for their own political gain. It is cheap politics at best, and I think it's something that they should be ashamed of.

It's funny; I noticed the House leader for the NDP giving us a lecture on what responsibility in the House is. You know what? Our responsibility in this House is to hold this government accountable for its actions. It's something that this party hasn't got a clue about over the past two years, having propped them up time and time again, and making deals with them they have even renege on. They haven't even lived up to your deals. I mean, it's sad. You keep getting taken over and over again. Stop being so naive over there. Call it what it is. If you're afraid of an election—you say you are over and over again; we understand that. But it's time to pay the piper.

If this government is going to do anything—it's clear they're going to say and do anything they possibly can to stay in power every inch of the way. It's sadly evident that the socialist—I'm sorry, the NDP party of Ontario—is going to do whatever they can to prop them up. Frankly, you've never had more power, not since the 1990s, when you blew it.

This is a time Ontario doesn't need politics. Ontario needs leadership. It needs a government that's willing to

take the bull by the horns and lead from the front. We haven't seen any of this from this government, and today is a blazing example of a government that knows nothing about leading from the front. We haven't seen any new, bold ideas. We've seen lots of shiny legislation with pretty names that does nothing for the people of Ontario—except for trick them into believing that they're actually getting something done, in many cases, which is shameful. Now they're trying to trick the people of Ontario and even this Legislature into thinking that a supply motion is unimportant, and that it's a routine proceeding.

The government House leader talked about giving a background. Let me give you context. The context in which we are debating this today is that we had fully intended to debate an infrastructure bill this afternoon. Everyone in this House, I would hope, came prepared to be able to do that. They're unable to do that now because the government, at the last minute—as they have the right to do—changed the schedule. Therefore, many of us have to switch gears quickly and start debating things that, although broad, don't give us any time to prepare for.

That tells me one of two things: Either you don't respect the work that's done in this House, or you're scared of something. You don't want something to happen, so you're trying to manipulate a situation, maybe to keep some of our members from going to the ROMA conference so that they can talk to their constituents about issues that are very serious to them—

Mr. Bill Walker: Like infrastructure.

Mr. Rod Jackson: —like infrastructure, like policing, and any number of—

Mr. Bill Walker: Hydro rates.

Mr. Rod Jackson: Hydro rates is a great one, as the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound mentioned. Let's talk about hydro rates for a second. I was just back in my home riding over the weekend, and there's not one person—I went into a pizza store just last night, actually, and the first thing he said to me was, “What are you guys going to do about hydro rates?” It's killing his business; it's absolutely killing it.

Interjection: Tell us about your plan.

Mr. Rod Jackson: Here, let me tell you what the plan is.

Interjection.

Mr. Rod Jackson: Yes, you know what? We need to cut the subsidies to the Green Energy Act, just like you guys have put in there, and you know what? You got nothing for it. There's absolutely no more energy being produced by green energy now than there was when you instituted that plan. There are more businesses paying more for your energy than ever before, and it's chasing them out. You can't say it's not, and if you do, you're not telling—

Mr. Bill Walker: Telling an untruth?

Mr. Rod Jackson: —telling the total truth.

Businesses are leaving. We've got many examples of it. We got an example in Barrie, just recently, where

there's a manufacturer that's been there for almost 20 years supplying car parts for Honda. They're gone. One of the biggest manufacturers in Barrie is gone, and do you know why they're gone? Because they can't afford their hydro. They can't afford hydro, and they're having infrastructure problems with getting their trucks in and out of there, so they're moving somewhere else. They're gone. That's hundreds and hundreds of jobs gone, and it's because of the ineptitude of this government to actually grab the bull by the horns, do the right thing and stop chasing businesses out of Ontario that are actually growing.

We know that a massive percentage of people—I think it's 75% of all the people who are employed in Ontario—are employed by businesses with four or less employees. That tells me that big business is small business. We know that those businesses, when they start up—and have the ability to be started up, are young and are healthy—have the ability to grow to be 10, 20 or 120 people strong, three, four, five or 10 years later. That's what we need to be doing: actually creating that environment that they can thrive, grow and be the businesses of tomorrow in.

This government doesn't seem to be interested at all in doing that. They talk about it a lot—and that's fine, because it makes us realize that they actually understand the problem, which is the first step out of denial. But the second step is to actually do something about it. You can't talk about it; you have to do something about it.

This isn't getting it done. This is a delay tactic. This is delaying putting the budget together. This is delaying actually getting work done at ROMA. This is delaying and actually obfuscating this House's business, doing what we ought to be doing. I think it's shameful, Speaker.

It's time this government actually stood up, did the right thing, stopped wasting Ontario taxpayers' time and made sure that we're all—from all sides in this House—doing the right thing, which is representing the people of Ontario, making sure that we get them back to work and making sure that we're creating an environment that we create jobs in. That's not being done here today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? I'm pleased to recognize the member for Nipissing.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, Speaker. This should be good.

This morning, 600,000 men and women in Ontario woke up without a job. Heinz, Kellogg's, Caterpillar: These are all companies that recently announced they're shutting Ontario operations and heading for greener pastures. They're still making ketchup, they're still making cereal and they're still making earth-moving equipment; they're just not making them here in Ontario.

With Ontario boasting the highest energy prices in North America, the highest payroll taxes in Canada, 86 consecutive months with unemployment higher than the national average and a government about to raise the gas tax and raise corporate taxes, is it any wonder why companies are abandoning Ontario in record numbers?

1500

In addition, other companies are bypassing Ontario as they search for a place to set up shop. Whatever happened to this once-powerful province of Ontario, the envy of Confederation? In fact, Ontario, once the engine of Confederation, has, under this Liberal government, become a have-not province, relying on equalization payments from the federal government. We had a low debt-to-GDP. We had low unemployment, cheap hydro and less red tape, but look what's happened over the last decade: expensive energy, high taxes, crushing red tape—the perfect storm to kill jobs in Ontario.

Families open their hydro bills to find they're now paying the highest electricity prices in North America. Businesses that set up shop in Ontario for our cheap hydro are leaving in record numbers. Hydro rates have tripled in 10 years, and the government has told us they will increase a further 50% over the next few years. Corporate taxes, which were scheduled to fall from 11.5% to 10% in the 2012 budget, were left at that level as part of the Liberals' deal with the NDP to win their support. Now, as part of the Big Move to fund transit in Toronto and Hamilton, in addition to taxing families a further 10 cents a litre for gasoline, the government is planning on raising business taxes to 12%. As a result, Ontario businesses will be paying the highest corporate taxes amongst the large provinces in Canada. In addition, Ontario employers and employees pay the highest payroll taxes in Canada. When you add the newly created WSIB tax and the College of Trades tax, neither of which offer any value to any businessperson, a clear tax-and-spend picture forms.

Recently, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business held a Red Tape Awareness Week and disclosed that burdensome red tape costs Canadian families a whopping \$11 billion annually. That's money that can't be reinvested in their business as it is used for non-value-added activity.

Let's look at these three things: high energy, high taxes and burdensome red tape. We'll start with energy. In 2011, after serving my first three months as PC energy critic, it was apparent that while energy rates had doubled, they were about to skyrocket. The Auditor General had just presented his scathing report on the Green Energy Act, but sadly, two and a half years later, the Liberals still show no sign of changing course, which is why energy rates have tripled under this government and are about to go 50% higher. What we saw was a government with a social engineering plan in mind called the Green Energy Act. When this disaster started, Ontario produced 25% of all of our energy from green energy: water power, the cleanest, greenest, most reliable, most affordable form of renewable energy. Now, several years later and many billions of dollars later, Ontario still produces 25% of all of our green energy, 22% now from water and 3% from wind. It has not changed from 25% green energy in Ontario, despite the billions. There's nothing green about the Green Energy Act.

Now that a few more facts have come to surface, the message has expanded to include more details on the

global adjustment charge. The Auditor General pointed out that wind generators operate at 28% capacity and wind mostly blows at night when we don't need the power, so we've been paying Quebec and paying the United States to take that surplus power. In fact, almost \$2 billion—that's from the Auditor General—so far has been spent paying American and Quebec hydro utilities to take our power, with it averaging out at about \$500 million a year now. When the wind blows during the day and power is produced, the government was contracted to take that power, but not knowing whether wind would generate power that day, they would have already contracted for all the power we need, so they spill water over Niagara Falls onto idle generators and pay about \$300 million annually not to produce that water power. And when that reaction is maxed out, they turn to our nuclear plants and redirect the steam away from the generators and vent it outside. That little exercise, which we did five different days last year, cost the ratepayers \$80 million. We've got \$500 million in payments to Quebec and the States, \$300 million to spill water over Niagara Falls and \$80 million to vent our steam.

This is all what we call the law of unintended consequences. So when you hear wind proponents saying, "My gosh, wind is only 3% of our total power. It can't have accounted for our rates tripling," they are not taking the law of unintended consequences into that. That \$500-million payment, that \$300-million payment and that \$80-million payment which they don't take into account only happen because we're generating power from wind.

While other jurisdictions are realizing what a disaster this has been, Ontario is doubling down. Back in the time it was announced, when the Auditor General wrote his scathing report, we were producing 1,700 megawatts of wind, with the target to be 10,700 megawatts—six times bigger a problem. But because of so much community pushback on these installations, whether for health concerns, property values, environmental reasons and a whole host of community activism, there's been a partial retreat, and the target has been lowered to 6,500 megawatts. However, there's no comfort in knowing that our electricity problem in Ontario is only going to be four times bigger a catastrophe instead of six times bigger.

While the government claimed the Green Energy Act would create 50,000 jobs, the auditor stated the FIT program loses two to four manufacturing jobs for every so-called green job. I've used this example many times. Xstrata Copper, back in 2011, should have been a siren call to the government. In fact, Xstrata Copper, as you know, terminated 672 men and women in Timmins and crossed the border into Quebec—115 kilometres over—for cheap power. If you remember, we pay the States and we pay Quebec every night to take our power. Quebec lured a company out of Ontario with that many employees into Quebec for cheap power.

But there are also companies that simply will not locate in Ontario because of our hydro rates. The Montreal Gazette revealed that Innovation Metals, a Toronto-based firm, announced plans to set up the

world's first independent, centralized rare earth ore separation plant in Bécancour, Quebec. The company chose the location over several potential sites in Ontario, citing Quebec's low industrial power rate as a major factor. Remember, it's power we paid them to take from us that they're now selling to lure our companies. It's estimated the rare earth metals refinery will require an investment of more than \$200 million and the creation of about 300 new jobs.

This weekend, Professor Ian Lee of Ottawa's Sprott School of Business summarized the Ontario energy situation in a recent Toronto Sun article: "Over the last eight years, the government of Ontario has squandered an energy-competitive advantage that both parties supported from 1909, when Adam Beck created Ontario Hydro," Sprott said.

"For the past century, Ontario has enjoyed an energy advantage that keeps the province competitive with northeastern US states, such as New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Ohio," he said.

"Failed Liberal policies mean we've lost that competitive edge.

"The government squandered it to drive up energy prices by subsidizing people at 10 times above the market price ... to produce a surplus of electricity—that we didn't need in the first place—which we then sold at a loss to the Americans to exacerbate the competitive advantage we have handed them by squandering our cost advantage on energy."

He summed up what it took me two pages to say, Speaker. That's what happened to our energy. That's why we've had triple hydro rates. That's why we have rates which are about to go up another 50%.

Speaker, I will turn my attention to the high taxes in Ontario now. Our partners across the hall here, the Liberals, love to tax and spend all of Ontarians. They believe it is best to add a health tax, a new gas tax or the HST. Speaker, that HST was supposed to add 600,000 jobs, if you remember the sales pitch. They believe they are best positioned to spend your money on things like wind energy, Ornge and cancelling gas plants. Sadly, they continue to spend more than they take in, so they have borrowed annually and grown our debt. The increased taxes and debt load have burdened the economy to the point where we have lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs in the last decade and have seen 86 consecutive months with unemployment higher than the national average.

1510

There are a number of other factors at play. We just talked about how we got the highest energy prices in North America. Our corporate taxes were scheduled to fall from 11.5% to 10% in the 2012 budget; as I said, as part of the Liberals' deal with the NDP, they left them at that high level. Now as part of the Big Move to fund Toronto transit, in addition to the gas tax, the government is planning on raising business taxes a further 0.5%, to 12%. This will put us with the highest business taxes in all of the large provinces in Canada. But with the Liberal

spending in place, it's still not enough for them. The government forecasts a growing deficit this year of \$11.7 billion, and our debt-to-GDP is scheduled to hit 40% in two years.

There are a few other new taxes that I'd like to address here. In the beginning of 2013, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board required independent contractors and operators to pay WSIB coverage, even though most already have cheaper and better insurance. Mandatory coverage for the construction system is tantamount to a tax on small business, independent tradespeople and contractors. This is cutting into the earnings of small businesses and contractors who would be reinvesting that money. For some now, it will be the straw that breaks their financial back. This legislation forces independent operators, sole proprietors, partners in a partnership and executive officers of corporations in the construction industry to now pay WSIB premiums. This is a tax on hard-working Ontarians designed to cover up the Liberal government's mess, a \$14-billion unfunded liability at the WSIB.

I held a news conference in my constituency office where local woodworker Steve Ciglen, painter Brent Tremblay and general contractor John Best were on hand. They all said they have long held private insurance that offers more extensive coverage and has nothing to gain from handing over a portion of their earnings to the WSIB. "This is a form of legal extortion," said Tremblay, describing the bill as "ugly" and "oppressive." He said the legislation, which requires him to pay premiums of between 7% and 8% on his own income, couldn't have come at a worse economic time. Tremblay said additional costs for business will translate into higher prices for customers. Best said most independent operators like himself, who already have insurance, aren't likely to make a WSIB claim against their own business. The three local tradespeople also agreed that most independent operators will likely hang onto their existing insurance, despite Bill 119, making the legislation that much more expensive.

Speaker, there's a further new tax aimed at tradespeople. Despite its name, the College of Trades is not a school to train skilled workers. Rather, it's a Liberal-created oversight body that has imposed a trades tax through a mandatory membership fee. Its intention is to regulate a wide range of tradespeople from hairdressers to construction workers to electricians and charge them a hefty annual registration fee. Created by provincial legislation in 2009, the College of Trades, which was up and running in 2013, is a regulatory body to oversee trades, but we call it simply another layer of bureaucracy that's going to cost tradespeople between \$100 and \$200 annually and employers between \$600 and \$700 each year. There's a barber in my riding who wrote to me that he was intimidated by one of the inspectors who demanded he stop cutting his customer's hair until he was finished talking. He pulled up in one of those shiny new College of Trades cars, wearing his College of Trades uniform, and was there for one purpose and one purpose

only: to collect the \$120 dues so they could afford to fund this new body and collect more dues from the next barber, the next hairdresser and the next hard-working Ontarian. It serves no other purpose. Collect money, and use it to hire more people to collect more money.

If you really want to shake investor confidence, you can do what this Liberal government did to raise taxes in 2007. This was a very sad story that we haven't talked about in this Legislature. The Liberal government made a very sudden change to the tax structure for diamond mines very close to the start of production at the Victor Mine in Ontario's Far North.

The Victor Mine is Ontario's first and only diamond mine, and, after this government pulled this stunt, quite likely it will be our last diamond mine. The government proposed to introduce a diamond royalty system under the Mining Act. At the time of the budget announcement, De Beers Canada had already invested approximately \$1 billion in the construction of the Victor project, which was scheduled to start production in 2008.

The De Beers board and shareholders approved the Victor project budget based on current tax policies and tax regimes. With a \$7-billion economic footprint by the De Beers Victor project alone, the future of diamond exploration and mine development in Ontario is important in the prosperity of Ontario communities, but this government was so desperate for money, the first thing they did after Victor discovered diamonds and spent \$1 billion was invent a mining tax. If you wonder what's wrong up in the Ring of Fire, you can only imagine these three companies that have spent hundreds of millions of dollars are keeping awake at night wondering, "If we start to haul the chromite out of the Ring of Fire, what's to stop this government, with a proven track record, from developing a chromite tax?"

When the Liberals formed the government in 2003, Ontario was ranked number one in mining; today, we are number 16. Is it any wonder? This government brought in the Far North Act, which cuts off half of northern Ontario from exploration, and caused many companies to move out of Ontario.

Speaker, I have toured the camps in the Ring of Fire on four occasions now and must tell you that after five years, there's very little different there today than my first trip in 2011. In fact, there's less there today than there was all those years ago.

We've talked about high energy rates, we've talked about high taxes and future taxes of this Liberal Party, and I'm going to speak very quickly now on red tape or, as I prefer to call this part of it, death by a thousand paper cuts.

From filing taxes to applying for government permits, we have seen the Canadian Federation of Independent Business come out with their red tape analysis telling us that for families it costs us \$10 billion a year across Canada, and for businesses, \$31 billion across Canada. This red tape is crushing business and crushing non-profits alike.

As I mentioned when I first started, many of us in our PC caucus toured about 30 cities this year. Red tape was a very common theme, hearing it from business, but the biggest surprise was to hear it from social planning councils and poverty action groups, who would say, “We can’t send our caseworkers to someone’s house because they’re busy filling out government forms.”

In 1996, the Conservative government developed a Red Tape Commission to reduce red tape for small business and individuals. Sadly, the commission was discontinued by the Liberal government in 2003, and it’s no wonder why we have death by a thousand paper cuts.

We heard a common theme throughout Ontario: skyrocketing energy rates, high taxes and crushing red tape. These are the three things that are killing Ontario’s business.

Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak for 20 minutes about these job killers in Ontario, and I’ll pass the floor.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Robert Bailey: It’s a privilege to have the opportunity to rise today in the House and to speak—I intended to speak to Bill 141. That was the program, the game plan. As a number of speakers alluded to, there was a schedule that was determined late last week, and we went forward with that. Our House leader and others had people prepared to come here today to speak to that. There’s a lot of disappointment, as a number of members alluded to as well. Many years ago—longer than I want to think now—I was also a member of municipal council for my municipality, the great county of Lambton. I always, with other members, looked forward to attending ROMA-Good Roads, ROMA-OGRA, and interacting with my provincial member at the time, and there were a number of provincial members who were in the House at that time from different parties. But anyway, I know how much municipal representatives, whether they’re mayors, councillors, reeves, or staff, look forward in coming to Toronto to the Royal York to that great conference for the opportunity of interacting.

1520

I’ve seen members from Stormont-Dundas–South Glengarry this morning having breakfast down in the lounge, downstairs in the dining room. Their member had them here for an early morning breakfast and then back down to the conference. I always enjoy attending the conference as well. I know that many members that are here today would have had to change their plans to come back to debate these two motions, that would have meetings scheduled with their members from their ridings. And also, they have conferences. There are displays that they like to attend. There’s a lot of great business that’s done there. It’s unfortunate that those activities had to change.

I’d like to take the opportunity as well, as a number of members have spoken to a number of initiatives that I would have touched on in Bill 141. That’s all right. I’ll touch on them now in this opportunity under estimates.

The College of Trades was touched on by the member from Nipissing. He outlined that very well. That’s a big impact in my riding. I’ve had hundreds of petitions presented in my riding from members who are impacted by this. They either work in unionized trades, non-union trades—barbers, a lot of hairdressers have signed. They feel this is a real imposition on their activities to make a living. They don’t see any benefit to this. It’s like a cash grab, a great hosing of the public, their wallets—go out and take more money. They talk about the trades police coming around and intimidating and calling on people to pay this money. There’s a threat that if you’re in arrears and you haven’t paid, you’re going to be on some website somewhere with your name showing that you’re now suspended.

I’ve had a number of retired people say they have no intentions of ever going back to work—electricians, pipefitters, plumbers. They said, “Look, I’ve kept my trade up all my life. I’ve retired and I don’t intend to work again, but I don’t want my name on some website saying I’m in arrears, that I’m suspended.” They take a real disagreement to that; they take utterance with that because they’ve maintained that trade all those years, and now that they think they’ve moved into their so-called golden years and they want to retire, some bureaucratic body here in Toronto, living in some golden palace down here downtown, which this \$120 per person is going to go to to maintain—now they’re going to be called recalcitrant; they’re going to be talked about as being in suspension or arrears, or whatever the word is. I’ve had a lot of people talk to me about that and come to my office.

There are the issues over hydro rates and energy rates. A number of people this year, especially with the price of propane spiking—and electricity rates are up. I’ve had numerous people call the office, and their issue is, it’s between heating or eating. It’s a sad fact. A number of them have called and said that their OAS, their pension, if they’re retired—their energy bills are more than their OAS pension, so we’re working with them on an ongoing basis in my office, and I’m sure many members from all three parties are doing the same.

These are some of the impacts of the policies that this government, over the last 11 years, has implemented. As the member from Nipissing said, it’s the unintended consequences coming home to roost. We’re going to have to address those things as whoever the next government is. They’re going to be faced with these issues. There are going to be a lot of hard decisions to be made to try and right this great ship of state and get it back on the right track.

A number of issues that I would have liked to have seen and debated about earlier, if I would have talked about infrastructure under Bill 141, is the expansion of natural gas into rural Ontario. That’s something that I think is a long time due, and I think the focus will be even greater on it this year because of this cold winter and with the number of people that had to heat with propane. Propane, as we all know, because of market supply etc., doubled over in price, and so a number of

people have no options. They either heat with oil or propane. Some people are on electricity. So, if we want to expand the rural economy, the farm economy where people can use—they need a source to dry their grain, corn etc.—the corn and wheat. They need access to something that's affordable. Natural gas is something that we have in plenty, especially because of the Marcellus shale that has been discovered.

There's a surplus of natural gas now in Ontario. I know that the energy companies—to speak of two that I'm most familiar with, Enbridge and Union; both have facilities in my riding—are certainly interested in working with the ratepayers, homeowners, the government at all three levels: municipal, provincial and federal. I think that's something we should seriously look at, and that's something I'm going to be pursuing.

I have a private member's bill before the House to do with LNG and transport. That's another issue I think is very important: the transportation industry. For the transportation, to keep the cost of food and other goods down, we need to look to move towards that. The industry is interested. There are private companies that are interested in installing the infrastructure. They're not looking for any money at all. They'd take it, but there's no money available. They're not looking for any kind of support in that regard from government. They're willing to do it. I hope that the members will take a look at that private member's bill of mine, and we'll move that forward. I'd like to get it into committee and debate it and talk about it all day long. I know that's where the economy is going. We're already doing those types of transportation fuels in Quebec, along their main corridor. If you look at a map of the lower 48 states, there are numerous facilities that have been installed there and other ones planned. The big, missing link is Ontario: 40% of the Canadian economy right here, a major opportunity along the 401 corridor. I call it the blue-ribbon highway. There's the opportunity to install these LNG facilities right along there. I know these companies are interested in doing this. There are companies that approach my office, outside of those two energy companies, willing to install that type of infrastructure. They're looking for guidance from us in this Legislature along those lines.

I would like to also talk about our million-jobs plan. We'll be debating that this Thursday, and I'm looking forward to that. We have a five-point plan in there, for those folks at home who haven't had an opportunity to see it. It calls for lower hydro rates for Ontario families and businesses and lower taxes; reins in government overspending that has doubled Ontario's debt over the past 10 years; promotes the skilled trades and lowers apprenticeship ratios; increases trade with provinces across Canada; and eliminates the red tape that forces small to medium-sized business owners to spend more and more time filling out paperwork instead of hiring

more employees. Unlike the Liberals and NDP, the PCs are the only party with a plan to create jobs, and that's our million-jobs plan.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity I had here today. Like I say, I came prepared to talk about Bill 141, which was supposed to be on the schedule, but I'm glad that I had the opportunity to speak about this and about the disappointment that our municipal colleagues, I know, are feeling at this time. We'll have to assuage them later today when we have an opportunity to see them and explain. We'll point out where the difficulties lie and where the problems arose in the first place, why we weren't able—a number of us who had appointments and were trying to make those appointments. We'll explain to them at the time where those shortcomings lie.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to close on that point and give the House the opportunity to move forward with the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Again, Mr. Speaker, this is a routine motion that we deal with every year in order to accept concurrence of the estimates that we've done in the Legislature and the estimates committee, one of the committees of this Legislature—fairly routine, normally done by voice. I don't see any particular need to prolong this debate because we have all our ROMA convention delegates who are there waiting for us, and I would hope that we can get there sooner rather than later.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate.

Mr. Milloy has moved concurrence in supply, government orders 11 through 21 inclusive. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, this vote is deferred to deferred votes tomorrow, February 25, 2014.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the day.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1530.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziatti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Michael Prue
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Laura Albanese, Steve Clark
Mike Colle, Joe Dickson
Rob Leone, Amrit Mangat
Taras Natyshak, Jerry J. Ouellette
Michael Prue
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong
Steven Del Duca, Victor Fedeli
Catherine Fife, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Douglas C. Holyday, Mitzie Hunter
Monte McNaughton, Michael Prue
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield
Grant Crack, Dipika Damerla
John Fraser, Michael Harris
Peggy Sattler, Laurie Scott
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Rick Bartolucci
Laura Albanese, Rick Bartolucci
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Percy Hatfield
Mitzie Hunter, Jim McDonell
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely
Teresa J. Armstrong, Steven Del Duca
Bob Delaney, Frank Klees
Jack MacLaren, Phil McNeely
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri
Jonah Schein
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Bas Balkissoon, Grant Crack
Vic Dhillon, Garfield Dunlop
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett
Toby Barrett, Lorenzo Berardinetti
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek
Bill Mauro, Phil McNeely
Norm Miller, John O'Toole
Jagmeet Singh
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof
Donna H. Cansfield, Dipika Damerla
John Fraser, Monte Kwinter
Jane McKenna, Rick Nicholls
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh
Bas Balkissoon, Ted Chudleigh
Mike Colle, Vic Dhillon
Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman
Rod Jackson, Helena Jaczek
Paul Miller
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Developmental Services / Comité spécial
sur les services aux personnes ayant une déficience
intellectuelle**

Chair / Présidente: Laura Albanese
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Elliott
Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon
Cheri DiNovo, Christine Elliott
Mitzie Hunter, Rod Jackson
Sylvia Jones, Monique Taylor
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Continued from back cover

Canadian International AutoShow	
Mr. Michael Harris.....	5387
Gasoline prices	
Mme France G�elinas	5387
Silverhearts Association	
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn	5387
Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis	
Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	5387
Stuart Hartnell	
Mrs. Laura Albanese	5388
Larisa Yurkiw	
Mr. Bill Walker	5388

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /
D EP T DES PROJETS DE LOI**

Making Healthier Choices Act, 2014, Bill 162, Ms. Matthews / Loi de 2014 pour des choix plus sains, projet de loi 162, Mme Matthews	
First reading agreed to.....	5388

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES / D ECLARATIONS
MINIST RIELLES ET R Eponses**

Healthy eating	
Hon. Deborah Matthews	5389
Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	5389
Mme France G�elinas	5390

PETITIONS / P ETITIONS

Lyme disease	
Mr. Steve Clark	5391
Off-road vehicles	
Mr. John Vanthof	5391
Children's aid societies	
Ms. Mitzie Hunter	5391
Ontario Drug Benefit Program	
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	5392
Gasoline prices	
Mme France G�elinas	5392

Family safety	
Mr. Bob Delaney	5392
Highway improvement	
Mr. Norm Miller.....	5392
Dog ownership	
Ms. Cheri DiNovo	5393
Distracted driving	
Ms. Mitzie Hunter	5393
Physiotherapy services	
Mr. John O'Toole.....	5393
Property taxation	
Mr. John Vanthof	5393
Ontario College of Trades	
Mr. Bill Walker	5394
Asthma	
Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	5394
Charitable gaming	
Mr. John O'Toole.....	5394

MOTIONS

Order of business	
Hon. John Milloy	5394
Motion agreed to	5394

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Interim supply	
Hon. John Milloy	5395
Mr. Steve Clark	5395
Mr. Bill Walker	5397
Mr. Toby Barrett	5399
Mr. John O'Toole.....	5400
Mr. Gilles Bisson	5401
Vote deferred.....	5402
Concurrence in supply	
Hon. John Milloy	5403
Mr. Rod Jackson.....	5403
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	5405
Mr. Robert Bailey.....	5408
Mr. Gilles Bisson	5409
Vote deferred.....	5409

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 24 February 2014 / Lundi 24 février 2014

Introduction of member for Niagara Falls

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) 5373

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. John Yakabuski 5373

Hon. Deborah Matthews 5373

Mr. Wayne Gates 5373

Mr. Frank Klees 5373

Hon. David Oraziotti 5373

Mr. Todd Smith 5373

Mr. Rick Nicholls 5374

Ms. Peggy Sattler 5374

Mr. Monte McNaughton 5374

Mme France Gélinas 5374

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) 5374

Olympic athletes

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5374

Mr. Tim Hudak 5374

Ms. Andrea Horwath 5374

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Job creation

Mr. Tim Hudak 5374

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5375

Energy policies

Mr. Tim Hudak 5375

Hon. Bob Chiarelli 5376

Hon. Eric Hoskins 5376

Job creation

Ms. Andrea Horwath 5377

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5377

Job creation

Ms. Andrea Horwath 5377

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5378

Government investments

Mrs. Jane McKenna 5378

Hon. Eric Hoskins 5378

Job creation

Mr. Wayne Gates 5379

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5379

Hon. Eric Hoskins 5379

Healthy living

Mr. Phil McNeely 5380

Hon. Deborah Matthews 5380

Energy policies

Ms. Lisa MacLeod 5380

Hon. Bob Chiarelli 5381

Hospital funding

Mr. Wayne Gates 5381

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5381

Hon. Deborah Matthews 5381

Family caregiver leave

Ms. Soo Wong 5382

Hon. Yasir Naqvi 5382

Wind turbines

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson 5382

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5383

Ms. Laurie Scott 5383

Hon. Bob Chiarelli 5383

Horse racing industry

Ms. Cindy Forster 5383

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 5383

Energy conservation

Ms. Mitzie Hunter 5384

Hon. Bob Chiarelli 5384

Ontario College of Trades

Mr. Garfield Dunlop 5384

Hon. Brad Duguid 5384

GO Transit

Ms. Cindy Forster 5385

Hon. Glen R. Murray 5385

Estimates

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) 5385

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mrs. Christine Elliott 5386

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Long-term care

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson 5386

Empty Bowls campaign

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong 5386

Heart Month

Ms. Mitzie Hunter 5386

Continued on inside back cover