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of Debates
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**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 8 July 2014

Mardi 8 juillet 2014

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 8 July 2014

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 8 juillet 2014

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Resuming the debate adjourned on July 7, 2014, on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, I just want to take this occasion during this throne speech to outline a couple of things that I think the government needs to reflect on in light of this particular throne speech.

This government is trying to put itself forward as a progressive government, a government that is doing the right things for all people all of the time. I don't doubt that there is some goodwill on the part of government members and the government generally to do some of these things, but I think for them to try to portray themselves as being this hugely progressive government that's always doing the right thing for all of the people all of the time leaves a little bit to be desired. I just want to go through two or three things that are happening where I live that I think exemplify what this government is not doing, and what they continue to fail to do even after this particular election.

The first one is that the government says, "We're the progressives. We're the ones who are going to do what's right for the people of Ontario and we're going to stand to make sure that government is there for people when they need it." Yet, when you look at northern Ontario, who is it that's privatizing the ONTC? Who's selling off Ontera? It's the Liberal government across the way that's decided that they're going to take a mantra out of the Conservative books and themselves act like a bunch of Conservatives when they get to government and actually sell off Ontera, which is one of the profitable arms of the ONTC, the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission. They're going to sell it off. Supposedly, Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals are trying to say, "Oh, we're the progressives. We're the ones who stand for making sure that we shore up services that people need across this province and make the investments that allow us to be able to function as a province."

I, for one, and I think a lot of members of my caucus, the NDP caucus, would agree that those investments are necessary. But why is it right for the government to have cancelled the only train that we have in northeastern Ontario, the only means to transport people all the way from Moosonee down to Toronto by rail—at the same time say it's okay to cancel that but it's also right to make an investment in transportation infrastructure—namely transit, subways and others—in the city of Toronto and other great cities of this province?

Now, I want to say up front that I think the investments in the city of Toronto are needed. I think it's yet to be determined, by the end of this particular four-and-a-half-year mandate, if the government actually would have moved on those issues. I think they portray this as an issue that they're interested in, certainly, but when it comes to actually delivering for the people of the city of Toronto, I'm not convinced that, in fact, they're going to do so. All I know, sitting as a northerner, is that I look at what is immediately affected by the people that I represent, and we have lost our only transportation train connection in northeastern Ontario.

It is a Liberal government under Kathleen Wynne that has decided cancel the train. It was Dalton McGuinty's government that started it, but certainly Kathleen Wynne could have reversed it. She had a year in government to do so before this election. Not only has she agreed to continue Dalton McGuinty's legacy of cancelling the train, she has also said that she's going to accelerate the sell-off of Ontera, the profitable telecommunications wing of Ontario Northland.

So how can a government on the one hand, or, I say, a political party on the one hand portray itself as being this progressive movement that's going to do all that is good for the people of Ontario and ensure to preserve public services, when they're prepared to sell off Ontario Northland, an agency of the crown that has been there for over 100 years, something that even Mike Harris didn't do, quite frankly, when he was in power? He had looked at the possibility of selling off the train to CN and decided to back off. Here we have the Liberals outdoing the Conservatives when it comes to a move to the right on privatization. So I say, in that particular example, job not well done.

I look at another one, and this is somewhat related but very important to the economy of northern Ontario, and that's in the case of forestry. We have mills across northern Ontario that have shut their doors partly because of, yes, what happened to the North American economy and what's happened with the market when it comes to the

sale of wood. But where you have people who are prepared to invest in their mills and to be able to keep their mills open and create the wealth and create the jobs in northern Ontario, there's been little in the way of support from the government.

I look at Little John Enterprises in the city of Timmins as a good example of that. Little John made an investment of quite a lot of money, over \$1 million, in order to do an expansion to that mill, in order to be able to produce more and higher-quality wood that he can sell into the market. What he's lacking is a commitment from the government on the part of wood allocation for that particular mill. When they did the expansion to the mill, there was an understanding that the government would make sure that there would be an allocation of timber that would go to that mill so that they can be guaranteed a supply of wood, as mills need to be able to operate. Here we are, a number of years after that mill is open, and Little John is still having to deal with the open market trying to get wood.

Now, in a time where there are a lot of sawmills that are down as a result of the shutdown we've seen in northern Ontario, he's able to get some wood. But he's able to get wood at a much higher price, which means to say that his operating cost is higher and he is not secured should the market turn around, and it will turn around. In time, there will be a huge demand for wood, and what does an operator like Little John Enterprises do when trying to compete with the large multinationals that operate mills in northeastern Ontario? He will be at a disadvantage when it comes to the price of wood because he will have to compete on the open market, and that's not how the wood allocation system should have worked in the first place.

The wood allocation system was always that you allot wood to a mill so that they're guaranteed a supply so that they can finance themselves and they can operate knowing what the price of the wood is going to be. What this government has done is taken the wood allocation system and turned it entirely on its ear. I just say to the government across the way, that is not what a progressive government does. What a progressive government does is it finds a way to balance the interests of large and small when it comes to operators in the forest industry and makes sure that the public will and the public good is reflected in the policies that come forward.

Put on top of that what you've done with the price of hydro. You have managed to put places like Xstrata Copper—where I represent—in the city of Timmins out of business as a result of the high price of power, but those that still stand, like Little John, like Tembec which operates a paper mill up in Kapuskasing, and a number of operators in my riding and across northern Ontario—you've really put those people in a hard position.

Where was the government speaking about how they're going to make hydro affordable for homeowners and how they're going to make hydro affordable for industry in this province as a progressive move? Somehow or other they tried to say that we, as New Demo-

crats, because we said that it's important that people have affordable power when it comes to being able to power up their homes and not having to pay hydro bills that are going through the roof—they were trying to say that somehow or other that wasn't a progressive thing to do. Well, I'm sorry. If mum and dad, if Jane and Joe Ontario, are not able to pay their hydro bills, I don't see that, quite frankly, as a progressive thing. I see that as regressive.

What politics should be about is about making sure that people are able to live in this province, able to prosper in this province and able to afford to purchase the services that they need. So I just say to the government across the way, you can, as much as you want, try to position yourself as being progressive, but for those people back home who are trying to pay their hydro bills, to those industries back home that are trying to pay their hydro bills, I don't think being progressive is doing nothing about the price of electricity. In fact, your own Minister of Energy, prior to the last election, said that hydro rates would be going up yet another 44% over the next number of years—that on top of increases that we've had in hydro alone already that have put electricity prices through the roof.

0910

So this government can try to pretend as much as they want that in fact they are a progressive government. I believe that this government is essentially a Conservative government in action, one that campaigns like New Democrats in order to sound good during the campaign, but when they get to government continues doing the same kinds of things and the old kind of politics that we've seen around this place for far too long.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It's my pleasure to spend a couple of minutes on the comments from the member from Timmins—James Bay. It's becoming more and more obvious that although I wasn't here for some two and a half years, not much really changes. It's hard to believe that the member from James Bay would accuse the Liberal Party or the government of being Conservative. If anybody took part in the last election, which I'm sure he did, and I did—I mean, they had no platform. They kind of borrowed from Conservatives, from us. We talked about an Ontario pension plan, which was their idea, frankly, Speaker, and they turned their backs on seniors in Ontario when the time came.

They talk a lot about the cost of energy, and he's right: The energy costs are high. But it would be nice to see a suggestion from them or the official opposition about what they would do. It's fine to complain. Yes, gasoline is expensive. I drive about 3,000 or 4,000 kilometres a month and I know how expensive gasoline is. But they never make any concrete suggestions—I'm not even saying concrete that one could apply, but even to suggest something that would alleviate some of those costs.

Speaker, they are in opposition, and I respect their role to hold the government accountable, but it would also be

very nice to partner with us as a government to find the proper solution, not just throwing windows in the air.

I look forward to the rest of the debate on the throne speech. I think it's a very balanced throne speech. It outlines the plan that we got elected to proceed with.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I spoke at length yesterday—in fact, I spoke for 20 minutes yesterday—on this throne speech.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It seemed longer.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Maybe it did seem a little longer for those who were paying attention, John.

I have to say there was a theme that I've seen coming out so far. We have a government that is promising a tremendous amount on one side, and a tremendous amount of expectations on the other side. Speaker, you simply can't have both. We've got a \$12.5-billion deficit forecast for this year, up from \$11.3 billion last year, up from \$9.2 billion the year before. Obviously, the deficits are going the wrong way: They're getting larger instead of smaller. Yet the promises are also growing. So you've got a growing deficit that the government promises to bring to balance in 2017-18, and you've got a growing list of expenses. This budget that they're bringing next week offers \$5.7 billion in new spending, yet somehow they are magically going to balance the deficit, which is at \$12.5 billion this year. So as a result, we've seen Moody's, we've seen BlackRock, we've seen other credit agencies and financial institutions offer downgrades, offer outlook downgrades, offer warnings, offer credit warnings; we see the cost of our money and borrowing going up. We're seeing a tremendous amount of pressure because we have a deteriorating balance sheet, yet the government continues to go on a spending spree.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yesterday, I rose in my two minutes and talked about what's not in the throne speech, as well as talking about that there is no allocation of funds and a firm commitment to year-round GO train service to Niagara Falls. One of my colleagues on the other side, from the Liberals, decided to heckle or make some comments—the MPP from St. Catharines—about GO trains. I want to be clear that I had raised that issue with the member from St. Catharines. He also knows the importance of having GO train service come all the way to Niagara. So I want to make sure that when I stand up in the House and I'm talking about issues that are important to Niagara, I talk to the other MPPs who are elected in my area, because I think that's important. As we go through this process over the next four years, we've been hearing about the partnership and how you want to listen to the other parties. Well, that's why I go and talk to the other MPPs. I think it's important to know.

Make no mistake about it: We have the highest unemployment in Ontario, in Niagara. There is absolutely no reason for it. What we have in Niagara—with the falls, where you get 11 to 12 million visitors a year;

where you have the wine industry, which is growing; and you have the research and development, which could grow—but the big thing, the game-changer for Niagara, is a GO train to Niagara. I want to say that there's no mention of that in the throne speech.

Then when you take a look at Fort Erie, I mentioned the racetrack because there's no mention of support for the horse racing industry or the Horse Racing Partnership Plan, which came into effect. It's important—

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Where have you been?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Where have I been? I can tell you all about the racetrack. There are 37 dates at the Fort Erie Race Track. They've got four and five horses running in races instead of eight, nine or 10—to protect 1,000 jobs there. Bring the slots back there. Protect the 1,000 jobs; 250 more jobs will do more to stimulate—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much.

Further questions and comments? The member for Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to see you in the chair.

It's a pleasure to respond to the member from Timmins–James Bay. I am really very thankful that he didn't—I can't remember him uttering the words “Trojan Horse,” which are, of course, his leader's new—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I did yesterday.

Mr. John Fraser: Yesterday? I'm sorry I missed it. I'm not as happy about it anymore now that you've reminded me of that, but that's now his latest excuse for voting against—or, I anticipate, voting against—what some describe outside of this building as the most progressive budget that has been put forward in this Legislature in years.

I know he was talking about power and the affordability of power. There are measures inside that budget for affordability for low- and middle-income Ontarians for hydro.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke: I really appreciated your Bible lesson yesterday. I wanted to remind you of that seven-year period between 1995 and 2002 when you borrowed money for a tax cut and then hid a \$5.6-billion deficit. There are seven years that you should remember.

I'm sorry that the member from Nipissing is gone right now, but I really enjoyed him schooling the new member from Ottawa–Orléans yesterday on her comparison with the federal government. When I listened to him this morning, he described our budget deficit going up by about \$1.1 billion. Unfortunately, he forgot to mention the Parliamentary Budget Officer stating quite clearly that the federal government is shortchanging Ontario by \$1.2 billion. I'm sure that he's saving his advocacy on behalf of Ontarians to the federal government for some time in the future. We're not quite sure when.

I would like to say as well that the member from Kingston and the Islands gave a great maiden speech yesterday, and I wanted to point that out.

Thank you very much for your time, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I would only just say this: First of all, thanks to all the members for commenting on my eight minutes this morning. I would just say that time will prove or tell just how progressive this government really is. I tend to bet that now that they're able to hide behind the four-and-a-half-year mandate—because that's what essentially this is—they are going to be not as progressive as they put themselves out to be in the last election.

They're going to be faced with an issue of: How do you deal with diminishing revenue in the province of Ontario and increasing costs? At one point, governments have to deal with that. I don't care if you're a government to the left or a government to the right; you have to be able to deal with those issues if you want to be around here and be able to offer services like health care, education and others in a public system the way that Ontarians, I believe, want.

0920

The other thing is that I would just say this, and I guess I'm not surprised but I'm a little bit—only surprised in the sense of how early it comes. I listened to the exchange when the member from Niagara—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Niagara Falls.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —Niagara Falls talked about horse racing. The comment coming back was, “Do you want a sustainable industry?” Well, listen, there was a sustainable industry before. There was a deal that was made, and people need to recognize this. When we decided to create casinos in this province, it affected horse racing. We made a deal—and it was eventually done by the Tories, who put it in place—in order to put slots at race-tracks as a means to be able to shore up that industry so that it could stay there and keep on employing the people that it did.

There was not one of them that was losing money. For the government all of a sudden to say that this thing was not sustainable and they were justified in taking the \$500 million out, which only about half of that went to horse racing, my God, I think shows to what degree this government has really missed the mark on this particular one. I support the comments made by my colleague from Niagara Falls because I think this is a bad day for horse racing in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: A point of order, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Point of order.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. I know you're new to the chair, and you're doing a good job. A few minutes ago, my friend from Ottawa South said that the member from Nipissing is gone. I believe that's a violation of our parliamentary procedure—to point out if somebody is in the chamber or not. I'd like a ruling, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I thank the member. It is a point of order that it's not parliamentary to refer to anyone who is not here. Thank you.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: The member should withdraw.

Mr. John Fraser: I withdraw.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member withdraws? Thank you. Withdrawn.

Further debate? The member from Barrie.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Good morning. First, let me say congratulations, Speaker, on your re-election. You once again have been entrusted by this Legislature with a very important and, as I observed yesterday, difficult job. I'm confident that you will keep order and rule with a firm hand in the same manner that a teacher such as myself might do in the classroom. If this task becomes too difficult, perhaps you might consider implementing some other methods used by teachers in pioneer days. There were no shenanigans in those classrooms.

Before I speak about the community, Barrie, that I represent, I would like to thank some of the people who helped me stand up for my community. In case you didn't know, I'm a late bloomer, so to speak. In fact, I did not become a Liberal candidate in Barrie until almost one week into the writ. I was moved to act when the former Leader of the Opposition announced his plan to eliminate 100,000 public sector jobs. Quite ironically, the announcement was made at the Barrie Country Club.

As a teacher in Barrie, I lived through the turmoil caused by reckless cuts in the 1990s. I did not want services to be negatively affected again, especially for the little kindergarteners in my care. I proudly put my name forward and became part of Team Wynne, and I'm glad I did—part of a team with a positive vision for government and a practical plan. No other group had a plan. And I'm proud today to make my maiden speech before this House and stand in support of our government's throne speech in which this positive, practical plan is articulated.

I want to thank my wonderful campaign manager, Christine Allenby, who took a green candidate with an even less organized support system and turned us into an unstoppable force. My main canvassing team, which went out three times a day, consisted of three boys in their 70s and two retired women. Many thanks to Nelson Therriault, Stan McGrath, John Gilbride, Linda Nicholson and “Mighty Mouse” Jeanie Harris. Thanks also to former MPP Aileen Carroll and her husband Kevin, Jeff Kovalik-Plouffe, Ian Pattillo, Dave Hein, Dorothy Ramsay, Janet Bigham, Heather Owen, Bud Watson and BPLA president Stephen Bertelsen. Thanks also to my family: my two daughters, Kelly and Stacey, and my grandchildren, Christopher and Carling, and to the hundreds of other supporters too numerous to mention. Without all of these volunteers, I would not be here today.

But those who deserve my deepest gratitude are the voters in Barrie, who have placed their trust in me. I will not let them down. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. They made it clear that I am to support the government in implementing the plan outlined in the throne

speech. They told me, as I went to their doors, that they wanted full-day kindergarten to remain in place. It saves them money and gives their children a head start in the education system. New voters and their parents appreciate the 30% rebate on their tuition costs and want that program to remain in place as well.

Many Barrie voters commute to the GTA for their work and use the GO trains and buses. They are appreciative of the work that this government has done reviving this system, but they want all-day, everyday service so commuting can take less time out of their day, giving them more very important time with family and friends.

The corporation of the city of Barrie received millions of dollars for additional police officers, Barrie transit, landfill, arena upgrades, roads, bridges and \$12 million for a new water treatment plant. It's part of this government's uploading of costs, an approach that benefited Barrie taxpayers by \$11 million last year alone. The annual benefit will be over \$17 million by the time the uploading is completed in 2018. Other capital projects included one third of the cost of returning GO Transit to Barrie, a new fire station and the expansion of the Lake Simcoe airport.

Investments to local education included lower class sizes, higher graduation rates, full-day kindergarten and additions at three Barrie secondary schools and funding two new buildings at Georgian College.

As a kindergarten teacher at Terry Fox Elementary School in Barrie, I have personally witnessed the benefits of the programs currently in place because of government funding. Students who may come from homes without having eaten because of their hectic schedule in the mornings or because there is no money to have food in the house for breakfast, or just because they are growing quickly and need more food than was in their lunch boxes that day, are able to get nutritious food whenever they need it throughout the day, no questions asked. Students who have full stomachs are much more able to learn than those who are hungry.

I have also been fortunate to be part of implementing full-day kindergarten, and I wasn't too much of a believer at first. I truly am a believer now. This program will be implemented in all schools across the province this fall. It not only saves young families thousands of dollars in daycare costs and allows both parents to be part of the workforce, it better prepares our young children for their future academic life. They learn more quickly. Little Peyton was three and a half when she entered my JK class last September. She had not yet learned to read or write. As a result of this new program, she will be heading into senior kindergarten socially and academically ahead of where she would have been in the old program. Peyton and her classmates have progressed much more quickly than they would have before, where there were times that I didn't see them for a whole week. They are well prepared. They are almost ready for grade 1, and still have senior kindergarten to go. They are all reading and writing already.

I was also thrilled to see little people with very problematic teeth issues get them fixed because of govern-

ment funding. A member yesterday said that that promise had not been implemented. Very clearly, for the last three years I have seen evidence of it in all the kindergarten classes in our school and in all areas.

0930

After many years of uncertainty, Barrie's boundary issue with the town of Innisfil was resolved, and the city of Barrie is able to move forward with their expansion.

Job creation is a big part of the growth plan for the Simcoe area, aided by a continued increase in GO train service. The number of trains and the number of cars for weekday service have continually increased and we have seen the introduction of weekend and summer GO train service. We hope that eventually people from Toronto will come to Barrie, step off at the station at Allandale, walk across the street to the beach and enjoy Barrie's facilities.

Not to be forgotten from the list are the cleanup of Lake Simcoe, capital and operating funds for local non-profit agencies, social housing, affordable housing, literacy, theatre and other cultural events.

In addition to increases in funding for the rent bank and other housing initiatives, in March 2011, former MPP Carroll announced the official opening of 125 Bayfield Street in Barrie, a 43-unit building which received more than \$3 million from the Canada-Ontario affordable housing program for the construction of new housing units for seniors and people with disabilities. Almost \$4 million was provided through the same program for the construction of 31 new housing units at Stanley Heights, another affordable housing project for seniors in Barrie. It's right beside my school, and those seniors come over and volunteer every day. It's wonderful.

Unprecedented investments were made to local health care, too, with well over \$300 million to RVH for the construction of the new cancer centre and renovations. Millions more were given to reduce wait times and for other projects at our hospital, like a portable radiation unit and \$2.5 million in start-up funding for the family medicine teaching unit. RVH has received over 40% in increased base funding since 2003, and that was a Liberal government.

Other health initiatives included a new long-term-care home for Barrie, the introduction of nurse-practitioner-led clinics and the Aging at Home program. We now have more nurses, and more people have access to front-of-the-line health care services. Former MPP Aileen Carroll worked very hard on securing funds for a hospice in Barrie and she was pleased to announce almost \$3 million, half the cost in capital funding, to build Hospice Simcoe. Doors opened in 2009, and since then, well over 1,000 residents have received care and comfort from our dedicated health care professionals in a home-like setting. This is what we want for our seniors. In their final days at our 10-bed residence, they were very comfortable when they passed away.

Our community programs like Visiting Hospice and grief and bereavement support reach hundreds more each year. Although Barrie already has a hospice, the present

government, our government, should work towards increasing the number of hospices in Ontario. Hospice palliative care is a good thing to do. Many more ridings want and need it. It's something we should all work towards, and it lessens the burden and the costs on hospital facilities.

In 2007, \$2.5 million was announced for start-up of the family medicine teaching unit, which is located at Rotary House in the RVH site. In partnership with RVH and the U of T, the Barrie teaching unit is where residents manage their own practice of up to 300 patients each. The number of resident doctors has increased each year. There were 18 in 2012. Fortunately, many of these doctors love it in Barrie, and on leaving the residency program have stayed in Barrie as family physicians, alleviating the doctor shortage for families.

My personal experiences with the health care system in 2000, during another government, were not that unusual at the time. I got a diagnosis that no family wants to get. I had breast cancer. At that time, patients could get their chemotherapy at Royal Victoria hospital in Barrie, but most patients had to travel far away to get radiation therapy, to North Bay or maybe Buffalo. This type of diagnosis is frightening enough without being told that you have to leave the support and comfort of your family to be treated for your illness in another location, maybe even another country.

One young woman I met had no support system to look after her young toddler, so she made the tough decision to have a double mastectomy so she could stay in Barrie. What a terrible choice she had to make. That no longer has to happen because of the Liberal government.

Now, because of the Liberal government, funding for all treatment can be done in Barrie in the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre and the cancer care clinic. No question, Barrie is absolutely better off as a result of having a Liberal government at Queen's Park.

As a partner with this government, Barrie will continue to grow and thrive as we take the next steps in building our community and expanding opportunity for all.

This is how Barrie has grown: Ours is a history of building up this province. Barrie's beginnings can be traced back to the First Nations people, using the western shores of Kempenfelt Bay as a place of rest before travelling the portage that ran between Lake Simcoe and the Nottawasaga River to Lake Huron.

The War of 1812 resulted in increased use, allowing the British troops and supplies to bypass the American forces at Detroit. At the war's end, settlers arrived and took up residence at the end of the portage, beginning the traces of modern-day Barrie. The British military presence is reflected in many street names and even in the name of our city itself, in honour of British admiral Sir Robert Barrie.

As our city grew, it began to export local resources. Trees nearly 200 feet tall were logged and shipped out, serving as masts for British ships and railroad ties. In the winter months, huge blocks of ice were cut from the

frozen waters of Kempenfelt Bay and shipped down to Toronto, Buffalo and New York for refrigeration purposes. Three large storage houses enabled the blocks to be effectively stored for shipment during the summer months.

Between the late 1800s and the early 20th century, Barrie underwent a number of changes that contributed to its rapid growth. The long-anticipated railroad connection in 1865 joined Barrie to the city of York, its resources and industry, a connection that is maintained now. But it was the building of Highway 400 in 1950, providing tourists easy access and exposure to our beautiful city by the bay, that made Barrie the favourite for family fun in central Ontario.

Today Barrie's population stands at more than 140,000 and continues to be one of Canada's fastest growing cities. Remembering our heritage and what led to our city's success is the focus of some of our key attractions.

This is what the plan laid out in this throne speech will do, not just for Barrie but for all of Ontario's communities, and that is why I will vote in support of it.

Finally, I would like to congratulate every one of the 107 members of this House on their recent election. Politics is a blood sport and it's a very difficult time, and we all worked hard. Congratulations to those who are here and those who did not make it. I look forward to working with all of you to build Ontario up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I am pleased today to rise and share comments on the comments that we had heard from the member from Barrie. I really appreciate the zest and the enthusiasm which was so evident when she spoke about her home riding. But I'm afraid that that zest and enthusiasm may very well be squelched when the reality and the severity of the last decade of total mismanagement comes home to roost.

Interjection.

0940

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My fellow member just said there is maybe too much Kool-Aid over in that caucus.

But the reality is, this Liberal government actually is going to reap what it sowed, and I look forward to seeing how they're going to manage the absolutely mismanaged mess that they created over the last decade.

Just one of the messes that I want to refer to quickly came to mind when the responses were being shared with the member from Timmins-James Bay and the whole topic of the horse racing industry came up. The member from Perth-Wellington shared something with me yesterday. He had the honour of attending the Queen's Plate, and the buzz around that prestigious horse race is that in two or three short years, this Liberal government may have very well killed the root and the foundation of that thoroughbred race because only purebred horses—

Interjections.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Purebred Canadian horses are the only type of horses that are allowed to race, and

our breeding program has gone south, literally and figuratively. So there's a concern there.

But I want to go back to the throne speech as well, Mr. Speaker, because there's little evidence of sound fiscal planning or even evidence-based solutions, and it appears to be a study in contradictions. For instance, they talk about eliminating the deficit, but they don't talk about cutting spending, and that's the root problem of this total mismanaged mess.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further comments and questions? The member for Manitoulin—sorry, Algoma—Manitoulin.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good; I thought I had a new riding there, including Manitoba. My riding is big enough, thank you very much.

To the member from Barrie, bienvenue. I hope you enjoy the work that you're going to do here. I was really impressed by your family. I'm pleased to know a little bit more about you. I look forward to building bridges with you, particularly with one of the issues you brought up, which was respite care. I'm one of the firm believers in that area, where this province lacks. The biggest city in my riding is Elliot Lake. There's a huge, huge need, and you see the care and the attention that is given in those particular areas.

One of the things that I really enjoyed from your comments is that you really focused on Barrie, what it means to you and the things that are working for you in your riding. That's really important. It's what is going to get you re-elected, to be quite honest with you.

I don't agree with one of your comments where you said that politics is a blood sport. I think that's a perception that's out of this House that we have to change. You as a new member and me, there are different ways that we can change things in here, and that's through our decorum and how we are addressing each other. I'm hopeful. We're all back here at Queen's Park. I hear the battering that's going back and forth in the House. Hopefully that will tone down in a bit, because I think that's what we want to do: build bridges in order to get things accomplished for us.

I have to tell you that things aren't so great in the north. As critic for northern development and mines—and I'm sure you heard it, too: the problems that everyday families are faced with. One of them is the challenging task of everyday living costs. People are struggling to make ends meet. The cost of hydro is not actually being addressed. What I would suggest as well is, learn some of the suggestions that we had made and that we had campaigned on, just like we learned some of the suggestions you had made and that you campaigned on, and let's find the grounds where we can actually meet together and implement changes that will help all Ontarians.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Mike Colle: Certainly, I've heard a number of maiden speeches over the years that I've been here, but this is one of the very most compelling ones I've heard.

She talked about the personal health challenge that she had, and she relayed it to this place and how it's our job to make sure that, when people can't get cancer care in their home, we do the best we can to make sure that places like Barrie do get that care so mothers don't have to leave home to get treatment in North Bay when they leave children behind. That's a very, very significant and compelling story our new member from Barrie told us.

Also, as the member from Algoma—Manitoulin said, she talked about her hometown, Barrie. Too seldom in this place—I see people stand up and attack the government or praise the government. They don't talk about the people back home. She boosted the people back home. Sometimes too many people stand up here and are always talking about high unemployment: "Things are bad." Barrie is a beautiful place by the bay. It's got an incredible work ethic. It's one of these cities that a lot of you represent here that doesn't get the attention it deserves: Barrie—124,000 people, almost the same size as Prince Edward Island. People are working around the clock; they're building; they're driving to work every day; they're building new schools and hospitals. It's an incredible working community that deserves a lot more credit. The member from Barrie is here to do that. She was relating to the importance of that child in full-day kindergarten who is now benefiting from what we do here.

I think this member really hit home what's very important, and that is that everything we do relates to the people back home. We should be praising the people back home and the incredible history that the people have made back home. So let's talk about what's good at home, not what's bad.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's a pleasure to comment on the speech today by the new member from Barrie. I want to congratulate her for being elected and thank her for making that decision. I'm sure we'll hear more of her contributions to this House in days to come.

I want to talk about the throne speech. I can't comment specifically on her speech, because it was very personal and very directed at the riding, but I do want to talk about the throne speech itself and how this government has put itself into quite a box. It's got a tiger by the tail, as they say, because they've preached on one side about how they were going to deliver all of these new programs and new spending for the people of Ontario, enhancing their lives, as they said, to paraphrase what they've been saying. But on the other hand, they know they've got a mess of their own creation in the debt and deficit here in the province of Ontario.

On the one hand they say they are going to be absolutely resolved on dealing with that debt crisis and the deficit in the province of Ontario, but they give us no information, no specifics, on how they're going to do that. They're saying, "Oh, there will be tough decisions." Well, it's about time we started to talk about those tough decisions, because their hand-picked adviser, Don Drum-

mond, has said that they can't get to balance without making some serious changes. They've got to tell us what services they plan to cut here in the province of Ontario. They've got to tell us who's going to get laid off in the province of Ontario, as far as public servants are concerned. We talked about that during the campaign, recognizing that in order to get to balance those tough decisions would have to be made, and we were prepared to make them, but this government wants to dance all around the issue and hope that the tooth fairy shows up sometime before 2017-18—or the fairy godmother—with a bag of money to pay off the deficit. But that's not going to happen. We live in the real world here, and you people have to start managing the government like you're in the real world, not in Walt Disney's *Fantasia*.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the speaker for her final comments.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I'd like to thank everyone for their kind comments. I hope that we're getting along as well in four years. I do believe that we need to work together. I recall that Mr. Obama thought that that's what he would do. It didn't work out so well there. Everyone needs to compromise, and I'm hoping that we will be able to do that in a civilized manner. I know that a lot of teachers do not bring their classes here to witness question period, and there's a reason for it. I hope that we do improve the decorum here, although I did find myself, yesterday afternoon, chirping a little bit. So I apologize for that, and I hope everyone has a wonderful day and a great four years.

I hope we do live up to our promises and we do implement all of the things that we promised for all of the people of Ontario and the people in Barrie. I would like to say that working together is very important. I see my ETFO colleague across the hall there, Jennifer, the member from Oshawa, and I welcome her. This is a different experience for us and a different setting. Quite often, elementary teachers in particular are very quiet and shy. I don't think that's going to happen with us. Thank you again.

0950

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? The member from—Elgin—Middlesex—London.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thank you, Speaker. Congratulations on your appointment to this position. I think you'll do well, as soon as you learn my riding name.

I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak and respond to the throne speech. We do find ourselves back at Queen's Park with a newly formed Liberal majority government, so congratulations to those who won their elections, and we look forward to working together with you.

Speaker, I do want to get to the point of the matter, and that's about Ontario's fiscal reality. At this time in Ontario's history, it's a very difficult and frightening truth that we have to confront. Unfortunately, this Liberal government, through the past 10 years and now, currently avoids looking at this reality. But a problem doesn't go away just because you ignore it. Just like a pile of dust

and dirt starts to form when you continue to sweep it under the rug, Ontario's debt continues to pile up when you neglect to restrain spending. The biggest problem in this government is that it continues to sweep bigger and bigger piles of dirt under the rug. The projected deficit, according to their spring budget, will be \$12.5 billion for 2014-15. That's an increase of \$1.2 billion over their projected deficit of \$11.3 billion for 2012-13. Our debt level as a percentage of GDP is also set to rise to 40.8% by 2015-16.

To keep things in perspective, when the PCs left office in 2003 the debt level had been reduced to about 28% of GDP. Tough decisions were made by the PC government during the 1990s, but that government left Ontario's fiscal house and capacity to invest in the best shape it has ever been. Unfortunately, for the past 11 years, this government has squandered billions of dollars and has put us in the deepest hole in Ontario's history.

While we tried to bring this message to the voters this spring, it was overshadowed not only by a myriad of cheap promises from the Liberals but also an avalanche of third party ads produced by groups that had vested interests in the Liberals being re-elected.

Just as a side note for all Ontarians watching here today who may have become sick and tired with the ubiquity of negative ads during the election, please don't forget that it was the PC Party that put forward a bill in the last session to reduce third party advertising. As was expected, the Liberals voted against this legislation, despite the fact that every other province in the country has some form of third party advertising legislation. Nevertheless, I was disappointed by the results of the election on our party. The establishment of a majority government, regardless of whichever party, does present a number of valuable opportunities going forward.

As I mentioned, our province is facing a severe debt and deficit crisis. However, if the Liberals wanted to, they could, as a majority government, decide to unilaterally bring down spending—put spending controls in place. It's not a very easy process and requires political will and fortitude, but with a majority government, at least the Liberals would not have to worry about having their major initiatives voted down.

In the days after June 12, I tried to assure myself that there would be a possibility—a little possibility—that firm action would be taken to bring our province back from the fiscal brink. Without the constraints of a minority government, it was my hope that even this Liberal government couldn't deny how bad Ontario's fiscal reality truly is. They couldn't deny that Ontario resembles Greece 15 years ago. They couldn't deny that our debt burden is worse than California's. By acknowledging this reality, I had hoped that even the Liberal government would step up and make the tough decisions to rein in spending to eliminate our deficit and start to reduce our debt.

However, last week's throne speech dashed all of my hopes. It set forward an agenda that is virtually the same as the old one, and that's to say that it's the same agenda

that in 10 years doubled a debt level that had taken 100 years to accrue. There's really no surprise from the throne speech that this government will now be eager to reintroduce its spring budget. The throne speech was certainly written with that in mind. And so Ontario will get to again see a budget that hikes taxes, increases spending and creates more job-killing policies while future generations get saddled with more and more debt. It may be interesting to note that the hour we spent in the chamber during the throne speech cost the people of Ontario an additional \$1.34 million in debt. That's how much our debt increases each hour, \$1.34 million. I truly can't believe how blind this government is to face the reality. Even when news articles after news articles from publications ranging from the Toronto Star to the Huffington Post warn this government of the perils of continuing to overspend, Premier Wynne and her team remain steadfastly committed to building a bigger debt pile. While pundits and investors cower in fear at the house of cards that is Ontario, this government continues to operate without a care in the world. Perhaps they don't understand the consequences.

So as a member of this Legislature, it is my duty to take the time that I have here today to outline the looming negative consequences that face Ontario under the vision outlined in the throne speech. It would be my hope that these Liberals finally start to take more seriously the fiscal situation of this province—

Interjections.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: But I'm getting the impression, and I'm hearing it now, too many promises were made during the election to too many special interests. Certainly, if the government is serious about making the decisions necessary to eliminate our deficit, they will no doubt alienate some of their biggest special interest supporters.

Perhaps the biggest sign of Ontario's financial distress came on the same day the Lieutenant Governor delivered the Liberals' throne speech. As we all know Moody's Investors Service has lowered the outlook for Ontario's debt from stable to negative. While this isn't actually a downgrade, it is an indication that Moody's is prepared to downgrade Ontario's debt unless significant action is taken to balance the budget.

It's great that some of the Liberals came out and said that they're committed to balancing the budget by 2017-18. However, it's the job of the analysts at Moody's to dig deeper and look below the surface to verify whether in fact the actions and directions set out by this government credibly support their deficit reduction target. I tell you right now, I'm not a financial expert and it's not that difficult to see why Moody's affirmed what the PC Party has been saying all along. By referring to the Liberal budget as a credit-negative budget, Moody's is telling the Ontario people that the budget that triggered the election, the same budget that will be introduced next week, does not contain the measures necessary to instill confidence in Ontario's debt.

While the Liberals say that they will balance the budget by 2017-18, Moody's has noticed that most of the

heavy lifting in terms of spending restraint will occur in the back end of the plan. In other words, the Liberals are saying, "Let's not worry about doing any heavy lifting today. Let's worry about it tomorrow."

But what concerns us in the PC caucus and what concerns the analysts at Moody's is that the approach is fundamentally risky. Circumstances can change, and to be honest the Liberals have not been good at sticking to their plan. Their most recent budget revised the projected deficits of 2014-15 and 2015-16 upward by about \$1.5 billion and \$2.5 billion respectively. That is to say, last year's plan, which also committed to balancing the budget by 2017-18, projected deficits of \$10.8 billion and \$5.1 billion in 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. However, this year those projected deficits are now \$12.5 billion and \$7.6 billion.

So it's great for the Liberals to say that they will have balanced the budget by 2017-18, but if every year they keep revising their deficit projections up and up, it becomes mathematically impossible to balance the budget.

Another concern we share with Moody's is that the road to balance as laid out by the Liberals relies heavily on a surge in Ontario's economy. I've always been of the opinion that most prudent plans attempt to take action on things you can control. Doing so reduces the risk other factors have that may derail your plan. Unfortunately, Liberals are heavily relying on the health of Ontario's economy to achieve balance. Again, circumstances can change.

Everyone predicted that Ontario would rebound faster than it has. However, as we've all seen in the past few years, the economy can be fickle and it's been particularly slow to rebound following 2008. Therefore to pin Ontario's fiscal strategy primarily on this factor is imprudent, particularly when we so clearly have a spending problem. Maybe that's part of the problem.

The government has conditioned itself to think that spending is not the issue. I hear them say it in every press conference where they get asked about spending restraint. I also hear them blame the recession for Ontario's fiscal woes. All of these tactics amount to abdication of responsibility by the government for the mess that it is in and the mess that it alone created. I'll go on and prove that as I continue.

If we consider the last budget of the Ernie Eves government, we can note that Ontario's revenues were \$66.5 billion and expenditures were \$54.3 billion. In the most recent Wynne budget, revenues are \$118.9 billion and expenditures are \$130.4 billion. For those sitting across the aisle who still think revenue is an issue, just consider the fact that over that 11-year period, revenues have increased by 79%. On an average, compounded-yearly basis, this is about 7% a year—7%. That has been consistently higher than inflation. It has been consistently higher than the real GDP growth, and has been consistently higher than most other provinces.

1000

The only thing that the growth rate hasn't been higher than is the growth rate in expenditures. Over the same

period of time, expenditures have increased by 140%, or roughly 13% on an annualized basis. Expenditure growth in Ontario has nearly doubled that of revenues on a yearly basis. Just once I'd like to see a member of the government stand here and tell me that they've spent too much, because quite simply they have.

One more thing to reinforce the fact that our problem is a spending problem and not a shortfall of revenues is that our personal tax rate is the third-highest in the country. Only Nova Scotia and Quebec have marginal tax rates that are higher than Ontario's. Why does this matter? It matters because once people, investors, companies and countries lose confidence in Ontario's debt, our interest rates will rise. Interest already costs the taxpayers \$11 billion per year. That's almost 10 cents of every dollar the Ontario people pay in taxes to the government goes to paying the interest on our outstanding debt. That's \$11 billion that is not going to our schools, our hospitals or improving our roads. And the frightening thing is interest rates will become a larger portion of the budget going forward.

According to the budget plan, the Liberals intend to restrain spending. They anticipate total expenditures will increase by 1% less than GDP over the next few years. This means that according to the Ministry of Finance's own numbers, the justice budget will increase an average of 1% each year; children's and social services will increase at just under 4% each year; post-secondary and training will increase at 1% each year; and both education and health care will increase an average of 2% each year. The total we pay in interest on our debt will increase at a staggering 8% each year—8%.

In order to balance all these increases, there is a big "other" section in the Ontario budget that calls for yearly decreases of about 6%. But what falls under that category? I don't know, which is the problem, because it makes the entire spending restraint part of the Liberal plan uncertain and abstract. It's no wonder Moody's has revised its outlook on our debt.

What was interesting to note was that while Wynne supporters rallied in support around her on the evening of June 12, investors and traders were also responding to Wynne's victory. The Friday morning after the election, investors responded to the news of Kathleen Wynne's election as Premier and that the Ontario budget would go forward as a result. Their message was loud and clear: By 10:20 a.m., the yield on Ontario's long-term bonds jumped two basis points, the biggest one-day jump since January. What does that mean exactly? Well, interest rates and bond prices are inversely related. When the price of a bond goes down, the interest rates go up. The reason is prices go down because people don't want the bonds and therefore the interest that's offered on these bonds has to rise to entice more buyers. In short, the morning after Premier Wynne won the election, investors from all over the world were trying to get rid of bonds like they were infected. With more people selling than buying, the interest rate yield went up.

The head of the Canadian fixed-income division at BlackRock, the world's biggest money manager, says:

"We're on high alert that S&P will downgrade Ontario.... She's front-loading the deficit or the total debt in anticipation future years will benefit from stronger growth." The S&P is "just looking at the raw numbers and they're seeing a deteriorating financial balance sheet."

Translation: S&P could downgrade Ontario's debt very soon. This will mean Ontarians will have more of their hard-earned tax dollars going to pay interest rates that will get higher and higher every year. This will mean less money every year that can be invested in health care, education, infrastructure, the environment and agriculture. And let's not forget that this Liberal government has brought us to this point, and it's the Liberal government that, with their throne speech, is refusing to get us out.

I'd like to talk a little bit now about job creation. As I've discussed, the Liberal budget relies heavily on strengthening Ontario's economy to achieve a balance. However, the throne speech offered nothing in the ways of credible job creation policies. In fact, one of the pillars of the plan is the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, which is not only not a job creator, it is a flat-out job killer. Regardless of how Wynne dresses it up, we all know this pension amounts to a payroll tax. Every business in Ontario will be required to contribute 1.9% of earnings for every employee who makes less than \$90,000.

Let's assume you have a factory or business that employs 100 people at about \$50,000 per person, and that's about the size of any mid-size factory. That means that under the Ontario pension plan, the business will have to pay an additional \$100,000 in expenses—\$100,000 extra. I don't know about the rest of you, but I think that's a lot of money.

What scares me about this is that, in my riding, I have seen 6,300 good manufacturing jobs erased since 2008. While the recession certainly played a factor, many of these companies like Ford are still making cars; it's just that they've determined it's not worth making cars in our part of Ontario. Now you're telling the businesses that stuck it out through the depths of the recession and had faith enough to keep their factories in Ontario that their reward is a \$100,000 yearly expense, courtesy of the Ontario government. I can't think of anything more asinine or detrimental to job creation than that.

What really troubles me was when I read comments delivered by the CEO of Magna during their annual general meeting. First of all, we have to appreciate that Magna has a storied history in Ontario. Its culture and roots are embedded here. That makes it different from other foreign-owned companies that have less of a vested interest in Ontario. Foreign companies may come and go on occasion, but Magna derives much of its identity from being in Ontario.

And I can understand why: There's a Magna plant in my riding. It does advanced manufacturing, employs my neighbours and provides a decent living for hundreds of people in St. Thomas. So it troubles me when I heard the Magna CEO state that Magna would no longer be investing in Ontario. It's not closing any plants at this point, but any benefits of expanding in Ontario are outweighed

by the costs. The reason the costs outweigh the benefits, according to Magna, are high energy rates and the proposed Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, which would cost Magna \$35 million a year.

This decision by the company is not rooted in broader economic malaise; it's directly related to policies enacted by this government. Their own bureaucrats warned them that the Ontario pension plan would drive over 100,000 jobs out of the province.

Obviously, it's too early to have lost that many jobs already, but Magna's position is certainly an indictment of the plan and a dark omen of the future that awaits Ontario. When I look at how consistently misguided this Liberal government is when it comes to fiscal and economic policy, sometimes I think they will not be happy until all the manufacturing jobs in Ontario are eliminated.

The bottom line is that the Liberals have a four-year mandate. We in the PC caucus will continue to sound the alarm, and hopefully this government will take the decisive action that's needed to avert a full fiscal disaster. We in the PC Party believe in the services that this government provides, but we also need, at the same time, to be fiscally prudent so that these services may continue: to provide the health care for our seniors, to provide protection in the environment and to ensure that we have infrastructure. All of these are on the line when this government continues to spend and spend, and our debt levels continue to rise.

It's like running a household, Mr. Speaker: You can only run the credit card so far before things start having to be cut away. This government has run that far. It's time to take a look at their policies. It's time to bring forth the policy in this upcoming budget—there's still time to change it—to ensure that fiscal restraint is in order and that we can protect future generations like my daughter, our kids, our grandkids down the road, so that they are not saddled with this debt, so that they can have a health care and an education system much like we were allowed to have during the Bill Davis years when we were growing up.

So I'm hoping this government steps forward, starts listening to the PC Party caucus and implements some of these restraints so that, going forward, we'll have a stronger and more prosperous Ontario.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Seeing as it is close to 10:15 and that if we were to start questions and comments, we would have to finish it all, this House is now recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1009 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's my pleasure to welcome Heather de Veber and Gabriel de Veber to this chamber. I hope you will all join me in welcoming them.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister of—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The Treasury Board.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): President of Treasury Board.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you, Speaker. I'm delighted to welcome two summer interns: Cecily MacKnight and Priya Kanagakingam. Welcome.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's my pleasure to welcome, from the Ontario Health Coalition, Peterborough chapter, Dave Nicholl, Tom Young, Roy Brady, Dorothy Body and Carol Winter. And my mother, Sheila Wood, is here to lobby me as well today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A tough lobby.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's my pleasure to introduce Andrea Houston, a journalist known to many of us in the House. Welcome, Andrea.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introductions? Further introductions? Last call for further introductions.

It is now time for question period. The leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Sorry, I forgot something. I apologize to the leader.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would ask members to join me in welcoming our new pages. If they could assemble, please.

While the rest of the assembly takes place, it has been suggested that sometimes we miss hearing each riding's name because of applause, so if we could hold our applause until all of our pages are introduced, that would be helpful.

I would ask the members to join us in welcoming the legislative pages serving in the first session of the 41st Parliament:

Ashley Bowes from Oshawa; Caitlin Boyle from Brampton West; Thomas Brassard from Thunder Bay–Atikokan; Gabriel Chemla from Etobicoke–Lakeshore; Hayden Cheung from Richmond Hill; Kaitlyn Doleweerd from Simcoe North; Ethan Elliott from Perth–Wellington; Lavanya Gunentherathas from Scarborough Centre; Emmanuelle Hébert from Mississauga South; Daniel Hoogsteen from Burlington; Émilie Lebel from Timmins–James Bay; Matthew Lynn from Etobicoke Centre; Ayesha Mir from Don Valley East; Zahra Mohamed from Markham–Unionville; William Qin from Mississauga–Brampton South; Victoria Recagno from Oakville; Nardien Sedhom from Mississauga–Streetsville; Brendan Sheppard from Barrie; Stephanie Ttofias from Scarborough–Guildwood; Josée Venne Brisebois from Sudbury; Ethan Walker from Wellington–Halton Hills; Eric Wood from Davenport; and David Zhou from Scarborough–Agincourt.

These are our pages for this session.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Again, I apologize to the leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition for that interruption.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr. Jim Wilson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the introduction of pages is important. It's historic for them to be here, and we certainly welcome them all.

Now let's get down to business.

My question is for the Premier. Moody's credit rating agency has changed Ontario's debt rating outlook from stable to negative. After 11 years of a Liberal regime in Ontario, you've managed to double our debt, and paying the interest on that debt is now the third-largest expenditure in the budget. When referencing the debt, even former Liberal MPP Donna Cansfield said, "This province is in deep trouble."

Premier, your proposed budget has caused a credit downgrade to hang over Ontario. Tell us today, does the government's fiscal plan take into account a further credit rating downgrade, which would increase the cost of servicing the debt? Or will you assure us that your budget will not result in a credit downgrade?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I can assure the Leader of the Opposition is that we are determined to eliminate the deficit by 2017-18. We have laid that out in our budget. We will reintroduce our budget next week. We have been very, very clear about the constraints that we know have to be put in place. We have been clear about that path to balance.

But we've also been clear—and we were clear with the people of Ontario as we went through the election campaign—that our plan was based on investments in communities, investments in the talent and skills of our people, our children, our grandchildren, investments in infrastructure that we know are necessary, whether it's roads or bridges, whether it's transit, whether it's hospitals or schools. Those investments are necessary in order for the province to thrive.

That is the basis of our plan, and it is laid out very clearly in our budget documents.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again to the Premier: Premier, you claim that you want to build Ontario up, but the fact is, the massive debt your government has created is now threatening front-line services that we cherish here in Ontario, like health care and education. Even former Finance Minister Dwight Duncan says that the province's finances are "a ticking time bomb," yet you're still working to push through a budget that the credit rating agencies are already frowning upon.

Premier, is it your intention to rush through this budget, then shut down the Legislature so that you can

negotiate new public sector contracts without the Legislature being in session to hold you to account?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As the Leader of the Opposition knows, we are back here within 20 days because I said that it was important that we get the budget reintroduced and that we have the opportunity to debate it. We're willing to stay as long as that takes, to have the budget debated and to make sure that we get the full input from this House.

But the reality that the Leader of the Opposition puts forward, that there are challenges ahead, that's not news to us. We know that there are challenges, Mr. Speaker. That's why in our budget, we lay out the path to balance. We understand the constraints that have to be in place.

But the other reality is that there are investments needed. I would just call attention to a statement that the member for Wellington–Halton Hills made yesterday in his first member's statement. He talked about the need in his riding—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —and I will quote in the final supplementary, but he talked about the need in his riding for investments in infrastructure.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: Well, the honourable member for Halton—

Interjections.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I just say to the Premier, the honourable member for Wellington–Halton Hills has a far better record of sticking up for his constituents and setting priorities, because he was part of a government that set priorities for eight years in this province and balanced the budget.

Premier, in Europe, they—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That will do.

Mr. Jim Wilson: We've seen in Europe, where they didn't care about the credit rating, or didn't care enough about it, and they didn't care enough about their debt obligations—in fact, their debt obligations just kept growing—that they actually did have to cut services that we cherish here in Ontario, like health care and education.

You need to treat the credit rating as sacrosanct to make sure that we spend within our means, because we owe that to the hard-working people of Ontario. That's an obligation we have, and we have an obligation to preserve front-line services.

Premier, will you take your time with the budget? We'll forgive you if you don't introduce it next Monday. Take your time with the budget. Fix it so that we don't lose our current credit rating.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What is sacrosanct to me are the needs of this province and the needs of the people in this province, and those needs are multi-faceted. As the Leader of the Opposition notes, there are challenges

ahead for our fiscal situation, and we have laid out our path to balance in our budget.

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But we also have a need to make investments in infrastructure. The Leader of the Opposition references the history of the member for Wellington–Halton Hills and his participation in the government, his membership in the government, and his membership in a government that in fact didn't make the investments that were needed, didn't make the investments in infrastructure that were needed, which is why yesterday he was standing in this House saying, "On June 13, the day after"—and I'm quoting the member for Wellington–Halton Hills—"On June 13, the day after the election, we were back to work at my constituency office, and I wrote the Premier to highlight three key issues in my riding: the Highway 6 Morriston bypass, improved GO train service, and high-speed Internet in rural Ontario." So, Mr. Speaker—

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

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Good morning, Premier, and congratulations on your success.

Premier, the day after you brought in your budget, Moody's rang the first of many alarm bells. They said that your deficit represented "a credit negative for the province." They said that the path to balance "presents more risk than previously assessed." Premier, this is a clear signal, yet you're bringing back the same budget next week.

We know that your \$12.5-billion deficit has already caused cuts in senior physiotherapy, cuts in cataract surgeries and cuts in diabetes testing strips. Premier, I'll ask you: What cuts are coming next?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, Mr. Speaker, the member for Nipissing is kind of playing both sides of the fence here, because on the one hand he reiterates what his leader has said about concerns about the fiscal situation, on which I have acknowledged that there are challenges. There's absolutely no doubt about that, but we have laid out a path to balance, and we will reintroduce our budget next week. But at the same time he talks about the need for more spending.

The reality is that we have to find ways to meet the needs of the people of this province. The issues that he raised in terms of health care are part of a transformation of the health care system that is absolutely critical. We must provide services in a different way. We must provide more home care and more services in the community. But we must provide those services; we cannot neglect those services. And we must make those investments in infrastructure that we know are needed in the riding of Wellington–Halton Hills and across the province.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'll certainly let the 34 people at the hospital in North Bay know that they're part of a

transformation. The 60 beds that were closed: I'll let them know that that's part of a transformation.

Premier, even more warning signals from financial experts came the very day after the election. The Financial Post revealed that Ontario's borrowing costs spiked the most in six months. BlackRock, the world's biggest money manager, said that they were on "high alert" for a credit rating downgrade for Ontario and noted that investors were "seeing a deteriorating financial balance sheet." Premier, you're well aware that this will lead to extra borrowing costs, which will take away money from front-line services.

Someone is going to feel the pain of your decisions. Who is it that will suffer next, Premier? Is it families, is it seniors or is it Ontario's most vulnerable?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, there is a fundamental disagreement between the opposition and us. That fundamental disagreement is that we don't believe that starting with cutting 100,000 jobs and slashing services is the way to prosperity for the province. We just don't believe that.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think that the people who work in the new hospital in North Bay and the people who work in the children's treatment centre in North Bay understand that investment in services is very important. They understand that investment in infrastructure is very important.

We will reintroduce our budget next week, Mr. Speaker. We have laid out a path to balance in that budget. We have laid out the investment strategy that we believe is necessary at this point. We must do both of those if the province is to prosper.

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

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Premier, the rating agency sent a further shot across your bow in an attempt to jolt you back to reality. Moody's has now downgraded their credit outlook from stable to negative based on your plan to forge ahead with this budget. A formal credit rating downgrade is now forecast, which will not only drive up the cost of borrowing for the province but also for linked agencies, such as my city of North Bay, the city of Ottawa, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, the school board financing authority—all will downgrade, along with the province. Rating agencies simply are not buying into this promise to balance in three years. Norman Levine of Portfolio Management stated that you "have not articulated in any way, shape or form" how you would get there.

Premier, can you tell us today specifically what further cuts to front-line services will make your budget balance?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I will just go back to what I said previously, which is that there is a fundamental disagreement. We believe that if we do not make the investments in transit, in roads, in bridges, in schools, in hospitals and in the education of our young people, if we do not make those investments, if we do not provide opportunities for young people to have experience and to

partner with business and get that work experience, if we do not transform the health care system and make sure that we have more home care in communities, if we don't do those things, we believe—in fact, there's good evidence—that we will not have the future that will attract business to the province. We will not create those jobs in the short term and in the longer term. So there is a fundamental disagreement between us and the opposition.

We will reintroduce our budget next week and we look forward to the debate in the Legislature on that plan that will build Ontario up.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. The Liberals have put forward a Trojan Horse plan. The government is telling Ontarians that it is progressive, but scratch the surface, Speaker, and you'll find some real surprises there, like the fire sale of public assets. You don't burn the furniture to heat the house.

Will the Premier tell Ontarians what public assets she's planning to sell off?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, as I said yesterday, the leader of the third party's platform was actually based on the plan that we had put forward. It was the foundation of the fiscal plan that she ran on. I think I just need to remind her that the plan that we are going to reintroduce next week is exactly the one on which she based her fiscal plan.

What we have said is that, yes, we are going to make sure that the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario work for the people of Ontario. We have asked Ed Clark, who is the former CEO of the Toronto-Dominion Bank, to look at those assets, to make sure that they are working in the best way possible for the people of Ontario so that we can lay out that path to balance and so that we can make the investments that are necessary for the province.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: As the Premier knows, our public assets provide benefits to Ontarians. For example, one of OPG's jobs is to provide electricity without adding in the profit margin. Selling off OPG will turn it into another private power company looking to make more money from families and businesses. We know first-hand that privatized power has tripled hydro bills in this province since 2002.

Will the Premier tell Ontarians whether she thinks it's the right thing to sell off OPG so it will turn into yet another private power company driving up their bills for private interests?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The leader of the third party is making a huge leap and I don't know exactly where she's getting her information, but what we have said is that there are assets that are owned by the people of Ontario. I believe that it is responsible for government to make sure that those assets work for the people of Ontario. I used the example of the 407 yesterday. I'm

going to use that example again because I believe that had the government of the day had a process in place to actually look at the 407 and to look at how it could have been made to work for the people of Ontario, I don't think it would have been sold off at the rate that it was sold off and I don't think that the people of Ontario would have then been robbed of that ongoing stream of revenue.

I believe that it is responsible that the government make sure that assets work for the people of the province. That's what we're going to do.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: In 2013-14, the LCBO put \$1.7 billion into health care, education and other very important public services. That's a long-term, stable source of public funds that come from that agency. Even Mike Harris said that selling the LCBO didn't provide enough "bang for our buck," and Ernie Eves said that selling off an asset that generates so much public revenue simply doesn't make any sense. Does the Premier think it makes sense to sell off the LCBO?

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Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, Mr. Speaker, again, I agree with the leader of the third party. The LCBO is a terrific asset and provides a great benefit to the people of Ontario. The leader of the third party is making a leap of logic that just is not based in any reality. What I've said is that we want to make sure that the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario work to the very optimal value possible for the people of Ontario.

I would ask the leader of the third party, now that she's had some time to contemplate whether she will support the budget that we are bringing in, that we're reintroducing on Monday—because it makes investments in transit, in roads, in bridges, in developmental services, in support for personal support workers and home care, I would ask her whether she is prepared now to support that progressive budget that previously she deemed was not acceptable.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. The Premier told Ontarians that her plan was a rejection of austerity, but yesterday she wouldn't rule out cutting 100,000 public service jobs, and she didn't rule out the fire sale of public assets.

My question is a simple one: Will the Premier come clean with Ontarians and tell them whether or not she will rule out the firing of 100,000 people and the fire sale of public assets?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It's almost breathtaking, because what our budget and our plan does is it lays out supports for personal support workers to make sure that personal support workers, who are fundamental to transforming the health care system, are paid adequately. It lays out raises for child care workers, and the leader of the third party purports to be supportive of child care and

the child care system. It lays out \$810 million in investment in developmental services. That's something that for years we have known is necessary, that there's a gap in our system. People have not had support. People with developmental disabilities, once they age out of school, haven't had the support that they need. We have suggested, and we have put forward in our budget, that we would make investments in those people.

I turn to the leader of the third party and say why won't you—

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

Interjections.

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

Start the clock. Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the Premier insists she's been upfront with the people of Ontario, but she didn't dispute the comments made by the Liberals' hand-picked economist Don Drummond, who had this to say about the Liberal plan: "By 2017, I wouldn't be at all surprised if that involved the public sector about 100,000 lower."

Now, will the Premier be upfront with Ontarians and tell them whether Don Drummond is right about the Liberal plan?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think that the leader of the third party knows full well that Don Drummond did not suggest that we were going in with a plan to cut 100,000 workers. She knows that. That's not our plan. Again, I would ask the leader of the third party, and I would ask the members who were saying that our plan will not happen—I would ask them for their support—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Essex, come to order.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I would ask for their support on top of the things I spoke about earlier: their support for investments in public transit; investments in legal aid support, which is part of our plan; an increased social assistance rate—I would ask for their support for those things.

To the accusation that this will not happen, Mr. Speaker, I am more than determined. We are here sitting in the beginning of July because I am determined to bring back our budget. I am determined to work in this Legislature to get it passed so that we can make those investments in a better Ontario.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: New Democrats believe that government should be investing in the concerns facing families, not adding to their concerns. The Premier's plan could see 100,000 people fired and our public assets sold off. Does the Premier think austerity is okay as long as it's splashed with a coat of red paint?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I guess again I would just ask, when the leader of the third party talks about the people about whom she's concerned, does that mean

she's not concerned about personal support workers, she's not concerned about child care workers, she's not concerned about the people who will work to build the transit that we are going to invest in and that she's not concerned about the families who can't get legal aid because they don't have enough support—and our plan would give them more support—is she not concerned about those people? Because my understanding of the NDP is they used to be concerned about those people. We are concerned about those people.

Interjections.

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

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Michael Harris: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Just weeks before the election, the former Minister of Transportation announced that your government would invest in high-speed rail from London to Toronto with a stop in Kitchener. Of course he didn't—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I'm going to ask the member from Eglinton–Lawrence and the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek to take it outside.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): In case anyone has missed the message, it's not about you two.

Please finish your question.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks. The former minister didn't have a realistic cost estimate, he didn't have ridership numbers and his announcement was routinely rejected by experts across the province. Still he stuck to his guns, claiming you'd be delivering.

Minister, we all know that Liberal promises during elections aren't worth the paper that they're written on, so I'd like to give you a chance to set the record straight. Minister, was this high-speed rail promise an actual commitment or was the former minister just selling one of your election points?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin by actually welcoming the member from Kitchener–Conestoga back to the Legislature and thanking him for this question today. I also understand that he is the PC caucus's transportation critic, so I look forward to having the chance to work closely with him and all other members on all sides of the House to make sure that we deliver on the plan that the people of Ontario have elected us to do.

That means that for communities like Kitchener and communities right across the province of Ontario, it's crucial that we begin to get on with the work at hand, that we begin to make sure that the \$29 billion that we've earmarked for transit and transportation infrastructure gets rolled out so that communities like Kitchener and communities across this province have the benefits from those investments.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Michael Harris: Back to the minister: Toronto Star transit expert Greg Gormick says your “back-of-the-napkin high-speed rail plan is so out of sync with reality that its failings don’t warrant cataloguing,” and it’s not hard to see why. When the former minister made your high-speed rail commitment, he couldn’t offer any details. He just said that he had a study somewhere which backed up his claims. Although he refused to release the study during the election, he told the media, “One of the first things we want to do if we’re re-elected is get those studies out there.”

Minister, in the spirit of transparency will you release this mystery study, or will you continue to hide it because you know it won’t back up your claims?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I thank the member from Kitchener–Conestoga for that supplementary question. It’s important for everyone to understand that we are working very hard to finalize a business case for this particular project.

One of the things that I do want to highlight in my response today is how proud I was to serve alongside the former member from Kitchener Centre, because of his extraordinary advocacy for his community, and how much I’m looking forward to working closely with the new member from Kitchener–Conestoga, who is right here—

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Kitchener Centre.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Sorry, from Kitchener Centre, who I know will continue to be a champion for her community.

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As I said in my initial answer, we are committed on this side of the House to making sure that we implement the \$29 billion worth of crucial public infrastructure, public transit and transportation investments that are needed right across this province. I know the people of Kitchener and people in communities right across Ontario are delighted to know that we want to roll up our sleeves and get back to work to make sure that we deliver positive results for all of Ontario.

HEALTH CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. First, congratulations on your new appointment. I look forward to working with the minister.

Public health care advocates are at Queen’s Park today to oppose this government’s plan to push even more services out of our hospitals and into private, for-profit clinics. In 2012, the Auditor General found over 800 private health care facilities in Ontario, and 97% of them are for-profit.

This government’s Trojan Horse budget includes a third straight year of hospital budget freezes, which means cuts to hospitals, increased user fees and even more private, for-profit clinics. Can the minister tell Ontarians why his government is so intent on cutting hospital services and expanding private, for-profit clinics in this province?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question. I’m happy to talk about the government’s plan to improve the quality of care. I would think the member opposite would also agree that it’s important to provide care to people where they need it, when they need it and as easily as possible.

I want to say that I’m glad as well. I will be speaking with the Ontario Health Coalition in about an hour’s time. They have an important day here. They’re going to be advocating on a number of important issues. But I want to emphasize that we’re only going to move these procedures into not-for-profit clinics. All medically necessary procedures performed in these clinics will be covered by OHIP.

A good example is the Kensington eye clinic, which I suspect the member opposite supports, which here in Toronto has provided cataract surgery—low-risk procedures—to nearly 12,000 patients in Toronto, the GTA and in fact around the province, helping to reduce wait times for cataract surgeries by 60% in the Toronto Central LHIN. It’s this kind of movement which is going to provide a better quality of care.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: This government is moving services from an area that is not-for-profit and has oversight and accountability, into the community which has no oversight, no accountability and no way for people to know that they get quality care.

Another year of austerity for a hospital leaves them with little choice but to carve out services and hand them out to those private providers. You’re not going to be able to get a colonoscopy, an MRI or an echocardiogram in our publicly funded, not-for-profit, trusted community hospitals under this government’s plan. You will have to go to a private, for-profit clinic, with all sorts of fees associated with them.

The government talks about being progressive, but what I see on the ground is not. When will the minister recognize that his government’s health care agenda throws the door wide open to more privatization, where the real winners are the private clinics, not the patients?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, that is simply not true. The member opposite needs to understand what the facts are. I’m not sure if she has even read our platform, our action plan and what we propose to do.

Here’s what we’re not doing: We’re not creating private, for-profit clinics. We’re not charging patients for OHIP services. We’re not cutting care in our hospitals. We’re not moving care further from home. This is what we’re doing: We are shifting some routine, low-risk procedures out of the hospital and into the community through not-for-profit clinics, just like our hospitals are not-for-profit. I think the member opposite supports our hospitals being not-for-profit.

We’re talking about not-for-profit institutions in our communities. We’re talking about two new midwife-led birthing centres in Toronto and Ottawa that are giving expectant moms more choice in where they deliver their babies. I would hope the member opposite would support

that type of community care, which is bringing great quality of care through not-for-profits in the community, where patients want it, at a better cost to government and with better results for the patients themselves.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Han Dong: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

It's my privilege to represent the great riding of Trinity-Spadina, one of the most culturally diverse ridings in Ontario. Every day I'm reminded that our country is so great because of the contributions of newcomers. We are a welcoming country. That is at the core of what makes us Canadian.

So too is our commitment to universal health care, the radical notion that no one should be denied care when they need it. That is why many in Trinity-Spadina and across the country were deeply disappointed by the federal government's decision to reduce health coverage through the Interim Federal Health Program. I understand there was a recent federal court ruling on those changes.

Could the minister tell the House about this decision and how it relates to Ontario government policy?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'd like to first thank the member from Trinity-Spadina for his excellent question and congratulate him on his election to the Legislature.

Changes to the Interim Federal Health Program, a program and a population that I know very, very well, left many refugee claimants with little or no health coverage. This was a serious abdication of the federal government's responsibility to protect some of the most vulnerable people in our society and it showed a lack of compassion. A federal court ruling late last week ruled against that decision, calling it unconstitutional and even calling it cruel.

We have all heard of heart-wrenching examples: a patient who suffered a retinal detachment, an incident that often leads to blindness, whose surgery was cancelled when he couldn't afford it. We learned of a diabetic patient only kept alive by free insulin samples that were provided by a pharmaceutical company. That doesn't reflect the values I know we share as Canadians. Making sure patients get care when they need it is the right thing to do and it's my most fundamental responsibility as minister.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you, Minister. Speaker, I'm pleased that a court has recognized and upheld principles that underpin our commitment to universal health care. The court decision is a step in the right direction, but I understand that the federal government may appeal. In the meantime, it is clear from the minister's remarks that there are many people who need care right now but are no longer receiving it through the Interim Federal Health Program.

Speaker, through you, could the minister tell us what is being done to ensure refugee claimants are getting the care they need?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: The member is right: Some refugee claimants face health challenges while waiting for the federal government to determine their status. Cuts to the IFHP, the federal health program, have left them unprotected and put our doctors and our health care workers in an untenable position, forcing them to choose who should and shouldn't be treated. That's why our government, the provincial government, vigorously opposed this decision, and it's why we joined with other provinces to reinstate access to essential and urgent health care services for refugee claimants through the Ontario Temporary Health Program.

The federal court's ruling confirms what we've said all along: that our health care system must reflect the principles of fairness and certainly compassion, providing the right care for those who need it.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Bill Walker: Mr. Speaker, through you to the Premier: On June 4, you received a 20-page document and letter from the municipality of Grey Highlands seeking your recommitment to move forward with the Grey Bruce Health Services' Markdale Hospital. You received yet another letter from me on June 24, where I reiterated my support for the hospital project.

Over the years, your government has had lots of conversations about this project. Regrettably, it's going on 11 years since your government pledged to build this hospital and nine years since the great people of Markdale and area raised \$13.2 million, which still sits in the bank.

Premier, will you please tell me, can you confirm that infrastructure money will be allocated in the budget and that the hospital promise your government made to my constituents was not purely made for partisan political purposes?

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

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I thank the member opposite for the question. Of course, we're working closely with Markdale Hospital to make progress on this important capital investment. I appreciate the member bringing it to our attention again. It reflects the significant infrastructure investment, the capital investment, that we're making in hospitals and health facilities right across this province. It's a multi-million dollar investment.

In fact, even when you look at one aspect of this, small and rural hospitals, we've invested over \$115 million towards capital investments to strengthen care. In this fiscal year alone, there are 91 different projects across the province where we're working with important partners like Markdale to make sure that we're making that progress through capital and operating investments to ensure that the quality of care continues to improve for patients. It's so badly needed.

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The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Walker: Again to the Premier: To be fair, six years ago you did actually erect a sign promising and

committing to this project for the Markdale Hospital. You know this hospital project is of profound concern and need to my constituents. The community stepped up to the challenge and raised \$13.2 million as part of the challenge you put in front of them, and they want you to honour your commitment.

Premier, I respectfully ask you, do you accept that the case for a rebuild is strong? And on what timeline do you envision this redevelopment taking place?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm pleased that the member opposite, like I'm sure many members in the Conservative caucus, acknowledge and agree that infrastructure investment is of vital importance to this province going forward. So the \$129-billion investment over the next 10 years that this province is making—and how much is for hospitals?

Interjection.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: It's \$11.4 billion specifically for hospital capital investments. I'm glad that you acknowledge the importance of that.

We are working closely with Markdale. There's no doubt that there will be further conversations to see how we can move that project forward in as expeditious a manner as possible. I'd be happy to sit down with the member opposite to talk to him. I know this is an important project to him and I look forward to seeing how we can continue this project together.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Yesterday, I asked the Premier how much this government plans to pocket from the whole or partial privatization of the LCBO, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. I asked because on page 4 of the Liberal Party's infrastructure program it clearly states that the plan is to pocket \$3.15 billion from the sale of public assets. The Premier and the Minister of Finance refused to answer my question yesterday, so I'm giving it another shot, another opportunity, Premier.

Will the government tell this House how much is slotted into the government's fiscal framework for the full or partial sale of these core public assets?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The member opposite knows, if he looks at the budget, the numbers that we have laid out in terms of our projections, in terms of our revenue, in terms of the investments that are necessary. But he's asking a question that I've actually already answered. What I've said is that we have asked Ed Clark and his team to look at the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario to make sure that they are working to the very best benefit of the people of Ontario. I believe that it's the government's responsibility to do that, to make sure that we optimize the value of those entities, whether it's real estate or whether it's an organization. That's what Ed Clark is going to do with his group, and we will absolutely keep the House and the people of Ontario apprised of the optimization of those assets. But I don't have the specific answers at this point because we've asked him to do that work.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The \$3.15-billion asset sale figure from your platform is interesting, because 15 years ago the Mike Harris PCs sold off Highway 407 for \$3.1 billion. We're talking that scale of a sale. If you know you're going to raise at least \$3.15 billion from overall asset sales, you also know how much you're planning to get from the whole or partial sale of OPG, LCBO and Hydro One.

So this time please answer the question: How much of the \$3.15 billion that your platform says will be raised through asset sales comes from the sale of LCBO, OPG and Hydro One assets?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the member for Toronto–Danforth is jumping to a conclusion that is not a forgone conclusion. He's leaping to an end point that may or may not be the case. He's engaging in a hypothetical and I'm not going to go down that road.

The reality is we've asked Ed Clark to look at the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario. I'm glad that the member raised the issue of the 407, because it reinforces my point, which is, had there been a process when the previous government was in office, had there been a rational process to look at that asset, the 407, I believe that different decisions would have been made and the people of Ontario would have benefited much more and would not have lost that asset and the ongoing stream of revenue that is lost to the people of Ontario because of a decision made by a government that did not take the time and did not take the responsibility to do it right.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Arthur Potts: My question is for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. When our parents and grandparents, and maybe some members of this House, can no longer be cared for in their homes and they need to transition to long-term care—and in my community of Beaches–East York there are many who are transitioning into long-term-care homes—we want the best possible care for them when they transition. I know that investing in long-term care has been a priority for our government. An important part of that is redeveloping older facilities so they can provide state-of-the-art care in renewed space. Could the minister inform this House of the government's plan for long-term-care re-investments?

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I'd like to begin by thanking the member from Beaches–East York for the question. Congratulations on an excellent win.

I'm committed to the 77,000 residents who live in Ontario's long-term-care-home facilities—that they will get the highest standards of care. A big part of this commitment is our plan to modernize our existing facilities. That is why our budget had money set aside so that we could help our long-term-care operators to redevelop and modernize 30,000 beds. Unfortunately, the PCs and the NDP voted against this budget.

I look forward to the reintroduction and passage of this budget so that we can get on with the work of redeveloping and modernizing these 30,000 beds and investing in our seniors.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Arthur Potts: Thank you, Minister, and, through you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure that the residents of the long-term-care facilities in Beaches–East York—such as True Davidson Acres and Ina Grafton—and their loved ones were very pleased to hear that this government has plans to redevelop and create so many more beds in the communities and across the province.

As we all know, in the long-term-care facilities, residents don't just depend on the care they receive from hard-working nurses; they need personal support workers and other front-line health care workers in this long-term-care sector.

Speaker, through you, would the minister please tell us what the government is doing to ensure that residents in long-term-care homes receive the best possible care that they can get?

Hon. Dipika Damerla: Thanks again to the member from Beaches–East York. I also want to thank the thousands of Ontarians who go to work in long-term-care homes every single day to care for our family and friends. That is why our government has funded over 10,000 new full-time, front-line staff in long-term care since 2003, and we have provided homes with \$20 million so that they can provide training to their staff to improve the safety of our residents and to advance the quality of care.

We have also hired over 600 full-time staff since 2011 through our Behavioural Supports Ontario to improve care for residents with challenging behaviours, and we're adding 75 nurse practitioners in our LTC homes to prevent unnecessary ambulance use, prevent injuries and improve resident care.

We've brought in tough legislation to protect residents by allowing stronger enforcement and better inspections of long-term-care homes. We will continue to make investments in our long-term-care sector.

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: My question is for the Attorney General. In February, my private member's resolution called on this government to implement a comprehensive long-term solution to reform joint and several liability insurance for municipalities, and to do this by June. AMO, the Insurance Bureau of Canada, insurers in Perth–Wellington and beyond, and 200 municipalities have supported it. All parties in this Legislature supported it, yet the June deadline has passed. I will ask the minister this question: When will you get it done?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I want to thank the member for asking and being so persistent with the question; however, legal liability reform is an important and complex issue.

1120

I understand that this issue has been of significant concern for municipalities. AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, has asked the government to consider the impact of the law on joint and several liability on municipal insurance. At my ministry, the Ministry of the Attorney General, and in the legal community, two options are under consideration. One of the models is modification of joint and several liability—it could look very simple for some of us, but it's a very complex issue. Indeed, if this bill is passed, there will be winners and losers, and that's what we have to consider before moving forward with it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: With all due respect, this has been going on since I was a councillor back in the municipality of North Perth, and that goes back seven or eight years that I have heard about this issue. AMO and many municipalities are supporting a combined model which would place reasonable limits on the damages that can be recovered from a municipality. In Perth–Wellington, municipalities including Stratford and the county of Wellington are asking you to support this.

Minister, the time for consultations is over. Municipalities have spoken. My question is this: When will you get it done?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Again, Mr. Speaker, this is a complex issue. There are two different models that have been suggested. One of the models, which the member is talking about, is a model that was adopted in Saskatchewan, and we are reviewing this model. Another model will limit municipal liability for negligence in road maintenance to two times the proportion of damage.

But like I said, in the two situations, there will be winners and losers. It's a very complex matter, and we want to make sure that we have it right before we move forward.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. When Ontario families need hospital care, they should be able to trust that there's actually room at their local hospital, but that's not the case in Thunder Bay. For much of this year, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre has been literally in gridlock. They have funding for 395 beds, but they routinely have 30 more patients waiting for a bed. They are doing the best they can to provide care, and that has pushed their deficit to \$5.5 million.

My question is this: When will the government step up and provide the funding for hospital beds that Thunder Bay so obviously needs?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Health.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm really happy to get this question, actually, because we have provided that funding, and we are making important improvements to health care in Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay region. I have to thank the member from Thunder Bay–Superior North

and the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan particularly for their hard work and their advocacy on this—and the community leaders that they have been working vigorously with on this issue.

Recently, we announced that we're investing almost \$14 million to improve access to emergency care and to enhance community health care services, measures which will improve not only those types of services but also, of course, the hospital-based care that is available to residents of that region. This additional funding is going to support Thunder Bay's three largest health care providers: the Regional Health Sciences Centre, St. Joseph's Care Group and the North West Community Care Access Centre.

These are important measures. I'm happy to speak in more detail in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Liberals have made many, many promises, but the fact is that health care austerity continues under this year's Trojan Horse budget. Another year of frozen hospital budgets means there are not enough hospital beds in Thunder Bay and their deficit is ballooning.

This government's decisions are putting pressure on everything from staffing to laundry services. In fact, the way the hospital is coping with the lack of funding is to open 300 new parking spots to raise money off of patients to try to pay their bills. When will the Premier announce a real plan to address the gridlock in the Thunder Bay hospital?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Well again, Mr. Speaker, the facts just don't match with what the member opposite, the leader of the third party, is saying. We're creating 26 new hospital beds to help more people with long-term illness or disabilities receive the specialized care that they need. We're funding up to 17 more spaces in supportive housing so that seniors and people in need of care can remain independent and out of hospital. We're expanding a nurse outreach program to provide up to 500 more seniors and people with complex needs with home care services, again to keep them as close to home as possible and out of hospital. We are staffing 10 acute care hospital beds to treat up to 600 more patients per year and helping to recruit up to 10 full-time and 14 temporary emergency-room doctors to improve access to urgent care.

These are the steps that we're taking. We're investing dollars to do that. They are important improvements to that region, that important region in the province. So I'm not sure where the member opposite is trying to go to—we are seeing the progress that we want to see in terms of quality of care.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Mr. Chris Ballard: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. This summer, many young people are starting new jobs in restaurants, golf courses and retail shops around the province. I know in my community of Newmarket—Aurora, the numerous golf

courses, auto parts manufacturers like Van-Rob and Magna, and Upper Canada will offer many new job opportunities for youth. But the statistics show, Minister, that young people are three times more likely to be injured in the first three months of their job than experienced colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: What are we doing to ensure that our newest and least experienced workers are safe at work?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Let me first congratulate the fine new member from Newmarket—Aurora. Congratulations on being elected to the House here.

Speaker, the question is a very important one. We are all saddened in this House when we hear of a workplace fatality when it involves a young person, and I know our hearts go out to the family and the co-workers of those who have been injured or killed. The more tragic, or the equally tragic, part of that is that these incidents that lead to injury or death are indeed often preventable.

As the member said, it's true that new and young workers are most likely to get hurt. That's why the ministry conducts an annual safety blitz for new and young workers. The goals of this blitz are very, very simple: We ensure that new and young workers are properly oriented, trained and supervised, and we ensure that their employers are taking every reasonable precaution to protect new and young workers.

But we need everyone playing a role in keeping our workplaces safe. This blitz is going to raise awareness of workplace health and safety amongst our young people.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you to the minister for that response. We know that our youth are helping to build a stronger and more competitive economy here in Ontario, and I was encouraged to hear about the minister's annual health and safety blitz. I think it's very important to be out there in the summer educating and enforcing safety rules as students work to save for college and university. But surely the minister's safety blitz cannot go to every single workplace in the province.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: What is the government doing to ensure that all new young workers have access and an understanding of their basic health and safety rights? Also, what is the ministry doing to ensure that those youth whose first language is not English are properly trained in health and safety?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thanks to the member for another fine question. I want to assure the Legislature that this ministry takes health and safety very, very seriously. Reducing injuries, eliminating fatalities: number one priority for this ministry.

Last fall, we passed a regulation that made it mandatory for all workers and supervisors to complete basic health and safety training. As of July 1 of this year, just recently, workers and supervisors are required to have taken this training. Speaker, I should note that that includes everybody in this room, including yourself.

We have made it easy to complete this training online at the Ministry of Labour website or through free work-

books available at ServiceOntario locations across the province. It comes in many languages: English, French, Chinese, Spanish, Punjabi, Portuguese and Hindi, just to name a few.

It's true that many Ontarians will already be aware of these basic rights and responsibilities, but the exercise we're going through with the mandatory training that came into effect is going to make a good system even better, Speaker.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr. Toby Barrett: To the Premier: Premier, just before you became Liberal leader in 2012, you made a commitment to eliminate Ontario's deficit by fiscal year 2017-18, a promise you continue to reiterate. I'll go back to your quote of 2012: "When I say we need to stay on our government's fiscal plan of balancing the budget by 2017-18, I mean it."

1130

You say, in three years a zero deficit. However, your hand-picked economist, Don Drummond, projects in three years a \$30.2-billion deficit. Premier, how do you square this \$30.2-billion discrepancy?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think I would advise the member opposite to actually read what Don Drummond had to say about that. The point he was making was that if we did nothing, that is the reality we would be facing. What we have done is we made very clear steps to reduce our deficit—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's enough.

Finish, please.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We are committed to balancing the budget by 2017-18, and we've had to make tough decisions in the past in order to move to that direction. Every single time we took a difficult decision, you stood up in opposition to that.

What I'm saying is that all of us agree—all three parties agree—we must get to balance. We're looking for constructive ways to get there. You do have some responsibility to support the transformation that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound will come to order.

Supplementary.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Well, back to the Premier: We have no indication from you of how your promise will be kept. Nothing will come of nothing. Your Minister of Finance is expecting revenue shortfalls in the coming years.

Back to the Premier: How will you keep your promise? Is it selling assets, cutting government programs and services for families, seniors, the vulnerable in our society, jacking up taxes on the middle class? Or do you plan on breaking your promise to balance the books in

three years? What is the plan for 2017-18? Is it to cut government spending by \$30.2 billion? Is that the plan?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think all of us are looking forward to the budget being introduced next week. I don't think there will be any surprises, though, because we've committed to introducing the same budget that was not supported by either party when we introduced it earlier this year. It clearly lays out a path.

We have actually become the lowest spender in the country on a per-capita basis. Our program spending is down to 1.4% annually. We're looking ahead to 1.1% annually. We're on track to meeting those deficit targets. But what I don't understand is that we seem to have an "austerity everywhere but my riding" attitude on your side of the House, where people will stand up and advocate for more spending in their riding but no spending overall.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Miss Monique Taylor: To the Minister of Health: Recent reports say that parking fees at the Juravinski Cancer Centre in my riding of Hamilton Mountain would be raised to as much as \$25 a day, which is a 25% increase. One patient who travels to receive care puts it this way: "They know they have a captive audience."

Parking fees amount to a health care levy on sick people. When will this government follow through on its election promise to cap out-of-control hospital parking fees?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question because it gives me the opportunity on behalf of the government to remind the members opposite that in fact, in our platform during the election, we committed to putting a cap on parking fees at hospitals and at our health care facilities. I agree with the member opposite that it's incredibly important that access to our health care services is provided in an equitable fashion, so we intend on moving forward as we committed in our platform. I suspect we're going to have the third party's support on that.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Miss Monique Taylor: Just so the minister knows, the fees have already been increased last week.

The Canadian Medical Association and New Democrats call hospital parking fees a barrier to health care access and an unnecessary stress on patients and families. The Liberal government may not see it, but the people in my riding and people across this province need relief now from these out-of-control parking fees.

We haven't seen any directive to the hospital administrators to cap the fees, even though you made the pledge during your election campaign. Since then, the government has been silent. My constituents are hoping that this is not just something that was said at election time.

When will this minister act immediately and cap hospital parking fees?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm glad to have the member opposite's support. It's too bad that you didn't put it in your platform if it was that important to you then, but we did,

and it's a commitment that we're going to follow through on.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to be working closely with local communities, with our hospitals and our health care facilities because one size does not fit all. The circumstance in a particular community or locality is different from one to the next, so we're going to work in a responsible fashion and we're going to cap or, in some cases, cut hospital parking fees so that they are acceptable.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I want to leave the members with a message. It's never too late to receive a warning, or ever too late to be named.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1136 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to introduce my cousin Betty Perkins, in the members' gallery; my aunt Lillian Currie; and Jim McKane. Jim was my successful campaign manager. He has also recently accepted an appointment by the federal government to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. Welcome to Queen's Park. They're here for my maiden speech, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Maiden speech? We've been remiss.

Further introductions? Last call for introduction of guests.

It is now time for members' statements. The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. This does not constitute your maiden speech.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Mr. Bill Walker: This does not constitute my maiden speech.

It is an honour to rise today in recognition of the many volunteers and dedicated partners of the Ontario Student Nutrition Program.

In my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, these hard-working volunteers have achieved an astonishing 100% participation rate, with the Student Nutrition Program running across all schools. We are, in fact, the only area in the southwest region to have reached the 100% participation rate, with over 12,000 students eating breakfast, lunch or snacks every day at their school.

In addition to the meals and snacks at every school within the Bluewater District School Board and the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board, the program is also available at Cape Croker; at all Keystone programs; the French school in Owen Sound, St-Dominique; as well as the Montessori school in Owen Sound.

It is evident that this success would not have been possible without strong supporters and volunteers and people like Bev Gateman, who is Grey Bruce Eat and Learn school nutrition program coordinator. Bev herself says, "The volunteers would not rest until each school was on board and offering food to children in need."

Mr. Speaker, I'm encouraged by their resolve and passion. It is evident that no child can learn while hungry and that the breakfast program is critical to our children and youth's well-being and is critical to starting their day ready to learn.

Grey Bruce Eat and Learn has enjoyed tremendous support from the local community as well as the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, but we can't stop here. I encourage all members in this House to donate to it so we can serve more schools and students who have long bus rides, who don't eat breakfast at home or who may not get food anywhere else. With the cost of a healthy breakfast being about \$1 per child, your donation could help to ensure that healthy food choices—bagels with cream cheese and jam; egg and cheese sandwiches; fruit; yogourt; chocolate milk; the list is endless—continue to be available on a daily basis to all students in need. Your donation can and does mean a lot.

RIDING OF KENORA-RAINY RIVER

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I would like to take a moment to thank the people of Kenora-Rainy River for the confidence they have shown in me. It is truly an honour and a privilege to serve the hard-working and honest people of northwestern Ontario. Campaigns are huge undertakings, and they don't happen on their own. I would like to take a brief moment to thank each and every person who helped out on my campaign.

A fantastic team of people stepped up to help: the sign crew, canvassers, office staff, the campaign team, election day volunteers and more. What a wonderful thing to have so many people committed to the same end. I'm very pleased to once again represent Kenora-Rainy River in the Ontario Legislature. Each volunteer who contributed their time and effort deserves acknowledgement. Thank you to each of you.

I know that we have much work to do. Throughout the campaign, I met many people who are struggling just to make ends meet, to pay their hydro bills and to have money left over to put food on the table. I met people who were worried about their jobs, retirement security and health care.

I was inspired by the strength and resiliency of my fellow northerners, and I am humbled to be the one who's entrusted to represent our views, concerns and our way of life at Queen's Park. It is a tremendous honour, and I'm looking forward to the challenge that it brings.

ARMENIAN FESTIVAL

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm very pleased to rise in the House today to acknowledge the Armenian National Committee

of Toronto and their excellent work promoting awareness issues affecting Armenian Canadians. The Armenian National Committee of Toronto helps foster better understanding about Armenian culture and history and also provides opportunities for social and political engagement in our community.

This upcoming weekend, the national committee and the Armenian Community Centre will be hosting the 18th annual Armenian SummerFest. SummerFest is a three-day outdoor celebration that features Armenian singers from around the world as well as games, music, dancing and food. Each year the event has grown. It is now considered the largest Armenian festival in Canada and draws crowds from across Canada, the United States and Europe. The festival is being held at the Armenian Youth Centre, located at 55 Hallcrown Place near Victoria Park and Highway 401.

This is an event you do not want to miss, and organizers expect that more than 6,000 people from around Ontario will be attending. Together, we continue to build a strong, culturally diverse Ontario.

I'd like to take this opportunity to invite all of my colleagues in the House and everyone watching at home to join me at this fantastic annual SummerFest. I also want to wish the best success to those who are participating in SummerFest. I look forward to celebrating this annual celebration.

JOB LOSS

Mr. Victor Fedeli: There is great concern about the announced layoffs today at Ontario Northland's Ontera division. This is in addition to recent staffing and service reductions at the North Bay Regional Health Centre and teacher layoffs at the Near North District School Board.

Speaker, today we just learned the government is bulldozing ahead with the sale of Ontera, with nearly 70 jobs being cut in northeastern Ontario, including my hometown of North Bay.

We know from the Auditor General's report on Ontario Northland that the sale of Ontera will cost the taxpayers between \$50 million and \$70 million, so I am outraged that the government is continuing with this fire sale of Ontera, knowing that it will not save them any money, as they had announced earlier.

Last year, the government fired 40 nurses at our hospital, and just prior to the election campaign, it was announced there would be a reduction of 60 beds there. I recently met in my North Bay office with Shawn Shank of CUPE to learn more about these cuts. As it turns out, nearly 300 nurses have been fired across Ontario by this government.

As well, residents were alarmed when it was announced that eight teachers were being laid off at the Near North school board. Just last night, we learned from the board that there will be even further staffing reductions.

This government has made some pretty indignant claims about being opposed to cuts, but cuts are hap-

pening right now under their watch. Speaker, this is what happens when the government doesn't spend within its means. Front-line services we care about are being eroded.

I urge this government to stop picking on northern Ontario and start governing responsibly.

EVENTS IN SUDBURY

Mr. Joe Cimino: I welcome any opportunity I have to showcase my community. Greater Sudbury is a fantastic place to live, work and play. For example, we have many dedicated individuals and organizations who organize festivals for our residents as well as for visitors. We celebrate multiculturalism and diversity.

Some of the festivals that we look forward to in Greater Sudbury are:

The Canada Day festivities held at the Sudbury Community Arena, which are sponsored and organized by the Sudbury Multicultural and Folk Arts Association;

We just completed the Italian festival this past weekend at the Caruso Club, which my family and I thoroughly enjoyed;

The Northern Lights Festival Boréal also took place this past weekend and highlighted multicultural, bilingual and aboriginal components of northern Ontario through music, crafts and storytelling;

The dragon boat races will take place July 12. This year, funds will go towards the Northern Water Sports Centre;

The blueberry festival is a great place to be, from July 13 to 20, with locally picked berries and wonderful treats;

Pride, July 14 to 21;

The Greek festival will be held July 25 to 27, with great food and entertainment, I assure you of that;

The Whitefish Lake First Nation powwow, July 26 and 27;

SummerFest, August 21 to 24, which will have two mainstage concerts and 120 local performers as well as a lot of activities for children;

The garlic festival, August 24, at the Ukrainian Seniors' Centre downtown;

The ribfest, August 29 to 31;

The jazz festival, September 5 to 7; and

Cinéfest, Canada's fourth-largest film festival, will also take place this fall.

I encourage everyone to come out and have fun.

WORLD CUP

Mr. Han Dong: Mr. Speaker, as you know, this past month has seen the world celebrate its beautiful game of soccer. The World Cup is a celebration of diversity, athletic ability and human potential. It's an opportunity for the world's communities to come together in a shared spirit as they compete for this coveted prize.

This diversity and competitiveness is best seen in my riding of Trinity-Spadina, one of Canada's most diverse

ridings, which plays host to immigrants from all over the world, from Little Italy to Little Portugal and in between.

The World Cup has been an important economic stimulator to the various small businesses in the community: establishments like Caffè Brasiliano; Café Diplomatico; Sicilian café; and the Toronto FC fan favourite, the Football Factory at Richmond and Bathurst.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate all the teams, especially Italy, Portugal and Korea, on their performance in the World Cup.

As we await the battle of Germany versus Brazil, where the streets of Trinity–Spadina will be painted in yellow and green for the host country, I look forward to engaging with the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport as he continues our preparations for the Pan Am Games, where we will see some of those talents on display again right here in Toronto.

1510

JOE BEST

Mr. Todd Smith: On May 20, North Hastings lost a very industrious, community-minded individual. We lost Joe Best. The day before, I was up in Bancroft, attending an event with the members from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock and Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, when the news came that Joe was in his final few hours.

We talk a lot about people in this chamber as being fixtures in their community. In small communities across Ontario we often have people like Joe Best, who seem to be at the centre of their community.

As the former reeve of Monteagle township and warden of Hastings county, Joe served his community in elected office, but he was never far from the centre of any community activity because he loved and never stopped working for the people of North Hastings. He was very active in his United Church community as well.

Joe is survived by his wife, Bessie; his daughters, Cathie and Shari; his grandchildren, Sandy, Jamie, Bryce and Todd; and his great-grandchildren, Andrew, Emma and Cooper.

During the election campaign, I had the opportunity to talk to his brother Claude as well, who was very distraught about the idea of losing his brother Joe at such an unfortunate time.

Joe Best was a great man, a great servant of his community, and it was an honour to have known him.

Joe wouldn't have wanted me to leave this out: In 50 years, he never missed a single Tory event in North Hastings. He was as true blue as they come, and you don't get friends like that every day. Thanks, Joe.

FIRE IN BRAMPTON

Ms. Harinder Malhi: It is a great honour to address this House for the first time and a greater honour to serve the people of Brampton–Springdale.

On June 8, 2014, on Ardglen Drive in Brampton, a devastating fire left 100 Bramptonians homeless and

claimed the life of 10-year-old Nicholas Gabriel. As these families struggled to cope with the loss of their homes and loved ones, the Brampton community rallied around these families in their time of need. The response has been overwhelming.

Sarah Lewis, a single mother who felt the need to do something for the victims of this tragedy, decided to organize a fundraiser for the Ardglen families. With the help of the Brampton community, they were able to raise over \$9,500 for the Nicholas Gabriel/Ardglen trust fund. The community did not stop there.

The Punjabi Press Club of Canada and Highest Level Entertainment hosted a local fundraising dinner that I had the privilege to attend. The Brampton We Care event is yet another example of how the Brampton community is making a meaningful difference in the lives of these families.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge Mr. Russell Peters, a native Bramptonian and a constant force for good in the community. Whether he's donating his time to raise funds for the development of Brampton Civic Hospital or donating \$10,000 to cover the cost of Nicholas Gabriel's funeral, Mr. Peters is a kind and generous man who deserves our appreciation and our thanks.

I want to personally thank everyone who has supported the victims of this horrific tragedy. Such expressions of compassion demonstrate our sense of community, and we will continue to support the Ardglen families as they rebuild their lives.

MIRACLE LEAGUE OF OTTAWA

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: It is an absolute honour to rise today representing my riding of Ottawa–Orléans for the first time.

Today, I would like to highlight an organization that shares my passionate commitment to improving our community. The Miracle League of Ottawa is one of 10 national finalists for one of the most generous community development competitions in Canada. The Ottawa-based not-for-profit is now competing for a grand prize total of \$100,000 that will help to build the first-ever baseball diamond and playground in the country for children with disabilities.

The president of the Miracle League of Ottawa, Mr. David Gourlay, estimates that more than 4,000 children with physical disabilities in the region, and their families, will benefit from this remarkable project.

The park will have a rubberized surface that is safe for children who use walkers or wheelchairs.

The Rotary Club of Orléans has been a tireless advocate for this project, and this is why I'm here today to advocate. I am asking every member of this chamber to take the time to spread the word and to ask their friends and their families to go and vote in support of this inspiring project. Please vote between July 21 and July 22 at www.kraftcelebrationtour.ca. With your help, we can bring this miracle to Ottawa–Orléans.

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

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I believe the member from Scarborough Southwest has a point of order.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I would like to introduce a group of individuals who are here today in the gallery just beside me here, with your indulgence, Mr. Speaker.

The 97th annual Lion's Club International Convention began on Friday, July 4, and concludes today on Tuesday, July 8, 2014.

I would like to introduce some guests who are with me today: Penny Emmanouil, dermatologist and past district governor, 117A, Greece; Emilianos Chrysopoulos, multiple district council chairperson, Greece-Cyprus, here with his spouse, Chrysoula; Minas Chatzidakis, district governor, 117A, Greece, with his spouse, Rita, and his son Nick; and finally, Popi Moutafis, second vice-governor, 117A, Greece, with her husband, Dr. Stylianos Moutafis. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We welcome our guests from Greece.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PUBLIC SECTOR
AND MPP ACCOUNTABILITY
AND TRANSPARENCY ACT, 2014
LOI DE 2014 SUR
LA RESPONSABILISATION
ET LA TRANSPARENCE
DU SECTEUR PUBLIC
ET DES DÉPUTÉS

Ms. Matthews moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 8, An Act to promote public sector and MPP accountability and transparency by enacting the Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014 and amending various Acts / Projet de loi 8, Loi visant à promouvoir la responsabilisation et la transparence du secteur public et des députés par l'édiction de la Loi de 2014 sur la rémunération des cadres du secteur parapublic et la modification de diverses lois.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm proud to stand in the House today to reintroduce a package of far-reaching measures that would, if passed, build a more transparent and responsible government that is accountable to all Ontarians. The proposed legislation includes many different measures which would, if passed, strengthen accountability and oversight, including expanding the role of the Ontario Ombudsman to include municipalities, school

boards and universities; establishing a patient ombudsman to oversee hospitals in our health care sector; strengthening government oversight of air ambulance providers; making it an offence to willfully destroy government records; and setting compensation frameworks for broader public sector executives, including hard caps. I do hope that my colleagues in the Legislature will share our commitment to open government and will work with us to pass this historic legislation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I do want to reference that the normal case is to read from the explanatory notes for short statements when we introduce bills. I remind all members of that.

MOTIONS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding House proceedings for Thursday, July 10, 2014.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that notwithstanding standing order 98(a), private members' public business shall not be considered on Thursday, July 10; and

That following routine proceedings, if the debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech from the throne has been concluded, the Speaker shall adjourn the House without motion until Monday, July 14, 2014; and

That notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot items 1 through 6, inclusive, be waived.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that notwithstanding standing order 98(a), private members' public business—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

1520

Do we agree on the motion? Agreed? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

HYDRO RATES

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

"Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain energy sources, including the world's highest subsidies for solar power; and

“Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer’s hydro bill; and

“Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario’s residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

“Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing immediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy;

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

“To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges.”

I fully support it, will affix my name and send it with page Thomas.

ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

Mr. Percy Hatfield: To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, a petition from across the province:

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

“Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

“Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and is only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

“Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

“Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

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

“To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research.”

I agree with this petition. I will affix my name and give it to page Matthew to bring up to the Clerk.

AIR QUALITY

Mr. Steve Clark: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Ontario’s Drive Clean Program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

“Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

“Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions is the result of factors other than Drive Clean, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

“Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

“Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false ‘fails,’ which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

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

“That the Minister of the Environment takes immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature and send it to the table with page Nardien.

CREDIT UNIONS

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I’m pleased to present this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

“Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support our 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

“Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote economic growth without relying on taxpayers’ resources;

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

“Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario’s economy and create jobs in three ways:

“—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

“—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

“—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries.”

I'm pleased to affix my name to the petition and will send it to the Clerks' table through page Victoria.

HYDRO RATES

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further petitions? The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start, congratulations on your appointment. A pleasure to be here, with you in the chair.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain” new “energy sources, including the world’s highest subsidies for solar power; and

“Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer’s hydro bill; and

“Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario’s residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

“Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing immediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy;

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

“To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges.”

I fully support this, will affix my signature and send it with page Nardien.

DENTAL CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from all over Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas thousands of Ontarians 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 program was designed with rigid criteria so that most of the people in need” still “do not qualify; and

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

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

“To do all in its power to stop the dental fund from being diverted to support other programs; and

“To fully utilize the commissioned funding to provide dental care to those in need.”

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

GASOLINE PRICES

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further petitions? The member from Leeds–Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: Thank you very much, Speaker. I too want to congratulate you, not just on your re-election by the people of Chatham–Kent–Essex, but also on your elevation as one of the deputy speakers.

I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the price of gas is reaching historic levels and is expected to increase another 15% in the near future, yet oil prices are dropping; and

“Whereas the” McGuinty-Wynne “government has done nothing to protect consumers from high gas prices; and

“Whereas the high and unstable gas prices across Ontario have caused confusion and unfair hardship to Ontario drivers while also impacting the Ontario economy in key sectors such as tourism and transportation; and

“Whereas the high price of gas has a detrimental impact on all aspects of our already troubled economy and substantially increases the price of delivered commodities, adding further burden to Ontario consumers;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and urge the Premier to take action to protect consumers from the burden of high gas prices in Ontario.”

I'm proud to sign this petition in support and affix my signature and send it to the table with page Nardien.

1530

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from Madame Lorraine LeBlanc, la directrice générale de la communauté Alzheimer de Sudbury.

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

“Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

“Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and is only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

“Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

“Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches”;

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario “to approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research.”

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

HYDRO RATES

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

“Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain energy sources, including the world’s highest subsidies for solar power; and

“Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer’s hydro bill; and

“Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario’s residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

“Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing immediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy;

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

“To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges.”

I fully support it, will affix my signature and send it with page Daniel.

SOINS DENTAIRE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further petitions? The member from Essex.

M. Taras Natyshak: Merci, monsieur le Président. I also want to congratulate you on your nomination and acclamation to the Speaker’s chair.

Je veux introduire une pétition à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario qui dit :

« Alors que des milliers d’adultes ont de la douleur et des infections parce qu’ils ne peuvent pas se payer des soins dentaires;

« Alors que le fonds dentaire de 45 millions de dollars de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté exclut les adultes pauvres;

« Considérant que le programme a été conçu avec des critères rigides de sorte que la plupart des gens dans le besoin ne sont pas admissibles; et

« Alors que l’argent pour les soins dentaires n’a pas été dépensé et a été détourné vers d’autres fins, même si les gens continuent de souffrir sans accès aux soins dentaires;

« Nous, soussignés, demandons à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« De faire tout en son pouvoir pour empêcher que les fonds dentaires soient détournés pour soutenir d’autres programmes ;

« D’utiliser pleinement le financement pour les soins dentaires aux personnes dans le besoin. »

J’appuie cette pétition. Je vais la donner à Matthew.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a petition for the global adjustment charge on hydro bills.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Auditor General of Ontario defines the global adjustment charge on hydro bills as ‘mostly consisting of the difference between the market price and the price paid to generators as set by the board for OPG or under contract with the government or the OPA’; and

“Whereas the Auditor General says the global adjustment has been rising steadily over the last few years and is expected to continue to rise from \$700 million (prior to the 2009 passage of the Green Energy Act) to \$8.1 billion by 2014; and

“Whereas the Liberal government’s 2010 fall economic statement stated that hydro bills are expected to rise 46% by 2015, and that new renewable power generation would account for 56% of that increase; and

“Whereas small to mid-sized businesses across Ontario are seeing the global adjustment portion of their monthly hydro bills increase significantly to the point that it is now larger than the actual energy portion of their bills; and

“Whereas many of those businesses are now delaying investment or hiring, or both, and considering either closing or moving outside of the province of Ontario as a result of delivered-to-market industrial energy rates that are now the highest in North America;

“We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the government of Ontario to reverse course on its expensive energy policy by cancelling the feed-in tariff (FIT) subsidies and treating Ontario’s energy as an economic development tool so that it once again is a competitive advantage for Ontario in retaining and attracting jobs and investment.”

Speaker, I support this petition, affix my signature and send it down with Nardien.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on July 8, 2014, on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mr. Joe Cimino: I'll begin by congratulating the Speaker from Brant for being elected, and the deputy speakers as well. As I see so far, you have definitely earned my respect in terms of the work you do.

I'd like to take a moment and really congratulate everybody who put their name on a ballot, regardless of which party. It takes a lot to put your name on the ballot—a hard campaign. To the new MPPs in the House and to those aged—those who have come back—congratulations. Sorry, Paul.

I am going to take quite a bit of time to talk about my predecessor, Rick Bartolucci. I think that Rick, when you take into account the fact that he gave up about two decades in this House, close to 20 years, and then city council previous to that—he has shown his commitment to Sudbury. He has shown that he was willing and able to sacrifice, especially for those of us who come outside the GTA, family time to serve the public. He should be congratulated and commended for the time he has given to the public sector.

During the election campaign, he was very cordial; always a gentleman. I spoke to him a couple of days ago—three or four days ago—and again, very friendly, and I always appreciated his friendship. In terms of his legacy, I think when we think of Highway 69, him working in a minority government situation to bring forward the importance of twinning or four-laning Highway 69, doing it—and I remember very well his postcard petitions. I'm sure he's still watching to make sure Highway 69 gets done, and I'll speak to that later on.

I'd like to also thank our leader, the New Democrat leader from Hamilton Centre. She campaigned vigorously during the campaign, whether it was zigzagging the province via automobile, via bus or airplane, selling our platform, speaking to a lot of people. During the campaign, she came to Sudbury two times, and we did a town hall phone meeting as well. Her time in Sudbury is very much appreciated. The fact that we received or earned over a million votes, I think, is testament to the fact—and that's the highest amount since 1990—that people want us here, the New Democrats, to keep the government to account.

I knocked on many doors—probably 6,000 or 7,000 doors—and the themes that I heard very clearly were affordability, accountability, jobs, senior support, and the need for infrastructure money to deal with the pothole situation we have in Sudbury. People are talking about

affordability, especially when you talk about hydro rates and price of gas for automobiles, which in Sudbury for some reason is 10, 12 or 14 cents, sometimes even higher, compared to municipalities not too far down the road, as well as keeping the home heating gas, natural gas, the lowest rates possible. Insurance rates also came up at the door as being too high in Ontario.

1540

The issue with affordability is that people want more money left in their pockets at the end of each month. People want to be able to save for the education of their children. Seniors want to stay home as long as possible. People want to have money left over to do other things like, as we heard in Sudbury, taking their children on a trip, for example.

Accountability: People are quite clear in their belief that we can't talk about cutting services and yet have money wasted by government. The tax dollar and the taxpayer in Ontario need to be respected.

When we talk about jobs in Sudbury, we went through a phase of many of our youth leaving Sudbury for other municipalities, other cities, and even out of the country for jobs. We want our youth and our young adults to stay in Sudbury and to find work. That's why the Ring of Fire is so extremely important, not only for all of northern Ontario, but obviously for Sudbury in the smelting that would happen north of Capreol.

Interjection.

Mr. Joe Cimino: Found in Nickel Belt.

Seniors very clearly were saying that they want to stay in their homes as long as possible. If they're healthy, they should stay at home. They can with support and, again, with lower hydro rates, for example.

I will talk about road conditions in Sudbury and potholes later on in my address.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my supporters in Sudbury. The people of Sudbury have been very generous. I received over 14,000 votes and won about 70% of the polls. I can tell you that I represented ward 1 at city council. The people of ward 1 were very friendly; I received votes from that area that the NDP have never received.

I thank my relatives, the Italian community, the multicultural community, anglophones, francophones, everyone who came out and supported me. It's very much appreciated.

My campaign team, Patrick, Brad, Frank, Ryan, Tina, Scott, Dominic, Jean-Marc, Darren, Nathan, Kathy, Valerie, Chad, Julie, Kristina, Eddie and Jane—these people were on my campaign team, and I can tell you without a doubt, 16-, 18- and 20-hour days towards the last few days. I thank my campaign team immensely.

The volunteers who put up close to 3,000 signs—it took a while to take them down: Thank you to them. Thank you to the volunteers who came door to door with me whether it was rain or hot weather; I appreciate that.

We had new, young NDPers come out. We had youth. It was great to see 14-, 15- and 16-year-olds come out, brothers and sisters from various unions, the building

trades, Sudbury firefighters, as well as fellow educators—teachers, educational assistants and other child care workers. I appreciate that very much.

I should take some time and thank my family. My wife, Luisa, really is there every time I need her. She is the shoulder that I lean on. She's there every night—I can call her now from Toronto—giving me encouragement. She was there to bring food to the volunteers. She was there to take care of our two girls when I wasn't able to go home basically for five weeks. So thank you to my wife, Luisa.

My daughters, Vanessa and Vania, are 10 and four. They lost their daddy for four or five weeks. They understand, I think, what I was going for, and I do appreciate their encouragement, their dedication and their smiles when I came home.

My brother John, sister-in-law Sabrina, my sister Rosa and her partner, Robert: Thank you very much for your encouragement and kind words.

My parents, Letizia and Antonio Cimino, who emigrated from Italy as well in the early 1960s, taught me the importance of hard work, dedication and integrity.

My in-laws, Lucrezia and Antonio Mastroianni: Thank you very much for lending me your truck when I needed it and bringing food to the volunteers and spending time in the community to get me the support I needed.

To my brother-in-law Adriano and sister-in-law Jenna: Thank you very much for all you've done for me.

A little bit about my riding of Sudbury, which obviously borders Nickel Belt—the member for Nickel Belt and I work closely together, so a lot of these comments are between both our ridings. We are a city of lakes, 330 lakes, actually, in our borders, and fantastic people. Maclean's, a few years ago, declared that Sudbury had some of the friendliest people in Canada because of the volunteer hours that they put forward.

We are a community of communities; the city of Sudbury was amalgamated in 1999-2000. Fourteen years later, we are a better city for it, I believe, or a greater Sudbury, and yet we've preserved the differences within each community. I think that is a wonderful aspect of greater Sudbury—a strong francophone community which we're very proud of, anglophones, a multicultural community and a community of First Nations, which is growing. The multiculturalism can be seen through the festivals I listed earlier today, traditional gatherings and different events throughout the riding.

Sudbury is known for being a mining community. We have a rich history in mining, and we will have a long future in mining. One of the other industries that came out of mining is the mining supply and services industry, which provides employment for thousands of people. The mining supply and services sector sells supplies, services, talents and technologies around the world. We are very fortunate to have them in our community.

We are a health referral centre of northeastern Ontario, with a lot of research happening in health, science, ecology and mining.

We are a retail hub of the north, with commercial outlets seemingly opening every year.

We can boast of three post-secondary educational institutions. We have Laurentian University, Cambrian College and Collège Boréal. Laurentian University, which I am an alumnus of, is bilingual. I can tell you that since I graduated in 1991, we can now boast of a faculty of education, a northern medical school and, last year, a northern school of architecture, which is changing the landscape of downtown Sudbury.

Cambrian College, which my wife graduated from, has wonderful programs. I can tell you her education is serving her well. It's also a bilingual institution.

Collège Boréal, which is one of two French colleges in Ontario—the only one in northern Ontario—has fantastic programs like trades for women.

If you're into summer and winter activities, Sudbury—Greater Sudbury, the Sudbury riding and Nickel Belt—is the place to be. In the summer, enjoy our lakes, the fishing, motorized and non-motorized trails and a lot of campgrounds. There's just so much to do. In the winter, a fantastic amount—a plethora—of winter activities: skating on Ramsey Lake, which is in the centre of our city; skating in the skating oval at Queen's Athletic Field; snowshoeing; snowmobiling; cross-country skiing; downhill skiing—there's just so much to do. I welcome everyone to join us in Sudbury.

Sudbury has 160,000 people, approximately, and here's the challenge that we face as a community and as a city council: We have approximately 60,000 ratepayers and about 40,000 waste water ratepayers. That number is lower because some draw water from private wells, some draw water from lakes and some have private septic systems.

That might sound like a nice, cozy city, and it is. However, here's the challenge that city council faces in Sudbury: the fact that our area is huge—3,200 square kilometres. Just to put that in context, 15 southern Ontario cities fit within our border. Toronto, Mississauga, Newmarket, Orangeville, Richmond Hill, Ajax, Oakville, Oshawa, Aurora, Burlington, Vaughan, Pickering, Grimsby and Whitchurch all fit within our border. We have a small amount of ratepayers, relatively speaking, to other communities, paying for a large geographic area.

What does that mean? Approximately 3,600 lane kilometres of roads; 873 kilometres of water main; 793 kilometres of sewage pipe; 14 arenas; 13 libraries; 68 sanitary lift stations; 25 fire stations; 620 municipal buildings; 21 deep wells; two water treatment plants; 10 waste water treatment plants; 11 ambulance stations; seven community service centres, because some people live quite a distance from the downtown; and approximately 406—I'm sure that number's small now; I'm sure it's grown—fields, playgrounds and other parks.

So again, that's the challenge that we face in Sudbury as a community: a small amount of ratepayers paying for this entire geography. When it comes to, for example, Maley Drive—which I'm glad the Liberal government has said numerous times during radio ads during the election that it would support—the Maley Drive extension is a road that city councils have been looking

to build for over 20 years. It's a road that's parallel to Lasalle Boulevard, which would take the slurry trucks off of a commercial route which is used by residents. These slurry trucks are beating up our roads. It would take them to another route, which would make life safer and have less effect on our current roads.

1550

Some 3,600 lane kilometres of roads means we need a lot of money to maintain them. There are a lot of pot-holes in Sudbury and, again, a small amount of taxpayers to pay to support the road system that exists. The taxpayers are tapped-out in Sudbury. That's why, when I hear that monies will be spread across northern Ontario, hopefully Sudbury and Nickel Belt will not be forgotten. The city council has put forth an unprecedented \$35 million towards road repairs; it should be \$70 million. There's a shortfall we have—and we're not even going to talk about the infrastructure, the sewer and water underneath the road.

I look forward to my critic portfolio in transportation. As a city councillor, I think I have some background and insight in the area. We do need new, better and safer highways. We do need to keep reviewing winter maintenance and making sure that our roads are as safe as possible in the winter. In Sudbury, we undertook that review with front-line workers, union members, management and councillors. Again, it's always under review to ensure the safety of our residents. Public transportation and active transportation are vital.

Highway 69: I'll speak about that for a while. I think Highway 69 was also in the media during the election campaign. I can tell you, it needs to be completed for the safety of our residents. Too many lives have been lost, with too many injuries on that highway. The four-laning has to be done. I can tell you, I will be pushing that issue with my colleague from Nickel Belt, I'm sure. It has been "on the radar" of the government and it needs to be completed sooner rather than later.

And of course, bridges need repair, not just in municipalities but across the province.

In terms of the throne speech, Liberals make big promises, but we need to remember some facts and some information. Unemployment rates in Ontario are still higher than the national rate, since 2006. Over 300,000 manufacturing jobs have still not come back. Hydro rates have increased 300% since the Liberals have taken government and are expected to increase another 42% in the next five years.

Again, hydro rates are a big burden. They're a burden on our citizens, they're a burden on our families, and they're a burden on seniors who want to remain home as long as possible. They're a burden on businesses that would rather spend their money on expansion. In Sudbury, they're even a burden on facilities like curling clubs, for example, that can't meet their annual expenses because of the high rate of hydro.

Child care: Sudbury is one of the 18 communities that has seen cuts in affordable daycare funding from the province. As a result, Junior Citizens Day Care, a muni-

cipally owned daycare in Sudbury, is now being looked at in terms of having to close. This is a facility that has workers who have worked there for a long time and created rapport with families, and do a fantastic job in assessing and identifying the needs of students prior to them entering the school system. That is a shame. It is a model that should be mimicked and not one that should be cut.

We also need to support our horse racing industry. Again, I met with horsewomen and horsemen at the stables and observed one lady crying because her family has been in the business for many generations. We have farmers who are affected. We have stable owners and trainers who are affected. The horse racing industry, Sudbury Downs, has to be up and running. We need that industry. We talk about creating industry; well, here's one that we want to remain and not disappear.

ER wait times: Again, it's very important to get those ER wait times down. The New Democrats have put forth a good plan in terms of hiring nurse practitioners and 24-hour family health teams. The member from London—Fanshawe and I heard, when she visited me in Sudbury and met with stakeholders, that it's easy to call 911 and get brought to the ER and get treated and then discharged. The problem is that there's no home care at home. What's happening is that people are calling 911 again to go back to the ER. Home care is essential.

Again, we heard over and over in the last week or so the plans for the LCBO, Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One. I'm really not sure what the plans are, but if it's divesting, we have some concerns that we need to be watching that portfolio very closely.

Priorities: We need to keep our seniors at home. Once they need support, we need some long-term-care beds and some quality spaces for them.

We need to keep our youth from moving away.

We need infrastructure money to improve our roads, and like the member from Windsor—Tecumseh and I heard when he visited Sudbury and we visited some bridges, we need some infrastructure money across the province.

We need more family doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses and personal care workers. We need to reverse the reduction of monies to affordable daycare. We want people to work, but I heard that if they are paying \$1,000 a month for daycare, it makes it very difficult for parents, single dads or single moms to go to work. We need those home care demands met. We need cities to be consulted. And in Sudbury, we need a PET scanner. We need a positron emission tomography machine.

I knew Sam Bruno personally. I can tell you, I met with him and I passed a motion at council which we wrote together. He is no longer with us. He lost his battle with the disease. But I can tell you that his family still, five years later—last year was the fourth year that they had a gala, fundraising hundreds of thousands of dollars to purchase a PET scanner for Sudbury, the only region in the province that does not have one, and I think that's a shame. I think we owe it to Sam Bruno to have that

come to Sudbury. I know the member for Nickel Belt has put forth several petitions, many petitions, in terms of a PET scanner, and we need that in Sudbury.

As an educator for almost 20 years, I'll finish my points by saying that how we serve our children best is by providing as much one-on-one support as possible. That means EAs in the regular classroom. That means other child care workers. In special education, which I have worked at in the last seven or eight years, we need more money for assessments and more money for programs for our special education and special-needs children.

I'll end with that. These are the priorities I think should be on the agenda of the government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments, please.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I would like to congratulate you on your appointment in the House, the Legislature. I know how difficult it is to be elected, so congratulations to you. I also would like to congratulate you on your appointment as transportation critic. We look forward to working with you.

I thank you also for your kind words about our former member for Sudbury, who was a champion in his own community. So thank you very much and congratulations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments? The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: Oh, I'll defer. Sorry, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Yes, the member from North Bay.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you, Speaker.

I, too, want to congratulate the member from Sudbury on your election to this fine Legislature, and for your kind words about the former member as well. I'm really looking forward to working with you, as well as the member from Nickel Belt and all of the other members from northeastern Ontario, northern Ontario, and all of Ontario, for that matter. But I really am looking forward to the opportunity to get together and chat about issues of mutual concern. I think we're going to have four years where we need to continue to chat together about Highway 69, Highway 17—highways of mutual concern and mutual issue to us.

So I really do want to take this opportunity to welcome you. You gave a wonderful speech, your first speech. I think it was right from the heart, which is what I expect we're going to see more and more from you. You certainly seem to be a person who speaks right from the heart.

I did enjoy my years as mayor of the city of North Bay and coming to Sudbury and chatting with your council and your mayor as well, and getting to know your wonderful councillors. We always have such a great rivalry between Sudbury and North Bay, particularly a hockey rivalry.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: And Timmins.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Well—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, we have a rivalry.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Well, a hockey rivalry, an OHL hockey rivalry: the Sudbury Wolves, and of course we now have the North Bay Battalion back. So I will continue to look forward to walking over there with my hand extended on small bets over the Sudbury Wolves and the North Bay Battalion. I hope that you'll take my hand and maybe share a small bet, a soda or something along that line, and maybe we can sit and chat a little bit more in our traditional northern Ontario ways.

I think you're going to be a wonderful member, and I congratulate you on your election.

1600

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I'll correct my record and my apologies to the member: the member from Nipissing, not North Bay.

Further comments and questions, please.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was a real pleasure for me to listen to what the member for Sudbury had to share with you. I have known the member for Sudbury for a long time. He and I share a community, and I have worked with him on many occasions.

I think what you saw today was the true Joe. This is who he is; this is what he brings forward. He is an extremely good listener. He can connect with people easily. When he sets his sights on something, he puts the time, effort and energy to succeed. He does it in a way that is always very personable—and more power to him. I hope you got a glimpse of who the new member for Sudbury is today through his first speech.

I know that it is always nerve-racking to speak in this House, especially when you first get elected, but you could see by the way he was able to speak from the heart that he meant what he said, whether it is saying thank you to the former member from Sudbury, who was not from the same party but did great things, and he's quite capable of acknowledging this and saying thank you, as well as laying out, in his first speech, the list of priorities that he intends to work on. I have no doubt, if we look back, you will see that he will act on each and every one of those.

A note of caution, though: If you see him and say hello and he doesn't say anything back to you, it's because it's his twin brother. They look identical.

Interjection: Rob Ford?

M^{me} France Gélinas: No; he has a real twin brother named John. They look identical. One will recognize you and talk to you. The other will say, "I'm not Joe." But they look identical, and he does come down to Toronto every now and again.

Congratulations to you, my friend. I look forward to working with you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: What a pleasure it was to hear the new member from Sudbury with his maiden speech. I commend you enormously for some of the issues that you've brought forward. We met briefly during the

orientation seminar. After all of these years dealing with the public, I have to say that I think I have a pretty good sense of what people are like. I was impressed with you. Just hearing your words today about some of the people in your community, I can see that you will be a very strong representative of your community.

It is the stories of the single moms out there that need to be brought forward in this room. It's the stories about the equipment that is needed in your hospitals in your community that we need to be very adequately bringing forward in this Legislature, so I commend you on that. You've done a marvellous job.

I do look forward to working with you. I know that you have more than adequately understood the implications of this on your young family, so I commend you for that as well. I know what it's like to leave family at home, although mine is a little bit older than yours. It does mean something, and it's a sacrifice that we all need to be aware of. I think that it's critical that we remember who brought us here and the work that's happening in our community to support our being here. You're obviously somebody who's very in tune to people and who gets that picture quite adequately.

Thank you so much for that. I look forward to working with you in the future, and please feel free to say hello at any time.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Unless it's his brother.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Unless it's your brother, of course.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Now back to the member from Sudbury for his response.

Mr. Joe Cimino: Thank you to the members from Ottawa–Orléans, Nipissing, Kingston and the Islands and, of course, the member from Nickel Belt. I can tell you, listening to you makes me even more nervous, because I think that's the biggest transition, from city council to the provincial Legislature. The biggest transition from waking up in the morning, going and teaching during the day, and going to city council in the evening is that I get to go home at night. Here, I'm in Toronto for four days a week. As scary as that might be, I think when you take into account the fact that there are a lot of people who are encouraging you and urging you on and saying wonderful things about you, like I've just heard now—and thank you very much—it does kind of set you back a little bit.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Joe, it's only one day.

Mr. Joe Cimino: Yes, it's only the one day. I'm told that these kind words will stop, so thank you.

Hopefully this will be a good four years and a productive four years for the province, for our ridings, and obviously, for Greater Sudbury—the Sudbury riding in Nickel Belt.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the member from Nickel Belt. I can tell you that over the last eight years on council, the number of events that we attended together was too many to count. Always a supporter, always a friend, you helped me during the campaign. We knocked on several doors together, and I think it was

very useful to have, and continue to have, the member from Nickel Belt on my side.

We're all here together to serve the public. I think we all have the best interests of our ridings at heart, and together with my caucus I think we are going to do what the people of Ontario ask us to do, and that is to work to make Ontario better. We will speak from this side on issues that are important and on items that maybe we do not agree with—it might be loud at times.

With that, I can tell you: Thank you to the caucus for welcoming me. It's been a great week and a half. I won't even guess how many moments are left. Thank you to everyone.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I am honoured to rise as the member for Cambridge for the first time in this unique, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to address this chamber.

Speaker, I offer congratulations to you on your election as Speaker. You have shown yourself already to be fair, disciplined and effective. Thank you for allowing your name to stand for this election. It takes courage and conviction to put your name on a ballot.

I also offer hearty congratulations to the other members on your elections to this 41st Legislative Assembly.

I want to take a moment to offer a sincere thank you to former MPP Rob Leone for his vigorous voice in this place and for his service and sacrifices in representing the city of Cambridge and the riding of Cambridge since 2011. All of us here understand what it is like to put our lives on hold for public office. He is the father of three young sons, and he indicated recently that on this past Father's Day he was very happy to spend an uninterrupted Father's Day with his family.

Acknowledging the people who have helped me in my election campaign is almost daunting as there are not enough ways to say thank you. Allow me to recognize the incredible efforts and the belief by the members of the Cambridge riding association that it really was possible to elect the first Liberal in Cambridge in 71 years. The mood at our victory party on June 12 was absolutely electric. To the many volunteers, supporters, donors and young people who have been with me on this eventful journey to Queen's Park, I say a heartfelt, sincere and grateful thank you.

Kayla told me recently that June 12 was her 18th birthday and she voted for me for her first vote—I was pretty honoured. The polling clerks apparently sang her Happy Birthday. It was very memorable for her, and I thank Kayla.

It is my supporters' hope and unwavering friendship and effort that continue to inspire me each and every day to become the best representative of the Cambridge riding that I can be. My supporters will ensure that I will serve all of our communities, recognizing that those who hold differing viewpoints are our friends and neighbours. Indeed, having open debate in this legislative chamber is a privilege that I hold dear and a responsibility that I readily assume to serve all of the citizens of this great and diverse province.

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Thank you to all of my family, and in particular to my husband, Fred McGarry, whose undying support gives me the strength and ability to serve our constituents each and every day; and to my children, whose patience, selflessness and fierce loyalty make me continuously proud. You inspire me, support me and you willingly share my time and energy with all the others in our community. The greatest gift I have ever been given in this life has been the gift of knowing each and every one of you. Rory, Geordie and Jenny have already launched their adult lives; and also to our sons at home, Alex, Liam and Declan, thank you.

About 10 days ago a TV series called *Murdoch Mysteries*, set around the turn of the 20th century, was filming here on the steps of Queen's Park. I was quite taken aback by the signs held aloft by the period-costumed actors in the scene, which read "Votes for Women." It made me realize what a long way we have come as a society since that time about 100 years ago. My mother-in-law passed away last year, three months shy of her 100th birthday. When she was born, women in Canada did not have the right to vote; before she passed away, Ontario had its first female Premier in history—all within her one lifetime. What a difference a few strong women leaders made at that time in striving to achieve equality for all women. How inspiring. I am proud and humbled to be the first elected female MPP in the riding of Cambridge; and I am honoured to serve under the first elected female Premier of Ontario. Premier Wynne's leadership inspires me and women of all ages.

Interestingly, in 2011 the set location scouts of this series, *Murdoch Mysteries*, chose Cambridge as a frequent filming location. These scouts were no doubt as captivated as I was, when I moved to Cambridge in 1988 by the natural beauty of Cambridge and in particular the Speed and Grand rivers, which flow through the city's core. The confluence of the Speed and Grand rivers is near the village of Blair, the oldest inland settlement in Ontario, founded in 1800 by the Pennsylvania Dutch settlers. These lands were once the summer home of the First Nations aboriginal peoples, the Neutrals.

The Grand River was designated as a national heritage river in 1994 and it's one of the very few heritage rivers in this system that runs through an urban area. Bald eagles and rare species now inhabit the shores of these rivers, delighting passersby.

Cambridge also boasts a rich architectural heritage, with many early stone and brick buildings along the riverbanks, downtown cores and tree-lined residential streets. The large number of heritage buildings has also been an important element in Cambridge's economic history. The beauty of the heritage buildings draws many to its downtown cores, boosting tourism and the local economy of shop and restaurant owners. The city gains revenues from the filming of many movies, due to the historic settings.

Now, little did I know, when I joined a heritage organization 20 years ago to advocate for and lobby Cam-

bridge city council frequently to preserve our heritage buildings, that I was embarking upon my political career. Someone asked me to consider running after one such city council meeting, and here I am today.

The city of Cambridge was amalgamated in 1973 and is comprised of the original towns of Hespeler, Preston and Galt. These towns were founded along the rivers to take advantage of the water power to run the many grain and textile mills that were the driving force of the early economic engine.

Cambridge and North Dumfries make up the riding of Cambridge. Speaker, we are part of the two-tiered municipal government of the region of Waterloo. Today, Cambridge is one of the fastest-growing areas in the country. Ideally located astride Highway 401, it is part of Canada's technology triangle. Advanced manufacturing, auto manufacturing and space manufacturing companies such as ATS, Toyota and COM DEV employ our highly skilled workforce in Cambridge. IT companies within the region also make up part of our workforce. This government invested in expanding Conestoga College into Cambridge. This and the University of Waterloo's School of Architecture within our borders ensure that our young people have great opportunities to choose a quality post-secondary education close to home.

Cambridge is also home to a growing multicultural mix of families, a very vibrant arts and culture scene and an incredible system of walking and cycling trails, many along our rivers. The Liberal government partnered with our federal and municipal government to build the recently opened Dunfield Theatre, part of the Drayton theatre group, and it has surpassed its expected ticket sales in its very first year. Over 60% of our guests are from out of town, and the local businesses are really enjoying the increase in customers and their revenues.

Speaker, North Dumfries township is home to about 10,000 residents. It's distinctly rural, and it also includes the largest town of Ayr and smaller towns of Roseville, Branchton and Clyde. Agriculture and gravel extraction contributes to the local economy. Several areas are designated as environmentally sensitive policy areas. Remnants of the threatened Carolinian forest remain in North Dumfries, and several rare species of reptiles, birds and plants are found here. I live in one such area. I reside in the rural countryside of North Dumfries and really delight in and enjoy seeing the rare sandhill cranes and osprey, and I love being serenaded by the spring peeper frogs in the pond every spring.

With a strong foundation of support services, a diverse economic base, the beautiful riding of Cambridge is an ideal place to live, work, play and raise a family.

Speaker, in the throne speech we heard about this government's commitment to health care, education and improving transportation for Ontario, among other things. The Liberals' shared values that government should be a force for good in people's lives—and continued investment in our core public services—motivated me to seek public office, and I believe it's these values that really set apart this government.

Helping patients and their families while working as a registered nurse under all three political parties in the last 30 years stirred the need in me to become politically active at a time when hospitals and health care services were being cut. It made sense to me to spend less to provide home services to keep people in their own homes rather than in costly long-term hospital admissions.

Speaker, in the early 1990s, our oldest son had a chronic lung illness that became life-threatening. At age 10, he was admitted to hospital for most of the next four years. He narrowly avoided a double lung transplant at a time when only 11 had been performed in Canada. In the 1990s, home care was not a priority for the Ministry of Health or well-resourced. Our son was not eligible at that time for home services. Since 2003, this government has invested significantly in community care, increasing services, home supports and care for increasingly complex health conditions at home. Today, if our son was assessed for home services, given the same medical condition, he could receive enough home care that he could have avoided spending much of those four years in hospital. The impact on our family would have been a much more normal life between the acute phases of his lung disease. Fortunately, our son's health improved so that he is leading a more healthy life. Rory could have lived his life with a "poor me" attitude but chose to strive for excellence in his education and again in his work, and he is now an industrial designer in Ireland. He is my hero and my inspiration.

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Speaker, the benefit to our health care system would have been the saving of hundreds of thousands on the hospital bills incurred from his prolonged hospital stays. The realization of the importance of smart strategic investments in health care heightened my political awareness. To ensure continued improvement and expansion of health care and home care, I ultimately decided to run as a candidate for the Liberal Party.

The throne speech has served only to strengthen my commitment to public service and the Liberal Party, as this government is committed to transforming health care, placing the patient at the centre and making strategic investments in community care to keep people where they want to be: in their home rather than in a hospital. Until elected, I was a care coordinator for the community care access centre, and I strived to provide the right care in the right place at the right time and was able to help more of my clients to achieve this goal because of these direct investments.

The throne speech, Mr. Speaker, describes a plan that builds on our world-renowned education system by planning to continue improving learning so that our children have the best possible start in life and our young people are prepared to lead in the global economy. The youth jobs strategy helps connect young people to promising careers and a robust apprenticeship program. Many college-age students really depend on the 30%-off tuition grant that helps many pay for post-secondary education.

I share this government's vision for my own children. We have a fairly unique situation in our own family, as there's a wide gap in our children's ages. I often laugh when I say we've had children in school for decades and under all three provincial governments. From this comparative perspective, I recognize the importance of the Liberals' continued investment in our education system, which cemented my resolve to run for this office.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased about this government's planned investments in order to move Ontario forward. This is an important cornerstone in Ontario's plan for economic growth. Its plan to invest \$29 billion in transportation and transit projects over the next decade will support economic growth across the province. Transportation has been a front-of-mind issue for Cambridge and Waterloo region for some time. GO trains, light rail transit, improvements to the 401 and widening of Highway 7 are all important issues that many constituents and municipal politicians are eager to discuss in order to have Cambridge included in future plans. I am fully committed to making this a priority for Cambridge, and indeed I've already had two meetings with the mayor of Cambridge and various city councillors to discuss these plans.

Speaker, the Liberal government has improved infrastructure in Cambridge with new schools, school expansions, roads, bridges, the theatre and Conestoga College. But the main priority for the citizens of Cambridge and North Dumfries has been getting an expanded and redeveloped hospital. Our facility is one of the oldest in Ontario, and it has been an ongoing issue for very many years, with several false starts. I'm extremely proud to say the reality of this dream is only a few weeks away from the actual groundbreaking. The detailed design has been done over the last few years. The consortia that will build it has been chosen and should be announced shortly. We heard during the annual community meeting that the plans to start are actually as close as this September. That is an awesome occasion for the citizens of Cambridge. This Liberal government has delivered on its commitment to expand Cambridge Memorial Hospital to the people of Cambridge, and we could not be more pleased. I wish to thank the previous Minister of Health, Deb Matthews, for all her support to get this to a reality.

Helping people is at the heart of what motivated me to become a nurse. Being a nurse taught me how to earn people's trust, care for our most vulnerable citizens and advocate for the things that make a difference in people's lives. Over many years, I have been committed to helping in my community in many different sectors: planning; arts and culture; transportation; health care; social services; the environment; tourism; and community safety. Noting the lack of palliative care resources for families facing life-threatening illness, I became a founding member of the Hospice of Waterloo Region. I endeavour to be an effective communicator, and I am known as an engaged community builder. I will use all of these skills to be the MPP for Cambridge.

Speaker, the voters of Cambridge have shown their trust in me by electing me to Queen's Park to continue

my lifelong work of public service. The trust of my constituents must be earned, and I commit to establishing that trust with respectful, thoughtful service to the constituents of Cambridge; and, knowing that trust is hard-earned, I accept this responsibility.

I asked a political leader once what motivated him to continue on in the face of strong opposition. He said, “You know what it’s like to help one family. Imagine what it’s like to help all the families in Ontario.” This resonated with me. I will endeavour to do my very best for the people of Cambridge and the province. It is indeed an honour to serve Ontarians with all my esteemed colleagues in this 41st Parliament.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I’d like to thank the member from Cambridge.

Questions and comments?

Mr. Bill Walker: To the member from Cambridge, thank you for your classy act of acknowledging the service of your predecessor and our colleague, Rob Leone.

You referenced a lot in your speech. Family—I just want to offer to you: Please always make them the first priority. At the end of the day, we do serve, but our family has to be our priority at all times.

On behalf of our PC caucus and my colleagues, I’d like to wish you the best of success in your tenure here. We look forward to working with you. Thank you so much, and welcome.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I want to give a big welcome to the member from Cambridge. This is my first opportunity to welcome a new member in the chamber, and if you would allow me to explain, I’m vicariously reliving, through your joy and bewilderment of this place, the sentiments I once felt when I was first elected in 2011. I feel your exuberance; I feel your energy. I’m very happy to see that you’re here. You bring a lot to the table. A public health nurse: one of the most revered, respected careers that we have in our society. I look forward to hearing your information and sharing your ideas on how we can make our public health system even better.

Of course, everyone in this chamber in the province has had to deal with our system on an intimate level. We bring a lot to the table around the need to make it better. But of course, the fundamental principle of universality and access to public health is something that I think is universally protected and respected here, and I’m glad to hear that that is a sentiment that’s come through in your maiden speech here today.

On behalf of New Democrats, we’d like to welcome you, and we look forward to working with you on an ongoing basis through this chamber. Congratulations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Hon. Jeff Leal: Over the last two days, I’ve been very impressed by both the tenor and content of the maiden speeches that have been delivered on all sides of the House. I think it shows a great example of civility and the ability to reach out.

I’m reminded that in politics, you always stand on the shoulders of others. The new member from Cambridge stands on the shoulders of Mike Farnan, Gerry Martiniuk and Dr. Rob Leone as she takes her seat here and builds on the legacy of her three predecessors, which is so important.

1630

We got a great history lesson today: the amalgamation of 1973 of Preston, Galt and Hespeler to form the dynamic community of Cambridge. The member highlighted the great base of economic activity that indeed enshrines and encapsulates the modern-day Cambridge that came about some 41 years ago.

But what I thought was very interesting, Mr. Speaker, is the insight that the new member provided, both in her professional career as a registered nurse to look at what has happened in Ontario during three different governments of different political stripe, and looking at the education of her children through three different governments in the province of Ontario, and coming to a conclusion that she accepted the Liberal philosophy in order to move the residents of Cambridge forward June 12 and for many decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, I’ve got to tell you one thing. The first Liberal member from Cambridge in 71 years—there must have been great pent-up demand for a party June 12 in Cambridge after 71 years. Now, I would have enjoyed tremendously to have had the opportunity to join that joyous celebration after 71 years. This is an excellent member who will make a great contribution on behalf of her riding here at Queen’s Park.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I, too, want to welcome the member from Cambridge to this chamber. It’s a humbling experience. I’ve only been here since 2011 and it has taken some time to try to get used to the way the House works and how you work with other colleagues in your work and in this chamber.

For a little while my son lived in Galt—I’ll call it Galt—part of Cambridge. I remember he was married shortly after he moved there and we had a reception at the Newfoundland Club there. The people in that club were truly a great bunch of people and they made us feel welcome, and we certainly had a great time during the festivities that we had there.

I come from a rural riding. My biggest city is Stratford, which is about 30,000 people, but most of my riding is rural. I’m sure that you will enjoy the rural part of your riding. Most people in rural Ontario, as all Ontarians, are very welcoming and I’m sure they’re going to make you feel welcome during your time here in the Legislature.

I think, as all members must remember, it’s the people who voted us here that we work for. We work for all of those people, even the ones who didn’t vote for us. I’m sure that you’ll understand that and try to make your presence known in your riding. Again, I want to congratulate you on your election to this House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member for Cambridge for her response.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you to the members for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Essex, Peterborough and Perth–Wellington. Interestingly, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is a beautiful riding itself, of course, with the lakes going on there. We have friends that live on Lake Huron, and it's certainly a lovely part of the world.

It's interesting that everyone does mention their families because indeed they're the most important thing in our lives. All of us members, no matter which side of the House that we sit on, really seek to endeavour to make sure that their family is at the heart of the reason why they run. Although we do differ politically, it is incumbent upon us, as members, to work together in the best interests not only of our own families, but also our constituents.

Certainly the constituents of Cambridge have asked me to represent them in this legislative chamber, much like the constituents of your ridings have sent you to the House to look after their particular interests. They really do expect us to work together in order to protect their health care and education services, to be fiscally responsible and to work together to address their identified priorities, many of which we've been hearing about in the last two or three days.

I certainly thank the members for recognizing that sometimes nurses do bring unique perspectives to their work in life and that some of the skills that we use in our day-to-day work, actually, we can use and transfer to other areas, in particular our skills in communication. So I thank you for all those comments.

The Newfoundland Club is certainly one of the areas where we do have a lot of celebrations in Cambridge, so thank you for those comments. They'll enjoy that.

As the member from a rural and urban area, I will endeavour to bring together some of the transportation issues and also some of the rural and agricultural issues that we do hear about.

So I thank you, everybody, for your kind attention and your kind words on this, my first time to rise in the House. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's normal tradition for someone to deliver their maiden speech in their first term, but due to all the challenges and issues that we had, I never got to that. I got right to work and just never got there. But I want to pay homage to those people that I believe are very important in my life and the reason I'm standing here today.

I'm extremely delighted that my aunt Lillian Currie is here—she's the last remaining sibling of my late father's family, so it's a real delight to have her here—my cousin Betty Perkins, my good friend Jim McCain, and one of my great team members, Ana Sajfert. It's a pleasure to have them.

Wow! I still pinch myself every day that I'm the member of provincial Parliament for the wonderful riding

of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. It is a pleasure and a privilege to serve my constituents and, by extension, the people of the great province of Ontario.

I am humbled that I join those who have served as MPPs before me, those who have worked or volunteered in any capacity at this revered institution, and of course my colleagues that I serve with from all parties and the staff, past and present, of this great Legislature. It is my commitment to honour your service by working my hardest and making the best decisions I can, both on behalf of my constituents of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, who are my first priority, and also in the broader context of what is best for the citizens, the taxpayers, the people of Ontario.

Many people ask, "Why did you become a politician?" It is not an easy or a short answer. For those of you who know me, that is a bit of a standard reply, and at times an understatement, Mr. Speaker. The reality is, there are a number of reasons. The most fundamental is that I care. To borrow the term, I want my dash on my tombstone to have meant something. I care about people and I want to know that I have used my life to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

In my senior year of high school, I served as head boy, now referred to generally as co-president, along with my dear friend Cathy Cook, who served as head girl. It was a fantastic leadership opportunity, and it was then that I would suggest I was bitten by the political bug.

After graduating from the recreation leadership program at Fanshawe College, I was given the privilege of being employed as the parks and recreation director and the organizer of the world-renowned, without a shadow of a doubt, Warton Willie Festival. I had the pleasure of attending a local Rotary meeting in Warton, and the guest speaker was a fellow by the name of Murray Elston, the MPP for Bruce-Grey at the time. Mr. Elston was a friend of my mentor, Mr. Thomas G. Norris, and was very well respected in our area. I honestly did not pay attention to his political stripe at the time. Murray was simply someone who, as I remember, spoke eloquently and inspired me. His speech stirred emotion in me and compelled me to get involved and make a difference in my community. I recall saying to myself, as I departed for home after his speech, "I want to be like Mr. Elston someday." I'm truly not sure how much reality I gave to it at that time, and it certainly wasn't an "I must absolutely do this" career decision. However, it is a case of a seed being planted, and it is one of those situations whereby you just never know where life's journey will take you if you're willing to step through the door of opportunity.

Lesson 1: Be prepared to take a risk and live life to the fullest every day.

I had always been involved in community development and tried to do what I could to make the community a little bit better. I'm a believer in the adage that it is a noble endeavour to offer yourself to public service, and I take great pride in telling people I am a public servant, a politician. It pains me, in fact, when I hear derogatory

comments about politicians. Sure, there may be the odd one who paints the rest of us with a negative brush. However, I stand firm that most people who enter this vocation are doing it for the right reason: to make a difference, to make the community, the province, the country, and, yes, in some small way, the world a better place.

1640

For me, public service has always played a key role in my life. Whether it was as parks and recreation director for the town of Warton, now known as the South Bruce Peninsula, the area manager for Heart and Stroke Grey-Bruce, the executive director of the Bruce Peninsula Health Services Foundation, the captain or coach of a sports team, or the manager of a festival or volunteer for a special event, I always seem to strive for roles where I could be in a leadership position and develop and motivate a team of caring and talented individuals.

A key lesson I fortunately learned very early is there is no “I” in team, and to be successful, you need to surround yourself and work collaboratively with other people with their own respective skills and talents.

Interestingly, just prior to writing this speech, I read the book *Orr: My Story* by Bobby Orr. He is, in many people’s opinion, the greatest hockey player to have ever laced up the blades, and yet the main message I took from his book is how it takes a great team to accomplish any goal. Lesson number 2: Teamwork is the key to success. Surround yourself with equally committed people.

Somewhere along the line—and I’m not sure exactly the date or the timeline of my life journey—I remember watching a clip of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, JFK, and his famous quotation, “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country,” from his inaugural address on January 20, 1961. It is strange, as he had been assassinated prior to me being born, and yet he is one of those figures who made, and continues to have, an impact on me. He was youthful and vibrant and provided hope to a nation that needed hope. He was a leader who made a difference, and his quotation is one that has always inspired me to action. While I’m not suggesting in any way that I’m anywhere even remotely close to his league, I do believe each of us can make a difference if we are committed and willing to make the effort.

More close to home, the Honourable William Grenville Davis, Premier from 1971 to 1985, and a member of the Ontario Legislature from 1959 to 1985, was a huge inspiration. During his tenure, Mr. Davis built much of our current education system as well as our nuclear fleet, and utilizing a balance of fiscal fortitude and social conscience, led our great province through some of the most progressive and successful times we have ever witnessed. Mr. Davis attended one of my fundraisers during my first election, and I will remember this auspicious occasion for the rest of my life. Thank you, Mr. Davis, for all that you did to make our great province the best that it could be.

At home, my cousin Howard Greig served his community on municipal council for 28 years. He retired last term as mayor of the municipality of Chatsworth after many years prior serving as a councillor and then reeve of the former Sullivan township. He also served in leadership capacities on a number of provincial boards and ensured rural Ontario, and specifically Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, had a voice heard at the table—a shining example of someone who remained grounded to his roots and who dedicated much time and effort to benefit his community.

Also, my friend and current member of Parliament for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Larry Miller—Larry recently celebrated his 10th year of service as a federal politician and served 13 years before that as a municipal councillor and then reeve of Georgian Bluffs, formerly Keppel township, including a term as warden of Grey county. Larry has recently had Bill C-383, An Act to amend the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act and the International River Improvements Act, his private member’s bill, or PMB, receive royal assent and be passed into law. This is a significant accomplishment, as very few PMBs ever become legislation. Congratulations, Larry, and keep up the great work.

And, of course, my hero: Terry Fox inspired with his selfless act of pure determination, positive spirit and enduring hope. He was a person who truly epitomized that we can all make a difference regardless of our lot in life. His quotations, “I just wish people would realize that anything’s possible if you try; dreams are made possible if you try,” “It took cancer to realize that being self-centered is not the way to live. The answer is to try and help others,” and “Even if I don’t finish, we need others to continue. It’s got to keep going without me,” are all examples that show that with a positive attitude, we can all make a difference. Lesson number 3: Make a difference. Every single person can make a contribution if they take action.

Mostly, however, it was my life goal and ambition to make my mom, Sarah Ethel Jean Walker, proud. People would often comment, “Are you a politician?” or “You would make a good politician.” My predecessor, Bill Murdoch, a 20-year veteran MPP who served in this very hallowed House, approached me and suggested, “Have you ever thought of being a politician? I think you should try.” After much thought, the idea of serving others at the provincial or federal level and the opportunity to be able to give something back to the community was something I thought would make my mother proud.

Mom was a special lady who had a challenging life. My dad passed away when I was 10 years old, leaving Mom solely responsible for me and my five siblings—no easy situation. However, Mom just picked up the pieces, moved forward and raised all of us to the best of her ability. Not once did I hear her complain.

She ended up with significant back problems and 15 years ago was diagnosed with breast cancer: again, no self-pity, no complaining. She merely accepted the challenge and made the most of her days. Instead of looking

for pity, she volunteered at the local hospital foundation, the Legion Ladies' Auxiliary and the Women's Institute. She focused on family and having fun and living on her terms. She was always smiling and looked for the positive in every situation, right up until October 26, 2013, the day she passed away at the wonderful age of 86 years young. It is with some sadness, obviously, and regret that she did not get to see or hear me deliver this speech. However, I take some comfort in knowing that the day I was elected, I had in some small way made her proud. I dedicate this speech to her.

Lesson 4: Attitude is key. Be positive and make the most of every second of every day.

Per my previous comments related to Bobby Orr, I am so thankful and grateful for the many people who have helped me, shaped me and mentored me over the years, and who continue to do so. There are too many to mention, and I will not attempt to do so for fear of missing and offending someone. The reality is, there have been many: some who in significant ways have helped to counsel me on one of my many significant life decisions, some who have said nothing but were there when I needed them most, some who have motivated me to take a chance, some who have derided me for making a decision that to them did not make sense.

I would be remiss if I did not thank all of those people who helped me with my nomination, my two election campaigns and my riding association. To everyone who contributed to Team Walker, whether by giving of your time and talents, financial support and/or moral support, please know I appreciate your generosity and extend a heartfelt thank you.

To my staff, Ana Sajfert, Sandra Breedon, Karen MacInnis, Susan McMillan and Lisa LaPierre, thank you. You are each a treasure in your own way and offer so much to the success we achieve as a team. You truly embody the character of teammates who are there when I need you every single day, and I hope you are proud of the work you perform to help and assist others. Thank you for all that you do, and know I truly do appreciate you and your families for the sacrifices you make for my benefit.

At the end of the day, we all need family and friends. To my mom, Jean Walker, my wife, Michaela, my sons, Zach and Ben, my mother-in-law, Dorothy, and father-in-law, Brian Eastwood, you are my foundation. You always will be, and even when my responsibilities take me away from home—and I apologize that that happens way too often—please know you are never far from my thoughts. I can't thank my family enough for supporting me to get here and for all the sacrifices they have had to make over the past few years. I appreciate your understanding and your immense support. I am so proud to have such an amazing family.

To my siblings, Marie, Gord, Norm, the late Marjorie, and my sister Bonnie and extended family, I cannot say enough for all you have done and continue to do.

To my friends, and you know who you are and the role you have played, thank you for being you. Thanks for

your support and encouragement. Each of you has played a key role in allowing me the privilege to follow my dream, and for that I am eternally grateful. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

I would also like to extend appreciation to all of my colleagues—and, yes, I consider you all to be friends and consider that we are a special fraternity. There are only 107 of us who are given the rare privilege to serve the greater good—107 people out of 13.5 million people. That is absolutely staggering to me. What a privilege.

We live a life that no one, not even our spouses, really understands. We live a life that some would suggest is one where we cannot win, as there is always someone taking a shot at you. We live a life that sees us away from our family and friends almost all the time. We live a life that requires us to always be on, especially in today's world of social media. We live a life that requires us to be jacks of all trades and yet masters of none as we are hit with wave after wave of information and requests from all areas. We live a life that requires us to be decisive, bold and compassionate, knowing full well that most decisions will be criticized and/or heckled. We live a life that challenges us to make decisions that will impact the lives of millions, people we will never meet. We live a life that is like nothing else I could ever imagine. We live a life that is a once-in-a-lifetime experience and one that I am truly privileged to live. I take my hat off to those who have served before me, to those who serve in other levels of government or who have served in the past. Mostly, I extend my hand in friendship to those I have the pleasure to serve with from all parties in this hallowed Legislature. I commit to working with you to make a difference.

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A special thank you and oath of allegiance to those people in my PC caucus, my colleagues, my friends. You are truly special people, and I am honoured and humbled to serve alongside you and to learn from you.

As a call to action, a "walking the walk," if you will, I challenge everyone to step up and be part of the solution, if you were to criticize; to be positive and help others—do at least one good deed every day of your life; be proud of your community, province and country; and vote as your way of saying thank you to those who made the ultimate sacrifice so we could enjoy the rights, freedoms, liberties, and the privilege of democracy and right to vote and speak freely in this wonderful province of Ontario and the country of Canada.

In closing, it is my hope that I have been able to communicate that I am truly privileged and honoured to be an elected member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the greatest province in the greatest country in the world. I love my job, and I will continue to pursue it with the most integrity, energy and passion that I can. It is certainly a job that is learned on the fly, and I will continue to put my best foot forward and perform my role with class and dignity. It is my hope that the wonderful people of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound will be proud of the effort I am making on their behalf, are proud

to call me their MPP, and that in some small way I am making a positive difference in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes my maiden speech. However, I will take a few moments to also address the speech from the throne, if I may.

One of the concerns, I believe, of the caucus when the election started was where this government, the Liberal government, has taken us. They've doubled the debt in eight years; the deficit is \$13.5 billion more than we take in a year. Every single dollar that we spend on interest payments because of that debt, that overspending continually, is not a dollar that goes to our front-line health care. It doesn't go to our schools. It does not go to the needy and the homeless. It does not go to people with special-needs children. Almost every day in my office, someone comes in with a heart-wrenching story of their child, their sibling, their family member, and all of my colleagues share the same experience. It's saddening to say that there's not a whole lot of hope on the way, because right now our third-largest expenditure in government is our interest payment on the debt. Mr. Speaker, \$10.5 billion a year goes to spending money on interest payments.

This throne speech continues down the same path. It continues down the same overspending ways that we've watched here for my two and a half years and, sadly, for the 11 years they were here. Spending continues to go up, even though economist Don Drummond, their own specialist, their own economist who they hired to report to them two years ago, is telling them that they have to change their ways.

I didn't hear anything in there, although it says more money for hospitals. Today in the House, I offered once again to the Minister of Health to step up and put a commitment to the Markdale hospital. Some 11 years ago they committed to building that hospital, and they have still not come through on that commitment. The great people of Markdale have raised \$13.2 million, and it's sitting there in a bank doing absolutely nothing. It's not helping the great people of our community. It's not providing the health care that they deserve and were committed to. I hope the minister was very frank in his thought process to me, in his remarks and in his rebuttal, and that he will work with me and he will meet with me to find a way to move this forward.

I also have a program in my riding: the Georgian College marine emergency duty training facility. As the colleague from Cambridge mentioned, in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound we live in one of the most beautiful parts of our wonderful province, surrounded by the Great Lakes. We have Georgian College, with one of the most state-of-the-art simulators in the country. They're divesting this program at the federal level, and it only makes common sense to bring that to Owen Sound, where we are the Marine Centre of Excellence. This would ensure that jobs remain in Ontario. This will ensure that the marine industry is served well in Ontario. There are similar programs on the east coast and the west coast, but my concern is that if they start going there for the

training, they'll eventually start to move all of their business there, and this is a huge industry for Ontario.

They talk about education. The Liberals want to be known as the education party. Well, here's an educational institution that certainly can be the sustainability and vibrancy of this whole marine sector. Again, I reached out to Minister Duguid today. He agreed to meet with me and have his staff meet with me to try to move this forward. Those are the types of things I want to see in the budget, but what I saw more was overspending. I saw a lot of discussion about where they want to take us. They said all the buzz words that are wonderful—"hope" and "opportunity"—but what we need is some social sense. Like the Bill Davis years, we need to have fiscal responsibility. We need to not spend more than we currently bring in in revenue. Those pages sitting in front of you, my children and, hopefully someday, grandchildren, are who we're borrowing from today to make promises today to get elected today and to remain in office today. That's not the way we need to be going. It's not why the 107 people, I believe, came to this hallowed House, Mr. Speaker.

We need to show that progressive fiscal responsibility, along with a social conscience, obviously. But when we're spending almost \$11 billion on interest payments which is not going, as I mentioned earlier, to help front-line health care, front-line education, then we're not helping the disabled, and we're not helping those who are without, Mr. Speaker. I didn't see a lot of that in the budget, and I think we really need to focus on that third-biggest expenditure being debt and interest payments. It needs to be broken; it needs to be changed. They're going in the wrong direction, and they need to step forward with a better plan. They're going to introduce the exact same budget.

I don't even have time to get into the pension that small businesses are telling me is probably going to put them out of business if they truly fully go forward and implement this. We've heard it from the economists. We heard it at the front door when I was campaigning. This is just another added burden of tax that is going to decimate not only the employee but the employer.

The throne speech has some merit. There were some things in there, but I think, at the end of the day, we need a big change, and the government needs to address its overspending ways.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By the way, congratulations on your nomination for that role. You'll enjoy it, and you will learn the names. Congratulations.

To the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, I was struck that this is your maiden speech because it seems like you've been here forever already. Anyway, congratulations on having made it. It's wonderful. It's always good to hear about a member's family, about their roots and about their motivations. I think often we don't see ourselves here in this House as full human beings,

and it's wonderful to hear members get up and talk about themselves a little bit.

Congratulations to all of the new members who have been elected. It's a wonderful privilege to be here. I'm no maiden; it's my fourth time elected in eight years of service. But I have to say, every time one stands in this House, one is aware of the huge number of people who sent us here, those who voted for us and those who didn't vote for us but who we still represent, those who exercised their franchise. It's really important to acknowledge them, and I think the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound did exactly that.

It's also important to recognize our family. I want to give a shout-out to my family too, to Gil, my husband; to Damien and Francesca, my children—all of whom worked on my campaign night and day. I'm sure I'm not alone in this. Our families turned up. They did the phones, and they knocked on doors. We had family canvass on Sundays in my household. Particularly to my husband, and I know he's watching, I just want to say, I love you, and thank you for all your support. Thank you for your love, and thank you for your hard work and belief in me.

That's what we also heard from the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, because none of us would be here without family support. That's the core of who we are. Bringing their voices and names forward is so important, just to acknowledge their role in our lives, because really, when we're elected, they're elected too.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It's my pleasure once again to rise to offer a couple of comments to the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I must say you had my 100% attention for three quarters of your speech, and then you referred to PC notes, and that kind of threw me off-kilter.

But let me first say, congratulations. I'm of the same belief as you are: I truly believe that all 107 of us who are here are here for the right reasons. We might have some different philosophies, but that's what makes it interesting, and I think it's fantastic.

Your part about families: I spoke yesterday for some half hour or so, and family is very important. They sacrifice a lot to allow us to serve Ontario, so it's real teamwork.

I think that's a message that sometimes, frankly, the public doesn't quite understand. They think that we come here, we sit here and then we collect a big fat pension at the end of the day. But having said that, we made that choice to be here. We know what the conditions were. We accept it, and I think we're all honoured to be here. So to you, Bill, your family and your riding, congratulations. I'm sure they'll enjoy you being here.

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I must say one thing; I'm going to comment on the last four or five minutes of your speech. You talk about needing some issues addressed in your riding. I think everybody in this House needs that. You say you need it; it's got to happen. But on the other hand, you talk about

austerity, and I'm not sure things mesh. You can't talk from both sides of one's mouth, so although we all need those services and those needs—but at the end of the day, congratulations. I enjoy being here with you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm pleased to comment on what I as well was surprised to hear was the maiden speech from my friend from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, who has been with us since 2011 and has spoken on many, many, many occasions, on different bills. I just kind of assumed that one of those was his maiden speech, but I'm pleased I had an opportunity to be here for what is officially your maiden speech. It's a big day for every one of us.

I can remember mine, which took place back in 2003, something that you look forward to for a long time. Having followed my father to this chamber, it was indeed a kind of changing of the guard, if you want to call it that, for me as well at that time.

I'll say that Bill hit on all the right points. He understands why he's here. He's not too big for his britches. He understands humility, who put him here and who he is here to serve. I think that's the best lesson you can remind us all of from time to time: who puts us here and who we're here to serve. It is, in fact, the constituents that we are here to serve.

Again, his shout-out to his family: There is not any one of us here who could do the job, or indeed have gotten here to do the job, without the help of our families, in one way or another, in whatever form that family is. I know in my case it was paramount for me to have the support of my wife and our children in my ability to seek this office and ultimately be successful in attaining it.

Again, Bill talked about the importance of his riding, a little bit of history. He touched on all of the things that I think make that day of your maiden speech special. It is something that I can assure you, while it took a long time getting to it, you will look back on. You will have copies of this, you will distribute them to your friends and you will remember this for a long, long time, because I expect that Bill Walker is going to be here for a long, long time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

Mr. Joe Cimino: I'll also share my words of congratulations and thank you for those words to the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. It's very good to stand up and learn a little bit about each of us, because we are more than just a riding name. We're more than just a chair or a seat on one end of the chamber or another. When we talk about ourselves, whether it's in here, outside or downstairs for a coffee, I think we all appreciate each other's differences and respect each other's viewpoints, to a point, regardless of political colours.

I think it's important that we remember that we are all here for the same reason, as has been stated several times. We are all human beings who have families at home, who have desires for our ridings, who have ambitions in terms of making sure that we leave the riding

better off than the way we received it. That is always my philosophy, and I've been taught that that goes back to a famous book. We won't get into it, but when you receive something, make sure you return it back better than when you received it in the first place.

I can see your dedication and your enthusiasm. Even though it has taken you a while to do this inaugural speech—I'm sure it was written two and a half years ago; you just didn't have time to do it. I thank you for your comments and I hope to talk to you soon outside the chamber and get to know you a little bit better.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I return to the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound for his final response.

Mr. Bill Walker: To the members from Parkdale–High Park, Sudbury, Northumberland–Quinte West and of course my good colleague John from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, and to all the people who were here today—it's special to have some of the other colleagues here being able to hear my inaugural speech.

Cheri, when you say that it seems like I've been here forever, I hope that's not in a bad way. I'm sure some of the Clerks that have to record me all the time may feel that way as well. I think last year my record was 86,000 words spoken in the chamber, so it does probably seem a little strange, Mr. Speaker, that I would be doing this maiden speech now.

But I do truly believe that it is important to do it, and it's to pay homage to those who have made my life, who have allowed me the opportunity and privilege to be here today.

It's important to say thank you to the constituents who have shown faith in me and continued, in my second election, to have shown faith and trust in me.

I think it's important especially—and all of my colleagues have talked about family. I believe in sharing—I think you might have been the person who said it—that when we get elected, the family gets elected. This isn't a one-person show in regards to any of us. If I didn't have my wife, Michaela, and the support of my sons, Zach and Ben, and my family, my extended family, my siblings, certainly I couldn't do this. This is all-encompassing, and it's a privilege to do this job. I thoroughly enjoy every single moment that I'm out in my job, that I'm doing my job, but it truly is sacrificial from the point of family, as all of us in this House know.

I think it's important to put on record why we are here and to remind ourselves. John, again, has a very special situation, to follow his father into this hallowed hall. I can only imagine what his speech would have been back in the day. I will go back through Hansard and read that, because I think it will be entertaining, as all of his speeches are.

But I think that at the end of the day it's important for us to take time and to put our mark on this House, as this House puts its mark on all of us. We all truly are here with different thought processes, different views of the world, but that's the democracy that we have a right and a privilege to enjoy.

Thank you to everyone. It's my pleasure to serve, and hopefully for many years to come. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? I recognize the member from Parkdale–High Park.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, it's a delight to stand. I left a few people off the list of thank yous in that two-minute hit. I also want to extend a welcome to all my colleagues, the returning colleagues as well. Welcome back. Good to see you again.

To my staff, Bhutla, Carly, Susan and Ram—phenomenal staff—I couldn't do it without them.

And to our leaders—I don't think they've been acknowledged—to the member from Simcoe–Grey, to our own Andrea Horwath, to the Premier: Again, congratulations on your election and to your leadership positions. I have the privilege of being the first LGBTQ critic for any party at Queen's Park, and so I just have to acknowledge, as we've just come out of World Pride in Toronto, the first openly gay Premier as well. I have to acknowledge that; that is a moment in history.

And now to the throne speech; now to the throne speech. What I'm going to say is absolutely, utterly inspired by my members from Parkdale–High Park: what I heard at the door, what I spoke to people about. Really, I'm tasked with bringing their voices forward. That's who elected me—and, of course, others in Ontario who feel the same way.

Let me say first and foremost that there's a problem. We have a problem in this province, and that problem has many faces.

It first of all has the faces of those who are marginalized, those who live in poverty. My friends opposite and next to us should know that food bank usage is way up, and that is a pretty good measure, Mr. Speaker, of poverty. We have over a million people using food banks now. Back in 2003, when this government was first elected, we had around 700,000. That's a significant increase. That is an increase in poverty rates. And those people who live in poverty have real faces. I met them; I met them at the door.

A problem they also have is housing. We have over 150,000 families—not just individuals—waiting for affordable housing in this province, over 70,000 families in the GTA alone. I met those people. They had a hard time even exercising their franchise because many of them lacked sufficient identification. We have a problem there, and it's a problem that has solutions, that could have been solved in the last 11 years. One of those solutions, we put forward several times. It's called inclusionary zoning, and I tabled that bill again, Mr. Speaker. It's a very simple little bill. All it does is make a small change to the Planning Act so that municipalities who have overwhelmingly told me they want this ability can then require of their developers and developments that they set aside a certain amount of units for affordable housing. It could be rent-to-own. It could look differently in different municipalities.

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I have to give kudos to Olivia Chow who is running for the mayoral position in Toronto right now for talking about using section 37. But she has also acknowledged, and others, that they need more tools in the tool box in cities and municipalities to be able to address this.

I see my new minister, for whom I am a new critic on the housing file, and I look forward to speaking to him about this very issue and seeing if we can move this forward, because we need to move this forward.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't cost one tax dollar and yet we calculate, looking at the incredible development that has happened across Ontario in the last 11 years, that would provide about 12,000 to 13,000 new units of affordable housing every single day. But, of course, that's not enough. We also need new builds. Again, by their own reckoning, by their own standards, this government said they wanted to and were going to build 20,000 new units—not close, Mr. Speaker, not even close.

I see those faces. I see the faces of the homeless, and I see, more frequently, the faces of the under-housed, not to mention our children. Where will they live in the GTA, with the average price in the GTA now approaching \$600,000, \$700,000 or more? This is a situation that is leading to calamity unless it's addressed. Again, to the new Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, I hope that he and I can work on this together and make some changes, because we need to make those changes.

The other thing that we need to change where municipalities are concerned, certainly in Toronto—and this I heard at the door from many of my folk in ward 13 who are extremely concerned about rampant development where citizens have no say. Here's what happens: A citizens' group gets together; they oppose a new development for all sorts of good reasons—certainly sometimes there are good reasons. The developers often now bypass them completely, do not even hold meetings with citizens, go right to the Ontario Municipal Board and win there.

My friend Rosario Marchese who served in this House for 24 years—24 years Rosie was in the House—and made this one of the key pieces of his work here, to get the OMB out of Toronto planning. We do not need the OMB in Toronto planning. We have our own appeal process. We have our own planning process. I know other municipalities feel the same, but certainly Toronto feels dramatically that way.

You will see across my riding “Save Our Village” signs on people's lawns. Why do they put them there? Because of the development that's happening eerily close, frighteningly close, to one of our greatest natural resources in Parkdale–High Park, and that is High Park itself. People are concerned. They're concerned about the height. They're concerned about where the children in those buildings will go to school, because we do not have the infrastructure—schools—to accommodate those children.

Let's talk about education for a minute. We have the highest student debt per capita of any province in all of

Canada. We have the highest student debt per capita of any province across Canada and we have among the highest tuition fees ever. This is again a nightmare for young people, particularly young people, who then go into the job market where there are no jobs, carrying massive debts the size of mortgages, many of them. We need to address that fact and the fact that we are 10 out of 10 in terms of our record on education.

But to get back to the development issue: The young children who are being raised in apartments now in downtown Toronto, because that's all most people can afford, don't have a place to go to school in my riding. They have to be bused out of my riding half the time just to find a place in a classroom. I'll tell you, when I first ran eight years ago, one of the issues was that this government was going to close Warren Park school and King George school in my riding, because they were under-enrolled—this takes us back to the funding formula, which really has not changed since the Mike Harris days. So they were going to close these two schools. Mr. Speaker, those schools are overflowing now with students. In fact, every single school in my riding now is packed. Kids are taking classes in gyms. We have to bus students out of my riding to be able find a spot. This is a problem, and it's particularly a problem when you look at the throne speech and the budget it's based on and see that the government's answer, if there is one in there, is to sell schools—schools that are under-enrolled. Well, I say to those communities where schools are on the chopping block—because it's one of the resources they're looking at in this budget: Stand up. Fight back. Because if you do and if you win, you will be glad.

We all know there are demographic blips and troughs. There are changes. Many of us are from the baby boom era, but then there was the baby bust era. We cannot sell off our precious public resources, like schools and, of course, like you heard in question period today, potentially the LCBO, OPG, Hydro One. But let's focus on schools for a minute. Had those schools in my riding been shut, I don't know what we would be doing, because already we have a problem. That's education.

Let's talk about child care. We are bordered by two provinces: Quebec, which has \$7-a-day child care, and Manitoba, which has \$17-a-day child care. Here we are in Ontario, where only one in 8 to 10 children has a space, and those spaces cost upwards of \$1,000 or more a month. I can tell you, I heard that voice at the door during this last election, and they said, “We need a child care program.” It's desperately needed. In fact, I would say it's the critical feminist issue of this province, because you can't have full equality of women if you don't have good, high-quality, affordable child care, available to every woman who needs it. That's essential, and we don't have that. But we're bordered by neighbours who really do have that, so we can do way better—and that's after 11 years.

What about transportation? One of the huge issues I heard in Parkdale–High Park was transportation. First

and foremost, I heard about the air-rail link. This is nothing new. Members have heard me speak about this ad infinitum, over years and years. Jonah Schein, the member who served for Davenport, introduced a bill which I re-tabled just now, that that line connecting Pearson and Union Station has to be electric. Why? Because it's a health risk to all of those who live near the tracks it runs on.

We know this. Studies have been done. The environmental assessment is there for all to read. It has to be electric. It is literally running past the backyards of many of our citizens, and the citizens of Davenport, and the citizens of Trinity–Spadina, and the citizens of York South–Weston. For all of these ridings, this is a huge issue. Again, I look forward to meeting with the new transportation minister—I've already asked for a meeting—to talk about electrification. We need more than a promise. We don't even have that, but we need more than that. We need a plan. We need a budget. We heard from the last transportation minister that, "Oh, this will be done in 2017." But even then, we haven't seen a plan. We haven't seen a budget. We haven't seen anything tabled. We need that plan. We need that budget. We need action on that file. We need it soon, because in 2015 those trains start to roll for the Pan Am Games. I was sent here to say on behalf of all of my residents that a two-week sporting event is not enough reason to destroy their quality of life and their health. We've heard about asthma rates in schools—something like 20% now. Well, I can tell you that those asthma rates will go up when those diesel trains start to run.

Again, that's the biggest transportation issue in my riding, but there are others. If you wait for the streetcar on Queen Street, you will be waiting quite a while if you wait in rush hour, Mr. Speaker. You will see sometimes one or two cars go past; they're packed. If you try to get on the subway, you'll have the same experience; it's packed too.

I tabled a question for the transportation minister. I want to know where that so-called \$29 billion they're putting in transportation is going, how it's being spent, when it's being spent and on what, because I can tell you that we need a relief line in downtown Toronto. It's critical.

We need more buses on the road, too—again, something that Olivia has talked about. We need both. We need a full package and a full focus on how to move people. It is costing us billions not to move those people in downtown Toronto and in Parkdale–High Park. These are critical issues for us—absolutely critical.

1720

One issue I haven't heard talked about yet but is also something I heard at the door from our activist folk in Parkdale–High Park—and we are activists—was, "Whatever happened to the move to get rid of that regulation that caused all the problems with the G20?" Remember the G20? Remember the nightmare of that? Remember the absolutely undemocratic move of this government, Mr. Speaker, when, behind closed doors when the House

was in full session, in cabinet, they invoked a secret regulation nobody knew about, dusted it off from the Second World War to put it in place, that had disastrous results for civil liberties in our city? It had disastrous results for civil liberties in Parkdale–High Park. It's sad to say that I had to say to those people who raised that issue with me, "Nothing has been done. Nothing has changed." Now, that's sad because that's just a regulation. Nothing has been done. That was a while back, Mr. Speaker. Nothing has been done.

Long-term care: You've already heard members speak about long-term care, the huge wait-lists, the problem with getting a bed in long-term care. But more to the point, Donna Cansfield, who was here, introduced a bill—I co-sponsored it with her, so did Christine Elliott—calling for at least a strategy to look at those who are aging and who have dementia and Alzheimer's. We need to confront this issue. We need to do something. We need a strategy; we need policies in place. Otherwise this, too, is a calamity waiting to happen. I heard about it when I met those faces at the door, and I heard about it during this election campaign.

Again, we need to talk about the amount of service people in long-term-care homes get and the amount of funding that goes per bed in those homes. I also heard that we have overworked staff who just can't get around to provide the services needed. When I was first elected eight years ago, I was speaking about this. We were speaking about the fact that we need at least 3 hours—3.5 hours I think was the amount asked for—per long-term-care resident per day, and instead, we still have less than three. Again eight years later, still no action on that; this is a problem.

Labour: Our labour critic has introduced some excellent bills. We have, over the eight years, bills that have not seen the light of day here: anti-scab legislation, card-check certification legislation. Again, there's nothing to address those core concerns of those in organized labour. Let's be frank: If it weren't for those in organized labour working hard, we wouldn't have the civil liberties that we have, going back to that G20 moment. They have always been at the forefront of the changes that we have needed. We need to look at how we can unionize more—not as my friends to the right want, to unionize less, but to unionize more. That's what we should be looking at. That's critical.

We saw again, in the history of this government, Bill 115, which took away the collective bargaining rights of teachers. We saw the EllisDon bill, which took away the collective bargaining rights of trades. Again, there's nothing progressive about that. We need to see action on those files as well.

I only have a few minutes left and a lot to say. But let's just sum up by saying this: There are very different ways of looking at an economy. There's a way that we used to call the trickle-down theory, where you put lots of money into big corporations and multinationals, and you hope that somehow that trickles down and results in jobs on the front line—somehow. Or you can look at

investing where people need it, and that's what I've been speaking about, Mr. Speaker: investing to combat those who live on the margins, to find jobs, to provide housing, to have education and to provide health care—by the way, shout-outs to the Ontario Health Coalition, who came here and talked about the increasing spate of privatization and the delisting that has happened under the government: for eye care, for ambulances, for physio. I could go on, but anyway.

That's where we need to put our money: health care, education, housing, poverty elimination, child care, long-term care. That's where we need to put our focus.

We need to look at those multinationals and those large corporations that do not pay their fair share. There's nothing progressive about not looking at the corporate tax rate—nothing progressive about that at all.

Finally, one of the most frustrating bits of messaging I've heard out of the Liberal Party and this government, of all of them, is this proud crowing—I've heard it now also from the Progressive Conservatives, who have debunked it in other ways—that we spend less per capita on all social programming for our citizens than any other province. I think that's cause for shame. I think it's cause for shame that we spend less on education, on poverty elimination, on housing, on child care, on long-term care and on transportation. That we spend less for each one of our citizens than anyone else in Canada I don't think is something to be proud about, Mr. Speaker. I think it's something to be ashamed about, particularly when we live in one of the richest jurisdictions in the world and when people need support and when those infrastructure investments actually produce wealth—because that's the other way of looking at the economy.

Again, I'm proud to stand here. It's great to be back. Welcome, everybody. We've got some serious work to do.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments.

Mr. John Fraser: I would like to congratulate the member from Parkdale–High Park on her re-election and for her comments today. I know that she's a strong advocate for her community and a strong voice for issues around poverty. I know that from speaking to the former Minister of Community and Social Services and current Minister of Municipal Affairs about how strong a voice you are. Although I may not always agree with you—and that's what this place is all about—I know that your words are sincere and honourable.

You will remember that there is a commitment in the throne speech to introduce a new poverty reduction strategy within 60 days. I think that's important to note.

I think it's also important to take a look at our budget. I want to thank you for not using the term “Trojan Horse.” The last Trojan Horse I remember was in 2003, and a certain party was trailing it around to different campaign offices. I remember getting my picture taken with it.

You'll remember that we have raises for PSWs, people who care for the people we care for most. We

have a large investment in developmental services, which will help to eliminate wait-lists for families who so badly need those services. We're also looking towards people's retirement security. We're investing in people. We're continuing the 30%-off tuition grant.

As members, we can all agree that our job here is to make sure that those things that we do for each other—like hospitals, schools, public transit, protecting the most vulnerable—are there in reasonable measure for everyone and that we can sustain that. That's a very difficult balance to make sometimes, and that's why we have these debates here.

I want to thank you again for your remarks and for your strong advocacy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's a pleasure to comment on the address today by the member from Parkdale–High Park. The member from Parkdale–High Park and I get along very well. I've never quite understood that because on a philosophical basis, we don't agree on very many things. We've had this discussion. When it comes to how she would run the province versus how I would run the province, ne'er the twain shall meet, and yet on a personal basis, we get along very well.

The one thing I can always be completely honest about about the member from Parkdale–High Park is the passion that she exudes in this place for the causes and the things that she believes in. There are few members who speak with such strength about social issues as the member from Parkdale–High Park. However, on some of those issues, that's where she and I part, because I have a social conscience, but I'm very fiscally conservative, and I just don't understand how we can possibly spend, spend, spend and still solve the big problem, and that is, if we don't solve the fiscal problems in Ontario, we won't have any money to spend someday. Not just the spending that some people may want us to do today on this particular issue or that particular issue, but we're not going to have any money, Speaker, because the province is going to be broke. And therein lies the challenge that faces the government.

1730

I can't believe two minutes goes by so quick.

They've got a tiger by the tail here right now, because they talk about—the member from Northumberland–Quinte West talked about having it both ways. That's exactly what the government thinks they're going to do, is have it both ways. It doesn't work that way. This is the real world.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to rise in response to the eloquent delivery of the response to the throne speech by our colleague the member from Parkdale–High Park, who clearly identifies quite poignantly some of the fundamental shortfalls of the throne speech and, of course, of the budget that we anticipate being delivered. It's because she is so poignant that I think we in this

House listen to her explicitly. She not only offers a clear perspective on the problems that we face in the province, specifically in her riding, but also remedies that we should all listen to and heed, and things that I don't see as wasteful spending or potentially expensive measures; they are value-added measures. When you do invest in child care, you aid productivity in the province of Ontario. When you invest in a publicly funded health care system, that is good value for dollars. When you invest in transit to move people around the wonderful city and the GTA, again those are good dollars spent.

We question, I think, the priorities of the government and she nailed it at the end as she concluded. She hit the nail on the head when she said that it boggles our minds, on this side of the House, that the government boasts of being the lowest per capita spenders in the country when it comes to delivery of public services. Those are incredible metrics, because you would anticipate that they would have money in the bank and not such a massive deficit. So those two equations don't make sense to myself. It certainly doesn't make sense to the general public. All the more reason to ask the hard questions of this government, how they intend to continue to provide the public services that we all are passionate about. Certainly the member from Parkdale–High Park exudes that passion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Granville Anderson: It's a pleasure and a great privilege to serve the people of the great riding of Durham. I've listened, and it would be remiss of me if I didn't mention the speech from my colleague from Cambridge and the speeches, as well, from the members from Sudbury and Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. An excellent speech—and as the member from Northumberland–Quinte West said, the speech was okay until we got to the Tory talking points, which baffled me a bit. He was doing so well—but then he ended by saying he had a social conscience, which is good to see, a Conservative with a social conscience. That's always wonderful to know. I think he's a good man at heart.

Back to the member from High Park, who just spoke, I wondered during her speech if she had looked at the budget, or if she's on the same page with her leader, because a lot of the things she spoke about were in that budget that was defeated both by the Conservatives and the NDP. So that had me a bit puzzled for a minute. I do share one thing with her: I belong to a food bank and I agree that there are too many of them and it's something that we need to tackle: poverty, poverty among young children. It's something I'm passionate about. So I agree with her that it's something that this government is going to work hard to eradicate, as much as possible. I'm sure we'll look to the other side and to the members across the aisle for their support in doing so.

Again, thank you for your speech. At least it sounded more like you're an NDPer. Thanks again.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I return to the member for her final response.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you to all the members. I'm going to start with the member from Durham: Welcome. I want to say simply that Dr. Phil-ism: The best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. Eleven years of past behaviour is what I'm dealing with here and what reality is, quite frankly. The rest is dreams, we hope.

To the member from Essex, absolutely. We need to invest. That's the critical thing. I had a business as one of my former careers, and I can tell you that any business person will tell you, you start by putting money out and then you see the return come back. Without the investment, no business. That's how business works and that's where, of course, I would disagree with my other friend from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, who, yes, we call him Miracle Whip.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Miracle Whip?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Yes. I used to be Cool Whip, but no longer.

To Miracle Whip, I would have to say the same, that yes, you invest to see a return. But, absolutely, you have to talk about where the taxation isn't fair, and I did that by talking about looking at the top first rather than the bottom first.

Ottawa South: It's not working. Eleven years; it's not working. Poverty rates, by the food bank, "are up." It's not working.

We have the highest per capita debt in our school system. It's not working.

As I say, we live in hope in this place, or we wouldn't be here. We're all here, I think, for the right reasons—perhaps with the wrong ideologies, I would argue, but with the right reasons. We want to make a positive difference in the lives of those we represent and the lives of all Ontarians. So I would say to my friends, thank you for your comments. We live in hope. Let's see you do what you promised. We've been waiting 11 years.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? The member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for the first time in this chamber, this beautiful place, as the Speaker has described it, and I congratulate you on your election to your position, which you will distinguish yourself in, I'm sure.

I want to congratulate all of my colleagues on all sides of the House for their election, and those hundreds of our fellow citizens who also put their names on the ballot this past June. It is truly a humbling experience to be standing in this chamber, knowing you've been selected by your neighbours, your fellow citizens, to represent them.

Mr. Speaker, before I speak about how we're going to be building Ontario up, I do want to take this opportunity to first of all thank the great people of Etobicoke–Lakeshore for putting their trust in me to be their MPP. Over close to 20 years in different capacities, those very same people elected me to be their representative on city council, first in the city of Etobicoke and subsequently in the city of Toronto. So I'm very grateful to them that I have exercised my duty to them relatively well, that they

felt confident that they could give me this additional trust and this additional opportunity to represent them.

I also want to mention my two immediate predecessors from Etobicoke–Lakeshore. First, Laurel Broten, who was an extremely kind and compassionate member who represented Etobicoke–Lakeshore with great distinction in this House. I also want to thank my immediate predecessor, Doug Holyday. Though Doug and I may have often sparred on different things, back in November 1994 when I was first elected to Etobicoke council, Doug Holyday was elected mayor. He had already been an elected official before; it was my first time as an elected official. Even though we sometimes disagreed back then too, I did learn a great deal from him, certainly when it comes to looking after taxpayers' money, which is something that I've always done in my role as a city councillor. I'm proud to be part of a government that will continue looking after taxpayers' money carefully.

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I also want to speak about the wonderful volunteers who assisted me, not in one election, but in two, because unlike many of you, perhaps, to get to this place, my campaign was two campaigns in less than one year. I was blessed last summer with many hundreds of volunteers and this past June with somewhat fewer volunteers but no less enthusiastic.

I did want to mention some of the names of those who were the most supportive and came out the most often with me: Bob Stewart; Jean-Luc Marcheseau; Phillis Steren; Nik Bulatovich; Andrew Misiak; John O'Sullivan; Paul Capranos; Dean Walker, my riding association president who is the first deaf person who is a riding association president in the Liberal Party of Ontario; Adam Feldman; Glen Howell; Cassandra Steele; George Takach; Barbara Anderson; Susan Watt; Ken Mangat; Susan Kuzman; and Tanya Kuzman. There were, of course, many hundreds of others. I can't thank them all, but I am forever in your gratitude.

Of course I do want to thank my family: my beautiful wife, Rose, who has an incredibly challenging career of her own, but she always makes the time to help me and to support our family; and my darling daughter, Ariana, who just turned five not long ago. In her lifetime, she's had to experience her father running in three elections: one municipal and now two provincial. She is the apple of my eye, the light of my life, and I try my best to explain to her that when daddy is not around very much, it's because I'm trying to make this place better for her, and I will try to do that for her and for all the other children in Ontario and all the other citizens of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank my parents, Maria and Wes Milczyn, who were immigrants from Communist Poland to this country. When they first arrived here, they settled in Montreal. After a few years, they saw that the place of opportunity was in Ontario, and they moved here with their unborn son. I have to think that with that singular decision they could never have imagined that today I would be standing here.

I was first elected when I was 29, so of course my parents were very big parts of those campaigns. This past summer, I was knocking on doors in Mimico, where I grew up, which is part of my riding, and people were saying, "I remember when your mom knocked on our doors 20 years ago." My grandmother also knocked on some of their doors, but perhaps they didn't remember that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand here having lived my entire life in Etobicoke–Lakeshore, growing up in the town of Mimico, living in the village of Islington and now in the beautiful, leafy neighbourhood of Sunnylea. These places are in my marrow. I am so grateful to be representing my neighbours from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, and I will always strive to ensure that the trust you've placed in me—that I will come through for you.

In my political career, as in my professional career—I studied architecture—I like to conceive things. I like to then see them implemented and see them through to completion. When I was five years old growing up in Mimico, the debate about the development of the motel strip began. I wondered, "What's taking so long? That's really cool. I think I'd like to be an architect." Lo and behold, I graduated from U of T with my architecture degree.

As a city councillor for ward 2, Mimico and New Toronto, I spearheaded the beginning of the redevelopment of that area, also known as Humber Bay Shores now. Later on, as an Etobicoke councillor, we had the derelict Ontario hospital at the foot of Kipling in the ward, which we transformed into the great Humber College campus, but there was one building, the Assembly Hall, that was sitting vacant. My thesis at university for architecture was an arts centre on those grounds. Just five years later, as a city councillor, I led Etobicoke council in ensuring that that Assembly Hall was renovated and expanded, and a community arts facility was built there.

In my latest incarnation in politics, on Toronto council, the project that I worked on for the entire 14 years that I was there was the redevelopment of the Etobicoke City Centre, 16 acres of vacant land marked in the middle by a highway interchange but where no highways were, just regular city streets. That was 1950s planning. After 14 years of consultation, planning, studies, and begging and pleading council to allocate money, construction on that will begin this year, Mr. Speaker.

I've been proud to be a city builder in my first political career, and now I'm proud to be part of a government that will be building Ontario up and that will be province builders, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, in the speech from the throne there are many issues that have been raised that are extremely important to the future of this province. I want to start with one, though: education. Over the past year of campaigning, I often heard that full-day kindergarten is not a good way to spend money. I sometimes heard that it was a waste of money. "Wasting money" on my daughter's education and the education of every other young

child in this province—that is not a waste of money, Mr. Speaker. Ensuring that our children have the best education system that they can have and that, as they move through the school system leading into post-secondary education, we give them the education, the tools and the opportunities that they so richly deserve, is never a waste of money, Mr. Speaker. This government is committed to ensuring that that education, from early childhood education through to post-secondary education, will be of the highest quality and will also be affordable for young people with post-secondary education, but also in terms of creating employment opportunities for their families so that young families can afford to get back into the workforce earlier. That is a very important part of this throne speech and this government's mandate that we will follow through on.

Of course, the aspects of the throne speech that people might logically assume I'm going to speak more about are issues like transit and infrastructure. I'm very grateful to the Premier for appointing me as the parliamentary assistant to the Honourable Brad Duguid, the Minister of Infrastructure, because that is a role in which I think I can contribute a great deal to this government and to this province.

Le gouvernement affectera une nouvelle somme de 29 milliards de dollars à la stratégie sur 10 ans relative au transport et au transport en commun Faire progresser l'Ontario qui créera des emplois et stimulera notre économie dès maintenant et dans l'avenir. Dans le cadre de cette stratégie, un montant pouvant aller jusqu'à 15 milliards de dollars sera alloué de façon transparente à des projets de la région du grand Toronto et de Hamilton, et près de 14 milliards de dollars seront consacrés à des projets menés à d'autres endroits de la province où la croissance repose sur la circulation garantie des gens et des marchandises.

Mr. Speaker, in this throne speech, our government is committing to the most significant investment in infrastructure in several generations in this province, the infrastructure that, as I was growing up, made this province a place of opportunity that my parents chose to move to. This infrastructure has been ignored to a degree that's unconscionable, and this government is committed to building it up once again.

For the residents of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, transit and infrastructure is one of the key issues that I heard about: the need to improve local transit services, regional transit services, highways, roads, bridges, water quality systems—all those elements that make a modern economy thrive.

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In my community, Mr. Speaker, this government is investing in a Kipling mobility hub to ensure that there's a seamless transition between Mississauga Transit, TTC and GO Transit in the heart of our Etobicoke city centre, which it is about to do. We are making improvements to the Mimico GO train station. We are committed to expanding GO rail service to 15 minutes all day long along the Lakeshore line and other lines throughout the

GTA. In my community, we're also very concerned about creating new regional rail stations, particularly in the Park Lawn-Humber Bay Shores area, to allow a thriving and growing community to have access to great transit. This government's plans to electrify the GO rail system will make that a possibility. I look forward to working with my municipal counterparts now on making sure that the development in that area allows those types of projects to proceed.

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech also talks a great deal about creating a better business climate and allowing the private sector to create the jobs that Ontarians need. In my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, we have a number of sectors which are really crucial to the economy. One is the film and TV production sector. Mr. Paul Bronfman, the owner of William F. White, which is the largest Canadian, and one of the largest international, film and TV equipment rental companies, is a great supporter of the initiatives of this government to promote the film and TV production industry in this city. The year 2012 was the banner year for that industry in the city of Toronto and in Ontario, 2013 was a close second and 2014 also looks very auspicious. That's because of the investments and partnerships that this government has created for that sector.

Another key sector in my riding, which many members might find unusual, perhaps, is actually the agri-food sector. Yes, Etobicoke–Lakeshore is in the middle of Toronto and the GTA, but we are home to the Ontario Food Terminal and we are home to dozens upon dozens of food warehousing and food processing and food product manufacturing companies. Our support and investments in that sector are crucial to the Toronto economy and to the provincial economy, and the partnerships that this government creates in the agri-food sector are crucial to moving us forward and will continue to move us forward so we have a sustainable province.

In terms of sustainability, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud that this government has acknowledged climate change to the extent that we have a Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. For the residents of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, this is not an abstract point. During last summer's by-election, on July 8, there was a massive storm that literally hovered above Etobicoke–Lakeshore on that day, flooding some parts of my riding to the same extent as they were flooded by the infamous Hurricane Hazel in the 1950s. I observed people being carried out of their homes by brave firefighters on that night because of the flooding and the overflowing creeks and rivers in the community. While it's easy to say that was a freak storm, in December of last year we had an ice storm. Again, large parts of Toronto and large parts of Etobicoke–Lakeshore were profoundly affected by it. It is no longer a matter of scientific debate whether climate change exists, it's a reality; and this government is making investments to create a more sustainable energy sector and to provide support to municipalities to build the kind of infrastructure that will help us withstand the challenges of the decades ahead.

This government is also a very compassionate government that cares about improving health care, improving long-term care and providing more support for seniors to stay in their homes. This is a government that is also focused on making sure that those who provide essential services to the most vulnerable people in our province can make a living wage. I was shocked, as a citizen, that our party was the only party that came out strongly in favour of increases to the minimum wage when this government brought that forward. This government brought forward increases in pay for personal support workers—also very important. I know, from when my mother required that kind of service, how difficult it was to get and how caring those people were. They deserve to be treated well, and this government is going to make sure that they are.

It's also very important that this government is thinking in the long term, not just in a four-year election cycle. It's thinking about the retirement maybe not of me but of my daughter, by creating a pension fund that, really, our federal counterparts should assist us with—they have the CPP—but they choose not to. Under the leadership of Kathleen Wynne, which is real leadership—she is saying that Ontario will do the right thing for our citizens in generations to come. That is why we'll be implementing the Ontario pension plan, something that I'm very proud of, Mr. Speaker.

So this throne speech represents a vision of this province that is not abstract. It will impact the daily lives of residents across the province and of my neighbours in Etobicoke–Lakeshore immediately, by making those investments in infrastructure that are so badly needed; by helping to support job creation, and everybody agrees we need to do more to sustain that by doing it in a smart way through partnerships with the private sector; by supporting a strong education system; good health care; and supports for the most vulnerable people in our society.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that Etobicoke–Lakeshore is a microcosm of the province in many ways, and the way that this government's throne speech impacts Etobicoke–Lakeshore so positively, I am convinced it will impact every riding in this province positively. I look forward to getting to know parts of this province better as an MPP and to working with my colleagues from all parts of the province, finding out more about their problems and the solutions they want to come up with, whichever side of the aisle they come from.

Mr. Speaker, thank you, and I'm so proud to be a member of this House.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Since it is 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1758.

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Cimino, Joe (NDP)	Sudbury	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	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
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. 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	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
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 Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
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
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
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 the Environment and Climate Change
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
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 Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
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	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	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	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

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