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of Ontario

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 6 November 2014

Jeudi 6 novembre 2014

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Thursday 6 November 2014

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Jeudi 6 novembre 2014

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CHILD CARE MODERNIZATION
ACT, 2014**

**LOI DE 2014 SUR LA MODERNISATION
DES SERVICES DE GARDE D'ENFANTS**

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 3, 2014, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 10, An Act to enact the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, to repeal the Day Nurseries Act, to amend the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007, the Education Act and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 10, Loi édictant la Loi de 2014 sur la garde d'enfants et la petite enfance, abrogeant la Loi sur les garderies, modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les éducatrices et les éducateurs de la petite enfance, la Loi sur l'éducation et la Loi sur le ministère de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités et apportant des modifications corrélatives et connexes à d'autres lois.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated Wednesday, November 5, 2014, I am now required to put the question.

Ms. Sandals has moved second reading of Bill 10, An Act to enact the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, to repeal the Day Nurseries Act, to amend the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007, the Education Act and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

Second reading vote deferred.

**PUBLIC SECTOR
AND MPP ACCOUNTABILITY
AND TRANSPARENCY ACT, 2014**

**LOI DE 2014 SUR
LA RESPONSABILISATION
ET LA TRANSPARENCE
DU SECTEUR PUBLIC ET DES DÉPUTÉS**

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 3, 2014, on the motion for second 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'édition de la Loi de 2014 sur la rémunération des cadres du secteur parapublic et la modification de diverses lois.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): When this item of business was last debated, the member from Parry Sound—Muskoka had the floor.

Further debate?

M. Gilles Bisson: C'est avec plaisir que j'ai une chance ce matin d'être capable de participer dans ce débat. J'ai besoin de le dire : les libéraux sont toujours les mêmes. Ils ont des beaux projets de loi avec des beaux titres qui parlent de faire bien des belles affaires. Mais quand tu regardes les détails du projet de loi, tu vois que les libéraux sont très bons pour communiquer un concept à travers un titre, mais quand ça vient à être capables de vraiment faire les changements qui ont besoin d'être faits pour faire ce qu'ils disent dans leur « bill », c'est une toute autre affaire.

Écoute, c'est très connu que ce gouvernement, sous M. McGuinty et puis à cette heure avec M^{me} Wynne, est un gouvernement qui était plein de scandales. On a vu ce qui est arrivé avec cyberSanté, avec les ambulances aériennes Ornge et avec les centrales de gaz à Mississauga et Oakville. Dans tous ces cas et d'autres—j'en passe—le gouvernement a été vu comme un gouvernement qui était non seulement incompetent, mais aussi comme un gouvernement qui avait des problèmes à, comment dire, faire des affaires d'une manière correcte.

Donc, on voit un gouvernement qui était plein de scandales, et là, on voit M^{me} Wynne qui dit : « Je suis une première ministre qui est différente. Oh, mon Dieu! Je vais faire les affaires différemment. Moi, je ne suis pas comme ce méchant M. McGuinty. Moi, je vais faire les

affaires d'une manière qui est transparente et qui inclut le public. Je vais avoir des conversations avec le monde. Vous allez voir que ça va être bien différent. »

Mais quand je regarde ce projet de loi, c'est la même affaire qu'on a vue avec M. McGuinty : un projet de loi qui dit une affaire, mais qui, franchement, ne marque pas sur les points du titre du projet de loi. Je vais regarder le projet de loi dans une couple d'instances. Et vous allez voir, j'ai de très belles lunettes, données par ma belle-soeur, parce que j'ai perdu mes lunettes. Je les ai cassées. Ça, c'est ce qu'on appelle en anglais « my cheater glasses ».

Vous allez voir; la première partie du projet de loi, c'est la question de la compensation pour les exécutifs qui travaillent pour le gouvernement dans leurs agences et à travers le gouvernement. On l'a vu à beaucoup de reprises : quelqu'un qui travaille comme président ou la personne qui est responsable d'une grosse agence provinciale et qui d'habitude, on va le dire, est payé une couple de 100 000 piastres. On a vu des instances où les personnes ont été payées jusqu'à 1,6 million de dollars de salaire, et où la personne précédente était payée bien moins que ça.

Parce que les libéraux sont très bons à prendre soin de leurs amis, hein? Quand ça vient à leurs amis, il n'y a rien comme de s'assurer qu'ils ont l'habileté d'enligner un peu plus d'argent dans le portefeuille. Et là, le public regarde ça et ils disent : « Écoute, ça ne tient pas debout. » On voit quelqu'un qui fait un salaire qui est très élevé et on ne reproche pas au monde de le payer ce qui lui est dû pour le travail qu'il fait. Mais quand tu vois que le salaire payé avant, dans les gouvernements précédents, était beaucoup plus minime que ce que les personnes ont présentement dans ces postes-là, tu te dis : « Il y a quelque chose de différent et de mal. »

Donc, sur ce point-là on dit que quelque chose a besoin d'être fait. Ma chef, M^{me} Horwath, la chef du NPD, a dit qu'on a besoin de mettre ce qu'on appelle des « hard caps » sur les salaires pour s'assurer qu'une personne qui travaille dans ces postes-là n'ait pas plus que le premier ministre, fois deux.

La première ministre est payée combien? Je pense que c'est environ 240 000 dollars par année de salaire. Je ne suis pas sûr à 100 %. Peut-être que quelqu'un peut me clarifier sur le montant exact. Mais on dit que si la première ministre ou le premier ministre est payé un salaire pour être capable d'être responsable d'un budget de 130 milliards de dollars, certainement une personne qui est responsable pour une agence avec des responsabilités très minimes comparées à celles du premier ministre—ça ne tient pas debout que cette personne soit payée quatre, cinq ou six fois plus que la première ministre. So, nous autres on a dit : « Pas plus que deux fois. »

Voit-on ça dans le projet de loi? Non. On voit de beaux mots qui disent qu'on va faire quelque chose pour limiter les salaires payés aux exécutifs de ces agences-là, mais quand tu regardes les détails, il y a assez de trous dans le projet de loi que si on mettait de l'eau dans le seau, toute l'eau tomberait. On pourrait payer cette per-

sonne-là ce qu'on veut selon la manière de ce projet de loi-là.

Sur le deuxième point du projet de loi, on voit, par exemple, que des personnes qui ont été congédiées de leur poste parce qu'elles ont fait quelque chose de mal—on voit ce monde recevoir des paquets de « severance » qui sont beaucoup plus élevés que ce à quoi on est habitué dans le secteur public ou dans le secteur privé.

0910

Écoute, moi, quand je travaillais à la mine, si je faisais une erreur et que mon « boss » arrive un bon matin et Gerry, mon « boss », qui était—comment est-ce que j'ai pu oublier son nom? Ça, c'est grave. Anyways, Gerry Savard, disons, arrive et dit : « Écoute, Gilles, tu ne fais pas un bon job. Tu t'en vas, je n'ai plus besoin de toi. » Il ne me donnerait pas deux ans de mon salaire pour m'envoyer parce que je n'ai pas fait un bon job. Il te paye le salaire qui t'est dû, puis tu t'en vas, tu as tes « severances », tes vacances et c'est tout.

Mais dans le cas des libéraux, on a du monde qui ont été payés deux fois leur salaire annuel pour partir parce qu'ils ont fait quelque chose de mal. Écoute : paye-moi 1,6 million de dollars, puis moi, je vais aller gâcher un organisme quelque part et ils vont me payer 3,2 millions de dollars pour l'avoir gâché? Ça ne tient pas debout. C'est stupide.

Est-ce qu'on voit quelque chose dans ce projet de loi qui va changer? Non, il n'y a rien là-dedans qui va changer.

It tells me that the government is yet again doing what they do. They put a nice, shiny title on a bill. It's called the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act. If I read that, I'd think, "Man, this is great legislation. There's going to be transparency. There's going to be accountability." But there's no transparency and accountability in this legislation. This is nothing but window dressing; it's baffle-gab. It's exactly what the Liberals do best: "Let's tell you what we were talking about doing over here," but when you look over there, it's completely the opposite.

I just used the example of what happens with salaries when it comes to people working in agencies of the crown. You've got people who work at agencies of the crown who are being paid far more than what they would normally be paid if it had been under previous administrations, or as compared to other sectors within the economy. And what's worse is that if they do something wrong and get fired because they mucked up, they get severances that are worth as much as two times their annual wage. Listen, if I offered Sally who lives down the street from my place a job for \$1 million a year and I said, "If you muck it up, we'll give you \$2 million," she'll be running real quick to muck it up, if she can get the two million bucks and get the heck out. It's a silly system.

When we look at the bill, you would think that's being fixed. You would think, "Oh, my God. That is all taken care of because Kathleen Wynne says it's so. It's accountability and transparency." But when you look at the

details of the bill, we're still going to be able to pay those executives the salaries they're getting and they're still going to be able to negotiate those types of severances. That's not at all what the Premier has promised the people of Ontario by way of the title of this bill or what she talked about in the election. I think it is yet just another example of the duplicity of this government. They love to talk a good line, they love to say the right words, but when it comes to the actions, they do completely the opposite.

They're the Tories who are in a hurry. The Liberals will do things on the right wing that even the Tories wouldn't attempt to do. There are all kinds of examples of that. If you take a look at the privatization within the health system, there is more being privatized in the health system today by the Liberals than the Tories ever dreamed of doing under Mike Harris. There is more being privatized in the Ministry of Transportation when it comes to maintenance of our highways than even the Tories dared to do. There is more being privatized under the Liberals under energy and electricity than there ever was dreamed of even under Ernie Eves, who was talking about privatizing the whole thing. Even Ernie Eves backed down and got out.

So I say that the Liberals love to pretend they're a big, progressive party that is doing all the right things, but, Mr. Speaker, when you start to pull away the veil of what they're doing, they're Tories in a hurry. They do exactly the opposite of what they say. A good example, when it comes to transparency, is what they said in the last election. I think what Mr. Hudak did in promising to cut 100,000 jobs was not a very wise policy decision, public policy position, and certainly politically not very good for the Tory party, at the very least. But here's the point: The Liberals campaigned against Mr. Hudak on the 100,000 jobs that were going to be lost. If you take a look at their own budget, they're saying that 6% will be cut in each of the various ministries; and I would project that the revenues are not going to be as good as we think they're going to be in the upcoming months because of what we're seeing in the energy and resource sectors.

So the question goes to the Liberals: How many people are they going to lay off? I bet you we end up by the end of this, by way of attrition and direct layoffs, probably laying off about the same amount of people Mr. Hudak talked about in the last election. But yet these Liberals tried to make it look as if they didn't stand for that, they were completely the opposite. That is not transparency. That is just political baffle-gab; and it's politics, I think, of the worst kind because it makes people more and more cynical.

We wonder why we get 49% of the people coming to elections. I don't remember the exact number in the last election, but I remember that in the one previous to that 49% of the public voted in the provincial election—at least in my riding; I don't know what it was everywhere else. Part of the problem is that people look at that and they say, "Why should I be engaged in politics? They say one thing and they do completely the opposite."

If we're serious about providing accountability and we're serious about applying transparency to government, and we actually did what we said we were going to do, I think the public would be more engaged. I think the public would say, "Hey, I'm getting good value for my tax dollars that I'm giving the government. The government seems to be trying to do a good job"—whatever stripe that government might be—"of making sure there is accountability and transparency for decisions," but we're not seeing that.

A good example is what's happened in regard to the daycare bill that we're about to vote on later on this afternoon. We New Democrats are in favour of the bill that is being proposed. We don't think it goes as far as it should, and deals with the issues of daycare for most parents, but it's a step in the right direction. We're regulating parts of the daycare sector that need to be regulated; nobody argues that. But we asked a very simple thing. We said, "Listen, daycare is an issue across this province. It doesn't matter what community you live in." I don't care if you're from northern or southern Ontario, eastern or western Ontario, if you're a parent and you're looking for daycare, a lot of you have issues.

So why didn't we take the time, as suggested by us, the New Democrats, and the Conservatives, to actually take some time to send that bill into committee so that the public outside of Toronto—and in Toronto—can have their say about what they see in the daycare bill as proposed and what they think generally should be done around daycare? The government said, "We're transparent and we want to be accountable." Well, in this case they're transparent and accountable for two days in the city of Toronto. They're saying, "If you have an issue and you want to come and speak to this bill, come to the city of Toronto between 3:30 and 6 at night and between 6:30 and 9:30 at night, two nights, sometime in a couple of weeks from now, and you'll get to have your say."

What happens if you live in Cornwall, Ottawa, Sudbury, Timmins, Sarnia or wherever it might be? You have to either—"Well, maybe I'll watch it on the legislative channel, if I can find it." Depending on which committee room it is in, it may not even be televised live. And it's not going to be run in real time; you're going to have to stay up in the middle of the night to watch it. Maybe you can watch on the Internet if you're lucky and you have good enough bandwidth to see it. Or you're going to have to drive down to Toronto.

You know what? There's a huge province outside of Toronto. If you go to Kenora–Rainy River, my good friend's riding, and you go to Fort Frances, it's 1,600 kilometres from here. Who's going to jump in a car and drive all the way to Toronto from Fort Frances for a 15-minute presentation to a committee here at Queen's Park? You may feel strongly about the situation of daycare in your community if you come from Fort Frances, but my God, are you going to drive 1,600 kilometres to come here?

It's incumbent upon this Legislature to allow the committee to travel to some of these communities so at least

some people outside of Toronto can have their say. Was there any transparency? Was there any accountability? Mr. Speaker, the government just used its majority and said, “No, we know best. We’re Liberals. I’m Kathleen Wynne. I am the Premier. I know what’s good for Ontario. Here’s a bill and if you don’t like it, too bad. I’ll use my majority and I’ll just push this thing through the House by way of time allocation and I’ll send it to committee for a couple of days in Toronto—done.” I think that’s a bit arrogant. I was thinking that the Premier was serious in her word when she said that, in fact, she was going to engage with citizens and have real dialogue about the issues that face us.

I can’t think of an issue that is not as important to young families as is daycare. I talked about it the other day in the second reading debate. I’m a grandparent. Our daughters each have two children: a little boy and three little girls. There are two in each of the families. The ones who were in daycare are now out of daycare. They struggled in order to find some daycare spots. It’s very expensive. Luckily, our daughters and their husbands are doing well enough that they can pay for it, but they ended up in a private daycare because it’s hard to get into not-for-profit daycare; there are not enough spots available.

Clearly, there are parents who are struggling for daycare spots. What do you do if you’re not as fortunate as Natalie and Julie, our daughters, who make at least a decent wage, who can afford to pay the daycare? What happens if you’re working in a job that pays 12, 13, 14 bucks an hour and you might be the only bread-earner in your family and you have to pay for daycare? It becomes very, very difficult.

0920

So I say, this is not about transparency, Mr. Speaker. This bill is more about the government trying to be seen as doing something on an issue where people really want the government to do something. They have a big, shiny title: MPP transparency and accountability act. If you looked at the title, you would think, “Boy, that’s a good bill, because it’s all about accountability and transparency.” But when you look at the details, it’s not there.

One of the other issues we talk about is limiting the ability of lobbyists to do some of the things they’re doing now. First of all, I want to say up front that lobbyists are a necessary group of people in our system. You have to have professionals who work with organizations to do the work that has to be done to prepare them to lobby governments and opposition, to be able to move their agenda forward. That’s what lobbyists are. They shouldn’t be seen as a negative.

But we have rules here that allow the former Premier, Mr. McGuinty, who is working for an educational software company that his government gave money to when he was Premier. When he was Premier, his government gave money to this company to do work on some educational software—whatever it is they do in that company—and now Mr. McGuinty is hired as their lobbyist. I think the average person would look at that and say, “My God, is that right? Does it make any sense that the guy

who gave them money gets hired by the company that got the money?” It doesn’t look good on the surface.

There has to be some sort of mechanism where you can’t do that kind of thing, or at least have a real cooling-off period of a couple of years that you cannot be involved in something you were directly involved with as a government member or as a member of this assembly or as a Premier or as a cabinet minister. I’m not saying that an MPP who leaves this place couldn’t get a job as a lobbyist somewhere, but there have to be some sort of conflict-of-interest guidelines that say you can’t be lobbying on things that you were responsible for when you were in government, because it does look to the public, at least on the surface—it doesn’t smell well, I guess, is the only way I would put it.

The other part of this bill is that they’re posting MPPs’ expenses. This is supposed to be something that’s really great. So we’re now going to post the expenses of myself and all of our colleagues when it comes to the two budgets we have: We have one budget to run our constituency offices, which we call our global budget, and we also have our travel expenses. We get money to travel to and from the riding.

So a person like myself, I take an airplane ride once a week. The government pays for that, including the taxi. They’re saying, “Look at this. We’re going to be posting it. It’s such a wonderful thing.” It was information that was already available to anybody who wanted to find it. It was already on government websites. All we’re doing is making it a little bit easier for people to find. But let me tell you: People in my constituency who are looking for how much I spend on travel or in my global budget, as with every member in the assembly, never have a problem trying to find that, because your local papers right away will publish what it is that you spent the year before. Normally, there’s an article that is written about how Gilles Bisson is either the highest- or second-highest-spending member when it comes to travel. Normally, Kenora–Rainy River is number 1 and I’m number 2 or I’m number 1 and Kenora–Rainy River is number 2. Well, you know, surprise, surprise: My colleague and I live far away, and we take airplanes to come to work because we’re more than eight hours’ drive.

In your case, how many hours’ drive would it take you to get here? Two days?

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Twenty-one.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, it would take two days of driving. Well, excuse me, you’re not going to drive four days to come to work for a four-day workweek at Queen’s Park when we’re sitting. You’d be missing a day. So, of course she’s going to fly, and of course I’m going to fly.

To me, it’s a little bit silly. Everybody knows how much I spend every year, but somehow this is seen as transparency because it’s in the bill. It was already public information. It wasn’t as if nobody could find it. All you had to do was go to the legislative website, go searching around and you can find the report that lists how much each and every member in this assembly charged in travel and how much we charge in our global budgets to pay our staff and buy paper and pay rent.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I say this is a case where the government is saying they're going to do one thing, when it comes to having a really nice title that says it's transparency and accountability, and be seen as doing something, but in fact the details leave a lot to be desired.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mr. Yvan Baker: The other day when I stood in the House, when I followed Minister Matthews as she presented this bill, I was very proud, and I'm proud to stand here again in support of this bill. It's an important bill; it's an impactful bill. We are not just talking about accountability; we are doing something about it and strengthening it.

During the election campaign I was knocking on doors and spoke with many constituents. Many of them talked about the need to make sure that government is accountable, that it's transparent, that we get value for taxpayers' dollars. I know from my experience in business and in the private sector that one of the best ways to ensure value for dollars is that the information that shines light on how we spend those dollars is so important. Having access to that information and making sure that's available to all concerned, and easily accessible, is important. That's what this bill strives to do.

This is a signature bill, Mr. Speaker. It's a broad-ranging bill. I believe it's an impactful bill. It's going to do a number of things. I would just like to reiterate some of the highlights of what the bill does.

It enables the government to directly control compensation of senior executives in the broader public sector. We're going to gather the information we need to make sure that we make an educated and responsible decision about public sector executive compensation, and then we can impose the right frameworks to make sure we control that compensation.

It expands the Ontario Ombudsman role to include municipalities, school boards and universities.

It requires expense information to be posted online for cabinet ministers, for parliamentary assistants, for opposition leaders, their respective staff and all MPPs. I think this is important. I think the people of my community and all our communities expect no less.

It requires all institutions covered by the provincial municipal freedom-of-information legislation to securely preserve and prohibit the wilful destruction of records, to make sure that information will always be present and available.

It gives the government greater oversight over the air ambulance service providers.

It allows the government to appoint a patient ombudsman to respond to complaints and to eventually help to make changes to improve our health care system.

It's a broad-ranging bill, Mr. Speaker. It's an impactful bill. We're not just talking about transparency; we're doing something about it. The people of Etobicoke Centre deserve this; I think the people of Ontario deserve this.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I have to commend my colleague for raising such important issues on this bill. I'll be joining in the debate as well, but I think it's important to note that there is a lot that the government is simply talking about, even in the bill. The bill is really, as we've described, window dressing. There is so much in the bill that was already happening, so much more that could have been done; really, it's a form of distraction.

For example, air ambulance: All the measures in this bill would not have changed anything. The government knew very well that there were serious problems going on. The government received an audit that they requested. They hired a company, Meyers Norris Penny, and had them do an audit. The audit clearly stated there were a number of problems. They received this document. I was in the committee; I was shocked at how exhaustive that report was. It went through and showed all the problems that existed—this is years ago; this was 2009, well before the scandal broke—and they did nothing about it. Really, what needs to happen are some systemic changes to the overall structure, the way in which this government responds to red flags, the way this government responds to problems.

Speaking about the Ombudsman, it's a great idea to expand the scope of the Ombudsman, but why is the government not expanding it to the area where there is so much in terms of scandal, like the health sector—eHealth, Ornge? These are some serious concerns, and particularly serious because health is something that everyone is concerned about. So why is this government appointing a patient ombudsman when we know very well that the Ontario Ombudsman is one of the most skilled individuals in terms of oversight? It's an office that has done great work.

This government, again, is not really implementing transparency. They're simply talking about it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

M^{me} Sophie Kiwala: Premièrement, je voudrais dire que mon français n'est pas parfait, mais je voudrais dire au membre de Timmins–Baie James que c'était important de répondre en français, dans le meilleur français possible.

Au début, je ne sais pas s'il y a un mot pour « bafflegab » dans le dictionnaire, mais bon. Le troisième parti a jeté plein de « criticism » sur ce gouvernement pour le projet de loi pour « transparency » et « accountability ». Enfin, c'est quelque chose dont je me sens très fière.

0930

C'est vrai que nous sommes prêts à faire quelque chose à propos de « accountability ». Nous avons fait une campagne électorale qui soulignait ce fait-là. Ce n'est pas quelque chose pour faire distraction. C'est une loi pour dire à nos commettants que nous sommes sérieux à faire un gouvernement ouvert.

I believe that we owe it to our constituents. I stand in this House confident that this is a principle that we will abide by. It's something that we are all very proud of. I

look forward to working together to see this bill passed into law.

There is nothing more important than accountability in today's government, and we owe it to our constituents on a daily basis, with every single act that we do in this House, whether it's our expenses online—we need to make them accessible to constituents. They shouldn't be hidden in the depths of a website. They should be accessible.

I'm proud of the work that this government is doing.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

M^{me} Gila Martow: Le membre de Timmins–Baie James a parlé en français. J'aime pratiquer mon français, alors c'est très intéressant. On devrait comprendre que c'est une grande province, comme il l'a expliqué. On a des membres qui viennent de localités qui sont très loin d'ici, à Toronto, et on devrait parler avec tout le monde dans cette province en deux langues sur tous les sujets. L'accountabilité, c'est très important pour tout le monde ici en Ontario.

We need to have not just talk, but we need to have real accountability. I think we're seeing that too many people don't even go to vote at election time. Why don't they vote? Because they're not engaged, because they hear the government say one thing and do something completely different. People are very disappointed.

It's up to us to communicate with the public. That's what we're here for. We're here to represent the public, not just at Queen's Park but across the entire province. We need to hear from the public. How can we hear from the public when, as the member from Timmins–James Bay has just said, people cannot be expected to fly in or drive for two days to come and give their opinion and share their opinion?

We need to have enough times where we reach out to the public. Video conferencing could be set up in these locations, at the bare minimum, so that people are able to come to their local community centre or town hall and speak to us in the committees through video conferencing.

All the communication networks are out there. The Internet now is making us so much more accessible, and it's disappointing to me to see that we're not using it more.

Thank you very much for allowing me to speak on this.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Timmins–James Bay, you now have two minutes.

M. Gilles Bisson: Bien, premièrement, laissez-moi commenter sur l'utilisation du français à l'Assemblée. C'est très apprécié que mes collègues ont pris la chance d'être capable de répliquer à mon discours en français. N'ayez jamais peur de faire ça. L'une des députées de l'autre bord a débuté en disant : « Je ne parle pas trop bien le français. » Aucune différence : le point que la personne essaye et pratique le français, c'est l'affaire la plus importante.

Je veux faire un point sur ça. Quand on a un nouveau arrivé au Canada ou un francophone du Québec qui arrive ici en Ontario, puis il parle l'anglais, on ne s'inquiète pas s'il ne parle pas bien l'anglais. On essaye de comprendre ce qu'ils disent, et eux autres pratiquent et éventuellement ils apprennent l'anglais et puis ils deviennent plus courants. Un des problèmes qu'on voit dans le français des fois, c'est que les francophones, eux-autres-mêmes, vont entendre quelqu'un qui parle le français, puis parce que la personne ne prononce pas bien les mots ou a des problèmes à rechercher certains termes, ils vont la décourager d'utiliser le langage.

Moi, je prends l'approche complètement inverse. Utilisez votre français du mieux que vous êtes capables. Si vous avez des anglicismes dans le langage ou des mots que vous n'avez pas compris, en utilisant le langage et en demandant des questions, éventuellement, on devient plus courant. So, l'affaire qui est importante, c'est l'utilisation du langage et c'est quelque chose qui est très important.

Again, thanks to my colleagues for replying in French. I do want to say, though, that I really do see this bill as essentially a communications exercise on the part of the government. This is transparency and accountability by title; that's really what this bill is. It's not about the things that we need to do to really make transparency and accountability work.

As I said in my speech, and it was repeated by the member from Thornhill, in fact, people are disconnected and don't participate in politics exactly because politicians and governments tend to say the right things but take very little action on the things that they say they're going to do.

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

Mr. Michael Harris: It's a pleasure to have an opportunity to address Bill 8. It is of course the curiously titled Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act. I say "curious" as I don't think there has ever been a more clear example in this House of a government saying one thing and doing another. Perhaps one would say they're talking out of both sides of their mouths.

"Accountability" and "transparency" are two words with such importance when it comes to democratic governments, and certainly concepts that we on this side of the House support wholeheartedly. Yet these two words seem to lose all meaning when dragged through the mud by the Wynne Liberals. I feel it's important, as we move through this legislation, to understand just what accountability and transparency mean and how they apply when it comes to expected outcomes for this legislation under the current Wynne regime.

Let's take a clear look at these two words. We'll take "accountability" first. I have taken the opportunity to look it up, and according to Merriam-Webster, accountability is defined as, "An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions." Then they provide an example, which I will read as well, as it applies to this situation: "public officials lacking account-

ability.” I didn’t write that, Speaker, but it seems someone at Merriam-Webster must have a familiarity with this Ontario Liberal government.

So accountability is a “willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.” I submit that this willingness is clearly absent in this House. I would advise that without that willingness to accept responsibility, there is no legislation wording that will restore the principle of accountability from a government whose actions continue to ensure it is not accountable.

Just in the last couple of weeks, we see this government, despite the announcements surrounding this legislation, moving again and again to ensure it cannot be held to account. Look at the legislation that is being rammed through this House at rapid, unaccountable speed. Let’s take Bill 15, the Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act, 2014, where we just had one day of public hearings here in Toronto following time-allocated debate last week. Then one more quick day of clause-by-clause before it’s to be returned to the House and ramrodded through to shut down any sense of democratic input. How is this democratic? How is this accountable?

Last week it was Bill 18, the Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act. It’s the same story here, Speaker: time-allocated to shut down debate, one day of hearings here in Toronto to shut down input, one day of clause-by-clause to shut down amendments, and quickly back to the House. In the end, we’ll be left with neither stronger workplaces nor a stronger economy, but we will have a piece of legislation that says we do. Welcome to Premier Wynne’s Ontario, where government talks about doing the right thing but fails to walk the walk.

Talk is cheap, Speaker, and the people of Ontario deserve a government that tells them what they’re going to do and then actually does it. That’s what the people of Ontario deserve, yet we’re left with a government that brings forth snappy-titled legislation like the accountability and transparency act when its actions are clearly anything but accountable and transparent.

Of course, the fast-tracking of legislation follows hard on the heels of the government’s complete lack of accountability when it comes to allowing the people of Ontario a glimpse into the deals they’ve made to tie us to the white elephant known as MaRS, just out those front doors. Time and again, our members worked in committee to draw government out, to hold it to account on its MaRS dealing. Time and again, we were met with a solid brick wall of deniability.

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My colleague from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington was persistent in his questioning in estimates, prodding the minister to simply provide the documentation, the agreements made by this government that have left Ontario taxpayers holding onto a multi-million dollar bill that I don’t even think government members know the total of. We’re still waiting for those documents, those agreements, while government hides behind their new buzzwords “commercial sensitivity” to keep the truth from getting out.

This is a project that has left us paying \$65 million to buy out an American real estate partner while also paying interest on a \$224-million loan issued by the province itself to get a second tower built in the first place. The minister wouldn’t even tell us how much we may end up paying for the project in the end. It’s hardly accountable, Speaker. And it makes me question the government’s intentions when it comes to inserting accountability into this legislation.

What about those gas plants? I don’t think there is anyone in the entire province who would consider this government’s actions in the wake of the Liberal gas plant scandal to be accountable. It’s completely the opposite, and the games continue. Seemingly emboldened by their new majority status, this government is doubling down on its unaccountability when it comes to the gas plant debacle. Where is the accountability when the government uses its majority to refuse the justice committee from hearing the testimony of Peter Faist and Laura Miller? All those in opposition stood in a united front to increase accountability with respect to the two cancelled gas plants while, of course, the government voted to shut us down. It’s more of the same cavalier attitude that cost taxpayers \$1.1 billion, all in the name of winning the 2011 general election.

You’ll have to forgive us in opposition for being skeptical of the government’s intentions when it puts legislation before the House with laudable principles of accountability and transparency while completely ignoring those principles when the rubber hits the road. The frustrating part for us in opposition and those across Ontario watching this play out is that it doesn’t seem to matter what legislation is in place to hold the government to account and ensure transparency. This government simply pays lip service and goes on its merry way doing what it wants when it wants and sticking taxpayers with the bill.

For instance, in the case I just mentioned—the government’s refusal to allow Mr. Faist and Ms. Miller to appear in front of a committee—their testimony would not have even been required if the government had behaved in accordance with legislation already on the books in the first place. You see, there was already legislation in place to protect public archives and public record-keeping before someone from government ordered the destruction of emails. Obviously, that legislation was completely ignored, so it’s questionable how the simple addition of another clause in this legislation is now going to protect future records.

You can change the legislation but a leopard or cheetah doesn’t change its spots. In fact, a number of different pieces of legislation to bring increased and enhanced accountability and transparency have been enshrined into law right here in this assembly, but they’ve all been ignored. After every scandal, it’s the same routine:

(1) introduce legislation to make it appear like government and its agencies are finally going to do things right: be accountable, be transparent, provide proper oversight;

(2) pass the legislation and announce all is right again, and the government can be trusted—don’t worry;

(3) wait until the people aren't looking and engage in the same unaccountable actions that got you into trouble in the first place—cue crisis;

(4) stir and repeat.

We had legislation to prevent an OLG-like crisis from ever happening again. Before you knew it, there was eHealth. Then eHealth crisis-prevention legislation gave way to Ornge, and Ornge begat the gas plants. The cycle just goes on and on, and at no time does it appear that this government actually gets it, actually understands what it is doing to prevent the very accountability and transparency that it pretends to defend. If it sounds frustrating, that's because it is. We have had more than a decade of this back-and-forth gamesmanship, and now we see the latest chapter with Bill 8.

Let's get back to the so-called accountability and transparency act. We have dealt with the accountability piece, or lack thereof, so now what about transparency? Again, when we flip through the Merriam-Webster, we learn that transparency is defined as "The quality or state of being transparent, free from pretense or deceit, characterized by visibility or accessibility of information, especially concerning business." These are all qualities we want to see in government, all qualities we should aspire to in this House, and while I support the initiatives towards transparency, I question once more the government's ability to make good on this goal.

I already told you about the MaRS questioning in committee. So, too, in the House during question period, we in the official opposition were stymied by a government and a Premier that simply refuse to be responsible, to be transparent. After the minister refused to release the business case for the MaRS loan and other relevant information related to the MaRS bailout in committee, Premier Wynne herself followed up in this House, refusing to release or even acknowledge that a business case existed that showed the MaRS phase 2 bailout of over \$309 million was in fact in the best interest of the Ontario taxpayers—they want to know.

This is a Premier that was supposed to be changing the scandal-plagued Liberal government, supposed to be ushering in a new era of openness and transparency. This is simply not the case. It makes me question the purpose of legislation like Bill 8 if it is going to be completely ignored once it's on the books, just like so many others in the past. I'm further concerned when I see members of this government—new members of cabinet who we hope aspire to be different when it comes to transparency—show that in reality it is the same old same old for a government that refuses to meet its responsibilities.

That concern was clearly front and centre again in estimates last week when we had the Minister of Transportation appear before the committee to answer questions on his ministry's plans moving down the road, a very important file as we continue to hear government make a pledge of \$29 billion to spend over the next 10 years on critical pieces of infrastructure—but I will remind them that they have been around for about 11.

This minister was asked for documentation, business plans and background material for issues, including high-

speed rail from London to Kitchener to Toronto, maybe even including Windsor, the UP Express—the high-speed electronic link from downtown Union Station to the airport—LRT and more. Yet, at every turn, he refused to provide the committee with requested documentation. Further, he refused to even provide timelines on projects for his government announcements that they've actually previously announced, indicating, "I'm not here to announce specific timelines or to make confirmations."

And here is where it gets a little strange. When I asked the minister to confirm the timeline announced by his predecessor for all-day, two-way GO service to Kitchener-Waterloo in five years, his answer seemed to indicate that Liberal commitments during an election are not commitments at all. Now, I don't want to mislead or put words into the minister's mouth so I will read his reply, and you can be the judge.

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He said, "You would understand, as a veteran member of this Legislature, that there are a lot of commitments that governments make, that parties make, that individual MPPs make that are aspirational in nature...." There it was, in front of the entire committee: an admission that commitments of this government are not actually commitments at all but in fact are aspirations—aspirations.

As I said in the House to follow up on that questioning, where we come from on this side, commitments are your word; they're your promise. Where we come from, there is of course a four-letter word for those who dress up their commitments as aspirations.

I put it to the members opposite: Here we are. After years of scandal, after years of legislation paying lip service to concepts of transparency and accountability, after one of your own cabinet ministers admits that your commitments aren't what they're made out to be, how are we supposed to believe you when you tell us that your latest for-sure, we-really-mean-it-this-time commitment to transparency and accountability is anything but another measure to divert the public's attention while you move on to your next scandal? And I'm sure it will be a good one.

How are we supposed to believe that this piece of legislation, as laudable as some of its goals may be, will end up actually instilling the principles of transparency and accountability instead of being ignored like the long line of ignored ethics proposals that litter the twisted trail this government has left for us to clean up?

I know there were comments earlier that talked about the Ornge scandal. We all saw, after the committee spent hours and hours and hours interviewing folks and coming up with a report—I'd like to specifically thank my colleagues, especially retired MPP Frank Klees, from Newmarket-Aurora, for his extremely great work on this file to bring and shed some light for Ontarians on just what happened at Ornge and how it got so bad.

But how careless the former Minister of Health was, when she was in fact warned, given a letter identifying all the red flags at Ornge. I'm not sure if she just has an inability to manage correspondence, or if she simply ig-

nored the warning signs that could have prevented unnecessary deaths and tens of millions, if not hundreds of millions, of dollars that were squandered by Ornge.

We can't forget, of course—

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order: the member for Northumberland–Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Speaker, I would hope that the member will get back on track and speak about the legislation that is in front of us today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'm listening carefully, and I'll bring him back if he drifts.

Continue.

Mr. Michael Harris: I do appreciate that interjection, perhaps, to get a bit of a break.

We are talking about transparency and accountability. Now, I know your colleague from Trinity–Spadina encourages his colleagues to simply be transparent when it's good for the government, perhaps, just like the member stated. It has got to be a convenient time for us to be transparent with Ontarians. But we believe on this side of the House that that needs to happen 365 days a year, at every turn.

A report was recently tabled into the on-goings at Ornge. It was transparent. In fact, it was endorsed by the committee wholeheartedly, I suppose.

Then we can't forget about eHealth, the \$2-billion, maybe even \$3-billion, scandal that Ontarians, who still don't have electronic health records, are more than familiar with.

I guess I go back again to, how are we supposed to believe this piece of legislation will end up actually instilling the principles of transparency and accountability instead of being ignored like the long line of previous pieces of legislation to go back on? I just mentioned Ornge and eHealth.

We understand that this is simply another attempt by government to deflect from the decade-plus of scandal we are all paying for. I can assure you it's expensive.

That said, I do hold out hope that this is something more than an exercise in public relations and a continued cover-up, more than just the next chapter of scandal and denial. I hold out hope, but until I see this government actually engaging in the accountability and transparency this bill aspires to, I'm not going to hold my breath.

I'll leave it at that, Speaker. I thank you for the opportunity. I look forward to hearing questions and comments from my colleagues.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mr. Joe Cimino: Thank you to the member from the Conservative Party—very well spoken.

I sit here on this side of the House as a newer member. I can't use that phrase for too much longer, because five months have passed, but I'll still use it. As a newer member, or a new member, I'm starting to see how titles are extremely important. I can assure you, when my private member's bill comes forward, the title will match what's in the text.

I spoke for quite a long time on the fighting fraud and reducing auto insurance motion, or bill, that came forward a couple of weeks ago, or a week ago. I love the title, so I read that title and I got into the bill, and I had some support from researchers etc. Then I looked into it and it was really nothing about that. It was about having an appeal process—the courts—taken away as a right of claimants, and it was about reducing the interest rate that insurance companies have to pay for pain and suffering from the time a claim is awarded until the time it's paid. So that bill didn't really match the title.

Then I take a look at this bill that's in front of us today, the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act. I believe that every single member of this House wants exactly that. Every single person in this province wants exactly that. The problem is, the bill does not go far enough. We take a look, for example, at the salaries of public sector workers. How in-depth are we going? Are we attacking the severance packages? No. Are we attacking the bonus systems that up the salary that they actually get at the end of the year? I didn't see it in there.

Again, if we talk about transparency and accountability—and then there's the whole piece about not destroying information. It's very ironic, I would say, considering what's going on with the gas plant investigation by the OPP.

Again, I'm hoping, as time passes, that there is more accountability and transparency.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you for the opportunity to speak about the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act.

Since the beginning, the Premier has made it a top priority to make openness and transparency available for all. This is what we campaigned on, this is what the people of Ontario elected us to do, and this is what we hope to deliver on.

What are people going to get with this act? First of all, let's look at executive compensations. We want to have a look at this and try to control these compensations in the broader public sector. We want to set some fair compensation frameworks, including hard caps.

When it comes to a patient ombudsman, we want to have a person in place who is going to be able to listen to complaints from people who have gone through the health care system and have concerns. This is what we want to deliver on.

We want to also expand the Ombudsman role. This person should be able to look at municipalities, school boards and publicly assisted universities.

When it comes to MPP expense reporting, the public is going to be able to go to our websites and look up how it is that we spent their money on out-of-town riding travel, hotels related to that travel, meals and hospitality, and that will be posted online. That's going to be there in place not just for MPPs but for cabinet ministers.

This act is going to strengthen political accountability by requiring the public posting of expense information

for cabinet ministers, parliamentary assistants, opposition leaders and their respective staff.

Again, I say, this is what we campaigned on. This is what we show the people of Ontario, and this is what they elected us to do. They favour this, and they want this.

I'm hoping that our colleagues in the Legislature are going to share our commitment to openness and to work with us to pass these new measures.

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The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's a pleasure to respond to my colleague from Kitchener-Conestoga's comments on the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act. You know, it's these types of legislation brought by this government, with its long history of 11 years of scandals—

Interjections.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I know the member from Northumberland is shouting something—but really, scandals. You don't come to this job over there with a sense of integrity, or else you wouldn't be making rules up to try to make it appear that you're running a transparent and accountable government, because you have to make the rules up after you have broken most of them. It's like the old story of closing the barn door but the horse has already left.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, way gone.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, it's way past. The government is famous for lip service: they can put titles on bills that make the public think, "My gosh, they're the best and most integral and honest government out there," but really the scandals—MaRS being the most recent, the power plants, eHealth, Ornge. We've been asking for Ornge—we've asked for witnesses they will not let come forward to account about the power plants, the most recent being Laura Miller and Peter Faist—scandal after scandal. So they bring in pieces of legislation to try to—a shiny bauble over here, transparency and accountability. We have an obligation to tell the public that we don't believe that this piece of legislation is going to do anything.

Mrs. Julia Munro: We've seen this before.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, we've seen this act before; 11 years—we don't expect a lot of changes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'm pleased to be able to rise to speak to this bill with the title of "MPP accountability and transparency." I believe the bill is good in theory, but theory is not enough. The government actually needs to walk the walk, not just talk the talk. I think we've all seen over time that that's not what is happening; they're not walking the walk. It's all just lip service.

In fact, if we want to talk about transparency and openness—just a couple of days ago I was denied access to a public facility in my own riding, so I don't really understand how they can talk about openness and transparency. As a matter of fact, I haven't received an

invitation for that tour that was brought up, just to clarify that.

Also, we need to look at the public sector CEO salaries. We would like to see hard caps on those salaries, not the approach of, "We'll just keep an eye on it and see what goes on"—you know, if you like this one better than that CEO, this one's going to get paid more. There need to be hard caps on those salaries.

Back to accountability and transparency: I again bring up the gas plant scandal. We have witnesses that they're not bringing forward. The public needs to know. They deserve to know what happened, not to be shut out of any processes.

So again I say accountability and transparency—this government has not been walking the walk; it's all been lip service. It's good in theory, but my concern is that this government is not going to be really practising what it is they propose this bill to say.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member from Kitchener-Conestoga. You have two minutes for a reply.

Mr. Michael Harris: I would obviously like to thank those who had an opportunity to listen to my 20-minute remarks on this particular bill. Of course, the new member from Sudbury, I appreciate your comments on that. I know we were in committee together just last week and experienced some of those similar frustrations with the Minister of Transportation. Of course, my new colleague next door to me, from Kitchener Centre—and Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, thank you for chiming in and repeating some of the things that seem to light a fire under them. They don't like hearing about the past. We will be here each and every day to remind you of that, because as I said earlier, a leopard and cheetah don't change their spots, Speaker.

Ontarians sent us, of course, to continue to hold the government accountable, so that we can ensure we don't have \$1.1-billion power plant scandals in the future. I mean, \$1 billion. I often hear about how Obama spent \$1 billion to get elected in the United States—\$1 billion, President of the United States of America. He fundraised and raised that money on his own. We used \$1.1 billion to get a few Liberal MPPs elected here in Ontario.

Hon. Michael Coteau: What about the 407?

Mr. Michael Harris: You guys keep talking about the 407. You know what? Pensioners in Ontario and Canada will be thankful down the road that their pension is steady and wholesome because of their stake of ownership in the 407. It's the only thing you've got over there, the only thing you've got and you want to talk about; yet pensioners will have a secure pension because of their stake in such an important piece of infrastructure.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I'm now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there have been more than six and one half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned, unless the government House leader specifies otherwise.

The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport?

Hon. Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, we wish this debate to continue.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

Hon. James J. Bradley: We want to hear what he has to say.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm glad that the members of the government would like to hear my input. I appreciate that. Thank you so much. It makes me feel very warm and fuzzy.

Interjection: You are fuzzy.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I am actually warm and fuzzy, aren't I?

Because I was so kindly received, I want to start off that there are certain elements of this bill that are good, I think it's important to note. I'll quickly mention the ones particularly that we have no issue with. I think it's definitely a step in the right direction.

I'm particularly happy to see steps taken with regard to lobbyists. Schedule 8, amendments to the Lobbyists Registration Act: That's a good step and I commend you for making the right decision in terms of expanding accountability in that area. These are some of the propositions that were raised by our member from Welland; and most of the additions to this component of the bill are well received and are similar to what she had put forward in her bill.

I also want to mention that there are good amendments put forward with respect to the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act. That is an important amendment that you're proposing and I also recognize that's a good step forward in terms of accountability; as well as the amendments to the Public Sector Expenses Review Act. Those are some good areas and I think they're important.

There are certainly some good steps taken, but I have to come back to the overall name of the bill. Again, I think this is a good PR strategy and I recognize the skill that it takes to do this, but the reality is that when you have a bill with such a strong name, the contents have to match the strength of the name, otherwise it makes people somewhat cynical. The bill being named the MPP accountability and transparency act is quite a lofty name. But if you look into the bill, the substance is simply not there, in a number of other areas. The areas that I did earlier note—those are strong, those are good. But let's get into some of the areas that are really important and where the accountability is simply lacking or the transparency is lacking.

One of the first examples I'll turn to is the broader public sector executive compensation component of this bill. Now, it's good that you acknowledge there's a problem. Thank you. That's something that we salute and recognize, that you realize there's a problem. The public has complained about it, that there seems to be this runaway executive compensation in the public sector. The problem with this bill is, what is the solution that the bill is proposing? The bill says, "Hey, we're going to obtain information. Once we get that information, then we're

going to create a framework and then we'll do something about it." That's not really transparency. That's not really accountability. That's saying, "We'll do some stuff, we'll put some stuff together and maybe we'll come up with some stuff." It's very vague. It's not really anything concrete.

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Why couldn't any of this be done without a bill? You could review information of public sector salaries for executives. You're paying them, so you could review that information. There's nothing stopping you from doing that. There's nothing stopping you from putting together a framework. You could do that. There's nothing stopping you from putting together a policy on this. All of those steps could easily be taken without a bill.

What makes it cynical is when you say, "We're taking action on this. We're taking some steps on this," and your actions are not really actions. There's stuff that you can do without a bill, and the bill's not really doing anything; there's no cap. Then, you say, "Okay. We're not in a position to make a cap yet." That's fair, but then you can't put it into the bill and say, "Hey, we're going to take action on broader public sector executive compensation. We're going to do something about it." You may in the future, and I hope you do, but you're not right now. This is not taking any steps. This is nothing that you couldn't otherwise do. So that's a concern.

We proposed a hard cap. That's a starting place, saying, "Listen, there needs to be a hard cap in this province. For a public sector executive, there's got to be some level of a cap." We have caps on the Premier. The Premier who runs the entire province has a clear cap. Why can't we put a cap in place for executives? That seems to be a logical step, and that would be some action. You could say, "We're putting in a concrete cap. We'll review and modify it given the expertise and given the area we're dealing with. If it's in the health sector or the energy sector, we'll deal with it appropriately, but here's a general guideline for a cap that's subject to some changes." That would be a step, and I wouldn't be able to criticize that. I'd say, "Hey, listen, that's a step. You've definitely taken something bold and you've put in a cap." But without a cap, without even a framework for a cap, just saying, "We're going to obtain information to then maybe do a framework for something in the future" really is not doing a lot.

Schedule 2, amendments to the Ambulance Act: This is something I feel very strongly about. I spent a lot of time in the Ornge committee, the special committee struck to deal with Ornge. What we learned was quite compelling, quite dramatic. In Ornge, the Auditor General made it very clear—and let's just look at what happened. We saw that there was a serious problem. We noticed that there were some red flags. As the opposition, we raised those red flags. What happened was, all of the changes that happened at Ornge, all of the improvements that happened at Ornge: changing the entire board, getting rid of the chief executive officer, the CEO—all of these steps, in terms of improving Ornge, happened without a bill, without any new legislation.

What does that tell you? We had the tools already. This government had the tools already to actually do the oversight. They had the tools. The Auditor General said very clearly, “They had the tools; they simply didn’t use them.” That’s the problem. You can have legislation, you can strengthen the bill, you can strengthen the oversight mechanism, but at the end of the day you have to actually do something about it. If you’re not using the tools you have, it doesn’t matter how many tools you have—you could have the nicest, fanciest tools, and if you’re not going to build anything with them, you’re not building anything with them. That’s the bottom line. In this case, all of the amendments proposed would not have prevented Ornge—it’s the actions that were required, and the Auditor General makes this absolutely abundantly clear.

Given how much of a problem Ornge was, given how much of a problem we’ve seen in the health care sector in general and given the fact that that’s our largest expense—health care is our largest expense in terms of provincial expenses. The fact that, right now, as it stands with these amendments to the Ambulance Act, there is still no oversight of Ornge by the Ombudsman. In addition, Ornge is still an organization that can’t be called to the government agencies committee. It still can’t be brought in front of the committee that gives oversight to these arm’s-length agencies that do work for us as a province. It still can’t be done.

Again, the reason why I question the substance is that, at the end of the day—this is a clear example—this bill doesn’t change the accountability. It doesn’t address the Auditor General’s concerns that it wasn’t the legislation that was needed, it was action needed by this government.

We had the Meyers Norris Penny report that was released. The report clearly indicated all of the problems that existed with Ornge, yet—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

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

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Steve Clark: I want to welcome my two constituency assistants from Brockville, Renee Jackson and Rebecca Williams. They’re looking right at me, up in the upper gallery. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I’d like to welcome the parent of Danielle Beaudoin, who is a page in the Legislature here in this session. Kim Beaudoin is with us, who comes all the way from Timiskaming–Cochrane. We’d like to welcome you.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Today we have three members of Renée Grenaway’s family here. Renée is a page from my great riding of Davenport. I’d like to welcome

Renée’s mother, Sandra Grenaway, her grandmother Gloria Bradey, and their fabulous neighbour Bernadette Boyle. They’re sitting here in the members’ gallery. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: It’s my pleasure to welcome two people who are here today, Shelley Ratelband and Elaine Scriven, two very hard-working people from my constituency office. They’re in the gallery.

I also have two other people in the gallery: Gregory Van Boekel’s mother, Jennifer Van Boekel, and aunt Mary Tubbe. They’re in the public gallery this morning to make sure that Gregory is doing his job. I see he’s very attentive.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I’m delighted to have in the members’ gallery Frank Franciosa and Matt Novak, who are visiting today. Welcome.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I’m delighted to welcome students and staff from Northern Lights Public School, here in the gallery today.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I’d like to introduce two of my staff here in Queen’s Park today: Michelle Roe and Dela Horley. They keep the office in Sarnia working.

Hon. Mario Sergio: From the wonderful school of Gulfstream in my area, I have page Faith Ebanks, who has been serving during this particular session of Parliament. Her mother, Denise Lindo, is with us today. I hope she enjoys her visit to Queen’s Park.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I’d like to welcome the best constituency team in Ontario: Diane Foxton, Janet Haines, Lynne DiCocco, Sarah Ross, Victoria Stevenson, and our latest addition, Kristy May, our intern.

Miss Monique Taylor: I’m very pleased to welcome the family of our page captain Félix Nunes: mother Malika Nunes, father Carlos Nunes, grandmother Jeannine Nunes, grandfather Arthur Nunes, grandmother Juliette Losier and grandfather Jean-Yves Losier. They will be in the members’ gallery this morning. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I’m pleased to welcome Aaron Van Tassel. He is one of the OLIP interns who I’m fortunate to have in my office, and he is here with us in the members’ gallery.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I want to welcome to Queen’s Park Ms. Trish Wilde, who is in the gallery here today. Unlike in some constituency offices, Trish is all alone, looking after the Alliston office.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I’d like to welcome to the assembly today my two staff members from the constituency office, Lucille Rose and Kathy Link.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: We’ll be joined today by four members from United Way Toronto: Pedro Barata, Nauman Khan, Stephanie Procyk and Michelynn Lafleche; and from the Workers’ Action Centre: Rubeni Ahilah, Beulah Paul, Beixi Liu, Justin Chung and Karen Cocq. Please welcome them to Queen’s Park.

Mr. Bill Walker: I’d like to welcome my staff: Sandra Breedon, Karen MacInnis and Lisa LaPierre.

I’d also like to extend a very happy birthday to my colleague Randy “Milo” Pettapiece.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I know we all welcome people in the building here from Ontario Pork and the egg farmers—that makes a real nice ham and eggs combination. Those who attended their breakfast can look forward to a pork reception this afternoon at 4 o'clock.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Today is my House leader's 38th anniversary with his wife, Murielle. We should all wish him congratulations.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm very pleased to welcome the finest constituency office staff team, who work at the Wellington-Halton Hills provincial riding office, Judy Brownrigg and Karen Thomas, who are with us today.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It gives me great pleasure to introduce to the Legislature two of my constituency staffers: Nicole da Silva from my Chatham office and Sue Adamson from my Leamington office. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: From the great riding of Dufferin-Peel—Dufferin-Caledon—please join me in welcoming—

Laughter.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Actually, she lives in Brampton, so it is Dufferin-Peel, but we'll go with Dufferin-Caledon—Lavinia Trask, who actually lives in the leader's riding, and Carole Clark.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That means I get a pass on my next stumble.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: It gives me great pleasure today to welcome my executive assistant from North Bay, Andrea Stoppa, to Queen's Park.

Mr. Michael Harris: I, too, would like to welcome, from Kitchener-Conestoga's constituency office, Natalie Gleba. Thanks for joining us today at Queen's Park.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd like to introduce Lindsay Rennick, who is part of my team in Stratford, here for constituency training.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Speaker, I thought I'd go last and welcome my EA from St. Thomas, Whitney McWilliam, from the land of no windmills.

Mr. Norm Miller: I'd like to welcome, from my Parry Sound office, Jess Fargher, who is going to be here at Queen's Park today; and from my Bracebridge office, Christine Marshall, who will also be here at Queen's Park today.

M. Michael Mantha: J'aimerais introduire un vraiment bon francophone, M. Jean-Yves Losier, qui est ici comme grand-père, en train de regarder son beau petit-enfant, Félix Nunes—qui est le capitaine aujourd'hui—et aussi qui a eu la difficulté et la grosse tâche d'enseigner à un de nos membres, Taras Natyshak.

Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac): Bienvenue.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent that up to five minutes be allotted to each caucus to speak on Remembrance Day;

and that following all the remarks we rise and observe two minutes of silence.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to pay tribute and to include two minutes of silence after the tributes. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: My dad was a navy veteran. He was a brave man. His ship was torpedoed twice. He couldn't swim.

Growing up, he used to say, "Son, you haven't paid your debt to the past until you've left the future indebted to yourself." I used to wonder what he meant by that, but standing here today, I understand. In a few short days, we will gather together, heads bowed, in sombre and solemn remembrance to honour the sacrifices Canadian soldiers have made in the two great wars, in Korea, in Afghanistan and in numerous peacekeeping missions. As the sound of the Last Post touches our ears and the familiar words of Colonel John McCrae's memorial poem, In Flanders Fields, once again touch our hearts, our thoughts will be filled with sorrow for those lost on foreign battlefields, be it on the land, in the air or at sea.

1040

The contributions Canadians have made in these historic conflicts solidified our reputation as a nation that doesn't look for fights but will not shirk from them. Those who answered the call to serve defined our Canada, known across the globe as a strong, peaceful and multicultural country—our Canada, a nation that stands up in defence of freedom; our Canada, a free nation, a privilege earned by the soldier and then donated to us all.

It is our duty to remember how they died and the sacrifices they made. But it is equally important to remember how they lived—with duty, selflessness and honour—and to reflect on those who came home, our glorious veterans. Let us pay tribute to how they went on living and the values they represent, values forged in the despair of war, values learned on battlefields, values then brought home to build this great province and this great nation. How they lived.

Last week, I attended the funeral of Corporal Nathan Cirillo in my beloved hometown of Hamilton. This young man's life was taken so callously because he represented the very ideals that define Canada: strength, tolerance and peace. Those of us in attendance and, indeed, the entire nation were given the unique privilege to hear about Corporal Cirillo's life, to catch a glimpse of a proud single father who adored his little boy, Marcus; a man with an infectious smile and a huge heart; a soldier who found the greatest honour in representing his regiment, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada, while guarding our country's most treasured memorial.

Reflecting on how Nathan and all our veterans lived is truly the essence of Remembrance Day: to celebrate rich lives lost or forever changed in the defence of freedom and ideals we have come to cherish. There simply is no greater sacrifice.

They believed in a cause worth fighting for. They believed in a greater good and that their endeavours, rife

with great peril, had a purpose for future generations. What a great lesson for us all, especially each and every one of us who has been granted the extraordinary privilege to serve in this place and to try as best we can to make a difference for future Ontario generations. To make lives better for future generations, we must overcome adversity and emulate the hard-won values our soldiers have forged for us to follow.

We are indeed indebted to those who served, Speaker, both living and dead. It is our duty, as Lieutenant Colonel McRae reminds us, "To you from failing hands we throw / The torch; be yours to hold it high."

On behalf of the Liberal caucus, lest we forget not only how they died but how they lived: For to live in the hearts of those we leave behind is not to die.

The question we should ask ourselves today is, how will we live? Let us resolve to leave a future indebted to ourselves, for that surely would be the best way to remember those who showed us how to live. It is also the best legacy we could possibly leave to our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'm humbled and proud to deliver Remembrance Day remarks in this Legislature on behalf of Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

Usually, this chamber echoes with partisanship and confrontational arguments from members representing communities all across Ontario, holding strong views and beliefs on any given number of issues. However, this is an occasion when partisanship is set aside and consensus is easily reached, a time when MPPs of all parties are united in pausing together to remember and honour those Canadians who made the supreme sacrifice to defend freedom and democracy.

As we strive to represent the people of Ontario in this place, we must always remember the noble efforts of those who served to preserve and protect our just society. We debate issues of the day in this chamber in absolute freedom. It should always be remembered that this absolute freedom came with a price, and to this day it continues to come at a price.

On November 11, we will honour the thousands of Canadian men and women who risked their lives and all those who lost their lives to defend freedom and democracy and those who continue to do so today. Canadians are painfully and keenly aware that our safety and security are not taken for granted.

In less than a week, Canada saw two men who served this nation struck down. The loss of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo reminds us that the danger for our armed forces personnel begins the moment they the don uniform of public protection and service.

Those of us who had the privilege of attending Corporal Cirillo's funeral will never forget the image of his young son wearing a smaller version of his father's glen-garry, the military headdress, knowing that he will grow up without his father. It hit home for me—and, I'm sure, for all—the tremendous sacrifice that we ask of our men and women in uniform and their families.

Mr. Speaker, Remembrance Day is of special significance, whether we are 10th-generation Canadians or new Canadians. Canada and the world we know today would not be possible without the courage, valour and sacrifice of our veterans and fallen soldiers. They fought for our right to assemble. They fought for the very diversity that we prize in this country. In times of war and on peace-keeping missions around the world, our troops have served Canada with courage and resolve.

We will remember that their sacrifice made way for our liberties. We will remember the honour with which they served, which in turn shaped our democracy. We will remember that those values that we hold so dear, which include the fundamental freedoms of democracy and liberty, are a direct result of their selflessness and their patriotism. We thank them for their service that has kept and continues to keep Canada strong and free. They put our safety and our security above their own. They do this for us.

Thank you to the Canadian men and women, past and present, who served our country with brave resolve, who have risked and given their lives so that future generations could enjoy the blessings of peace and democracy. They deserve our greatest gratitude. We will remember them.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: As Remembrance Day approaches, next week, it's vitally important that we in this House do what we are doing, which is take a moment to pay tribute to our veterans and to our fallen soldiers.

I rise on behalf of my caucus and on behalf of New Democrats across Ontario to say thank you to those women and men who have served and, in some cases, given their lives for our country. We owe them an enormous debt of gratitude—a debt of gratitude to veterans and to their families. We know that without their sacrifice we would not be standing here today, enjoying the freedoms that they fought for and which we all hold so dear.

In light of the recent tragic events in Quebec and Ottawa, this year's Remembrance Day ceremonies will take on a particularly sombre tone. I would like to recognize again the two men lost to their families and to us as Canadians just a few short weeks ago. Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo will forever be remembered by the people of this country, and I ask everyone who is marking Remembrance Day next week to give special thought to their families.

1050

It is said that in war there are no unwounded soldiers. How we, as Canadians, take care of and pay respect to our veterans should always keep this fact in mind. Veterans and their families deserve respect and dignity. I think that's a value that all Canadians agree upon. This is why taking the time to mark Remembrance Day every year is so important to all of us.

Today New Democrats join with our House colleagues in the Liberal caucus and Conservative caucus to say thank you to the loyal and courageous soldiers who have and will continue to risk their lives for our safety, for our

freedom and for our democracy. We will never forget your service. We will never forget your sacrifice. We will remember you.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank the three members for their very heartfelt and powerful words. At this time, according to the unanimous consent, I would ask all members and guests to rise for two minutes of solemn quiet.

The House observed two minutes' silence.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for Deputy Premier. Deputy, in November 2008, the Ministry of Health received a letter from a whistle-blower who had worked at Ornge. In his letter of April 2008, Keith Walmsley said that there were two sets of accounting books: one was used for internal reporting and the other was used for quarterly reporting to the ministry—all with a view to hiding the surplus of money Ornge had received from the ministry.

Deputy Premier, were you briefed on the problems at Ornge raised by this whistle-blower when you first became Minister of Health in October 2009?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I know the Minister of Health would like to speak about further progress at Ornge.

As the member opposite knows, we have had years now of discussion about Ornge. The committee has met. There has been great debate in this House.

The fact is that we've moved on at Ornge. We have new leadership. When I became aware of the problems at Ornge, I worked closely with the Auditor General to ensure that he had the information he needed as he did his audit. We brought in a completely new board, new leadership and new quality improvement plans.

The answer is that Ornge is a far, far better organization now than it was when I became minister.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Deputy Premier: From my experience in having held a number of cabinet positions, the minister would have been fully briefed by ministry officials on the top issues and concerns when she first took office, and that was October 2009. So I say to you, Deputy, that it's beyond believable that you would not have been briefed on the serious allegations raised by the whistle-blower's letter.

In addition to alleging shady accounting practices at Ornge, Mr. Walmsley says, "Individuals are also benefiting far too luxuriously, for example the president's bonus of \$250,000."

Deputy Premier, how can you continue to stand up every day and insist that you knew nothing about the problems at Ornge until December 2011?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I was called to committee. I testified on three different occasions. I would be happy to send you the transcripts from that if you would like. I stand by my testimony at that committee.

What I can tell you—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Finish, please.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, what I can tell you is that, in response to concerns at Ornge, it was almost three years ago that I introduced legislation in this House to remedy things at Ornge. That bill has been debated on an astounding 23 different days in the Legislature. It was sent to committee in April 2013, more than a year ago, but both the opposition parties ganged up to refuse hearings on that issue.

It's time to vote for Bill 8 and get this matter behind us.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Leeds–Grenville will come to order.

Final supplementary.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again to the deputy: The consequences of the Deputy Premier's failure to act could not have been more serious for Ontarians. The committee learned that, between October 2009, when the Deputy Premier became the Minister of Health, and December 2011, when she says she first became aware of the problems at Ornge, there were at least two serious incidents that are now the subject of multi-million dollar lawsuits against this government. In May 2010, a patient had to undergo an amputation as a result of a delay in transport. In July 2010, a patient from the Soo area died as a result of a delay in transport.

Deputy Premier, patients have died because you sat back for two years as Minister of Health and did nothing about Ornge. How can you not feel a moral obligation to do the right thing and step down?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, I and my colleagues on this side of the House are proud of the work that the Deputy Premier did when she was Minister of Health to turn Ornge around, to make the necessary changes to restore the public's confidence in this important organization.

Not only the former minister—now the Deputy Premier—but we continue to make important changes. She has mentioned that we have new leadership: a new CEO, a new board, a new chair. This Deputy Premier introduced changes including a new performance agreement, conflict-of-interest guidelines, a patient advocate—many changes.

There are changes still required. That's why we speak to the importance of getting the opposition's support to pass Bill 8, to make those further changes and complete the transition.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier. A total of 86 Ontario municipalities have now declared that they are not willing hosts for the continued spread of green energy projects. These include the four municipalities that surround wpd's application to build eight, 500-foot—sorry, the Premier is not here.

1100

Interjection: The Deputy Premier.

Mr. Jim Wilson: The Deputy Premier—to build eight 500-foot-tall wind turbines on the flight path of the Collingwood Regional Airport.

I say to the Deputy Premier, this is the very same project that the Premier committed to personally review the weekend before she became Liberal leader, when she held a press conference in Collingwood. At the time, she said she would personally review that project.

So I say to you, when all four municipalities are against this development in my riding—because at that same press conference, the Premier said that if the municipalities are against it, they shouldn't have these projects forced on them—is your government still going ahead with this dangerous proposal to build 500-foot-tall wind turbines in the flight path of the Collingwood airport?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I recognize that it may have been a slip, but I do want to remind all members—I take it as an opportunity, not a criticism, to remind everybody we do not talk about anyone's attendance in this place.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Yes, because there's a lot missing—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me, Minister. I've already explained my circumstance. I don't need editorials. I did say that I believed it was a slip, so I wanted to leave it at that—a teachable moment.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Was Ornge a slip?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke will come to order.

Deputy Premier.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: We have looked at the procurement process for renewables, and we have a new regimen in place. In fact, there is a very current procurement going on at the present time for large renewable projects which require and will require very significant municipal participation.

On the other hand—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm not going to let it build, so stop.

Carry on.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: On the other hand, there are a number of existing contracts which are out there, which we will not break because we will have the types of liabilities which occurred, as they know, with several of our other energy projects at very significant cost.

There are communities that are asking us to break contracts for large renewable projects. There are some that are asking us to extend contracts—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary? The member from Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: This is not about old projects, Minister. These are new problems.

Placement of industrial wind turbines and the related transmission lines are causing problems all across Ontario. When you allowed the Green Energy Act to strip municipalities of their planning power, you also left those same municipalities to clean up your mess.

This summer, Dufferin Wind Power has been installing a transmission line for its wind farm in Dufferin county—this summer; now. In Melancthon, there are some transmission poles that are so close to the road, the mayor has told me they're not going to be able to safely plow that road. The municipality knew this would be a problem, raised it during the consultation in the spring, raised it with the Premier and your ministers through numerous letters, and you still allowed the company to ignore their concerns.

Is this your idea of your new consultation process?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: That party continues to ask us to break existing contracts. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, what they did—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Come to order. The clock is still running.

Carry on.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The PC plan was to cancel existing contracts. They introduced legislation which would give the Minister of Energy the right to cancel existing contracts. Our calculations would show that that would expose the provincial government to liability to the extent of about \$20 billion to cancel power purchase contracts.

They continually have risen in this House to ask us to break existing contracts and expose the province to billions of dollars in penalties—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville will come to order. The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, who's not in his seat, will come to order.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: This is about public safety, and that is your job.

Speaker, I'd like a page to bring the minister a picture—so that you start to understand how close the utility poles are to the existing roadway. If these poles aren't relocated, Melancthon may be forced to redesign the road to ensure safety and allow winter maintenance. The Minister of Energy or the Minister of Transportation could direct that these transmission lines be moved, so that Melancthon residents are not forced to pay the additional costs of redesigning the road. Will you do it?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member knows that there's an environmental process—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Huron–Bruce will come to order. The member from Simcoe North will come to order. And some are getting close to warnings.

Carry on.

Mr. John Yakabuski: You couldn't bear to look at the picture.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke will come to order—two.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I have a quote here from the member from Nipissing when he was mayor.

Interjections.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The MPP from Nipissing said, "Taking advantage of locally available green power resources is a good fit with the long-range development strategy we have for the community. I am particularly pleased with the relationship we have struck with West Wind Development ... for the first half of the project. I am confident that the company's reputation as a responsible wind power developer can put North Bay 'on the map' as a showcase for the sensitive and responsible development of this great renewable energy resource."

Mr. Speaker, they continually stand up and challenge us to cancel existing contracts which will expose the province to \$20 billion—

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

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: There is a process for environmental assessment—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I stand. You sit. New question.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Deputy Premier. I want to ask the Deputy Premier an extremely important question. It's a question that matters to Ontarians in every corner of this province. How many people will this government fire as part of the Liberal austerity budget?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I can assure the leader of the third party that our government is determined to get to balance by 2017-18, but we would not do it at the expense of our growing economy.

We have a plan in place that will get us to balance. I have been appointed as President of Treasury Board with a strong Treasury Board. We are looking very closely at how we can get better value for the money we spend, so that we can provide better services to the people of this province. The status quo is not an option. We must get to work and get the best value possible for every tax dollar.

I look forward to working with the NDP because I think they may even have some good ideas on how to continue to get better value for our hard-earned dollars.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Liberal austerity budget will cut 6% from most ministries each and every year. Don Drummond looked at the Liberal budget and he said that would mean 100,000 job cuts. The people of Ontario soundly rejected the Conservative plan to cut 100,000 jobs. Why are the Liberals now picking up the same plan and firing 100,000 people?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think anybody watching at home might need a little reminder that in fact the NDP built their platform—all nine pages of it, including the cover and the back cover. Their nine-page platform used our assumptions, and then they said, "We can actually go further. We can find an additional \$600-million worth of cuts."

I find it puzzling a little bit that the third party would be concerned about cuts when they actually promised to cut further and deeper—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let's just take a look at how we are doing in this province as our economy continues to improve. Since 2009, the recessionary low, we've added over half a million jobs. Our unemployment rate is down. Our job numbers are up. Last year, Ontario employment increased by 100,000 jobs. We're on the right track and we will stay on the right track.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, 1,000 jobs not coming to Windsor with the Ford plant; Windsor's transmission plant closed; Oshawa's truck plant closed; Ford's St. Thomas plant closed; St. Catharines' components plant, Navistar in Chatham—the list goes on and on.

The fact is, Bloomberg News said that the Liberal budget means the deepest cuts since Mike Harris. You know, the Premier used to say that she actually got into politics because of Mike Harris. We used to think that was to oppose him, not to imitate him. Now she's going to go even further than Mike Harris went.

1110

The Premier called the PC plan to fire 100,000 people "disastrous," but she's going to tint 100,000 pink slips with Liberal red instead of Tory blue, and she insists that that's a progressive plan. Do the Liberals think it's progressive to fire 100,000 people?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm sure the leader of the third party will be very pleased to join us in celebrating a very significant investment that is happening today in Alliston. I'm very pleased that Honda is making the Alliston facility the global lead for the very popular Honda Civic. That is very, very good news for Ontario and very good news for Alliston.

Not only, these investments—it is almost a \$1-billion investment—safeguard 4,000 highly skilled direct positions and help thousands more who are in that supply chain: Honda's investment, \$857 million over the next five years in the latest assembly and engine manufacturing technology. This is fantastic news and a sign of—

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

PUBLIC SERVICES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: If you keep jobs at Honda and still fire 100,000 people, that's 100,000 people who are still unemployed.

My next question is also for the Deputy Premier. Last week, 15 nurses in Leamington learned that they'd lose their jobs when the hospital decided that they'd be cutting the obstetrics and gynecology unit at the hospital. Not only will that put nurses out of work, it is going to make it extremely difficult for women in this part of the southwest to access ob-gyn services close to home.

What other health services in Ontario are being cut as part of the Liberal austerity budget?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm happy to speak about the Leamington hospital and the decision that was taken by the board of the hospital on a go-forward basis to close the obstetrical unit. It isn't a final decision because, in fact, it's a decision by the LHIN. In fact, the LHIN has announced already that next Wednesday they'll be having a community meeting. They're going to have an open board meeting of the LHIN specifically on this issue, including one hour set aside specifically for members of the community to speak to this important issue. Although, in fact, it was a decision by the local board of the hospital, it isn't a decision which is finalized.

I should add, as well, that currently, Windsor Regional Hospital is a—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, come to order.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: —destination for the people in Leamington. Already, roughly 50% of the women who deliver and who are from the Leamington area do already deliver in Windsor.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Two weeks ago, 40 nurses at the Timmins and District Hospital found out they would be losing their jobs, and 26 beds will disappear. So I repeat the question: What other health services in Ontario are being cut as part of the Liberal austerity budget?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I know that from time to time specific changes are made by hospitals in terms of their staffing requirements. The fact is that in the last year alone, 4,000 more nurses were employed in this province. In fact, 24,000 more nurses are working in Ontario since our party, the Liberal Party, took power in 2003.

I understand that the member opposite, the leader of the third party, wants to focus on specific incidents where human resources decisions are made—frankly, where those decisions should be made: at the locality, by the hospital, in concert with the local LHIN as well—but the reality is that we're deeply committed to the nursing profession in this province, and the evidence is that

we've dramatically increased not only our investments in that profession, but we've increased the scope of practice, the nurse practitioner-led clinics, but also 4,000 new nurses last year alone.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: When it comes to Liberal austerity cuts, the health care system is not the only victim. People for Education has reported that the Liberals have slated 125 schools for closure before 2015. That means throwing parents and students into chaos across Ontario. Can the Deputy Premier tell students and their families just what communities will be losing their local schools as part of the Liberal austerity plan?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: To the Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm always fascinated when I get these numbers that pop up out of nowhere. I can guarantee you that there has been no directive, so I have no answer to what 125 schools, because there is no list.

What I can tell you is that we do know that there are over 600 schools in Ontario which are more than half empty. We are actually spending on the order of about \$1 billion per year on empty seats. We think, on our side of the House, that it would be better—

Interjection: Change the funding formula.

Hon. Liz Sandals: That's a very good idea. We will change the funding formula.

We think, on our side of the House, that we should invest money in the children who are in our schools rather than empty seats.

TAXATION

Mr. Michael Harris: My question this morning is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, last week when our tourism critic asked for the economic analysis supporting the punitive aviation fuel tax you've placed on Ontario families, you avoided the question. Minister, let me help you with the math. We told you about the loss of 3,000 jobs and \$100 million in GDP predicted by Dr. Fred Lazar of York University's Schulich School of Business.

Dr. Lazar also told us that eliminating the tax—as in BC, New Brunswick, Quebec and Saskatchewan—could provide a \$138-million economic boost and add 52,000 additional tourists and close to 2,000 jobs. But we're going in the wrong direction. In fact, we're the only jurisdiction heading in the opposite direction.

Tell us, Minister: What is the secret? What economic analysis have you done on the impact of job and revenue losses that this aviation tax will cost?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Since we announced the modest aviation fuel tax increase of a penny, Air Canada has launched new flights from Toronto to Rio de Janeiro, Amsterdam and Panama City.

We should also note that in comparison to some other jurisdictions—and I believe they've named Buffalo as one. There are 68,000 flights in Buffalo; in Pearson in Toronto there are 420,000 flights. There are seven airlines in Buffalo; there's over 65 airlines in Toronto at

Pearson. They only serve 22 cities; in Ontario at Pearson, they serve over 180 destinations worldwide. In the analysis that he makes, they're comparing five million travellers in Buffalo; at Pearson it's over 36 million in 2013 alone.

You should also note that when they talk about the increase, which hasn't been touched since 1992—and it's a penny—they are asking the wrong level of government. If they're going to petition anybody, they should let it be known—

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

Mr. Michael Harris: Minister, as I have mentioned, every other province in Canada is going in the opposite direction from you.

As I've said before, your numbers just don't add up. In fact, you've marginalized them by characterizing the increase as a mere penny. Minister, your tax creates one of the highest—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. It cuts both ways.

Please finish.

Mr. Michael Harris: I know it's tough having to hear and be reminded of—

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

Mr. Michael Harris: Minister, your tax creates one of the highest fuel taxes in North America. That means higher ticket prices for travellers—families and business people. It means, Minister, another 400,000 travellers diverted from Ontario airports on top of the three million who already cross the border to fly from aviation-fuel-tax-free airports like Buffalo.

We've seen the headlines: The Buffalo airport will take advantage of your increases, putting on a full-court press courting travellers as well as airlines south of the border. Sunwing is just the wing tip of the iceberg.

Minister, you have no economic analysis. Will you please join us—

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

Mr. Michael Harris: Heed our call to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. I stand you sit.

Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: The marketing manager at Buffalo airport called Ontario's fuel increase insignificant compared to the federal taxes and surcharges that are being charged now.

Pearson has actually indicated that it will continue to grow, regardless of the issues that we put forward.

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The member opposite should know this: An average ticket price domestically to Vancouver from Toronto is about \$284, of which \$5.90 goes to the province of Ontario. How much goes to the federal government? Fifty-two dollars, Mr. Speaker. An international flight to Orlando: \$4 goes to the province, \$44 goes to the federal government, and \$34 goes to the US government authorities.

You should be fighting for Ontario. You should tell your cousins to stand up for Ontario and give more of that money back to us so we can invest—

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

Interjections.

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

New question, the member from Parkdale–High—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, in the middle of my sentence, will now be warned.

Interjection.

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

The member from Parkdale–High Park.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. We now know that the government only got two bidders for the Eglinton Crosstown public-private partnership—just two. With only two giant consortia bidding, taxpayers are going to pay more; that's inevitable. In fact, last year, the Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario said the government was about to overpay by half a billion dollars for the Eglinton Crosstown P3 alone. These same warnings came from ATU local 113, the Amalgamated Transit Union, the TTC and experts in the American Public Transportation Association as well.

So with the contract about to be signed, how much, in fact, will the government overpay for the Eglinton Crosstown mega-contract?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to thank the member from Parkdale–High Park for that question. The Eglinton Crosstown LRT project is one of the most exciting projects that our government has in our lineup. As the member there knows, there is already work that's under way.

Speaker, it's important to put this project, in terms of its scope and its importance, in context. The Eglinton Crosstown LRT will run about 19 kilometres through midtown Toronto, with 25 stations and stops. The province of Ontario, because of the leadership of our Premier and this government, is investing \$5.3 billion in this project. This means that the Eglinton Crosstown LRT is the largest public transit project in more than half a century here in the province of Ontario.

That work is taking place in communities represented by people like my parliamentary assistant, the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, our new member from Davenport and others. It's going to provide positive results because of the leadership that we are showing on this side and the importance that we assign to building Ontario up.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: With public-private partnerships, the public is kept in the dark, as the minister knows, while the important decisions are actually made. We don't find out about surprises like a half-billion dollar

overrun in costs or dirty diesel trains until it's way too late.

We know the plans for the Eglinton Crosstown have changed. There's no question about that. Kennedy station might need to be moved, and there will be complicated conversations and connections with TTC bus and subway lines and the TTC itself. We don't know if expensive change orders will be needed. The public is completely in the dark.

Instead of negotiating the final plans for Eglinton behind closed doors, with private contractors, will the government publicly disclose the contract requirements so we can know exactly what we are paying billions for?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Well, Speaker, I think it's important for me to say, and this has been said by the Premier and it has been said by others on this side of the House, that this is in keeping with the unfortunate mythology that this member and that caucus continue to spin about how our government moves forward with important transit and transportation infrastructure.

The member speaks about the impact this is having on people and whether they know transparently about what's happening. Speaker, in fact, my own in-laws live a stone's throw away from where this Eglinton Crosstown LRT will be built, in the neighbourhood of Dufferin and Eglinton. When I see them on a regular basis, they are excited; they are thrilled because a part of their neighbourhood will be built up over the next number of years. That's the kind of transparency that we're delivering. That's the kind of positive results that we're delivering.

Speaker, it's important to note that over the last number of months, at every opportunity, when our government has provided a plan to the people, be it in the budget, in an election platform or in the second version of the budget, that member and that party have voted to stop public transit investments, and that, Speaker, is a shame.

BUILDING CODE

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, last month you announced some significant changes to the Ontario building code. Taking effect on January 1, 2015, Ontario will now allow the maximum height of wood-frame buildings to be increased from four to six storeys.

While new to Ontario, mid-rise wood construction is common in parts of Europe, such as Scandinavia, Austria and Italy. British Columbia introduced amendments to its building code in 2009—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, come to order.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: —to allow six-storey light-weight wood-frame construction for residential occupancy. Now over 100 mid-rise wood buildings are currently built or are in construction in BC.

Minister, although mid-rise wood might be permitted in other jurisdictions, Ontarians need to know these changes are the right fit for our economy.

Speaker, can the minister explain how mid-rise wood construction will impact Ontarians?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Well, I sure can, Mr. Speaker, and I'd be delighted to do so. I want to thank the member from Cambridge for that question.

Allowing mid-rise wood construction will encourage the building of affordable housing across the province. As Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, I know this is incredibly important. In fact, some people in the building industry say it could lower the cost of some houses as much as 30%.

These changes will also give builders more choice in how buildings are designed, filling a gap in the housing market between high- and low-rise buildings, and that will certainly enhance our streetscapes.

The change will also help strengthen the forestry sector, which creates thousands of jobs and sustains the local economies of more than 260 communities across Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, mid-rise wood construction is just one way that our government is working to build Ontario up.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Minister, in my riding of Cambridge, three-storey buildings on Main Street in Galt were initially built from wood in the mid-1850s. After a devastating fire in the mid-1850s, these buildings were rebuilt in stone.

Speaker, there is some concern regarding the safety of six-storey wood-frame buildings. Many wonder about an increased risk of building fires and whether occupants' and firefighters' well-being will be compromised as a result. In addition, Ontario is moving ahead on its own mid-rise wood amendments before similar amendments are made to model the national building code.

As with any impactful province-wide change of this nature, Ontarians need to know that considerations of public safety are paramount. Speaker, through you, can the minister explain what safety—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek is warned.

Please finish.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Speaker, through you, can the minister please explain what safety measures have been incorporated into these amendments to the building code?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Well, that's a good and fair question, and it deserves a good and fair answer. Thank you.

Speaker, safety is always our number one priority when considering changes to the building code. Our choice to allow mid-rise wood construction is based on extensive public consultation with the fire service, building regulators and building professionals.

We believe our made-in-Ontario model for mid-rise wood offers the highest degree of public and firefighter safety in Canada. For example, all mid-rise wood buildings in Ontario must have stairwells and roofs built with non-combustible materials. Ontario requires all new con-

struction to meet very high safety standards, especially with respect to fire safety, and mid-rise will be no different.

Lastly, I would like to thank a couple of colleagues: the honourable member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, who first introduced a private member's bill, capably assisted by his honourable colleague from Thunder Bay, the member for Thunder Bay–Superior North.

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AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Mr. Toby Barrett: To the Minister of Agriculture: Today is the one-year anniversary of the Local Food Act, which you chose to proclaim in sections and play politics with for election purposes. We shamed you into finally proclaiming the section for increased access to local food through the tax credit for farmers who donate to community food programs, food banks, churches and other groups like that. That was an amendment based on five years' work by our colleague, the member from Sarnia–Lambton.

Applause.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Good work, Bob.

But you still haven't proclaimed other parts of the bill. You speak of being open and transparent, but today you should be publishing your first annual report on local food in Ontario. Minister, today is your opportunity to be open and transparent. Why are you saying one thing and doing another?

Hon. Jeff Leal: That question is a bit rich from that member. When it came to developing the Local Food Act, we took the opportunity to reach around to all sides of this House to put together a piece of legislation that is profoundly changing the agricultural sector in the province of Ontario. We've introduced the sale of VQA wines at farmers' markets in the province of Ontario. Since May, the sales of those VQA wines are a quarter of a million dollars, contributing to the great success of the Local Food Act right across the province of Ontario.

But the fact is that on numerous occasions I've gone out of my way to recognize the member from Sarnia–Lambton. When we did the announcement in Hamilton, I made sure that the member from Sarnia–Lambton was up front with me and gave him a chance to speak to the gathering that day and—

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: Speaker, it's a little baffling. It's been a year; there's no data. One of the provisions of the Local Food Act was to publish goals and targets. Minister, you've had a bit of a rocky start, obviously, with farmers and food banks—and the needy, who would truly benefit from this kind of legislation.

Again, you talk about being open and transparent. This is a prime example of how you aren't and how you fail to live up to your own legislation. We all voted for it. Your Premier boasts of being a champion for local food, yet years later I ask, why do we still not see local food in our

schools, in our hospitals and in other government institutions? Why are you holding back? Why has that initiative not been proclaimed?

Hon. Jeff Leal: The Local Food Act has been an overwhelming success in the province of Ontario. Everywhere I go, in the north, south, east, west, I visit farmers and they continually talk about the success of the Local Food Act.

Just this morning—perhaps the member for Haldimand–Norfolk was a bit late when he came to the Egg Farmers of Ontario's omelette breakfast this morning. But again, during my remarks, I paid tribute to the member from Sarnia–Lambton, the gentleman who developed the tax credit for donations that are made by farmers to food banks in the province of Ontario. That's the way we operate on this side of the House. We recognize people who make contributions to the agricultural sector in the province of Ontario. I don't share the member's assertions at all on the Local Food Act.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Ms. Sarah Campbell: To the Minister of Natural Resources: Minister, you met with the Rainy River district delegation that travelled to Queen's Park to ask you and the Premier for your government's help with ensuring the mill in their town resumes operations. They have asked for your help—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Deputy House leader.

Ms. Sarah Campbell:—and as minister, you have a responsibility to the people of Fort Frances. You can't leave this to the two companies to solve. As minister, you need to involve yourself and your ministry in helping to broker a solution. You know as well as I do that there is more than enough wood in the Crossroute Forest to meet the needs of all parties and that, therefore, this should be a win-win situation. Minister, the Rainy River district and I are asking you to do your job and help broker a solution that creates jobs in Atikokan, Ignace and Thunder Bay, and saves the 1,000 jobs in Fort Frances. Minister, will you do that?

Hon. Bill Mauro: I thank the member for the question. She is right; we did meet with the delegation, both the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and myself, and I would describe the meeting as productive and conducive to trying to see what we can do to move the process forward. What I would say, too, is to offer my strength of support, specifically, to Roy Avis, the mayor of Fort Frances, who in my opinion is a true gentleman and who I think is one of the best mayors we have right across northern Ontario.

I've had opportunities to work with Mayor Avis previously on other files. I very much respect the position that he feels that he's in. I very much respect the position that the community of Fort Frances feels that they are in as a broader community. I understand their fear, and I understand their anxiety. As I've said in this House over

the course of the last several days, I'm committed—and have been. We've never stopped trying to work to find a solution, not only for Fort Frances but for the broader community of northwestern Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Minister, it's reassuring to hear that we have your support, but what we really need is your action. As minister, you have a responsibility to the people of Fort Frances. The mayor of Fort Frances and First Nations chiefs from across the Rainy River district came here this week to meet with you and ask you to act. They came 1,800 kilometres after the business deal fell apart because this is a government-related problem having to do with the forest licence.

Minister, the clock is ticking. I ask you again: Will you find a solution that benefits the people living in communities across the northwest?

Hon. Bill Mauro: In my first response, I referenced that I very personally can understand and be attuned to the feelings that are in the community of Fort Frances. In 2005, when the forest industry first started to go through the economic cataclysm that I think it's fair to describe it as, my home community of Thunder Bay was very much affected. There were multiple sawmills and multiple pulp-and-paper mills that had been there and serviced our community for generations that closed, so I very much respect what is going on in Fort Frances.

As I've said repeatedly in the House, we are looking to try and find a solution. I would respectfully suggest, also, that the solutions that have been put forward at this point by the third party are not necessarily things that I think can work. We are open to all options. We are open to all good ideas, but we need to understand that there are other forestry operators working right across the province of Ontario who will very closely be paying attention to what we do in response to this particular situation.

LABOUR LEGISLATION

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Ma question est pour le ministre du Travail, the Honourable Kevin Flynn. The Standing Committee on General Government met earlier this week for clause-by-clause consideration of an important piece of legislation, Bill 18, the Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act. Speaker, with your permission, I'd like to commend the third party—as I often do—for joining with the government in putting forward important, enhancing and substantive amendments which ultimately strive to capture the many lessons learned during our consultations with the public and stakeholders.

But regrettably, the official opposition resorted to procedural games, filibusters and delaying tactics in an obvious attempt to derail the proceedings. They introduced hundreds—

Mr. Han Dong: Four hundred.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: —of repetitive, meaningless amendments in order to tie up the proceedings.

These disruptive efforts, I'm pleased to say, were met with sheer determination on the government side. The

committee has completed its work, and third reading debate has been completed. Can we get on with this bill?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I want to thank the member for his important and very timely question on this bill. I want to begin by thanking the majority of the members of the general government committee for the hard work, the contributions and the advocacy they've had for workers in the development of this bill—especially the Chair, the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, for the excellent work he did the other night. Passing this bill is about protecting workers in this province. We can't afford to delay it any further than these tactics already have.

One of the main features of the bill is changes to the minimum wage that are based on the consumer price index. It's going to provide certainty to workers and certainty to business, as they are able to plan for any changes in the future to the minimum wage.

In order for this bill to come into effect for workers in the province of Ontario in time for next year, this bill needs to pass through the Legislature in a very short period of time. I'm hoping that all members will support it today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: As my colleague from Trinity–Spadina reminds me, he has actually endured 400 filibuster-type amendments, so I think we have to commend the government side for that.

The workers of Ontario, I think, appreciate our overall efforts on their collective behalf. I think it's clear that we can, should and must vote in favour of Bill 18 today, particularly if our intention is to tie the minimum wage to inflation. Of course, organizationally, this has to be implemented soon, in time for next year.

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Minister, Bill 18 will be brought back to the House, I think momentarily, for a third and final reading before it's voted upon. If passed, promises to make stronger protections for thousands of workers across the province will of course emanate from this new law.

Speaker, I'd like to know: What can I report back to the people of the great riding of Etobicoke North with regard to Bill 18?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you for the excellent supplementary. The member is absolutely correct. It has been nearly a year and many, many hours of debate since we first proposed the Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act, which will, if passed—it takes very important steps to ensure that every Ontarian in this province gets the paycheque they've earned at the end of the day. It protects vulnerable workers from dangerous working situations. It makes our businesses more competitive and it ensures they treat their workers fairly. It ties annual changes in the minimum wage to inflation. We need to pass it now in order for this to take effect in 2015.

Speaker, this morning members will have a chance to vote on this important piece of legislation in third reading. I would urge all members of the House to continue

their support of this bill at third reading, just as we did unanimously as a group at second reading. I urge that support.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr. Rick Nicholls: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, the Leamington District Memorial Hospital board of directors is being forced to close Leamington's obstetrics unit due to a lack of funding. This closure will result in the firing of up to 40 good-paying jobs, including registered nurses.

Keep in mind, Minister, Leamington is still reeling from the massive job losses that hit this community earlier this year. This places Leamington's economic recovery in jeopardy, but more importantly, it puts the health of local residents in jeopardy. Mothers going into labour will now be forced to make the long drive to Windsor.

With millions of dollars spent on middle management in health care, why is there no room for Leamington's vital clinic?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm happy to speak to this issue again. I do understand that the Leamington district hospital board has made this difficult decision, on a go-forward basis—the recommendation to close the obstetrics unit or at least certainly certain elements of it, that being the birthing of children.

Many aspects of the Leamington obstetrics program, gynecological program, the board has considered and will wish to retain. The next stage of this process, as it should be, Mr. Speaker, is that the local health integration network of that region be involved. They are involved; my office has been in regular contact with them. There is, as I mentioned earlier, a public meeting next Wednesday to give the opportunity for the public to be heard on this important issue to the people of Leamington.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Back to the minister: The sustainability of health care in rural communities has to be looked at through a different lens. Minister, I understand that LDMH has in fact submitted a proposal that would incorporate midwife and ob-gyn programs that have already been acknowledged as a unique and viable program. However, the Erie St. Clair LHIN has not provided the support needed to move funding of the program forward. This LHIN has cut \$2 million in funding to LDMH.

Health system funding reform is closing rural hospitals. Your ministry is putting mothers and families at risk by not providing this funding in order to keep obstetrics in rural hospitals. By the way, Minister, LDMH has provided excellent health care in the community since 1956.

My question to you is: Why has this government broken its promise to make its decisions through a municipal lens?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I think the member opposite needs to talk to his colleague from Bruce–Grey–Owen

Sound to see what we are doing with our rural hospitals. I was with him a number of weeks ago in Markdale, announcing that the government will be constructing a brand new Markdale hospital in that small rural environment. So the truth is the opposite of what the member is trying to portray.

With respect to Leamington hospital, the services that will be retained—in fact, the board of the hospital's argument for closing obstetrics was partly because the volume of deliveries isn't sufficient to maintain the effectiveness of that unit. Roughly half of the women in Leamington currently are choosing to deliver in Windsor Regional Hospital in Windsor, but the gynecological services as well will be retained. The pre- and post-care services as well will be retained. In fact, they're adding beds. The proposal is to add beds at Leamington hospital in acute care and other aspects, to accommodate the needs of the region more.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: To the Deputy Premier: A private company is trying to cut a deal with the Hamilton Port Authority to build a waste gasification plant on Hamilton's waterfront. Residents are very deeply concerned. This plant will use immature technology that, so far, exists only as demonstration projects. With no track record, we don't know the environmental impact and what it will be at full scale.

Will this government commit to a full environmental assessment on this proposal so that we can understand how it may affect our environment?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The environmental assessment process is determined independently by scientists and experts in the Ministry of the Environment. I don't think we want to politicize that process. I think the member opposite knows how that process works.

I am happy to meet with her, one on one, to get a bit of a briefing from her on what her concerns are. We'll be very responsive. We want to make sure that the people in Hamilton have high air quality and high water quality, and that any business activity on the waterfront is consistent with protecting the environment and protecting the people of Hamilton.

I just want to commend the Hamilton Port Authority. Just in the last couple of years, they've added 12 new businesses, and the Hamilton port has now emerged as one of the largest ports for food production and transmission. Coming out of the recession, this has been one of the largest job creators in Hamilton. We're very proud of that, and I'm sure the member opposite is as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Hamilton's airshed is already overburdened with pollutants. Now the government seems poised to allow a new, unproven technology, that relies on waste as a fuel, to contribute further to the pollutants in Hamilton's air. Children and families

deserve to breathe clean air, and it's up to this government to make sure that the quality of air and the people of Hamilton are being protected.

So I will ask one more time: Will this minister commit to a full environmental assessment to protect the air and the people of my community?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: As the member opposite knows, you could not open this plant without an environmental assessment. So yes, of course there will be an environmental assessment.

I don't think we want to politicize these processes. I don't think any of us in this House are experts on this particular technology. The member opposite has said it's a new technology. It will be evaluated properly.

We have about the highest standards in North America right now on environmental protection. We're very proud of that. That's the legacy of this government and, quite frankly, her party in power as well.

This is the government here that closed all the coal plants, that has seen the largest reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. We have been leading in North America in almost every area of environmental protection, and we have no intention to back off our record on that. We take this very seriously.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. Granville Anderson: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, Ontario's nuclear facilities currently provide approximately 50% of electricity used by Ontarians. A number of our reactors are coming to the end of their life cycles.

I am aware that our government intends to upgrade our Darlington and Bruce nuclear facilities so that they continue to provide the province with reliable, safe and emissions-free power.

Minister, last week you toured the Ontario Power Generation, OPG, Darlington Nuclear Generating Station in my riding of Durham. The upgrade of the Darlington reactor is particularly important to me, as it represents a significant investment for the province as well as the very large number of people it will be creating jobs for in my riding.

Minister, could you please inform the House as to the status of the Darlington nuclear refurbishment?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I thank the member from Durham for raising this important question, particularly for his riding. Our government has put forward a long-term energy plan which includes refurbishing the nuclear reactors at Darlington and Bruce generating stations to ensure that we get the best value out of our existing infrastructure.

The refurbishment of Darlington will allow continued operation until 2055 at approximately 50% of the cost of building new nuclear. OPG is ensuring maximum efficiency in the Darlington refurbishment by allowing workers to train at a state-of-the-art training facility, including a full-scale training reactor.

Nuclear refurbishment will begin in 2016, and the plant upgrades will create almost 25,000 jobs and generate \$5 billion annually in economic activity.

1150

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for ensuring that our government is taking a significant step to ensure refurbishment in Darlington is done right. While OPG's Darlington generating station is one of the top performing nuclear stations in the world, it is still reassuring to hear that OPG will be subject to strict oversight to ensure safety, reliable supply and value for ratepayers.

During your tour last week, you stated that the government will hold OPG accountable and that we are committed to having refurbishment happen on time and on budget. Minister, could you please inform the House as to what other measures our government has in place to protect Ontario's ratepayers from cost overruns and to ensure the project moves forward on budget and on time?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, we have full confidence that the project will hit its targets, and the refurbishment schedule is spread out to ensure that further refurbishments will only proceed after the successful completion of the first unit. Our plan has built appropriate off-ramps should operators be unable to deliver the projects on schedule and on budget. We've been very clear that we will not proceed if there are significant cost or schedule overruns. The province has an independent oversight adviser to monitor progress and spending at each stage of the development. Our nuclear refurbishment contracts ensure that operators and contractors are accountable for refurbishment costs and schedules. A nuclear refurbishment will ensure we have safe, reliable, affordable, emissions-free energy where and when we need it.

Ontario has an unblemished record of 40 years in nuclear power. We're among the safest in the world, and we have a tremendous supply chain—

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

New question.

POVERTY

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question today is for the minister responsible for the poverty reduction strategy.

On November 1, Ontarians once again saw an increase of 3.7% on their energy bills. Today, social housing assistance for energy costs is based on 1997 prices. This scale no longer reflects the current realities associated with the failed Liberal Green Energy Act and a decade of Liberal mismanagement.

Stakeholders such as the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association are asking your Liberal government for a more realistic utility scale, but to date have met with no success.

Minister, can you commit to including in your strategy an updated utility scale for social housing, and, more importantly, when will you get this done?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I am delighted to be asked a question about the Poverty Reduction Strategy, because I have to say, this may be the first time, so thank you for asking about the strategy. I am hopeful that this question demonstrates a new focus from the opposition party, that reducing poverty actually does matter, because the history is not so good. They voted against the Ontario Child Benefit. They voted against all of the progressive initiatives, including most recently in this budget.

We continue to increase the Ontario Child Benefit. Our new Poverty Reduction Strategy sets a very ambitious but achievable goal of ending chronic homelessness. If I can now move forward with the confidence that I have the support of the opposition on this, I will be very, very, very pleased.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Speaker, we need achievable outcomes today, because people are going without heat. Minister, there's no excuse for turning a blind eye to today's problems that you know are hurting hard-working families across Ontario. Energy prices are going to continue to skyrocket. I'm currently hearing of residents who are using food banks so that they can save their scarce dollars to pay their utility bills. People are selling their homes because they can no longer afford to stay in them.

The United Way in my area announced last week that the utility assistance funding for 2014 is already dried up and waiting lists are running long. We don't even have an inch of snow yet, Minister.

So today, will you do the right thing, do the honourable thing, and commit right here, right now to resolve this shortfall before winter is here to stay? Do something today.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Again, Speaker, I am delighted to see this abrupt change in tone, because the PC Party actually, when they were in office, slashed social assistance by 22%. They froze ODSP, they froze social assistance benefits, they ended construction of social housing, they cut all funding for affordable housing, they even cancelled construction of units being built and—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I happen to know that there are people here who need to sit for a vote.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister responsible for seniors has done it again, and I won't tolerate it. You are warned.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Mr. Speaker, during the past election, they had a plan to slash social services that the most vulnerable people in this province depend on.

In our budget, which they voted against, we actually included in that budget that they voted against implementing a support program for low- to modest-income families that would provide—

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

AWARDS TO MEMBERS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, on a point of order.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yesterday, the Professional Engineers Ontario were here. They award annually to a member of each caucus for their hard work, and I just wanted to acknowledge the member from York–Simcoe, the member from Kitchener–Waterloo and the Minister of Community and Social Services, who received the awards last night.

VISITOR

Miss Monique Taylor: One of my guests joined us since the beginning when the formal introductions happened, so I'd like to welcome Frank Miceli to Queen's Park today.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Before we proceed, I would like to give you some sad news: that our pages are experiencing their last day today. I want to thank them for all the good, hard work that they've done.

Applause.

DEFERRED VOTES

STRONGER WORKPLACES FOR A STRONGER ECONOMY ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION DU LIEU DE TRAVAIL AU SERVICE D'UNE ÉCONOMIE PLUS FORTE

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

Bill 18, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour / Projet de loi 18, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'emploi et la main-d'oeuvre.

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

The division bells rang from 1157 to 1202.

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

On November 5, Mr. Flynn moved third reading of Bill 18. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Forster, Cindy	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm
Arnott, Ted	Gravelle, Michael	Miller, Paul
Bailey, Robert	Gretzky, Lisa	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Balkissoon, Bas	Harris, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hatfield, Percy	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Barrett, Toby	Hillier, Randy	Naqvi, Yasir

Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoggarth, Ann	Nicholls, Rick	Ballard, Chris	Gretzky, Lisa	Murray, Glen R.
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David	Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hatfield, Percy	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Bradley, James J.	Hoskins, Eric	Pettapiece, Randy	Bisson, Gilles	Hoggarth, Ann	Naqvi, Yasir
Campbell, Sarah	Hudak, Tim	Potts, Arthur	Bradley, James J.	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Chan, Michael	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq	Campbell, Sarah	Hoskins, Eric	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou	Chan, Michael	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Cimino, Joe	Jones, Sylvia	Sandals, Liz	Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Clark, Steve	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy	Cimino, Joe	Kiwala, Sophie	Sandals, Liz
Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Scott, Laurie	Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Sattler, Peggy
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sergio, Mario	Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet	Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet
Damerla, Dipika	MacCharles, Tracy	Sousa, Charles	Damerla, Dipika	MacCharles, Tracy	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter	Del Duca, Steven	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.	Delaney, Bob	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique	Dhillon, Vic	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Dickson, Joe	Martins, Cristina	Thompson, Lisa M.	Dickson, Joe	Martins, Cristina	Vernile, Daiene
DiNovo, Cheri	Martow, Gila	Vernile, Daiene	DiNovo, Cheri	Matthews, Deborah	Wong, Soo
Dong, Han	Matthews, Deborah	Walker, Bill	Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duguid, Brad	Mauro, Bill	Wilson, Jim	Duguid, Brad	McGarry, Kathryn	Zimmer, David
Dunlop, Garfield	McDonell, Jim	Wong, Soo	Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Eleanor	
Fedeli, Victor	McGarry, Kathryn	Wynne, Kathleen O.			
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Eleanor	Yakabuski, John			
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted	Zimmer, David			

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 96; the nays are 0.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

CHILD CARE MODERNIZATION
ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LA MODERNISATION
DES SERVICES DE GARDE D'ENFANTS

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

Bill 10, An Act to enact the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, to repeal the Day Nurseries Act, to amend the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007, the Education Act and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 10, Loi édictant la Loi de 2014 sur la garde d'enfants et la petite enfance, abrogeant la Loi sur les garderies, modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les éducatrices et les éducateurs de la petite enfance, la Loi sur l'éducation et la Loi sur le ministère de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités et apportant des modifications corrélatives et connexes à d'autres lois.

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

The division bells rang from 1207 to 1208.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On October 22, Ms. Sandals moved second reading of Bill 10.

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

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted
Anderson, Granville	Forster, Cindy	Meilleur, Madeleine
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul
Balkissoon, Bas	Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hillier, Randy	Pettapiece, Randy
Bailey, Robert	Hudak, Tim	Scott, Laurie
Barrett, Toby	Jones, Sylvia	Thompson, Lisa M.
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Walker, Bill
Dunlop, Garfield	McDonell, Jim	Wilson, Jim
Fedeli, Victor	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia	
Harris, Michael	Nicholls, Rick	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 74; the nays are 22.

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

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 5, this bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

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

The House recessed from 1211 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jack MacLaren: It's a special pleasure here today for us. We have our private member's bill a bit later, and we have some guests to share the day with us. I'd like to ask them to stand, please—they're all on my side—and I'll read their names as quickly as I can. David Honey is president of the Niagara Landowners Association. We have members from other county landowner association groups from across Ontario. All of these people fall into one of those categories, and I'll read their names: Moira Egan—please raise your hand—Stefanos Karatopis, Yvette Rath—Yvette was Bob Mackie's partner in life—Pat Irish, Donna Balcome, Preston Haskill, Rhonda Campbell Moon, Holly Nelson, Gregg Wilson, Roseanne Rutledge, Clarence Rutledge, Bruce Whitmore, Margaret Whitmore, Gerry Nicholls, James Scott, Ray Desmarais and Karl von Bloedau, who will be with us shortly.

Thank you, people, for being with us today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We welcome our guests. Further introductions?

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'm going to be moving a motion later on, my private member's bill, and I also have some special guests in the gallery right now. I'd like to ask Mayor Gordon Krantz, of Milton, to stand up and take a bow. Two more years and he'll be the longest-running mayor in Canada.

Also here today is someone I think you'll be familiar with: Bill Mann, CAO of Milton, also here while I read my private member's motion.

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

The Speaker is allowed a little editorial leeway. Bill and I grew up together. We were two houses away from each other. He was going to be a politician, and I was going to be a CEO. So we switched roles. Welcome, Bill. Glad to see you here.

A point of order from the member from Dufferin-Caledon.

DISPLAY OF POSTER

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I request unanimous consent to allow me to show the poster of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair during my statement.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin-Caledon is seeking unanimous consent to show her poster during statements. Do we agree? Agreed.

Unless there are last-minute introductions, it is now time for members' statements.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL WINTER FAIR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You've got a travelling billboard. I like that.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: With the able assistance of my colleague.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm honoured today to rise and recognize Cory Conley of Melancthon, in Dufferin-Caledon. Cory won this year's Royal Agricultural Winter Fair poster competition. Cory's poster design is featured on the advertisements for the Royal, which runs from November 7 through to the 16th.

For the past 92 years, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair has been the largest combined indoor agricultural and equestrian show in the world. The Royal is the Olympics of the agricultural world. It is where distinguished breeders, exhibitors and growers from across the world come to compete and crown our champions. It's an honour for those who are selected to compete.

The poster competition was open to anyone across Canada. The Royal allows people to submit their artistry in any type of medium, such as painting, photography and drawings. In this year's search for a poster, the Royal

wanted artwork that focused on finding a poster that represented the rich history of the fair and its importance in Ontario. As you can see, Cory's poster depicts a cow, a sheep, a rooster and a horse.

Cory was happy that her artistry was chosen, especially because of her own family's long history in competing at the Royal. Cory said that her painting was a tribute to the world of agriculture and farming.

Once again, I'd like to congratulate Cory Conley on winning such a prestigious award.

See you at the fair.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I'm rising today to pay respects to the people who lost their lives to protect our freedoms. Remembrance Day is a special day each year that reminds us of this, and our resolve is especially strengthened this year, in light of recent events in Ottawa.

We heard statements from each of the parties this morning and paid our respects with a moment of silence.

When I go back to my riding this coming week, I plan to further pay respects by attending Remembrance Day ceremonies and events in Devlin, Fort Frances, Manitou Rapids First Nations, Emo and Rainy River. Alongside people across Kenora-Rainy River, I will be laying wreaths at these ceremonies. With each wreath that we lay, we honour the sacrifice made by so many people who died in the line of duty. Members of the Armed Forces have been honoured on this day since the end of the First World War, and I am very privileged to be participating in the ceremonies in this way.

Remembrance Day is also a day when veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members, RCMP officers and cadets are more visible to all of us in their full uniforms, and this gives us an opportunity to appreciate them unlike any other day of the year. We are humbled by their commitment to the security of the nation and their unrelenting courage.

On Remembrance Day, I'm very much looking forward to standing alongside the people in Kenora-Rainy River, and I hope to see many proudly wearing the red poppy.

Lest we forget.

GURU NANAK DEV JI GURPURAB

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in this House to recognize a very special day for Sikhs in Canada and all over the world: Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurpurab. Today we're celebrating the birth of the first Sikh guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism. Sikhism is still based on his teachings and those of the nine living gurus who followed him. Our 11th guru is the Guru Granth Sahib, our holy scripture, a forever-lasting testament of his teachings.

Guru Nanak promoted a society without discrimination and advocated for gender equality and empowerment

of women. He taught us to believe in hard work and honesty and to share with those who are less fortunate.

Speaker, I will be participating in several Gurburab events this evening in my riding of Brampton–Springdale. I'm looking forward to the festivities and seeing many of my constituents, with whom I will eat, pray and celebrate.

Today is a special day to celebrate cultural diversity in our great province. Let us join together and celebrate Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurburab.

LOST AIRMEN IN MUSKOKA PROJECT

Mr. Norm Miller: I rise in this House today to recognize an extraordinary effort undertaken in my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka. Over the past week, the Royal Canadian Air Force has been leading operations on Lake Muskoka to recover a World War II-era aircraft that was lost over 70 years ago. The Northrop Nomad aircraft number 3521 crashed into Lake Muskoka on December 13, 1940, killing Lieutenant Peter Campbell and Leading Aircraftsman Theodore Bates.

I would personally like to recognize the efforts of the Lost Airmen in Muskoka Project, who located the plane in 2007, and others who made the recovery a reality, including: the president of LAMP, Matt Fairbrass; Ron Brent; Al Bacon; Bracebridge Legion Branch 161; and many, many other community volunteers—as well as the OPP dive team who discovered the aircraft in 2010 and the Royal Canadian Navy Fleet Diving Unit, who recovered the remains of the two airmen in 2013. With the many groups involved, one can appreciate how the success of this project has truly been a combined effort.

An event was held this past Monday, November 3, to display the wreckage before transporting it to the National Air Force Museum of Canada in Trenton, where future generations will be able to experience this piece of local wartime history. I was fortunate enough to see the recovered pieces of the aircraft myself this past weekend.

This being Remembrance Week, I can think of no more fitting time to pay tribute to those who served our country and to those whose efforts, as with the Lost Airmen in Muskoka Project, continue to help remind future generations of the immense sacrifice made by Canadians.

PRINCESS PATRICIA'S CANADIAN LIGHT INFANTRY

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to speak about the centennial year of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. This year, 2014, marks the 100th year of the regiment formed in 1914 to fight in World War I. They have since been an integral part of every major Canadian campaign.

While the regiment's headquarters are in western Canada, I am proud to say that many Patricias call London home.

To commemorate the centennial, a display team and a baton relay team made stops between Edmonton and Ottawa, including a stop in London, showcasing the regiment's history from World War I to the present day, bringing the past to life. They also carried a roll of honour that lists the 1,866 Patricias who have sacrificed their lives over the past hundred years. It was truly a touching tribute to the men and women of the Patricias and Canada's Armed Forces.

1310

In light of Remembrance Day and the recent fatal attacks on members of our Armed Forces right here in Canada, the centennial celebration of the Patricias has served as a timely reminder of the immense sacrifice of past, present and future Canadian soldiers, lest we forget the dedication of the men and women who have fought and secured our freedom with their lives.

TREES OF CARING

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Earlier today in my riding of Cambridge, a holiday tradition reached its 26th year as the Trees of Caring were lit once more. Each year, Cambridge Memorial Hospital has lit several trees with lights, each one representing a donation made to support our hospital. This year will be no different, as this morning the Trees of Caring kickoff was held at Cambridge Memorial Hospital.

As the holiday season progresses, many people, myself included, enjoy passing by and seeing an increased number of lights with each passing day, knowing their donations will purchase new equipment.

This year, as our government recently celebrated the groundbreaking of the Cambridge Memorial Hospital expansion, the fundraising efforts take on a new tone, raising money for the new and expanded sections which are now being built.

As the only hospital in Cambridge and North Dumfries, Cambridge Memorial is critically important to the livelihood of our community and the over 130,000 people that it serves.

Speaker, I want to say thank you to all the hospital staff and to wish the hospital foundation senior staff, including Jennifer White, the executive director, and Lori Muzak McComb, the senior development officer, all the best with this year's fundraising efforts.

I'll be enjoying seeing the lights go on at Cambridge Memorial Hospital, and I look forward to seeing the Trees of Caring tradition continue for many years to come.

MILTON COURTHOUSE

Mr. Ted Arnott: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to represent the people of the town of Halton Hills in this Legislature. It has come to my attention that we need a new consolidated courthouse in Milton to serve the region of Halton.

Earlier this year, I was copied on a letter to Ms. Laura Oliver, president of the Halton County Law Association, from Paul Stunt, a lawyer in Oakville. He outlined the need for “a new and adequate court facility to serve the residents of Halton region.” In response, I gave him a call and suggested he invite the Halton area MPPs for a tour of the existing, inadequate court facilities in Milton. He agreed. I was pleased to have the opportunity to tour the courthouse on September 10 and later to attend a town hall meeting of courthouse users, including lawyers, judges and staff.

I understand that the other Halton MPPs—my colleagues—are scheduled to be touring the courthouse next week. As always, I am prepared to work co-operatively across party lines with other Halton MPPs to encourage the government to approve the new courthouse we need in Halton.

I've also discussed this issue directly with the Attorney General and our Attorney General critic, and I appreciate their genuine interest.

We are seeking a briefing with ministry staff on the approval process for new courthouses, and I look forward to hearing confirmation from the AG's office, as I hope we can have this briefing as soon as it can be possibly set up.

Let's work together and get this done.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms. Daiene Vernile: On November 11, we will pause to mark Remembrance Day, but a lot of young people often ask the question, “What exactly are we remembering?” My three children, who are now in their 20s, used to ask the same question when they were much younger. As a parent, I wanted to help them find a way to understand the significance of Remembrance Day and the commitment made by Canadian men and women, many of whom paid with their lives protecting the freedoms that we enjoy today.

About 15 years ago on Remembrance Day, we visited the Legion in Kitchener, branch number 50. At the entrance, there's a wall where, etched in stone, are the names of local soldiers who lost their lives in battle. Together, we looked for the name “Fred Tucker.” That's their great-uncle, who died at the age of 23 in Holland. He was killed just a couple of days before the war in Europe ended.

That visit to the Legion to look for Uncle Fred's name became an annual tradition for our family. It helped my children make a personal connection, understanding why brave Canadians serve their country. I know that many of us have stories like this as part of our family folklore. Perhaps it was a relative who served in a battle long ago, or maybe someone in a more recent conflict.

I urge you: If you have the opportunity to help a young person reflect on the meaning of Remembrance Day, do share your stories and help them appreciate why it is that we remember.

POLISH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: I rise today to pay tribute and remember those who have served and those who have fallen in the service of their country, freedom and independence.

Of course, to Canadians November 11 marks a solemn day of remembrance. However, this day also marks Polish Independence Day. At the end of World War I, Poland was allowed to regain her independence after 123 years of partition by the Russian Empire, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. On November 11, 1918, the Second Polish Republic was founded under the leadership of Marshal Józef Pilsudski.

For Polish Canadians and Poles worldwide, the celebration of the November 11 Independence Day is a tangible reminder of the real reasons why just nations must sometimes take up arms for the preservation of a country, a national identity and, ultimately, freedom from oppression or domination of itself or other nations.

For us in Canada, Polish Independence Day also serves as a reminder of what this nation's brave men and women fought for in the Great War: the preservation of freedom and independence. For Poland, that freedom and independence was short-lived, and once again Poland and the world were plunged into armed conflict during World War II. Canadians, Poles and many others once again took up arms, side by side, in defence of freedom. That freedom for Poland was not fully regained until 1989.

Canadians and Poles were staunch allies, and Polish Canadians thank all Canadians who served not just in the defence of this country but of Poland.

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE

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

“Whereas the Ontario government is committed to providing the right care, at the right place, at the right time, and by the right health care professional; and

“Whereas patients that are not satisfied with their care deserve the opportunity to voice their concerns and seek resolutions to their complaints; and

“Whereas patients sometimes need a third party to turn to when they have exhausted all local complaint resolution processes; and

“Whereas a patient ombudsman would facilitate the resolution of complaints, investigate health sector organizations, and make recommendations to further strengthen Ontario's health care sector;

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

“That members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 8, and create a patient ombudsman.”

I support the petition and give my petition to page Alex.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport and the minister responsible for the Pan and Parapan American Games has a point of order.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to introduce a good friend, Peter Rogers, who's visiting us here at the Legislature today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's not a point of order, but welcome.

Petitions.

MISSING PERSONS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario does not have missing persons legislation; and

"Whereas police are not able to conduct a thorough investigation upon receipt of a missing person report where criminal activity is not considered the cause; and

"Whereas this impedes investigators in determining the status and possibly the location of missing persons; and

"Whereas this legislation exists and is effective in other provinces; and

"Whereas negotiating rights to safety that do not violate rights to privacy has been a challenge in establishing missing persons law;

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

"We ask that the Attorney General's office work with the office of the privacy commissioner to implement missing persons legislation that grants investigators the opportunity to apply for permissions to access information that will assist in determining the safety or whereabouts of missing persons for whom criminal activity is not considered the cause."

I sign this petition and give it to page Ben to deliver to the table.

1320

LEGAL AID

Mr. Chris Ballard: Mr. Speaker, this is a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly regarding population-based legal services funding.

"Whereas Mississauga Community Legal Services provides free legal services to legal aid clients within a community of nearly 800,000 population; and

"Whereas legal services in communities like Toronto and Hamilton serve, per capita, fewer people living in poverty, are better staffed and better funded; and

"Whereas Mississauga and Brampton have made progress in having Ontario provide funding for human services on a fair and equitable, population-based model;

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

"That the Ministry of the Attorney General revise the current distribution of allocated funds in the" 2013-14 "budget, and adopt a population-based model, factoring in population growth rates to ensure Ontario funds are allocated in an efficient, fair and effective manner."

I'll sign that and give it to page Adam.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I have a petition here that's signed by people right across this great province of Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"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."

Speaker, I agree with this petition. I will affix my name to it and give it to Rachel to bring up to the Clerk.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"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 sign my name to this petition and give it to page Ben to deliver to the table.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

BOB MACKIE ACT, 2014

LOI BOB MACKIE DE 2014

Mr. MacLaren moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 32, An Act to repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and to make a related amendment to the Ministry of Natural Resources Act / Projet de loi 32, Loi visant à abroger la Loi sur la planification et l’aménagement de l’escarpement du Niagara et à apporter une modification connexe à la Loi sur le ministère des Richesses naturelles.

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

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to tell you the story of Bob Mackie. I met Bob in 2007. This was the year the Niagara Landowners Association had their founding meeting. This was the year that the dark body called the Niagara Escarpment Commission intruded into Bob’s life. This was the year that Bob’s use and enjoyment of his private property began to end. This was the year that Bob’s seven-year battle in court began. And 2014 was the year that Bob

Mackie died. His heart couldn’t take it any longer. The stress killed him.

What terrible thing did Bob Mackie do that would make government think it was in the public interest to persecute him in court for seven years? What heinous crime did he commit? Bob’s awful offence against the people, against the crown, against the government that required the full-force infliction of the law in order that justice should be seen to be done was that he dared to operate a small archery training facility on his nine-acre rural property where he lived, near the town of Beamsville. It doesn’t get much worse than that. Thank God for the law.

Bob loved archery, and he was very good at it. So he set up a shooting range with targets and fake deer, bears and racoons in his nine-acre backyard. He also had two mobile trailers in his backyard for indoor target practice in the winter months or on rainy days. Bob gave archery lessons to schoolchildren, Boy Scouts, members of the Brain Injury Community Re-Entry program, adults; in other words, anyone who enjoyed archery.

Bob’s archery training facility was the only one in the local community, and he had the full support of the people in his community and of the municipality. Unfortunately, his next-door neighbour decided to lodge a complaint against Bob with the Niagara Escarpment Commission because of noise and traffic. Archery does not make noise and there were never more than five or six cars at Bob’s place at any one time.

The Niagara Escarpment Commission decided that Bob had committed a crime. The Niagara Escarpment Plan showed that Bob’s nine-acre property was agricultural, and nowhere in the Niagara Escarpment Plan did it say that archery was a permitted use in an agricultural operation. It did not say that archery was not permitted; it just didn’t mention archery at all. The NEC ruled that archery was not permitted on Bob’s land, and therefore he must stop his archery lessons and remove his two mobile trailers. Martin Kilian, planning staff at the Niagara Escarpment Commission, was instrumental in making this decision.

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The order was written that Bob Mackie must end his archery business. Bob decided not to comply with the order. He knew he was doing nothing wrong. He knew he had loyal customers who appreciated his archery training, and he enjoyed teaching archery to his customers.

Bob hired lawyers and spent seven years in court fighting the Niagara Escarpment Commission. In the last year, his lawyer, Terry Green of Ottawa, was on a winning track with a strategy that looked like it would win in court. Unfortunately, Bob died before he could see that winning day in court. As well, the court case died with Bob.

Bob was a man of principle who believed in fighting for his rights, and he did that right to the end. Those of us who knew Bob were very proud to call him our friend, and we admired him for his values and strong sense of what is right. Bob was one of the founding members of

the Niagara Landowners Association and, for the last year, was president. Bob and the Niagara Landowners Association helped many local people who were victims of government bullies—people like Dave White and Mark Barnfield, who were fighting frivolous, wrongful charges by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority for doing routine maintenance on their land, such as filling in a shallow puddle to level the soil. Both men were strong, fought for their rights in court and represented themselves. With the help of Bob and the Niagara Landowners Association, they won.

Jim Williams, an 88-year-old landowner who lived near Beamsville, died on April 19, 2013, of a heart attack brought on by the stress of being harassed and threatened by a Niagara Escarpment Commission enforcement bully named O.J. Macdonald. Enforcer O.J. Macdonald was aggressive and disrespectful of Mr. Williams, who was a war veteran and a long-time resident of Beamsville. The enforcer marched all around Mr. Williams's private property and told him he couldn't have his old sawmill on his property; it had been there since 1957. He couldn't pile lumber on his property; lumber is what you get from a sawmill. He couldn't bring in a few loads of soil from his neighbour's place to fill in a few gullies caused by natural erosion, which any responsible landowner would do.

By the way, his 85-year-old wife, Beth, couldn't sell dresses from a room in her house. She had had a dress shop in town for 30 years.

Is that what we mean by law and order? Is that what you would call good government? I think not. When people are afraid of government, when government starts to hurt good people, when government starts to trample upon people's private property rights, then government is wrong, and the people need to take back their rights. Thank goodness Bob Mackie and the Niagara Landowners Association were there last year to stand by Jim Williams and support him against the Niagara Escarpment enforcer bully.

Ken Lucyshyn of Walker Industries told me the story of his 10-year fight with the Niagara Escarpment Commission. Ken spent 10 years and \$10 million to expand Walker's existing quarry. At the end of the process, Walker was forced to go through another hoop, a judicial review at Osgoode Hall, that was brought on by the Niagara Escarpment Commission. The Niagara Escarpment Commission had been infiltrated by special interest groups that wanted to stop the quarry expansion. It cost another million dollars—and we wonder why infrastructure construction costs so much money, we wonder why housing costs so much money and we wonder why small operators are driven out of business. This is not the way government should be operating. Government should be helping businesses that are trying to build our communities. We need the aggregate.

The Bob Mackie Act will repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act. This means that never again will the Niagara Escarpment Commission be able to prohibit a landowner from practising archery or

operating an archery training facility on his private property. This righting of a wrong will be Bob Mackie's legacy. It is a large step forward towards restoring private property rights in Ontario. It is the beginning of a change that is long overdue. It is the beginning of reversing the tide of creeping socialism that has been slowly taking away our property rights for decades. It is the beginning of restoring the strength and good character that is needed to respect the values of our British Christian cultural heritage of freedom, democracy, common-law and private property rights that date back to the Magna Carta of 1215.

Our freedom and democracy were hard-fought for in wars and Parliaments over centuries. Freedom can only be assured in a democracy that is founded on the principle of private property rights, where these rights are secured absolutely by law. Bob Mackie's property rights were denied. We can never let that happen again.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm rising today to discuss the Niagara Escarpment. As I'm sure most of you realize, the Niagara Escarpment runs through my riding of Niagara Falls. It should come as no surprise that the escarpment is well known, not only in my riding but across the country. In fact, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization named it as one of 16 World Biosphere Reserves located in Canada. We only have five others in this country at this time.

The international community and our federal and provincial communities came together and committed to maintain the Niagara Escarpment and the land in its vicinity. They made sure that this area would stay a natural environment and ensured that development that occurs on this land is compatible with the natural development of the area.

The bill we're discussing today would affect the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, which was passed by the Bill Davis government in June 1973. The bill was designed to protect the escarpment, which is 725 kilometres of land, stretching right up to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. All of the governments after that continued this plan, until Mike Harris. The commission was almost dismantled under his watch. The budget was cut, and one third of the staff was let go, though the developers did well as they were appointed to the board that was left behind. This board even tried to undo the international protection of the land. A lot of this was undone by Premier Ernie Eves, who replaced a number of the developers on the board.

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Though the Liberals were a bit more supportive, they also contributed to destroying part of the escarpment. It was under their watch that large developers like Highland Companies began to buy up escarpment properties with a plan to turn them into quarries, destroying everything around them and wrecking the land for future generations.

The Niagara Escarpment commissioners voted to ask the province to end all aggregate extraction on the Niag-

ara Escarpment. But this government hasn't been responsive in the past, and there's no reason to believe that they'll step up and defend the escarpment in the future.

The bill we're here to discuss today was originally put forward as Bill 32 and then named after Mr. Bob Mackie. I didn't know Mr. Mackie personally, but I've been told he was a very good man who loved archery. The original intent of Bill 32 was to allow for archery ranges to be put on escarpment land, after a long battle between Mr. Mackie and the Niagara Escarpment Commission. As you can see, there's a lot of history when it comes to the escarpment.

What makes this protected land so important? The escarpment is home to forests, farms, recreational areas, some of the best scenic views in all of Canada, wetlands, rolling hills, beautiful waterfalls like Ball's Falls, mineral resources, wildlife, historic sites, and villages, towns and cities. It's one of the best-preserved areas of land we have in the entire province, an area that was set aside so our grandchildren and their grandchildren could appreciate the beauty of this great province and this beautiful country. I believe that what the Niagara Escarpment offers to the world is something that benefits us all in this great province. Around 40% of Ontario's rare flowers are found in the escarpment, along with a number of rare birds and reptiles.

Many of you here know that it's home to Canada's longest and oldest footpath, the Bruce Trail. I'm sure that there are many of my colleagues here who have probably been to the Bruce Trail. I am personally familiar with the trail. Not to date myself here, but I can remember walking the Bruce Trail as a kid—a long, long time ago.

This is important: When the Bob Mackie Act was originally introduced, it was to allow archery ranges on agricultural land. This is also important. But this bill is completely different from that bill. In fact, this bill makes no sense at all. Instead of allowing for archery ranges on agricultural land in the escarpment, this bill would pave the way for a wholesale destruction of the area. Mr. Mackie was originally proposing that an archery range be allowed to run on his land. An archery range wouldn't have destroyed the land around his property. Now they're trying to attach his name to a bill that would replace the forests and the rivers with mega quarries; a bill that would see fragile environments destroyed and replaced by whatever project that developers feel would make the most money.

This is an area that no developer should get their hands on. There are lots of places in the province of Ontario that developers can develop and make lots of money; this is not one of them. It would be a great mistake if we allowed this to happen in this House.

There's nothing in this bill that would protect this wonderful area. Actually reading what's in this bill—it repeals the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act. Let me say this again: It repeals the entire act, which has protected the escarpment for almost 40 years. For the profits of a few companies, we would destroy one of the province's most beautiful and historic tracts of

land. Why? I say "why" to my colleagues. Why would anybody in Ontario, whether you're a Liberal, a Conservative or an NDPer, want to support destroying this? It makes no sense to me. All the skiing, the camping, the swimming, the fishing, the boating, the hiking and the preservation would be gone. Gone. The intent is a lot worse than the intent of the original bill.

I know that in some areas affected by the escarpment, the landowners have had some issues from local conservation authorities. The conservation authorities have had some major problems, and there is definitely room to discuss their business. But at the end of the day, it benefits everyone in Ontario when we have authorities, commissioners, boards and agencies out there protecting our natural environment; when these groups stand up for the land we have done a good job of protecting all these years. The generations before us fought for this land and protected it. We owe it to the generations that follow all of us to make sure that we do the same.

To be honest, I'm not entirely sure where these changes in the bill come from. Quite frankly, nobody should take this seriously.

The Liberals shouldn't be smug about this either. They've done very little to protect the escarpment.

What we do know is that this land contains some of the most beautiful and historic pieces of land not only in this province but the entire country—the entire country. That's why the international community designated the land the way they did. It benefits our tourist industry when people come from all over the world to see it. It benefits our farmers, who take advantage of the rich soil found on the escarpment. Simply put, right now it benefits the people of Ontario.

We've seen representatives stand up and fight against quarry production in the past. We know that megaquarries will destroy everything past generations have worked so hard to protect. We also know that the damage would be permanent.

I can't see any reason why any Liberal, Conservative or NDPer would ever take the escarpment away from our future generations—from our kids and our grandkids. They're the ones who would be losing out because of this bill. Let's put this proposal aside and come up with ways we can work together to make sure the escarpment benefits everyone from Ontario and remains an important landmark for generations to come.

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

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It is my pleasure to stand in my place today and join the member opposite, the member for Niagara Falls, and discuss the beauty and the precious value of the Niagara Escarpment.

It's somewhat ironic that I find myself in this position today, having just come from an event where the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation honoured Ontarians for their advocacy in the protection of precious lands throughout our province, including the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine and, of course, the greenbelt. Indeed, one of the honourees, I'm proud to say, is a former sitting

member of this House, the former member of provincial Parliament for Scarborough East, whose work on Save the Rouge Valley System is well and broadly known. That celebration, in light of the topic we're about to discuss today, strikes me as passing ironic.

As Ontarians, we enjoy some of the best natural geographic heritage in the world; heritage that must be protected for future generations.

Bill 32 would repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, a piece of legislation that is designed to protect the sensitive ecosystems found all along the Niagara Escarpment. The repeal of this act would result in the immediate abolishment of the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, instruments which protect and maintain the Niagara Escarpment. When this bill was originally tabled in March, it had a much different intention, but it now has grown into something much more.

1350

Ontario's Niagara Escarpment is a working countryside and a significant component of Ontario's greenbelt. I am proud to say it is of cherished value to the citizens in my riding of Burlington and, indeed, in the neighbouring riding of my colleague the member for Halton. It is recognized both provincially and internationally as a significant landform, with a strong system of development control in place to guide development in its area. Land use control is achieved through the Niagara Escarpment Plan, Canada's first green plan, a visionary land use plan which was conceived in 1973 by the Ontario government, under the leadership of former Premier Bill Davis, through the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development act.

The escarpment is also a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, a designation that in part recognizes land use plans and development controls for areas with unique and sensitive landform characteristics. It is one of only 16 biosphere reserves in Canada and a part of a network of 631 in 19 countries. Little wonder that our Niagara Escarpment is so cherished and so desperately in need of our protection.

The Niagara Escarpment Plan is an important piece of a broader policy framework that balances the protection of our environment with a responsible approach to planning our communities.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, along with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry—of which I am proud to say I am parliamentary assistant—the Niagara Escarpment Commission and other partner ministries are working together to determine how to coordinate reviews of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Oak Ridges moraine plan, the Greenbelt Plan and the official growth plan.

Our government remains committed to protecting the Niagara Escarpment, and so the province is carefully considering options for the scope and timing of this review, during which we will engage and consult with municipalities, stakeholders and aboriginal communities. I would encourage members of this Legislature and their

constituents to participate in these important reviews. I feel that when discussing a topic as important as the Niagara Escarpment, it is vital to understand the history and significance of the area in order to fully appreciate the implications of the decisions we make.

When the Niagara Escarpment Plan was passed in 1985, it raised the standard for environmental planning in Ontario and Canada as a whole and set an example for the rest of the world.

The Niagara Escarpment is truly one of Canada's foremost scenic landforms. The escarpment soars 510 metres at its highest point and stretches 725 kilometres from the beauty of Niagara to Tobermory. Having joined the thousands of Ontarians who have cycled in the Halton Hills and beyond, I can tell you that it is indeed a formidable and majestic climb. It is a rich mosaic of land uses, including farms, recreation areas, forests, cliffs, streams, wetlands, mineral resources and historic sites. Preserving these environmentally sensitive lands in Ontario will be an ongoing challenge, to be sure, but one that is of utmost importance.

The escarpment also includes the Bruce Trail, Canada's oldest and longest continuous footpath, reaching from Queenston Heights to Tobermory and going through my riding of Burlington and the riding of my colleague the member for Halton—very important areas, Mr. Speaker, not to be trifled with.

The area includes some of the province's best skiing, camping, swimming, fishing, boating and hiking areas, as well as boasting a successful wine industry, all of which contribute to a diverse tourism industry. The Niagara Escarpment contributes an astounding \$100 million to local and regional economies through tourism every year.

Perhaps one of the most important features of the escarpment is the diverse and crucial wildlife habitat that it offers. It contains more than 300 species of birds, 53 mammals, 36 reptiles and amphibians, 90 species of fish and 100 varieties of special-interest flora, including 37 types of wild orchids. Amongst these species are 55 species at risk—canaries in the coal mine. Thirty-two are listed as endangered, 20 as threatened and three of special concern. This only goes to underline the importance of the Niagara Escarpment and ensuring that it is protected.

The area also includes many agricultural operations, which will become even more important as we deal with the effects of climate change, a rapidly growing population, expanding urban areas and increasing demands. Food security and the livelihood of our agri-food industry is an ever-growing concern and we need to take it seriously.

Repealing the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act would open up the entire area to potential development. This could put even more pressure on species at risk that are already having a tough-enough time trying to survive. Valuable farmland could be lost, forcing us to rely more heavily on food imports.

This area needs special protections, and right now it has that. To do away with all of that would not simply be

the wrong decision; it would be irresponsible. Ultimately, it is our responsibility as legislators to preserve this province and everything that it has to offer for future generations, and Bill 32 does just the opposite.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'd like to take this opportunity to participate in this afternoon's debate on Bill 32. Bill 32, if passed, would repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and, by extension, repeal the Niagara Escarpment Commission. I will not be supporting Bill 32 because, while every agency, board and commission can and should be reviewed regularly and updated, eliminating the NEC is not the solution.

From Tobermory to Niagara Falls, the Niagara Escarpment runs through my riding, north to south, in Dufferin-Caledon. Because of its unique geological feature, as other members have mentioned, the NE was designated as a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. To put this in perspective, there are only 16 other UNESCO World Biosphere Reserves across Canada. This prestigious designation gives an area international recognition for the important ecological and/or cultural values in the area. Here, in this Legislature, we should feel honoured to have such an important geological feature in Ontario. We also, by extension, have a responsibility to protect it.

To put it in perspective, other UNESCO World Biosphere Reserves include Yellowstone National Park, which was the first national park in the world and one of the first biosphere reserves. Another example is Everglades National Park in Florida, which is the largest designated subtropical wilderness reserve in North America and is home to one of the most diverse and complex ecosystems in the world. Another famous UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve is the Galapagos Islands, which are best known for their population of giant tortoises, and are of course where Charles Darwin formulated his theory of evolution. The Niagara Escarpment is part of this very exclusive club.

I agree that there are some challenges with the current NEC, and certainly there are areas within the permitting process within the NEC that need to be clarified and updated, but we should not be repealing the NEC, as it was created to preserve and cherish this unique landscape. Can we improve transparency and ensure proper oversight? Absolutely. Can the NEC planning and approval process be improved through clearer direction on the roles and responsibilities of the NEC and their board members? Absolutely. But does this mean throwing out the entire concept behind the NEC? No. That is why I cannot support this bill in its current form.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member for Windsor-Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. I didn't know Bob Mackie; condolences to Mr. Mackie's friends and relatives who are here today.

I can't support the bill, because I do sleep better at night knowing that there are authorities out there—conservation authorities, commissions, boards and agen-

cies—that work hard to save our natural environment from ourselves. We owe it to our ancestors and to our children and grandchildren to leave the world in no worse condition than when we found it. I believe that what's on the table would decimate the Niagara Escarpment, something that I value—and I hope that most of us in this room today would do so.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask everyone in the chamber to help me in welcoming, in the members' gallery, former MPP Ruth Grier, member for Etobicoke in the 33rd Parliament and Etobicoke-Lakeshore in the 34th and 35th Parliaments. Welcome.

Further debate.

1400

Hon. James J. Bradley: I will be speaking against this particular bill, which abolishes the Niagara Escarpment Commission. The Niagara Escarpment Commission is a legacy of Premier William Davis and Mr. Norm Sterling, who was in the cabinet at that time, responsible for the development of this plan.

This has had multi-partisan support over the years—almost unanimous support. It has gone through several Premiers. Some you wouldn't even expect to be supportive of the Niagara Escarpment Commission have been. I have been a strong supporter of it—of the preservation of agricultural land, of the preservation of environmental and natural resources that we need in this province.

One of my colleagues who was in the Niagara Peninsula recently said he looked up and saw the Niagara Escarpment and how beautiful it looked. There are many people out there who would love to see hotels on it, skiing resorts on it, commercial developments on it and residential developments on it.

This is a real gem. It's a biosphere reserve. It's something we in this generation have an obligation to maintain for future generations in this province.

There has been support from all political parties. I think of David Tilson, who was a predecessor to the member, who was here at that time—a very strong supporter. Premier Peterson, Premier Rae and Ruth Grier, who is in the gallery here today, all have been very strong supporters of it.

One of the problems that we have happening in many jurisdictions is a loss of land. Once it's gone, it's gone forever. I think it was Will Rogers who one time said, "They're not making it anymore."

I look at the Niagara Peninsula, for instance, which used to be a place—a gem—for tender-fruit farming. Today we have development all over it—a big mistake for future generations.

The amount of arable land that there is left in Canada, and in the province of Ontario, is very limited. I know we think our province looks big and our country looks big, but the land where you have climatic conditions and soil conditions where you can actually grow agricultural products is very limited. We do not want to be reliant upon others.

So I pay tribute to those who previously established this, with the support of everyone—established the

Niagara Escarpment Commission. Mr. Sterling was very passionate about this when he came to this House and when he was part of the Davis cabinet. Premier Davis has received accolades from many people over the years for having this plan come forward. As I say, subsequent to that, Premier Peterson was supportive; Premier Rae was supportive; Premier Harris was supportive. I've got to confess to you that I thought, when Premier Harris's government came in, we might see some substantial changes taking place. They avoided that, and for that I commend them. I think of John Snobelen, for instance, who was a minister at that time and did not make the kind of changes that some people in the province were advocating at that time.

If you go into Pennsylvania or New York state—we always think they're states with a lot of population and so on and that it's going to be wall-to-wall development. Go through Pennsylvania, go down some of the highways in Pennsylvania and you will see large tracts of rural land—beautiful landscape. If you start to erode that, if you take it away, if you give it to local people—there are a lot of people at the local level who will not be satisfied until they've paved every last square centimetre of property. Then they will say they've reached paradise. Well, I think the overwhelming majority of people in this House do not believe that, and I want to commend those who in years gone by have been protectors—first of all, establishing the Niagara Escarpment Commission and then protectors of it.

The world looks upon this as being a major gem that we have. It's something that when you lose it, you cannot get it back. When you allow the development to take place where it's appropriate, what happens is that you can't pull those buildings out. You can't get the bulldozers back, pushing the soil back in and restoring it. It's very, very difficult to do that. So I will certainly be in opposition to this resolution.

I should say, by the way, when I was first elected to this House, one of my colleagues from Grey county put forward a similar motion to this House. I don't even know if it was alone, but I stood against that resolution at that time, against the resolution that would have abolished the Niagara Escarpment Commission, because I think it's exceedingly important.

Are there changes that have to be made from time to time? Yes. Is there a review of its mandate? Yes. But this is something we should preserve, and I implore all members of this House to unanimously reject this particular proposal.

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

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Mr. Speaker, in my role of PC critic for Senate and democratic reform, I have become alarmed at the proliferation of agencies, boards and commissions and the increased delegation of governance authority to these agencies, boards and commissions from the provincial government.

Referred to in the 2012 provincial budget as “delegated administrative authorities,” or in the activist com-

munity as the “technocracy,” there is increasing concern expressed by citizens across the province, and indeed across the country, about the creation and buildup of a vast, unelected, unaccountable technocratic bureaucracy to micromanage every aspect of our lives. Canada is supposedly a free country, yet over the last several decades we have watched as governments at all levels have slowly but steadily eroded our common-law rights and freedoms.

Of course, one of the key foundations of the success of western developed nations is private property rights. The ability to buy and use land is what lures immigrants from around the world to settle here. It is the Canadian dream to buy and own a single-family dwelling to raise your family, yet since the 1970s, social engineers have seized the planning process and used it to control and restrict land, land use and availability.

This is a province where 87% of all our land is crown land, yet the provincial government has been crowding us into high-density development using a variety of excuses. First it was to house the poor, then it was to house young urban professionals, and now the excuse is to save the environment.

Currently, people seem to have lost the basic common understanding of the importance of private property rights to maintaining freedom, creating prosperity, and protecting the environment. Many people seem to think that the private property owners, without rigorous government oversight, will intentionally destroy their property and the environment. Nothing could be further from the truth. The vast majority of private property owners go to great lengths to care for and improve their property.

That is what Bob Mackie did. He invested in his property to enhance the environment and his customers' experience. For that high crime, he was persecuted through the courts for seven long years, a persecution that eventually cost his life.

So today, not only do I advocate for the repeal of the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, but also for authority delegated to agencies, boards and commissions to be repatriated back to the provincial government so that elected representatives can be held accountable for their decisions. It is unconscionable for elected representatives to wash their hands of the actual job of governing. If the provincial government wants to meddle in local planning and politics, they need to do the work themselves, not pass the buck. This is a critical issue if we are to win our rights and freedoms back, rights and freedoms that many of our ancestors fought for and died for.

Ask the high school kids and college kids if they want to be micromanaged by self-appointed experts. Ask them if they want to raise their future families in a high-rise condominium apartment or a house. Ask them if they should be able to defend themselves if they are bullied or attacked. Ask them if the government should decide what food and how much of it they should be allowed to eat. Ask them if they want to maintain their common-law rights and freedoms or be impoverished by an out-of-

touch centralized government. I suggest that the vast majority of school kids don't want to be continuously bullied by intrusive controlling government for the rest of their lives.

1410

What we do today will have grave consequences for future generations. It is time to begin dismantling the technocracy and give back to people the power to plan and live their lives as they see fit. Thank you.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'd like to stand on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say a very quick welcome—they're just leaving—to Netivot HaTorah Day School.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? Last call for further debate?

Then I recognize the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills. You have two minutes for a response.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the members who have contributed to the debate today from St. Catharines, Windsor–Tecumseh, Niagara Falls, Burlington and Dufferin–Caledon.

The Bob Mackie Act will repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act. This is a significant change. It is the right thing to do. We will be restoring private property rights, rights Bob Mackie was denied.

I ask each member of this House, this special democratic place where we have the privilege and responsibility of making decisions that govern the people of Ontario, to think carefully about the decision you are about to make; to think as an individual member and set party interests aside for a moment; to think about the importance and even the sanctity of that special place that is most important to each of us, and that is home. That is the special place where we live with our families, our loved ones. That is the special place where we go each night to rest and enjoy our families. That is the special place where we like to think we have rights, more rights than anyone else, because it is our home, and think how that special right and that special place called home needs to be protected.

As individual elected representatives, we each of us on our own have great power. Each man and woman has the absolute power of being a majority of one. I ask that each of you exercise the power as a majority of one—

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

Orders of the day.

PAN AM AND PARAPAN AM GAMES

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I move that, in the opinion of this House, we should all join together to celebrate the success and strength of our athletes and mark the positive legacy of the upcoming Pan and Parapan American Games in 2015 by recognizing July 2015 as

Pan Am Month and August 2015 as Parapan Month in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Naidoo-Harris has moved private member's notice of motion number seven. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'd like to begin by just acknowledging some other guests that I didn't get a chance to acknowledge earlier on. I would like to acknowledge Tom Saras, of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada, who is in the gallery. I'd also like to acknowledge Karen Miceli, who's with the Milton Canadian Champion; Laura Steiner, with the Milton Villager; and Seema Bakshi, from my office.

Mr. Speaker, we're just months away from the start of the Pan American and Parapan American Games in this province, and you can already start to feel the excitement in the air. Like most people in this House and across our province, I enjoy watching athletes compete at the highest level. Seeing the world's best compete allows each of us to see the best we can achieve. It shows us what we are all capable of if we work hard and strive for the top. We can't all run the 100 metres in 10 seconds. We can't all throw a discus 67 metres or score 8,000 points in the decathlon. But we can all devote ourselves to goals and follow the example of these athletes striving for perfection.

That perfection is something we will all get to experience and see next summer. That's why the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games next year are something so many Ontarians are looking forward to, including the residents in my riding of Halton. These games will transform communities in Ontario; I know they will transform my community. But perhaps most importantly, they will transform all of us into one big community during the months of July and August in the summer of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, if this motion to proclaim the months of July and August 2015 Pan Am Month and Parapan Month, respectively, moves forward, it will move everyone in this province forward together. No matter where you live in Ontario, no matter what your age, no matter where you come from, we will all cheer together with one voice. We will gather in living rooms, pubs and stadiums around the province to cheer on our athletes and celebrate our Ontario. After the roar in the stadiums, at the velodrome and around the swimming pools dies down, the sound of the Pan Am Games will echo on long after in our hearts and in our minds.

These games are what Ontario is all about. They celebrate the different cultures, different peoples and different abilities throughout the two Americas, all welcomed here into our extraordinarily open and accepting community—our Ontario. We will be cheering on our Ontario athletes and our other Canadian athletes, but we will be supporting and encouraging all the athletes who come here to strive for excellence. That's why making a special designation for July and August of 2015 is so important.

I attended a one-year countdown event in my Halton riding this past July, and you could feel the excitement

building in the air over the upcoming games. It was clear to me that Halton residents, young and old, were looking forward to taking part and playing host to a major international event. And it was inspiring to see several world-class athletes in attendance, including Olympic cyclist Curt Harnett, the great Canadian and Ontarian cyclist who emceed the event.

After speaking with residents, meeting with organizers and listening to our athletes, it's clear that the level of excitement and enthusiasm for these games is only continuing to grow.

The public's response to these games has been incredible. Within the first 48 hours of going on sale, 75,000 tickets were requested.

So far, we have had more than 33,000 people sign up as volunteers. This is all the evidence we need of a community coming together. These people are virtually getting a free passport to possibly the best seats in the house. They will be our ambassadors to our visitors and the world.

I think it's safe to say that Ontario is ready. We are ready to welcome the Americas to our front door, we are ready to compete and we are ready to win.

Mr. Speaker, as an Ontarian, I am so proud that we will be hosting the largest multi-sport games in our country's history. The size of these games is staggering: more than 7,000 world-class athletes representing 41 countries and territories competing in 51 different sports and hundreds of individual events. The events will be spread throughout 40 different venues across the province, spanning 5,300 square kilometres and 15 host municipalities, including my own. Think about it: The games will showcase Ontario to an international audience, and I know that we will be ready for our moment on the international stage.

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These Pan Am and Parapan Am Games are not only a celebration of human excellence and peaceful international competition; they are also about bringing together athletes, spectators, volunteers, organizers and local communities in the pursuit of excellence, friendship and respect. These games will also provide significant and lasting economic benefits to our province.

The games will attract tourists, create jobs and help to leverage new business investments. They are expected to grow Ontario's GDP by \$3.7 billion, attract up to a quarter of a million visitors, and create 26,000 new jobs. This will be an incredible boost to our economy. There's no question that these games will be an economic driver for our province.

In addition, there will be massive improvements to provincial infrastructure. The construction of new, world-class athletic facilities will ensure that athletes, spectators and Ontarians will reap the long-term benefits that come with hosting such a major international event. These games will transform communities, and that transformation will happen all across the province.

In fact, my riding of Halton is in the midst of such a transformation. Halton has been selected to host the Pan

Am and Parapan Am track cycling events. These events will be taking place in a brand new, state-of-the-art velodrome. Once finished, it will be the only facility of its kind in Canada and just the second in North America. It meets top international standards, giving our Canadian athletes a world-class venue where they can come to train and compete at the highest levels. This will be a great legacy piece, not just for the town of Milton but for Halton, Ontario and Canada as well. Having a world-class venue right in our own backyard in Halton gives our athletes the opportunity to train in Ontario, compete in Ontario and excel in Ontario and the world.

Perhaps the best part about the new velodrome is that it won't be just for top-level athletes. In addition to track cycling, the velodrome will be a central hub of physical activity for our local community, a place that will help to bring people closer together and encourage a more active lifestyle for local residents, regardless of age, fitness or ability. It will be open year-round and will house multi-purpose facilities to accommodate a variety of fitness activities, including basketball, volleyball, badminton and running. There will be a new fitness centre and studio space, and there will be areas that can be used to host community events and special gatherings.

It won't just be great for our community fitness and spirit; it will be great for Halton's economy as well. It will help businesses to explore new revenue streams, connect with a larger, more diverse customer base and share in the long-term economic benefits of improved development prospects.

When you think about it, it's really quite remarkable what we'll be getting out of this investment individually, socially and economically. The velodrome is but one example of Ontario's promotion, celebration and legacy strategy, a \$40-million provincial investment, spread over three years, that will be aimed at making sure all Ontarians—not just those living within the games' footprint—will feel a positive impact.

As part of the strategy, the government will be looking to expand our trail network, provide OSAP support for student volunteers, create community-based programs to promote healthy living and leadership, and support the 2015 Pan American Economic Summit to promote trade, investment and business opportunities. It is a plan that aligns with existing provincial programs and it is an excellent way for us to leverage and maximize the benefits from hosting the games.

Getting ready to host the Pan Am and Parapan Games has been a labour of love for all of those involved. It has taken a lot of hard work to get here. Five years of careful planning and preparation have gone into making sure that next summer will be a time that athletes and spectators can enjoy and that the people of Ontario can be proud of. These games are important for our province, for our athletes and for our economy. We will experience the highs and lows of our athletes' performances, but we will know clearly during that brief period in time that we are one Ontario. We are the best province in the best country in the world. This will be our moment. It will be a brief

moment in time, but for many of us, it will result in memories that will last a lifetime and leave a legacy for Ontarians to enjoy for generations to come.

So I call on this Legislature to commemorate this momentous occasion and support this motion to declare July and August of next year to be Pan Am and Parapan Months here in Ontario.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm happy to speak on this item by the new member from Halton, who speaks so beautifully and reminds me that maybe I need to do more media training. Thank you for that.

I think we all agree that next summer is certainly going to be an interesting summer, and I hope it's going to be a summer that we're going to all be celebrating, and I'd like to lend my support to having July and August 2015 as Pan Am and Parapan Months in Toronto.

When the member from Halton mentioned the velodrome that's being built in her riding, it reminded me of the Montreal Olympics. I am from Montreal, and I have a feeling that Montreal is still paying for the Olympics, believe it or not. To this day, they still haven't finished paying for it. It was also supposed to be infrastructure that the city would be left to enjoy. Well, I think that the city was certainly left with a lot of infrastructure, and I don't know how much enjoyment has been gotten out of it in terms of the costs associated with not just building—we have to maintain this kind of infrastructure, so I think that has to be budgeted in as well, and I hope that is in part of the budget; that the municipalities aren't going to be coming and crying to the province later on and asking for funding to maintain the structures that we're building for these games. We need to ensure that the model is in place.

The Pan Am and Parapan Am Games will collectively give us a chance to proudly celebrate our city and to revel in its diversity. Events such as the Toronto International Film Festival, the Caribbean carnival and World Pride offer us reminders of the city's joys and I think really put Toronto on the map, and I hope the Pan Am Games will as well.

Given the long-term benefits our province will see, I think it's very important that we make sure that these games are a success. The planning for the games—I hate to use the word “scandal,” because it's getting to the point where when we say the word “scandal” so many times, it actually loses its meaning, and I'm concerned with that. There are articles just today in the media saying that politicians are considered one of the least-trusted professions in the world.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Not the least, not the least.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Not the least; lobbyist was below us. Way too close.

As an optometrist in my previous life—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock.

I would ask the members on the government side—when their member was speaking, the place was silent,

and I think we should give the same privilege to the person on the other side.

Carry on.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Thank you, Speaker. I'm tougher than I look. I can handle it, but thank you for your help and support.

For Toronto in 2015, we're really hoping that the goodwill and camaraderie will be the same as Vancouver 2012, where representatives from 41 countries from around the world came to our streets, came to our country and really did put us on the map. The athletes' village—I think we all wanted to be there joining in all the fun, and I hope that the roadwork we need to keep these games a success is being looked into.

Right now, Toronto is being choked with gridlock—I don't have to remind everybody of that—and the decision to have the Pan Am Games across 13 municipalities, in my estimation, was somewhat naive, because in order to have it across 13 municipalities, we have to have a way to get all the judges, all the staffing, all the security and all the visitors between these events and municipalities.

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We have to be able to feed people, we have to be able to house people, and we have to be able to move people. Toronto can certainly manage. We have enough hotels. I believe we have enough restaurants. But I'm very concerned about the transit, I'm very concerned about the traffic, and I'm also very concerned about the parking issues. I'm hoping that that's going to be addressed, and that we're not going to be coming to the people of Toronto two weeks before the games and saying, “You know what? We're not going to be able to do it without your co-operation. You're all going to have to go on vacation while we're hosting these games or stay home and stay off the streets, because we're not going to be able to have business functioning in Toronto.” We're not going to be able to have the residents of Toronto going about their daily lives with all the extra traffic and transit users. We can have subways, but if the subway cars are full of our Toronto residents, which so often we see that people tell us—I'm sure that other members here hear the same thing from their constituents: The train comes and they cannot get on the train; the streetcar comes and they cannot get on that streetcar.

It will be summer, and I think that unfortunately a lot of Torontonians and people from the greater Toronto area and Hamilton will choose to be away because they will be concerned. I think that if we're having an event like this in our city, I'm really hoping that we have a plan in place to address the traffic chaos that's inevitable. It is inevitable to have some problems. We all know that. We're not expecting it to be perfect.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: We're not Manhattan.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Well, Manhattan has a great subway system. Thank you for mentioning that. We see in Manhattan that people are able to get on those trains. They come often, and it's a very well-functioning transit system. The cab fare in Manhattan is also far less

expensive than it is in the Toronto area. Maybe that's something that we have to look at, to say to the cab companies, "You know what? You're going to have so much business, more than usual. Can we have a special Pan Am rate for taxi service?" Maybe that's something that the planners can look at as well.

Of the \$1.4-billion operating budget for these games—that doesn't really include transportation and it certainly doesn't include security costs—almost half is earmarked for capital investment, and a lot of it is in high-performance sport venues. We need to ensure that there is funding for our athletes to train; not just to have these venues, but we need to invest in coaching for all of our athletes. Otherwise, this really won't be a great investment in terms of our sports community.

The area's athletic community has been woefully underserved in a lot of ways. I think we saw a big investment in our athletes before the last two Olympics, but I hope that with the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games, we can find the necessary funding, either through different government programs or through private sponsorship of some kind, because it's great to have the venues, but if we don't have the funding to coach our athletes, it really is in vain.

I want to mention that the security costs are ballooning. I've been to some of the committee meetings, and again, part of it is because it's across 13 municipalities. I'm wondering where the funding is going to be coming from, because what we saw in the last couple of weeks in our capital of Ottawa is that security costs are of great concern. I'm concerned that somebody might use the Pan Am Games and the world stage that it's on to make political statements through violence. I would like to see that we're investigating that through social media programs, perhaps asking people to be alert—and what they should be alert for, because it's not something that we can rely on just our police and security forces to do. We have to also do our part.

Let's celebrate. I look forward to celebrating with everybody here and everybody at home. We need to celebrate Pan Am as an opportunity to promote sports and camaraderie within our city, our province and our country. Let's use it as a beacon of light and progress on to our visiting athletes, teams and tourists. Let's remember the Pan Am Games as a fantastic event and not a failed opportunity.

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

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to start off by saying that it's a pleasure, as the New Democratic Party's critic for tourism, culture and sport and the Pan/Parapan Am Games, to speak on this motion. When I think of a long celebration of a particular event, in this case two months of this celebration, I think of how much this event must mean to so many people locally.

I'm sure the minister would like to hear this: I have a personal connection to the Pan Am Games. In the first Pan Am Games in Hamilton in the 1930s, my aunt was a world-class swimmer. She then went on to train for the

Berlin Olympics. For 29 years after she completed that, she taught many budding Olympic swimmers in the 200-metre and 100-metre breaststroke for Canada. I also had family members who were involved in other sports during the first Pan Am Games—which I might add was in Hamilton, Ontario—called the British Empire Games.

I'd like to also say that my colleague across the floor, the MPP from Halton, did a wonderful job in her speech on promotion and sales, which is also part of the whole Pan Am procedure. That certainly is something that has to be promoted, and hopefully her venue will be ready soon for use. That's if some of the other venues are finished on time.

Of course, I've stood up here many times and had concerns about the Pan Am stadium in Hamilton. I've been saying for months—these concerns that I've raised with the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games for some months now; he has stood up and kind of done a good sales job. It's his job to do that, and he's certainly avoided my questions about finance and kind of deflected and said that I should be honoured that I have this stadium in Hamilton, and I should be honoured, and we should all be honoured that these venues are coming to the province. No doubt about it: We're excited about the after-use of the venues, if they're used in a proper sense.

However, let's talk about the cost. I don't think this minister was around, as I was, when the Montreal Olympics took place in 1976. Mayor Drapeau and the city of Montreal and the province of Quebec—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order.

Mr. Paul Miller: With all due respect, Speaker, we listened to them; they don't want to listen to the truth.

They paid off their debts last year, and I remember the Big O crumbling about 10 years ago, and they had to repair that. Cement actually almost hit some spectators at a game. These are the types of things—the legacy, as the member from Halton likes to talk about: Some of the buildings that they used in 1976 Olympics are now rundown, derelict buildings down by the waterfront in Montreal that are being used for nothing. I remember one of them, in particular, they wanted to turn into a residential area after the athletes finished; it was called Habitat. Habitat is now a rundown, weed-filled building. These are concerns that are serious.

The minister went out of his way yesterday to take my concerns to a personal level, unfortunately, by saying that I did not attend the briefings. I'd like to set the record straight today. My staff, my EA from Queen's Park and our researcher, attended two of those briefings because I was—sorry, Minister—at a funeral, and I was out of town for those two things. Thanks for bringing that up. The first did include the previous minister but was chaired by his deputy; he wasn't at the first one. It was for the media. The EA and researcher both attended and said to me that it was more of a sales pitch, more of a rah-rah than actual numbers and finances about the cost of security. It started off at \$138 million; now we're at

\$238 million, and they still haven't signed the final deals, as the minister said the other day. He said they did, but they haven't signed the deals with the regional police departments, which is going to raise the internal costs and raise the external cost even more.

For them to stand up here week after week and chastise opposition members for their concerns—doing their job: protecting the buck for the taxpayer—is really unfair of them to do because they don't know the final numbers. The minister even told me he doesn't know the final cost of security. That's a fair thing to say, but the bottom line is, don't stand up here day in, day out, week after week, saying everything is hunky-dory, everything is on budget, everything is going to be great, we should be thankful, we're just being negative and all that.

I'll tell you what, Speaker. You heard it here first: I'll be glad when it's all over and all the numbers finally come in. I think the tune might change a little bit over there. I'll be there to watch and I'll be there to evaluate, and I'll certainly pass it on to our fair minister and his friends if he doesn't come in under budget, like he said, and on time.

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Moving on: The venue was difficult, to say the least. It took about 30 minutes for my EA, an ISU staff person at Queen's Park—they reported that they got all the details within 30 minutes, and when they got there, it sounded like an old TTC service barn. It was difficult to hear. We didn't pick up half the thing because we were sitting way at the back and they had all their staff at the front. So the people they think are negative were way in a corner; we could hardly hear them.

Just to be clear, to take this even further—and the minister can't deny this—I initiated a meeting with him a couple of weeks ago—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I hope you're going to turn this around to the bill that's in front of us.

Mr. Paul Miller: It's all part of the game, Speaker. Speaker, you can't be biased here—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock. Order.

I'm trying to do my job, and you people are trying to be above me by shouting me down. This is the second time. The next time, I'm probably going to throw a few people out.

I would ask the member to tie this into the motion that's in front of the House as quickly as possible. It has now been five minutes.

Mr. Paul Miller: I thought the costs had something to do with it, Speaker, but okay, if you think I'm off-base a little bit—I don't think so.

The Liberal government can hide behind so-called facts and figures that aren't legit. They're not the final product, and that's fine.

Before I get more jabs from them because they don't like what they're hearing—the truth does hurt—listen: I fully support the athletes. I support the tourism industry.

It's almost laughable when they criticize me. I come from a huge, huge sports family. We cover boxing, hockey, baseball, football—huge in the Hamilton area. Why would I not want that? I'm for it, 100%, but my job here is to protect the taxpayers' dollars so that we don't end up in a legacy scenario like the Montreal Olympics. That's what we're here for: to protect the taxpayers. I will continue to do my job.

I cannot help but be a little suspicious about the bookkeeping. I recall, during committee, that when I asked for the total cost of the games, I was given a figure. Upon further probing, I unearthed the truth: that the athletes' village was a separate cost structure and not reported as a cost for the games, which was interesting. So we had two sets of books. The cost of that was extraordinarily high.

I know that the security costs could escalate, but at this stage of the process, with the current world situation and threats—

Hon. Michael Coteau: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order, Minister?

Hon. Michael Coteau: We're discussing a private member's bill on the declaration of two months for a special occasion next year. I think the member is completely off track.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I am listening very carefully. I have asked the member to bring it back to the motion that's in front of us. I think he tried a little. I have given every speaker a little bit of leeway to speak about the games.

The member for Hamilton.

Mr. Paul Miller: Thanks, Speaker. I guess security is part of the games. I could be wrong; you might want to correct me on that. An American company won the bid for the security for the Pan Am Games, and apparently that company is now hiring kids out of law and security courses—they want to get about 1,000 across the province, across the country, to act as security. I'm very concerned about that, because these are not front-line security people. They're young people who are in a college course, and they have not dealt with situations that could escalate. I think that's bad.

Guess who's hiring them? The American firm that won the bid that was double the bid of the company in Toronto, Reilly Security, which has been around for years, has trained supervisors and trained personnel, and has handled many big venues. They could have handled it, and they were actually hundreds of thousands of dollars cheaper than the American company. So you've got to ask yourself what's going on there.

These are inexperienced students who could face very difficult and very unhappy crowds—depending on if they can't get in or whatever; emotions will be flying high—and they won't have the experience of what to do and when. They could be at a serious risk of workplace injury, but without being traditional employees in Ontario, how much workplace insurance will they have, and will

they qualify for WSIB if they're injured in a crowd situation?

There are other questions about these games—and such wriggling around quantifiable answers, that it makes many of us wonder what financial shocks we'll be facing in less than a year. To be quite blunt, I wonder what kind of smoke and mirrors today—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member again to tie it to the motion that's in front of us.

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, I just said, "What smoke and mirrors is this motion?" Is that not talking to the motion? It's really just another opportunity—

Interjection.

Mr. Paul Miller: Minister, it's just another sales job, to make the Liberal Party look good; that's all it is.

I was shocked to find out that the GO train passes immediately on the south side of the athletes' village. There's no platform there to move the athletes to various venues. That could cause a problem.

This is a terrific opportunity to get people moving, not only to Union Station but beyond, without getting caught up in the traffic, on streetcars. Is anyone thinking about how to maximize opportunities like this that will continue as a very valuable legacy cost of these games? Shocking to me—actually, yet another shock to me—that would be a legacy of the games worth celebrating—not with a month recognizing the games but with an actual GO station stop that can move people downtown for years to come. Great idea, but no, you haven't done it.

Really, if we get right down to it, July and August 2015 will be more than well recognized without moving a fluffy motion like this. This motion is just a feel-good motion. It's one of those ones like—I don't know—let's make it Nickel Day. It's just another one of these fluffy—we don't need a sales job done here. We need facts and figures.

It's not as wasteful as—you know what, Speaker? I'm going to end it by saying this: All I've asked for, for the last four years, former minister, present minister—I said, "Listen, just tell me the costs. Tell the people of Ontario the costs. Tell us that it really is going to be on budget."

They told me there would be no delays. Let's look at the stadium in Hamilton. It was supposed to open in June. This is now November and it's still not completely done. I predicted, on a tour—not that I'm a specialist; I have three trades, by the way. I took a tour of the stadium and I said they'd be lucky if they got it for Labour Day, and they only had half the stadium done for Labour Day. I said they'd be lucky if they got it for November. Well, it's November, and it's still not done, so that prediction six months ago is coming true.

I'll tell you right now, Speaker, when it's all said and done, it's great. I'm excited for the athletes, I'm excited for the opportunity and I'm excited for the end use. But I want to see the final cost to the people of Ontario. I'm telling you right now: They won't be under budget; they won't be on time. I'm telling you it's a fallacy.

They're trying to spread it out and make it look good with flowers, and everything is wonderful and everyone

else is negative but them, because they know how to do everything right. I don't want to get into that, all the other things they've done, but the bottom line is, we'll see. We'll stand by with bated breath to watch the final result. I wonder if the minister is going to be doing any back-stepping. He might.

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

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to first start by thanking my colleague the MPP from Halton for this great bill that's coming forward into this House—that motion, I should say—which really will help build on the strengths of what the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games have to offer here next year, in July and August.

I want to start off by thanking the Conservative Party of Ontario. I want to thank the Conservative Party of Ontario for having the wisdom, 84 years ago, to bring the Empire Games here to Ontario. That was the last time here in the province of Ontario—

Interjection: What?

Hon. Michael Coteau: Eighty-four years ago—back in 1930, in the beautiful city of Hamilton—the last time we were bold enough to bring forward a multinational, multi-sport games here to the province of Ontario. You would think, Mr. Speaker, that in this House the notion of bringing a multinational, multi-sport games here to Ontario would be accepted by all members of this Legislature. It is quite sad today to hear that there are people who are very critical of these games. I see these games as an opportunity for all Ontarians but mostly for young people here in the province of Ontario.

I think it's an extraordinary opportunity to rebuild infrastructure, like we're doing in Hamilton, to recognize the fact that we need the type of facilities to provide our athletes with the opportunity to compete on a world-class scale. What's happening in Milton is a perfect example of our building the type of infrastructure that's necessary for our young people. We know that prior to building this velodrome, people were actually packing their bags, jumping on a plane, heading over to California and practising there—our team, people in Ontario—and then coming back to Ontario. To me, that's unacceptable. If we can have our athletes stay here in Ontario, and actually attract athletes from across Canada here to Ontario, I think it's a win for the young people of this province.

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In fact, Mr. Speaker—I have about a minute left—I'm going to tell you about a few of the things that we're doing, I believe, in our government to help young people here in this province to become stronger and to help build them into responsible young individuals.

The Pan Am/Parapan Am Kids Program is going to be throughout our schools, and it's going to talk about accessibility and games that will be inclusive to young children. We have volunteer certificates that will be issued through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration that will provide young people with an opportunity to hand an employer a certificate to say that they've been trained in things like accessibility. There is OSAP

deferral for volunteers, which I think is great, up to a year of deferred OSAP loans—and, of course, the new infrastructure.

My two daughters, Maren and Myla Coteau, actually take advantage of this new infrastructure; I talked about this in committee. They go to the Pan Am building in Scarborough and they take their swimming lessons there. It's a beautiful hub, and my children love it. They're in lane 10, I think, one day—I think it's a Tuesday—and they love it.

I want to say thank you to the people who had the insight—in fact, five years ago today—to win the bid for the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games. Thank you so much. And I want to congratulate the member for her great work.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to speak on this particular motion, but I'm going to focus in on the athletes, because the full disclosure is that I have three nieces who are competing at the international or national level currently. I understand, because I see it in those three families—

Interjection: What sport?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: —I'm getting to it—how committed these athletes, these young people, are—and, quite frankly, their families and their support systems.

My niece Perianne Jones, a two-time Olympian in Sochi and Vancouver in cross-country skiing, was the youngest member, at 17. Her training all had to happen in Canmore. I'm a parent; my children are 12 and 15. I can only imagine how challenging it would have been for my brother and my sister-in-law to say, "Yes, go after your passion. See you later. Enjoy Canmore." So I have to give her a lot of credit for making that commitment and doing that.

My other niece, Kate Friesen, is currently competing at the national level in hockey. Once again, you travel a lot—family commitments. She will actually be taking her education and continuing her career in the States next year. Again, it's very challenging: a 17-year-old who's going to leave her family and be literally 10-plus hours away.

Finally, to my youngest niece, Sarah Gillies, who is 12 years old. She is going to be competing, or is currently competing—again, at the provincial level—in para-skiing. It's a huge commitment, all through the summer. My own daughter is 12 years old, and she's very close with Sarah.

You see how much energy and how much passion and how much work it is to continue and to stay at that provincial and that national level.

This motion speaks to that passion for the athletes, and I'm happy to support it.

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

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I'm very proud to support my colleague MPP from Halton on this very important resolution. I think it's a great resolution to bring forward.

It helps build the excitement that we're already feeling for the games. It's fantastic.

We've talked about how great these games are for Ontario, how they're great for Canada, they're great for the world. The minister responsible for the Pan Am Games talked about the aquatic facility where his daughter swims; that happens to be in my wonderful riding of Pickering–Scarborough East. It's the largest infrastructure facility for the games, and it's fantastic. I think they're doing fencing there, and some other things. It's quite something to see, if you haven't seen it. It's just a remarkable facility of infrastructure and accessibility and community—

Interjection.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Yes, by a remarkable government, exactly.

What's important—and I've talked about this before—is the legacy of some of these facilities; the legacy for the community in Scarborough, where I grew up. I went to high school just down the road from where that facility is now. There wasn't much at West Hill Collegiate, I've got to tell you. The school was great, but the community didn't have a place like it has now.

I know there are so many organizations that are going to be part of that legacy facility, not the least of which is the Canadian men's and women's—men's for sure; I'm not sure about women's—wheelchair basketball teams. I can tell you that right now they have to go to the States to train, and it takes lots of time and expense to do that. They'll be able to do that right here in Canada, and I think that's fantastic.

When I was out there a couple of weeks ago, I met with members of both the women's and men's wheelchair basketball teams, and I actually took some shots at the net from a wheelchair. I know how to get around in a wheelchair pretty good, because I'm married to a paraplegic, as many of you know. But I'm telling you: Shooting baskets from a chair is really, really difficult. Of course, it just increased my respect for these athletes and the work they do. They were there at the crack of dawn—that's when they're there every day—to train and put their best foot forward for us next year at the games.

It's very competitive. Wheelchair basketball is very competitive. My husband used to play it. In fact, my husband is a former Canadian Paralympian. I think he still holds the record in backstroke.

I'll just conclude by saying that I know he did that a long time ago, when he was much younger. But that experience of travelling around the world and representing his country was one that shaped his future tremendously, exposed him to the world and spurred him on to travel internationally and so on. So the experiences of the athletes cannot be measured by the games themselves. They really extend beyond.

I just want to say thank you again to my colleague from Halton: a great, great motion, and I'm very pleased to support it.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: In the limited time we have left, I want to commend the member from Halton on recognizing July 2015 as Pan Am Month and August 2015 as Parapan Month in Ontario.

There's been a lot of talk today about the games. We certainly need to celebrate the athletes. That's what we should all be doing here. There's been some overshadowing on this topic by the government's poor management of the games, whether it's expense scandals, construction delays, golden parachutes or executives who failed to bring budgets in on time. Maybe they should have consulted the former mayor of Winnipeg, who is now the Minister of the Environment. You hosted the games in Winnipeg in, I think, 1999, did you not, for a cost of only \$150 million? Well done. I think that maybe there should be some consultation with the minister who exists now.

But really, we want to see them succeed. They're coming. I know that in Minden Hills, in my area, they're hosting the canoe/kayak slalom event at the Minden Wild Water Preserve. I'll be there to watch them.

I'm running out of time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: First, I want to acknowledge my colleague from Halton, who has quickly become one of the bright lights and most thoughtful voices in this assembly. Some of the best time I've ever spent was knocking on doors with my friend.

I also want to thank Ministers Coteau and Chan, former Premier Peterson and many others who played such a seminal role. They took a lot of heat in this House for some very courageous decisions.

Yes, I was on the planning committee for the 1999 games, when I first got elected to city council in the 1980s. I was mayor and played a major role the last time, so I know first-hand how hard it is for a city to secure these games.

One of the things that's really interesting to us is that we had 60 years when Vancouver got the Olympics and Calgary got the Olympics and Montreal got the Olympics and Victoria got the Commonwealth Games and Winnipeg got the Pan Am Games twice, in 1967 and in 1999. When I was mayor, we used to tease Toronto and Hamilton about never having really had a major event in our lifetime. I'm very proud to be part of a government that finally has delivered for Ontario.

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The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock: We had problems. Do you know what is amazing to me about Ontario? I'm starting to understand why previous governments couldn't do it, because they're like the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek. They can tell you everything that could possibly go wrong and paralyze themselves. They never did it. It's because, when the parties opposite had their shot, they were terrified. They're the most risk-averse. We're excited, Mr. Speaker. We know this is going to be amazing.

The reason that the Winnipeg games were so inexpensive was because we held them before. We didn't have to

build anything and we didn't have the Parapan Am Games. Everything was built. The athletes' facilities were built; the pools were built; all of that was built. We renewed them all.

The other thing I love: I was mayor of the poorest of the large cities in Canada. We had the highest debt and the highest property taxes when I got elected. When I left, we had the lowest debt and the second-lowest property taxes. So I can tell you first-hand: Pan Am Games are good for building your tax base and helping governments.

There's a reason I ran for the Liberals and not the Conservatives or the NDP: because that philosophy of prudence without being afraid to take a risk is found in this party, not in the parties opposite.

We are delivering a games, but these aren't like the Winnipeg or—these are like the Rio games. Rio then went on to get the Olympics and ran the most successful games. This is Ontario's introduction to the world of international competitive athletics which previous governments had delivered in the last century. Every other major region of Canada entered the international sporting scene in the 20th century. We had to wait until the 21st century. Thank God we finally elected a bright, creative, risk-embracing, innovative Liberal government that, for the first time, is delivering what are going to be the most amazing games.

I'm going to keep all the tapes from all of the whiners and lemon-suckers opposite so that when the games are booming—let's just remember who took the risk and showed the leadership and who hid in the shadows and whined and told us, "It's all going to be so terrible. We should all be so afraid."

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

Mr. Yvan Baker: I'm thrilled to be able to speak to this motion. Anybody who knows me will tell you that I will always be willing to speak about the important issues of value for money and value for taxpayers' dollars.

Today, though, in the limited time I have, I'd just like to speak to the motion. The motion is about making sure that we declare next July Pan Am Month and next August Parapan Month. I would like to congratulate my fellow member from Halton. I think it's an excellent motion.

Let me just say this: I was raised believing that we live in a wonderful city in a great province in the best country in the world. I believe that this motion and these games allow us to do three things: They allow us to celebrate that as Ontarians; they allow us to share that with people from around the world that are going to be coming to Ontario; and they allow us to build on that success by building the infrastructure, the legacy, that will allow us to make sure that we can enjoy and savour these games for years to come.

So I hope that we can count on the members opposite to support the motion. I congratulate my fellow member from Halton. Let's pass this motion.

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

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: In the very brief time I have, I congratulate the member from Halton. I'm very excited about the legacy that's going to be left here: the best CFL stadium in the country in Hamilton, terrific aquatic facilities in Scarborough, and the renewal of the Etobicoke Olympium, which was a legacy of the 1976 Paralympics and is a few blocks from my home. We will be celebrating the wonderful athletes. It was wonderful to hear from some of the members in this House who have that link to athletes. That's what these games are about in Ontario. We'll have a wonderful legacy from it if we all work together to celebrate it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Halton, you have two minutes now to reply.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. You know what? Politics is about passion, and I can tell you, I heard a lot of passion in this room today. In my perspective, the way I look at the world is, I see a glass of water half-full, not half-empty. I think, ultimately, in the end, that's what this discussion is about.

This is about really bringing the world to our doorstep, having the games here that celebrate Ontario, and also ensuring that our children, their children and children down the road get a chance to actually be able to do the things that they aspire to, that they see others do.

I couldn't agree more with the member from Dufferin-Caledon and her comments. Kudos to you and your family.

Applause.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Yes.

My children also participated—not on that level, but rep hockey, rep soccer, you know, competitive figure skating, dance. I know many parents spend their time getting up early in the morning, going to other cities, going to other arenas, going to other places in order to make sure our children get the shot they deserve.

In my opinion, first of all, these games are what we should be doing. If other provinces can do it, why not Ontario? I believe we should be doing it.

In terms of my motion, I think this is a way for all of us to embrace all that is good about this province. Is this a feel-good motion? Absolutely. Are the things that happen in government when we stand in here only supposed to be negative and critical? No. I think we need to stand up together and roar and support each other. That should happen in the House, in addition to making sure that we are vigilant when things go awry.

So I am here today saying that declaring those months, proclaiming July Pan Am Month and August Parapan Month, is a perfect opportunity for all of us to come together in this province and make sure we move forward together with these games. Thank you.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that

Ms. Malhi assumes ballot item number 23 and Mr. Colle assumes ballot item number 18.

Orders of the day.

PANCREATIC CANCER

Mr. Joe Dickson: I move that, in the opinion of this House, since pancreatic cancer has the lowest survival rates of any cancer, and awareness is the first step to prevent and end this disease, therefore November 13 should be recognized as World Pancreatic Cancer Day in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Dickson has moved private member's notice of motion number 9. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Joe Dickson: I rise today to ask all members of the House to join me and individuals around the world to mark Thursday, November 13, as the first-ever World Pancreatic Cancer Day.

Some in this House might be surprised to learn that pancreatic cancer has one of the lowest survival rates of any cancer, and this has been true for more than 40 years. Mr. Speaker and my fellow members, together we must raise awareness to shine a light on this deadly issue.

I'm proud to join the many organizations around the world who are leading this initiative, including Pancreatic Cancer Action, who are committed to tackling the fight against pancreatic cancer by raising awareness of the deadly disease and, more importantly, raising awareness of the poor overall survival rates of people with pancreatic cancer. Together with Pancreatic Cancer Action, World Pancreatic Cancer Day will help to bring about a new awareness of the disease and a focused need for urgent change.

Mr. Speaker, members of this House would be interested to learn that the launch of World Pancreatic Cancer Day will include a number of different developments, including a dedicated website and a special social media campaign. These multimedia tools will help drive the conversation and increase public awareness around this cancer. I know that Pancreatic Cancer Action has a goal to raise awareness of pancreatic cancer on an international basis. Ontario is proud to be part of this movement.

Many might not know, but in 2009, pancreatic cancer was the 12th most common cancer diagnosed in Ontario, with some 1,502 cases diagnosed, according to Cancer Care Ontario. That same year, it was also the fourth most common cancer cause of death in Ontario, with 1,462 deaths: 715 for males and, unfortunately, 747 for females.

1510

Ontario has made some progress, as the five-year relative survival rate ratio increased from 8.9% for 1995-99 to 11.6% for 2005-09. But as you can see from these alarming stats, we have much more to do.

I also find it surprising that such a deadly disease, which has impacted thousands of Ontarians, is still so

poorly understood. But they can be forgiven for that, because unfortunately, it does not get a lot of attention. That is why I am standing in the Legislature today. As an MPP, one of the biggest pleasures of my job, as yours, is in helping people in our communities, mine of Ajax–Pickering, Durham region—and of course, for all of us, all of Ontario.

I'm proud of the health care investments our government has made, including increased funding to home and community care by 92% since 2003, and \$260 million more for community and mental health care in 2013. Across Ontario, that has meant over 226,000 more people are now receiving home care than in 2003, including 76,000 more seniors over the past two years. That's right: 76,000 more seniors over the past two years.

Together, our government has created 54 health links, covering half of the province, bringing together providers in our most complex patients' circle of care to create individualized care plans, keeping seniors in their homes and keeping seniors out of hospital. And we've gone from worst to first in surgical wait times, with the shortest wait times in Canada for the past eight years, according to the famed Fraser Institute.

My community is now better served because we are building cutting-edge health infrastructure, with over 100 major health capital projects complete or under way, including 23 new hospitals. These investments are vital to help create and sustain a system that can identify and treat deadly cancers like pancreatic cancer.

Our government has also added almost 5,000 new doctors since 2003, meaning that 2.1 million people, 2.1 million more Ontarians—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Point of order—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order, the member for Windsor–Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: On a point of order: I'm waiting to hear more about pancreatic cancer and less about hospital building, if we can get back to the point of the topic. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I think he's trying to draw a reference to both, and I'll let him carry on.

The member for Ajax–Pickering.

Mr. Joe Dickson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will certainly attend to that.

Just for the record, again, that was 2.1 million more Ontario residents who now have access to a family doctor. And we have added 20,500 new nursing positions since 2003.

Ontario is also finding new and innovative ways to bring care closer to people, including 25 new nurse practitioner-led clinics, over 100 community health centre sites, and family health teams serving 206 communities, providing care to over three million Ontarians, many of whom, of course, are cared for because of cancer. Our government has a care record that we can be proud of.

Now, I'm here today to build on that strong foundation and increase awareness and literacy on this deadly cancer, a

cancer which, as I mentioned earlier, impacts many around the province. The direct impact of a cancer diagnosis is such a destabilizing event in one's life. I know many of the members of this chamber have been affected by cancer, whether through yourself or friends or constituents.

I'd like to tell you a short story about one of my wife's sisters: Karen White from Maple Grove, which is now Clarington, who had struggled with pancreatic cancer for 28 years. When I was dating my now lovely wife, Donna—that doesn't sound right. I want to clarify that she has always been young and lovely since the day I first met her.

I'm referencing the first time we met her older sister Karen and her husband, Ted, and her two baby children, when we did a babysitting session for some two hours on a Saturday. They later had two more great children, Kevin and Paul. Karen was one of those rarities: a loving wife and dedicated mother of four who excelled in highly competitive sports year-round. The family received the bad news in 1980 that Karen had a growth on her pancreas. It was determined quickly that it was more than just a growth.

A devout Christian, she lived a prayer-filled life, stood on promises, never lost her faith and never lost hope. She never, ever drank, and she never, ever smoked. Through it all, she continued in high-calibre sports enterprises up to the end in 2008, playing for Canada in the Canada-USA international softball championship in Florida. Sadly, she passed away a few months after that.

However, she lived 28 years with pancreatic cancer, making so many untold hospital visits, two exploratory operations, a portion of her bowel removed, double bypasses, heart surgery and a breast removed. Some say Karen was one of the very lucky cases, living 28 years with the deadly disease.

Mr. Speaker, I think I speak for all members here when I say we need to do all that we can to fight to cure cancer. Today with this motion, we're taking a big step together, joined by individuals from around the world, to stand up for World Pancreatic Cancer Day on Thursday, November 13. I would ask that each member of this House take time to reflect on both the impact of the disease and what you can do to increase awareness and join the fight.

They say a journey starts with a single step, so today we are taking that step to increase awareness.

I thank you, Speaker; I thank you, fellow members; and I thank you, Karen.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: Thank you to the member for his comments and for raising awareness of such a serious and deadly type of cancer. As an optometrist married to a physician—I know maybe it doesn't sound so nice, but my husband used to often get calls from people saying that a relative had a certain diagnosis, and asking what he thought the prognosis was. He used to say, well, if they were told they had pancreatic cancer, then the prognosis

is quite serious; that 99% of the time it's terminal and the other 1% was a misdiagnosis. It's a very serious cancer.

I think it says something about human nature in general that, until we raise awareness of something by having a special month, maybe a hashtag on Twitter or a special day to focus on and raise awareness, oftentimes, unless people have a close friend or family member who is affected, they aren't aware of a certain type of disease.

We saw this just recently with ALS, when they had the bucket challenge. So many people did not know what Lou Gehrig's disease was; they didn't know what ALS stood for. But the bucket challenge on social media really did raise awareness.

So kudos to the member for bringing this forward and trying to raise awareness of such a deadly cancer. It's the fourth-leading cause of cancer death in Canada, according to my notes. Approximately 4,700 Canadians are diagnosed each year with pancreatic cancer, and 4,300 will die each year. That's a testament to what a deadly type of cancer it is.

One of the reasons pancreatic cancer has such a poor prognosis is that it's very difficult to have early detection. They are making advances in terms of early detection. That's why I think it is a good idea to raise awareness now.

1520

It really is one of those sort of symptomless diseases that masks as something else entirely, and by the time they figure out what it is—it's often by process of elimination. They're able to prove that it isn't one medical condition, it isn't a second medical condition, and it isn't a third. Then finally—finally—they decide that they have to go in and take a look at the pancreas. Because it's such an internal organ, it's not something that's easy to look at.

Most people, as I said and the member said so well, aren't aware of what pancreatic cancer is until they know somebody with the disease. I think that that's something that we all have to work on, to raise awareness so that we can have people advocate, even on their own behalf, and suggest that they might suspect that it's something more serious than what their doctor is suggesting and they want further testing. I'm hoping that, with awareness of pancreatic cancer, people will understand some of the signs and symptoms.

All of the great medical care that we have in the province of Ontario—you can build hospitals, but if we don't have them staffed and we don't have the proper equipment, that's not providing health care. If we're closing departments, as was discussed earlier today, in Leamington, that the obstetrics gynecology department was closing—well, it's not just about having babies, obstetrics and gynecology; it's women's health. If women have children to take care of, and they're told that they need to go for a follow-up appointment, and it's hours of a drive away, they're far less likely to go.

We can't just look at the costs. We have to look at the lives that are at stake and have health care access close to home. It's a balancing act, and we all know that. We all

know that we would like to have a hospital in every neighbourhood with every department and every type of machine. We know that there are limitations to the closeness that we can provide for health care, but we do have to make it accessible in the province, and we do have to provide the services. There are many challenges—we all know that—in terms of different cultures and different languages and in terms of budgetary constraints.

But we have to realize that the funds that we're collecting, as nice as it was—we just spoke about the Parapan Am games. We like to apply the tax revenue to these fun events, but we have to first find ways to fund the health care of our aging population and our youth as well. We have to find the wherewithal within all of us to focus the health care dollars where they're supposed to go, into front-line health care; not creating bureaucracies, not creating other layers of government, which is what the LHINs and the CCACs are. These are all administrative levels, and they eat up a lot of the funding for health care. We need to focus that funding on health care as much as we can.

I'm glad that we're talking about pancreatic cancer and raising awareness of pancreatic cancer, but I think that we also have to always remember that there are many other diseases that we need to raise awareness of as well. We see in the Legislature that very often stakeholders come and visit us. They'll do things like giving us pins to recognize what they're trying to raise awareness of. We had just yesterday ME, myalgic encephalomyelitis; they came to visit to raise awareness of people with very debilitating problems. They understand that without awareness, the budget is not focused on where they need it to be focused.

I'm happy to support a wonderful program of raising awareness of pancreatic cancer. I think that everybody here will unanimously support it as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Kenora–Rainy River.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I'm glad to be weighing in on this important issue of pancreatic cancer awareness. Cancers of all forms are frightening and becoming increasingly common among the general population. I'm sure that each of us in this chamber has been touched personally in some way by this disease, whether it's a personal struggle or that of a loved one, a friend or a co-worker. Many times the forms of cancers that have touched our lives are generally known. That is to say, they are types that we have heard about before and have been involved with in some way, perhaps through fundraising.

What is alarming about pancreatic cancer is the relative mystery about the disease. Despite being the fourth-leading cause of cancer-related death in Canada and the United States and having the highest mortality rate of all major cancers, awareness of pancreatic cancer is exceptionally low compared to other forms of cancer.

In November 2012, Pancreatic Cancer Canada commissioned an Ipsos Reid poll that surveyed over 1,000

Canadians to determine their knowledge and awareness of the disease. The poll found that only one third of Canadians are knowledgeable about pancreatic cancer, and that we tend to vastly overestimate its survival rate.

Other facts that are important to note: There are no detection tools to diagnose this disease in its early stages, when surgical removal of the tumour is still possible. Because there are often no early symptoms, it is also very difficult to detect the cancer early. Pancreatic cancer can often grow for months before discovery and diagnosis, and diagnosis is often only made once symptoms become apparent, such as weight loss, back pain and jaundice.

The cancer also spreads rapidly and, unfortunately for most cases—in fact, over 50% of the time—pancreatic cancer tumours are only found after they have metastasized to other organs, giving an average survival rate after diagnosis of only three to six months and earning this form of cancer the title of “silent killer.” Pancreatic cancer is the only one of the top 10 cancer killers that has a five-year survival rate still in the single digits; that is, 6%.

The results of these findings are significant. As Canadians, we aren't knowledgeable about the disease, and we do not know how silent and deadly it can be. It kills nearly as many people per year as breast cancer. What's worse is the fact that, without increased knowledge and public attention given to this disease, we have little hope to increase funding for medical research. That, really, is why raising awareness of this silent killer is so important.

An unfortunate thing for all of us with this disease is that it takes away people who bring us so much joy. It was a few years ago when the town of Dryden said goodbye to a beloved jazzman, Craig Fotheringham. His whole life was filled with music, and he brought that pleasure to everyone around him. As a youth, Craig played piano under the instruction of his mother and piano teacher. As a teenager, he enjoyed success in the local group Shades of Blue during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Over the years of his musical career, he became a celebrated musician. His loss has left an undeniable void in the country, blues, rock and jazz scenes. This formidable musician passed away at the age of 58, following a battle with pancreatic cancer.

Pancreatic Cancer Canada has done a good job in terms of raising awareness throughout the year by remembering those who have lost their lives to the disease, supporting those who have been diagnosed and are battling the disease, and providing hope for future generations that a cure may be found, by featuring two campaigns. In the spring, the organization sells pansies, which symbolize hope for all those who are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. In November, the organization features its Purple Lights Campaign, which seeks to shine some light on this terrible disease. This campaign has two particular components: Individuals can participate by displaying strings of purple lights on their homes, and businesses and governments can participate by illuminating their buildings using large purple spotlights during the month of November. Some of the buildings that have

participated in Ontario include the CN Tower—Niagara Falls, Toronto's city hall and the Niagara Falls Skylon, among others.

But as with all cancers, more needs to be done. As mentioned, public awareness is still very low. It is believed that one of the main reasons for this general lack of public awareness about pancreatic cancer has to do with the fact that there seems to be a relatively small proportion of the Canadian population who personally know somebody who has been diagnosed with this disease.

Only about 6% of the Canadian population personally knows someone, such as a family member, neighbour, co-worker or friend, who has survived pancreatic cancer. This figure serves in stark contrast to the personal knowledge of survivors of other forms of cancer, such as breast cancer—60% of Canadians know someone who has been personally affected—and prostate cancer, where 43% of Canadians know somebody personally affected by the disease, to name a couple of forms.

1530

This fact likely speaks to the high mortality rate of pancreatic cancer. In fact, it may surprise some people in this House that the following celebrities have passed away due to this tragic disease: Steve Jobs, who was a businessperson, entrepreneur and inventor; Bill Hicks, who was a social critic, comedian and musician; Patrick Swayze, singer-songwriter, actor and dancer; Jack Benny, comedian and actor; Luciano Pavarotti, opera singer and actor; Joan Crawford, pin-up girl, actor and singer; Sally Ride, a physicist and astronaut; Donna Reed, an actor; Marcello Mastro—

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Mastroianni.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: —Mastroianni—thank you very much—film producer and actor; Anne Francis, model and actor; and Count Bassie, a jazz pianist, songwriter and musician.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Basie.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Basie—thank you. I knew I was going to slip up. I can tell my generation is probably coming through a little bit, but I did do my research.

The reason why I'm mentioning these folks, these well-known figures, is to help put a face to pancreatic cancer. Like I said, one of the main reasons why it's generally thought that there isn't enough awareness of pancreatic cancer is because the survival rate is so low. By mentioning some of these folks, hopefully, people will have a bit more awareness.

More also needs to be done to combat and prevent this disease, due to the fact that the diagnosis can be slow or late, due to the lack of symptoms, and there aren't any tools to help with diagnosis. Little is known about the risk factors for developing pancreatic cancer. The few that are defined and thought to be contributing factors include a family history of the disease, and smoking, age and diabetes.

It's important to note that medical researchers here in Ontario and elsewhere are continuing to work hard to improve detection, increase survival rates and find new

and more effective treatments. Since 2003, Mount Sinai Hospital's Zane Cohen Centre for Digestive Diseases has aimed to identify the genetic, environmental and lifestyle causes of the most common type of pancreatic cancer. To date, more than 1,400 Ontarians have participated in the pancreas cancer study.

On November 13 of this year, we will mark the launch of the first-ever World Pancreatic Cancer Day. This day will serve as an important opportunity to recognize the pain that has been caused by this disease, recognize the work of researchers and promote early detection and awareness. It will also mark the international co-operation of non-profits intent on raising global awareness of pancreatic cancer.

This motion brought forward by the member for Ajax–Pickering reads:

“That, in the opinion of this House, since pancreatic cancer has the lowest survival rates of any cancer, and awareness is the first step to prevent and end this disease, therefore November 13 should be recognized as World Pancreatic Cancer Day in Ontario.”

It's an important step for Ontario to participate in this international day of recognition and awareness. I will be joining my Ontario New Democratic caucus colleagues in supporting this motion.

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

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: At the outset, I of course commend my colleague from Ajax–Pickering for not only this particular motion highlighting a very difficult, challenging, often lethal, often terminal, often deadly cancer, pancreatic cancer, but also, perhaps, allowing us in this House to talk about cancer in general.

I think the world itself was moved when the most famous victim of pancreatic cancer succumbed to his illness. I think that was a loss felt across the world. That was, of course, Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple Computer. He had a pretty good health care system and a number of specialists and a whole team of folks, but even they, at the highest level—and by the way, this was California, the land of golden dreams. Even the highest level of medical care, unfortunately, was not able to save an individual who was really at the heart of medical practice and innovation and technology. This speaks, first of all, to the challenge with regard to pancreatic cancer.

Speaker, with your permission, perhaps I can use this moment to just talk as a doctor.

Unfortunately, we do tend to see it late. Patients tend to experience what we call the B symptoms, which, unfortunately, are kind of general and could have resulted from many things.

The first, of course, is weight loss. People look cachectic, as we call it, meaning they look somewhat sick, malnourished, maybe a little bit off-colour. They may have fatigue; they may have fevers; they may have unexplained aches and pains.

It's only after many, many, many things are tested for, thought about, eliminated—you know, is it a flu, is it a virus, is it this, is it that, is it a medication change, is it a stressful job, whatever—it is only then that sometimes

folks may trigger or may realize that there's a deeper process going on. By the time the patient experiences these symptoms, say, for months or perhaps even longer, and by the time it declares itself more overtly with things like unremitting, severe, almost untreatable back pain or jaundice—meaning, turning yellow, because it affects the liver and there's leakage of liver fluids—that, unfortunately, is often very, very late.

I would just encourage folks to learn about some of what we call the B symptoms. If things are lingering, if it's not just off-colour on the weekend but progressing, lingering, unexplained weight loss, they should probably be analyzed.

The other thing I would say, is just a shout-out to some of my Etobicoke colleagues, including the honourable Mayor Rob Ford who, as you know, is battling a different form of cancer, not pancreatic but what's called liposarcoma; it's basically fat cells gone crazy. This, by the way, is a cousin of the type of cancer that took out Terry Fox, who had a bone-related cancer, osteosarcoma.

All of this means simply to say that, unfortunately, cancer, as a disease entity, is still alive, it's still progressing, it's still spreading, it's still increasing in prevalence; and all of us should collectively, for the health of Ontarians, and particularly the fortification of our health care system, mobilize all our different modalities, whether it's awareness or supporting my honourable colleague from Ajax–Pickering on this particular day calling attention to World Pancreatic Cancer Day—and also for the members of the public to be aware of the different forms of cancer long, long before they actually declare themselves as, for example, being either inoperable or too large, or having spread, metastasized or left home.

I salute my colleague from Ajax–Pickering. I know that we'll be hearing from some of my other colleagues, including the honourable Monte Kwinter, who will speak more directly to this.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member for Kitchener–Conestoga.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you, Speaker, for this opportunity to speak to a motion that will declare November 13 World Pancreatic Cancer Day; to speak to this motion that really will address the vital need for awareness surrounding the impacts of pancreatic cancer.

In this chamber we see many proposals brought forth for designated days, weeks or months to recognize any number of causes or issues, some more worthy than others, of course, but there is no doubt that this initiative to recognize November 13 as World Pancreatic Cancer Day is something that we can all get behind. In doing so, we will join organizations and individuals around the world to mark the first-ever World Pancreatic Cancer Day.

Why the need for the day and the need for awareness, Speaker? The fact is that, as we've heard, pancreatic cancer has one of the lowest survival rates of any cancer. This has been the case for more than 40 years, and yet very few are aware of its impact. It's a fact, of course, not lost on me, as my extended family is one that has felt that

impact directly. Somebody close to me, my grandfather Lloyd Harris, passed away in 1991 of pancreatic cancer.

I'm often asked about how I got into politics, if my family was involved, and I always say my immediate family wasn't but the one individual who had the political bug was, in fact, my grandfather. I remember, as a little kid, joining him as he was active in the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. He was a township councillor for Egremont township. I really remember those days fondly. But I do, unfortunately, remember those days when he was dealing with pancreatic cancer and the treatment of that. It was truly a painful sight to see him go through.

Of course, technology and medical advances today are progressing, but as we heard earlier, Steve Jobs, someone who perhaps would have had all the resources at his disposal, unfortunately succumbed to the same thing that my grandfather did. I want to mention that because I do believe it's important, and there is a family connection to that.

World Pancreatic Cancer Day, of course, will help to bring about the much-needed change in awareness levels about the disease and a focus on the need for urgent change. I'm proud to support today's motion to ensure that we in Ontario are part of that much-needed change. With our support, we can move forward to not only raise awareness of pancreatic cancer but also to support innovative research into early detection methods and improved treatment options, and to save lives.

1540

Ultimately, the hope is that the discovery of a screening test will enable doctors to diagnose this disease in its early stage when it is most treatable, resulting in a significant increase in survival rates. As we work toward that goal, I note, as well, that the launch of World Pancreatic Cancer Day this year will also incorporate the launch of a website and a social media campaign. I encourage fellow members to get tweeting on the 13th.

In fact, you can actually get involved today by joining the World Pancreatic Cancer Day Thunderclap, blasting out a message across social media about the signs and symptoms of pancreatic cancer.

Again, I thank the member for bringing this forward and pledge my support for the motion to recognize November 13 as World Pancreatic Cancer Day here in Ontario. Thank you, Speaker, for that opportunity.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'm grateful to contribute to the debate about this motion to announce World Pancreatic Cancer Day. Every one of us has had—someone has touched our lives with the disease of cancer.

Very little is known about pancreatic cancer; it's not something that I hear a lot about. So I did a little bit of reading up on it. They call it the silent disease. Often in its early stages, you don't have the symptoms to know that there's something you need to investigate further. So, definitely, having an awareness piece, making sure that people realize that pancreatic cancer is something

that you can be exposed to and you should be dealing with the screening—I think prevention in medicine, in our health care system, is one of the best ways that we can get ahead of disease and make sure that we stay healthy. If we don't have that prevention piece, then unfortunately the outcomes of these diseases are not very successful.

Some of the symptoms that people will experience are jaundice—we should be letting people know some of the things to watch for; jaundice is one. Also, abdominal pain and back pain; people might think that they've pulled a muscle. Be careful; that could mean something different than what you're experiencing. Onset of diabetes—that's also something that's very important.

We have to take responsibility for our own bodies and know when changes happen so that we can—we don't want to self-diagnose, because that's not a good thing. But once we see that there's something wrong, that we're not feeling the same way, we're tired, we're depressed—because those are other symptoms that happen, and weakness—those kinds of things are flags. As we talk about pancreatic cancer and we bring it to people's attention—those are great ways of making sure that people go out and get diagnosed or get tested or go to their doctor to make sure that they prevent any further seriousness of this type of cancer disease.

I commend the member for bringing it forward and, again, making it something that people should be cognizant of. Our health is very important to every one of us. When we experience symptoms, we should go to a doctor to make sure that we can catch them early and have good survival rates with any kind of cancer.

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

Mr. Monte Kwinter: I'm delighted to stand and support the motion of my colleague, and I'm talking first-hand.

My older brother, who lived in Florida, woke up one morning—he had never been sick a day in his life, really, and he was in his 60s—and while he was shaving he noticed that his eyes were getting yellow. He was really concerned about it, so he went to see his doctor.

The doctor looked at him and said, "I have to do some tests." Then he said, "You've got pancreatic cancer."

My brother said to him, "What does that mean?"

He said, "Well, the mortality rate is about 99%. The only people who really survive it are people who are diagnosed by accident. Ronnie Hawkins is one of them. He was diagnosed by accident and he's still around."

Anyway, my brother—they started to give him treatment, and then they determined that he might be a candidate for what is known as a Whipple operation. It's a technique that is done very rarely in Canada because people just don't have the expertise to do it, but down in Florida, in Miami, there's a major hospital that does it quite regularly. They had to determine whether or not he was a candidate, and they decided, "Yes, you are a candidate, and we're going to prescribe it."

So I flew down to Florida. I went to the hospital to visit him. He seemed to be quite comfortable. The sur-

geon came in and talked to him and said, “Well, you are a candidate, and we’ve had some positive results from this. We’re going to go ahead.”

The next thing that I knew, they took him into the operating room. I was waiting in there, expecting that I was going to be there for some time. About 20 minutes later, I saw the surgeon come back in, and he wasn’t wearing his scrubs; he was wearing a suit. I said, “What happened?”

He said, “Well, we opened him up, and then we closed him. It was too far gone. There was nothing that we could do about it.”

There was a situation that was totally, totally unexpected. As I say, he was always an outdoorsman, always healthy. Unfortunately, this has happened. I think it’s absolutely critical—because it is probably the most virulent cancer there is, and unless you’re diagnosed by accident, the chances of survival are very remote. I had an opportunity to deal with it first-hand, and I can tell you, it was a shattering experience for all of us, because it was so unexpected.

This is something that I think is important. I don’t know exactly how we get around the fact that there’s no way of knowing this is going to happen to you until it happens to you, and then usually, by that point, it’s too late. From that point of view, I think it’s important that we raise the awareness of it, that we have this day to bring attention to it, to do what was done here today, to talk about the people like the president of Apple, who are prominent people who you would think would have the best medical care available and it doesn’t really matter. If you’re going to get it, as I say, unless you’re diagnosed early by accident, the chances of survival are very, very rare.

I just wanted to share that because, as I say, I had the opportunity to live with it. It was quite an experience and something that I don’t wish anyone else to go through.

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

Mr. Arthur Potts: It does also give me great pleasure to rise and speak to this bill to declare November 13 World Pancreatic Cancer Day. I thank the member from Pickering, and my heart goes out to his family and his sister-in-law, and also to the member from York Centre and others who have had close encounters and have seen the devastating impact of this disease.

It’s so true that in Canada, something in the order of 4,700 Canadians will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2014, and almost 4,400 will probably die from it. We’ve had a great lesson in the medical side of why this is and some other information from the other side of the House. It is so hard to diagnose in the early stages, so by the time it presents, it seems to be fatal.

Having the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network come forward with this notion to create a day of recognition and acknowledgment is so important. We think about the other diseases that have gone down this route: We have the Becel Ride for Heart to draw attention to heart disease in the province and across Canada and across the

world. We have the Run for the Cure and breast cancer awareness. This has been so incredibly important for helping people identify with the disease so that people will both recognize symptoms and get the treatment but, more importantly, will help raise dollars and awareness corporately and socially—social media campaigns—in order to raise the funds necessary to do the critical research.

1550

To my understanding, there are no early tests to determine—it goes from symptoms. You then start to do your MRI analysis. To be able to find, early on, symptoms of presentation of the disease would be critically important.

The MaRS institute, we know, has a number of companies and high-tech research looking for cures, looking for early diagnostic opportunities and a whole array of medical conditions, of which pancreatic cancer is one, through a company that I’ve had some awareness with, which is seeking a marker drug called an alpha-fetoprotein, which reveals itself in a cancer patient. They can then put targeted chemo to a cancer cell. They’ve shown tremendous success, potentially, with a drug called Taxol, a chemotherapy drug which is widely used in the advanced stages and has opportunities to cure.

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, an American organization which has put together this notion of November 13 to be an awareness day, is also waging a campaign they call “Wage Hope.” This is not about one day a year when we think about the disease. This is about awareness that we can go on and think day to day. I want you to reflect on the campaign of Wage Hope and what that means. When you think about the word “wage,” you’re waging a war. You’re out there. You’re fighting hard for a glimmer of hope—because that really reflects the nature of this disease, where one in seven or 14% of Canadians are expected to get this disease in their lifetime and 1.2% of Canadians are expected to die from it.

When you think of how important it is that we encourage the research, we encourage the investments, we encourage people—part of the awareness issue may well be that people die so quickly. You do not have a lot of survivors who are out there to help direct public attention to this disease. It’s just the nature of how aggressive and how quickly the disease takes people.

I get the sense—and I appreciate the support we’re hearing from all sides of the House—that we can do this and declare November 13 World Pancreatic Cancer Day.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? There being none, I now recognize the member for Ajax–Pickering, if he would take his own seat.

Mr. Joe Dickson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to acknowledge and personally thank each and every one of the members from all parties who spoke today, and that includes the members from York Centre, Etobicoke North, Beaches–East York, Kitchener–Conestoga, Thornhill, Kenora–Rainy River and London–Fanshawe. I hope I haven’t missed anyone, and if I have, I would certainly apologize. I just want to say thank you

very much for speaking in reference to World Pancreatic Cancer Day on Thursday, November 13.

As I said before: They say a journey starts with a single step, so today we are taking that step to increase awareness.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker; I thank all fellow members; and I thank Karen.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

BOB MACKIE ACT, 2014

LOI BOB MACKIE DE 2014

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will deal first with ballot item number 10, standing in the name of Mr. MacLaren.

Mr. MacLaren has moved second reading of Bill 32, An Act to repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and to make a related amendment to the Ministry of Natural Resources Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a bunch of noes.

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will take the vote at the end of regular business.

PAN AM AND PARAPAN AM GAMES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Naidoo-Harris has moved private members' notice of motion number 7. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PANCREATIC CANCER

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Dickson has moved private member's notice of motion number 9. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

BOB MACKIE ACT, 2014

LOI BOB MACKIE DE 2014

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1555 to 1600.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. MacLaren has moved second reading of Bill 32, An Act to repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and to make a related amendment to the Ministry of Natural Resources Act.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

Ayes

MacLaren, Jack

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.

Arnott, Ted

Baker, Yvan

Ballard, Chris

Berardinetti, Lorenzo

Bisson, Gilles

Bradley, James J.

Campbell, Sarah

Coteau, Michael

Delaney, Bob

Dhillon, Vic

Dickson, Joe

DiNovo, Cheri

Duguid, Brad

Gates, Wayne

Hatfield, Percy

Hoskins, Eric

Hudak, Tim

Jaczek, Helena

Jones, Sylvia

Kwinter, Monte

MacCharles, Tracy

Malhi, Harinder

Mangat, Amrit

Martins, Cristina

Martow, Gila

McMahon, Eleanor

Milczyn, Peter Z.

Miller, Paul

Moridi, Reza

Munro, Julia

Murray, Glen R.

Naidoo-Harris, Indira

Potts, Arthur

Qaadri, Shafiq

Scott, Laurie

Sergio, Mario

Walker, Bill

Wong, Soo

Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 1; the nays are 40.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negatived.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find we have unanimous consent to revert to motions.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The minister says we have an agreement to revert to motions. Agreed? Agreed.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. James J. Bradley: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion, without notice, regarding private members' public business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item numbers 13, 15 and 16 be waived.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SAFEGUARDING HEALTH CARE INTEGRITY ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 DE SAUVEGARDE DE L'INTÉGRITÉ DES SOINS DE SANTÉ

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 5, 2014, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to safeguard health care integrity by enacting the Voluntary Blood Donations Act, 2014 and by amending certain statutes with respect to the regulation of pharmacies and other matters concerning regulated health professions / *Projet de loi 21, Loi visant à sauvegarder l'intégrité des soins de santé par l'édiction de la Loi de 2014 sur le don de sang volontaire et la modification de certaines lois en ce qui concerne la réglementation des pharmacies et d'autres questions relatives aux professions de la santé réglementées.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): When this item was last debated, we had finished the leadoff for the government caucus.

Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: I'm very pleased to stand today, as associate PC health critic, to speak to Bill 21, an act to ensure that blood is donated freely in Ontario. This bill is also known as the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act.

Generally, the Ontario PC caucus, my colleagues, are supportive of the proposed legislation. However, considering the facts, we believe we need to have extensive discussion with all stakeholders to better understand the complexities of the issues involving this bill and make amendments as appropriate to strengthen the bill. I'll speak about that a little bit more at length.

The facts are: 70% of plasma use in Ontario comes from the United States' plasma clinics where donors are paid for plasma. Our system relies on a voluntary system of unpaid donors, not paid donors. The safety and sufficiency of our blood system has been tested before, namely the critically low supplies in 2008 and the tainted-blood scandal that saw 30,000 people receive blood that was infected with HIV and hepatitis C in 1980.

The Minister of Health has known for some time that Canadian Plasma Resources applied to Health Canada back in November 2012 for a licence to collect plasma from paid donors, but did nothing about it until it made the news. The ministry decided to act in haste when it introduced the original bill, Bill 178. Our worry remains that the urgency of the situation may lead to unintentional consequences.

As with many of the bills in this House, we believe we need to take a methodic thought process. We need to ensure that we consult with stakeholders. Sadly, in the last couple of weeks, we've had a number of bills come to this House that are time-stamped by the government, trying to push those through. We believe this is one of those where it can't happen. We definitely need to consult. We're talking about blood services that will impact people at the end of the day, and we want to ensure that there is full debate and full disclosure from all interested stakeholders.

For these reasons, we must ensure that trust and faith in our blood supply system is maintained. That is why we will be calling on the government to provide significant time for committee hearings on this bill: because of the importance and because of the complexity. It is an extremely complex issue, and I'll try to provide more

details of my rationale as I speak for the next 50 to 55 minutes.

We're finding more and more uses for plasma in various medical treatments, so there is going to be an increased demand for plasma. That's the reality, Mr. Speaker; we know that's coming. As I speak a little further, we're going to show that there are times when we may be in a deficiency. We want to make sure that the supply will continue, even if we don't pay for donations. We need to ensure that there is enough plasma and blood in the times when we need them.

Again, that's why it becomes complex. Some people will believe that we should never pay for these types of things, that it may have a negative impact. Others are going to say, "You know what? We're already getting it from the States when we need it in a slow-demand period, and thus we need to do that."

We want to ensure that there are no unintended negative consequences—particularly when it's impacting the health of those that we're truly here to serve—arising from the proposed legislation—

Interruption.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you, Lily-Anne. It's been a pleasure to have you and your colleagues here. We're saddened to see that you're leaving today, but you are our future and it has been a privilege to serve with you. Thank you very much.

As I often say in this House, the whole reason for me being here is for that generation, the next generation. I have two sons—Zachary is 20 and Ben is 17—and a number of nieces and nephews and great-nieces and nephews, and of course friends and their children, and that's really why we're here. It's what compels me to come in every day and try to do my best as a member of the official opposition, Her Majesty's loyal opposition, to ensure that we have the best legislation we possibly can.

This certainly is one of those situations, and we want to ensure that every item we debate has thorough debate and the proper stakeholders consulted, and that we're not rushing things through for partisan reasons or just for the sake of expediency. We need to do that.

I'll get back to my notes in hand, Mr. Speaker.

There are significant considerations respecting paid plasma donation that need to be raised, and I'll be doing them on behalf of my colleague, our PC health critic and member for Whitby, Christine Elliott.

In plasma donations, as I understand it, the liquid portion of the blood, which is plasma, is collected, and the remaining blood components are returned to the donor. Plasma is a yellow, straw-coloured liquid that is maybe 90% water. It provides a transportation system for blood cells. Plasma also helps blood to clot, and the plasma collected is usually given to people with liver conditions, burns or bacterial infections in their blood. Evidently, it is vital to our survival—again, the whole need to slow things down to ensure that we're doing the proper consultation with the proper people at the table before any decisions are made.

Plasma can also be used to manufacture plasma protein products. One of the new studies we're hearing

about is the use of plasma proteins in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. As Alzheimer's disease or related dementias impact as many as 500,000 Canadians today, mostly senior citizens, and we all know that that is probably going to increase as we move through the baby boom generation, it's even more critical that we pay attention to this and anything that can help if there's a potential cure for those deadly and horrible diseases.

I think it's safe to say that demand for such novel treatments, and thus the need for plasma products, will increase in the coming years. Therein lies the predicament: How do we best ensure that we're collecting enough plasma to be self-sufficient, which would theoretically amount to 600,000 to 700,000 litres of plasma per year?

According to Canadian Blood Services, we currently purchase the majority of our products from the United States and Europe. As I mentioned earlier in my leadoff, the plasma sources we purchase are 70% from the United States' plasma clinics where donors are paid for plasma. The remainder of our supply, the smaller portion, comes via volunteer donors in Canada.

1610

I'm proud to say that I've been a blood donor since, I think, I was about 16 or 18 years old. I try to do it wherever I can. I thank the Canadian Blood Services. As their slogan says, it's in all of us to give, so those of you out there listening, those of you in the House, those of you who may look at this recording at some point, I encourage you, wherever you can, when it's safe and practical to do so, to please give. It may be you or a loved one that you are helping somewhere down the road. I applaud all of those in the Canadian Blood Services, the volunteers. Certainly, in our riding we have a number of those, particularly in Owen Sound—the Owen Sound Legion and a fellow by the name of Percy Staight. I think he was about a 20- or 25-year volunteer who organized those clinics with the help of a mass of volunteers. I just want to do a shout-out to all of those people across our great province and across our great country who give their time and energy to collect volunteer blood units on behalf of those who may need them due to other circumstances.

Interestingly, I've also learned that while bodies such as the International Society of Blood Transfusion, the World Health Organization—WHO—and the European Union all strongly stand against paid donation systems, the majority of the world's supply of plasma products comes from paid donors sourced by the plasma industry. At the end of the day, ensuring a safe blood supply is a challenge for our system. We know blood is scarce. Even though, as I said earlier, it is in all of us to give, there are certain times that people wish not to; there are health implications for some who won't do that. But I truly, truly do try to encourage those who are able to do that. I know there is one gentleman in my riding—Jim Moyer is his name—who surpassed 400 units of donated blood, which is a pretty staggering amount that he has given back to his community. That was about a year ago. I think I rose in the House and did a statement to acknow-

ledge that at that time. I believe Jim is still a proud donor and goes at every opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the average adult carries about five litres of blood. The average unit of donated blood is a half a litre. I'd like to remind the House that back in 2008, the Canadian Blood Services—CBS—issued an urgent appeal for donors, warning that the blood supply had fallen to just a two-day supply. That's staggering, when you really think about it, when there are so many people who I believe could and should be giving. So I again encourage, and you'll hear me belatedly through this—and I won't apologize because I do think it is something we all have to do when we have the ability, is to step up and help our fellow person in their time of need.

The Canadian Blood Services national office issued a statement warning that donations dropped 40% over the previous two months. So I ask, what if the demand for blood surpasses our ability to collect it? What really happens then? What are the alternatives? What are the predicaments that we may face? I understand that many people will have a very strong principle one way or another with regard to paid donations, but I think what we have to do is look beyond that and ask, what's for the betterment of everyone? What's the ability for each of us to really look at the collective need and the collective ability to have a solution to help those in need? Can we guarantee that our existing volunteer model can meet that demand of 600,000 to 700,000 litres of plasma per year?

Let's not forget that I shared a little while ago that that's currently with about 500,000 people, sadly, suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia in our population. I just met with the executive director of our local Alzheimer Society, Deborah Barker, and we explored and had quite a good discussion in regard to the concerns we share about that baby boom coming through and how many more people in the next 10, 15, 20 years are going to be afflicted by Alzheimer's and dementia. It's one that I think, again, may be one of those things we need to be 10 years ahead of the curve on. We need to be thinking today of what the solutions are and how we're going to address it, have protocols in place, as opposed to waiting for all of a sudden there is a shortage like we experienced a few years ago and then go into panic mode, because some of those agencies that might be able to provide us need to be aware of what the need may be. We need to have that procurement process and strategy in place long before.

In reviewing the history of blood collection services here in Ontario and Canada, we're quickly reminded again of just how complex the blood supply system is. We're also quickly reminded that the system has been fraught with trial and error in the past. For all of us who lived through the 1980s, we're quickly reminded of the devastation when 30,000 people unknowingly received blood that was infected with HIV and hepatitis C in 1980. It was devastating; thousands of people had their lives cut short because our blood supply system was not safe.

I'd like to remind the House of some key findings from Justice Krever's landmark report on how Canada's

blood system managed the threat of HIV and Hepatitis C transmission from blood transfusions. I think it's important to talk about this landmark report, as it gave us 50 recommendations on strengthening our blood system, which is the crux of this bill. It was, after all, the Krever commission that first recommended against paying donors for their blood. Again, I'm going to cite some information from the Krever report: "As many as 2,000 Canadians became infected with HIV through transfusion or the use of blood products between 1978 and 1985 and 30,000 Canadians contracted HCV through the blood system between 1986 and 1990. Krever's review of the blood system found fault at all levels, from the Canadian Red Cross Society, to Health Canada, to the provincial and territorial governments, to hospitals, as well as to doctors and their governing bodies. Contamination of the blood supply with HIV and HCV, Krever noted, was essentially inevitable, but failures at all levels made the problem larger than it needed to be. A selection of the findings for each of these players includes:

"The Canadian Red Cross Society: inadequate screening of at-risk groups and communities; failure to implement surrogate testing ... for HCV in 1986; failure to abandon a factor VIII product that was suspected of being inadequately treated to kill the HIV...; unacceptable look-back and trace-back processes in place for notification of donors and recipients of contaminated blood."

On the Health Canada side of things: "Lax monitoring by the Bureau of Biologics (the regulator), which should have recognized the threat; no national blood policy that clearly defined roles and authority; reluctance to trace recipients of blood and blood products; passive rather than active regulation of blood and blood products."

Again, what we're seeing—they may have been unintended, certainly, some of these consequences, and probably were, I would suggest, although I wasn't directly involved. But when we see that there are concerns, what we need to do when we're looking at legislation is to put it in place to try to prevent these, wherever possible.

"Provincial governments: a pact to deny compensation to infected claimants; poor surveillance of infectious diseases; failure to properly fund adequate blood screening; failure to build a network of blood manufacturing plants across Canada, which resulted in the necessity to import the product from the United States, where donors were paid and blood was collected from prisoners (practices that increase the risk of contamination)."

Again, you can see what I'm trying to outline is that there is a lot of complexity. People will have various thoughts on either side of many of these contentious issues, whether it be from a principled point of view or just their own personal viewpoints.

"Physicians/Hospitals: some reluctance by physicians to tell patients of their HIV status due to stigma; reluctance to trace recipients of contaminated blood and blood products; homophobia.

"Provincial governing bodies: poor enforcement of physicians' duty to report infectious diseases.

"Manufacturers: misleading information provided to and crucial information withheld from Health Canada with respect to product safety."

These key findings now form the basic principles of the Canadian blood supply system. According to the World Health Organization, at least 65 countries do not test all donated blood for HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and syphilis. Tainted blood still accounts for as much as 5% of HIV infections in Africa. The World Health Organization estimates that six million tests which should be done for infections on donated blood are not carried out.

To repeat comments raised by my colleague and PC health critic Christine Elliott, the member from Whitby, in response to a previous bill, Bill 178: "Plasma obtained from Canadians will be safer, in relative terms. Canada has lower rates of infectious diseases than many other countries, including parts of the US, and Canadians have access to covered health care services."

Importantly, I do want to recognize again Canadian Blood Services, who are doing a great job of ensuring that blood donations are safe and that trust and faith in our blood supply system is maintained.

As I say, I often give blood on a personal basis. I am very, very impressed with the process. I'm impressed with how they have our information catalogued. I'm impressed with the process that they put you through, even as you lead up to actually getting the ability to give blood that day. They put you through a very thorough screening test, even though you're already in the system. Although you're a regular donor, they don't skip steps. They ensure that everything is done according to what their protocol is. To the best of my knowledge, all blood units are tested for transmittable diseases, and there is definitely a rigorous process for screening donors.

I'm now going to turn a little bit of my thought process to the second component of this bill, which mandates the College of Pharmacists to inspect and license all hospital pharmacies in Ontario. This part of the bill is in response to the underdosing of 1,202 chemo patients in 2012-13. The social policy report titled Diluted Chemotherapy Drugs found that patients in four hospitals in Ontario and one in New Brunswick had received diluted doses of chemotherapy drugs and that the company supplying the drugs was unregulated.

The contract to purchase these drugs was between the pharmaceutical company and a group purchasing organization called MedBuy. The hospitals were not party to the purchasing contract for the product. The recommendation was that group purchasing organizations and shared service organizations be subject to audits by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario to provide oversight in order to maintain transparency and accountability in procurement practices in the health care sector.

We support any improvement to Ontario's hospital drug supply system and patient safety. Obviously, patient safety is number one, and it needs to be. It's actually why, in this House, this week and a little bit last week, with the tabling of the Ornge report, I have stood up and I

wanted to ensure that there is transparency and accountability and proper oversight in place. It's a concern that I've tried to raise, not being necessarily personally critical of the minister, but we continue to hear in this House: "We'll do this next time. We'll take action afterwards." Yet there has been a lag of two years, in some cases, before we actually get to there.

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What we want to ensure—certainly what I want to ensure when I'm talking about legislation and regulation in this House—is that we're doing everything in our power to prevent it from happening the first time and certainly the second time. We all have to be diligent, and we all have to ensure that we're standing here every day thinking of patient safety, constituent safety, taxpayer safety—people. Regardless of what title we give them, it's all about people and what we're doing to ensure that they have the most safe practices in our country, in the great province of Ontario and in each of our respective ridings.

The chemo scandal, sadly, was an example of the Ministry of Health dropping the ball yet again, and we're definitely looking to the new minister to ensure that this never happens again. That's why I stand in this House and challenge—my role as a member of Her Majesty's official opposition is to challenge the government, to ensure that practices are there, and where I think there are opportunities for improvement, to offer those suggestions. We certainly want to be able to be a solution base. We want to accept them at their word that they want to reach out and work in co-operation. But at the end of the day, if we don't see that, then we're going to continue to bring these messages to this table.

I've received a couple of pieces of correspondence recently, and I'm just going to reference them here. We received a letter from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. They, I believe, are generally in support of the intent of the bill, and are quite willing, again, to work collaboratively with the government and with all three parties in this House to ensure that there is good legislation going forward. What they see as essential amendments—that's not saying it's a "should have" or a "could have" or a "we might do." "Essential" to me says, "Do not move forward with this policy unless you're truly going to listen to the input." I believe the College of Physicians and Surgeons are at the front end. They're the people who are going to be impacted with regard to this legislation, when it's implemented, to be the carriers of it, to be the enforcers of it, to be the delivery body of it. So I really think it's important that we sit down with these groups and that we have a very thorough consultation.

I've also received correspondence from the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario. Again, they're suggesting, generally, that—I should give a little bit of background. Some of the people at home may not know, as I didn't—when you become a member of Parliament, you get a lot more information than I ever would have imagined we'd get, on almost an hourly basis.

In this case, the Federation of Health Regulatory College of Ontario is "the umbrella group for 26 regulatory colleges (including three transitional councils) for the health professions governed under the Regulated Health Professions Act.... Colleges have a statutory mandate to protect the public interest through regulation of health care providers (e.g., registration, complaints and discipline, quality assurance, patient relations program). Together, the 26 colleges govern more than 300,000 health professionals in Ontario."

I think we would be abdicating our responsibility, if you will, and our accountability if we did not take time to consult the collective wisdom of 300,000 of our front-line health care practitioners. "The federation"—again, this is right in the correspondence—"supports the objectives on which Bill 117 is based. We believe that the bill has been introduced to enhance the ability of RHPA colleges to regulate their members and pharmacies, in the public interest. It includes provisions to help ensure patient safety, including enhancing the ability of colleges to disclose serious concerns to other authorities, that attempt to close gaps preventing colleges from receiving important information about the misconduct of practitioners and that reduce unnecessary activities that consume significant resources."

Again, I want to reinforce here: These are the folks at the front line. These are the folks who are going to be bound and forced, if you will, depending on the decree of the legislation, to move forward. So we need to ensure that we have their input so we do it right. We don't want to put out legislation at any time, I believe, that is saying, "You shall do this," without having had proper consultation, without having the input and insights of those people who are at the front lines, who have the best practices, who are looking not just for today; they're looking at what the consequences are, both good and unintended negative consequences.

One of the things that I think I've been saddened by a little bit, since becoming a member—it's certainly been a privilege and a pleasure to be here for three years representing the great people of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, and I'm thankful that they re-elected me in the last election to continue to be their representative. I think what we want to ensure is that we have legislation that truly is going to be representative and in the best interests of all the people.

We want it to be efficient. We don't want to have waste in the system. We don't want to do things and then have to come back here and re-debate over and over because we didn't think it through the first time. Many of my mentors—one of the things that sticks with me is, do it right the first time, because we don't have the luxury of resources. Right now, our government is in a significant financial crunch. There are not the resources because of mismanagement over the last 11 years. There is a lot of money that has been wasted, and we just don't have the luxury of being able to redo things.

This is a prime example of legislation where I think there's no expediency to have to do this. It's very conten-

tious. As I mentioned in my earlier remarks, there is a lot of complexity in regard to many components of this bill. They combine two different bills, previous health legislation Bill 178 and Bill 117, that died on the order paper, sadly, because we went to election.

We want to ensure that we're bringing this back now—let's do it properly. There's no big rush. We've got a four-year mandate from the people of Ontario, so let's slow this thing down. There's no need for the government to expedite it and push it through without having proper consultation.

I'm going to talk about a couple of specifics that the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario have shared with me and asked that I bring forward to ensure, again, that we're having that open, accountable and transparent discussion on a topic of this significance.

They want to question and to get more information, if nothing else, to ensure that they understand the word "discretion" in the registrar's screening of complaints, sections 12 to 17 of the bill.

The federation supports the purpose of the amendment and sees it as a very important element in the bill. "Colleges have devoted far too many resources to investigating complaints that do not serve any public interest. We want to devote those resources to complaints that have an impact on the public and would enable colleges to better protect the public."

We want to ensure the effectiveness of that word "discretion." Sometimes a word like "discretion" actually opens the door, in some cases, to an unintended consequence that may not serve the greater need of the bill.

Another area they have is the area of a time frame. The federation is concerned about the amount of time permitted for the step in regard to looking at complaints or concerns.

"Complaints are supposed to be dealt with in 150 days"—1-5-0, Mr. Speaker. "By adding this additional step and providing the complainant 30 days to decide whether or not to seek a review of the registrar's determination, the 150-day timeline becomes increasingly impossible to meet. The federation suggests that in subsection (9) of section 12 of Bill 117, complainants be given 14 days to decide on whether to request a review."

Again, I think it's well thought out. I think it's a good, rational concern that they've brought to our attention. All they're asking is, let's have some more discussion. Let's have open dialogue to make sure that the end product truly serves the people: first and foremost, the safety of the patient, the person receiving the service; and secondly, of course, the service delivery and the front-line personnel that are delivering these.

They also share a little bit of a concern: "The enhanced reporting duty in Bill 117 now turns on whether the person who grants the member privileges has 'reasonable grounds to believe' that the resignation, relinquishment or restriction is 'related to' the member's misconduct, incompetence or incapacity. This is a really high legal test. In such a case, a person who wanted to avoid a reporting duty would simply have to state that he

or she did not believe that the action was related to the member's competence or incapacity, in order to avoid the reporting duty."

Mr. Speaker, hopefully, most of our systems are on the merit system and people will do the right thing, but there are certain circumstances when that doesn't happen. I think we have to ensure, when we're writing legislation, utilizing words like "discretion," that we have to be more black and white. We have to give people clear, defined terms, so that they all are working from the same page; we're all in the same ballpark, talking the same language and understanding it so that we don't go through this myriad of administrative bureaucracy and spinning paper for the sake of spinning paper.

In many cases, the people on the other end need timely results; they need to be able to move through the system properly. I think we need to do due diligence in that case as well.

"Appointing college supervisors, section 9 of the bill:

"Under the bill, the provisions permitting cabinet to appoint a supervisor over a college will be modified. The federation appreciates why this amendment is being proposed. The federation urges you to raise concerns that you may have with a particular college early and often so as to resolve concerns and to avoid, wherever possible, resorting to this extraordinary power."

Again, I think the reality here is that they're saying there are mechanisms; there are ways we can ensure that there's a timely, efficient process, and let's not let it get bogged down in administrivia because of the unintended consequence of a certain word, term or definition.

"Additional exceptions to the confidentiality duty, sections 10-11 of the bill:

"... three new exceptions have been created, enabling colleges to disclose otherwise confidential information. The proposed new grounds for disclosing confidential information are as follows:

"(1) for the administration of the Health Protection and Promotion Act (e.g. concerns about communicable diseases);

"(2) to a public hospital in relation to a pending complaint or s. 75 registrar's investigation in accordance with regulations initiated by the minister; and

"(3) to any other person named in the regulations, in relation to a pending complaint or s. 75 registrar's investigation in accordance with regulations initiated by the minister....

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"Colleges have access to information that sometimes can be of assistance to other regulators and participants in the health care system. However, the importance of the information varies significantly. Some of the information would not be of much value to others (e.g., alleged rudeness by a practitioner). Some of the information could be of significant value to others (e.g., about communicable diseases; about a developing pattern of treatment errors or risks). In addition, even where the information is significant, there is great variability as to the reliability of the information."

They've given me very, very specific situations that I think are good to feed back to committee. Hopefully that's where this bill will go: back to a committee that will take the time and effort to consult widely. They need to ensure that that happens. But I think what their concern is is that you don't want to add unnecessary administrative burden. You don't want to add things into the system that are going to slow things down and not allow answers to be made in a timely and efficient manner, Mr. Speaker.

I want to ensure that I've conveyed the proper message today. You have two pretty significant groups, both the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario, that generally are supportive. I'm not going to quote, but I think they're generally supportive of this bill. They just want to ensure that we're doing the right thing and that we slow things down to make sure we get it right the first time.

I want to just give a little bit of an outline as well in regard to—again, I'm going to repeat—Bill 21, Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, 2014. There are actually six acts that are going to be impacted: Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act, a new one; Health System Improvements Act, 2007; Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act; Public Hospitals Act, a new one; Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991; and Trillium Gift of Life Network Act.

I want to reiterate what I said earlier in regard to schedule 1, Voluntary Blood Donations Act. This schedule 1 prohibits the sale of plasma or blood products in the province. This is in response to Canadian Plasma Resources setting up locations to collect and compensate donors for plasma. I'm not really going to get into a discussion today, Mr. Speaker, and try to convince people whether you should or shouldn't believe that there should be an organization or entity able to do this. What I think I want to bring more to the people of Ontario, and certainly to the people of this Legislature who will ultimately make the decision, is that there are options that we need to be looking at. There are situations where I think we can't just be closed-minded until we at least explore all available avenues and get the true facts on the table and look at it from all sides, which is what I think most of us do. Certainly that's what I try to do every day when I come here from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I want to make sure I have the facts, I want to look at both sides of an issue and I want to make the most educated, balanced decision that I can.

Currently, Ontario does not collect enough plasma to be completely self-sustaining. I've said a number of times in this House already in this short half-hour—it may seem long to you, Mr. Speaker, but for me it has been a short half-hour so far—that I think we have a tremendous voluntary outpouring of support to give blood. But I'm not certain, with some of the things I've suggested to you with regard to Alzheimer's and dementia specifically, but even just with our seniors' more acute-care needs out in our communities—there are a lot of

situations. My colleague Laurie Scott from the nursing practice industry—really, what it comes down to is that I have the utmost respect for nurses. I worked at Bruce Peninsula Health Services Foundation, right beside the Warton Hospital, at the bottom of the doctors' offices in Warton. What I saw were nurses, day in and day out, giving their heart and soul to those patients. You know why they did that? Because they truly are caring, compassionate people. But at the end of the day, I think what I really gleaned from them the most is that they put everything aside except the first and foremost principle of their day: the health and well-being of that patient sitting in front of them. I think this is the type of thing with blood services that we need to be thinking about, because that supply of blood may become critical to someone's life in a very distinct situation.

I heard, I think last night, on an ad as I was listening—I think it was television; I can't remember if it was television or radio—that they were asking if the public knew how many units of blood are needed for one car accident victim. Some people said, "Five," and they said, "No." Someone said, "Twenty," and they said, "Double that, plus"—so 50 units of blood for one car accident victim. Again, we need to ensure that we have that supply. I can't give enough credit to those people who truly do voluntarily give of themselves. It is in you to give, as I've said. I want to just give that plug for that line a couple of times while I'm here today.

We need to be looking. What happens if we don't have that supply? Where do we go to get that supply? I've shared with you that the plasma and the plasma protein that we need to derive from blood—right now there's about 600,000 to 700,000 units, but that is purported to increase. Where are we going to get that? Can we guarantee that the voluntary sector will be able to step up if that doubles in the next five years? I'm not certain. Yes, Ontarians and Canadians are the most giving in the world, but we can't guarantee that, so we need to be prepared. And the Minister of Health, regardless of what stripe, is responsible for that at the end of the day. I think what you want to do is set yourself up for success. You want to set yourself up to ensure that you have protocols and a backup plan in place. So it is a very complex discussion that we need to be having.

Ontario collects enough plasma for transfusion but does not produce enough plasma protein products to be entirely self-sufficient. We currently purchase 70% of our plasma protein products from the United States, from paid and unpaid donors. I want to spend a few minutes on this because, again, there are some people who have certainly talked to me individually, anecdotally, saying, "I just don't believe in paid. It's the wrong thing. It's not ethical. It's not the right way to go." Again, I'm not here to convince you one way or the other, nor even try to go down that road. What I want to say, Mr. Speaker, is that you may actually be getting a blood unit right now that is from the United States, which actually was done through a paid donor.

I think we can't be closed to the fact that if we don't have enough volunteers and your loved one, your child

the age of our pages and younger, needs that unit of blood, at the end of the day, are you going to make that a real discussion about whether it was a paid or unpaid donor of blood? If it was one of my sons, Zach or Ben, lying in a hospital bed needing a unit of blood, whether it's paid or unpaid is going to be way, way back on my list of concerns at that time. What I want to know is that when my child—young adult; they probably don't want me to call them a child anymore—is in that situation, the blood is there and available to them when they need it. This is life and death at times. We don't have time to go back and consult. We don't go back in time to review this policy. We need to ensure that it's in place.

Plasma is often used in pharmaceutical products that help combat Alzheimer's and hemophilia. It has been addressed that we could have a shortage. We need to understand what those realities are. We need to explore it with people at the front end of the table, the stakeholders, the people who are truly in the business and truly understand the ramifications of what we're talking about. I think when this originally came into the House, there was a fairly short discussion more of the ethical side of things, but I don't think we ever spent enough time truly making sure that the public was informed. As a consumer, I certainly had no idea of the types of numbers we're talking about. I had no idea that there could be shortages like that. To be honest, I didn't even know that there was paid or unpaid. Fortunately, no one in my family at that point had needed to have a transfusion, although I did lose my dear sister Marge to cancer a number of years ago, and she did end up having some blood transfusions.

Again, as I said a few minutes ago, at the end of the day, whether it was paid—you know what?—if it was going to help keep my sister alive, I don't really care where that came from. Some people will hold those very highly. That's fine, and I'm open to that. But what I want to do is make sure that this bill addresses the true needs that are out there, the true shortages that we could be experiencing somewhere down the road—not too far down the road, particularly with that baby boom coming at us—and I think we need to ensure that we have a system in place that we're all comfortable with, that we're actually very comfortable and confident in our government of the day and our agencies that are going to provide, that we have the blood supply in place.

I want to touch again on the fact that much of the blood we bring in, 70%, comes from the United States and/or Europe, and that blood, in many cases, is from a paid donor. There are certain times that obviously we want to ensure that we can get all of it, but I think it has been stated clearly by a couple of different groups in our research that there aren't sufficient resources, so we have to look outside and look at new ways of doing this.

I want to talk really briefly, Mr. Speaker, about schedule 2, which talks about amendments respecting the regulation of pharmacies and other matters concerning the regulated health professions. Although he's not here right now in the House with us—I think he's out doing

some meetings. Dr. Jeff—I don't know if he's actually a doctor; I call him the mad scientist, but he's a pharmacist in any case, and I believe “Dr.” is part of his title, although Jeff would never want that to be used. I have to say it's been an absolute privilege, along with my colleague Laurie Scott, a nurse whom I've already referenced—having them right in our caucus; in fact, in front of me right now, that I can ask a question, has been absolutely a privilege and a value that I can't say enough about. Being able to talk to Jeff—and back home, when I was executive director of the Bruce Peninsula—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would just remind the member that we speak of members' ridings and not their names.

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Mr. Bill Walker: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I shouldn't have said “Laurie Scott” from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, or “Jeff Yurek” from Elgin–Middlesex–London. And I won't say “the mad scientist” again, because that probably goes way past the line there, Mr. Speaker. It truly is, though—having their ability.

As I was saying, in my former life, I was executive director of the Bruce Peninsula Health Services Foundation, and we did a capital campaign. Two people who really stood out and, again, taught me tremendously were Cristine and Richard Bouillon. They were the local pharmacists in town. They chaired the capital campaign to raise \$3 million in the Bruce Peninsula for the Lion's Head Hospital and the Wiarton Hospital—\$1.5 million in a very sparsely rural community—but health care obviously stood up for them; they stood up for health care. The things that they were able to share with me have been invaluable even coming into this job as a member of provincial Parliament, to understand how the pharmacy works.

Again, in my deputy health critic role, it has been a pleasure to work with our health critic, Christine Elliott from Whitby. I want to make sure we get the ridings correct, Mr. Speaker. Having that capacity to work under Christine's tutelage—her years of experience here and the things that she has been able to accomplish—has been absolutely wonderful. She has also been able to allow me the opportunity to go out and meet with a lot of the groups—so things like this—and again today gave me the privilege to present this hour of what I hope you will find a very interesting and factual discussion about a topic that is very complex and challenging. But she and Jeff—sorry. The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London and Ms. Scott from—Kawartha Lakes–Brock?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

Mr. Bill Walker: Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock. Sorry. It's a good thing that I'm not the Speaker, Mr. Speaker, because I would mess up these riding names all over the place, and these are the ones that I should probably know fairly well. Anyway, I digress.

We need to make sure that we have that access. I'm trying to make the point here so it is relevant to the conversation that having access to people who have actually

worked on the front lines, who have had experience, is invaluable, because they bring the practical nature. They are not talking theory. They are not talking hypothetical. They are not talking partisan speaking points. What they're talking is, here's truly how the system works or doesn't work and how we can improve it.

In the case of the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act, it redefines hospital and community pharmacies to all be considered as one type of pharmacy in terms of inspection. After the chemotherapy underdosing incident—on which we hope the government of the day has taken proactive measures so that it can never happen again—this ensures that all institutions are inspected properly.

I think it was our old-age homes that in the last session we talked about—where there were a number of old-age homes, seniors' residences, that were supposed to be inspected on a regular basis and haven't been. Again, one of the roles of the official opposition and the third party is to ensure that we're holding the government to account on these things. Those inspections play a critical role, and we need to do that in a timely and effective manner so that, again, it doesn't become a bureaucratic ticky-box exercise; it truly is something that is serving the end population user.

The Public Hospitals Act provides greater reporting to the College of Physicians and Surgeons when a physician leaves for misconduct. This allows for greater transparency in government and makes physicians more accountable.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk about transparency and accountability, certainly in the last couple of weeks. The Liberal government of the day has actually introduced a bill. It's one that I'm paying close attention to because—and I don't mean this in any other way than just being factual—I think there are times that there is a lot of transparency and accountability lacking. In the last couple of weeks, they have introduced time allocation for a couple of very important acts in this House because they wanted to push them through on their agenda, as opposed to taking time.

The child care act—I think it's Bill 10—is one example of that. Our member from Simcoe North, Garfield Dunlop—I think I did that right that time; I did the riding—has been in this House, as the very qualified critic of education, pleading with the education minister and the government to allow us to go out into the community, to go out and truly do what I believe one of the symbols in this House suggests: to actually listen and go out and hear from the people that we're here and given the privilege and pleasure to represent.

They've denied that, Mr. Speaker. It's a little tough to vote for a transparency and accountability act when those types of things happen.

Another one—and I need to be able to utilize it, so I hope you're able to see where I'm going with it, Mr. Speaker—is that with the gas plant scandal, we wanted to call the two key witnesses that actually were the closest to the truth, Peter Faist and Laura Miller. We wanted to ensure that at the end—

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: Well, yes, it's very relevant because we're talking about accountability and transparency, and this is part of the act that your government has introduced. So I want to ensure that I'm drawing the parallel that we want that. I think all members on this side, both the official opposition and the third party, want to ensure that there's absolute transparency and accountability, but you can't do that if you rush things through. You can't do that if you shut down debate. You can't do that if you use time allocation as a tool to expedite your needs as opposed to the needs of the greater populace, those being the people of Ontario.

Hon. James J. Bradley: You're starting to sound like me in opposition.

Mr. Bill Walker: I would be honoured to sound like you in opposition, the member from St. Catharines, the Honourable Jim Bradley.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: He has only been here 100 years.

Mr. Bill Walker: Yes. I've only got—well, I won't go there. But I certainly hope that at some point I can have your esteemed talent to be a cabinet minister some day and be able to carry out these great acts on behalf of the people.

Interjection.

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Join us next week.

Mr. Bill Walker: No. There's a true answer in Parliament right there: no. But thank you for the offer; very kind of you.

The Regulated Health Professions Act allows cabinet to appoint a supervisor to a health professions college when necessary.

All of these things, again, have merit. They have probably the right intent, but let's take time to really have open dialogue and discussion, to ensure that we're doing the right thing at every step.

The bill would prohibit the sale of plasma, a concern from the previous session—again, valid. Even today, we had a very solemn ceremony to start off our session of Parliament this morning, looking forward to Remembrance Day next week, from all the three speakers, who I believe did an absolutely admirable job of truly speaking about what's important to us collectively as Canadians, Ontarians and just citizens of this great and wonderful country, and that is to be able to have open dialogue and dissenting views and be able to say them wherever and whenever you wish, without fear of reprimand. I think we all need to hold on to that near and dear, and this is one of those. People are going to come on either side of this issue, whether to sell or be paid to give blood or not, but I think what we want to do is ensure that we put the big need out front. What is that need going to be down the road? Whether it's a year down the road—it could be in a month. We could have some kind of catastrophic incident come into our province, and we would need that supply of blood. We need to be prepared. We can't be saying, "We'll study it for a couple of years" or "We'll get to that somewhere down the road." We need to be on top of that.

About two and a half weeks ago with the Ebola scare, one of my jobs and one of my roles as opposition critic was to challenge the current Minister of Health, saying, "Are you truly prepared? Have you got your plan?" Equally as important is the communications plan so that everyone involved is ready when that incident may happen in their community or in their home base—in a riding, in our case. What I want to ensure is that all of our hospitals, our health units, everyone was on a coordinated basis and ahead of the game. They weren't waiting three days after something happened to say, "We'll have a plan."

The minister, I think, has learned some of the lessons from SARS. I believe that he and the interim public health director have things relatively in hand. But also in that case, I heard from hospitals in my jurisdiction, as well as from some of my colleagues, that hospitals were being forced to put in some potential protocols of buying equipment, doing training, so that they're prepared. On one side, that's a very valid and admirable way to do it because you want those people to be prepared, but then if you did more research, the reality was, "What is that impacting currently?" because a lot of our hospitals are working on shoestring budgets. There's going to be overtime for the training. You're going to be bringing in supplies on a budget that may be very close to not being able to be balanced.

When I asked when those hospitals would be compensated for those extra measures that were directed by the minister, he said, "Trust me; the money will come." When? No answer, Mr. Speaker. That didn't leave the hospital administrators, who have a very challenging job—how they would do that.

Then you start to get questions from your constituency, saying, "So, if you add"—let's just say—" \$100,000 into a budget for one of those hospitals that are already at the line from a deficit perspective, what are they pulling out of there?" You're either pulling out people, programs or services. Certainly in rural Ontario there isn't a lot of fat in the budgets that I know, and I work pretty close to the hospital sector.

What I want to—again, not that you don't want to have the ability to take action, but sometimes, do we really need it to the full bore and go overboard when there are going to be daily health impacts? Are we going to cut a service to someone currently for the potential of what happens? I'll admittedly agree that that's a daunting balancing act for someone like the Minister of Health because if he's not prepared, then there are going to be concerns; if he over-prepares, then there are going to be impacts today.

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But what I'm trying to say—it again says, "Let's have a balanced approach." Let's understand, with all of the people who can bring good knowledge to the table, and let's do the best that we can to put that in place proactively. Let's have positive public discussion. Let's have it out in the communities, like Bill 10, the Child Care Modernization Act.

I still can't understand why a government who purport to be education leaders would not allow people to go out into the community, from all three parties, to have that discussion: to truly say, "We're listening to you Ontarians collectively. We want to understand," and then we'll come back to this honoured House and create legislation that will truly be representative and serve them in their best interests.

This is one that you've heard a lot of discussion about in this House in the last couple of weeks. You'll continue to hear about it. I think you're going to see some public rallies from people out there who don't feel they've been served properly because that bill was moved forward so quickly without public consultation. I just don't want that to happen, certainly with a bill like Bill 21. Blood can be life or death. If you're that person—and again, my colleague sitting in front of me, Laurie Scott from—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

Mr. Bill Walker: —Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock; I'll get that eventually. It's easier just to say "Peterborough," but I know that goes in a whole different direction.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Well, we've got pieces of it.

Mr. Bill Walker: Yes, you do.

But I think, again, she's been, as a nurse, to see those types of situations, and what you want to do is to always be the person who can be ahead of that curve and be able to have the blood to save that life or to help that life be maintained, rather than be searching for it after the fact and be in a panic mode.

There are a lot of things in here that we get into in regard to schedule 1, the donations. It would make it illegal to pay or offer to pay for blood or blood products, including plasma. This is one, again, where I think that that complexity, that personal way that you look at this issue—you know, you may go on either side. But for me, if my son, any of my family or friends or anyone in this House is lying in a bed and the whole issue is whether you want to pay or not pay—if that's the reality, if you're 100,000 units short tomorrow, I think that you want to find a solution that is going to allow us to get that supply back to where we need it to be.

If it has to be paid for, particularly when there are other jurisdictions that are already doing it—I don't hear any horror stories, to be honest. I haven't seen any major media scandals about it in the United States or Europe, where they do this.

Again, if the facts speak for themselves, we actually import blood products today that are via paid donations, so at the end of the day, even on the moral side of it, that unit that you have allowed for your loved one to be transfused could be from paid. I can probably stand pretty comfortably saying that not, certainly, any family member that has had the luxury or the benefit of blood donation is going to come back and say, "I want you to take that out, because I've now learned that it was paid for." If it's going to save the life of a loved one, then I think that we have to be open to that, and we have to be

looking at the reality that there could be a shortage, and how we are going to address that.

Bill 21 provides an exception for Canadian Blood Services to pay for blood or blood products in an emergency situation. Again, an emergency in my mind suggests—that doesn't mean that you've got two weeks to debate this and call down to somewhere to get a supply. An emergency, particularly in an emergency room setting, is minutes—seconds—so you want that blood supply available to you. You want it sitting there in the hospital so that that patient immediately receives that service and that transfusion. You can't be saying, "Well, yeah, it's an emergency, and we'll get to it in a day, a week or an hour." You need it there, so I think we need to look at that.

Bill 21 allows research studies to compensate for blood or blood products. However, this does not include research studies with pharmaceutical products. Well, again, Mr. Speaker, I've shared with you earlier today about the realities of Alzheimer's and dementia, and there is some value in plasma products being used to potentially provide a solution, and hopefully a cure.

Certainly that's what I hold out for; I've unfortunately had some family members afflicted with dementia and Alzheimer's, and it saddens me, as it would all of us in this House, to see anybody go through any of that type of illness if there's a prevention. So we need to ensure with legislation that we're not inadvertently, unintentionally putting consequences in place that would ever prohibit us from being able to do that.

Again, for me, if it's the case that you don't have enough because of a lack of a voluntary supply, and you can find a way to make that happen in a viable manner from paid donations, then I think we have to look at that, and I would be prepared, I think, to at least explore that reality and really understand just where the public does lie on it. I'm not certain in my riding, to be absolutely honest, that I've had anyone truly bring this to me for or against paid or unpaid, so it's something that I think, again, having a good, frank discussion, having the ability to go out and meet with stakeholders who are going to be impacted, is certainly the way we want to go with this.

Again, schedule 2, the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act: I just want to touch on that a little bit more. It sets amendments that would classify all community and hospital pharmacies as pharmacies for inspection purposes. I think, again, the intent here is probably admirable. The whole idea is that we're going to treat all facilities in a like manner so that they're all getting inspected. Being proactive in inspecting and ensuring that there are no shortfalls or gaps is a good thing. I think that is certainly a wise step forward to making sure that there are inspection protocols in place.

I think there is a fine balance for this type of thing. Again, many of the things I hear across my riding, not necessarily on blood but on a lot of things, is the over-administration—now we're putting 15 inspections in place that are just wasting people's time, particularly private industry, who don't have the luxury of a lot of

spare staff. They're running on very shoestring budgets. The abattoirs were one of those where I heard continually that the overburden of inspection—you had regulated inspection by the federal guys; you had provincial folks coming in. It became a point of, "When do I ever serve my customer? I'm spending all my time doing yet another inspection report."

To the end degree of those, most are highly inspected and regulated. I think we always have to strike a good, fair balance. From a health and safety and wellness perspective, inspections are a good thing: The ability to send someone in who is looking at it through a fine filter. But let's not overburden business and/or public institutions that are then taking away—and I will always be the person who stands here and says that our absolute, first and foremost thought process should be about the patient or the front-line care and service that we provide. If anything administrative and bureaucratic is not adding to the value of that, then I think we have to have a good, hard look at it and say, "Is that really what we want? Is that really what we can afford?" And I don't mean afford in the financial context. I truly mean resource-wise. When you're hearing about waiting lists of all varieties, what are we doing to get rid of those and to get more people through the system to get the care that they need, as opposed to holding someone to account for yet another report and yet another inspection?

So that one—again, I think I like the intent of it. I certainly have the thought process that it would be to ensure that there are the best and safest practices in each of our facilities, whether it be a pharmacy in a hospital or out of hospital, but I think we just want to make sure that we're, again, not setting the table where there can be unlimited inspections of those types of facilities.

As I've mentioned here, the biggest thing with this bill is that we're taking six different bills and we're trying to lump them all in. We saw this again the other day with a piece of legislation, and I think in that case, we referred to it as an omnibus bill. There were 12 different acts that were involved. Regardless of anything that you're doing, taking 12 legislative acts and combining them into one certainly gives me concern at times. How thoroughly have we gone through those? What are, again, the unintended consequences, perhaps, of trying to combine and bundle those all together? Are we going to lose some of the good pieces? Are we going to lose pieces of that legislation that are not going to be of benefit to the people of Ontario, who we are here to serve?

In this case, I think we've taken a number of different acts—this was tabled earlier as Bill 178 and Bill 117, and now rolls in seven acts. I'm a little concerned about where we're going. I'm concerned, particularly—I don't want to belabour it, but I do want to put it on record again that, in this House in the last couple of weeks, we've actually had time allocation come through for some of the bills that we were agreeing to debate and wanted to debate. We wanted to have full, open accountability and transparency. We wanted to have the ability to consult the people that we serve. We wanted to go out

into the community. It's always good, I think, to go out and meet with the stakeholders, the people on the front lines, so that they feel comfortable and confident that they've had their input and they've been able to bring thought processes that might be of value, that are solution-based, that might improve our systems. If we just continually think, "We can do this in the ivory towers of downtown Toronto," I don't think we serve the people well that we're truly given the privilege to serve. I want to make sure we always slow down and take the time to do those types of things.

On the broader thought process of health care, I think we need to be looking at all processes that we have, all systems that we have, and ensure that they're meeting the needs of today. The health funding formula for small, rural hospitals is one where I've always had concerns that we've used a formula that has been in place for a number of years. Many things in the world have changed since those formulas were designed. It probably worked extremely well back in the day when we had lots of resources, lots of financial surpluses. We're certainly not in that situation today.

1700

When I look at the amount of debt and deficit that the Liberal government has accumulated and the amount of money that we're spending every year on interest payments that aren't going to the front line of health care, it causes me concern when you bring any bill into this House and see that it's being expedited and steamrolled.

Even the title, Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act—we need to ensure we consult with those who are most impacted. We need to ensure that the doctors and the nurses at the front line are certainly part of the process and understand the implications, even the good intentions.

As I referenced to you earlier, Mr. Speaker, we've had a very credible organization, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, come and bring their comments, and they're generally supportive of the bill in its first intent. But they came to us as the official opposition, Her Majesty's loyal opposition, to say, "We need to ensure that we have the ability to consult, that we can give you good, positive, constructive feedback to make sure that this legislation is effective." I think most people out there would think, when a group like that is taking the time to come to us, that there is some validity and that we will honour that by trying to push for those times to debate the various pieces of the legislation.

Again, the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario—a federation of 26 regulatory colleges representing and governing more than 300,000 health professionals in Ontario. I'm not certain how anybody in here could refute, when somebody's representing 300,000 health professionals, that talking about the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act would be a good idea. We want to ensure that we do that.

We want to ensure the ability of people to have a blood supply, and that's what I think we're coming down to here. We know that our older demographic is moving

through. The baby boom is coming through. It's going to create a whole lot of situations that today we may not be facing. But we can't wait until after the fact. We can't wait, and we certainly don't want to see things like the Ornge fiasco happen, where, again, a lot of resources were wasted, a lot of things happened that were inappropriate, and certainly not for the benefit of the patient. We want to ensure that we're not going through that.

And then we get a report, and I've been pushing again in the House here to ask the government of the day, and particularly the minister and the Premier: What are you going to do with that report? If you don't implement and you don't really go back and make sure that the oversight and accountability are in there, then you are doing a disservice to the people of Ontario. It can't happen again. We just can't allow that to happen. Regardless of how it happened the first time, we can't allow that to happen, not when we've had the ability—and we had an all-party committee agree to these recommendations. We can't allow that to happen.

I certainly bring to this revered House my thought process of trying to have balance, to be able to look at both sides of any issue to find the truth, the facts, and again, put people at the front of every decision that we make, particularly in health care. Regardless of whether I have the title of health care critic or not, I will always have that as my absolute core, because at the end of the day, that's what we're all here for. We want a healthy, productive life for every single one of our citizens, from those great pages who have served us for the last number of weeks to the seniors who I love to spend time with and everyone in between.

I want to take my last few seconds and really say thank you again to all of the pages, those who are in the House and those who aren't in the House, because when we stand here debating a bill like Bill 21, the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, the decisions we're making in this House will impact you today and they will impact you for many years to come—not just you, but your loved ones. You truly are the leaders. You're the next generation. We're going to pass that torch to you. What we need to do in good service to you and to all of the people of Ontario is ensure that when we're bringing bills like this, when we're bringing legislation, we're looking at it in a balanced manner and we're engaging all of the front-line stakeholders who actually can bring positive, valuable contributions, and ensure that at the end of the day we have practical, balanced legislation that is going to be enacted for, truly, the betterment of the health and the care of those people we are given the privilege to serve.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Well, that was a long speech; if nothing else, it was long and had a lot of interesting information. Some of the personal anecdotes were important. I think the fact that the member has donated as frequently as he has is to be commended. For those who are able to do so, his suggestion that this be a widespread

practice is very, very helpful. Some are not in a position to donate blood and some are. I've always admired the people who—and you mentioned that some of the real heroes of this are people who over the years have donated way beyond what you normally expect people to donate.

We want to ensure that the blood, of course, is going to be healthy blood, that it's indeed going to be helpful. There's no question that we want to see this legislation pass.

I hear the member make references from time to time about time allocation. I can recall when I was opposition House leader that while there was a lot of protesting about time allocation, in their heart of hearts very often the opposition actually wanted the government to impose time allocation because then they could denounce it. In fact, when I was government House leader, I recall time allocation being imposed over a pay raise, and the then leader of the third party, now deceased, came to me at that time and said, knowing that he didn't have unanimous support—and he wouldn't mind having me tell this story. But he came to me and said, "Do you have any time allocation motions?" I said, "I have six. Which one would you like?" And one of the six I pulled out—I said, "But you're going to denounce the fact that I am implementing this time allocation motion." He said, "Yes, that's part of the game, but you recognize that's it."

We're working hard with time allocation to get consent, but when it's necessary we will allow for a programmed way of dealing with bills.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments. The member for Thornhill.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure what the member's comments had to do with the topic at hand, but it was certainly interesting, so I guess that's why you didn't cut him off.

I spend a lot of time in my car these days. It's my first time having a job where I actually have to commute. The member from Windsor–Tecumseh likes to call me Gridlock Gila.

When I am in my car, I listen to talk radio. Just last week, they were talking about how people felt about purchasing blood products. There was one caller who called in. It was very interesting. She mentioned that there are a lot of restrictions on who can give blood. She thinks that's one of the reasons why we have blood shortages, that we have too many restrictions. I thought it was going to be medication or something like that. Obviously, we can't take blood products from people who are on some medications or have health histories that aren't conducive. But she mentioned that she was asked if she had had any medical tests. She had had a colonoscopy within the month, and they asked if she had the results. She said she hadn't gotten the results yet. They said, "Well, then, you can't give blood." She mentioned somebody who had been to Europe maybe 10 or 15 years ago and was told, "You can't give blood because you were in a certain city or a certain country"—and not a Third World country. Maybe that's something that we have to look at. Maybe we have too many restrictions.

Maybe the fact that people are so busy and spending so much time in their cars in gridlock means they don't have time to go give blood. Maybe we have to have mobile units going to people's workplaces more often. I know that there are some.

So maybe we have to look at making it easier for people to give blood, and then we wouldn't have these problems where we're discussing whether or not we have to coerce people, through monetary gain, into giving blood.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I just want to comment to the time allocation portion of the speech that was given, because the member is right: The government has got this penchant, as we say in French, to time-allocate pretty well every-thing, just as Dalton McGuinty used to do.

I was really interested because I remember a certain House leader by the name of Jim Bradley, the member for what riding, again?

Hon. James J. Bradley: St. Catharines.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: St. Catharines. Like you, I don't remember ridings.

I remember him not only as a House leader, that particular member from St. Catharines, Mr. Bradley, but also as a member being apoplectic any time that a government would use time allocation when he was in opposition. There are oodles, as we say in our language, parliamentary language—oodles and volumes of speeches in Hansard dating back many years when that particular member would be just vitriolic against the government for using time allocation, and saying time allocation by any other word is time allocation; it is a closure of debate. It was something else to see. It was mastery at its best.

1710

Now all of a sudden, I just heard the same member say, "Oh, it's programming." Come on, Jim. That's not programming. Programming is when three parties agree to a motion to allow something to go forward in some negotiated method. When you time-allocate or you use closure, those are two means by which the government can cut debate without the approval of either of the opposition parties—or at least one of the opposition parties if you're in a minority Parliament situation.

So I have seen everything. I've been around this place for some years, but I have just heard the dean of the Legislature pronounce himself in favour of time allocation. I can tell you, my good friend Peter Kormos is hitting the roof wherever he's at, saying, "I think I've seen everything now."

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to comment on something that the member for Thornhill said which I agreed with.

I find this kind of special, the member for Timmins–James Bay and the member for St. Catharines—because I love them both dearly. They are both fine parliamentar-

ians and both gentlemen of this House who many of us emulate and would go to for advice. But I have this feeling that if the honourable member was sitting there, and the other honourable member was sitting there, we would have just heard those speeches in exact reverse. I just want to point that out.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I didn't like it when we were in government either.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Okay, neither does he, maybe. I'm just suggesting that you may have more in common than—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member to speak to the—

Hon. Glen R. Murray: But to the issue of blood control—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Timmins–James Bay, come to order.

I would ask the member to speak through the Chair.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I was trying to find the lightness of the moment. My lightness of being is clearly being dragged down now, so I'll just move on.

Interjection: It's unbearable.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It is unbearable.

The member for Thornhill raises a point. This isn't an issue about blood security, but I don't want it to go—because I appreciate what she said. I used to run the mayor's blood donation clinic when I was a mayor. I knew my HIV antibody status because I had lost 43 friends to AIDS in my 20s, and I got elected in my early 30s. It always seems ironic to me that as someone who probably knew more about my own blood, having been one of the few—well, the only person—in my circle of friends who survived that epidemic at all, that I can never donate blood. I want to just reinforce the point she made.

I don't think there's anyone else, maybe, in this House, unless you're a hemophiliac, who knows more about what their blood health is than a gay man after the AIDS epidemic—

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Or if you're a medical doctor; I'm sorry. You know doctors always have to have the last word.

I wanted to make that point. I'm hoping that one day, in light of this, we can work together in a non-partisan way to remove these ridiculous barriers that are based on stereotypes and not based on fact.

I had to fake a blood donation, and I could donate blood—my blood is very clean—but I can't right now legally in Canada simply because I'm gay. I think that's wrong. I think it's not a disservice to me, but it's certainly a disservice to many people who need blood. So thank you to the member for Thornhill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound for two minutes for a response.

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure for me to respond to colleagues from St. Catharines, Thornhill, Timmins–James Bay, and the Minister of the Environment.

I'm going to take a little touch of my time on the time allocation since it absorbed most of the feedback. It's interesting when I see such an experienced member of the House telling me that time allocation is game-playing. As a newbie here still after three years, hoping to someday be able to serve my constituents as long in a tenured career as the member from St. Catharines, I don't want to play games, Mr. Speaker. I come here every day to try to do the best legislation that I can, to ensure that we're doing the practical things that are going to benefit the people of Ontario. At the end of the day, as I've said in my speech numerous times and almost every time I stand in this House, I want to do the things that are truly going to have a positive impact on the health care and the well-being of the people of Ontario.

This bill in particular is one that I think we have to have that debate on. We have to have good, thorough discussion. We need to be out in the communities. We've had a number of organizations—the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, and a number of other groups and organizations—that have spent time lobbying us and telling us that they want to ensure that we have fulsome debate on this and input from those stakeholders who are at the front lines. There are opportunities for research. There are opportunities to look at things through a new lens.

As I tried to reinforce through all of my talk, we need to worry about blood security, certainly. We need to worry about the blood supply. How we get there and whether people are opposed to paid donations or whether we want to continue to try to do it voluntarily are certainly matters that everyone has their own right to have an opinion on. But at the end of the day, I think what we need to do is have legislation that ensures that when the time is there, we have an adequate supply of blood so that we don't lose one single life because we did not put legislation in place that was practical, efficient, balanced and reasonable.

Mr. Speaker, it's been an absolute pleasure to discuss this on behalf of our PC health critic, Christine Elliot, from Whitby—I always get those—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Whitby–Oshawa.

Mr. Bill Walker: Whitby–Oshawa, sorry. Thank you very much. It's been a good lesson in learning all the ridings. Maybe Speaker is in my docket yet.

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

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm pleased to join in the debate. The debate on government Bill 21 causes us to look at or examine two areas of our health care system. One is to look at, obviously, the notion or the structure behind blood donation, and the second is to look at pharmacies and the oversight that is necessary in pharmaceuticals.

I'll begin first by talking a little bit about—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: You're standing down the lead.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Before I say this, I have to clarify one point. I'm standing down our lead, and I would ask the Clerks' assistance in that. Our health critic will certainly—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has just requested unanimous consent to stand down his lead. Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much. My apologies for my lack of knowledge on the procedural component of that.

As I was saying, I will begin my comments around the first question: looking at blood donation and the purpose or principle around voluntary blood donation.

There's a lot of discussion around blood donation as a public resource, that voluntary donation encourages a certain quality in our system. I think it's important to start looking at this. Our position is that I think we have a very strong culture and system of voluntary blood donations, and supporting that is certainly an important step.

I think we also need to look at what are impacts to society on a payment-based blood donation system. How does that affect our society? How does that affect people? And what does it say about the type of world we live in? What are some of the ramifications if we have a system that's based on payment? How does that impact the lives of those people who may be affected by blood donations? More importantly, those who don't have the means to support themselves, people who are vulnerable in our society: Where does that place them in terms of payment-based blood donation systems?

One of the concerns I think is raised is that if you have a system where you are paying for anything in the health care system, it raises the question of the motive. We've seen, time and time again—in the health care system, do we want a system that's driven by a profit model or a system that's driven by sustainability? Do we want a system that's based on what will give us the lowest cost and the highest revenue? Or do we want to look at a system that's driven by quality of care?

I think there's no doubt, when it comes to our health professionals—our doctors, our nurses, our midwives, our institutions of care or hospitals—we certainly believe that quality should take precedence over profits, that we should be driven by sustainable decisions that would create a system that's long-lasting and decision-making that creates the best quality of care. I think that discussion translates very well into this discussion around blood donation. If we want to encourage a strong, sustainable system where we can rely on blood donations that are voluntary, arguably it encourages a higher quality of supply, but it also speaks to that principle that in health care, we don't believe that profits should come into play. They shouldn't form a factor in our decision-making. It's a slippery slope, and it could erode the fabric of our health care system, so there's a reason why a number of health care providers have indicated their support for banning the for-profit plans around blood plasma collection. The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, the college of physicians, Canadian Doctors for Medicare, the Council of Canadians, Canadian Blood Services, as well as the Ontario College of Pharmacists, have all indicated their support for banning plasma collection. There's a reason for that—because I think it

speaks to their support of public health care and their support of a system that's based on quality over profits, and I think that's the right decision on that.

1720

Now, some questions have been raised. I think they're important questions, and I think it's important for us to look at this, given that we're examining our system now. Some of our blood supply, whether we want it or not, at the end of the day, if we rely on outside sources, if we rely on blood or plasma from the United States or if we rely on blood or plasma products from Europe—in those jurisdictions, they are actually using a for-profit model, so at the end of the day we have to look at our system and the integrity of our system.

If we believe, in a principled decision, in ensuring that we don't have a for-profit system to collect plasma, but we're relying on other sources of plasma which are for-profit, I think that that's an important discussion. I think it's important for us to look at how we can make our system more inherently consistent, so that we're not relying on outside sources that are for-profit.

At the end of the day, I think the issue that was raised by my colleague in the Conservative Party was that, if we have shortages, if we have circumstances where we don't have adequate supply—what do we do in those cases? I think that that's something that is covered by the bill in the form of, if there are exceptional circumstances, there may be an exception to this ban. Of course, it's certainly something to note.

But what I also have to draw attention to is the fact that, for a number of years, the Liberal government has been aware of this problem. There has been at least one example—there have been a number of them, but there's at least one clear example—of a for-profit clinic that has indicated its desire to basically set up a for-profit model and have that set up here in Toronto. For two years, the government hasn't really taken any initiative on this issue, and I think it's worth noting that delaying taking action has sent a message that the government is not serious about this issue, and now we're having to play catch-up.

I think that that's something that we want to see the government move away from. It's important to make sure that our decision-making is not done in a reactionary manner; we need to be more proactive with our decision-making.

I think that's a great segue into the serious and very tragic scandal or tragedy of the diluted chemotherapy drug incident. You know, 1,200 patients were impacted by this. It's a very serious situation where people who are among the most vulnerable people, people who are at a very serious point in their health, who are facing one of the most scary moments of their life, when they're faced with something like cancer—they rely on our health care system to assist them in that.

The fact that these individuals who, in terms of their health, are so vulnerable, and are relying on a health care system to give them the medication that they need to make sure that they are able to recover from this serious

illness—they found that the drugs that they were prescribed were diluted, were not sufficient, were not providing the right attention to their needs. It was something that we were all struck by. I know that my seatmate from London–Fanshawe was particularly impacted, because a number of the folks who were impacted were actually from the London region.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: And Windsor.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: And a number also, as my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh indicated, were from Windsor, as well. There were people who were impacted across Ontario, but the fact that there seemed to be a higher number of folks from southwestern Ontario was quite troubling.

This is a serious area, and this is another example of—we entrust our government with one of the most precious things, our health care. It's something that we spend the most money on in terms of our budget, and rightly so; it's something that we really care about, and it affects people in a very meaningful way. It's our biggest budget item. It's a very precious and very valuable item in terms of making sure that our citizens are cared for and receive the appropriate health care.

But the problem is that, time after time, we've seen the government drop the ball on oversight and drop the ball in terms of not having the appropriate measures and appropriate oversight in place to ensure that everything that we do invest in, the health care that we do provide, is the best value for money and is providing adequate care. There's a list now that's building—and it's troubling—of scandals and times or moments where the government has not provided the appropriate level of oversight. We can talk about Ornge and the number of red flags that came up, and despite those red flags, the inaction on the part of the government in terms of responding to those serious problems with our air ambulance system. When we look at eHealth and the serious waste of resources there that could have been used in a more effective manner, to actually provide front-line care—the approximate billion dollars wasted with eHealth is also quite troubling.

This is another example where people who are vulnerable, who are faced with a serious life-threatening illness didn't receive the medication in a manner that would have helped them. It was a very troubling circumstance. Now, the government is responding by ensuring that there is greater oversight. I acknowledge and I salute the fact that the government is taking the right step now. Again, I would love to see—and I know citizens of Ontario would like to see—the government take proactive steps instead of reactive steps. We would like to see the government, instead of waiting for a scandal to happen and then responding, take steps ahead of time to prevent them from happening in the first place. The government has that ability, the government can do that, and it's not taking the right steps.

Another example which connects very well to this is in schedule 2 of this bill: The government is taking steps to further regulate the pharmaceuticals through an

amendment to the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act. Another step, if the government was serious about oversight—this is all about oversight. We have a health care system that is robust, one of the best in the world, but we need to make sure that it receives the appropriate oversight to make sure it does the right job. Now, if you're serious about that—and you are taking some steps here with the pharmaceutical schedule 2—but the problem is that you have another amazing tool that could actually provide some real oversight, and you're not making use of this tool. The Ombudsman of Ontario is a world-class oversight leader, someone who has time and time again shown his skill. His office has shown tremendous proactive steps in terms of making sure that we are receiving the best care in all spheres, whether it's in the recent child care issue, whether it's policing—the Ombudsman has done a great job. Why is this government not including the health care sector in the Ombudsman oversight?

We've seen the government now finally take the step to include the MUSH sector—the municipalities, the universities and the schools, but they've not taken the steps to include the hospitals and health care. The Ombudsman has clearly stated that the office is ready to take that step. The Ombudsman himself has indicated that he is willing to make sure that that oversight falls on his office, and they're ready to do it. They're the most skilled individuals and most skilled office at dealing with oversight, but you're still failing to take that step.

I ask, if you're serious about oversight, and particularly in health care, which is one of our most precious commodities, then please, allow the Ombudsman to have oversight over the health care sector—and we would prevent things like this from happening. That would be a proactive step because, on the ground, individuals could complain, and it could be individuals affected, it could be health care professionals—there is a wide gamut of people who could complain directly to the Ombudsman, that could initiate an investigation, and we could see some immediate steps taken, instead of this tragic situation where 1,200 people are affected in such a dire and devastating manner. So I ask you, if you're serious about making sure that there is strong oversight, that you ensure that we have the Ombudsman included in this discussion and expand his responsibilities to include the health care sector. That's my recommendation in terms of real oversight.

In terms of the steps that we need to take to improve the current system around oversight when it comes to pharmaceuticals, the bill will extend the oversight authority of the College of Pharmacists to include pharmacies in public and private hospitals. The College of Pharmacists already has a role, has a duty in terms of managing their members and ensuring that the members are of the highest standard, of a standard that's appropriate for Ontario, and they do a great job. They already have the infrastructure in place to make sure oversight is conducted for their members. Expanding that to include pharmacies in the public and private hospitals is a much-

needed step. It's something that should have happened a long time ago, but it's an appropriate step. The folks who are in charge of the College of Pharmacists, like I said, have the expertise in this field, have the resources in this field and can ensure that oversight is established.

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The college will now have the authority to license and inspect pharmacies within public and private hospitals in the same manner as it currently licenses and inspects community pharmacies. That is something that obviously provides the oversight that we need in the hospital and private hospital regime, so it's a step in the right direction in terms of expanding much-needed oversight.

If you look again at the bill, there are two straightforward areas that we needed the government to take some steps on. There was the issue of blood donations and the issue of the pharmaceuticals. The government is taking steps now in a reactionary manner, but certainly taking the right steps.

I want to ask a number of questions, now that I have the opportunity to do so, with respect to the recommendations that Dr. Jake Thiessen put forward in his report in July 2013. He made 12 recommendations. This bill addresses the final recommendation, recommendation number 12, which states, "The OCP"—the Ontario College of Pharmacists—"shall license all pharmacies operating within Ontario clinics or hospitals."

My first question is, why was it the case previously that this wasn't being done? Why was it the case that there was no oversight over these private clinics in hospitals? Why was this simply overlooked? Again, if we're talking about oversight, we have another very serious issue brewing in our health care sector. If you've seen the problems that arise when oversight isn't present, you've seen that there was the serious scandal of 1,200 patients, 1,200 people—more than that—1,200 families impacted. We know this is a problem. We know there are recommendations set to address this.

We have another problem brewing, and that's in the expansion in the use of more private clinics, broadly speaking. What is this government doing to address that issue? We've recently heard of outbreaks in terms of infections at private clinics. We've heard about some serious problems in terms of the standards of these private clinics. We've seen a shift in terms of the health care system moving from the public sphere into the private sphere.

I ask the government again, if you're serious about oversight and you're taking these two steps now, to look at the private clinic model as well. What does that say about the importance that we hold for our public health care, the fact that we believe in a one-tier system, that everyone is entitled to quality health care? What does it say about our system when we have private clinics and this slow privatization of our health care system? It's a serious issue, and I ask you to look at that more carefully.

We as a party, the Ontario New Democrats, strongly support a public health care model. We believe that everyone is entitled to quality health care, and we don't

want to see the system eroded. More importantly, whatever system we have in place, it's the government's responsibility to ensure that there is proper oversight of it. If we have private clinics right now that are not receiving proper oversight, if their standards of quality and their standards of care are not being examined, this falls solely on the shoulders of the government to do so.

We've raised this issue through questions in the House. Our health critic, France Gélinas, the member from Nickel Belt, has raised this issue.

I'm asking you again, if you're concerned about health care, and you're raising these two issues, please look at the private clinic model and ensure that we have oversight so we don't see another tragedy, another scandal, unfold and thousands of lives impacted again.

Indeed, if you're serious about proactive steps, include the Ombudsman in health care sector oversight, and he will ensure that there is an independent watchdog to make sure we have the strongest health care system.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'd just like to respond to some of the comments that were being made. This bill, Bill 21, Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, 2014, is, I think, an extremely important bill. As mentioned earlier, it takes action to protect voluntary blood donations, and I cannot overemphasize just how important this is to the protection of our blood supply.

Ontario is taking action to protect the province's voluntary blood and plasma donation system. If this act is passed, we're going to do it in a number of ways.

The new legislation would prohibit payments to individuals for their blood and plasma. It would strengthen the government's enforcement powers in the case of violations, and it would expand the criteria considered for licensing blood collection facilities, making sure that we have the regulatory amendments in place also that prohibit any licensed lab or specimen collection centre from paying for blood and plasma donations, including reimbursement of expenses.

So we are taking a number of steps to ensure that our blood supply is safe, and we are trying to make sure that this blood supply is safe for all Ontarians, all Ontarians who are ill, and also that there are things in place for the future.

Encouraging people to give blood, as one of the members mentioned earlier, I think is a great idea. I think that we cannot do that enough and we should continue to do that.

The second part or schedule 2 of this bill focuses on the regulation of hospital pharmacies, and this is in response to Dr. Jake Thiessen's review of Ontario's cancer drug supply. What it suggests is making changes to strengthen the elements of the health professional regulatory system. He took a look at everything that was there and made some recommendations, and we're moving forward on these recommendations.

I think that ultimately, in the end, those are the steps we need to take, and this bill is a way of taking those

steps. I hope it will have the support it needs in this House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments.

Mr. Ted Arnott: The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton gave a fine speech this afternoon and I was quite interested in what he had to say with respect to Bill 21. I do want to compliment him; I thought it was very interesting.

Of course, as we know, this bill creates the Voluntary Blood Donations Act, as well as making amendments respecting “the regulation of pharmacies and other matters concerning regulated health professions.”

It is, I would agree, an important piece of health care legislation, but I also believe that this bill would likely be improved after thorough consultations through a standing committee of the Legislature.

What I would recommend and would hope to see happen is that this bill would be referred to a standing committee of the House and that there would be extensive public hearings for interest groups that have an expertise in this issue as well as a concern, perhaps, who might want to strengthen the bill with suggestions for amendments. That process is something that in the past has been routine from time to time, and in other eras there have been times when governments have chosen not to take that route on important pieces of legislation, thinking that they know best, that they can get it right the first time.

As we’ve learned, sometimes through very hard experience, it usually is the appropriate course of action to take the time to get it right, to refer the bill to committee, and sometimes to have committees that travel around the province to get input from all corners of the province, not expecting all the groups and individuals to come to Toronto, but going to their communities to listen and hear what people have to say.

I would ask the member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton: Would he agree that this bill would be strengthened through extensive public hearings and would he support that? That is my comment.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: This is one of the most important bills, I think, that could come forward, because of not just one tragedy, but two.

We’ve got the blood donation piece where back in the 1980s we had a tragic event happen where there was blood given to people and it was not the kind of blood that they could use to get healthy. It did more detriment to them. That’s a tragedy that we should be very ashamed of as a province, as a health leader in Canada.

Then the other tragedy was the underdosing of chemotherapy drugs. Again, that put people at risk.

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Here we are, in two instances, and we talked about how this government doesn’t have the right oversight in many areas. We’re talking about two very serious health concerns that put people’s lives at risk.

One of the ones I want to focus on is the underdosing of chemotherapy drugs, because when that came to light in this Legislature, there was a whole committee process. Dr. Thiessen came and reported on it. Our health critic, France Gélinas, sat there diligently, listening to these recommendations. Out of the 12 recommendations that Dr. Thiessen recommended—people should listen on the other side; the government should listen on the other side—one of those recommendations was taken into effect in this bill. How can you justify not listening to the expert in oversight when it comes to the underdosing of chemotherapy drugs, when people were compromised? Their health was compromised.

I really think this government needs to reassess, and hopefully, when we get to committee, to look at these recommendations a little further from an expert—on Dr. Thiessen’s suggestions.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments.

Mr. Mike Colle: I think, Mr. Speaker, that the critical thing is that in Ontario and in Canada, we have a very important part of our health care system, and that is the blood supply system, the voluntary system that we have here in Canada. We’re trying to do the best we can in this bill to ensure that its integrity is protected.

This is the second time this bill has been introduced. I know back in March last year, even the Conservative critic said that we should pass this bill quickly and get to it. We need to act and we need to act in a very deliberate way. We’ve all done our investigation with our experts here in the province of Ontario, in our health care system.

Also, it is important to note that these types of bills are important to introduce from time to time because many Ontarians take for granted the fact that we have over thirteen and a half million people who go through our health care system from time to time. Incredible work is being done by all partners in our health care system, from people who work in the labs, from our doctors, our nurses, our orderlies in hospitals, our pharmacists, our technicians, our researchers. I ask people, if you want to see the health care system and what pressures are on it, go down to St. Michael’s Hospital. Go right now and see what’s coming through the doors. Do you want to see the reality of health care?

There’s a certain reality in this House, and then there’s a reality down at St. Michael’s Hospital’s emergency room. This is why we have to pass bills like this, so that those professionals who are under the gun 24 hours a day are protected in their work through this kind of legislation, and ensure that—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much.

Now we’ll go back to the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton. You have two minutes for a response.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I want to thank all the members for their input. Thank you very much to the new member from Halton. I appreciate your thoughts and comments. Thank you so much, and welcome again to the assembly.

I want to thank the member from Wellington–Halton Hills. I actually agree wholeheartedly. In particular

areas—I can't imagine an exception to this—I think it's extremely important for us to draw from the expertise. We all come with our own experiences, and some of us come with a wide range of expertise in different fields. But at the end of the day, when it comes to particular technical bills, we need to solicit the expertise of those folks who are leading in that field. In this case, with health care, we need to make sure that we have the input of those people who are leaders in this field. I certainly agree with the extensive public hearings. Whether it's expertise-based—I think it's also important for everyday citizens to have their voices be heard if they choose to voice their concerns. I think it's important to always have good public hearings and to have the input.

I also want to thank my seatmate and member from London—Fanshawe. I absolutely agree with her in terms of the importance of oversight and making sure that we work and implement the recommendations that come forward. We've seen so many reports that are tabled and then get shelved and collect dust, as we say. If we have suggestions and input and recommendations from people who are leaders, who are experts, who are masters in their particular field, we need to make sure that those recommendations are actually implemented.

I also want to thank the member from Eglinton—Lawrence for his thoughts and comments as well. Again, I want to just reiterate: If you want to take oversight seriously, there are some steps in front of you: Expand the mandate of the Ontario Ombudsman, and ensure that that takes into account the health care sector—and also address the clinics that we are seeing.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: I was waiting for the government side, if anyone would like to speak to the bill today, but I guess not.

This is Bill 21, the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, 2014. It is quite hard to follow my colleague from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound on his hour leadoff on this bill—lots of information on this bill. The subsequent speakers who have spoken have added to the debate.

Basically, the bill is a couple of bills from the past rolled into one. When you've heard the debate previously about wanting it to go to committees, it is complex. I'm a nurse, and I can't tell you all the exact needs—the plasma and the plasma protein therapies part of the bill. That's why I think we want to have extensive committee hearings: to make sure that we get it right because that's probably one of the very controversial parts of the act, and the amendments to the Voluntary Blood Donations Act.

There's also the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act—which it affects—the Health System Improvements Act, Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act, Public Hospitals Act, Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, and the Trillium Gift of Life Network Act. When you're affecting that many acts, you want to get it right, to make sure we know what we're talking about.

The schedule that I'll speak about that is affected, and I'll probably spend most of my time speaking about that, is the plasma and the plasma protein therapies. Just for a refresher, if anybody has tuned in, we call plasma “liquid gold.” It's that yellow-coloured liquid that makes up about 55% of the total blood volume. It can be obtained either through regular whole blood donation or through a process called plasmapheresis, where blood is collected from a donor and then the plasma portion of the blood is separated out, and the red blood cells and formed elements from the blood are returned to the donor. That's kind of why it's liquid gold, because it's so essential. Boy, when you're in trouble in the hospital and you need plasma, you need it now. It is usually used for patients who are bleeding severely and they need it to help clot that blood.

My colleague from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound spoke about the shock that he was in around how many blood transfusions and how much plasma are involved in people who come in from car accidents. Sometimes they replace their body fluids seven times over until they get them stabilized, hopefully, and they survive such emergencies and tragedies.

Plasma can also be used to manufacture plasma protein products. One of these products is known as IVIG, which shows early promise of success for treatment of Alzheimer's. I wanted to read some of the plasma protein therapies and the diseases they treat.

Albumin, which is more the clear liquid that you'll see—I could be a little dated from my nursing days—and it usually came in a bottle. It's for shocks, burns, adult respiratory distress syndrome, cardiopulmonary bypass surgery, so after bypass. Albumin can be used for that; I've given it many times myself to patients while I was nursing.

IVIG, which I just mentioned, is an immunoglobulin. It's primarily for immunodeficiency diseases, autoimmune diseases, chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy and idiopathic thrombocytopenia. It's been a long time since I used words like that.

Alpha-1 antitrypsin is used to treat genetic COPD, and then the coagulation factors from that are used to treat hemophilia A and B, von Willebrand disease and bleeding disorders. So that's just the plasma protein therapies and diseases that they do treat.

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If you're a patient who has to receive for a chronic disorder many of these transfusions—for one patient, for one year, with primary immunodeficiency disease, 130 donations are needed; with the alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, 943 donations are needed; and for hemophilia A, 1,237 donations are needed.

I think you have to put that into perspective, and I say that because a portion of the bill is about compensating for donations—so, clearly, Ontario does not collect enough plasma to be completely self-sustaining. It collects enough plasma for transfusion but does not produce enough plasma protein products to be entirely self-sufficient. I know it might be a little dry, but when I list

all the treatments that it can be used for, you start to get the idea that there are a lot of people being treated. We currently—and this is the situation; you have to deal with reality—purchase approximately 70% of our plasma protein products from the United States, from paid and from unpaid donors. We just cannot collect enough here. That is one of the parts of the bill where I think you do have to hear a lot of feedback about how we deal with this in the real world.

In April 2013, Health Canada held a round table in Toronto on the whole issue of payment for the plasma. During that round table, the presentation by the Canadian Blood Services—and I will, if I could, read an excerpt from that—was from Graham Sher, CEO of the Canadian Blood Services at the time.

“Dr. Sher explained that the Canadian Blood Services currently purchases bulk pharmaceutical products from the US and Europe that are made from plasma,” like plasma protein such as albumin, “on behalf of provincial and territorial governments for use in Canadian hospitals. These products are made from several plasma sources, including volunteer donors in Canada and the US, and paid donors in the US. He emphasized that internationally, the use of paid plasma in creating plasma protein products has been a common practice within the pharmaceutical industry for decades, and that the majority of the world’s supply of plasma products comes from paid donors sourced by the plasma industry.”

Later on, Dr. Sher stated that “between 600,000 and 700,000 litres of plasma for fractionation”—which is a separation of the products—“per year would be required for Canada to become self-sufficient and meet today’s demand, and that collecting this amount of plasma with a volunteer model is not operationally or economically feasible.”

I know, as I said, it’s quite a bit of a controversy about paid and unpaid donors within the bill, but you have to look at the medical scene and the reality that exists here, and how are we going to get around that?

I don’t know if some of you remember the Krever Commission and the tainted blood scandal that occurred in the early 1980s, where 2,000 Canadians were infected with HIV by tainted blood products and as many as 30,000 more were infected with hep C—and I have several of those constituents in my riding. It is estimated that nearly 8,000 of those who received bad blood are expected to die as a result, and, unfortunately, I have had some of those cases within my riding also.

Now, as well as facing a blood shortage and weighing the pros and cons, Health Canada and the Canadian Red Cross turned to the international market to purchase blood products for Canadians during that time. Some of those products were purchased from blood brokers whose supplies came from high-risk populations. Remember that the 1980s was the height of the AIDS epidemic in North America, and this imported blood was being inadequately screened before entering our system. So it was certainly a period of time—we don’t have that at the moment. The screening is far, far better, made better by a lot of recommendations from the Krever inquiry.

It says that after months of hearings and four years of investigations, Justice Krever released his landmark report—1,200 pages. Don’t worry; I’m not going to read all 1,200 pages here. That was in 1997. It took a long time.

They fundamentally found that the relationship between the Red Cross and the federal and provincial governments was dysfunctional and that Canada lacked a cohesive national blood policy. He outlined some basic principles of the Canadian blood supply system that I’ll read:

Blood is a public resource.

Donors of blood and plasma should not be paid for their donations, except in rare circumstances.

Whole blood, plasma and platelets must be collected in sufficient quantities in Canada to meet domestic needs for blood components and blood products.

Canadians should have free and universal access to blood components and blood products.

Safety of the blood supply is paramount.

Certainly, those are all fundamental good ideas that were brought forward in recommendations. He basically said that profits should not be made from the blood system. We know that supply and demand, life and death is the balance here. Safety is paramount. We do have a lot more safety nets, a lot more filtering in order to make sure that blood products are certainly safe for everyone to use. Canadian hospitals buy the bulk of their pharmaceutical products from the US and Europe, like I said. This is not new. It’s been common practice for decades. I know some of the controversy is about a company that’s going to collect, for payment, some blood products within Canada. We have to be very careful in balancing the proper rules and regulations with the need that our health care system finds itself in.

I know that there are some associations—for sure, several patient groups are concerned about the impact of the bill, and they’ve written to us to make sure that they are kept apprised of when this bill will have its hearings. They include the Canadian Immunodeficiencies Patient Organization, the Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders, the Canadian Hemophilia Society and Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency Canada Inc. That is why we say the bill has got some complex ethical issues, but it also has some realities of the health care system, so we have to balance those out.

There’s another section of the bill, and it’s an amendment respecting the regulation of pharmacies and other matters concerning regulated health professions. I think we all value our pharmacists that are in all of our ridings. I certainly know, in my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, the pharmacists are the front-line health care providers. More people have access to them, and therefore they are seen by many people who need, for sometimes just minor ailments, a little bit of guidance. They were here—for the last couple of weeks, I think, the pharmacists were here. They are asking about their scope of practice being increased, which I fully agree with. I think they’re under-utilized in their profession and they

could help take the burden off our health care system immensely by treating minor ailments. They are a fountain of knowledge; I think that we all know that. But the Bill 21 that we're speaking about today redefines hospital and community pharmacies to all be considered as one type of pharmacy in terms of inspection—so, again, making sure we have the right regulations to safeguard our citizens in health care when they need to receive these health care medications.

The Public Hospitals Act is also going to be impacted, in providing greater reporting to the College of Physicians and Surgeons when a physician leaves through misconduct. This allows for greater transparency in government. It makes physicians more accountable.

So, as you say, from time to time, bills need to be looked at. We're not opposed to that, and I think that those are things that make absolute sense in this bill.

It also allows cabinet to appoint a supervisor to a health profession college when necessary. I think that's very fair.

When the government wants to bring these bills in—and as I said, this has been a couple of bills folded into one. We're just not talking that it's easily debated. We said that, in general, we'd like to get this to committee and have full committee hearings.

I see that the time is almost done. I see the Speaker rising—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): This House stands adjourned until Monday, November 17 at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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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	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
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	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
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	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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 Affairs 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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Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Han Dong
Cindy Forster, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri
Todd Smith
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Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Eleanor McMahon
Laurie Scott, Jagmeet Singh
Soo Wong
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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Christine Elliott, France Gélinas
Marie-France Lalonde, Amrit Mangat
Gila Martow, Kathryn McGarry
Peter Tabuns
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