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of Ontario

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
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(Hansard)**

Monday 31 March 2014

Lundi 31 mars 2014

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

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The House met at 1030.

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

Prayers.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'm delighted to have Girls Government 2014 here today. Schools represented are James Culnan Catholic School and Swansea Public School. The students are Karolina Zabloty, Cynthia Pham, Nicole Bonner, Renee Deer, Natalie Cocev, Ivana Marsusic, Kate Bryant, Hannelore Koch, Chloe Bhungara, Rachel Salem-Wiseman and Clare Radnoff. Their principals are Karen Ridley and Michele O'Dowd, and their teachers are Sonya Henderson and Rui Pedrosa. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I want to introduce someone who I know will be visiting us in the Legislature very soon. MPP for Davenport, Jonah Schein, our colleague, welcomed a baby daughter, Hope Wheatcroft Schein, at 3:25 this morning. I am assured she is healthy and beautiful. I want to give a special shout-out to the new mom, who did all the work, Kristin Wheatcroft, a wonderful lady whom I've known since she was eight years old, and a shout-out to Les and Mary Wheatcroft. I'm getting really jealous—another grandchild. Congratulations to all.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'd like to introduce today Kerry Vandenberg, from my riding of Sarnia-Lambton. He's doing his MBA at the Schulich School of Business, specializing in public management. He's also the riding president for the riding of York West.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Today, the page captain is Divya Dey. We'd like to welcome her mother, Dia Dey; her father, Suman Dey; and her grandmother, Indira Dutta, to the Legislature.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'd like to introduce my nephew, Greg Fougere, who is down for the day shadowing our Legislature.

ORAL QUESTIONS

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Deputy Premier.

Before I get to that, I just want to, on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, extend our best wishes to Constable Michael Klarenbeek and Constable Klarenbeek's family.

Constable Klarenbeek, of course, was shot at the Brampton courthouse. He's recovering in Brampton Civic Hospital, and we want to send our best wishes for a speedy recovery to this Ontario hero.

Applause.

Mr. Tim Hudak: To the Deputy Premier: It's been three years since the Liberal government got mired in this controversy around the cancellation of gas plants that cost taxpayers over a billion dollars.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Mr. Tim Hudak: The most troubling allegations have now arisen as of Thursday, when the Ontario Provincial Police anti—

Interjections.

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

Please finish.

Mr. Tim Hudak: The OPP anti-rackets squad indicated that an outsider was given access to destroy criminal evidence—a criminal activity to destroy evidence. I share the frustration and outrage of Ontarians about this allegation. I wonder why Premier Wynne, or you as Deputy Premier, did nothing to prevent the destruction of evidence.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I, too, want to offer wishes for a very speedy recovery to Officer Mike Klarenbeek and his family. This has reminded us of the bravery of our front-line police officers, who every day put their life on the line to protect us. We wish him a speedy, speedy recovery.

Speaker, I will be referring the supplementary to the government House leader, but I do want to address the issue of the Premier's availability today. She is doing her job as Premier. She is on her way to Sault Ste. Marie. She's got a number of events there, including a very important announcement at Algoma college. She's been available multiple times over the weekend. She was in Lindsay on Friday. She was with MPP Wong to visit the residents of Shepherd Village. She's been available all weekend long to answer questions. I will look forward to the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Tim Hudak: I hope, Speaker, I can have your assistance. If the Premier is not able to answer questions today, I certainly hope the Deputy Premier will answer those on the Premier's behalf and not refer them.

The Premier and I actually had a meeting on January 28, in her office. I assumed I was speaking with Premier Wynne on January 28. She conducted herself that way in the Premier's office. She actually asked me to back off on pursuing contempt charges in committee; I now understand why. I understand, too, that you attended a caucus meeting of January 30 of this year, 2014, and Premier Wynne ran that caucus meeting, not Dalton McGuinty. Can you confirm that Premier Wynne was in charge, that she ran the caucus meeting on January 30?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, let's start at the beginning. Thursday, we learned of some very serious allegations. They are allegations, but if true, they are very serious, and we take them very seriously on this side of the House. But the fact of the matter is that if members take time to review the document which was tabled in court, they will learn that these are allegations which pertain to the period in which Premier McGuinty was Premier and to his former chief of staff. They make no reference to an involvement by the current Premier. The current Premier has explained that, and despite that, the Leader of the Opposition continues with baseless accusations which are, quite frankly, below an insult to the office that he holds. We look to him to remedy the situation and to stop playing politics with this very serious matter.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Again, these are the most serious of allegations of the criminal destruction of evidence in the Premier's office around the gas plant scandal. I would fully expect that if the Premier is unable to answer these questions today, despite knowing these questions would be at the top of the list, the Deputy Premier should do so. Taxpayers are entitled to very direct answers to simple, straightforward questions. If you argue that Premier Wynne was unaware of what was happening under her watch, when she was in charge, then that shows she was grossly incompetent and extraordinarily negligent. Either she was complicit or she wilfully looked the other way, neither of which qualifies her to be Premier of the province of Ontario and get us out of the mess that we're in.

1040

Let me ask again of the Deputy Premier, which is it? Was she involved, or did she simply intentionally look the other way?

Interjections.

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

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, this is very disappointing. The Leader of the Opposition has no interest in the facts. The documents that were tabled in court make it clear that the accusations—they remain accusations; we all have to be very careful—deal with the former chief of staff to Premier McGuinty and have nothing to do with the current Premier.

Mr. Speaker, let's try to get our facts straight here. The Leader of the Opposition stands up and talks about a meeting with the incoming Premier in her office before she became Premier. That was in the office of the acting or the incoming Premier. That had nothing to do with Premier McGuinty's office. Premier McGuinty was Premier until February 11, and the accusations which are outlined, the accusations which have not been proven, involve his former chief of staff. It is time that the Leader of the Opposition—he is debasing his office—acknowledge these facts, and remove from his website and stop repeating allegations which are totally baseless.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Tim Hudak: Again, back to the Acting Premier: Facts are stubborn things. I met with Premier Wynne in her office when she conducted herself as Premier on January—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. The Minister of Finance will come to order—second time.

Please carry on.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Facts are facts, and I'm going to hold you accountable on behalf of taxpayers in the province of Ontario to get to the bottom of the scandal.

She conducted herself as Premier. The House leader now says, well, she was something called "Acting Premier." She also says she was the Premier-designate. She said she was leader of the Liberal Party. Enough of the dissembling; enough of the misinformation. The fact of the matter is, Kathleen Wynne was in charge.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please withdraw.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Withdraw.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: The fact of the matter is, Kathleen Wynne was in charge. She was at the wheel. This is as much Kathleen Wynne's scandal as Dalton McGuinty's. The criminal destruction of evidence—the allegations—took place between February 6 and March 20.

So come clean: Was she responsible or was she wilfully negligent, both of which disqualify—

Interjections.

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

The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities will come to order.

Deputy Premier.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Government House leader, sir.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, the meeting in question between the Leader of the Opposition and Kathleen Wynne was held in the transition office, not the Premier's office, located here in this building. I think it's time we get our facts straight.

There were documents that were filed in court last Thursday, and those documents made it clear that this is an allegation—unproven allegation—against the former chief of staff of Premier McGuinty.

There have been a number of third parties who have taken a look at these documents. Let me tell you what they're saying. The Ottawa Citizen, March 28: "Trail of Evidence in Gas Plant Probe Ends Before Wynne's Government Starts."

"Detectives have found no evidence that any computers in Premier Kathleen Wynne's office were accessed."

Toronto Star, March 29, 2014: "A close reading of the 111 pages of OPP documents provides no hint yet of any impropriety" when Wynne was Premier.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Now they say that the meeting took place in the transition office. I'll refresh your memory of another meeting that took place. It wasn't just me who met with Kathleen Wynne as Premier. On January 31, Kathleen Wynne and Dalton McGuinty met with the Lieutenant Governor on the transfer of power. On that day, January 31, Kathleen Wynne took over as Premier-designate, which gave her the authority to direct government activities. On January 31, she met with Dalton McGuinty and the Lieutenant Governor. She became Premier-designate. That tells me that she was in charge, that she is responsible, that this scandal has equal responsibility with Kathleen Wynne and Dalton McGuinty.

My question is, why didn't she say no? Why didn't she stop the destruction of evidence related to the gas plant scandal? Isn't that an incredible failure to do a very basic job expected by taxpayers?

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

Just as a reminder to all members, I will say it over and over again. Please refer to all members in this place either by their title or by their riding. Thank you.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite's accusations—he can repeat them over and over again but they do not make them true. They are baseless, they are irresponsible and they demean the very high office that he holds.

Again, last Thursday we learned of a document that was filed in court. That document contains allegations—unproven, Mr. Speaker—about the former chief of staff to Premier McGuinty and it outlines a series of activities that happened while Premier McGuinty was the Premier.

The Leader of the Opposition can try to turn himself into pretzels and stand here over and over again, saying things which are not accurate, but the fact of the matter is that the facts speak for themselves. As the Leader of the Opposition learned yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have certainly consulted legal experts as to the action that we may be taking if he continues in this baseless stream of allegations.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Well, let's look at Kathleen Wynne's record. She initially said that the—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me; title, please.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier Wynne's record. She said initially the gas plant scandal would cost \$40 million; she said that in the House. We found out it was \$1 billion. She was the co-chair of the Liberal campaign when they ordered the cancellation of the gas plants. She was actually the one who signed the cabinet directive to pay TransCanada whatever it took to make the gas plants scandal go away. That cost taxpayers \$1 billion.

She had meetings in her office on January 28 with me, January 31 with the Premier, and then on February 7 she ordered the Auditor General to do a review of the gas plants file. You say she was in charge on February 11. On February 7, she was giving orders around here. So clearly she was in charge. And if she wasn't, the extraordinary incompetence tells me she is not fit to get this province out of the mess we're in. Clearly, if we want to get Ontario back on track, it's time to change the team that runs this province and builds our great province.

Interjections.

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

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I will put the Premier's record up against the Leader of the Opposition's record any day of the week.

On the one hand, we have a Premier who re-struck—

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: If you want to put the record up, let's go to the polls.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order, please. The member from Simcoe North, come to order. Thank you.

Hon. John Milloy: —who re-struck the justice committee with a broad mandate and broad powers, has provided hundreds of thousands of documents to that committee, has appeared twice in front of that committee and made sure that government members, ministers and staff have also appeared in front of the committee.

What we have from the Leader of the Opposition is someone who went on YouTube and said that if he became Premier of the province, he would cancel the gas plants. We have a leader of a party whose candidates went out and campaigned against the very same gas plants that he's speaking about today, and he will not come clean and acknowledge that very simple yet important fact.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): New question. The leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, question period is supposed to be a venue for the government to be held accountable. By refusing to face questions today about the Liberal gas plants scandal, the Premier is making a mockery of accountability. New Democrats will not participate.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): New question. The member from Nepean–Carleton.

POWER PLANTS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Typical NDP: When the going gets tough, they get going.

Interjections.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I even had the Liberals applauding me on that one, Speaker.

Speaker, you'll indulge me on a time line to the Deputy Premier—and I would expect an answer. On January 26, Premier Wynne becomes leader of the Liberal Party. On the 28th, she meets with the leader of the official opposition, asking to stop the gas plants probe. On the 30th of January, she leads the Liberal caucus in a caucus of meeting. On January 31, she meets with the Premier, Dalton McGuinty, to assume leadership as Premier-elect. On February 4, an IT services cabinet officer provides David Livingston's executive assistant with a global administrative password. On February 6, Laura Miller, deputy chief of staff, has computer access. From February 7, she then has her computers accessed. Between February 6 and March 20—Premier Wynne is Premier of Ontario—there is access to wipe 24 hard drives clean.

On Thursday, March 27, 2014, I asked them if we could have Premier Wynne's hard drive. She refused to give it—

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

Deputy Premier.

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Hon. Deborah Matthews: Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, let me ask the honourable member to recall another date—and, in fact, the Leader of the Opposition will remember it—February 11, when Premier Wynne was sworn in as Premier in this very chamber with the Leader of the Opposition present. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, this dog doesn't hunt.

February 11 was when Kathleen Wynne became Premier, but let's go beyond that to look at the document that was released that was made public last Thursday—the court document. It makes very clear that there are serious allegations—not proven—against Mr. Livingston, the former chief of staff of Premier McGuinty, about actions that took place under his watch.

Mr. Speaker, I can continue quoting: the Globe and Mail, March 31, 2014, "There is nothing in the documents that suggests any records were deleted after Ms. Wynne was sworn into office on Feb. 11, 2013."

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The problem with the theory by the government House leader, and, in fact, the Premier, is she is expecting us to believe that no one was Premier of Ontario for six weeks. There is not an Ontarian out there who believes that. They believe that Kathleen Wynne was Premier of Ontario on February 11. They believe that the computers were accessed during that period of time.

If the Premier is so clean on all of this, why has she not responded to my question of last Thursday asking whether her hard drive was compromised, tampered with or deleted? She hasn't done that because she either doesn't know, or it has been. She needs to come clean. Will your government do it on behalf of the taxpayers of this province?

Interjections.

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

Government House leader?

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, maybe we need a little bit more money for opposition research.

As to the honourable member's question, I direct her towards the court document, which has been fuelling her tirades over the past few days, where it outlines those computers which it is alleged were tampered with. It's very clear that the current Premier's name appears nowhere. No, the current Premier's computer was not involved with this. The court documents are very clear. For the honourable member to be engaging in this sort of baseless allegation—these drive-by smears—is really an insult to the office that she holds as an opposition critic.

Mr. Speaker, on February 11, Premier Wynne became Premier. Before that, Premier McGuinty was Premier. The court documents make very clear, as the media reports have outlined, that the allegations in question are about his former chief of staff Mr. Livingston.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. The city of Brampton is one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada. This means that more and more young people are graduating from our high schools and deciding about their future.

I strongly believe that post-secondary education is vital to the success of young people in this ever-changing competitive world. Therefore, the creation of a university campus in an underserved area like Brampton is very important because that provides an opportunity for our young people to get a high-quality post-secondary education closer to their homes. I'm very passionate about the possibility of locating a university campus that can better serve the needs of students in Brampton.

Can the minister tell my constituents how we can bring a new campus to Brampton?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I know the member has been a hugely strong advocate in her region for post-secondary education.

Our government released its framework for major capacity expansion in December, and on Thursday we put out a request for proposals. We're deeply committed to making the long-term investments necessary to build on the world-class reputation that our post-secondary sector has earned. We need to plan ahead so that our post-secondary system has the capacity to take that next generation of students.

We also know that having a post-secondary institution expand or locate in a community can have a tremendous local economic impact. Interested municipalities will need to work through a university proponent to participate in this RFP. I know the member has a long-standing interest in this RFP, and I'm sure students in her community appreciate that.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: It's great to hear that the residents of my great riding of Mississauga–Brampton South will have an opportunity to work together to bring a new campus to the city of Brampton. However, I'm sure that the people of Brampton would like to know more about how they can qualify for a campus under the government's policy framework. I will certainly do everything I can to work with local partners to make that happen.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain what factors he will be considering when reviewing applications?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The process for consideration of our campus capacity expansion RFP will be transparent and fair for all proponents. A key consideration will be ensuring that the expansions take place in regions where student demand and growth are located: 30% of the weighting will go to location. Cost is also critical during these challenging fiscal times: 40% of weighting will go toward affordability for students and taxpayers and value for money. And 30% of weighting will go toward the campus product itself, including local community and economic impacts, promotion of innovation, impact on labour market needs and alignment with differentiation priorities, among others. Preference will be given to proponents that involve partnerships with colleges.

After a decade of record investment in our globally competitive post-secondary education system, we're following up with further long-term investments to ensure we provide that next generation of students with the quality of education they deserve.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Acting Premier. There are a lot of similarities between the gas plant scandal and Ontario's latest financial debacle. Your government said the gas plant cancellation would cost \$40 million, but it took the Auditor General to tell us that it's really \$1.1 billion. Now in the budget, you told us and the financial community that you will balance by 2017. Yet only days before that, your own documents entitled "Confidential Advice to Cabinet" said you had a \$4.5-billion gap. I'm sensing a pattern here.

During the gas plant scandal, you knew one thing and told the public something different. Now you're doing the same with finance, telling us one thing when you know the opposite to be true. Quite frankly, how can we believe anything you ever say again?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we wrote off \$40 million as attributed to the cancellation of that power plant. That was written off. The Auditor General was asked to review it, and they noted that the relocation of the power plant, over the period of 30 years, would amount to an additional billing as it relates to the construction and continuation of that facility, the investments in transmission and so forth.

The member is now talking about the integrity of the numbers that have been presented, numbers that the Aud-

itor General has also reviewed and confirmed as correct. He is saying that we have somehow hidden something that has been out there for public consumption in our fall economic statement. If the member would just read, Mr. Speaker, he would understand exactly where is that place and the fact that we're making revisions as it relates to the global changes—we're reacting, and we are taking the proper steps to meet our targets and balance the books by 2017-18, as we said we would.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Back to the Acting Premier: Let me compare the gas plant scandal to your financial debacle another way. During the contempt hearings, you turned over 36,000 documents, and a dozen cabinet ministers stood up and declared, "You have all the documents." Two weeks later, you reluctantly turned over 20,000 more documents that, we learned under oath, were ordered removed by Liberal operatives.

Now come budget time, you announce that you're on track to balance the budget by 2017-18, and again, eight cabinet ministers stood up in this Legislature and declared, "We're on track to balance the budget." Yet your confidential advice to cabinet only days before told you and your cabinet ministers that you're not on track to balance.

I have a question for you: Why do the Liberal cabinet ministers continue to stand in this Legislature and say one thing when they know the complete opposite to be true?

Interjections.

1100

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: We are on track to balance the books by 2017-18. More importantly, four years in a row, we beat our targets. Our spending was less than 1% year over year, and we were the only government to actually cut spending last year. We have met our targets. The Auditor General has confirmed them as such. We're taking the steps necessary. What is true is that we do have a plan to create those jobs and stimulate economic growth by investing in our economy, not by doing across-the-board cuts that would make it even more difficult for recovery. We recognize what's necessary.

We have also acknowledged that the global marketplace has changed, and Ontario has had to recalibrate to ensure that we stay ahead. We've led the way. We have more than 180% of those jobs returning to the province of Ontario because of the actions that we've taken, working in collaboration with our stakeholders. We're the leanest government in Canada, the lowest-cost government, by far, from any other government in this country.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: My question is to the new Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Co-operative housing is an important component of Ontario's afford-

able housing solution. Several co-operative housing units were originally built in the 1970s. The then federal government had worked with the province to ensure that they received federal support. With these agreements, the co-ops helped Ontario's most needy by providing rent-geared-to-income subsidies, making life more affordable for Ontarians. However, these agreements are expiring, and we're quickly approaching the day in 2020 when most of these contracts will end and so will rent-geared-to-income supplements.

Two weeks ago the Close the Housing Gap campaign was here at Queen's Park, advocating that our government stand up for these vulnerable Ontarians. Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Could he please explain what our government has done to support Ontario's co-operatives and social housing providers?

Hon. Bill Mauro: I'd like to thank the member from Scarborough-Rouge River for his advocacy on behalf of those in co-op and social housing.

I want to recognize the hard work and advocacy of a few people: Bud Purves, Harvey Cooper, Ginny Adey and Sean Gadon, who came to the Legislature to advocate for this very important issue.

Our government believes that long-term, local solutions are the only way that we can tackle homelessness. That's why our government has focused on Ontario's housing first strategy, which gives priority to finding permanent housing linked to flexible support services. We understand the importance of this. It's why we've invested \$3 billion in affordable housing since 2003, more than any government before us.

Though we've got more work to do, I was pleased to learn that the former minister met with Councillor Ana Bailão in February to hear their concerns and see how our government could help. I reaffirm our government's commitment to work with the city of Toronto and all housing providers, and the federal government, to ensure that we have predictable, long-term solutions for Ontario's most vulnerable.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I would like to thank the minister for the answer. I'm sure my constituents will be pleased to hear our government's commitment to co-operative and social housing.

Two weeks ago the Close the Housing Gap campaign came to Queen's Park. They spoke of their need for funds to continue their investment in capital repairs for Toronto Community Housing, which will be \$2.6 billion over the next decade. They have also asked that we have all parties in this House stand with our government to continue our call on the federal government to maintain the existing housing stock. They believe that the federal government needs to come back to the table with a long-term, stable source of funding.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Could he please explain what our government is doing to ensure that the opposition and the third party follow our government's lead in calling on the federal government to maintain their funding?

Hon. Bill Mauro: Our government has continued to call on our federal partners to join with our government to come up with a stable, long-term solution for homelessness in Ontario. That's why the former minister urged municipalities at the ROMA/OGRA conference last month to ask their local members and Minister Kenney to urge the federal government to come back to the table, and I understand that the city of Brantford is doing so.

However, unfortunately, like the federal Conservatives, the third party has been silent—and we can see what has happened here today. Sadly, this is typical for a party whose leader, according to the Toronto Star, “has done everything possible to avoid ... policies on tough issues that require political bravery.”

While they sat on the sidelines, we've acted: over \$600 million for affordable housing in Toronto since 2003, 4,700 new housing units, repairing over 3,700, and helping almost 15,000 homes with housing allowances and rent supplements.

There's more to do—this is a societal issue—and I hope the third party will finally stand shoulder to shoulder with us to demand that the federal government step up—

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

New question.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Rob Leone: My question is for the Acting Premier. We've all heard before the tales of what the Premier knew to be a fact: She knew the Oakville cancellations would cost \$40 million, despite signing a cabinet document that stated otherwise. She knew that the documents requested in committee had been made public before thousands and thousands more were dropped on our desks at the eleventh hour. So you will excuse the people of Ontario if after a year and a half of being taken for a ride by this Premier, we don't accept where she's dropped us off. Either the Premier knew full well what was going on, or she was willfully blind to the facts. Acting Premier, can you tell the people of Ontario, which is it?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Talk about being blind to the facts. We've all established that on February 11, Kathleen Wynne became Premier of this province. But, Mr. Speaker, don't take my word for it. I invite the honourable member to go read the document that was tabled in court. That document made it very clear that the accusations—which have not been proven; I think we all have to be very careful—were about the actions that took place under Premier McGuinty's time as Premier, with his former chief of staff.

The fact of the matter is that, again, I can quote media outlet after media outlet which undertook the analysis of it and came away with the conclusion that they are engaging in the most baseless kind of character attacks; and as the Premier pointed out in her open letter yesterday, she is taking the steps of consulting legal experts on this.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Rob Leone: Mr. Speaker, that was a completely unbelievable answer. This government brags about the

number of documents handed over, when they know full well that the most damning documents were deleted or hidden or corrupted or damaged or destroyed by a Liberal strategist's boyfriend.

We're worried. We're worried that there is no reason for the Premier to come clean with the people of Ontario, because in the world of Liberal politics money talks, especially hush money.

Acting Premier, in the real world, when you escort a man to your computer, give him your password and watch him destroy data, you get fired. When Liberal staffer Lauren Ramey does it, she gets promoted to press secretary to the Minister of Education; Beckie Codd-Downey gets promoted to press secretary; and Rebecca MacKenzie gets promoted to chief of staff—all while Peter Wallace felt it wasn't his place to say anything at all. Acting Premier, why do the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals get promotions for staying quiet?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Before I go on, I'm going to offer a caution, and that caution is—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me. The member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex is continuing to speak, first when I was trying to say something, and then when I was trying to get his attention.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Education will come to order. The member from Simcoe North will come to order.

I'm going to offer a caution: I don't like some of the language. Although I didn't quite find it unparliamentary, I'm going to caution the member not to go any further with that kind of accusation.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I didn't think it was possible for the member to go any lower, but he's just proven it in that question.

Last Thursday, a document was made public, a court document, which contains allegations about the former chief of staff to Premier McGuinty. It's a voluminous document; I understand over 100 pages. Everyone who has looked at it knows that it is very, very clearly about the former Premier's watch. The allegations are directed at Mr. Livingston; they are not proven.

To stand up here in the Legislature and to attempt to drag through the mud the names of hard-working staffers on this side of the House who were in no way implicated—and that document makes it very, very clear—is beneath him. I thought that member was an honourable member, but what he just did is beyond—beyond—contempt, and I cannot believe that he would have—

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

New question.

1110

RETIREMENT HOMES

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Speaker, my question today is for the minister responsible for seniors' affairs. Minister, on several occasions while addressing this Legislature, you

have provided up-to-date information on the implementation of the Retirement Homes Act, 2010. Thanks to this important piece of legislation, for the first time in Ontario, seniors living in retirement homes have strong protections under provincial law.

In Scarborough alone, there are 10 retirement homes, four of which are in my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood, serving hundreds of senior residents. Minister, I know that you have been to several locations in Scarborough, and our seniors have welcomed you there. I know my constituents in Scarborough-Guildwood appreciate this government's hard work to keep these residents safe and secure and involved in their local communities.

Speaker, can the minister inform this House of some of the work conducted by the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority?

Hon. Mario Sergio: It's indeed very refreshing to hear the member from Scarborough-Guildwood speak with such passion and advocacy about her seniors. The same goes for all our seniors, Mr. Speaker.

Let me say that since its inception, we have approved some 697 retirement home licences, and this speaks well for the regulatory authority. As well, we have to say that, thanks to the present government, seniors today are enjoying more safety and more protection in their retirement homes than ever before. It means that the regulatory authority is working and will continue to do so.

Since 2012 up to now, we have received some 5,000 inquiries with respect to retirement homes. We continue to provide information on the conditions of all retirement homes; that is available to all seniors and their families. They can access that information through the info line, as well as the rhra.ca website, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. I know that families in my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood are also thankful that this government has always been ready and willing to listen to the needs of our seniors.

Speaker, the seniors of my riding, like thousands of seniors across Ontario, have worked so hard to build this great province. Like my parents, who immigrated from Jamaica, they arrived in Canada many years ago. They chose to make this their home, right here in Ontario. They went straight to work, laying the foundations for the communities we live in today.

Recently, the fifth phase of the Retirement Homes Act, 2010, came into effect. Can the minister explain how these new regulations continue to build on the successful protections implemented by our government?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Again, Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question. She's quite right: We have made quite a few improvements since the act came into force. As a matter of fact, we have just approved phase 5 of the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority. I have to say that, thanks to the present government of Kathleen Wynne, seniors today are moving forward and they know that they can get better service, better quality and better care in a very safe environment.

What are some of the changes that we have been proposing and that are coming from phase 5? We have established the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority emergency fund. We have mandatory insurance for each retirement home. We have established a formal process for complaint handling by the RHRA, including a complaints review officer, and screening for staff and volunteers by the police. As well, we have created an RHRA—

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

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Todd Smith: My question this morning is for the Acting Premier. Your unelected, hand-picked Liberal Premier knew when she ran for the leadership of your disgraced party that she was inheriting the contempt charges and she was inheriting the criminal activity that went along with it.

Her predecessor fled the office like a coward, yet she stood on the stage, arm in arm chanting the name Dalton, as you did, even though his reputation had been tarnished beyond belief.

She knew that the gas plant scandal was the biggest scandal in Ontario's history—and it turns out the most expensive, too—yet she expects us to believe that she knew nothing about the secret, diabolical mission that was going on to destroy documents in her office when she was the Premier.

Now, Minister, I know you have your own OPP investigation to contend with, but how can you continue to stand up for this government that's so embroiled in criminal activity—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Again, I'm going to offer a caution: Making any accusations of criminal activity is not expected from any member in this House.

Deputy Premier?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: You know, Mr. Speaker, it really does insult the office that member holds as a critic. That question was the worst kind of politics. What we've seen here today is a Progressive Conservative Party that doesn't care about facts. They don't give a damn about facts. All they care about—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Withdraw, please.

Hon. John Milloy: Withdraw.

All they care about is scoring very cheap political points. The fact of the matter is that the reason why we are having this debate and discussion here is because a court document was made public last Thursday. That court document was very serious but it's very clear: It's about allegations that took place under the former Premier and is directed—it's not proven, and again we have to be very careful—at his former chief of staff, Mr. Livingston.

But you know, if the honourable member wants to talk about gas plants, then perhaps in the supplementary he'll tell us about the cost—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. John Milloy: —PCs when they stood on YouTube and promised that if they were elected, those gas plants would be cancelled.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Oxford will withdraw.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Todd Smith: Back to the Acting Premier—I don't know what the heck this government is going to do when that guy leaves because somebody is actually going to have to answer a question over there.

You know what? The stink of this gas plant scandal is something this government can't outrun. They're trying to continue the cover-up as long as they can, but they're not going to get away with it. You've got the same old McGuinty cast of characters there. These are the same people who stood up on the stage in January of last year and said they were going to continue the Dalton legacy. That's what they promised to do. And yes, they've done an excellent job of it because it has already cost us over \$1 billion to cancel that gas plant. Any time anyone brings this government's incompetence to light, what we get is a threat to sue, silence and censure.

Will you do the honourable thing? You said you would stand on your record. Will you call the non-confidence motion today and let the public decide this once and for all?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Before I return, I offer an apology to the member from Oxford. I was incorrect, and I apologize. I will now ask the member from Nipissing to withdraw.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Withdraw.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. Thank you. Government House leader?

Hon. John Milloy: I'm not sure about my colleagues, but when I saw that ridiculous display, I was quite proud of the fact that our Premier has sought and obtained legal advice. The fact of the matter is that what we have seen from the opposition is this drive-by smear.

Again, there was a document that was released by the courts last Thursday that makes it very clear that there were serious allegations that took place under the former Premier's watch.

Again, what does the Toronto Star have to say on March 29? "A close reading of the 111 pages of OPP documents provides no hint yet of any impropriety when" Premier Wynne was Premier.

Toronto Star, March 30, regarding Tim Hudak's claims about Premier Wynne: "The OPP documents suggest no such thing." It is time that the Progressive Conservatives came clean, that they apologized and that they removed the offensive language from their website and stopped spreading these un-based smears.

1120

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Ms. Soo Wong: My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation. Ontario is recognized for its many excellent academic and research institutions and their strong collaboration with industry. To build on this further, we continue to create the right conditions that will lead to an innovative business climate that will attract investment, create jobs and increase the quality of life for Ontarians.

Fostering collaboration in this intensely competitive global economy is important. It is also to our competitive advantage. To help to translate Ontario's research strengths into commercialized activities, businesses must be able to access the world-class knowledge and expertise available in Ontario's research institutions.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation: What steps has the government taken to facilitate knowledge mobilization between industry and academic institutions?

Hon. Reza Moridi: I would like to thank the member from Scarborough–Agincourt for that very important question.

Our government recognizes the importance of a strong relationship between academic and research institutions and industry in our province. That's why our government created the Collaboration Voucher Program, which provides redeemable credits to small and medium-sized businesses for expertise and resources from Ontario's research and academic institutions and research hospitals. Collaboration vouchers are a practical tool to facilitate knowledge mobilization between industry and academic institutions.

Not only does this voucher program help businesses improve their competitiveness around the world and productivity in the marketplace, but it helps to translate Ontario's research strengths into stronger innovation and commercial activity in the future.

I am proud of our government's initiatives to foster strategic collaboration and knowledge mobilization in our province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to hear that our government is undertaking stronger collaboration between innovative businesses, industry and academic institutions. Ontario's research community is globally recognized as a commerce-friendly jurisdiction that supports the growth of innovative companies and activities.

International research collaboration is a rapidly growing component of core research activities for all countries. They enable researchers to participate in networks of cutting-edge and innovative activity.

Ontario is the home of many world-class researchers. They know that collaboration provides opportunities to move further and faster by working with other leading people in their field. But in a global context, especially as developing countries and economies ramp up their

research investments, to achieve prominence they must collaborate nationally and build international bridges.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation: Can he please let us know what international partnerships and collaboration our government has undertaken to promote this research?

Hon. Reza Moridi: I want to thank again the member from Scarborough–Agincourt for that question. Ontario understands the importance of collaboration and building international bridges to remain competitive.

Ontario has several active MOUs that focus on promoting Ontario's strengths while attracting investments to Ontario. In fact, I had the pleasure of visiting China a couple of weeks ago, with a focus on collaboration and collaborative opportunities in life sciences, information technology and clean technology.

We announced the next phase of our MOU between our government and the Ministry of Science and Technology of China. Under this MOU, a total of 12 academic and industry research and development collaboration projects are being funded by both of our governments. As Ontario's second-largest trading partner, China's emerging economy will remain a key factor in Ontario's international business strategy.

These partnerships will lead to the generation of new technologies, attracting talent and international investments into our province of Ontario and creating jobs for today and tomorrow.

POWER PLANTS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm pleased to have the added opportunity today. My question is to the Acting Premier. Look, I don't know what is worse: the Premier evading this assembly and not answering questions—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member knows full well that we do not make reference to people's presence or absence in this House. Don't do it again, please.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm not sure what's worse, the fact that the Premier is avoiding accountability or the fact that the NDP is refusing to hold this government to account.

I'm going to try it one more time: Since they will not answer whether or not the Premier's hard drive was wiped, will the Acting Premier afford us this opportunity in telling us whether or not the Premier's senior transition staff—and all of her staff, actually—had any of their data wiped clean during that period of time.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: I answered that question several minutes ago. The honourable member can look at the document that was released by the court which talks about a series of computers which allegations are about. It does not include Premier Wynne. It includes a list of individuals, which is made very clear in that document. I'll tell you what's really bad: the baseless allegations coming from the opposition.

I'll pick up on one point she made about the New Democrats, because it's not just against the Progressive

Conservatives. Let me quote the Toronto Star, March 30. The leader of the NDP “indulged in conventional opposition mischief by implying police were ‘now focusing on questions about the period after you were sworn in and became Premier’—a clear misreading of the OPP documents.”

It’s kind of interesting, the theatrics we saw from the New Democrats, because when the PCs tried the same thing in November 2009, the leader of the NDP said, “New Democrats believe it’s extremely important to bring the voices of the people into this Legislature.... I not only don’t approve of their tactics—being the PCs—but it changes the channel for them”—

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The NDP and the Liberals can play all the games that they want, with the PR stunt by the Premier yesterday and the PR stunt by the NDP today. The only leader that is here committed to getting to the bottom of the gas plant scandal is Tim Hudak, leader of the official opposition.

Acting Premier, I would like to know this: How much was Peter Faist, the outsider hired by the Liberals to delete the public records, paid? Was he paid from the Premier’s office budget or from the Liberal Party of Ontario? How much was he given to destroy these records under Premier Wynne’s leadership?

Hon. John Milloy: As I said, many of the issues that have been raised by the member have been dealt with in the court document. In terms of the IT company that the honourable member is speaking of, we learned of the allegations on Thursday, as she knows. Following those revelations, an internal investigation was conducted, and it was determined that the company has previously done occasional IT services work for the caucus office under the former Premier and the party office. The company was informed yesterday that its services at the party office were terminated. The proper authorities had been proactively made aware.

But to be clear, the allegations centre on the former chief of staff to Premier McGuinty. These are serious allegations. No one disputes that, but the fact of the matter is, they are still allegations. I would caution all members to be very careful and to allow the police to do their work.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Bob Delaney: My question is to the Acting Premier. Acting Premier, I understand that, yesterday, the Premier sent an open letter to the Leader of the Opposition. In the letter, the Premier asks the Leader of the Opposition, his caucus and his party to stop making false and defamatory allegations. Acting Premier, would you share with the House the contents of that letter?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I would be happy to read into the record the contents of this letter, dated March 30, 2014, to Mr. Tim Hudak.

“Dear Mr. Hudak,

“During your press conference on March 27th you made several false, misleading and defamatory allegations about me”—this is from the Premier. “You alleged that I personally ‘oversaw and possibly ordered the criminal destruction of documents’ and that criminal conduct took place in my office. The Ontario Progressive Conservative Party repeated these false allegations on its website and in a public mailing.

“These allegations and accusations are false and utterly unsupported, and you ought to know it.”

I will continue in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Thank you to the Acting Premier for beginning to share that letter. From the day that she was sworn in, the Premier has opened up the government to an unprecedented degree. Under the current Premier, the government has implemented mandatory record-keeping rules and staff training, and new rules limiting political staff involvement in commercial third party transactions.

Acting Premier, would you continue to share the contents of that letter?

1130

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The Premier goes on to say, “As political leaders it is our role and public duty to engage in spirited political debate on issues. The decision to relocate the gas plants and the facts related to the ongoing police investigation are legitimate subjects for this political debate. False, misleading and defamatory statements are not, and they represent the worst kind of politics. That is why I’m writing this open letter to you.

“There should be no tolerance for false and defamatory accusations as a means to gain political power.

“I am asking you and your caucus to immediately stop repeating these untrue statements and to immediately remove them from the PC Party website and all other communications.

“I have sought and obtained legal advice”—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —“regarding your comments, and if steps are not taken immediately, I will have no choice but to”—

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —“take all necessary and”—

Interjections.

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

New question.

POWER PLANTS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the government House leader. Moments ago, the government House leader indicated that Peter Faist had a contract with the Liberal Party of Ontario. According to reality, on January 26 Kathleen Wynne became Premier but also became leader of the Liberal Party. That means he was one of her contracted employees. This revelation is quite serious in

that it gives us more of an understanding into what is going on with this Liberal government.

So I ask the government House leader once more, were members of the transition team and Kathleen Wynne's hard drives wiped clean—yes or no—by a contracted employee of the Liberal Party of Ontario when Kathleen Wynne assumed the leadership of your party?

Hon. John Milloy: I think this stretches longer than a Leonard Cohen song. The fact of the matter is that last Thursday a court document was made public. I would invite the honourable—I believe it's on the Toronto Star website. I know you have to pay a certain fee every month to access it, Mr. Speaker, but I would invite her to read that, because it outlines a number of computers—and it names those staff of the former Premier, Premier McGuinty—that were, in fact, according to this document, wiped clean. There are allegations about the former chief of staff. These are unproven allegations, and I think all of us should allow the police to do their work.

But in terms of the Premier's transition team, I will point out to the honourable member that the justice committee has received information and emails from the Premier's transition team. Again, she should read those documents. As I say, the court document makes clear what computers they're talking about, and it's staff of former Premier McGuinty.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm sure that the minister is well aware that I was the first person to bring the revelations to the floor of this assembly. We're quite aware of what's in the ITO. I asked this minister for very specific details. He is choosing not to provide them. I would ask the minister one more time, would he provide the assembly, the committee and the leader of the official opposition with the nature of the contract for Peter Faist from the Liberal Party of Ontario?

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Dufferin–Caledon, come to order.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Both the caucus office and party require significant IT services, both to support staff and to communicate with Ontarians. My understanding is that the company performed IT services like routine maintenance. But again, I invite the member to take a look at the court document that was released last Thursday. That document clearly outlines allegations—unproven allegations—against the former chief of staff.

In terms of the current Premier, she was the one who worked—I can tell you, as House leader—to open up a committee with a very broad mandate, with a great deal of power. Mr. Speaker, we have provided some 326,000 documents to that committee, including documents and emails from the transition team. Again, she should read them.

DRIVER LICENCES

Mr. Grant Crack: My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. I drive about 1,500 kilometres a week, and I know that Ontario roads are among the safest in North America. It's important that we continue to keep our roads safe while aiming to keep our seniors driving as long as they can—and that they do so safely.

Recently, Minister, your ministry announced changes to the seniors' driving tests, and I know that seniors in my riding have received this news quite well. Many still have questions about exactly what those changes are.

Speaker, through you, I'm just asking the minister: Can you please speak to these changes and how they will affect seniors in Ontario?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I have to be very careful, Mr. Speaker, because of my mother. I can't give her age because she'll really get upset with me. But suffice to say my mother is a woman of a certain age, and she's watching what I'm saying, so I had better be on my best behaviour today.

She is someone who does not drive at night now. She gave up her car when she moved to the city so she could be close to myself and the rest of the family to take care of her. But if she decided, and my mother is a woman of some substantial will, that she wanted to renew her driver's licence again—and she has kept it; I commended the Premier when she introduced an equivalent to the drivers' licences so people like my mum can have a licence—she would take a vision test, she would undergo a driver record review, and she would attend group education sessions, as well as complete two in-class screening exercises. These are easier, less stressful, less threatening solutions.

We really look forward to an easier system for our mums and dads and our grandparents that is more safe.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Grant Crack: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. Both my mother and father are seniors, and I recall quite well my mother knocking the mirror off my vehicle in the driveway. I just wanted to throw that in.

I'm pleased to hear about the changes to the process. Many seniors share the desire to drive for as long as they can and as safely, as well. The old program was onerous—that I well know—and caused many of the seniors in my area a fair amount of stress. Many of the enhancements to the program are quite similar to the previous renewal process for seniors, but I do notice that we're shortening how long the entire process will take.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can the minister please explain why that is and what you have enhanced? Will this result in any new fees to our seniors?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I once lived in the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell's constituency. My mother and father nearly ended their relationship over my father's acquisition of half a bull. My mother didn't realize—she thought she wasn't going to have room in the freezer for it, until I heard the words “artificial in-

semination,” when my sister and I were sent away from the dinner table for the rest of my parents’ conversation.

But I know in that constituency and many others, it gets dark. There are many areas of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell and rural communities that don’t have the kind of lighting—and as your eyes get a little more challenged as you get older, it’s important.

There will no longer be these complicated tests people have to study for—

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: And stressful for these seniors.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Very stressful, as the Attorney General has just pointed out—they will just simply be able to come in and do a short classroom test that won’t require much. As you know, in legislation before the House, first of all, there are no fees, as the health minister just pointed out—none. Second of all, we’re also looking at graduated driver’s licences for seniors as well, if we pass the legislation through the House.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. John Milloy: I wish to correct my record. Earlier in question period I referred to the current Premier before she had assumed office. I got a bit tongue-tied and said “incoming” or “acting.” I, of course, meant Premier-designate at that point.

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent that the question on the motion for second reading of Bill 177, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act, be immediately put forward without further debate or amendment; and

That the bill be ordered for third reading; and

That the order for third reading of Bill 177 be immediately called; and

That the question on the motion for third reading of the bill be put without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Finance is seeking unanimous consent that the question on the motion of second reading of Bill 177, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act, be immediately put without further debate or amendment; and

That the bill be ordered for third reading; and

That the order for third reading of Bill 177 be immediately called; and

That the question on the motion for third reading of the bill be put without debate or amendment.

Do we agree? I heard a no.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Consumer Services on a point of order.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: On a point of order, I realized I forgot to introduce some elected official here today

from the city of Pickering. We have Doug Dickerson, deputy mayor; and Kevin Ashe, councillor for ward 1. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: I seek unanimous consent that the sponsorship of Bill 5, An Act to freeze compensation for two years in the public sector, be transferred to the member for Nipissing.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Simcoe–Grey is seeking unanimous consent that the sponsorship of Bill 5, An Act to freeze compensation for two years in the public sector, be transferred to the member for Nipissing.

Do we agree? I heard a no.

The minister responsible for seniors’ affairs on a point of order.

Hon. Mario Sergio: Speaker, I would really be happy if I could have a late show on the question that—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That’s not a point of order.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1141 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I ask all members of the House to join me in welcoming my guest today, Mr. Suneet Singh Tuli, who is CEO of Datawind. Their claim to fame is that their tablets are outselling both iPads and Samsung tablets in India. Please join me in welcoming him today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We welcome our guest.

Further introductions? Further introductions? Last call for introductions.

If you will notice, I was very slow in getting to the member from Scarborough–Guildwood.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Speaker, thank you very much. It’s my pleasure, and honour in fact, to welcome Miss Jamaica World and Miss World Caribbean to the Legislature today: Ms. Gina Hargitay. This is her first time to Canada, and I think she has brought the sunshine with her, so thank you. I’d also like to welcome her mother, Marlene Campbell Hargitay, her uncle Johannes Campbell, and a friend, of course, to all of us, the Consul General of Jamaica, Mr. Seth George Ramocan. Please welcome them.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I want to thank the Consul General for having it rain every day on my holiday while I was in Jamaica.

Further comment on this introduction?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I’d also like to invite all members in the House to join us in room 230, where Ms. Hargitay will be available for pictures, which we will provide to all of you, and also, I believe, a taste of Appleton rum, which is wonderful for the afternoon.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I've got to say something. I'm not sure if that's parliamentary, to invite people to have rum out of the House, but we thank our visitors and we welcome you.

Mr. Bill Walker: Unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That could be unanimous consent.

Last call for introductions.

We thank our guests for being here. It's now time for statements.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ENGINEERS

Mr. Jim McDonell: March is National Engineering Month across Canada. As an engineer myself, I'm glad to see the initiatives that inspire younger Canadians to explore the engineering profession. Engineers have consistently taken the possible and pushed its boundaries.

In his official greeting to mark National Engineering Month, the Governor General wrote, "Engineering is truly a profession of faith in the advancement of technology for people's well-being, in Canada and worldwide."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper also commented that "The work engineers do drives investment, contributes to our prosperity, and ensures our safety, comfort and well-being."

As part of engineering month, the Upper Canada chapter of Professional Engineers of Ontario hosted its annual bridge-building competition for grades 5 to 12 students. Their challenge was to build a bridge out of 200 Popsicle sticks and white glue, which was then subjected to a load test.

Kaytlin Andrews and Charlotte Reed of Char-Lan school beat their high school peers to take first place.

Twelve-year-old Eric Ronkin of école Rose-des-Vents took second place, following in the footsteps of his father, Dimitri, who is an engineer at the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp.

Third place was taken by the Filliol brothers, Caleb, Eric and Jean, of école Notre Dame.

Our future infrastructure and safety and our province's leadership in technological innovation depend on a growing generation of passionate, inquisitive and resourceful engineers. I am pleased to see that the future leaders of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry are ready to face that challenge.

BIKES FOR CUBA

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's my privilege to rise today to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of two of my constituents from Port Colborne, Mr. Aubrey Foley and Kathleen Cosby, who have started an initiative to provide bikes to underprivileged children in Cuba.

Mr. Foley is a 69-year-old Port Colborne resident who has been repairing used bicycles out of his home, using his own money to pay for the necessary parts. The initiative then sends the bikes to children in Cuba who otherwise would not be able to afford one.

Two bikes have already been sent to a 13-year-old girl and an 8-year-old boy, and yesterday, a volunteer truck driver from Brantford—your riding, Mr. Speaker—picked up 40 completed bikes, 10 of which are destined for an orphanage in Cuba. They've already received an overjoyed thanks by email from the father of the one of the recipients expressing his gratitude.

The initiative's ultimate goal is to give a bicycle to every child in Cuba who can't afford one. They rely on donations of used bicycles to make this a reality.

Doctors Without Borders has offered the initial space for 100 bikes in a shipping container bound for Cuba, so they are calling upon the community to donate old or used bikes to help fill the container.

It is truly heartwarming to hear about this project happening right in my own riding, and I'd like to be able to commend Aubrey Foley and Kathleen Cosby for their incredible charitable work.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Brantford truckers can get it all the way to Cuba.

That's over everyone's head. Don't worry about it.

SENIORS

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to talk about last Friday's visit by the Premier to my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt. The Premier visited Shepherd Village, a large seniors' complex in my riding.

I want to acknowledge Brock Hall, Christine Hopwood and all the staff at Shepherd Village for the excellent work they do for the seniors they care for at Shepherd Village, as well as across Scarborough.

Mr. Speaker, as the Premier and I chatted with the residents and staff at Shepherd Village, we heard that our government's commitment to seniors' care is making a positive difference in our community.

In 2012, Dr. Samir Sinha produced the Ontario Seniors Strategy. We listened; now we are taking action. We're working to ensure our seniors are living healthier, safer, and living in a community that meets their needs. We are committed to providing more access to home care through the additional three million personal support worker hours for seniors in need.

Through the Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit, seniors are now eligible to claim up to \$10,000 worth of home renovation on their tax return to help them with the costs of improving the safety and accessibility in their home. Recently, we rolled out the Seniors Community Grant Program to support initiatives that improve community engagement for seniors across the province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that our government is working together with our community to make Ontario the best place to grow up as well as to grow old.

CRAFT BREWERIES

Mr. Norm Miller: I rise in this House today to recognize two excellent craft brewers that are based in my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Recently, during the annual Speakers' craft brewers' event at Queen's Park that was held on St. Patrick's Day, members of the provincial Legislature and staff of the Legislature voted across a number of categories. Some 23 of Ontario's craft breweries were on hand, with 87 varieties competing in the annual event. The results of the voting are now in.

I'm pleased to congratulate the Highlander Brew Co. from South River in the riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka that was the winner in the "refreshing ale" category for its Lion Grass beer. As well, the Lake of Bays Brewing Company, located in Baysville, was voted the winner with their Spark House Red Ale, which topped the "malty dark lager or ale" category.

I'm proud to say that these two breweries are growing, and, along with other Ontario craft brewers, are making a significant contribution to Ontario's economy and creating jobs throughout Parry Sound–Muskoka and across the province.

I look forward to their continued success, and I again want to congratulate the Highlander Brew Co. and the Lake of Bays Brewing Company on their award-winning ales.

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. John Vanthof: On March 15, I organized a round table discussion with the mayors and reeves of central Temiskaming and the leader of the Ontario NDP, Andrea Horwath. It was a raw, windy day, but, despite the blustery weather, there were reps from across the area. We had an excellent discussion regarding the issues that municipalities are facing in my riding and across the north.

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Some of the major topics of discussion were: MPAC and ARB appeals, which were brought up first. The retroactivity of the appeals process is very difficult to deal with. It's one thing for an appeal to impact projected revenue, but it's very hard for municipalities to budget to reimburse taxes that have already been spent.

Provincial downloading and cancellation of programs were brought up several times. The cancellation of the Connecting Link Program is a serious blow to many towns, and other cases of downloading were also highlighted, from parks to wildlife management.

Energy was also a hot topic of discussion. Issues ranged from the local contractors who are not being paid for their work on the Canadian Solar farm to the siting of projects on agricultural land and the problems with billing by Hydro One.

The proposed new billing model for OPP services was top of mind for many townships. Under the model, their costs are projected to go up by, in some cases, more than 300%. This increase was seen as unsustainable, and it was felt that a better solution must be found.

Connectivity with the rest of the province continues to be a crucial issue. Highway maintenance, the ONTC and air service were the focus of much discussion.

On behalf of Andrea, I'd like to thank the municipalities that took the time to inform her about issues important to their constituents. I hope to be able to arrange similar round tables in the north and south parts of my riding as well.

EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

Mr. Mike Colle: I rise today to acknowledge the heroic efforts of over 120 firefighters, police officers, paramedics and MOE emergency personnel who responded to a six-alarm fire in my riding on Thursday. The six-alarm fire saw over four fire pumpers in the sky with their cannons. There were crews that worked for 24 hours on the site to control this fire in a mattress factory. Luckily, we had an excellent first-hand response from our firefighters and all of our front-line emergency responders.

I would also like to give special thanks to the police: Staff Sergeant Mike Matic, who, on the last day before he retires, was there, helping control the crowd; and staff inspector Baptist from 13 division. There were senior environmental officers from MOE—Sarah Proud and Charlie Tajnay were there—and Toronto EMS.

I would like to, again, give special thanks to the amazing firefighters who were up on these ladders, hundreds of feet in the air, with smoke that you could see all the way to King City. They were there, again, for 24 hours, for one of the worst fires we've ever seen in the middle of Toronto. Thankfully, no one was seriously hurt and all that was damaged was the building.

Again, we sometimes forget how important these first-line responders are. We thank them for their great work.

TOBACCO CONTROL

Mr. Monte McNaughton: As you know, Ontario is the epicentre for contraband tobacco in Canada, and it is currently estimated that one quarter of all tobacco sold in Ontario is of the contraband variety. Illegal cigarettes are a prime source for youth smoking and make a mockery of price and access control efforts.

In addition, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation estimates that in Ontario alone, the provincial and federal governments lose as much as \$1.1 billion annually to missing tax revenues from the contraband tobacco trade.

We know that illegal cigarettes fund criminal activities in our communities, and because of this, it is clear: The province of Ontario needs to do more to control the flow and supply of contraband tobacco. As you know, it has been nearly three years since the government passed Bill 186, the Supporting Smoke-Free Ontario by Reducing Contraband Tobacco Act. This legislation could help disrupt the manufacture of illegal cigarettes, but it is essentially useless because the Ministry of Finance has failed to finalize regulations for its full implementation.

Contraband tobacco is a cash cow for organized crime, and it's a huge problem affecting communities across my

riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex. Today I join a number of community organizations in calling on the government to do more to stop and prevent the sale and manufacture of contraband tobacco all across the province of Ontario.

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Mr. Steven Del Duca: I'm pleased today to rise and update members of this House regarding an event that's taking place in my wonderful community of Vaughan this coming Thursday. April 3 will mark the 25th annual Vaughan Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Awards.

For over 30 years, the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce has been an essential part of the business community, providing services to both small and large organizations. These critical supports have helped businesses grow and have provided them with the tools they need to thrive and prosper. This annual awards event allows us to recognize and celebrate business excellence in Vaughan, and it truly exemplifies my community's support for key industries and also for small businesses—principles not unlike those demonstrated in our government's plan for the economy.

I want to thank the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce for their dedicated commitment to our business community, and I also want to specifically congratulate Mr. Rudy Bratty on his receiving, this coming Thursday, the Philanthropic Business Person of the Year award for the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, as well as all the other winners who will be receiving awards this coming Thursday at the event.

I want to thank and congratulate the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce staff, board and volunteers on what I know will be, as always, a truly amazing event that I look forward to attending.

CUB SCOUTS

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I would like to start this statement with a promise:

"I promise to do my best,
 "To love and serve God, to do my duty to the Queen;
 "To keep the law of the Wolf Cub pack,
 "And to do a good turn for somebody every day."

Mr. Speaker, that is the promise by the Cub Scouts of Canada, and I was fortunate enough, during the March break, to have the 13th St. Thomas Cub Scouts visit my office on a hike.

It was really interesting that day; they did an outdoor hike, but instead of going out into the woods and seeing nature, they came to downtown St. Thomas and visited their political leaders. They stayed and toured my office for a good hour, asked many intriguing questions, and we got along quite well before they headed out the door to see the city of St. Thomas's mayor, Heather Jackson.

The Cub Scout program focuses on six activity areas: the natural world, outdoors, creative expression, healthy living, home and community, and Canada and the world.

Activities include: challenging hikes, weekend camps and outdoor activities; water activities like canoeing and kayaking; games and sports; model-building; and music, storytelling and play-acting.

I want to thank them for coming to visit me at my office, and I would also like to take the time to thank the volunteer Cub Scout leaders for helping and teaching and guiding our young folks of the next generation who will be there to take care of us when we're in our elderly years.

The last thing I want to leave you with is the motto: Do your best. I hope that we're all here at the Legislature doing our best for our constituents of Ontario.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT (STRIKE AND LOCKOUT INFORMATION), 2014

LOI DE 2014 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL (RENSEIGNEMENTS SUR LES GRÈVES ET LES LOCKOUTS)

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 184, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to information relating to strikes and lock-outs / Projet de loi 184, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail en ce qui concerne les renseignements sur les grèves et les lockouts.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yesterday, March 30, marked the first anniversary of Peter Kormos's passing. I didn't want to let the day go by without mentioning his name, and without doing a little something for him.

People who knew him would remember that he always had on the docket an anti-scab bill; that was something that he would present at every Legislature. This bill is a whole lot more timid; all it asks for is to identify when temporary replacement workers are used, but I thought it would have made him happy. I miss him greatly, and this bill is for him.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES DAY

Hon. John Gerretsen: I am pleased to make a statement on behalf of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs on

the 25th anniversary of National Aboriginal Languages Day.

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Speaker, boozhoo, bonjou, tunngasugit. Today marks Canada's 25th annual National Aboriginal Languages Day. National Aboriginal Languages Day was established by the Assembly of First Nations in 1989 to raise awareness about aboriginal people's languages and to support their preservation.

Speaker, aboriginal languages are significant to our country's great heritage. The name Canada comes from "kanata," the Ojibway word for village. Ontario stems from the Huron word "Onatari:io" meaning beautiful lake.

Languages are integrally linked to all of our cultures. There are more than 60 aboriginal languages spoken across Canada. They carry with them the spirit, history and philosophy of a people, and they transmit their culture to future generations. However, only three are currently considered safe from extinction: Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut.

The revival and preservation of aboriginal languages is not only important for First Nations, Métis and Inuit, but for all the people of Ontario.

Ontario's curriculum offers studies in seven First Nation languages: Cayuga, Cree, Delaware, Mohawk, Ojibway, Oji-Cree and Oneida. These classes are available to all students who want to learn an aboriginal language.

Last year, almost 6,650 elementary and secondary school students were enrolled in the aboriginal language programs and courses in our public schools throughout the province. This includes students enrolled in the Ojibway classes in the northern boards such as the Algoma District School Board and at urban schools in the Toronto District School Board.

Mr. Speaker, on National Aboriginal Languages Day our government joins with the First Nations, Inuit and Métis in recognizing the efforts of individuals and organizations to revive and preserve aboriginal languages.

There are not too many places, unfortunately, in southern Canada where you can learn to speak Inuktitut, but the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre is one of them where you can learn that language. Classes there are helping to create a new generation of Inuktitut speakers, connecting Inuit children and youth with their culture and their elders through language.

The University of Toronto's aboriginal studies department offers courses that provide opportunities for aboriginal and non-aboriginal students to learn about indigenous people's cultures, histories and traditions. A key feature of their program is its commitment to aboriginal language instruction. One of its affiliates, the Indigenous Language Initiative, promotes language learning in Ojibway, Oneida and Inuktitut.

The Métis Nation of Ontario has created a collection of resources to help Métis youth reconnect with their heritage language, Michif. This includes a series of videos with phrases and pronunciations, in addition to

audio and text resources. As you've probably seen by now, I should have taken some of those lessons to get some of those aboriginal languages in.

Interjection: There's always time, John.

Hon. John Gerretsen: There may still be time yet.

Six Nations Polytechnic is home to the Indigenous Knowledge Centre. The centre works collaboratively with indigenous knowledge guardians to collect information about cultural history for the benefit of aboriginal communities. One of its key projects is the preservation of Haudenosaunee languages.

Mr. Speaker, it is exciting to know there are opportunities available across the province to learn aboriginal languages.

I'd like to take just a moment—I think all of us in the House can do that—to thank these unsung heroes. Their work is supporting language preservation and strengthening the aboriginal cultures and traditions that are part of the foundation and the future of Canada and Ontario.

I encourage all of the people of Ontario to spend some time on National Aboriginal Languages Day—today, March 31—to learn a few words in an aboriginal language. It helps all of us to recognize the importance that the aboriginal communities and nations have played and continue to play in this great province. Let us respect that this is due to the founding peoples of this land and adhere to the treaties and obligations that have been signed with the aboriginal nations.

Speaker, there are resources available in the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs Twitter account and Facebook page.

Thank you. Miigwetch. Nia:wen. Marsé. Nakurmiik.

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

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to respond to the minister on National Aboriginal Languages Day. I'm pleased to rise in this House today on behalf of the PC caucus and leader, Tim Hudak, to recognize National Aboriginal Languages Day.

Founded by the Assembly of First Nations in 1989, this year marks the 25th anniversary of National Aboriginal Languages Day in Canada. The 2011 Canadian census reports over 60 First Nations languages spoken in Canada, falling into 12 distinct language categories.

Language is central to culture. As we discuss the preservation of culture, it becomes more necessary to also look to preserving language. This will undoubtedly be a difficult task, as the number of elders in First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities limit the ability for these languages to be passed on. In many cases, the oral tradition associated with the passing on of these languages adds to the difficulty of bringing these traditions to younger generations.

I would be remiss to not acknowledge the fact that First Nations languages suffered through the residential school system. There are constant reminders that First Nations children were forced to speak and work in English or French, with students being punished for speaking in their mother tongues.

New technology provides hope for the preservation of Canada's First Nations languages. Specifically, with the capability for online archiving and remote learning with the expansion of Internet access, there is much greater hope of ensuring that these aboriginal languages are preserved and passed on to future generations.

As was pointed out by the minister, the Métis have developed some programs to help promote the Michif language. Michif is the language of the Métis people. Once spoken all across the homeland, like most aboriginal languages, the number of Michif speakers declined due to the colonization process that attempted to stamp out the use of languages other than English and French.

Efforts are now under way to preserve Michif and introduce Métis youth to their heritage language. As part of that effort, the Métis Nation of Ontario has created online Michif resources. These include online audio and video files to help preserve—and educate new individuals to—the Michif language. This technology could certainly be used for First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages.

I'm pleased to represent a riding that has some seven First Nations and Métis, including the Dokis First Nation, Henvey Inlet First Nation, Magnetawan First Nation, the Pottawatomi of Moose Deer Point First Nation, Shawanaga First Nation, Wasauksing First Nation and the Wahta Mohawk First Nation.

Seeing as I have the floor, I would like to congratulate the Wahta Mohawks' newly elected chief, Philip Franks, on his election, which was held recently, on March 15.

Miigwetch. Nia:wen. Marsé. Nakurmiik.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Miigwetch.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: It is an honour to stand up and speak on behalf of the New Democratic caucus to mark National Aboriginal Languages Day. This day was established in 1989 by the Assembly of First Nations to support aboriginal languages across our country.

It is important not only because it preserves culture and helps strengthen one's identity, but because it helps to preserve the history of our nation's first peoples. There are more than 60 indigenous languages in Canada, which represent 12 distinct language families. Approximately 1.4 million people identify as aboriginal in Canada, representing 4.3% of the total Canadian population. With each new report, this number is growing.

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As an MPP who represents nearly 50 First Nation communities, I have been very fortunate to be in close contact and witness first-hand the sharing of this vital link to our past. Aboriginal peoples, through their language and oral storytelling, have conveyed thousands of years of accumulated knowledge. Through art and expression, we have seen much of their important connection to the natural world passed on from generation to generation.

However, in more recent history, aboriginal languages and culture have become threatened and weakened through things like residential schools and other assimilation policies. In some cases, children faced severe

punishment for speaking their First Nation languages. Being cut off from their families, they lost the ability to speak their mother tongue and pass it along to their own children.

In the words of the Assembly of First Nations' national chief, Shawn A-in-chut Atleo: "As with all civilizations our languages, cultures and ceremonies and histories are the foundations for our identities."

Preserving aboriginal languages means supporting access to immersion programs, language teachings, cultural camps and access to traditional languages within all learning environments, including training of language teachers in our schools and institutions.

To this end, we appreciate the role that the Assembly of First Nations, the Chiefs of Ontario, treaty organizations and our First Nations leaders have played. Other significant contributors to the preservation of aboriginal languages are the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, Aboriginal Voices magazine, Windspeaker, Tekawennake, Wawatay Native Communications Society including Seven magazine, which is a quarterly publication aimed at sharing and promoting First Nations culture among youth.

In addition, there are many independent initiatives taking place, such as the new development of a web-based interactive First Nations language portal featuring dictionary and curriculum-based resources for Cree language in Canada, and the commitment of individual communities such as Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug to the preservation of First Nation culture through their newly created youth leadership program, which will increase awareness about First Nations culture, issues and living conditions in northern communities.

The fact is, much of the preservation of these languages relies on the commitment and supports that we all provide to preserve it. Today, on National Aboriginal Languages Day, we celebrate and honour the strength and endurance of aboriginal languages and culture. This day recognizes the need to revitalize and seek ways to sustain traditional languages, First Nation identity and our history as a nation. Meegwetch.

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

PETITIONS

WIND TURBINES

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

"In light of the many wide-ranging concerns being raised by Ontario citizens and 80-plus action groups across Ontario and the irrefutable international evidence of a flawed technology, health concerns, environmental effects, bird and bat kills, property losses, the tearing apart of families, friends and communities, and unprecedented costs;

“We, the undersigned, ask the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to declare an Ontario-wide moratorium on the development of wind farms.”

I agree with this petition. I'll affix my signature and send it to the desk with Milana.

HYDRO RATES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES

Mr. Steve Clark: I would like to thank Rooney Feeds Limited in Kemptville for this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the University of Guelph's Kemptville and Alfred campuses are two of Ontario's outstanding post-secondary agricultural schools; and

“Whereas these campuses have delivered specialized and high-quality programs to generations of students from agricultural communities across eastern Ontario and the future success of the region's agri-food industry depends on continuing this strong partnership; and

“Whereas regional campuses like those in Kemptville and Alfred ensure the agri-food industry has access to the knowledge, research and innovation that are critical for Ontario to remain competitive in this rapidly changing sector;

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

“That Premier Wynne in her dual capacity as Minister of Agriculture and Food act immediately to reverse the University of Guelph's short-sighted and unacceptable decision to close its Kemptville and Alfred campuses.”

I'm pleased to affix my signature and send it to the table with page Samantha.

GASOLINE PRICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from M^{me} Lynne St-Jean from Naughton, in my riding, as well as Mrs. Monic Monahan from Gogama. 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. I will affix my name to it and ask page Milana to bring it to the clerk.

USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: I have a petition addressed here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which has been duly signed and endorsed by Clerk Todd Decker. It reads as follows:

“Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

“Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

“Whereas progressive record-keeping relies on cloud technology, remote access, real-time updates, multiple-point data entry and broadband, wireless and satellite technologies;

“Whereas as there is more to full exploitation of technology than having an email address;

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been considering the value, utility and usage of digital devices within the legislative precinct and within the chamber of Parliament itself for several months;

“Whereas this consideration of digital empowerment of members continues to be unresolved, on hold, under consideration and the subject of repeated temporizing correspondence between decision-makers and interested parties;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully embrace digital technologies, empower members, acquire

the optimal Android and Apple devices, maximize the many technology offerings, and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario.”

In agreement whereof I affix my signature and send it to you proudly via page Nusaybah.

FISHING REGULATIONS

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

“Whereas the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary is printed each year by the Ministry of Natural Resources and distributed to recreational fishermen throughout the province to inform them of all the relevant seasons, limits, licence requirements and other regulations; and

“Whereas this valuable document is readily available for anglers to keep in their residence, cottage, truck, boat, trailer or on their person to be fully informed of the current fishing regulations; and

“Whereas the MNR has recently and abruptly drastically reduced the distribution of the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary such that even major licence issuers and large fishing retailers are limited to one case of regulations per outlet; and

“Whereas anglers do not always have access to the Internet to view online regulations while travelling or in remote areas;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately return the production of the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary to previous years’ quantities such that all anglers have access to a copy and to distribute them accordingly.”

I affix my signature in full support.

MINING INDUSTRY

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

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

“Whereas the people who collectively own these natural resources should stand to” benefit from them;

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

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

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

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

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

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USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: J’ai une pétition ici, adressée à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

“Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

“Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

“Whereas progressive record-keeping relies on cloud technology, remote access, real-time updates, multiple-point data entry and broadband, wireless and satellite technologies;

“Whereas as there is more to full exploitation of technology than having an email address;

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been considering the value, utility and usage of digital devices within the legislative precinct and within the chamber of Parliament itself for several months;

“Whereas this consideration of digital empowerment of members continues to be unresolved, on hold, under consideration and the subject of repeated temporizing correspondence between decision-makers and interested parties;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully embrace digital technologies, empower members, acquire the optimal Android and Apple devices, maximize the many technology offerings, and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario.”

I agree, Speaker, affix my signature and send it to you via page Divya.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I’m pleased to present this petition from the community of Mildmay:

“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.”

I agree with this petition, I affix my signature and I'll send it to the desk with Simon.

FIREFIGHTERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters' Association, their Sudbury local. It reads as follows:

“Whereas firefighters are routinely exposed to burning chemicals and other toxins in the course of protecting the lives and property of fellow citizens; and

“Whereas even with the best respiratory practices and protective equipment, exposures will continue to occur due to absorption through the skin once a firefighter has become soaked during fire suppression activities; and

“Whereas epidemiological, medical and scientific studies conclusively demonstrate an increased rate of diseases such as cancer in firefighters versus the general population ...”

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“Amend the regulations of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA), 1997 to include cancer of the lungs, breasts, testicles, prostate, skin and multiple myeloma in presumptive legislation for occupational diseases related to firefighting.”

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

USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads as follows:

“Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

“Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

“Whereas progressive record-keeping relies on cloud technology, remote access, real-time updates, multiple-point data entry and broadband, wireless and satellite technologies;

“Whereas as there is more to full exploitation of technology than having an email address;

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been considering the value, utility and usage of digital devices within the legislative precinct and within the chamber of Parliament itself for several months;

“Whereas this consideration of digital empowerment of members continues to be unresolved, on hold, under consideration and the subject of repeated temporizing correspondence between decision-makers and interested parties;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully

embrace digital technologies, empower members, acquire the optimal Android and Apple devices, maximize the many technology offerings, and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario.”

I agree, Speaker, affix my signature and send it to you via page Mira.

PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

Mr. Jim McDonell: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas current community care access centre personal support worker guidelines do not provide a clear indication of whether PSWs are allowed to support patients' activities outside the home; and

“Whereas patient health is best ensured through an active, healthy lifestyle that may involve activities outside the patient's home; and

“Whereas the spirit of community care includes patient access to their community's healthy lifestyle resources;

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

“To enact all necessary statutes that would allow personal support workers and other community care access centre staff to support their patients and clients both in the home and in necessary activities in their communities.”

I will agree with this and sign it for page Jane.

DENTAL CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from all over Ontario.

“Whereas thousands and thousands of adults live with pain and infection because they cannot afford dental care;

“Whereas the promised \$45-million dental fund under the Poverty Reduction Strategy excluded impoverished adults;

“Whereas the programs were designed with rigid criteria so that most of the people in need do not qualify; and

“Whereas desperately needed dental care money went unspent and was diverted to other areas even though people are still suffering without access to dental care;

“We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to do all in its power to stop dental funds from being diverted to support other programs and to fully utilize the commissioned funding to provide dental care to those in need.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Samantha to bring it to the table.

USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

“Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

“Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

“Whereas progressive record-keeping relies on cloud technology, remote access, real-time updates, multiple-point data entry and broadband, wireless and satellite technologies;

“Whereas as there is more to full exploitation of technology than having an email address;

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been considering the value, utility and usage of digital devices within the legislative precinct and within the chamber of Parliament itself for several months;

“Whereas this consideration of digital empowerment of members continues to be unresolved, on hold, under consideration and the subject of repeated temporizing correspondence between decision-makers and interested parties;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully embrace digital technologies, empower members, acquire the optimal Android and Apple devices, maximize the many technology offerings, and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario.”

I agree, will sign it and send it to you via page Eli.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

YOUTH SMOKING PREVENTION ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LA PRÉVENTION DU TABAGISME CHEZ LES JEUNES

Resuming the debate adjourned on February 19, 2014, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 131, An Act to amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. / Projet de loi 131, Loi modifiant la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'm pleased to recognize the member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Speaker. Well, I guess it's my turn to do my lead on Bill 131.

This bill was first introduced on November 18 of last year. This is a bill that is extremely important and this is a bill that has wide support throughout Ontario to ban candy-flavoured tobacco in our province. I'm happy to be doing my lead today, but I sure wish we didn't have to wait four and a half months to move on with something like this.

1350

You see, Speaker, flavoured tobacco is something that I have been working on since 2008. In 2008, myself and

the Speaker—not you; Speaker Levac—introduced a co-sponsored bill that did just that: It banned flavoured cigarillos. The bill was one of the first ones put forward as a co-sponsored bill, and it actually went through. It received first, second and third reading and royal assent, and it became law in Ontario. We were both very proud that something like this had been supported. That was back six years ago, in 2008.

By the time the act came into effect—because there was a little bit of a delay between the time it received royal assent and the time that the people in Ontario had to adjust—the tobacco companies had already found a loophole. The loophole was quite simple. They took the little, single cigarillo that had been defined in the act as best as we could—it contained a total gram of tobacco to say that it was a cigarillo, not a full cigar, that we were talking about, because the full cigars have not been targeted to kids as much. They're targeting other people with it. But, to make a long story short, by the time it came into effect, the tobacco industry was ready. They had found a loophole in the bill, increased the number of grams of tobacco in their cigarillo, and continued to sell under the same name brand, the same packaging, the same price—the same everything. If you put the old product, which I still have in my office, beside the new product, which is how they found a loophole, you need to have a pretty sharp eye to see the difference between the two, because to you and me it looks pretty much identical.

Since then, I have been working really hard to try to close that loophole, to try to ban flavouring in tobacco, which clearly targets our youth. It hasn't been easy, and I have introduced different versions of this bill six times. But I was happy that in February of this year, my bill, Bill 149, actually went through. It passed second reading with unanimous support from this House. So we know that in this House, like in the rest of the province, there is really strong support to bring that kind of legislation forward.

Given all of this, given that we know that Ontarians want this, that we've already had a similar bill go through the House and reach second reading, it is a little bit disheartening to see that here we are four and a half months after the minister has introduced her bill, and I'm just doing my lead. Doing my lead means that it's the first time the bill is tabled in a way that allows us to talk about it. With something that has such great support, you would have thought that my lead would have been done way back in November, but it wasn't. It took a lot of work from the cancer society and from many people who are opposed to flavouring in tobacco to move that ahead.

It shouldn't be that hard, Mr. Speaker. When there is support within this House, when there is huge support within our society, why is it that the Legislative Assembly is so, so slow? Why is it that volunteer organizations have to come here and talk to pretty well every single one of us to show us how important it is to move on this issue? But it even took a letter to the editor in the *Toronto Star* to finally get this bill back on the docket so that

we can talk about it. It leaves me with a feeling that they're not that committed to this. They say yes when they're pushed in that direction, and they say the right thing when they're speaking, but their actions speak way louder than their words, and their action right now is saying that four and a half months later is sort of a good time to talk about this bill again. Well, not to me, Speaker; not to me.

Sometimes you dream as to what could be. Well, life in Ontario could be quite, quite different when you look at things like the fact that three million people worldwide die every year because of tobacco use. Right here in our province, 36 people today and every single day will die because they were smokers. If you look at the population at large, about 20% of Ontarians are smokers. Well, that 20% of Ontarians who are smokers are the 90% who will die of lung cancer. Lung cancer is not a fun disease to fight, but for the 20% of smokers in Ontario, 90% of them who get the disease will die. Of all of the lung cancers that are diagnosed in our province—and unfortunately, there are tens of thousands of them every year—90% of those diagnoses come from that 20% of people who smoke.

If you look at all cancers, and we know there are hundreds of thousands of people who receive a diagnosis of cancer, 30% of all cancers are directly linked to people who smoke. If you look at things like chronic bronchitis, emphysema, you could wipe out 80% of the people with chronic bronchitis or emphysema if people stopped smoking. Twenty-five per cent of heart disease or strokes—those can be pretty debilitating diseases and handicaps. Having a stroke that affects your right side usually also affects your speech. It becomes a very difficult recovery when not only is half of your body paralyzed so that you cannot use it, but you also cannot communicate. Twenty-five per cent of strokes and heart disease would be wiped out if people stopped smoking.

Why am I going through all of those statistics? Because the people in this House have an opportunity to change it. The people in this House have an opportunity to move this bill forward so that it becomes reality and so that the next generation of smokers doesn't start.

We all know that a cigarette contains nicotine. Nicotine—a bit like heroin—breaks what we call the blood-brain barrier. It affects the brain. But did you know that nicotine is actually more addictive than cocaine? Nicotine is more addictive than heroin, so it is really, really easy to get hooked.

Why am I talking to you about this? It's very simple: because the products that we want to ban, the flavoured tobacco products that we want to ban, are there because they want to hook the next generation of smokers. For somebody who is already hooked on nicotine, they don't want the cherry flavours anymore and they certainly don't want the bubble gum or the candy floss flavour anymore; they want the nicotine. The nicotine is what will call you back 30 times a day to light another one.

Interjection.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Sorry. No, this is not a smoker's cough. That was not funny.

1400

So all of those kids who will have a buck to look cool, a buck to go and buy a flavoured cigarillo so that they can carry it in their backpack, so that they can try to fit in with the cool crowd—what the industry is really doing is making sure that they get addicted to nicotine. Once you're addicted, then they don't have to worry anymore: You will find the money someplace to buy the next pack. Once you're addicted, it's not the single flavoured cigarillo that you will crave. It is the nicotine, and you will find this, and you will do what needs to be done so you get your next fix of tobacco.

Anybody who has tried to quit will soon realize the very unpleasant withdrawal symptoms that come once you're addicted to nicotine and you try to stop. What's the easy route? Well, the easy route is to continue to light up, which is what the industry is hoping for.

Interjection.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Sorry, let me try again. I don't want any comments from the gallery either.

Basically, this is the core of what the bill will do. The bill will do more than that, though, and those are all measures that we support. The bill will prohibit the selling of promotional items with tobacco products, which is something that is kind of picking up speed. You buy a pack of cigarettes, and you get a free lighter with something cool on it or a pack with something on it—it would ban this. It would broaden the ability of an inspector to enter a place where it is prohibited to smoke, a place that manufactures or a wholesale distributor of retail tobacco or a place where an inspector has reasonable grounds to believe that a prohibited activity is taking place. It also doubles the fine for those who sell tobacco to youth, which unfortunately is still happening in this province.

It would allow for testing of tobacco in water pipes, or hookah pipes, which is a practice that is gaining in popularity with our youth. Unfortunately, this is also another way where youth get addicted. You don't need a whole lot of nicotine before you're addicted.

It's always weird to think that a product that has over 4,000 different chemicals in it—40 of them are known carcinogens; that is, they give you cancer.

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Carcinogens.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Carcinogenic? That was the French translation for you there.

They are actually inhaled by people every day. If you would ask people to take a pill that has all of those chemicals in them, people would refuse because of the harm it would do to their health, but they're willing to inhale them 30 times a day—or whatever number of cigarettes they do smoke.

The bill also has some regulations. The regulations will prohibit smoking on playgrounds, sports fields, sports surfaces and sports spectator areas within a 20-metre radius, except if there's a private dwelling. This is the kind of regulation that's already in place in a number of municipalities. So I would say the province is playing catch-up right now with a number of municipalities,

including my own in Sudbury, where such a bylaw has already been put in place.

It prohibits smoking in all covered and uncovered restaurants, bars and patios, except for a few Legion halls that have been exempt. This is because, right now, if summer ever comes and we get to go and sit at a patio again without a nine-foot snowbank surrounding us, you will see that they are now captive of people who smoke. You go on to any restaurant patio anywhere in Ontario, and a lot of people who are smokers decide to smoke there, which really makes it almost impossible for a family who does not want to be exposed to second-hand smoke to also enjoy the patio. So to bring a little bit of fairness to it, and to encourage people to quit—I am not denying this—I would like those measures to be in place, because not only do we not want the next generation of smokers to pick up the habit, but it would be good to support people who do have the habit and are trying to quit. Making it harder and harder is certainly one way to do this.

It would prohibit the sale of tobacco on post-secondary education campuses, in schools and in day nurseries. So if there is a convenience store within a university or a college campus etc., no more tobacco. It prohibits smoking on specific provincial government properties, similar to Ontario public services, and it prohibits smoking on outdoor hospital grounds, except in areas designated by the hospital board.

We've already come a long way in Ontario with smoke-free. I started my career working in hospitals, and I remember when people used to smoke in hospitals. I remember we used to have smoking rooms and non-smoking rooms. You would walk into a smoking room, and if somebody was bedridden, you were guaranteed that all around that bed you could see burn marks on the floor where cigarettes had fallen off and burned through, basically, the tiles or carpet or whatever was around the bed. I remember lighting up cigarettes for people who were bedridden when I started my career. People would now think, "Really? You have people with oxygen and you have people with all kinds of respiratory diseases." But that was then. Now we wouldn't think of smoking in our hospitals; we know better.

I think those next steps are pretty much in line with making more and more public places smoke-free so that the norm for recreation and for socialization is not around a cigarette anymore; it's in a smoke-free environment, whether it be on a sports field, on hospital grounds, on school grounds, or at a college, university or day nursery etc. So we're changing the social norm, which is a big part of helping people quit, and also preventing new smokers from picking up the habit.

When we talk about tobacco and smoking, it is good to review the facts and the impact—I've talked a little bit about the impact of tobacco, but things like the fact that it costs the Ontario economy about \$1.6 billion in health care annually. This is a lot of money, \$1.6 billion, that we wouldn't have to spend anymore. That results in \$4.4 billion in lost productivity, and it also results in about

half a million hospital stays—so 500,000 hospital days are used in our hospitals directly linked to people being sick because they are smokers.

We also know that exposure to second-hand smoke causes major damage to our children. We now go into a school and it is not rare to see a third of the kids in every single class having asthma. Part of this is linked to the damage that is done to lung development in children that are exposed to second-hand smoke. As well, there are a lot of middle-ear problems. When you have kids that have earache after earache, they are often from a family where people smoke in the house and they are exposed to second-hand smoke.

Smoking during pregnancy also increases the risk of complications such as miscarriage, premature delivery, low birth weight, infant stillbirth, and sudden infant death syndrome—none of them good. The way to prevent this is to make sure the next generation doesn't start to smoke and to help the people that are smokers quit the habit. In adults, tobacco use is responsible for lung disease, heart disease, lung cancer and many others.

1410

In our hospital in Sudbury, they have a special clinic just for what we call COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. If you look at them, Sudbury is no better, no different than anybody else. Between 80% and 90% of the people there are smokers or in some cases, by the time they are severe enough to come to the clinic, become ex-smokers. Just think of the difference it would make if we could make sure that the next generation does not pick up the habit. That 80% to 90% of the people with COPD would fall to 10%, which would make a huge, huge difference for them and for our health care system.

If you look at youth in grades 6 to 9, and maybe the Minister of Education is interested in that, 8.7% of them have tried smoking. If you try the grades 10 to 12, it rises to 34% of them having tried smoking. Unfortunately, the smoking rates are the highest in young adults, that is, between the ages of 20 and 24. This is where the highest province-wide rate of smokers sits, at about 22%. It is a sad reality, with everything we know about smoking, that we still see young people picking up the habit.

That brings us back to our bill. One of the reasons is that they got addicted. This one, fun-looking package that you carried in your backpack to look cool that contained a flavoured cigarillo—well, it doesn't matter that if we were to give them just a regular cigar, most of them wouldn't be able to smoke it. It tastes pretty bad. It not only gives you bad breath for a week, but if you're not a smoker, it's pretty hard to smoke one of those. Once you add the flavouring in there, it makes it way easier, and a lot of youth will be able to smoke the full cigarillo. They will get a full charge of nicotine. That nicotine—it doesn't take long before you get the addiction. The nicotine will keep calling you back.

If this bill passes, and I sure hope that it does, it would bring Ontario closer to the high standard set by British Columbia's Tobacco Control Act. It would also stream-

line the bylaws passed by dozens of municipalities in Ontario that already prohibit smoking in parks, patios, government buildings etc.

Since 2008, when the Speaker and I introduced a ban on flavoured cigarillos, a lot has happened. The industry has really expanded the number of flavours that exist, that could not even be thought of, but all of them have something in common. All of them are meant to target youth with a lot of candy flavours, a lot of drink-based—appletinis and those kinds of flavours really go after the youth so that they take their first puff, they get the nicotine rush and then they come back, because the nicotine is telling them to come back.

When the changes happened, the cigarillos themselves, as I say, except for being a little bit bigger—they smell the same, the packages were the same, the price was the same and, more importantly, the marketing was the same. The tobacco industry recognizes a money-maker when they see one, and they knew that they had found one with the flavoured cigarillo. So I hope that today we will finish the job to help protect youth from becoming the next generation of smokers and ban this flavoured cigarillo.

There's a difference between what the government is putting forward and what I am putting forward. My bill, Bill 149, not only bans flavoured cigarillos, flavoured tobacco, it also puts a ban on new tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco. I don't know if any of you follow little league baseball, but if you go to the 15-to-24 age groups that play ball, I guarantee you on every single one of those benches you will find chew. Chew is flavoured chewing tobacco. It comes in all sorts of flavours, and I guarantee you every single one of those benches has it. They do the same thing: They deliver nicotine. Nicotine breaks the blood-brain barrier to deliver the addition. Once you're addicted to nicotine, you will do what needs to be done to get your fix, or live with withdrawal, which most people don't find they want to put up with, so they light up again.

My bill looks at what we call smokeless. There are all sorts of different chews that exist. There is snuff also, which is used lots in Europe and is trying to make its way into Ontario. It's basically a little pouch of finely, finely ground tobacco that you keep in your mouth. Some people keep that in their mouth for 12 hours a day, and they forever have this slow release of nicotine through the snuff—again, a habit that has not come into Ontario yet. I would much rather it did not come.

Same thing: They have teeny-weeny little mints. Everybody knows what a Tic Tac looks like, the little mint. They look pretty much like a Tic Tac but, again, they are finely, finely ground tobacco; and they do the same—some of those little Tic Tacs will deliver four times the amount of nicotine that a cigarette would give you. They all do the same. If you start with those little mints, there's also a new product being tested that looks a bit like a toothpick. You use it like a toothpick except that it delivers, again, nicotine, and it delivers this addiction. People will tell you, "Oh, but it's better that they

chew tobacco than smoking it." No, it's better that you don't use nicotine at all and it's better that you don't get addicted at all.

My bill really looks at banning flavoured, not only in smoke tobacco but also in smokeless tobacco, so that you don't get addicted to nicotine. It doesn't take long, once you're addicted, that you will find your way to the smoking kind. The same thing goes for people saying, "Oh, yes, but it will help me quit." None of this has been substantiated by any research. There's no body of evidence that shows that if you introduce those nicotine-based products you will help people quit. But I can guarantee something, though: that as people start to use those products, the chances that they will become smokers go up through the rafters. They're not products that I want brought into our province.

We already have quite a few good products to help people quit. Some of those products are available in our health units, at the community health centres, from our family health teams. They're available free of charge for a lot of people. And there are health care professionals who will be there to help you quit. We don't need nicotine-based new products under the disguise that it will help them quit. We have products to help them quit that are not as dangerous as bringing in new nicotine-based products and hoping that they help people quit, while the risk of getting people addicted to nicotine is real and is a clear and imminent danger I would call.

1420

If we focus specifically on flavoured tobacco, there was a study done in October 2013. A report that was released, the Youth Smoking Survey, showed that 57,000 grade 6 to grade 12 Ontario youth used flavoured tobacco products in the year 2010-11. The report was just released, though, this past year. Fifty-seven thousand youth had tried flavoured tobacco products, and we know a great big number of them will become smokers. It is time that we take this off the shelves. There is no reason to have this on our shelves in Ontario.

I know that the cigar industry is always very worried when we talk about banning flavouring, but if you look at the package that they come in, there is no way that an adult would buy that kind of thing and throw them in their tackle box on their way out to a fishing trip. They are made for kids. They are packages that look like you're buying candy or you're buying a Fruit Roll-Up. It certainly does not look like you are bringing a cigar to wherever you want to go with your cigar.

Of those kids who have tried them, in the last 30 days, 14% of them had reported that they also tried cigarette smoking. So to go from one to the next was quite easy, and we're finding that. The response to the findings of those different studies was immediate. They want us to ban, eliminate, flavour in all tobacco products.

There is a youth group that has started to advocate for this. They used to be called Flavour Gone and now they have changed their name to Freeze the Industry. I encourage you to Google Freeze the Industry because they have some pretty out-there YouTube videos. They

wear those little suits where they are one colour from top to bottom. They look like—I don't know how to describe them, but we've all seen them. It covers the head and the arms; some of them are yellow, some of them are orange, and some of them are green. They all get dressed like this, and they do a pretty nifty video about Flavour Gone. They've also got pens.

I will read you what it says: "Freeze the Industry is advocating for a tobacco moratorium, a ban on all new tobacco products not yet introduced in Canada and an alteration to current products." This is a bunch of youth. They started in Ottawa, but they have membership throughout Ontario now, and they are asking us to act. Why are they doing this? Because they see their peers, the youth around them, who are starting to smoke.

They go on to say, "We need a moratorium because the tobacco industry continues to develop new, innovative products that evade and exploit tobacco legislation designed to protect the health of young Canadians; recruit and retain youth and young adults, since 81% of current and former smokers begin smoking before the age of 18—and they appear to be less harmful than existing products when in reality they continue to contain the same dangerous ingredients." They call themselves Freeze the Industry.

Freeze the Industry is a group of youth. Google them, and you will see. They put their message out in a way that is very much youth-targeted, but really, they're talking to us. We are the ones who can freeze the industry. We are the ones who either can pass my bill or the minister's bill to make sure that the flavour will be gone and to make sure that new tobacco-based products won't be allowed into our province. This is the only sure way to ensure that we don't continue to have 90% of our lung cancer deaths attributed to the 20% of the people who smoke, because every time that 20% of smokers gets smaller and smaller, the number of people with cancer, with heart disease, with COPD etc. starts to go down. It is directly linked.

Not only are tobacco companies good at marketing; they are also good at inventing new flavours. I had an intern from OLIP with me last fall. During the constituency week for Remembrance Day, I was able to bring him to my riding. My riding has quite a few First Nations in it with smoke shacks. I was able to bring him there. He had never seen what a smoke shack looked like; he certainly had an opportunity to see quite a few of them in my riding. There, the tobacco products are not behind cupboards. They are in plain view so you can see the number of flavours and the fancy packaging that is put out. It is just unbelievable.

A lot of people will tell you that what we really need to do is to work on illegal tobacco, and I couldn't agree more. More needs to be done regarding illegal tobacco, but that doesn't mean that we cannot also support this bill. It's not because more needs to be done that we don't start someplace. For every step that we take towards the end goal of making sure that youth don't start smoking, or making sure that we make it easier and easier for

people to quit smoking, all of those little steps will bring us to where we want to go.

Specifically about patios: Allowing smoking on patios associates tobacco use with relaxation and socializing with friends. With the bill, the regulation will make patios 100% smoke-free. This tells young adults, who sometimes smoke on patios, that any use of tobacco products—occasional or not—is dangerous. Today's patios are often occupied almost entirely by young smokers, which, as I said, makes it almost impossible for a family with kids to go there or for a non-smoker to enjoy socializing on a patio. So the idea is really to show that smoking, no matter where it is within a public place, is not welcome.

We have right now 100 Ontario municipalities that have passed such a bylaw, that ban smoking in outdoor places such as playgrounds, parks, beaches etc. This number is increasing quickly. To pass this bill with the provision that would ban smoking in municipal places is really to play catch-up, because a huge percentage of the municipalities in Ontario are already there. We would just make it an even playing field for the entire province.

I mentioned that we have 100 municipalities. Well, just two years ago, there were only 50, so you can see that in the last few years the number of municipalities that have joined the ranks of municipalities where you cannot smoke in a variety of outdoor places, such as playgrounds, parks, beaches etc., has grown and continues to grow.

I think it is time for us to get in front of this, to make it easier rather than having many, many other dozens of municipalities having to take on the battles on their own with their own resources. It's a whole lot easier to just make the ban province-wide, and then we save time, effort and energy in all.

1430

"It is widely accepted by experts that there is no risk-free level of exposure to second-hand smoke.... Second-hand smoke is composed of both mainstream smoke, exhaled by the smoker and side-stream smoke from the burning end of the cigarette." This smoke contains 5,000 different chemicals, and 69 of them are carcinogenic. "Second-hand smoke is a known cause of sudden infant death syndrome, asthma and respiratory infection in children and coronary heart disease, lung cancer and emphysema in adults, among other serious health consequences.... According to the US Surgeon General, even low levels of exposure 'lead to a rapid and sharp increase in dysfunction and inflammation of the lining of the blood vessels, which are implicated in heart attacks and stroke....'" As I said, having a stroke, whether it's on your right side or left side, can be quite debilitating. The therapy is difficult and not always fully successful. It's a whole lot easier to prevent than to cure.

A recent study specifically for Ontario has showed that banning smoking inside bars has saved the lives of five to seven non-smoking bar workers annually, and has also prevented 90% of those workers from coronary heart disease. This is quite significant, because you have to

realize that whether you used to smoke in restaurants—we don't anymore—if you smoke on a patio, the workers still have to go there. They still have to serve you. They still have to pick up and they still have to clean up. Those people are exposed, and now the body of knowledge that we have on second-hand smoke makes it clearer and clearer that those workers are at risk. They are putting their health at risk; and banning smoking on patios would certainly help those workers in having a safe workplace.

I've talked to you a bit about a letter that was sent to the Toronto Star. It was titled "Whatever the reason for the stall on anti-smoking legislation at Queen's Park, kids are still accessing flavoured tobacco products." I will read part of this into the record. That was a letter penned by Michael Perley, who is the director of the Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco; Martin Kabat, who is the CEO of the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario division; and Tom McAllister, who is the COO of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Those are the people who, basically, want to put pressure on us to do the right thing, and to do the right thing is to make sure we move ahead and pass legislation that bans flavored tobacco. So they go on to say—that was published on March 25, that is, Tuesday of last week—that:

"You'd be hard-pressed to find many subjects today on which all Ontarians agree, but the need to keep tobacco products away from our kids would surely be at the top of the list.

"Since 2003, the current provincial government has been helping build this agreement through legislation, smoking cessation programs, and efforts to prevent kids from getting access to tobacco products. Its latest effort is Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act"—which we are talking about today—"introduced in the legislature by Health Minister Deb Matthews on Nov. 18, 2013.

"The bill is designed to protect kids from deadly, addictive tobacco products. The centrepiece is a ban on all candy and fruit flavours in tobacco products. Outdoor patios—where smoking is still positively linked with relaxation and socializing, and where workers can be exposed to dangerous levels of second-hand smoke—will be made smoke-free.

"Sports fields, playgrounds and hospital grounds would all be made smoke-free. Sales of tobacco will no longer be permitted on university and college campuses. Fines for retail tobacco sales to minors will double. Finally, tobacco enforcement personnel will be able to take further steps against the spread of indoor water pipe smoking. The latter is critical: In the latest survey, more grade 12s are smoking water pipes (19%) than cigarettes (11%)!

"Bill 131 is essential to keeping our kids healthy. But it's also critically important because the overall rate of smoking in Ontario has remained flat (at about 18%) for five years. Aggressive further action is necessary to reduce this deadly incidence of smoking.

"Ontario's major health charities—the Canadian Cancer Society, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and others—were delighted when Bill 131 was introduced.

We looked forward to the opening debate (called second reading) on the bill's contents in the Legislature. At the same time, we were aware that a possible election this spring might affect the chances for passage of Bill 131.

"As things turned out, we were right to be concerned.

"The fall session of the Legislature ended on December 12 with no further action on Bill 131. With a possible election looming, we decided to poll Ontarians during the Legislature's winter break to see how many supported the bill, and whether a political party's attitude toward its passage would affect their view of that party.

"We found that 76% of Ontarians supported Bill 131. Among those supporters, nearly all (92%) supported the legislation being made a high priority and passed quickly. A majority of that group (54%) strongly supported quick passage. We were both heartened, and not surprised, by these levels of support: Whether smokers or not, all Ontarians want their kids to have a healthy future.

"The Legislature returned to work on February 18, and second reading started on February 19. Unfortunately, it didn't last long; only an hour, not enough time to allow the opposition health critics and other MPPs wishing to speak to have their say. Once again, the process stalled.

"To inject some urgency into the process, we organized a day of action at Queen's Park, in order to meet as many MPPs as possible and urge them to pass the bill. Hundreds of calls went into government and opposition MPPs' offices as well.

"During our day of action, we showed MPPs first-hand the flavoured products that Bill 131 was designed to eliminate. They heard personal stories of survivors' battles with cancer and heart disease caused by smoking. They heard from youth volunteers about the need to protect them and their friends from the predatory marketing tactics of the tobacco industry.

"No matter which party or office we visited, we heard nothing but expressions of support for Bill 131. Yet, unfortunately, the bill hasn't moved an inch since February 19.

"Whatever the reason for the stall in progress, the fact is, kids are still accessing flavoured tobacco products. With the possibility of an election getting closer, our chance to have an immediate impact is fading.

"Let your MPP know that enough is enough, and that the Legislature must pass Bill 131 now, by sending a letter to the Canadian Cancer Society's End the Flavour campaign. Our kids' health depends on it."

I fully agree with this letter, Mr. Speaker. I know that the PC critic for health, the member for Whitby-Oshawa, has not had an opportunity to do her lead, and I sure wish that this bill gets put on to the docket so that we have an opportunity to move it forward.

1440

Ça me fait plaisir aujourd'hui de passer quelques commentaires au sujet du projet de loi 131. Au coeur du projet de loi 131, c'est de s'assurer que le tabac aromatisé sera banni de l'Ontario à tout jamais.

En 2008, j'ai eu le plaisir, avec M. Levac, qui est maintenant le Président de l'Assemblée, de mettre un

projet de loi conjoint. Le projet de loi conjoint était pour bannir le tabac aromatisé de l'Ontario. On était très content lorsque le projet de loi a reçu l'appui de l'Assemblée et est devenu loi.

Par contre, le délai entre la sanction royale et lorsque le projet de loi est venu en effet, l'industrie du tabac avait déjà découvert une échappatoire. L'industrie du tabac avait pris la définition qui existait dans le projet de loi, dans laquelle on définissait de quoi avait l'air un cigarillo aromatisé, avec le nombre de grammes de tabac enroulés d'une feuille, etc. Ils ont pris la définition, ont fait un changement mineur, c'est-à-dire qu'ils ont ajouté un gramme de tabac, et ont continué à vendre des cigarillos aromatisés partout à la grandeur de la province.

Donc, bien qu'on a un projet de loi en bonne et due forme en Ontario qui bannit le tabac aromatisé, étant donné que le projet de loi définit de quoi a l'air un cigarillo aromatisé, ils ont tout simplement trouvé une échappatoire en ne respectant pas la définition telle que dans la loi, et ont continué avec leur effort de marketing à vendre les mêmes produits : les mêmes produits, dans les mêmes dépanneurs, dans les mêmes emballages, exactement de la même façon.

Plusieurs études, certaines dont j'ai parlé aujourd'hui, démontrent clairement que ces produits-là mettent l'emphase sur les jeunes. Les saveurs sont des saveurs qui sont surtout associées à la jeunesse, soit des saveurs genre fruits, bonbons, etc., ou de la boisson, des saveurs du genre pommetini, pour un martini aux pommes, ou des saveurs du genre chocolat, cerise, etc.

Le problème c'est que, bien que les emballages ont l'air d'être des produits pour les enfants, ce qu'il y a à l'intérieur, c'est vraiment le tabac aromatisé. C'est là pour une raison : pour t'aider à prendre ta première cigarette, parce que pour quelqu'un qui ne fume pas, la première cigarette, elle donne pas mal au coeur. Non seulement qu'elle donne une haleine horrible pour les prochaines plusieurs journées, mais ça donne mal au coeur. Avec les produits aromatisés du tabac, ça leur permet de finir leur première cigarette parce qu'elle ne goûte pas aussi mauvais. Mais ce qu'elle fait vraiment, c'est qu'elle va livrer la nicotine.

On sait tous que la nicotine crée la dépendance pire que l'héroïne, pire que la cocaïne. La nicotine brise la barrière entre les vaisseaux sanguins et le cerveau et développe une dépendance très, très rapidement. Donc, l'idée est simple : tu vends pour un dollar un produit qui a l'air d'être un produit pour enfants, qui sent, qui goûte, qui est emballé comme si c'est fait pour être dans le sac à dos de nos enfants, mais qui est là pour une et une seule raison. C'est là pour s'assurer que la prochaine génération de fumeurs et de fumeuses devienne dépendante à la nicotine, pour s'assurer qu'ils vont continuer à vendre leurs produits.

Le problème, bien entendu, c'est que pour les fumeurs et les fumeuses, le risque pour la santé est « astronomical ». Si tu regardes dans les dizaines de milliers de personnes qui vont mourir du cancer du poumon, 90 % d'eux sont des fumeurs ou des fumeuses. Aujourd'hui, en Ontario,

36 personnes vont mourir. Demain et après-demain, puis le jour après, 36 personnes vont mourir, tous les jours en Ontario, pour une et une seule raison : parce qu'elles fumaient.

Donc, le gouvernement a mis beaucoup d'efforts au cours des années pour essayer de diminuer le nombre de personnes qui fument. Les efforts ont eu du succès. On voit maintenant que personne ne penserait à fumer lorsqu'il va à l'hôpital. Personne non plus ne pense allumer une cigarette au travail ou dans un restaurant ou dans un café. Maintenant, ça fait partie des habitudes sociales que les gens ne font pas ça. Si tu vas dans les endroits publics, les gens ne fument pas. Ça, c'est bien.

Le projet de loi nous emmène un pas plus loin parce que pendant les cinq dernières années, bien qu'on avait vu que, lentement mais sûrement, le pourcentage de fumeurs en Ontario diminuait, là on se rend compte que dans les cinq dernières années, le taux de fumeurs et de fumeuses est demeuré le même. À la grandeur de la province, c'est 18 %. Si tu regardes chez les jeunes—puis là on parle des jeunes qui ont le droit de fumer, les jeunes de 20 à 24 ans—ce pourcentage-là est de 22 %. Donc, non seulement qu'on ne voit plus une diminution chez les jeunes, on voit une augmentation.

Ce genre de projet de loi, c'est un projet de loi que je pousse depuis 2008. Depuis la première fois que le projet de loi est devenu loi en Ontario et que les compagnies de tabac ont trouvé des échappatoires, j'essaie de le ramener. En ce moment, c'est un projet de loi du gouvernement qui non seulement bannit l'usage du tabac aromatisé, mais également augmente les endroits publics où on n'aurait pas le droit de fumer pour inclure les patios. Donc, l'été—si jamais l'été arrive—si on va manger dans un patio, les gens n'auraient pas le droit de fumer, et également dans les parcs et les endroits publics, donc autour des parcs et des arénas. Dans les universités, les campus, les collèges et les écoles en général, s'ils ont des dépanneurs sur leur campus, ils n'auraient pas le droit de vendre des produits du tabac. Donc, des petits pas qui nous amènent à continuer d'encourager les gens à arrêter de fumer, mais encore plus important que ça, qui nous assurent que les jeunes ne commenceront pas à fumer.

Le projet de loi, malheureusement, n'inclut pas l'interdiction de nouveaux produits du tabac. On sait que l'industrie du tabac est en train de tester le marketing de plusieurs nouveaux produits du tabac. Moi, j'ai un projet de loi, le projet de loi 149, qui est déjà passé en deuxième lecture et qui non seulement bannit le tabac aromatisé, mais également les nouveaux produits du tabac et les produits du tabac sans fumée. Ce que les jeunes appellent les « chews », c'est vraiment du tabac à chiquer. Il y en a maintenant de toutes les saveurs. Le baseball va recommencer bientôt. Si vous allez voir du baseball mineur—on parle de jeunes de 16 à 25 ans—et vous allez voir sur le banc, je vous garantis que vous allez avoir du tabac de toutes sortes de saveurs.

Ça, c'est la même chose. C'est une façon pour les jeunes—ça a l'air cool, d'avoir ton petit contenant de tabac à chiquer, mais ça donne la même chose. Ça donne

une dépendance à la nicotine, et ça ne prend pas de temps qu'on va d'une dépendance à la nicotine à devenir fumeur ou fumeuse.

Donc, j'aimerais pouvoir ajouter ces clauses-là au projet de loi, ou, tout simplement, ajouter les clauses de la ministre à mon projet de loi qui est déjà passé en deuxième lecture.

New Democrats will be supporting Bill 131. We want this bill to go through, the faster the better. If not this one, then make changes to Bill 149, which has already passed second reading.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Premièrement, je voudrais accueillir quelques invités représentant the Heart and Stroke Foundation, as well as the Canadian Cancer Society. From the Heart and Stroke Foundation we have Cristin Napier and Krista Orendorff, and from the Canadian Cancer Society we have Andrew Noble, Nicole McInerney, and Joanne Di Nardo; I welcome you all. We certainly support all the efforts that you expend and conduct on behalf of the people of Ontario and beyond to reduce the incidence of these very important illnesses that affect us and our families on a day-to-day basis. We certainly support, of course, and we welcome your support of both Heart and Stroke and the Canadian Cancer Society on Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act.

1450

As a physician-parliamentarian, there are perhaps few bills that concord with my own outlook more. We see, unfortunately, more and more youth, despite our various efforts, being lured into unhealthy lifestyles, whether it is obesity and lack of activity and getting too much screen time, or tobacco exposure, or the supposedly free and easy e-cigarettes that are now coming our way. Just as an example, I'll cite for you a New York Times bestseller, *Salt Sugar Fat*—and we could probably add tobacco to that as well—by Michael Moss, which essentially details how the food industry, the food giants, literally have lured—induced—dependence, addiction, diversion and self-entertainment with these various foods. This is in part what is leading to the epidemic that we see of tobacco-related illnesses and, of course, obesity and type 2 diabetes or, as we call it, the cardiometabolic syndrome. So we certainly support not only the efforts of our guests today, but of this particular bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: It is absolutely a pleasure to stand today and offer some remarks following my colleague from Nickel Belt. She is always standing up for health care, for which I admire her. I take health care very seriously in my portfolio, regardless of whether it's an official portfolio or not, and this one really strikes a chord with me. I lost my sister Marjorie to lung cancer. She started smoking at a very young age and smoked throughout her life, and it was the most horrible thing in my life I've ever seen. I stood at her bedside with her two

children and watched her pass away. It is something that will stay in my mind forever. If I could paint that picture for every youth who's out there listening today, or not listening, I think it would turn them around to what we believe is something that may be deemed in our adolescence to be cool, and something that a lot of peer pressure forces children into.

My second sister, Bonnie, is closest in age to me, and is actually currently surviving breast cancer. Again, she was a smoker from a young age. I believe there was a lot of peer pressure back in those days—all of my brothers and sisters, with the exception of my oldest sister and myself, have smoked, in our family. Thank goodness my mother didn't; she set a great example. My dad was a smoker and died of emphysema. So again, I think that whole connection is there.

It deplores me when I see youth smoking. It absolutely infuriates me when I see it: a family in a car with young children who have no say in the matter being subjected to that. I believe second-hand smoke is one of the worst things we have. If I had the ability, it would be an outright ban on smoking, period. Some people out there may not like to hear that, but to me it is something that has a huge, huge impact on our health care system. There are people waiting for other surgeries, other forms of prevention or a cure that they can't get because we spend so much money after the fact, after people have spent a lifetime smoking. It all starts, I believe, at that youth age. We really have to put something in place that condemns anybody who is promoting smoking for our youth. Mr. Speaker, we have to do it. I applaud the act and will definitely be supporting it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It is an honour to stand here and speak to this bill on behalf of my constituents, and to follow the passion that my colleague from Nickel Belt has brought to this discussion.

If I heard correctly when she was speaking about Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, 36 people a day die in Ontario from smoking-related causes—36 people a day, and the cost to Ontario's health care system per year, she said, was \$1.6 billion. That's because people smoke; it's legal to smoke. As she pointed out, there are 4,000 chemicals in a cigarette, and 40 of them are known carcinogens.

As I understand it—I'm not an expert, but I'm told by the people who oppose contraband tobacco that the chemicals in contraband tobacco are even worse, if you can imagine, than the 40 in the 4,000 in regular tobacco.

I know it's an addictive habit, and I know if you want to continue to sell your product you've got to come up with a marketing technique to get younger people into the field, younger people to buy your product or, indeed, just convince other people that have been doing it to try something different, and sell more product that way.

I quit smoking about 40 years ago. I smoked in my teens. I've been married almost 40 years, and I quit before that, which is a good thing, I know.

Applause.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you.

I agree with the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. There's nothing that burns my butt more than when I see somebody driving in a car with the windows up, kids in the car seat, and they're smoking away. I've got no respect at all for that.

I wish I had more time, Speaker, but thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I'm pleased to add my voice in support of Bill 131 and to compliment the member from Nickel Belt on her speech.

I am a smoker, so I want to say that it's important to change the cultural norm, because when I was growing up, we didn't know about all the harmful effects that we know now about tobacco and smoking. There is no reason why our youth, our young people, have to start smoking. The best way to fight this addiction is never to start.

It does take, apparently, numerous attempts to be successful. There's not one day that I get up and I don't think, "I have to quit." I know it's coming. I did quit for five years at one point, so I was successful, but then other stresses in my life brought me to smoke again. But if I did it once, it doesn't mean I can't do it again.

Yes, nicotine is very addictive. I know that because I'm a smoker myself. There are over 4,000 chemicals. I don't know which one I'm addicted to, and that goes for all the other smokers.

We have to protect our young people. As I said, the best way is to never light up. Never light up. If you can avoid it, don't start. I think it's the best way to really promote a healthy population, a healthy new generation. When I was growing up, it was very trendy. My doctor smoked; many of my professors smoked in the classroom. All the teenagers would try to be trendy and smoke. Not today. You should know better. You should know that it's not good to start.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes the time for questions and comments. We return to the member for Nickel Belt for her reply.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'd like to thank my colleagues for having listened for an hour—you deserve a medal—and for your comments as well.

The bill, Bill 131, is out to do good things. It's out to ban flavour and to make sure that we expand the areas of our province where we cannot smoke—and where tobacco is sold. It's all good. It took a long time to get to second reading, but it is here now. I would encourage all of my colleagues to try to move this quickly.

If that doesn't work, we have the backup of Bill 149, which is my bill, which tends to do the same thing except that my bill also bans new tobacco products.

The member from Etobicoke North mentioned the e-cigarettes that are becoming more and more popular in Ontario. This is but one new product that I don't want coming into our province. We don't need them. We have other measures to help people quit, and this is not one of them.

1500

The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound talked to us about his loss, his father and two sisters. I'm sure similar stories could be shared by other members of this House. When 90% of people who die of lung cancer were smokers, when 80% of the people with COPD are smokers, we know that it puts a huge strain on our health care system, not to mention the family, and that's what he shared with us.

Thank you also to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Further debate?

Mrs. Gila Martow: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise and speak on Bill 131, An Act to amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and various regulations. The short title of this bill is Youth Smoking Prevention Act, 2014, which is targeted to address youth smoking measures but also looks to restrict smoking from additional public locations and the sale of tobacco products on post-secondary education premises and specified provincial government properties.

Like the member from Nickel Belt, I'm speaking in favour of this bill. There are other members of my caucus who will also be speaking in favour and have already spoken in favour, as the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound did. This is a revision to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care first introduced Bill 131 last November, and second reading for this proposed legislation and revision to certain regulations occurred just before I was sworn into my new position as the member of provincial Parliament for Thornhill. However, this government seems to be in love with feel-good bills in what I think is an attempt to distract the public from reducing government spending and paying for something that the government never uses, like the gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga, the money wasted to unsuccessfully implement an electronic medical record system—I'll remind those who are in the Legislature that I was able to introduce electronic medical records in my medical practice—as well as OPP investigations of wrongdoing on helicopter purchases, as well as—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I have to caution the member that it's important that the remarks she makes in the context of this debate are relevant to the debate and not bringing up other issues that are irrelevant to the debate.

I'll return to the member for Thornhill.

Mrs. Gila Martow: This government continues to try to play the role of what I consider to be a parent, and this is another example of it. Even though I, myself, am not a smoker—and to tell you the truth, I find it hard to be around people who smoke, even if they're not smoking at that time; just the smell of it bothers me. But right now, smoking is legal. I know the member from Nickel Belt did raise an interesting point. She said that she would like

to have smoking completely banned in the province. I think when we have a public health care system, that's something to consider because we're all paying for the costs.

I know there's talk of banning things like tanning beds. We have to realize there's a lot of cost to society, to the health care system. Things like alcohol and alcoholism—not just the medical costs, but the social costs are exorbitant.

It's disturbing for a lot of people, though, in Ontario. Those of us who are adults want to choose how we live our lives, and it does make some people uncomfortable when they feel that the government is sort of a big brother or big sister bossing them around. What we do here is that balance between making laws to have fair business practices, making laws so that our health care system can function, making laws for the safety of all of us in society—not just the children but the adults as well, seat belt laws and things like that.

It is sad to realize that sometimes we lose the right to live our lives exactly how we want, and it's that balance we're always struggling with. You hear from everybody when they're speaking that they're struggling.

In continuing this sort of nanny state philosophy—

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Huge nanny state.

Mrs. Gila Martow: It is a nanny state. Sometimes it's necessary to have a nanny state, I admit it.

This Liberal government initially supported a private member's bill to ban flavoured tobacco products geared towards minors, and it has crafted a government bill to ban the sale of these products. We see a government in place that loves to tell Ontarians what they should or should not be doing with their lives. I think that we have to consider that people do want to live their lives the way they want, and we have to consider what else is going on in the world.

I've been to countries like Spain where—it's shocking—you come up to the customs booth, and the customs official, who is a government employee working at the customs booth, is smoking. Obviously, you can't tell the customs official to stop smoking, because you don't want to have a problem getting into the country. So you're stuck standing there at the booth. Just picture that: You're coming in at Pearson with the mobs of people and you're going up to the customs official, and the person is literally holding your passport and blowing smoke in your face. It's shocking, but we do have to consider in the grand scheme of things that we want to welcome tourists to Ontario. If we ban smoking on outside patios—not just inside restaurants—and in parks, in the playgrounds and things like that, there can be repercussions on tourism. So we have to take that into consideration when we craft new bills.

As I mentioned, I've never smoked, nor did any member of my immediate family. We used to joke when I was kid because my mother, who was a CA and a college professor, couldn't even light a match, so she couldn't light our birthday candles. If we kids were home, we had to either be old enough to light them or wait for some adult to come by.

Unfortunately, my mother actually died of lung cancer—somebody who could never light a match, never lived with anybody who smoked, never really worked in a workplace with people who smoked. But we are seeing a rise of lung cancers in people who don't smoke, so we can't just look at statistics and assume that every case of lung cancer is due to second-hand smoke.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Maybe that's because they're breathing in the second-hand smoke that you want to defend.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I have to say, she really was not exposed to second-hand smoke.

We have to also address, in terms of pollution and damage to the lungs, what gridlock is doing. I'm sorry if I'm going off topic, but gridlock creates incredible pollution, and it's not just time wasted, but it is a terrible health care concern.

The perception of smoking has definitely changed for all of us since we were kids. It was an established norm that people would light up at work, in restaurants, in hospitals, as the member from Nickel Belt mentioned, even in doctors' offices—doctors were smoking in front of their patients—and, of course, on airplanes. We all know that a lot of movies glorified smoking, as did TV shows.

I remember standing in line at the bank to make a deposit of my babysitting money. I was only about 12 years old. There was somebody smoking in front of me and somebody smoking behind me. Up until then, if I ever had that situation, I could turn my back on whoever smoked, but I felt trapped. I really remember that feeling of standing in line and saying to myself, just a 12-year-old kid, "There's something wrong here. There's something wrong with the adults." I think that that was one of the moments—we all have moments when we're a kid or a teenager where we realize that adults aren't this perfect group of people, that they have their flaws and they don't always do what's right, and it's time for us to start thinking for ourselves about what's right or wrong and not to blindly follow what an adult tells us to do. Maybe that's why I'm here today. Maybe that's why a lot of us are here in the Legislature.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Please don't tell my daughters.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Yes, don't tell your daughters; I won't.

I'm from Montreal, so certainly, when I picture René Lévesque—he was the Quebec Premier—I picture a cloud of smoke around him. Even in some of the pictures that we see on the walls of Queen's Park, of the early leaders of our great country, you see that hazy cloud of smoke. Smoking was legal then, and smoking is still legal now.

I think that there is a movement afoot, and we do have to maybe be an example—Canada, in certain regards—be a leader for the rest of the world. Maybe we have to welcome tourists to come to Canada to have a real healthy lifestyle and welcome them to visit our hospitals and see how our health care is functioning and join us in living those healthier lives.

It would be nice if I could say that in my grandchildren's time smoking will not be a social norm at all. My own kids, when they saw somebody smoking, used to sometimes almost embarrass me and say, "Look at that person. That's just terrible." They're really learning it, and our school system is doing a good job teaching the kids not just to say no to drugs, but to say no to smoking in general.

1510

Previously, we gave municipalities the power to determine where people could or could not light up a cigarette. We all know that Toronto was a leader in this regard. Their board of health championed the cause for non-smokers and started banning smoking in bars and restaurants.

As an optometrist, I can't tell you how many times I had patients who said they needed glasses because they couldn't wear contact lenses in bars and things like that. That was a problem, because they were often young people wearing contact lenses. It was a sort of look that they wanted for evenings and weekends, and just when they wanted to wear their contact lenses—which was to a bar or a club—was exactly when they couldn't wear their contact lenses. It has certainly improved the life of many contact lens wearers. Sometimes we forget about all the aspects of smoking, and we just think about the inhalation in lungs, but it does affect people's eyes and ears and things like that.

Throughout the province, we have seen municipalities that followed Toronto's lead and did limit smoking to different degrees, mainly in food establishments and, of course, bars.

I am a little concerned. I do feel bad when I think about how many restaurants and even bars created, at a huge expense, non-smoking areas. We do have to recognize that. Businesses aren't just sort of an entity; corporations and businesses are people. People invest their savings to comply with the laws and what they're told the future landscape and climate is going to be for business. They invest in these separate smoking rooms with very expensive filters. Maybe they ensure that the staff are comfortable with it, but then the staff are kind of stuck because they want the job badly. So while I do prefer not to see any smoking, obviously in restaurants and bars—I haven't even been able to go on patios because, invariably, there's always a smoker there. It does ruin your meal. I've never really understood why somebody would want to smoke while they're eating.

In 2005, the province decreed it knew best, and it banned these separate smoking rooms. We saw a lot more patios going up, even ones with heaters for the winter and those plastic sort of windows. You've got to be pretty desperate to have that cigarette to go out in the cold, but we do see people outside hospitals even. It's shocking when you see somebody with that IV—can you picture them in their hospital gown and they're standing with the IV pole smoking a cigarette? You can barely look at them because it's so uncomfortable to look at them outside the hospitals. So now we have the govern-

ment's revised smoking restrictions, which I think has all-party support, from what I as a rookie member of the Legislature can surmise.

My colleague for Huron-Bruce's role is the caucus critic for small business and red tape. I want to note that she has some concerns that this will negatively impact cafes, bars and restaurants. I think that we do have to remember that we are trying to bring tourists to Canada, and to maybe warn tourists somehow that they will not be able to smoke in too many places because most hotels don't allow smoking. There are smoking rooms, but you don't always get a smoking room. I think that maybe we'll have to address that once this legislation passes, if it does, in the near future.

I remember sitting in a folding chair outside a soccer game, little kids in grade 1 running around playing soccer. I had a baby on my lap, and one of the adults sitting next to me lit up a cigarette. You can't really say anything, but you just look over at them, and you give them that sort of look that you hope is telling. They don't take the hint, or they choose to ignore it, and a bunch of us had to sort of move our chairs over to another side of the field with all the stuff. I think that's part of the problem, the lack of courtesy in general. As we see, again, on another topic—cellphones and things like that—we all need to show more courtesy to each other in terms of what we're doing and how it affects our neighbours: the home next door, but also somebody on a park bench near you, somebody on a sidewalk near you or even somebody in a restaurant near you, if we could all think about that a little bit more. I think that's been part of the problem for us non-smokers: We've felt a genuine lack of courtesy from smokers. If there were a place that they could go and not bother anybody and they would go off and smoke there, they didn't seem to take advantage of that.

It appears that we're in a race with the other provinces to raise the fines, and the result will be the highest fines in Canada for selling tobacco to youth. I think most of us have no problem with that. The present fines, I think, would be doubled, based on what the suggestions are right now. I can't imagine somebody wanting to sell tobacco to a minor, to tell you the truth.

I also want to comment on the fact that part of this proposal is to ban tobacco on post-secondary education campuses and specified provincial government properties. These are adults, the students. To tell you the truth, if somebody was looking to open a business, probably opening one right outside a university selling tobacco would be a wise business decision. I understand that they're trying not to speak out of both sides of their mouth. You can't say, "We're trying to discourage youth from smoking" and then sell it to the same youth, but I don't know how realistic that is, to tell you the truth. But I would like to see smoking banned from any school setting. I think it's taxpayer-supported, and if we want to just ban the actual smoking on campuses, that's something we have to consider. I walk a lot in my area by a high school. We all know that several years back they

banned smoking on school grounds from the high schools, so the kids all huddle on the sidewalk. I guess they think it's very cool. Well, they just look very cool to me in the winter because they are all out there without their coats and they are standing, huddling in these big groups smoking. When you walk by—and again, maybe it's that courtesy thing; maybe there's something in tobacco that gives people the right to feel that only they matter—they don't move off the sidewalk; they don't let you pass. You have to walk around them on the grass or the road, and they're completely blocking the sidewalk. So I can understand we ban it on school grounds, but then they just move on to the sidewalks. To tell you the truth, I'd rather they were on the school grounds and not blocking the sidewalks.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 131 won't please everyone; we know that. Smokers are definitely going to complain and say that it's an attack on their personal freedom. Bars and restaurants see it as an attack on their livelihood. But it is a society that wants to be health-conscious, and we have health costs to consider. These measures are a good step towards helping to prevent our youth from lighting up in Ontario. I will absolutely be supporting this, as will my caucus.

I just wanted to mention that the youth who are having Freeze the Industry target us—maybe they have to target the other youth. We know youth are very good at that. When McGuinty was Premier, he had advocated that for youth driving cars, for the first few years they wouldn't be able to have more than one passenger. We saw the youth rally on Facebook and social media against that. They're very good at raising awareness for their causes when they need to, on social media. Maybe they should be having a youth-on-youth campaign against smoking because, to me, that would be far more successful than adults telling youth not to light up.

As far as the hookah, which was brought up by the member from Nickel Belt, that's a concern to me, because I think anybody who is saying that that is perfectly harmless is kidding themselves. Just because something is herbal—if you're in the medical profession you understand that just because it says “herbal”—guess what?—most of the medications that doctors prescribe are, in theory, herbal at some point.

1520

I think that we have to encourage people to quit smoking. A friend of mine that I spoke to about Bill 131 this weekend mentioned to me up in Thornhill, just this weekend, that he actually quit smoking when they started to make it more difficult and there were so many places he couldn't smoke and he started to feel that it was not favourable in most people's eyes. He said that that was the difference. I think that's what it often is with people.

I'd like to do everything we can to help the member from York South–Weston to quit and to keep her health in as good shape as she can for as long as she can. We all have to help our neighbours and our friends and our family members. Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House and make some comments on the member from Thornhill on Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act.

I'd also like to refer back to the member from Nickel Belt, because she has been an advocate on this issue for a lot of years. I think something we always have to keep in our mind is that 36 people a day die from smoking-related disease in this province. There's a huge financial cost to that, but the bigger cost is the personal cost, because those 36 people every day all have families. There's a huge, huge personal cost.

To us, this bill is a natural progression. One thing the member from Thornhill—I really appreciate that she brought a lot of personal perspective to this issue about how things were. She remembered, and I remember, when you walked into every restaurant and it was full of smoke. We've slowly been improving that.

The member from Nickel Belt mentioned that we could have been moving on this quicker, but at least we're moving slowly ahead. I think this is a natural progression on how we're making life better.

The member from Thornhill mentioned the nanny state a couple of times. I think that in this case, this isn't a nanny state. This isn't a nanny-state bill, and I think she would agree. This is a bill about the health, the long-term health, of our society.

One thing that we face where I live, in my riding—we're right on the Quebec border. We make the rules very strict, and we're making them stricter, to access cigarettes in Ontario. Somehow we're going to have to figure out how to combat—our young people drive five minutes. The member from Nickel Belt was talking about the smoke shacks. That's the biggest business across the border, and we're going to have to look into how to combat that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise to speak in support of Bill 131. Our government is strongly committed to protecting the health of every Ontarian, especially the children. So I take great exception when the member from Thornhill talks about this bill as a nanny state. As someone who has dedicated my life as a public health person, I could tell you that for over 25 years, this is the number one issue when it comes to the health of young people and the future of this province.

I also want to acknowledge in my comments my colleague from Oak Ridges–Markham. I worked with her to make sure York region had a no-smoking bylaw.

When the member opposite talks about the concern about small business, I totally get it. But the health of our children, the health of Ontarians, must be the primary goal of this Legislature.

The other piece is that the Minister of Health is showing leadership and is courageous in bringing Bill 131, because at the end of the day, our municipal colleagues are already banning smoking in playgrounds, in schools, in soccer fields.

For the member to say that prohibiting selling cigarettes in universities and colleges may be a challenge—no, no, no. It has already happened to hospitals. Could you imagine that you're selling cigarettes in a facility that's providing care?

We must stand and provide leadership. That's what leadership is about. We must send a message to the public that at the end of the day, this Legislature must protect every child's and every young person's health. Through the proposed Bill 131, if passed, that would do the right thing.

At the end of the day, our goal as a government is to lower the tobacco rates across Canada, to become the first province to have a single-digit tobacco rate, in terms of cessation, but, more importantly, to protect the health of every young person in this great province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Toby Barrett: I support the presentation we've just heard from the member from Thornhill. It's truly a breath of fresh air during this debate. We know this bill would prohibit smoking on playgrounds and sports fields, and the member made mention of younger people, high school students, out on the sidewalk smoking tobacco. I've got news for people in this House: They're not smoking flavoured tobacco, they're smoking illegal tobacco; they're smoking contraband, straight tobacco. Much of it is swept off the floor of many, many manufacturing operations in native communities. I'm very disappointed that this government is turning a blind eye to that.

We know that this bill will ban the sale of flavoured tobacco products targeted at kids. That's fine, but according to Health Canada, 94% of the market for flavoured cigar products, for example, is legal-age-driven. The majority of the people are over the age of 25.

I would suggest this government consider banning the sale of tobacco by organized crime to young people. That's the primary market. Young people are price-sensitive. Why pay \$80 for a carton when you can pay \$8? You can get rollies. They're in a plastic bag, 200, 220 cigarettes. You take 20 out, put them in a plastic container, keep it in your jacket, keep it in your purse.

So the bill will prohibit tobacco sales on post-secondary-education campuses. I suggest you prohibit the sale of tobacco—flavoured tobacco is not the issue here; it's illegal tobacco, and it's disgusting what this government has allowed to happen over the last 11 years.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I rise again to speak to this bill, and I do so knowing that I'm one of the more senior members of the House. I'm 66 years old. I remember, as a young man, flying back and forth across Canada when there was still smoking on airplanes, be it Air Canada or Trans-Canada Airlines. They'd be blowing smoke up at you. They'd put you in the back and still blow the smoke up on you. So we've come a long way, but we still have a long way to go.

Just a quick aside: When my son was born 36 years ago and I brought him home, my mother-in-law and her mother were there, and they said, "What are you going to call us?" I said, "Well, we'll call old Grandma 'Great-Grandma' and we'll call you 'Not-So-Great-Grandma.'" That didn't win me any points, but at the time, my mother-in-law smoked, my father-in-law smoked and my parents smoked. When we had the kids, we said, "No smoking in our home, and we're not bringing the kids to your home if you continue to smoke." Right away, four people close to us quit smoking. So that's a good thing.

The member from Thornhill talked about what youth can do, especially with today's technology of banding together and putting out messages saying no to smoking. I think that's a good thing, because we do listen to our young people.

On the other issue of the legality of tobacco, I'm of the understanding that there are 10,000 convenience stores in Ontario and, on average, 40% of their revenue is derived from the legal sale of tobacco products. So when we talk about contraband tobacco, I know the people who sell it legally really want harsher measures for those who sell it illegally. The contraband tobacco is worse for you, as tough it as sounds, than tobacco, which is really bad for you anyway.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments. I can return now to the member for Thornhill, if she wishes to reply.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I want to thank all the comments. I won't list all the ridings, because that will use up my two minutes and I probably don't know some of them.

I want to comment on the sale of contraband, because I think that the illegal tobacco, from what I understand, lacks proper filters, and it is more dangerous for those who are smoking it. I have heard that it is purchased often in bags; people buy it by the bag.

1530

I believe it is a hazard for public safety because what happens with the money that it is generating? I believe it is often used to buy weapons that are then brought into Canada illegally, and it should be of concern to all of us.

I think that, probably, it is more important than just banning the sale of flavoured cigarettes to ban the sale of contraband to anybody. If it's being sold on a reservation or something like that, if you don't live on the reservation, why should you be allowed to go onto a reservation to buy tobacco products?

The other part of contraband is that we're not generating any taxes. As sad as it is to admit, we do generate a lot of taxes for the province which do help pay some of our health care costs. As sad as it is to admit, with the sale of contraband cigarettes, we're losing all that tax revenue. We should be focused on anything that is costing us tax revenue—all aspects of the underground economy. Now, with electronic banking and the portable machines, there is no reason for us to allow the underground economy to keep expanding at the rate it has.

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

Mr. Michael Prue: It is a delight for me to stand here and speak in favour of this bill. I have spent my entire political lifetime—some 26 years, and even before that—trying to do things to stop people from smoking. I have never really smoked myself. I only ever smoked one cigarette one night. I still remember the foulness of the taste. I still remember how my mouth tasted the next morning, and I vowed I would never do that again. I never have, but I have spent a lifetime trying to convince people that this is bad for your health and that we need to find ways to wean people off of tobacco, and, I think far more importantly, make sure that young people understand the dangers.

I heard a little bit of the member from Nickel Belt's speech. She truly has been a champion in this Legislature. She really, truly was a champion with the introduction of her own bill, Bill 130, which, just by a day or so, predated the government's Bill 131, which we're going to be talking about today. I think that her bill was better, but this bill certainly does go a long way to doing what she wanted to do.

The member from Nickel Belt's bill was better in one primary circumstance: in that it would ban all new tobacco products. It's important to understand how smart the merchandisers, the lawyers, the advocates and the shareholders of large tobacco companies are. They are able to instantly change their marketing and come up with new products. They can do so literally at will and at whim. They are able to come up with a new product, new advertising, new packaging, new sizes—whatever is necessary to make sure that they are not subject to the laws that are passed in this Legislature. If we truly want to put an end to new types of tobacco sales, then we should be willing to adopt something similar to what the member from Nickel Belt had in her Bill 130.

If I can show by example, in the year 2008, there was a bill before this Legislature co-sponsored by the member from Nickel Belt and by the member who is now our Speaker, Speaker Levac. The two of them had a co-sponsored bill in 2008 which would ban the sale of single tobacco products, particularly single tobacco products that were flavoured. It didn't take very long after the passage of that bill that Big Tobacco immediately found some loopholes. As I said, what they did was they changed the packaging, they changed the sizes of the cigarettes, adding a couple of grams to each one of the flavoured tobacco cigarettes, and found that they were then in compliance with the law and not contrary to what the will of this House was, I think unanimously: to stop that kind of flavoured tobacco from being sold. It only took a couple of weeks.

We in the New Democratic Party, and particularly the member from Nickel Belt, feverishly tried to work through other private members' bills to close the loopholes, and have continued to try to do that since 2008, to absolutely no avail. What we are doing and what we are going to talk about here today is trying to close further and tighten those loopholes. Why I am speaking today at all is because I think we need to have this full discussion

in the House about how to close that off once and for all, because it's not going to be sufficient if we pass this bill and find out that the tobacco companies and their lawyers and their marketers are able to go around the bill again. That is not the will of the people of this province, what they want, and it's certainly not what we should be debating.

Back to the bill. I am somewhat disappointed, and perhaps someone in the government, in their two-minute hit, can tell me why it has taken so long to lift this bill from the order paper. This bill was introduced in this House at first reading on the 18th of November last year. Nearly five months, it has taken, from the bill being introduced in this House, to have it brought forward for second reading and to have the leadoff speeches which finished today. In those five months, many people have died as a result of tobacco-related illnesses, but even more important to what we are trying to do is, hundreds, if not thousands, of young people have taken up the habit—a habit which we might have been able to do something about had we taken action back last November.

We ought not to spend a lot of time on this bill, but I am delighted to speak about it and I hope there is some full debate here. Because it's not just to pass the bill; it's to make sure that we have looked at it very carefully to close any potential loopholes before it actually becomes the law. We need to take the time to think about tobacco sales in general in this country. Tobacco sales are declining in most countries worldwide. However, there are some countries where tobacco sales continue to climb. I don't know whether any of you have had the privilege or the opportunity to go to the Far East, particularly China. I don't think I ever saw so many people smoking as I saw there. The tobacco products were extremely cheap, and people were encouraged—and are encouraged at a young age—to take up the habit, and you will literally see thousands upon thousands of people in the streets smoking at any given time.

We need, in this country, to go away from that. We especially need to go away from it in the schoolyards. One of the most disheartening things I ever see in my public life is to go into a high school, and sometimes even a public school ground, and see a young person smoking. I don't understand why they want to do it in the first place, except probably to look cool or tough or something, which the cigarette dangling from their mouth obviously connotes to them. But that is not what we need to do. I would agree with some of the other speakers—my colleague from Thornhill and my colleague from—Mr. Barrett, what's your riding?

Mr. Toby Barrett: Haldimand–Norfolk.

Mr. Michael Prue: Haldimand–Norfolk—who talked about illegal cigarettes. Those studies that have been done, particularly in schoolyards and around hospitals, show that 20% or more of the cigarettes being consumed by young people is illegal tobacco that is bought in a smoke shack, or usually out of the back of somebody's car in close proximity to the schoolyard.

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We know that young people are taking those cigarettes because they are enormously cheap, and they are able to

purchase them without all of the safeguards, under the age of 18, which they have to do in any one of the convenience stores in the province. They are smoking those cigarettes, they are trading those cigarettes, and they are becoming addicted to those cigarettes.

There is one thing this government needs to do in conjunction with this bill, and they need to be done together. This bill is one half; the other half is to close down the illegal tobacco trade. If tobacco is to continue to be a legitimate product, sold in a store under licence, we need to make sure that it is not being sold on the streets as an illegitimate product which is going to harm people enormously. We need to do that.

If I can be very crass for a moment, this Legislature, some two years ago, gave the finance minister the authority to do all things by regulation in order to shut down the illegal tobacco trade and, in the process of so doing, bring up to \$1 billion to the coffers of this province, because if the cigarettes to be sold are sold legally, then tax revenues flow from those.

The finance minister has yet to deliver on the authority that we gave to him. Nothing, literally nothing, has happened with the authority granted in the budget bill two years ago. As a result, Ontario continues to suffer, and people continue to die.

In the 20 minutes that I'm going to be using, making this speech, there will be at least one or possibly two deaths, in all of Canada, happening as a result of the consumption of tobacco. So people need to think very clearly and carefully about what they're doing.

This bill, as I said, is a good bill. This bill needs to be supported. But it needs to be talked through—and I want to say this again and again—to make sure that when we're finished, there are no loopholes left. In the last couple of bills we've tried on this, there were enormous loopholes. Those loopholes have allowed what we don't want to happen to continue happening.

This is not a bill that needs to be rushed, or should be rushed, to that extent. Certainly, if the government can take five months from the time of introducing this bill to calling it for second reading debate, then they can take a little bit of time in committee to make sure that they've got it right.

What this bill does do is—and what I'm very happy to support the bill for—first of all, it prohibits promotional items being sold along with the tobacco. As a non-smoker, I'm not sure what those are, but I know that in the past, promotional items were often given out with tobacco sales. People who bought tobacco could get something else as a reward. This will make sure that this does not happen.

It prohibits flavoured tobacco. I would think that flavoured tobacco has a niche market, but it is also a market to someone who is new to smoking. They might like the chocolate- or candy-flavoured or candy-floss-flavoured or fruit-flavoured tobacco in lieu of or instead of the tobacco, which has its ordinary foul, pungent aroma—certainly, the taste I will never forget.

It gives the authority for officials to enter into premises which hitherto they were not allowed to go into

and to check for illegal tobacco sales. It gives those officials the authority to seize, the authority to confiscate, and we need to have that.

We need to have that not only in terms of legal tobacco sales but also in terms of illegal tobacco sales. Those are primary, in my mind, that need to be curbed, because if we do not curb those sales, what we are doing on the other side with the flavoured tobacco products, and what this bill intends to do, may all be for naught. If this government is going to continue to allow illegal tobacco sales to increase, then we know what is going to happen.

I do know that in the province of Quebec, in their last budget, they increased taxation on legal tobacco, thinking it was going to raise some revenue and cut some people out of smoking tobacco. First of all, it didn't cut out anybody smoking tobacco. Tobacco consumption actually went up, and the revenues actually went down because all that happened as a result of that was that people went out and bought the illegal product. We cannot fall into that trap here in Ontario. We need to take concerted action immediately against illegal tobacco, and then take equally strong action on flavoured tobacco products and where people are allowed to smoke.

This bill is also good in terms of it doubles the fines or allows the fines to be doubled for people who break the law. The fines remain ridiculously small and there is a real incentive to break the law, knowing that your first fine is so small. This is going to double it, which is going to have some retailers think twice about what they're doing.

This bill also does something around the issue of hookahs. I thought those were part of my youth, seeing those in and around restaurants and bars. You used to see them even in terms of people's homes—

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Shishas.

Mr. Michael Prue: Yes. Now they call them shishas. Same thing; it's still a hookah. They're just sort of like there, and people don't even realize that smoking herbal products or tobacco in them, or anything, is just as harmful as if you were inhaling it straight from the cigarette. We need to get a handle all on of that. Quite frankly, those days should be gone as well.

I'm also heartened by what the regulations purportedly will allow to happen as well. They will prohibit cigarette smoking on playgrounds, in sports facilities and other places where people congregate. This is vitally important. I know that there was a time—and I still occasionally see it—of people smoking in close proximity to where children are playing. I know that people smoke very often in close proximity to where dozens or hundreds or thousands of people gather to watch sporting events. We need to make sure that those people who are going out for a recreational afternoon are protected from second-hand smoke.

I am heartened as well that the regulations will also stop cigarette smoking on patios, whether they're covered or uncovered. I know that for the longest time, following the passage of bills both in the city of Toronto

and East York before that, and latterly from the province of Ontario, you could smoke outside on a patio, but not if there was an awning above your head. This clearly shows that there's going to be no differentiation made. Whether there's an awning or not, patios will be verboten.

I think this is a good thing in terms of the restaurateurs, who are apprehensive about this, and in terms of their patrons in the restaurant who are looking forward to going out and enjoying the open air without having their lungs polluted by someone sitting next to them. I'd like to hearken back to my days as a municipal councillor and mayor. The restaurateurs were the ones who most fiercely fought the implementation of no smoking in restaurants. My goodness, they talked about how much business they were going to lose.

I remember the late and great Dr. Sheela Basrur, who was the medical officer of health, first of all in East York and then, after that, for the amalgamated megacity of Toronto. I remember having the honour of proposing her being hired not only in East York but also in Toronto as well, moving those motions. She was a very brilliant woman, and she fought that attitude from some of the restaurant industry by proving statistically that in California and in New York, where the same laws had been passed against smoking inside of restaurants, the business actually went up and not down, because people who would not frequent the restaurants due to what they perceived to be the ill health as a result of the smoke in the rooms actually went more often to the restaurants. Although the restaurateurs did not believe her, within a couple of years, it was very, very clear that there was a boom in the restaurants and that the smoking ban actually helped the bottom line of those restaurateurs who were so afraid.

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These regulations will also prohibit the sales on campuses, schools and day nurseries. It will prohibit smoking on all provincial property. I'm not sure whether that will include places like our provincial parks. I don't know; that might be a bit of a stretch. But I do know it will prohibit smoking in some of the government buildings here around Queen's Park. It would also prohibit smoking outside on outdoor hospital grounds.

In the final analysis, this is a very good bill. This bill could be made stronger if we were to adopt the provisions of the member from Nickel Belt and ban all new tobacco products, because that would stop those who are ingenious in finding ways around the law of having to comply. It would also make the bill much stronger if the government were to do the right thing and end illegal tobacco sales in the province.

But, in the final analysis, this is a bill on which we must proceed. I am looking forward to hearing other debate, but most especially I am wanting to make sure that when this goes to committee for clause-by-clause, that we shut down all of the loopholes to make sure no one else becomes addicted in this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm pleased to respond to the remarks by the member from Beaches–East York. As he, I think, was saying at the end of his comments, we know that one of the most vulnerable times for people to become addicted is when they're young. So many people who are addicted to tobacco later in life started when they were teenagers. We believe that it's particularly important to intervene in tobacco use and stop tobacco use at a young age.

The Youth Smoking Prevention Act would, if passed, double the fines for those who sell tobacco to youth, which would make the penalties in Ontario the highest in Canada. It would prohibit the sale of flavoured tobacco products to help prevent kids from starting to smoke and becoming regular smokers.

I was absolutely astounded when the Minister of Health brought some of these flavoured tobacco products in one day for us to have a look at. They're so clearly marketed to children, but the nicotine is there to get them hooked.

We also want to strengthen the enforcement authority to test for the use of tobacco in water pipes in places where smoking is prohibited, and clarify that it's prohibited to offer promotional items with the sale of tobacco.

There are a number of regulatory changes that would prohibit smoking on playgrounds, sports fields, restaurant and bar patios; no tobacco sales in post-secondary campuses; and restrict smoking on outdoor grounds of hospitals and other government properties.

But what I did want to say was, yes, this bill has been not quick in getting debated, but that's because so many other bills are getting filibustered. If we could stop the filibustering of a whole lot of bills, we would get around to important bills like this one much more quickly. Then we could get it off to committee to get the amendments discussed that the member wants to have discussed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; a pleasure. I'll just remind the government that they call the bills to debate. So it's one of those things. You can quite easily fix that whole roster any time you wish.

I rise today as a dad, a brother, an uncle, a cousin, a father of youth who need us to make sure that we're paying attention and doing the right things for their benefit down the road. I rise today also as the critic for youth and children.

I'm not normally someone who supports—someone in the debate today has talked about the nanny state, and typically I'm not in favour of that. But in this case, because it's children—youth who do not have the ability to protect themselves because they don't know all the dangers and the ramifications—I believe it is incumbent upon to us to step up and put those things in place to ensure that their health is the first and foremost priority.

I shared earlier that I've gone through, unfortunately, seeing my sister die from lung cancer. I have another sister who has breast cancer. My mom was a survivor of

cancer. Almost everyone in my family except my oldest sister and I have been smokers. My dad was a smoker and died from emphysema. It's a horrible thing to watch. Other than making youth watch that video and see what I actually had to do beside my sister's bedside as she passed away, I'm not certain what else we can do but put something like this in that is so stringent, so powerful to people, to stop them from doing it. We need to protect our youth.

There is so much waste of the money that we spend on cancer care, trying to prevent—well we should prevent more—trying to cure and trying to treat people that have gone through this horrible disease, something that just makes absolutely no sense to me. I always say to my two boys, “Every time you even think about buying a package of cigarettes”—at whatever that horrible cost is nowadays—“think of all the wonderful things you could do for the less fortunate. Think of what you could do for a child in Africa who has not got food today, that you could send that money there. Think of the things you could do in your own backyard, with our First Nations communities—that we put money there.”

I will be supporting this legislation. We need to do what we can to protect our youth. Do not smoke, you young pages in front of me.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I certainly want to echo my support of this bill. I think it's absolutely something we need to do. I want to briefly talk about why it's important and why we need to go a little bit further in a different direction as well.

It's absolutely important for us to provide guidance so that our youth can make the right decisions. I think we all support that notion. I think that's a very important notion. I think we all have come to some consensus on that. So what we can do to assist young people in making the right decisions by discouraging them from making the wrong decisions is a good thing to do. I certainly support the bill and I support that component of the initiative.

However, I want to take it a step further. The member from the Conservative Party who just spoke touched on this—

Mr. Bill Walker: Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much, sir. I know that my colleague from Beaches–East York also talked about this. In addition to education, in general, there are rising costs for health care. Costs are increasing every year, year by year. What we need to do is put more effort into prevention. We know that the end stages of any disease—whether it's cancer, whether it's diabetes—are devastating to the families, to the loved ones and to the individual, and they have a great cost to society.

If we put more emphasis on prevention—prevention in some of the most basic ways: nutrition, opportunities to exercise, opportunities to be physically fit. Sometime it's not only the will but also the space. Physically, there aren't places for people to play, to engage in activities. There aren't opportunities for people to afford to go to a

gym, to have a gym membership. There need to be ways that we can, as a society, encourage healthy decisions—to make healthy decisions the easier decision. If you're given two options, and one option is more affordable, it's cheaper, it's easier, and it's more unhealthy, you'll do it because it's easier. But if you're given another option that's healthy, and it's harder to do, you won't do it. We need to reverse that. Make the healthy decisions easier, and we can have a healthier society.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I'm pleased to rise today in support of Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act. Our government is strongly committed to healthy lives for all Ontarians. As part of that, we have set ambitious goals of having the lowest smoking rate in Canada. That's why we introduced Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, and new regulations and amendments. We know that prevention is the best way to tackle this very tough issue.

I'm also really pleased at the broad support that we have been receiving on this bill. “The Ontario Lung Association welcomes the measures to strengthen the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. The government is addressing major gaps in regulations to protect young people, and all Ontarians, from becoming addicted to tobacco, the number one cause of preventable illness and death in our province.”

Yesterday, I was so pleased to attend a local event in Scarborough. It was put on by Ms. Letna, who is a cancer survivor. The event was in support of the Rouge Valley Health System, the hospital located in my riding.

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Dr. Mohan presented an update at this forum to the 400 people in attendance. He gave us key things that we could do to prevent diseases like cancer from occurring in the first place. The number one thing that we can do is to stop or avoid smoking altogether. It is something that is affecting the health of all Ontarians, and it's something that we can do proactively to put in this regulation so that those who are the youngest members of our community don't start smoking in the first place.

Yes, there are other things that we can do in terms of building a healthy lifestyle, such as exercise, eating right, and reducing obesity, but we also know that avoiding and preventing smoking is one of the number one ways that we can build a healthy community in Ontario, so I support Bill 131.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments. We return to the member for Beaches–East York.

Mr. Michael Prue: Thank you to those of my colleagues who had something to say about my speech: the Minister of Education, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, and the member from Scarborough–Guildwood.

To the minister: I agree. I think she was listening to my speech. She talked about many of the same things that I had talked about, but then she ended on what I

thought was a rather bizarre note, talking about a filibuster. I hope she wasn't aiming that at me, because I don't remember anybody, either myself or anybody in my caucus, filibustering a single bill in the last two years. I don't remember that. So since she was responding to me, Mr. Speaker, I really, really do wonder where that opinion came from, and how well-founded it is.

To the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound: Yes, it is very difficult. I, too, watched an uncle die from lung cancer. He was a cop—a big man, a strong man—who smoked two packs of cigarettes a day, many of them inside the police car, so all that smoke was trapped. To see what happened to him in his lifetime and at the end of his life was pretty sad; a big, huge, strong man being reduced in the final ravages of that disease.

To the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton: He is absolutely right. Prevention is the number one thing we can do in order to save money in the long term. If we can prevent people from smoking, we won't have to pay the huge inflated hospital and other costs at the end of life when people finally succumb to what has happened.

To the member from Scarborough–Guildwood: I have only got five seconds. Thank you for what you had to say. I hope to hear your speech as well.

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

Mr. Michael Harris: It is my pleasure to rise today in the House and speak to Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, which would amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, and various other regulations.

There are many influencers to encourage youth to smoke: peers, the media or actors. I was just speaking to a young page and we were coming up with a few actors and actresses who happen to smoke. We casually mentioned Justin Bieber, but I didn't think he smoked—at least not cigarettes, that is. I love Justin Bieber, by the way, so don't get me wrong on that. In music videos and television shows and movies we all see actors smoking in the videos; however, as a parent, we all have a great amount of influence on our children. Not only that, it's our responsibility to teach them about the ill effects of smoking.

I have three young boys at home—I know some of them will be watching today. Murphy is always tuned to the TV, and Lincoln is just probably in his swing going back and forth; he's not able to speak yet, but I feel it's so important to teach them the dangers of cigarettes and hope that they make the healthy decision to not smoke as they grow older.

I can tell you that I've never been a smoker, and, in fact, I've not bought a pack of cigarettes. I know the opposition or the government probably has a file, and they'll see in there that, in fact, I have not bought a pack of cigarettes.

You know what? I just have no interest at all in that. It just disgusts me, actually. I would encourage all parents to really open up that conversation with their children and keep that communication going as they grow up into teenagers and young adults. Especially during this past

winter, I happened to see folks smoking outside. I just said, "Look at this guy out here, freezing his rear end off for a cigarette." I just don't get it. Clearly, there's another side effect of smoking, living in Canada: You freeze your rear end off doing it.

Look: Statistics show that children are more likely to smoke if their parents do, which is why parents must take it upon themselves to quit smoking and teach their children of the effects on their health and on the health of those around them. Fortunately, over the years, the majority of kids and teens who smoke has declined, and that's a good thing. In fact, according to a youth smoking survey in Canada, 2% of youth in grades 5 to 9, and 11% of those in grades 10 to 12, reported that they were current smokers. Stats also show that most children have not tried cigarettes at all, not even a puff, and that's a good thing. In grades 5 to 9, 82% of youth have never tried it. By grades 10 to 12, 52% of youth reported that they still hadn't tried it at all. So I think those stats are moving in the right direction, but those stats also show us that 55% have tried some form of tobacco by this age.

The trends are heading in the right direction, and this bill will help those numbers get smaller because, according to the youth smoking survey, more than half of children will still try tobacco. So it's well worth opening up the conversation and finding ways to prevent the habit for our young people.

Mr. Bill Walker: Good dads like you.

Mr. Michael Harris: There will be no smoking in my house; I'll tell you that right now for free.

Mr. Bill Walker: Nor in mine.

Mr. Michael Harris: No. When we go to visit Uncle Bill, there will be no smoking in his place.

We all have a friend or family member who has gotten sick or passed away. We heard some of those colleagues today talk about loved ones who they've had to watch fight this awful, awful disease and illness. It's a sad and terrible thing to see, and I wish it upon no one. It's important that we continue to implement anti-smoking education in our curriculum, in our students' health classes.

Just a few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to have the Heart and Stroke Foundation folks in my office, and they filled me in on the awareness campaigns that they were doing. I'd like to commend them for their efforts in helping teach our youth about the effects of smoking.

Bringing it back closer to home, just last summer the region of Waterloo took the lead in exploring options to expand smoke-free legislation. The region already has a ban for smoking in public places like bleachers and seating areas at sports fields and parks. The bylaw did not include outdoor spaces like parks, playgrounds and athletic fields, so council and staff have taken this to the public and are undergoing consultations to amend their bylaws to address smoking proximities to sports fields and in public parks. Across Canada, more than 50 municipalities have taken it upon themselves to ban smoking in outdoor locations, and about one quarter of these towns and cities have bans that also include parks,

playgrounds and sports fields. Bill 131 would regulate this across the province, of course.

In fact, over the years, businesses like restaurants and bars, post-secondary schools and other public buildings have done a great job of implementing the regulations outlined in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which prohibits smoking in workplaces, enclosed public spaces and also in motor vehicles when children under 16 are present.

If you can only imagine, it was not too long ago when folks smoked in bars. In fact, you have to look at airplanes, a smoke-free environment. The thought that, at one time, back in the day, folks were smoking on airplanes—I mean, it's just asinine, really.

In fact, I walked to work this morning and happened to walk down Wellesley into the government building, and there were about four or five folks out front having a cigarette. They were awfully close to the front door. I had to walk through a cloud of smoke, and of course they throw their butts on the ground; that drives me crazy. As you see spring finally getting here, on the ground there's a lot of litter, but nine times out of 10, it's the cigarette butts on the ground. People think that they somehow just disintegrate. You wouldn't throw a coffee cup out the window, yet people feel that it's okay to flick a cigarette butt. It drives me crazy. Anyways, I'm getting off Bill 131, but I had to mention that, because I did have that happen on my way in this morning.

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As I had mentioned, many of these places have created designated smoking areas, and do a rather good job of enforcing it. These efforts have greatly reduced tobacco use and lowered health risks for non-smokers in Ontario like myself, my family and others who are here. Restaurants and bars have done a good job of implementing the regulations enforced by the Smoke-Free Ontario Act back when we made changes to it in 2006. We are no longer greeted by a host at a restaurant asking if we'd like a seat in the smoking or non-smoking section. They've gone completely smoke-free inside their businesses. There was some strife against us back in the mid-2000s, but businesses have done a good job of making the changes to make their locations easier to breathe in.

The question now is: Has Bill 131 gone too far, perhaps, by prohibiting smoking on patios of restaurants and bars? I have to mention, the Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association says that the ban will ultimately hurt their business. They have adapted since the changes were made to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act back in 2006 and are now happy with the current situation. The current act allows bar and restaurant owners to make their own decision to have smoking on their patio and base it on the type of customers that they serve.

Just this past weekend, I had the opportunity—we got busy on the weekend. We went out to Moose Winooski's, a local establishment in Kitchener. They've got a fairly large location. They've got a fairly large patio at the front and another one at the side. What they've done is, because there is a lot of concern from families, they've made the family patio in the back corner completely

smoke-free while still giving that option for smokers to go outside at the front patio and have a cigarette.

Business operators, like Tom Wideman and the Charcoal Group, who really accommodate at their facilities and offer families a nice, clean atmosphere to take their family to—I know a lot of families are looking forward to the summer, whenever it gets here, and they'll be occupying that patio, ensuring that their loved ones won't be subject to smoke of any sort. So we'd like to thank them for that and, of course, a lot of other owners moving in that direction.

There is a valid argument. I believe it should be up to the restaurant and bar owner whether they should ban smoking on their own patio or not. In terms of protecting our youth from being encouraged to smoke or breathing in second-hand smoke, most of the establishments who have customers that would go out on the patio for a smoke already ban youth from being in their bar or on their patio past 9 p.m. anyways, and even offer youth under the age of 19 a seat in their dining room area. It's too, perhaps, heavy-handed to create a ban for all patios. In fact, restaurants have proven that they can take it upon themselves to regulate smoking outside as they see fit, and the law already prevents smoking inside of these establishments.

Where we should be looking, though, is at the sale of tobacco products, and that's on universities and college campuses. Schools should be institutions of learning, not a place to develop bad habits, at least not smoking. Bill 131 prohibits sales on post-secondary education campuses, which will help reduce access to tobacco for young people.

What this legislation fails to address, really, though, is the issue of contraband tobacco. This is a huge contributor to youth smoking, which should not be taken lightly. According to the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco, there are more illegal cigarettes in Ontario than anywhere else in the country. That is an interesting yet asinine statistic. In fact, I had the opportunity to meet with folks from the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco just a few weeks ago in my office. I believe they had done a study at one of the local high schools. A good percentage of the tobacco butts out front were, in fact, contraband. This is an alarming issue that people need to take an interest in.

We talk about increasing the fines on the sale of tobacco products to under-agers. It really is a start to cracking down on youth smoking, but it doesn't go far enough toward stopping the sale of cigarettes out of the back of someone's trunk in the parking lot of a high school, or in someone's university dorm room. They often say that contraband tobacco is fairly easy to get. You see the vans driving up and down the street bringing the cigarettes right to the establishment or right to the schools in our own communities. I know a lot of the stores do their best to ask for IDs and crack down on it at the store, but there is so much of this contraband going on simply out of a van, and we need to deal with that.

I know my colleague from Haldimand-Norfolk has been a very vocal advocate in addressing this issue. In

fact, back in 2008, he put forward legislation which urged the government to crack down on illegal smoke shacks and contraband tobacco. He suggested that the province put an end to illegal tobacco and smoke shacks by increasing enforcement and reducing tobacco taxes. The member for Haldimand–Norfolk has said that when this took place in the early 1990s, 300 smoke shacks vanished on the Six Nations overnight.

I'm sure everyone in the House has received a baggie of what 200 illicit cigarettes look like. My colleague who will be up next, from Leeds–Grenville, has, I think, one of those on his desk. I'll ask viewers to stay tuned for a preview of that a little bit later on. It's illegal cigarettes like these that are sold by criminals through a network of drug dealers which can give greater access for youth to cigarettes, cigarillos, cigars, chewing tobacco and other products. Young people can get a carton of cigarettes for as little as \$90 less than the legal product. Some cartons are cheaper than the price of just a movie ticket. In fact, members of the Retail Council of Canada, Crime Stoppers, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation and Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters have joined together as 17 organizations to fight against the sale of illegal cigarettes, especially to our youth.

The Minister of Health begins to tackle this issue in Bill 131 by doubling the fines for those who sell tobacco to youth, but I would encourage the government to take a deeper look into the suggestions made by the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco and implement some of these recommendations at the committee stage so that we can continue to diminish this widespread problem.

However, I will have to interrupt and say that I do find it, obviously, quite rich that the government has called this bill back up for debate today. Of course, the Liberal Wynne government always chooses the most opportune times to toot their own horn and try to change the channel on the gas plant scandal, like coming across as a government that is protecting our youth from the harmful effects of smoking through Bill 131. We can't forget that this is the same Liberal government that wasted \$1.1 billion on cancelling gas plants to save some seats during the last election.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the member for Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, the member is perfectly aware of standing order 23(b)(i), and I know that this digression is a wilful one. I would ask the Speaker to ensure that the member stays on topic.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. I appreciate the reminder. I would say to the member for Kitchener–Conestoga that it is helpful if he keeps his remarks relevant to the debate, and I would encourage him to do so going forward. I would encourage all members of the House to ensure that their remarks are relevant with respect to the bill that we're debating.

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The member for Kitchener–Conestoga.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you, Speaker. In fact, I just started talking about the timing of this all. I know it's interesting that the minute I talk about gas plants or \$1.1 billion, the government is up on its feet, trying to shut down and muzzle the opposition again. I know we've heard about letters that are servicing or people being served. Just the mention of a gas plant and they get knocked off their rockers.

Look, I'll—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would ask the member for Kitchener–Conestoga to ensure that his remarks are relevant to the bill that we are debating.

The member for Kitchener–Conestoga has the floor.

Mr. Bob Delaney: You're part of the goaltenders' fraternity. You can—

Mr. Michael Harris: Well, I had a couple of more things about that and—

Mr. Bob Delaney: Talk about hockey.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes. Well, I'll tell you, I don't know how smokers play hockey. I was a goalie, and I'd see them come in and they'd be just getting a puff of a cigarette in, and they'd be jumping on the ice. If that's not a problem waiting to happen, then I don't know what is.

Okay, so I'll move on from that, because I know you guys know where I was going to go with this. We'll have more time to talk about that tomorrow in question period. I'm glad to see the NDP back this afternoon.

Anyway, the fourth section of the bill, which I have not spoken about, is the flavoured tobacco products. There are many unique tobacco products out there that are used predominantly by adults in Ontario. These businesses, of course, have contacted my office and are concerned that Bill 131 would put them right out of business and potentially increase the illegal sale of flavoured tobacco products across the province. There is still a market out there for smokeless tobacco products like Copenhagen and Skoal. Products like these have been available to Canadians for over a century, and these businesses go through great efforts to ensure that their products are for adults only. Bill 131 would restrict the sale of these flavoured products, which is what makes them unique to customers. According to the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey, there is a low prevalence of smokeless tobacco among youth and young adults. They believe that the ban is too broad in its definition and is unfair to adults who consume flavoured smokeless tobacco, and retailers who specialize in the sale of these products and wish to be exempted from the bill. For me, I've never really got into the smokeless tobacco products, but there is a market out there that does. I think the government should do a further study and consultation during the committee stage to ensure that you're not harming Ontario businesses if they do not contribute to youth smoking.

I know my time is done. I'll have a few minutes left on the recap. I'll look forward to questions and comments from my colleagues. I thank you, Speaker, for allowing me the time today to speak to Bill 131.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Michael Mantha: I encourage the member from Kitchener–Conestoga to continue having those open and frank discussions with your children, because I too was very open and frank, and I held no bars talking to both my boys. That's one thing that's missing out of this bill: How do you cope with kids that make the wrong decision? That's tough. I tell you it's tough. You've got to do it in a different way.

I can tell you from my personal experience that cancer has taken every loved one that I had in my family. It's taken away my dad, my mom, relatives. So I've seen the negative side of cancer. It's not pretty. It's not fun going into the hospital and seeing your dad or loved one who was a big man, 260 pounds, reduced to about 72 pounds. It's not something you want to see.

You try and have that discussion with your kids and your loved ones. I quit smoking 19 years ago, and I still quit smoking every day. It's not an easy task. It's tough, really tough, having those discussions, because there is so much pressure on those kids these days. There is so much peer pressure, so many added activities that are going on. So I commend you. Continue having those discussions with your kids. I wouldn't mind having a chat with you about my boys. Maybe you have some advice to give me. I'm open to suggestions, let me tell you. It is a tough situation. But this is a step in the right direction. I wish there was something in here that says how to deal with your boys, but there isn't, so I'll have to create that part, and hopefully I'll be able to amend it when it gets to committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I have to say this: I have to commend the Minister of Health for all the work that she has done to help Ontarians to quit smoking.

As you know, in my first career I was a nurse, and I was working in the hospital. In the hospital, everybody was smoking. Now that I think about it, it's a bit embarrassing. Nurses were smoking; doctors were smoking, even in the patients' rooms. Patients in the delivery room were smoking. Everybody was smoking—bad. It was bad.

Now, I am embarrassed to say that I was one of them. But contrary to my friend from Manitoulin Island, I'll say to those who want to quit smoking, it's not difficult. I did it. You have to put your mind to it. The fact that I was listening to people saying, "It's so difficult. You know, 20 years later, I still have the urge to smoke regularly"—so I was saying, "Oh, my God. I don't want to do that to myself." These opinions prevented me from quitting smoking. But when I did—you have to make the decision. It's like anything else. You quit smoking.

Each year, tobacco kills 13,000 people in Ontario—13,000 people—not just from lung cancer but from other types of cancer directly related to smoking: for example, bladder cancer, lip cancer and some skin cancers are related to smoking.

So, kids who are listening, don't ever start; if you do, please quit smoking, and you will have a wonderful and happy life.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Question and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's absolutely a pleasure to follow my colleague Mr. Harris from Kitchener–Conestoga. I'd just like to applaud him for being the role model father that he is to his boys, Brayden, Murphy and Lincoln. I think the best thing we can do is step up in front of our children and exhibit what we want them to be, particularly when it comes to their health. At an early age, children are very much influenced by the actions and the modelling that they see ahead of them. So, again, I applaud Michael.

Mr. Mantha, my colleague from Algoma–Manitoulin, spoke earlier. Mr. Prue has spoken. We've all seen what happens to people who smoke. I think what this bill—and I don't always agree with the Minister of Health on every single issue; the odd one, I do. This one I definitely support her on. We'll talk about Markdale Hospital another day. But I think she'll come around on that one, too.

Back to this bill, before Mr. Delaney stands up on a point of order: What we need to do here is we need to prohibit any sale of tobacco to youth, anything that's going to influence negatively our youth, because, as I say, in my role—and I take it very seriously—as critic of children and youth, children do not always have the ability to protect themselves, because they don't understand what may be the ramification 20 or 30 years down the road. They don't sometimes have the choice if their parents are smoking in a car and are subjecting them to that second-hand smoke or in their house or wherever it may be.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, Bill 131, I believe gives some opportunity for us to do the right thing for our next generation, those pages sitting in front of you.

Like the Attorney General, I would, again, encourage all children, please, never start smoking, and if you are, stop today. Not only are you impacting your loved ones, but you're impacting our ability to provide health care for a lot of other maladies that are out there that people now aren't being able to get services for because we spend an enormous amount of money treating people with these cancers that are caused purely from something that is from these carcinogens in cigarettes—40,000 chemicals, I think I heard here today, in those cigarettes. It's deplorable.

I will be supporting this legislation. Again, I commend my colleague from Kitchener–Conestoga—a great dad.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

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Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Speaker, I think that we all can agree that we're all supporting this bill. It's interesting to hear some of people's personal stories about some of their challenges and obstacles they have had to overcome if they were smokers or had family members

that they saw suffering from the results of cigarette smoking.

But I looked up some information on teens, because we're talking about our young people and how young people start smoking. There are 11 facts about teen smoking that I'd like to share. Ninety per cent of smokers began before the age of 21. That's information that perhaps we can use when the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton talked about prevention. If we know that that's a targeted age group that starts smoking before the age of 21, maybe we need to do things differently. We need to change behaviours, how people view smoking, and maybe talk about it a lot more to your children when they are young, as the member from Kitchener-Conestoga is doing, so that they realize that this is not something that's a habit you want to engage in, because it can take you a lifetime to quit. Then, unfortunately, when they come to realize that it's not a good habit, it could be a little too late.

Another item is that every day, almost 3,900 adolescents under the age of 18 try their first cigarette, and more than 950 of them will become daily smokers. Those are really shocking figures. I think what we have to do—and maybe we've tried this before, and I know it's happening, and we're trying really hard—is, we have to break the cycle of the generation before us, becoming smokers where we are today. I think a lot of education and getting kids opportunities where they can substitute behaviours for smoking that are healthy choices would be something we can all work towards.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Kitchener-Conestoga has the opportunity to reply.

Mr. Michael Harris: I'd like to thank my colleagues from Algoma-Manitoulin, the Attorney General, of course, the astute Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, and London-Fanshawe, I believe. I think it's the personal stories, as Mr. Mantha talked about, that really hit home.

It's an interesting stat that 90% of smokers start before the age of 21, which is why it's so important to get to our young folks at an early age and tell them about the effects—long-term effects and short-term effects—of what smoking is all about. I thank my colleague from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, who I know, as a father, has instilled in his children, boys, that this is something that they'd much rather spend their money elsewhere on. I don't know how people even afford to do it, if you ask me. That's one major deterrent of doing it.

I never miss an opportunity when I see a smoker outside in the wintertime, when I have the kids in the car, to point to them and say, "Look at that guy. Do you want to be out there smoking in the freezing cold? How does that make any sense at all?" I will continue to remind my children at every turn that this is something that they want to avoid doing.

We only need to look in our hospitals today and our loved ones who have succumbed to cancer and a lot of other terminal illnesses because of their choice of habits when they were younger. I know a lot of them, after

quitting years and years later, feel that they're a new person, that the health impacts, the things that they can now do—play with their children, play sports—will mean a lot.

Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to Bill 131, and I'll leave it at that.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Hon. John Milloy: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you'll find we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding late shows.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent of the House to bring forward a motion regarding late shows. Agreed? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I move that the late show requested by the member from Haldimand-Norfolk to the Minister of Energy scheduled for Tuesday, April 1, 2014, be rescheduled to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 2, 2014.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Milloy has moved that the late show requested by the member of Haldimand-Norfolk to the Minister of Energy scheduled for Tuesday, April 1, be rescheduled to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 2, 2014. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

YOUTH SMOKING PREVENTION ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LA PRÉVENTION DU TABAGISME CHEZ LES JEUNES

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? The member for Leeds-Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Applause.

Mr. Steve Clark: Thank you to the government House leader for that thunderous applause.

I'm pleased to provide a few comments on the record regarding Bill 131, which is An Act to amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and various regulations. I know the government has its short name as the Youth Smoking Prevention Act.

A number of speakers have come forward this afternoon to make some very good comments. I think from our caucus's perspective we've already had some speakers indicating that we're supportive. There are a number of amendments that I know I would like to pursue at committee, especially on contraband tobacco, illegal tobacco, as the community safety critic for our party.

As most members have already acknowledged, the bill's going to prohibit smoking on playgrounds, sports

fields, and restaurant and bar patios. In addition, it's going to double fines for those who sell tobacco to youth. The fines would ultimately be the highest in Canada. The bill would also ban the sale of flavoured tobacco products, and I'm going to talk a little bit about that at the start of my presentation. Finally—and I know the member for Kitchener–Conestoga mentioned this because of the universities and colleges in his community—it would also prohibit sales on post-secondary educational campuses and other specified provincial government properties. So there are a number of issues regarding this bill that would deal with smoking, and specifically, as the minister has said on a couple of occasions, youth smoking.

There have been some folks who have expressed concern. I know that the Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association has indicated some issues regarding the issues of businesses and the impact on their industry. I hope that when the bill gets into committee, they'll come forward and they'll lay those concerns on the table. I know I haven't had any specific people in my riding outline any concerns about that, but I know that we should, as part of the democratic process, give them a chance to put any concerns they have on the table.

Recently, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society met with a number of MPPs about both Bill 131 and also Bill 21. I had the pleasure of meeting with them. I know that they had a number of tobacco facts that they outlined at that meeting that I would like to get on the record, Speaker: "Tobacco use kills 13,000 people in Ontario each year." It's responsible for "30% of all cancer deaths and 85% of lung cancer deaths; 57,000 grade 6 to 12 Ontario youth used flavoured tobacco products in 2010-11"—and that is a very disturbing statistic.

They were very supportive of Bill 131. I know that specifically on restricting tobacco retail to young people, they indicated a statistic: "The highest smoking rates in Ontario exist in the young adult population from ages 20 to 24." Restricting the sale of tobacco on post-secondary campuses, they feel, will address the supply side of tobacco control and make it less accessible for young people who attend those institutions.

I had a very good meeting with them. I got a lot of good things on the record. The one thing, though, I do notice in the package is a prop. So through you, Speaker, I'd like to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms—just so I won't use it—if you could come and take this prop away from me. This is actually something they gave us showing a Fruit Roll-Up and a cigar that's got a strawberry on the front. I'm actually going to ask you to take this away from me so I don't use it in my speech. Anybody who can see it—basically, it looks like the same thing. The Fruit Roll-Up and the—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I must give the member full marks for his creativity, but I am also obligated to remind the House that it's inappropriate to use props while they are making their presentations in the House.

The member for Leeds–Grenville has the floor.

Mr. Steve Clark: And I want to thank you very much, Speaker, for clarifying that.

Interjection.

Mr. Steve Clark: No, no, no, through you to the member—I felt very strongly, and I know Ms. Gélinas from Nickel Belt mentioned the fact that some of the packaging of the cigars—the flavoured cigar in this case was a strawberry cigar—looked almost identical to the Fruit Roll-Ups. I do have a number of papers around it and I do get a bit animated. I just wouldn't want to get carried away, Speaker, but I appreciate your diligence.

1640

One of the things I did yesterday was walk down to the corner store, just around the corner from my house. It's called the Oxford Corner Store. I talked to the clerk there, a young woman named Sierra, and I asked Sierra to indulge me and show me some of the flavoured tobacco products that she had there. She lifted up the power wall and was able to show me a number of flavoured products. I was actually surprised at the amount of flavoured tobacco products that were on sale at that location. What surprised me the most were the flavours. I was shocked to find products she showed me that were flavoured grape, chocolate, peach, cherry, watermelon, strawberry—there was one café mocha cigar; I found that was a bit strange—cream, mint, and then also the traditional flavours; for those who would remember, the rum- and wine-dipped product or the cherry and vanilla product.

The other products that she showed me were some of the smokeless products. When I went to university in Waterloo, I roomed with a couple of local Brockvillians who were baseball players, so I was familiar with some of the smokeless products and some of the chewing tobacco that baseball players would use. In those old days, you had what I think was called Red Man chew flavour, and they would pack it into a ball and put it in their mouth, but they would normally wrap it with flavoured gum. They would wrap it with bubble gum, Juicy Fruit or something that actually had a sweeter flavour to it, and put it in their mouth when they were out playing baseball. I was familiar with some of these products. When I was at the Oxford Corner Store and spoke to Sierra, I was surprised at the amount of those smokeless products that were there. People call them dip. It's essentially like a moist snuff that they use, again, flavoured consistently with the candy fruit flavour. They had citrus, cherry, mint and then the straight-on products. It was very interesting to see the volume of those products.

Even though when I asked Sierra whether those products were specifically purchased by young people, I was surprised that she didn't feel that way; that wasn't the market that normally came into that store to purchase products—not to say that it didn't end up in the hands of young people, because clearly some of the statistics show that a number of young people have tried these flavoured products. I was just surprised at the amount that was there in the smokeless variety, the dips and the chews, but also in cigars and other products like that.

I noticed another document, if you can indulge me, Speaker, from October 2013. The Canadian Cancer Society had a number of pictures that showed us some of the changes with some of the different flavours. It wasn't just in the cigarillos, which ultimately became flavoured cigars, but also some of the other tobacco products that are used in water pipes, in every flavour possible. There was banana, melon, coconut, cola, Tropicana, cinnamon, apple, liquorice, cappuccino and caramel, so you see the volume of flavoured products that were available for sale.

I was, again, quite shocked that there were that many of those flavoured products on the market. Obviously, the prop that I'd given, through you, to the Sergeant-at-Arms showed exactly what Ms. Gélinas and the Minister of Health were saying, that we can't have these products being packaged specifically for young people to make them look like a bag of candy or a Fruit Roll-Up. I certainly had my eye opened yesterday at my local corner store in talking to Sierra about that issue.

I've also had a number of meetings with some groups. The Ontario Korean Businessmen's Association met with me recently. They had given me some statistics regarding youth smoking in their slide deck. As of 2011, the RCMP identified over—this is just on the contraband side—175 organized crime groups involved in the contraband cigarette trade.

One statistic that was interesting: The Canadian Medical Association Journal reported in August 2012 that 22% of youth smokers consumed contraband and smoked more than their peers. So I applaud the legislation for taking away the flavoured side of tobacco, which would be targeted for our young people, but I'm also concerned that price is a determinant for making these decisions. If we don't also include something in this bill to deal with that illegal tobacco trade, I think we've failed our young people. Clearly, when we look at those statistics, like the Ontario Korean Businessmen's Association's claim that you've got a significant population of young people deciding to smoke the cheaper illegal product, I think we have to, if we're actually going to target youth smoking—it's great to deal with the flavoured product. We have to deal, I suggest, with the illegal product.

I'm going to take a couple of moments just to put some comments on the record regarding what I think should be changed. Also, I think it's important to try to educate MPPs in this whole side of the business.

One of the things that I would like to put on the record is a magazine called FrontLine Security. This is a reprint edition, and I'm going to be quoting from it with some statistics regarding the illegal product.

One of the stories that's written by FrontLine's senior writer, Richard Bray, is entitled "Contraband tobacco: It's a Crime." One of the spokespersons for the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco, Gary Grant, talks about targeting young people. I'm just going to quote briefly from Mr. Bray's story on page 22 in volume 8, issue 2, of FrontLine Security.

"Targeting young people.

"Criminals are intent on getting a new generation of kids hooked on smoking. Canadian regulations, such as

requiring photo ID for purchasing cigarettes from retailers, banning cigarette ads, and hiding tobacco from view in stores, are all intended to prevent young people from getting access to tobacco. But these are undermined by the ready availability of low-cost contraband tobacco. A 'baggie' of 200 contraband cigarettes can cost as much as \$70 or \$80 less than a legal product, and, as I'm sure you know, contraband dealers, illegal dealers, obviously wouldn't ask for ID.

We've had the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco send us some similar statistics.

Maybe we can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to come again, because I found that I have another issue. So if you want to come grab this. You know, kids can get these bags for less than the cost of a movie ticket. This isn't actually cigarettes, Speaker; it's just cardboard. But it's still a prop and I want—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): It is a prop. I have to again say to all members of the House that it's inappropriate to use props. I don't know if you have any more in the envelope or not. But I understand: You are making the point very effectively. I would just again caution the member on the fact we can't do it.

The Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I would like to commend the member for his props that may be or may not be in order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I appreciate that, too.

The member for Leeds–Grenville has the floor.

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm glad to get that off my desk, but I think it does show that these baggies that are being sold are being sold at significantly less cost. That document from the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco really spells it out, that a young person, for about the same price as a movie ticket, could get a bag of contraband tobacco at a significantly lesser cost than the traditional legal product. I think if we're going to deal with youth smoking—and that's the short title; that's the government title for this bill. The catchy title is the Youth Smoking Prevention Act. If, in fact, we're going to provide a vehicle to reduce youth smoking, we have to also, in addition to dealing with the flavoured product, deal with the illegal product, and it's a big business.

I have to tell you a story. I worked for the Brockville Recorder and Times, just before I started working for my predecessor, Senator Runciman, when he was the MPP. I was the circulation manager at the Brockville Recorder and Times daily. We had a number of contractors that delivered our newspaper product. We had a number of employees who would insert flyers into the newspaper. We were an afternoon paper. The one morning paper would be the Saturday morning paper, which would take place overnight. For one reason or the other, one of the contractors that delivered these newspapers to dealers and carriers, their contract was terminated by the company. They decided that they would go a different direction.

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A funny thing happened that Friday night: I came to the newspaper, and I had a number of employees tell me

that we terminated the contract of their supplier, that unknown to me, a number of employees were getting bags of those cigarettes under the cover of darkness while most of the employees weren't at the paper. It shocked me, because I had no idea about the depth of purchase of contraband tobacco, illegal tobacco, in the riding. It was a real eye-opener for me, that right under my own nose, as an employee, as a manager at the newspaper, that illegal product was getting into that company. It was, as I said, a real eye-opener.

This magazine, as well, gives me a number of statistics on why this is such a crime that I think we all have to put our minds to. One carton of 200 cigarettes has potential tax revenue for the government of \$65 a carton; the potential illicit gain value is about 35 bucks a carton. So if you start looking at a master case of 50 cartons of illegal tobacco, that has a potential illicit gain of about \$1,750; the potential tax revenue lost for the government of Ontario would be about \$3,250. You go to an SUV, which would have four master cases; a van that would have 10; a cube van that would have 20; right up to a tractor-trailer that would have 1,400 master cases of illegal tobacco at a potential illicit gain of \$2.45 million. It costs approximately \$5 to produce 200 cigarettes, with a selling price of about \$400 a carton. So, again, for those who buy the legal product, when you look at the potential illicit gain and you look at the tax revenue loss for the government, it's an eye-opener. It's unbelievable.

One of the things that the Ontario government did recently—this was a couple years ago in June 2011—was they transferred, through new legislation, the responsibility of licensing raw leaf tobacco from the Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers' Marketing Board to the Ontario Ministry of Revenue. Just days before the transfer took effect, the ministry, in a news release, gave a temporary grace period in terms of dealing with that. So when we talk about different measures that could be put forward to deal with illicit tobacco sales, the enforcement of the Ministry of Revenue on that raw-leaf tobacco would be one of those measures that I think should be considered by a committee when this bill is put forward.

One of the members, I think it was the member for Scarborough—Agincourt, talked about the federal government. I also see in this magazine that it talks about the new task force that the federal government put forward: The Harper government announced a 50-officer RCMP Anti-Contraband Tobacco Force. I know one of the members opposite asked, "What is the federal government doing?" Well, they did create this anti-contraband task force which they hoped would be able to work with other jurisdictions to deal with the problem. It's a fascinating issue. One that I think is missed in this piece of legislation.

I do recognize some of the components in the bill. I recognize that the member for Nickel Belt had a similar bill, and I appreciated being in the House today to hear some of her ideas and suggestions. I do think that some of the things that this bill will stop, like some of the promotional materials—I think the member for Nickel

Belt mentioned where you buy a pack of cigarettes and you get a free lighter. I agree that some of those issues should be stopped, that we shouldn't be providing promotional materials when we're selling tobacco, but I also believe that there's an issue for the government. I heard loud and clear from the Ontario Convenience Stores Association and from the Korean Businessmen's Association about their concerns about the government possibly raising tobacco taxes in the budget and the net impact that would have. I think some of the statistics that we've seen show that that's not what these groups want to see this government put forward.

I think we need to have a very concerted effort on getting after the illegal product and getting it out of the system, but I do recognize that there are some things in this bill that are supported by all three parties, and I look forward to the bill getting to committee, to be able to drive some of those amendments forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak, Speaker. And I want to thank you for your assistance with getting the props off of my desk.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Questions and comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to stand up today to talk about Bill 131 and to respond to, quite honestly, a very well researched—and I think the member from Leeds—Grenville has presented a very compelling—case to support the bill.

Of course, we've all heard from our critic on this issue, the member from Nickel Belt, who has championed the issue of prevention around youth smoking and the flavoured cigarette products.

I think that this is interesting timing. We're seeing a number of pieces of legislation come forward in a very quick manner, even though, quite honestly, the government has sat on this issue for a long time. So timing is everything, I guess.

As a mother of a 15-year-old, I'd like to say that I want to see every measure put in place which would make the accessibility of cigarette products—raise the bar. Make that the highest level.

There is a vulnerability that exists within youth today. When I was president of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, we also championed the issue of media and the influence that media have on youth, especially around violence and around stigma and issues that pertain to youth in today's world. The peer pressure which existed when we were young is still there today, but it's hyped up because social media has played such a strong role in it as well.

I do think the member for Leeds—Grenville has made some very good points and I actually will take a lesson out of his creative use of not using props. I must put that down in my lesson book on MPP 101. I look forward to further debate on the issue of youth smoking prevention.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: I'm very pleased to rise in my place and speak about the Youth Smoking Prevention

Act. Mr. Speaker, to speak on this bill, we need to know what this act is all about. The act is about protecting and preventing youth from tobacco use. A wise person has said that prevention is better than a cure. That is why our government introduced Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act. It's all about that Ontarians live healthy lives; this is what this bill is about.

This bill, if passed, would save \$1.9 billion in direct health costs and \$5.8 billion in indirect health costs, such as lost productivity.

Mr. Speaker, this is not only that all of the members in this House support this bill, but we have support from outside as well, such as that 66% of people in Ontario want smoking to be prohibited on restaurant and bar patios, and 58 Ontario municipalities representing 61% of the population already ban smoking on playgrounds.

Many organizations, such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation; Rowena Pinto, vice-president, public affairs and strategic initiatives, Canadian Cancer Society; and the Ontario Lung Association—all these organizations support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill as soon as possible and send it to committee so that we can further have a debate in committee and hear from the stakeholders.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?
1700

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's always a pleasure to get up and to speak about the words from my neighbouring colleague from Leeds–Grenville. I was quite intrigued with the props, because I know that we're not allowed to use props—

Ms. Laurie Scott: But they were appropriate.

Mr. Jim McDonell: But they were appropriate.

Especially in my riding, with the contraband cigarettes, it's a major issue. Being on the health unit at one time, studies have shown that upwards of around 85% or 90% of the cigarettes that are being smoked at local high schools are actually contraband. Really, I think if we want to have some impact, I have some ideas on that.

But I always disagreed with seeing children out on the street smoking at a high school, where, really, they're outside the authority of the teachers and principals so that they have no way of counteracting who's in the group, who's selling what. I think if you were to talk to some of the older principals who talk about when they had spots on school property, they controlled who was there, so the groups were smaller. It was not the cool thing to be at that time.

Of course, when you're not allowed to buy the contraband cigarettes or whatever is being delivered there, cigarettes are more expensive, harder to get, harder to come by. I think that sometimes you have to look at the results of what you're doing. I believe moving people out to the sidewalk is an issue that is only actually encouraging it. We see an uptake in cigarette smoking, and I believe that's part of it.

But there's no question for people who remember before the days that the health risks were known, cigar-

ettes played a huge part in most people's families, as they've had loved ones who have passed away with cancer.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Michael Mantha: Based on the comments that came from my colleague from Leeds–Grenville, just a little word of advice: You've got to learn to bring those props up at the right time, but you also have to put them back down in order to get some leeway from the Chair.

C'est avec plaisir que je me lève pour offrir un peu de commentaires sur ce projet de loi, le projet de loi 131. Je veux remercier la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée, qui a apporté le projet de loi en avant. Puis je veux vraiment reconnaître et féliciter France Gélinas, notre députée pour la région de Nickel Belt, qui a vraiment été une championne sur le sujet de la prévention à fumer, surtout envers les enfants.

Cet après-midi, j'étais assis dans mon bureau et je parlais avec mon assistante, mon adjointe. Tout d'un coup, on a regardé dans la malle et on a reçu deux petits cadeaux. Et puis je lui ai dit : « Donne donc ça à ton enfant. C'est des bonbons. C'est quelque chose avec quoi il va être capable de s'amuser. »

Elle les prend et les met sur son pupitre, et puis tout d'un coup elle revient et dit : « Bien, voyons donc. » Un était un bonbon aux fraises, et l'autre était vraiment un paquet de tabac qui avait un goût de cerise dedans. J'ai regardé les deux, et puis c'était essentiellement ça. Il y avait deux paquets et j'étais totalement pris par surprise que les deux paquets—je pensais que c'était des bonbons.

C'est vraiment quelque chose sur quoi je veux encourager les gens à payer attention. Si on est pour protéger nos enfants, il faut vraiment qu'on regarde la prévention, et surtout la façon dont les produits sont délivrés et comment ils attirent nos enfants et leur curiosité. C'est ce qui les attire vers les produits, et puis c'est assez « in style », on va dire, pour essayer un petit goût, comme tous les autres le font. Vraiment, il faut qu'on les regarde et qu'on prenne le temps de parler à nos enfants et faire certain qu'on les garde bien.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments. We return to the member for Leeds–Grenville for his response.

Mr. Steve Clark: I want to thank the members from Kitchener–Waterloo, Mississauga–Brampton South, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Algoma–Manitoulin for your comments to my address today. I appreciate all the advice that I've received about how I've used all of these wonderful gifts that all these organizations—

Interjection.

Mr. Steve Clark: I have no more props to show. They've all been confiscated by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

I would like to quote from another document that I received. This is the Anti-Illicit Trade in Tobacco media monitoring from January 2014. One of the publications that it quotes from is actually from my alma mater, the University of Waterloo. It's a document called Tobacco Use in Canada from the Propel Centre for Population

Health Impact, the 2013 edition. The quotation in the document said, “This edition of the report provides, for the first time, data on the use of flavoured tobacco among youth. This shift from cigarettes to other forms of tobacco is a real concern, as more youth aged 15 to 19 have smoked a cigarillo than have smoked a whole cigarette.”

I think it’s very important that we’re having this debate about the flavoured products, given some of the studies that are out there.

However, again, I want to reiterate that I believe the whole issue of illegal tobacco needs to be addressed by the committee that will be dealing with this bill. I think there should be amendments. I’m going to quote from, again, this media monitoring. It was from an Ottawa Citizen story on January 3 called “Quick Fixes Won’t Work.” It says, “According to a report from Ontario’s Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, contraband ... is now the number one source of cigarettes for youth.”

So again, I think we need to deal with the illegal product. We need to have it as part of this bill. We can’t just forget about it. It is the number one issue that’s dealing with our young people. It should be in the legislation.

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

Mr. Jim McDonnell: I’m pleased to get up to speak to Bill 131, An Act to amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act. I have to say, I’m somewhat surprised that we’re talking about this bill now. The issues with youth unemployment being so high, I thought that might be on. The member from High Park said it’s actually been four and a half months since we last talked about this bill. I just wonder, the priority this week, but I’ll leave that. I know where we’re going. I’m just wondering why this is brought up this week. Maybe a bit of a channel changer.

Smoking’s an addiction that, as far as my family, certainly hit it very hard over the years. It’s something that’s very difficult to quit. I know many people who have tried over the years to quit smoking, and very few of them have been successful. It’s not something that I would wish on anybody. So really, prevention is key.

I had a father who tried many, many times to quit. I always remember a story while talking to him—in the early 1960s, we had built a barn on the farm. This is before the supply management, and money was pretty tight. In those days, your plans were generally in your head. It was a large project, a large new dairy barn to replace one that had burned about 10 years before, before my time. But renovating and building, you get into a problem. Even though he had stopped smoking, when he ran into a problem and he’d solve it, he’d have to light up. He just said, “You know, it’s funny. If I don’t have that cigarette in my hand—it’s just something I’ve grown so used to, I just can’t get through to solve the issues that are in front of me.” I think that talks about the seriousness of the addiction, and it is an addiction.

You look back and in those days, he probably wanted to quit just for the idea of the money, because cigarette

smoking was expensive even back then. It didn’t seem to be a lot of money, but there wasn’t a lot of money around. He was a person who ran a dairy farm, sold seed on the side, did a lot of things just to make enough money for—we had a family of 11 children at that time, so there were a lot of mouths to feed. I remember looking at one of the paycheques in March for a week back then, and the milk cheque was \$7. So it certainly was a challenge, and smoking would be part of it, and then trying to do the investments it took in the farm when there really was no money, like building the new barn.

When I look back, the 200 acres we had at the time has grown to 1,000 acres and a much larger dairy barn, but we still use that. So it talks about the investment and the cost of cigarettes.

As I say, when I look at the other issues, the life expectancy of smokers, clearly, as we go back to that time—when I first started going to school, there were really no details on life expectancy. It was all around the money.

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We used to have this lady come around to our school. She was a volunteer. Mrs. McKelvy was her name. The first talk about cigarettes—she came by once a year—would be about the cost of smoking and the opportunity cost by smoking and what you’re losing out of your income and how much over a lifetime that would cost. Sitting there in grade 3 or 4, it didn’t have an impact, I would think, at that time. I know that—I have a sister-in-law who was a teacher at the time—a lot of teachers didn’t really enjoy that because they were all smokers, and they smoked in the class. That was standard at that time.

Even when I got my first job at Bell, there was a lot of talk about the special ashtrays we had. They were all set up to avoid fires. That was the talk—about using the safety ashtray; it wasn’t about the health impacts. All that information came in later, as we identified some of the issues around lung cancer and the other issues with smoking. It certainly had a big impact on families, just through the disposable income.

But I think that when you look at education, it is key. We have to do things with our young children to make sure that they don’t get started. I hear about the flavoured tobacco and some of the past opportunities where some of that came back, and it was changed—or companies changed it to get around the law. Of all the issues I have with cigarettes, I think that is the most significant to me, because I really see that as an attempt at getting people hooked on it. It’s a terrible thing to get hooked on. It’s something I think we, as a Legislature, all agree that we don’t want to go there. I think that is a classic example of circumventing the intent of the law, which is trying to outlaw this to children, and changing a few technicalities and continuing that. I’d like to see this legislation probably do more to stop that because I think that was where we have a large impact. I think that through committee, maybe, we could get some of that done.

I look at some of the intense campaigns over the last 10 years, and I think it’s beginning to work. We’ve

gotten to a level where we actually see a bit of a kickback in the numbers, and more and more people are smoking, so definitely more has to be done. I think that that's our job here, to look at how we can have an impact. I don't think we necessarily beat up the people who are smoking. I think that some of them smoked—I guess that group is getting older now and there are less of them who started before there was an issue. Actually, in a lot of cases, people who came to the war were encouraged to smoke by the government. It was a way of passing the time in the trenches, you might say, so really there was a large group of people who started almost through no fault of their own. It was a way of passing time when times were slow in bad times. So I think we have to look at that.

We talk about the high schools, and I mentioned before about pushing students out to the street. When I went to school, we used to have a smoking room. You didn't have to smoke to be in the room, but that was the only place in school that we were allowed to smoke. I looked at the people in there—about half of them at the time smoked. It wasn't a reason to be there. You weren't in the public eye. I won't say that I'm encouraging that, but I guess if we're going to allow a group of people to smoke, I would rather see it on school property than out in public, where we don't know who's out in public. I go back to something that was said on the health unit board by Gary Barton—he was a past principal of VCI in Vankleek Hill. He said, "When the smoking area was on the school property, I could go out and monitor who was actually there." He says, "I go out there today. I know people are selling drugs, selling contraband cigarettes. I ask them to leave, and they basically told me that I have no authority on public property and that if these people want to stay there, they have all the rights in the world." I think that's a problem.

If we really want to stop people from smoking, I think we should take our lessons from alcohol. I just wonder why it's not a \$100 fine or \$80 fine—some fine—if you're underage and you're smoking. We go after the people who get them the cigarettes the best we can. We know that in our area, it's somewhere over 85% of the cigarettes smoked—in this area around the school; they've done tests on it—that are contraband. We aren't really doing anything by going after the store owners. I think what we have to do is go over the results, and part of that is taking away their audience. That's all we've created for these people is an audience. If you travel through the roads of—well, South Glengarry, Dundas and Stormont county, every time you pass a high school, you'll see a crowd of 30 students out front any time of the day. They're sitting on road property—sometimes not the safest place to be; in the city, it can be quite dangerous. Really there's an audience there. There are people who are selling these products who aren't our students, and we can say nothing about it. But I would like something that would go after the people who are really breaking the law, and those are the people who are underage smoking.

As I said, I sat on the health unit for a number of years and had the occasion to talk about some of the issues

around youth smoking and saw some of the stats in our area. Generally, if you get into an area of low income—average incomes in my riding are lower than the provincial average for sure—we see that there's a higher percentage of people smoking. I think these are people who generally don't have the money to smoke—disposable income. You see, again, people who are smoking when really it would be better if they could put their money elsewhere. Very few of the people I meet who are smoking actually want to smoke. Most of the people I talk to complain about smoking; they're hooked on it. It's something, especially for that group of people, that's very tough. We have to do something to keep them off that. I think there's more work to be done.

In my area, of course, we're referred to as the contraband capital of Canada, with the number of smokes that come through there. You go back not too long—before I got involved in municipal politics, there were guns being fired on the St. Lawrence, along the St. Lawrence, and people were scared. We had a couple of instances on the reserve where a couple of people were shot and a couple of people were killed, so it took some action. But that's what you get when you get involved with organized crime. We see the results all the time. We see very young teenagers with large, expensive vehicles.

If you talk to some of the members of society at Akwesasne, they're worried about their youth, too. It's hard when that kind of money is so readily available and they see their friends doing it—for them to stay out of it and to pursue an education. So it's hurting everybody. It's hurting all societies. Cottage owners and house owners are being told, "At 10 o'clock tonight, I don't want to see you around the house; and if you are, maybe something will happen." A lot of people are seniors, and they're scared.

Interjection: It's hard to believe.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Yes, and they're leaving. They're afraid to say anything. The police—I know we have a special detachment of the RCMP down there who have a special agreement with the federal government, the OPP, and they enforce this area very heavily. People don't know why they can't stop it. But when you can come over in a boat at night or Ski-Doo at night, it's very hard to track somebody down. When you've got the local population worried about saying anything, it's not a good situation. I know some people my way whose children have gotten involved and are facing prison terms. So it really has a big impact not only on the smokers but also society.

Something has to be done about the contraband. One of the access points we have with it is of course this audience that we're creating down on high school properties, and I think that's something we have to look at.

I always felt sorry about some of our law-abiding corner stores. I know my feeling—a friend of mine operates a store, and he hires high school students to come in. It's their first job. They do all they can—the tobacco police come through—I would say through some intimidation, to trick them into selling. I know my

daughter used to work there. She used to comment that her friends used to come in when they were of age—she's 28 now—and she wouldn't sell to them. But of course you get somebody who's working, 16 years old, first job—a number of cases where somebody has walked in and they get fined \$500 or \$600. One person I knew who only worked—first day of work, a couple of hours' work, all of a sudden he has a \$600 fine. Really, that's not the root of the problem. These are people who are really trying to stop it, but the whole situation is trouble, especially when you look at the products the kids are actually smoking.

1720

I think that we have to look at results. We have to look at education—trying to get out and talk to people about the issues that are occurring here, whether it be contraband or illegal cigarettes. It's got to come down to making it not classy to smoke. I think that we've done a pretty good job with that. We've moved ahead on doing some of that.

I would like to see amendments so that there is—not making it just a ticketing event on a person. It's like alcohol; it's not a record, but it hits them in the pocketbook. It makes it a little more expensive. We had a chance—our leader, Tim Hudak, and I went down and we met with the special investigations unit in Cornwall. They weren't recommending that we lower the taxes. They saw that as a problem, because if we do that—there's organized crime in this area—they would just move to a different product, whether it be drugs or guns, or humans. So it's a bigger issue. It's something we have to be very careful about. It's a matter of working at that and talking to the groups, and people like the special forces that are in there, to get their impression of what needs to be done.

When you look at the impact, the people I know—and I think we've heard it a number of times: It touches almost every family. My father, who I talked about, tried many times to quit smoking; he eventually had heart disease, likely caused from tobacco use over the years. It was only at that time that he was able to quit. Eventually, it was cancer that took him at about 71 years old; some say that it was much too young an age. Seeing people whittle away and lose weight—it's a terrible way to go. I commend the Legislature for trying to make a difference on this. We have to try to do better, try to step in and look at the science and see where we can make a change, and I really believe in making it illegal to actually possess cigarettes if you're under 19—if that's a law. There's lots to be done in that area, and it's a matter of changing the culture. We have to work with the tobacco producers as a team—something that we have to work at is that it's got to be in nobody's best interests to encourage young people to smoke.

On the other hand, we have some people who are a little older, like myself, who have been smoking, and I don't want to see them necessarily beat up either. I think we've done everything we can to help them. We probably could use some more programs. But, again, I dis-

agree with the idea of forcing them out onto the sidewalks. Especially because I go by the hospital and I see people out there with different medical apparatus, I see doctors and nurses out there—there's about 200 feet of green grass between the hospital and the street, and what you're really wondering is, are you really doing anything for these people? They're not smoking because they want to. It's a terrible addiction. They'd be the first people to admit to that. Can we not be a little more compassionate, and work with them and make sure that they're away from the entrance to the hospital? We have to allow them to go through their life and make the best of a bad situation. Because, really, that's what it is. We all deserve a smoke-free environment, but this has nothing to do with that. These people, they're 10, 15 metres away from the door of the building. Let them enjoy that little bit of life that they seem to enjoy.

It's an expensive habit. We make very much money from the taxes on it, which, I guess, if there is an upside, there's a little bit to that. I know that if you look at the amount of revenue that comes in from cigarettes, if we take that and put it back into health care and other issues—it's probably not an overall winner, but it helps alleviate some of the arguments about the smoking and the cost of it. People that certainly do smoke pay high taxes and they certainly accomplish some of that.

I know Dr. Paul, the local medical officer of health—a lot of stats, a lot of investigation into some of the results; what starts smoking. I think working with people like this, people in the know that have looked through the science, looked at different countries—what's worked, what hasn't worked—is really where we have to go to get rid of this terrible affliction, really. We have to make the products very hard for young people to get and make it so that it's not the cool thing—not giving them the opportunity that if you want to belong to a group, you have to smoke. I think that's another reason why we want to get rid of that group sitting out on the sidewalk smoking. It's just a bad situation.

Dr. Paul talked about the amount of smoking in our area, the other problems that it has, the determinants of health. It affects birth rates. It affects newborns coming through. There are just so many things wrong with this. In a lot of cases, a lot of the youth who are going through this have no idea or haven't heard that story. By the time that they find out about it, it's because they have a problem. They maybe have a child who has got some defects or issues. Percentage-wise, there's a number of those that go back to the cause of smoking during pregnancy. If there's a connection there, it's our job to make sure people know that.

Anyway, I'm looking forward to some real change on this issue. It's an issue that I see very much locally and in my family. I would like to see something that finally works on stopping cigarette smoking.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Thank you to the member for Stormont–Dundas–South–Glengarry for his contribution to the debate on this bill.

Speaker, it's good to see that we are trying to focus and target youth smoking prevention, because we know that that's the generation that is next up for this nasty habit to grab a hold of. It's difficult to shake that habit once you get involved in that habit.

As I mentioned earlier, I've been looking up some facts on teens specifically, because we're talking about youth. Another interesting item that I wasn't aware of that was a side effect of smoking, whether you're an adult or a teen—but this was a very interesting fact—is that teen smokers are more likely to have panic attacks, anxiety disorders and depression. I'm glad some of the pages are here today, because I was unaware that there would be some kind of mental health effects to smoking. Obviously, it's an addiction, but if it actually means that you're more likely to experience those things, that's something that we really need to consider, because in addition to the physical health side effects that come with smoking, there's also mental health side effects that come with smoking. So, Speaker, I found that fact really interesting. Of course, when people are smoking, and if they do have these so-called panic attacks or anxiety attacks, they probably end up smoking more because of the stress factor involved with that. So it seems like a vicious circle.

But this bill, I hope, does impact the fact that we can prevent youth from taking up smoking. It's a good piece maybe to start educating youth a little more on the facts about smoking and driving that home and making it more of a serious issue, because it certainly is something that's a lifestyle choice, but it can be changed. You can choose a healthier option.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise in support of Bill 131. I listened attentively to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, the whole comment of contraband cigarette selling to young people, but, more importantly, about the negative health effects in terms of smoking and long-term effects in terms of the whole community.

As someone who has dealt most of my career in public health, the anti-tobacco legislation across Ontario—I have been working actively for over 20 years on this whole file. I know my colleague the member from Oak Ridges–Markham, as a former medical officer of health in York region, has also done exemplary work when it comes to tobacco legislation and preventing smoking among young people.

We know the reason why the government and, as well, as I heard attentively, all members of the House are supporting the proposed Bill 131: to make our province the healthiest province in Canada. The only way we can make this province the healthiest one is by ensuring every young person in our province does not start smoking, because we know the data shows that when they haven't started smoking before age 25, they will not start smoking.

1730

At the end of the day, the goal of the proposed bill is to ensure that the smoking rates in Ontario are the lowest

in Canada. Right now, our tobacco smoking rate is about 19%, according to the data. That represents over 255,000 smokers. Our goal through this proposed legislation, if passed, is to reduce the incidence of smoking, but also to protect the health of every young Ontarian, because at the end of the day, the future of this province depends on the health of our young people and a message about the danger of smoking.

I'm very pleased that the members opposite are supporting Bill 131.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's always a pleasure to follow my colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry. He always does a great job of bringing forward the issues from his community—and, in this case, a personal perspective, losing his father. Many of us in this House have talked today about the loss that we have each suffered, or have all suffered collectively. We all have to think about that human cost and the impact to all of our lives from that whole humanistic perspective, and also the financial reality.

We were talking here a little bit ago about the fires that are created as a result of careless smokers, and those types of things; the firefighters' lives that have been lost over the years. The health care costs that we continually incur as a result of trying to treat those people who have inflicted themselves—I find it just absolutely asinine that someone would actually inhale that smoke that they know at some point is probably going to kill them, and I try my darnedest to try not to do that.

I implore the kids watching today, the youth of our world, to be cool and not smoke. It's a lot of peer pressure sometimes to jump on. I think it takes a lot more strength—it takes a lot more willpower—but you'll come out the other end a stronger person for it, and you'll be a leader in your community, which will actually help.

I'm going to put a shout out to Hazel Lynn, our medical officer of health. Jim mentioned medical officers of health. She's done a great job in Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound of trying to lead the anti-smoking mission in our area, and it's absolutely critical.

I think we should be focusing on the prevention. We should be finding ways to ensure that young kids understand why it's detrimental to their health and to the health of those around them, and what the future of our province, our country and our world is going to be if we can get smoking right out of there.

My colleague brought up a lot of things: illegal to possess, illegal to sell to youth—absolutely critical—and the addiction. A number of my colleagues have spoken about contraband. It's absolutely abhorrent that we actually allow this to continue in today's world. The damage that illegal contraband smoking causes to our province, across the spectrum, is absolutely unacceptable.

We need to stomp it out. We need to butt it out. At the end of the day, I will be supporting this bill wholeheartedly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Michael Mantha: I listened quite intently to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry’s statement, and I can relate to a lot of his personal experiences, particularly with his father. I think I spoke about mine earlier today.

With the information that is available today—it’s something that wasn’t there a long time ago. I remember as a young boy, seven or eight years old, sitting in the back of Dad’s old LTD station wagon, looking at that blue smoke coming from the windows at the front and back. Jeez, we didn’t even have seat belts. We were going in the bush, into camp, and it was the greatest good time that we had.

Could you imagine seeing that today? My goodness. That wouldn’t even happen anywhere on the streets today. You just wouldn’t even hear about it. Never mind not having that blue smoke coming at you in the back and pretending you’re smoking with Dad, but not having a seat belt and whistling in the back of the car.

There’s so much information out there that we can provide to our youth, to the public, that the decision should be an easy one, but it never is. Again, I used to be a smoker myself, for 19 years, and it was one heck of an experience to kick that habit. I’m thankful every day that both my wife and I made that decision.

The one thing in these comments that I’m going to stress right now, basically coming from the perspective of a father of two boys, is that I strongly disagree with the fact that we should be permitting areas around the schools with any type of tobacco product, let alone a lighter. Jeez. We can’t even get on a plane these days with a lighter.

Kids don’t need that in school. They don’t need that environment whatsoever. I don’t even want to see it come close to coming into our schools. If it’s there, it gives the perception that the kids can do it. If you give them a location, you’re actually condoning it, so I don’t want to see it there. That is strictly a comment coming from me as a father of two boys. That is definitely something I do not want to see anywhere near our schools.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments for this round.

I return to the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I want to thank the members from London–Fanshawe, Scarborough–Agincourt, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, who always has something to add, and Algoma–Manitoulin.

I think the issue of the panic attacks and mental health—I think that’s true: We’re seeing a lot more health issues than we ever dreamed of not too many years ago. We need to make people aware of that.

We talk about the issue of fires: How many house fires, forest fires, the amount of damage, the number of lives lost, and it came back to smoking? It’s something I think everybody has talked about and wants to put in the past, but it’s a tough one.

We talked about the age of 25, that if we can get them to that age, they likely aren’t going to smoke. Still, 19%

is a large percentage of the population still smoking. It’s hard to believe it’s still that way.

The member from Algoma–Manitoulin talked about the old cars. I remember being packed into a car, 10 of us, no seat belts. The smoke you were getting was usually the dust coming through the floor. For many trips—usually it was just church and back and that was it. But those are the days we came from, and those were the days when smoking was not an issue. It was not known to be an issue, other than the cost.

We know a lot more today. We know it comes down to keeping people under 25, especially those under 19, from smoking, and not letting them start. As the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound said, it’s got to be the uncool thing, to smoke. We’re getting there, but we’re not there yet.

One thing I think we need to do is stop that smoking area for kids. I really wonder—if you were to have a drink of alcohol or a beer in your pocket, it’s a \$100 fine. I don’t know why it’s not the same thing for smoking. I think that’s what it takes.

Interjection: Good idea. Private member’s bill.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Yes.

Thanks for the opportunity today, and I look forward to some change—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Further debate?

Mr. Norm Miller: It is my pleasure to have an opportunity to comment this afternoon for a few minutes about Bill 131, which is An Act to amend the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. I listened to a number of the speeches this afternoon, starting out with the speech from the NDP critic and member from Nickel Belt. I heard most of her hour-long speech on this bill, and I thought she certainly made a lot of good points. She started off by pointing out how this bill was introduced in November, and I think there was about an hour of debate maybe in December, but now it has been some four and a half months that the bill hasn’t been debated, so, in fact, as she pointed out, the NDP lead was just today, and we haven’t had the official opposition’s lead on this yet. It seems a little strange that it has been so long since the bill was introduced if it was a priority of the government, but it’s been four and a half months just sitting there with no discussion.

This bill is intended to do a few things.

“Assorted amendments are made to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Among them:

“1. The sale of promotional items together with tobacco products is prohibited.” I assume that means giveaways that would go with tobacco products to encourage their use would be prohibited.

“2. The sale of flavoured tobacco products is prohibited, subject to a power to prescribe exemptions.” I’ll talk a little bit further about that when I get an opportunity, the various flavoured tobacco products that are available nowadays.

“3. The list of places that an inspector is specifically empowered to enter is broadened.

“4. Adjustments are made to the penalty provisions.

“5. The power to prescribe places for the purposes of the act is amended to provide for exemptions.”

So that is, broadly stated, what this bill is about.

Mr. Speaker, as was noted by the member from Leeds–Grenville, I note that the Ontario Restaurant, Hotel and Motel Association has some concerns about what this would do for their businesses, particularly with patios. I gather that right now, with the current situation under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, bar and restaurant owners can choose whether they have a smoke-free patio or not. I would simply say that it’s important that they are heard in the process of this bill moving through its legislative process, so that when this bill goes to committee they be given an opportunity to make their case, as it may be.

1740

We’ve heard personal stories from people here about how smoking has affected their family. We heard the member from Algoma–Manitoulin talking at length about how many members of his family have suffered from cancer and passed away from cancer. The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry talked about that.

I have to say I’ve been fortunate in that most members of my own family do not smoke currently. I don’t think any members of my immediate family do now, with the exception of my one brother, Ross, who at a young age decided he wanted to be a farmer and started farming. It turned out that the farmer that he learned how to be a farmer with, Leonard Fitzmaurice, had smoked all his life and smoked roll-up Export ‘A’s: no filters or anything else. So my brother, and I don’t know how old he was—probably about 19 or 20—was learning how to be a farmer with Leonard, and the next minute, my brother’s smoking roll-up Export ‘A’s. He smoked those for many, many years and tried many, many times to quit. I understand how difficult it is to quit smoking. I think when you have friends or relatives who have tried to quit, you realize it’s probably one of the most difficult addictions to quit. He eventually did, so congratulations to him, but it was at a young age that he got hooked on smoking.

Really, I think that’s what this bill is about, in particular with the flavoured products: trying to stop young people from getting involved in smoking.

Mr. Speaker, I’d like to ask for unanimous consent to be able to use props that are related to this bill in my presentation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Parry Sound–Muskoka is seeking unanimous consent of the House to use props related to this debate. Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now I won’t have to get the Sergeant-at-Arms to come and take things from me.

I had a meeting with the Heart and Stroke organization related to this bill, and they were pointing out how the flavoured products now are made to appeal to young people and really get them hooked on nicotine. They sent

to, I think, all the members what I have before me, which is a Fruit Roll-Up on my right hand and a Strawberry Fields cigar on the other side. You can see from the packaging that they look quite similar, and are obviously meant to; the cigar looks very much like candy.

I haven’t tried one of these flavoured products, but I gather, in listening to the speeches this afternoon—the member from Leeds–Grenville talked about how he went to a local convenience store and had them lift up the wall. He named off banana and every flavour you could possibly imagine behind that wall. Obviously, I think, those flavours are intended to get young people to like smoking and then have them hooked on it. From there, they have a very difficult time and perhaps a lifetime habit which is very difficult to break. Obviously, I think dealing with that makes sense.

We’ve heard from other speakers about the negative effects of smoking. I just want to talk about some of those negative effects. We heard the member from Nickel Belt, in her hour-long speech, talk about the fact that three million people a year will die from lung cancer worldwide, but I think the one number she used that hit home for me was that 36 people a day die in Ontario. I thought this number was rather high. It surprised me, really, that 20% of the population of Ontario smokes. I didn’t realize it was still that high, because over the past number of years, we have seen things change. You watch a movie or TV program like *Mad Men*, which I’ve only done about once, but pretty much everyone is smoking.

We’ve heard speakers this afternoon talk about how nurses and doctors used to smoke in hospitals, and even in patients’ rooms they smoked. Times have changed since then. The rules—I guess you would call them the pressures of society, the social norms—have changed over the last 30 years so that people do wear seat belts in cars now, and people are pretty careful about drinking and driving, the great majority of the population. Whereas smoking used to be something that was very socially acceptable, nowadays, you have to be pretty determined to be a smoker. You see people outside in the middle of winter, and it’s minus 20, and they’re out freezing, very cold, smoking a cigarette. That doesn’t look like a lot of fun to me; that’s for sure. We have changed the social norms, and I think that’s good. But it only goes so far.

Mr. Speaker, I’ll use my second prop, and that is a baggy of—this isn’t actually cigarettes. It was also sent out. It’s what a bag of illegal or contraband cigarettes looks like. The unfortunate part is, they’re pretty common in Ontario. In fact, I think Ontario has more contraband or illegal cigarettes sold than any other province. There have been a few studies looking at that. The Ontario Convenience Stores Association did a contraband tobacco study.

“Between October 4th, 2013, and November 10th, 2013, NIRIC”—I’m not quite sure what that is—“anonymously collected cigarette samples at 136 previously identified (observed) smoking locations around specific sites like hospitals, office buildings, high schools and

other public locations. In total, 18,275 samples were collected in the province, and while the results are not scientific, they are an important indicator of illegal tobacco presence and usage in Ontario.

“The study found a large fluctuation in contraband rates across the province, noting a provincial average of 21% (one in five)—which is amazing to me. “The prevalence of contraband products is highest in southern Ontario and in the GTA.”

I think that’s pretty shocking. This was essentially a butt survey, where they picked up butts and identified whether they had been bought properly, legally, or not. They found that the worst-case scenarios were:

- at the Rideau Carleton racetrack in Ottawa, 46.6%;
- outside of Hôtel-Dieu Grace hospital in Windsor, 46.2%;
- at the Western Fair racetrack in London, 45.9%;
- at the Oshawa Centre in Oshawa, 42%;
- at Casino Rama in Orillia, 42%;
- at Sudbury Downs racetrack in Sudbury, 41%;
- at Fallsview Casino in Niagara Falls, 40%;
- at the Brampton GO train station in Peel, 40%;
- at Eastwood Collegiate Institute in Kitchener-Cambridge, 40.6%; and
- at Royal Victoria hospital in Barrie, 40.5%.

To me, those are pretty shocking numbers, and I think it’s important because we have tightened up the rules significantly in Ontario to the point where, from my perspective as a non-smoker, it seems to me you have to be pretty determined to want to smoke. And it’s expensive to smoke, too. Cigarettes are expensive. Well, the contraband cigarettes are much cheaper.

As well, they’re sold outside of the usual safeguards of checking for ID and that kind of thing. They’re basically unregulated. It would seem to me that many more young people are going to have access to contraband cigarettes than they are to cigarettes bought at your local store or wherever. I know that convenience stores have significant programs where they ID and health units inspect places that sell cigarettes. They even do things like send in underage people and try to get them to buy cigarettes. None of that happens where contraband cigarettes are purchased.

1750

It just seems to me that no matter what legislation is passed here, we’re missing a huge part of the consumption of cigarettes and other tobacco products with the rules, if contraband cigarettes are not dealt with.

I have some information from the Ontario Korean Businessmen’s Association pre-budget presentation—probably to the finance committee, I suspect—and they illustrate the costs of contraband. They point out that there’s a large criminal involvement with it as well. “As of 2011, the RCMP identified over 175 organized crime groups involved in the contraband cigarette trade.

“The Canadian Medical Association Journal reported ... that 22% of youth smokers consume contraband and smoke more than their peers....”

The “CTF study”—I assume that’s the Canadian Taxpayers Federation—“(Dec 2012) estimated \$742 million to \$1.2 billion” is “lost annually to both federal and provincial governments in lost tax revenue.”

So not only is there organized crime, where you have no controls on who is actually buying the cigarettes, but there’s a huge loss for government as well, and measures like putting up the price of cigarettes probably, if anything, encourage more contraband sales. You can do all you want passing new rules, but if there’s this huge segment of the market that’s contraband, then the rules don’t apply to them. Obviously for the Ontario Korean Businessmen’s Association, which has many, many convenience stores, they are concerned about their business and it’s really not fair to them.

“In 2009, one out of 10 convenience stores closed in Canada due to profits lost from contraband tobacco.”

As much as we don’t want people to smoke, there’s still a significant number of people who do smoke. If they’re buying their cigarettes at a convenience store, first of all, youth won’t be buying them because they do check ID. Secondly, taxes will be paid so that if all the cigarettes that are sold are legal, then we’d be getting that \$1 billion in additional tax revenues that could be then used for health programs etc.

There is a huge cost to smoking in Ontario. I heard the member from Nickel Belt say that the annual cost of smoking in Ontario is some \$1.6 billion a year. That’s a huge number. Also, the productivity loss is some \$4.4 billion a year, and there are some 500,000 hospital days that are used in the province of Ontario. So those are huge numbers.

Again, continuing on the contraband idea, some of the reasons why people are involved—I mean there’s just a huge illicit profit available. This FrontLine Security magazine—“Contraband Activity: Can It Be Stopped?”—I don’t see the actual date of it on here, but this magazine points out that “one carton (200 cigarettes) potential tax revenue loss, \$65 a carton; potential illicit gain, \$35 a carton.” Then you go all the way up to a tractor-trailer—“a tractor-trailer (1,400 master cases) potential tax revenue loss:” \$4.5 million; “potential illicit gain value:” \$2.4 million. Obviously that’s why there’s such an incentive to be involved in this business. “It costs approximately \$5 to produce 200 cigarettes, with a selling price of about \$40 a carton.”

They go on in the magazine talking about “Targeting Young People,” which I think is key. They point out that, “Canadian regulations, such as requiring photo ID for purchasing cigarettes from retailers, banning cigarette ads, and hiding tobacco from view in stores, are all intended to prevent young people from getting access to tobacco. But these are undermined by the ready availability of low-cost contraband tobacco. A ‘baggie’ of 200 contraband cigarettes can cost as much as \$70 or \$80 less than legal product—and contraband dealers don’t check ID. Low price and easy availability have made contraband tobacco a prime source for youth smoking. A recent study by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

(CAMH) in Toronto found that where teen smoking rates had been on the decline, that was no longer the case. In fact, the CAMH has identified contraband tobacco as a reason for Ontario's stubbornly high youth smoking rate. 'Young people are smoking contraband cigarettes, and they are smoking more of them.'"

I think that's a very important point. All these legislative changes and many other changes have been made the last number of years, but the smoking rate, particularly for young people, is stuck at one point. It's not going down anymore. In fact, I think I heard from speakers earlier on that it was the 20- to 24-year-olds that were one of the higher groups of smoking. So, obviously, dealing with issues like the flavoured products, which are meant to be attractive to young people, dealing with contraband accessibility, availability, which is where it would be easier for young people to acquire various tobacco products, whether it's flavoured cigarillos, whether it's regular cigarettes—these have to be dealt with or we're not dealing with the whole issue.

So you can make all the regulations and rules you want, but if you're not dealing with contraband, you simply won't be dealing with the problem. I think that's an area that hopefully, when this bill goes to committee—perhaps it will be an opportunity for the government or the opposition parties to amend this to deal with some of these other issues that I think are important to really have success in dealing with lowering smoking rates in the province. I think that's something that we all want to see for everyone in the province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I thank the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka for his contributions to the debate today. The member from Kitchener–Waterloo alluded to the fact that we hope that this bill—the debate is great. We love to hear debate on bills. We encourage—I feel it's every member's privilege and right to stand up and contribute to the debate, and I'd like to hear more of it. That's certainly not the issue that I have. But I hope when this does come full circle and we can move it forward, that it will get to committee and it will get the work that it needs done in committee and then be brought back to the House so that we can have third reading and hopefully get this looked after if and when and should an election be called. I'm encouraged by the fact that we have this bill here today and we're talking about it, but I hope that we can see the future in it so that it actually comes to be and we do protect our children against smoking addictions. Thank you, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Hon. John Gerretsen: First of all, I want to congratulate the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka for his very eloquent speech. He is certainly a highly honourable member of this assembly that I always enjoy listening to, particularly when he talked about his own family experiences.

I had a brother who died of lung cancer. He smoked for most of his life, except for the last 10 or 15 years, and then they discovered a lump on his chest and he was unfortunately gone about six or seven months after that—my brother, Peter. He was one of the most positive people that I've ever met in my life. He was never down about anything, particularly during the last six months of his life. I know that members of my own family and many of the people that he knew were highly impressed with the way he always carried himself.

I, too, was a smoker, back until my son, who's now the mayor of Kingston, turned one on June 5, 1976. Before that, I used to smoke two packs a day. I used to smoke those wine-tipped cigarillos as well. They're even worse than cigarettes because after a while you could smell wine coming out of every pore in your body.

1800

I think that whatever we can do to stop people, especially young people, from smoking, is a good thing. I hope the pages are listening to this. No matter what your friends or anybody tells you, do not start smoking. It is bad for you in every way, shape and form.

Particularly a bill like this, which is basically all about banning making smoking even more attractive than it used to be, with the kind of cigarettes that they used to talk about—because now we're talking about flavoured cigarettes that don't even taste like tobacco initially.

Don't smoke. Pass this bill as soon as possible. I think everybody, particularly our children, will thank us for it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Mr. Bill Walker: It's always a pleasure to follow my colleague from Parry Sound–Muskoka and the—

Hon. John Gerretsen: Whatever.

Mr. Bill Walker: Government services? Sorry, no. What's your new title?

Interjection: Chair of cabinet.

Mr. Bill Walker: Chair of cabinet. Sorry. My apologies. I still want to call you the AG, and you were sitting in your old chair today, so it threw me off. I always find my colleague Norm Miller brings a balanced viewpoint, regardless of the topic he speaks about. I think that what he was bringing out today was a lot of what has already been said. A lot of our families have lost people. Again, I've lost my sister, and I have another sister who's a survivor, thank goodness. My mom had breast cancer and has now passed; I'm not certain that that was from smoking. But my dad was a heavy smoker and so was the rest of my family, so I can only attribute it back.

I've spoken to a number of the pages now who have sat in here and intently listened. To a page that I've talked to, they've all said, "We hear what you're saying, and we're not going to." So if nothing else today, I think we've had some impact on at least some of our youth.

The cost to our society of this horrific habit—it is an addiction; it's a terrible thing. Not only the cost to us economically, to our health care system, to those people who don't get the care and services that they're duly entitled to because we spend so much money treating

people who, in my mind, have virtually created their own health challenges—it just boggles my mind when I see young people, particularly, smoking, when they know and when they've seen.

I shared today that when I watched my sister's life drain out of her body at 43 years of age—there's nothing that will ever take that horrific sight out of my mind. If I could put that in front of every child that I know, I think it would have a huge impact and no one would ever smoke again. That was most devastating, watching a vibrant, full-of-life, caring, loving person dwindle away.

I implore everyone out there: Be a good role model. Talk people out of smoking. Make sure your kids don't smoke. At the end of the day, those people who are trying to influence negatively, give it a sober second thought and stop what you're doing. Smoking is not good for any of us.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We have time for one last question or comment. The member for Beaches–East York.

Mr. Michael Prue: I listened intently to what the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka had to say. I thank him and I thank everyone today who has talked about family members and people who have literally wasted away before their eyes as a result of years of inhaling cigarette smoke.

One of the saddest things that we have seen in this Legislature—I'm going back a few years—was a woman who never smoked at all but worked in a cafe where she literally breathed in second-hand smoke her entire working life. To watch her on the television as the months went by and to see her lying there in the bed suffering so miserably from cancer, having herself never actually smoked but just having been around those who did, spoke volumes.

I'd also like to spend my last minute talking about the wonderful use of props, for which my friend sought and got unanimous consent. I think this is the first time in my 13 years that I have ever witnessed unanimous consent in this Legislature for the use of props. It was a good use, because if anyone is watching this on television—perhaps the members here all got the same package. I know that I got the same package and never thought to bring them up here and use them in debate, but kudos to the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, who did. For people watching on television to actually know what these baggies look like and to actually know what the cigarettes or cigarillos that are candy-flavoured look like and look at the packaging of them, I think that is a very useful tool.

Perhaps in the future the members of this Legislature will not be so cavalier as to disallow the use of props, because this is one example of where it actually works and is effective. Kudos to the member for asking for consent, and to all the members here for giving it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Parry Sound–Muskoka has two minutes to reply if he chooses to do so.

Mr. Norm Miller: I see we're past due in terms of time, so I'll just thank the member from London–Fanshawe, the chair of cabinet, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and the member from Beaches–East York for their comments and, in particular, their personal stories about how members of their families have been affected by smoking.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1805.

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, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
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	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
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	
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, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Orazietti, 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
Vacant	Brampton–Springdale	

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Mike Colle, Joe Dickson
Rob Leone, Amrit Mangat
Taras Natyshak, Jerry J. Ouellette
Michael Prue
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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Catherine Fife, Kevin Daniel Flynn
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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

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Laura Albanese, Rick Bartolucci
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Percy Hatfield
Mitzie Hunter, Jim McDonell
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor
Lisa M. Thompson
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Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely
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Bob Delaney, Frank Klees
Jack MacLaren, Phil McNeely
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri
Jonah Schein
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Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

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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

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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-présidente: Catherine Fife
Donna H. Cansfield, Dipika Damerla
Catherine Fife, John Fraser
Monte Kwinter, Jane McKenna
Rick Nicholls, Peter Tabuns
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 des 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

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