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**Official Report  
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**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 19 November 2014**

**Mercredi 19 novembre 2014**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 19 novembre 2014

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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 6, 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'édiction de la Loi de 2014 sur la rémunération des cadres du secteur parapublic et la modification de diverses lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House on November 18, Ms. Matthews has moved second reading of 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.

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.

Since there are five people standing, this will be deferred until after question period.

*Second reading vote deferred.*

SAFEGUARDING HEALTH CARE  
INTEGRITY ACT, 2014  
LOI DE 2014 DE SAUVEGARDE  
DE L'INTÉGRITÉ DES SOINS DE SANTÉ

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 17, 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 Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for London–Fanshawe has eight minutes left on her docket.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I am pleased to rise today to share my thoughts and the thoughts of my caucus on Bill 21, the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act.

This bill, as I understand it, enacts the Voluntary Blood Donations Act, which bans payment, reimbursement and compensation for blood and plasma in Ontario. Further, this bill seeks to implement only one recommendation from the Thiessen review into the chemotherapy system by authorizing the Ontario College of Pharmacists to inspect and license hospital pharmacies.

While there is much good in this bill, I don't believe that it goes far enough, and my colleagues and I will seek to strengthen it in committee for the benefit of all Ontarians.

In its current state, our health care system has been shown to have dangerous loopholes that could allow for private, for-profit plasma clinics to pay blood donors. We have inadequate oversight in our hospital pharmacies and group purchasing organizations.

For me, this bill is personal, and it is personal for all Ontarians who have been waiting for this government to respond to the Thiessen review since the underdosing of more than 1,200 patients at four hospitals in Ontario and one in New Brunswick in 2013. Of those 1,200 patients, 691 cancer patients in my hometown of London received watered-down chemotherapy treatments, and of those, 40 were children. Further, more than 130 Ontarians lost their lives during this underdosing tragedy.

The most frustrating part of this tragedy is that it was entirely preventable. We all watched in shock as federal and provincial health officials scrambled to address the startling lack of oversight in the increasing practice of Ontario hospitals to outsource their pharmacy work.

For example, at the time of the tragedy, the Minister of Health claimed to the London Free Press that she was only made aware of this on March 30, 2013. However, the president of the London Health Sciences Centre said he was made aware of the underdosing on March 22,

2013. The health minister was also unable to answer questions about who should be responsible for the oversight of drugs that are brought into Ontario hospitals.

Finally, it was uncovered that the outsourcing of drugs to Ontario's hospitals had been happening for more than five years, with no one in charge of quality control or regulation. It was my NDP colleague from Nickel Belt who held the Premier's and the Minister of Health's feet to the fire by demanding they take action and implement oversight. This is the same lack of oversight that brought us the Ornge air ambulance scandal, which saw Ontario's public purse robbed of over a billion dollars.

Time and time again, this government has been caught entirely unaware of operations within its own ministries. This, compounded by the Liberal government's haste to outsource and privatize our vital public services, makes for a nasty recipe for failure.

My concern now, and the concern of those in my riding of London–Fanshawe, is how to restore public trust in our health care system, a system that continues to be plagued by lack of oversight and appalling gaps in its regulatory framework. Further, it also acknowledges that there is a glaring lack of transparency and oversight in group purchasing organizations. I do believe that this bill is a start in the right direction, but so much more is needed.

For example, regulation of hospital pharmacies, recommended by the Thiessen report, is a good start. However, this oversight would not have prevented the diluted chemotherapy drug tragedy from taking place. This offers little solace to the families in London who are still waiting for answers and assurances that they can trust our public health care system.

I also want to spend some time addressing how this bill seeks to amend sections of the Regulated Health Professions Act. Since introducing this bill, the minister has been forced by New Democrats to agree to review the entire Regulated Health Professions Act.

This fall, it was revealed that 20 patients were infected during infection outbreaks at private clinics in Toronto, but the public was never told. It was also revealed that professional regulators are under no obligation to report to the authorities those individuals who are disciplined for professional misconduct and who may have committed a crime.

Initially, the Minister of Health refused to acknowledge that these were problems, saying that the colleges already had the tools they needed. However, two weeks later, he did a complete U-turn and ordered the Ministry of Health to help figure out how to review the Regulated Health Professions Act.

That's what is also concerning. As I mentioned, this minister is unaware of many of the loopholes or lack of oversight in departments, and health care is one of those ministries we cannot take for granted. We need to make sure there are systems in place so that people's health isn't compromised.

**0910**

After the infections in the private clinics were made public, the minister at that point, two weeks later, did a

complete U-turn and ordered the Ministry of Health to help figure out how to review the Regulated Health Professions Act. We have to thank my NDP colleague from Nickel Belt. She has held this government to account and has been clear that it's time for mandatory reporting to authorities and mandatory sanctions with respect to individuals who commit crimes, in order to better protect the public.

We are also calling for an open public review of the act by a legislative committee in order to gather important input from health care professionals, colleges and the public about the best way to amend this act. This review cannot be done in secret and cannot be done behind closed doors.

The need for appropriate and effective reporting is vital. We have seen, time and time again, how reporting alone does not ensure protections for Ontarians. For example, in my hometown of London last week, there was a fatal fire in a group home for those suffering from mental health issues and addictions. This group home had been known to the provincial guardians, emergency services and several other community groups and organizations, yet in spite of the knowledge and the reporting efforts, this tragedy ensued.

Reporting issues is an important step, but ensuring those reporting mechanisms have the teeth necessary to truly protect the public is a vital component that we are currently lacking. This is why my NDP colleagues and I will not stop holding this government to account in this Legislative Assembly, and making sure that the voices of our constituents are heard with regard to health care, affordability, jobs, and accountability, and holding this government to account for many of the things in which they have let this province down.

As I said, this bill is a small part in the right direction, but there's still a lot more work that this Liberal government can do to actually be fully transparent. I know that we talk about transparency and accountabilities, and those are words we're throwing around, but there's actually meaning to those words for the people of our ridings. They actually believe, when we say "transparency and accountability," that it is transparent and this government will be held accountable.

When we bring legislation forward, let's just not make it so that it's a watered-down kind of meaningless piece of paper. Let's make it legislation that actually has an effect and delivers the result to the constituents that we represent.

Accountability and transparency: Our constituents deserve that.

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

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm very pleased to rise this morning to respond to the member from London–Fanshawe.

I may be very blunt about this particular comment, Mr. Speaker, that the proposed Bill 21, the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, if passed, will be dealing with two very important issues. It is a time-sensitive bill that was previously introduced by then-Minister of Health Deb Matthews on the order paper in May 2014.

Schedule 1 of Bill 21 talks about prohibiting payment or the accepting of payment for blood and plasma donations in Ontario. Schedule 2 of the bill focuses on the regulation of hospital pharmacies in response to Dr. Jake Thiessen's review on the Ontario cancer drug supplies.

Let's all remember, folks, that Dr. Thiessen did the review over a year ago—August 7, 2013—encouraging and asking this province, and all of us here at the Legislature, to do some things with respect to protecting the health, and especially cancer treatment, for all Ontarians.

As much as I want to hear the debates here—I do totally agree that there's always room for improvement on this proposed legislation, but at the end of the day, we need to get this bill to committee to have more conversation with the people.

We also have to be mindful that right now, as we speak, Canadian Plasma Resources, a private, for-profit company, has already established two clinics here in Toronto and is paying \$25 per visit for plasma donors, up to a maximum of \$100 per month per person, and there is anticipation that a third clinic will be created in Hamilton.

At the end of the day, what are we doing? We need to protect all Ontarians.

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

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'm pleased to rise and comment on the talk by the member from London–Fanshawe.

As we've seen in the past few weeks—and it's certainly a concern we have as a caucus—legislation is being rammed through. It does get to committee, but this government shows a reluctance to let us travel in the province and talk about these things with stakeholders.

The member from London–Fanshawe raises some good points. This piece of legislation certainly should be thought through very carefully, because it affects our health. Some of us—we hope not many of us—may have to use some of these products in the future. We have seen in the past what can happen when proper oversight and proper rules and regulations aren't put in place. However, this government seems to be bound and bent on ramming through legislation and not allowing, to our mind, proper consultation with stakeholders in this business and certainly in others.

We believe this needs to be fully debated and fully talked about, too, with those involved in the plasma business and certainly in the blood services of Ontario. But I'm sure this is what's going to happen: It's going to be sent to committee, and any amendments that the parties on this side of the House have probably won't be looked at, and all of a sudden it will be rammed through without any travel time to talk to these different parts of the health industry. I think that's wrong and certainly something that we, as a party, feel we need to impress upon those in Ontario.

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

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I want to say, first of all, thank you to my colleague from London–Fanshawe for her re-

marks on this bill. I want to make it clear that we certainly support this bill. We support both components. We think it's important that we protect the institution of voluntary blood donation in Ontario. That is something that we're proud of, and we need to support that. We also acknowledge that there was a significant lapse in health care that deeply impacted many folks in southwestern Ontario; in fact, folks across Ontario, but particularly in southwestern Ontario.

It's important for us to address this issue by ensuring that we have proper oversight mechanisms that will ensure that drug dosages remain at the appropriate level to address whatever illness people in Ontario are facing. In this particular case, the recommendations from the Thiessen report—at least some of them—are being implemented, and I think that's a step forward.

But again, if we look at what my colleague was speaking about, there's a broader picture here. Accountability can't be done in a stopgap-measure type of approach. We see that there is a systemic problem with oversight when it comes to this government. Having one piece of legislation address one issue of oversight, one by one, isn't a fulsome solution.

We've asked this government to consider expanding the powers of the Ontario Ombudsman so that the Ombudsman, as an independent watchdog, an independent source of accountability, can oversee the entire health sector. That would be a real step toward systemically changing the problem, instead of having a bill that is raised each time one issue is found. That's not really creating a systemic change; it's not creating a fulsome solution. We ask this government to consider a real, fulsome solution in the health sector.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** And women's services as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'm sorry—and women's services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you. Good morning, Speaker.

As I understand it, this bill, the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, actually combines two bills that were previously introduced but didn't pass. I'm glad to hear that the NDP is supporting it, but they're the ones who didn't support our budget, so we had an election and here we are.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Well, it's a reality. That's the reality. So we're back at it.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** She wasn't being mean; she was just stating the facts.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** No, these are the facts. I just want to make it clear for the record why we're back on this.

It's a very important bill, because it would protect our current model of voluntary donation for blood and plasma. I don't think Ontario wants to go down the road of

something that's not voluntary. I think there are risks associated with that model. For example, paying people for blood donations raises a host of issues in communities, and it really flies in the face of the principles of a voluntary system. Paying for plasma is just a whole other world. I think it's very inconsistent with our values as Ontarians and what we want for our health care system.

**0920**

Support—of course we always look at what the experts are saying on this. People have talked about Dr. Thiessen's review, but there are others, of course, such as Dr. Graham Sher, who is the CEO of Canadian Blood Services. He said, "Canadian Blood Services has successfully managed the blood and blood products supply for Ontarians for more than 15 years. We are confident in the safety and sustainability of the current blood and blood product system in Canada, and we recognize Ontario's role in preserving voluntary blood and plasma donation in this province." The list goes on and on of people who support this, including people who have been blood-tainted victims and have experienced negative impacts—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

I'd like to remind the minister that it's women's issues.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Women's issues; thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I just want to correct you. Thank you very much.

The member from London—Fanshawe has two minutes.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'd like to thank the member from Scarborough—Agincourt, the member for Perth—Wellington, the member from Bramalea—Gore—Malton and the Minister of Children and Youth Services and minister responsible for women's issues.

The member from Scarborough—Agincourt talked about that there are pieces in place in this legislation that are going to help oversight. We didn't disagree with that. There is the one schedule, on blood donations, that absolutely is going to be helpful, and then schedule 2 with regard to underdosing of chemotherapy drugs and the oversight of pharmacies. So there is some of that.

What they neglected to mention—the minister also talked about why this bill hadn't passed because of the budget reasons and all that. She seems to forget, though, that the Minister of Health originally knew that this clinic was starting up their operations back in November 2012, with regard to blood donor services. So this is not something that you can say was—

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Snuck up on you.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, exactly: snuck up on you. You had time to plan and get this bill to the House long before—you had mentioned May 2014.

The bottom line is, we're here to serve the public and we're here to make sure the oversight in health care is actually deliverable, with transparency and accountability. As the member from Bramalea—Gore—Malton mentioned, we've been pushing for Ombudsman oversight. So if this government is truly dedicated to oversight and transpar-

ency, perhaps they should support the call to have Ombudsman oversight over the health care system.

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

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to rise today and add to the debate on Bill 21, the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, 2014. Bill 21 deals with two important and topical areas of our health care system. Firstly, the bill deals with the structure and rules around blood and plasma donation. Secondly, the bill deals with pharmacies and the oversight of the pharmaceutical industry in the wake of the recent chemotherapy drugs underdosing scandal.

Ensuring that our blood and plasma system is safe and ready to respond to growing demand is an incredibly important responsibility of any government. In the early 1980s, roughly 2,000 Canadians were infected with HIV-tainted blood products. Many, many more, perhaps as many as 30,000 people, were infected with hepatitis C. In response, the royal Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada, better known as the Krever inquiry, was created in 1993. Billions of dollars in compensation was received by victims from various governments, the Red Cross and insurance companies. In the aftermath of the scandal, Red Cross control of the national blood program was actually taken away and replaced with a new federal agency, Canadian Blood Services.

Plasma itself so important to our overall health care system because of the variety of ways it can be used. It is often used in pharmaceutical products that help combat Alzheimer's and hemophilia, for example.

Schedule 1 of this bill, the Voluntary Blood Donations Act, came about as a response to clinics opening up that are trying to pay for plasma donations. There are currently no private clinics that pay for blood plasma in my riding of Chatham—Kent—Essex, so many of my constituents may not be aware of this issue, but it is a vitally important one.

Some background for folks at home: Earlier this year, former health minister Deb Matthews vowed that the government would shut down any clinics that would pay people to donate plasma. This was in reaction to negative media coverage of the announcement that Canadian Plasma Services, a private company, intended to compensate people with \$25 per donation. Clinics were planned for Toronto and Hamilton.

Canadian Plasma Resources in fact applied to Health Canada back in November 2012 for a licence to collect plasma from paid donors. One wonders why the government waited until news articles were written and complaints started coming in to address the problem. Canadian Plasma Resources has set up locations close to low-income areas. They were in fact set up near homeless shelters and drug treatment rehab centres, two in Toronto and one in Hamilton.

Critics of paid plasma donations argue that opening collection centres in Ontario will do nothing to increase plasma protein products here because these products will simply be sold on the international market. When it comes

to blood and plasma, it is perhaps more a matter of ethics than simply supply and demand of a commodity.

A Toronto Star editorial on the matter stated, “People who voluntarily give the gift of blood—motivated by altruism instead of financial reward—present a safer source than those who are down-and-out and reduced to selling their bodily fluids.” Again, that was a quote from the Toronto Star editorial.

What happens if safe, voluntarily given donations do not meet the demand for blood? Seventy per cent of plasma used in Ontario comes from United States plasma clinics, from paid and unpaid donors. The rest of Ontario’s plasma is donated right here in the province, based on a volunteer system. The tainted blood scandal of the 1980s saw the importance of plasma collected from high-risk prison populations of the United States during the beginning of the AIDS epidemic; however, the screening techniques of the day were woefully inadequate compared to the practices in place at Canadian Blood Services.

The fact of the matter is that Ontario does not receive enough voluntary donations of plasma to rely on donations alone. That sends a bit of a mixed signal about whether or not we should be using plasma from paid donors, but the simple reality is the province has to resort to purchasing plasma from other jurisdictions because we cannot keep up with the demand with locally donated blood. This is an issue that impacts governments of all political stripes. It could be a Liberal minister, a PC minister or even an NDP Minister of Health, but at the end of the day whoever is in that position in the event of a shortage will be chiefly concerned with (1) do we have enough blood or plasma to get through the shortage or emergency; and (2) —and vitally important—is it safe? I know as a parent and grandparent that if any of my family needed blood, my first question would not be whether the person who donated it was paid; I would simply hope that there was an available match.

What we absolutely do not want to see are people who are down and out on their luck being preyed upon in potentially unsafe places to sell their plasma or their blood. Many people in my riding believe that it is a sacred gift to give and not something to sell for any monetary gain.

Bill 21 does provide an exception that allows Canadian Blood Services to pay for blood or blood products in an emergency situation. This only makes sense, as we certainly would not want to tie the hands of Canadian Blood Services in the event that there is an emergency of massive shortage in the future. The government has made it perfectly clear that Ontarians will not be paid to donate plasma. They have drawn a very clear line on this matter.

**0930**

The bill imposes steep penalties on those who contravene any section of the Voluntary Blood Donations Act. A fine of no more than \$25,000 each day and/or imprisonment for a term of not more than 12 months can be handed out for a first offence. Repeat offenders can be fined up to \$50,000 each day and/or imprisoned for a

term of no more than 12 months. This is a clear signal to companies and individuals that paying for plasma donations will not be accepted in the province of Ontario.

But whether or not we pay for donations, we need to ensure that supply continues to meet demand going forward. How do we ensure that there will always be enough blood and plasma donations in the times when we need it? Well, this is certainly an incredibly complex question and one that has been a concern to different levels of government of all political stripes. As we saw with the recent Ebola scare, it is incredibly important to have a protocol in place in the event of an emergency outbreak or shortage. We cannot afford to be caught off guard by future blood or plasma shortages.

This is why we feel that it is so important that this bill see plenty of time in committee. We want to make sure that there is extensive discussion on this issue, as it is so important to the health of Ontarians now and in the future.

I believe that one of the most effective tools for promoting blood donation is education. Speaker, Ontarians need to be aware of the intense need for donors.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** A point of order on your own member. Go ahead.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I don’t believe we have a quorum in the House today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Madam Clerk?

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** A quorum is present, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Apparently, a quorum is present. Thank you for that interlude.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Oh, sorry. On a point of order, the member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Now that my colleague has been interrupted, I thought I could just jump in quickly. I’d like to correct my record from yesterday. During my question, it was recorded that I had said a 50% reduction in auto insurance. It was 15%.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member, I guess at all times, is allowed to correct his own record. Thank you very much.

Continue. Sorry, member.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

Canadian Blood Services is always looking for more blood and plasma donors. I’d like to take a moment to share some useful information for people who have considered donating but were unsure of the process.

A plasma donation appointment takes about an hour and a half. Plasma donation itself only takes approximately 35 to 45 minutes to complete, but just like with a blood donation, you have to be monitored for a few minutes before you head home.

If you only donate plasma, you are able to make a donation weekly. Once you start donating plasma, you can continue to donate blood as well, but you must wait

56 days after a plasma donation to donate blood. Canadian Blood Services suggests staying committed to one or the other so that you can donate more often.

There are many locations throughout my riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex where blood clinics are set up with donation dates coming up throughout the coming weeks and months. Those looking to donate in Chatham–Kent can head to the Spirit and Life Centre on Wellington Street, the Chatham Polish Canadian Club on Inshes Avenue or even the St. Clair College healthplex.

Blenheim residents can stop by St. Mary's Hall on December 9 from 2:30 to 7:30 p.m. if they wish to donate. Ridgetown District secondary school and the University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus are holding donation days over the coming months, as is the F.T. Sherk centre in Leamington.

So here's what I want to do: I want to encourage you to visit the Canadian Blood Services website at [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca)—it's real simple—for more information, including clinics near you and donation dates. There are plenty of opportunities and locations for people from the great riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex to give the gift of life, and I fully encourage them to do so.

I'll now turn my attention to schedule 2 of the Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, 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 back in 2012 and 2013. A number of gaps were discovered in the drug purchasing and manufacturing process right here in Ontario in the wake of this chemo drug scandal. Understandably, it shook Ontarians' belief in our health care system.

After 1,202 patients in Ontario and New Brunswick were given diluted chemotherapy drugs in the spring of 2013, Dr. Jake Thiessen of the University of Waterloo was asked to conduct a review of Ontario's health care institutions to find out what went wrong and how we can avoid it in the future. Dr. Thiessen made 12 recommendations in his thorough review. A legislative committee was then established to report on the matter and made recommendations consistent with those found in the Thiessen report.

The Standing Committee on Social Policy tabled a report earlier this year recommending that the entire drug manufacturing system and processing process be subjected to far greater public scrutiny. When it comes to Ontario's health care system and especially its drug supply system, oversight and transparency are critical. Why do Ontarians have to wait for a scandal to bring these problems to light to receive an honest and transparent look into systems that have such a profound impact on their lives? When it comes to an issue as important as health care, shouldn't open government be the default?

Bill 21 is a positive bill. It seeks to address a very significant issue that has caused a lot of damage, both emotional and physical, to the people in this province. But it is, in essence, a reactive bill. The people of this province would prefer to see this government be proactive when it comes to safeguarding their health.

Bill 21 seeks to redefine hospital and community pharmacies so that they are all considered as one type of pharmacy in terms of inspection. This comes directly from the Thiessen report, as it was recommended that the Ontario College of Pharmacists license all pharmacies operating within the province's clinics or hospitals.

From the report: "This step of standardizing the pharmacy operations and practices brings the greatest potential patient benefits and reduces some of the identified medication management risks. It also implies that the previous recommendations targeted at licensed community pharmacies need to be adopted for clinic and hospital pharmacies." This will ensure that all institutions are properly inspected, and it is something that I fully support.

Bill 21, in general, provides the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care with additional oversight. But as we have seen over the past few years with the eHealth and Ornge air ambulance scandals, there is a major difference between a Ministry of Health simply having the ability to oversee and a minister who is actually conducting effective oversight. I hope that the additional powers that this bill will give the minister are used effectively and not just added to the tool kit, never to be used.

Many of my colleagues have stated during debate on this bill that they want to see a meaningful consultation period in committee where all relevant stakeholders can, in fact, raise their concerns.

The government has its majority for four years. This bill will surely pass. There is no need to rush this bill along for the political victory that comes with passing legislation. In the end, Ontarians don't care as much about how quickly laws are passed as they do about the quality of the legislation. I might add that there is a balance in there.

As I have stated throughout my remarks, I really feel this is a good bill overall, and one that makes meaningful improvements to the safeguarding of Ontario's health care sector. But at the same time, I want to ensure that this bill will not have any unintended consequences once it's passed.

**0940**

I'm not a doctor and I'm not a pharmacist. I don't work on the front lines day in and day out. I can say that this bill is a positive, but I cannot vouch for it with the same authority as the men and women who are working in our health care sector each and every day.

Speaker, I am happy to support this bill at second reading, but let's get plenty of expert support of this bill at committee. Let's strengthen the bill to make it the best that it can be. When it comes to the health of Ontarians, we can do nothing less.

In addition to placing safeguards on health care, and especially on the health care system that impacts each and every person in the province, this bill gives us the opportunity to discuss and promote the incredibly important issue of blood and plasma donation.

I conclude by saying thank you to everyone listening at home who has donated blood or plasma. Your gift means more than you'll ever know.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you, Speaker. I thought you had totally forgotten me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I can never forget you.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** The Speaker bought me breakfast a few days ago, and I haven't returned the favour yet, so he's still waiting for that.

**Ms. Ann Hogarth:** He's a nice guy.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** The Speaker is a very nice guy when he's off the chair.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It is.

It's always an honour to stand in this House and to comment on the member's comments. They were very thoughtful, and I agreed with the vast majority of them.

It's not just about people's health; it's about people's faith in the system. If there's one thing that should be under the government's control, it's the protection of the integrity of the system. That integrity was broken, and it perhaps cost some people their lives, with the dilution of the chemotherapy drugs. We'll never know or be able to say that, but one of the things that this bill is trying to address is to ensure that that never happens again. Do we believe that it's perfect? No. Do we believe that it could be made better? Yes. It's our sincere hope that we do—on this side of the House, in this corner, we support this bill. We hope that the government takes the time to actually look at amendments to make this bill better, because this one shouldn't be about politics at all. In our opinion, the scandal isn't what happened; the scandal would be if there was political interference in trying to make sure it didn't happen again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Newmarket–Aurora.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to speak to a very important issue. The legislation is important, but I first want to start by acknowledging the comments by the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex. I absolutely agree with him when he talks about the donation of blood as a sacred gift and one that is not to be bought or sold—and to reiterate his thanks to those donors who have given the gift of life over the years. I think every one of us here knows someone who has been a recipient of that gift of life, and for that we are really thankful.

Just to reiterate, it's nice to hear the positive words that are spoken in terms of support for this bill. We know that, following the tainted blood scandal of the 1980s—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Order.

Go ahead.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I thought that was directed at me for a second.

That belief was upheld by the Krever commission, that recommended that donors of blood and plasma should not be paid for their donations except in rare circum-

stances. That was acknowledged. Our position is consistent with the Krever commission's report and that's why the government is moving ahead with steps to maintain the integrity of Canada's blood system.

I've heard from a number of my constituents in Newmarket–Aurora, one of whom was a victim of the—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** If the member for Simcoe–Grey could just take it down a notch. I'm having trouble hearing him.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's Simcoe North, sir.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sorry; Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Sorry. I apologize.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I was looking for Jim Wilson.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, I hope you find him.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You'll be the first to know.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Go ahead; I'll let you finish.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I don't know if I've run the clock down or not, but I think I had about 15 seconds yet.

I just wanted to make the comment that I've heard from a number of constituents, one of whom was a victim of the whole tainted blood issue. They contacted me specifically to say that blood should not be paid for and that we should be doing whatever we can as a government to ensure that that doesn't happen. I'm happy to go back to them when this bill passes, and I believe it will pass, to tell them that that's been done.

Thank you to the two previous speakers for acknowledging the importance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. I was a little worried you might say I was looking like the member from Simcoe North.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You're allowed two strikes.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I can see that you're one up on the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, if he's got a breakfast out of you. The House wants to know if he'll ever get it back, knowing from his heritage—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, he's related to Ernie. I'm not sure.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Anyway, to talk about this bill, we are supporting it. It has got to be moved through.

There is some concern. I know the goal is always not to pay for blood products, but on the other hand you're paying now for 70% that's coming from a source that's unknown. I think that's a concern, and we'd like to hear from some stakeholders just how we can maybe change that. Nobody likes the idea of paying for blood, but in essence we are, and we're losing control of how that's done when we purchase it from outside the country.

On the pharmacy regulation, again, it's oversight that was lacking for many years. We've seen people die from

such a problem. It's really hard to know just how much of an impact it had on many people.

It's time for this government to step up and ensure, especially in the health industry—this lack of oversight is in many areas, whether it be Ornge or you look at eHealth. It's just a continuing list of issues that we know about. I guess there are lots; it's a large ministry and a complex ministry. But it speaks about, when there is evidence on the floor here—the NDP and ourselves are highlighting it—the reluctance of the government to really look at some of the issues, certainly on Ornge.

We're looking forward to this bill and we think it needs to be passed.

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

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I want to add my voice to the discussion again, and again I want to make it clear that we are in support of this bill. This is a bill that I think it's clear all members of the House are in support of, and the member made it very clear that he also recognizes this is a serious issue. It's an issue that we take as something that's quite important. Again, we want to clarify our position that we absolutely support and cherish our voluntary blood donation system that we have here in Ontario. It's something that we're very proud of.

There are a lot of merits to the system that we do have. Having a voluntary system ensures quality and a reliable source of blood, and it's something that also speaks to our values as Canadians and as Ontarians that we want to give back to our community. One of the catchphrases about giving blood is it's "giving the gift of life," and it really is. It's something we truly honour and cherish.

**0950**

In addition to that, we've heard a lot of comments, and the member brings this issue up as well, about the importance of accountability and oversight. It's quite important; it's of utmost importance. It's one of the primary roles that we play here in the House: that as legislators, we ensure that the system that we have works effectively and in a manner that we can trust and that actually takes care of the citizens of this province.

But there is a serious issue. I raise this again, and I want to raise it one more time to make it absolutely clear: If we have a piecemeal approach such that, any time a problem comes up, we come up with a piece of legislation to address it, it's not a long-term, sustainable solution. It's a limited solution.

We're asking this government: If you're serious about accountability, particularly in our health care, which is one of the most sensitive areas and one of the most precious areas of care in our province, or sectors in our province, then please extend the Ombudsman oversight to the health care sector to ensure we have that independent oversight.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Chatham–Kent–Essex has two minutes.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** First of all, I'd like to thank the member from Newmarket–Aurora as well as the members from Timiskaming–Cochrane, Stormont–Dundas–

South Glengarry and, of course, Bramalea–Gore–Malton for their insightful comments. I do certainly appreciate this.

The member from Newmarket–Aurora had spoken out and said that he knew of an individual who had in fact received some tainted blood. I, too, know someone—a neighbour, actually, several years ago—who had received some tainted blood and actually had come down with hepatitis C. He's doing well, but he was quite sick for quite some time. We have to safeguard against that.

The issue of pay or not pay: There are pros and cons to that. I think we need to be really, really insightful and taking the initiative, to ensure that we have plenty of (a) blood, and (b) plasma stored up in the event of—well, not just for regular operations and people needing transfusions and so on, but also in the event that there is a massive tragedy and suddenly hundreds, if not thousands, of people are in dire and desperate, desperate need and whatnot. So I think we need to take a look at this.

But, again, I'd like to remind people to go to the Canadian Blood Services website, which is [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca), to get more information as to where they can donate. I think it's very, very important.

Again, I want to simply say that I know there are many, many people out there who are trying to put safeguards in place. I want to thank all of the people out there who have donated blood or plasma, because you are in fact giving what I call, and many call, the gift of life.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you, Speaker. It is a treat to stand here in the House today and join you, because you're having so much fun in the chair this morning. As you know, normally I'm in the public accounts committee at this time, so it's unusual for me to be able to share some time with you as you chair this hearing this morning.

I always compliment you, because I believe you're doing a terrific job up there, and I know you really enjoy it. So that's why I enjoy being here, as you're having fun over there.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I think he's doing a pretty good job. Actually, the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex, when he's up there, does a pretty good job as well. So it is a treat to be here this morning.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** He wants a breakfast too.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Speaker, let me just say, before I begin my discussion here, that I'm sorry I missed your talk last night at the steel producers' reception. I heard you gave a barnburner of an address to the crowd last night. I missed it. I got there late, because I was in the House until about 6:30 last night, I think it was.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd just like to—sit down, please.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Yes, sir.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd like to thank you for your compliments and everything. I'd like

to call a little order, because when he's talking nice things about me, I'd like to hear them. Thanks a lot.

You may continue. Thank you very much.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** And keep it up.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Speaker, I think I'll turn the page on that at the moment.

I used to be a blood donor myself. When you come from the ragweed capital of Ontario—in the fall, when I was younger, I would get hay fever and so I'd have to take medication in the fall. That meant I couldn't give blood in the fall, which was always a problem. But I enjoyed my time as a donor until I came down with high blood pressure. Once you take high-blood-pressure pills they don't want you to donate blood anymore.

I do have to mention that a very good friend of mine was caught up in that terrible problem we had years ago with the tainted blood scandal. A woman I worked with for many years at the CBC after a pregnancy and a blood transfusion came down with hepatitis C, and unfortunately she's no longer with us. I mention that.

I'll also give you two numbers to think about this morning as I start, and that's 290 out of 1,200. Some 290 patients in Windsor Regional Hospital and Hôtel Dieu in Windsor were affected by the dilution, the underdosage, of chemotherapy drugs back in 2013. I mention that number because, in a community of our size, when you have 290 patients affected, you're bound to know one or two of them. I have to say that a good friend of mine—one of the best criminal defence lawyers in Windsor and Essex county—his wife was one of the 290 who received the underdosage of the chemotherapy drugs.

I am not a cancer survivor. My father passed away from various cancers. But I just imagine if you go to your doctor one day and you're told you have cancer. You might get a second opinion or a third opinion and then you come to terms with that, but the psychological effect is there. Then you begin your treatment. You put all your faith in your doctor, you put all your faith in the treatment, all your faith in the system. I believe, as I'm sure most of us in this room do, that our health care system in Ontario, as flawed as it is in some ways, is still the best in North America, if not beyond. I'm not trying to knock our health care system whatsoever. But from time to time, things come up.

God bless the government for trying to find ways to save money, because we know there's not a lot of it around these days. There are a lot of promises out there that have yet to be kept because of a lack of funds. But when you want to change a system that's working, you put out to tender the provision of chemotherapy drugs—the IV bags of drugs to fight cancer—and you make a change in the supplier, you go to the lowest bid, the lowest common denominator, and you think you're going to save some money.

Throughout that tendering process, somebody slipped up somewhere along the line. Instead of tendering for a specific amount of dosage, it came out as a more generic number. So 1,200 patients receiving chemotherapy drugs—290, as I say, in Windsor; 691 in London at the

London Health Sciences Centre; 37 at Lakeridge Health; one in Peterborough; and 183 in my home province of New Brunswick.

**1000**

These are people who put their faith in the system. Their life is on the line. Let's not kid anybody about this. Their lives were on the line. They're fighting cancer. They know what the dosage is supposed to be; their doctor knows what it is supposed to be. You've got all your faith in that, and then you find out along the way that you've been receiving drugs that were less than what you should have been receiving. Just imagine the psychological effect of that. Here you are trying to put on a brave face for your family, trying to put on a brave face for your doctors and your caregivers, and instead, you come up short.

Then what happens? What happens psychologically? How do you deal with that? I put myself in their shoes, and I say, "How would I deal with that? I want to get better. I'm doing what I should be doing. I've got all my faith in the system, and then the system has let me down." I think I'd be really troubled by that. The foundation of our system was rocked by this scandal, and I just can't get over that. There was a screw-up. Somebody should have been held responsible.

Our Standing Committee on Social Policy looked into it. An outside expert looked into it. There were all kinds of recommendations. Some of those recommendations are being addressed, but some aren't, and that's why, when we get through second reading of this bill and it goes to committee, there should be more amendments to this bill, more improvements to this bill. We owe it not just to the 290 patients in the Windsor-Essex county area but to the 1,200 patients throughout Ontario and New Brunswick who had received lower dosages than they should have received based on their diagnoses. So this bill has to be improved.

I really want to thank all of the members of the Standing Committee on Social Policy, who got into this in a very big way last year. I know our health critic, the member from Nickel Belt, did an outstanding job during those discussions and brought to light many of the recommendations that should have been put into bill, and some of them have yet to be included.

Speaker, as you know, I'm relatively new to this chamber. I was elected in a by-election last August and then re-elected in June of this year. When I first took my seat—actually, it was September last year when the House reconvened just after Labour Day—one of the things that I remember is our health critic from Nickel Belt, Ms. Gélinas, speaking to the then health minister from London, Ms. Matthews, about a clinic that was about to open up in Toronto that was going to pay people who wanted to donate blood or plasma. I remember our health critic from Nickel Belt saying, "But, Minister, if you weren't dragging your heels on this, you would have put a halt to it. You would have brought in legislation to prevent this clinic from opening, long before we were at this stage," because in the media at the time, there were

all kinds of stories out there that this clinic was about to open up. The federal government wasn't doing much about it, but Ontario has, and has now, the ability to put a stop to that, and it didn't happen. Our health critic kept saying, "When are you going to take action?" You know, it's a little late after the clinic opens, after the payments begin.

At some point, I imagine there will be legal challenges. That's part of the system, but with the legal challenges come costs, and costs, of course—from the government's perspective, all that money comes from my pocket, your pocket, Speaker, the taxpayer's pocket. If we're paying lawyers and paying court costs on something that could have been prevented, we're wasting tax dollars.

We know, in this House, how hard-to-come-by those tax dollars are. There's not enough money. There's lots of money out there, but money that we want to see better spent on health care—they're saying that there's not enough money.

The member from Windsor West, Ms. Gretzky, has been up in the House recently, talking about cutbacks at the CCAC service delivery level in Windsor and Essex county. People—the elderly, the vulnerable—who have been receiving CCAC home care services for years and years and years are now being told: "There's no money left. We don't have enough money to give you a bath. We don't have enough money to come to your home." A lot of these patients don't have somebody else who can step in and say, "Don't worry about it. I'll provide that service."

We know the health care system is struggling financially. We know it's a great system. Don't get me wrong; it's one of the best systems in the world. But money is tight, and when we see things happen in the health care system that are costing us money, costing us tax dollars, we say that we should be doing a better job. We should always be doing a better job. We should always be thinking about the taxpayer. When the health ministry hasn't stepped in and hasn't shut it down, and now we're going to have court challenges, I say that's a waste of tax money.

I'm going to be sharing some of my time with the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, one of the most passionate speakers in the House and, as you know, the nephew of another member from the Conservative caucus. We always like to remind him of that. We've turned one member of the family over to the New Democrats; we're hoping to turn the other one before his legislative days are over, if I can put it that way.

I just want to say, it's in you to give. If you want to be a blood donor, they would certainly like to have you down there. To all the donors in the province of Ontario, thank you for doing what you do to help our system along, because we know it's very important to have blood donors in our system, bringing safe blood, the gift of life, back to some of us who need it. Keep those supplies coming in.

Speaker, thank you for your time this morning. I would like to leave at this point and donate the rest of my

time to the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, who told me when I came in this morning, "By the way, you're not only going to fill in instead of being in committee this morning, but you're going to stand up and talk for 20 minutes." For that, I really wish him well the next time we get together socially, so that I don't spill any drinks on him or anything, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's an honour to be able to stand in this House today and talk about Bill 21. But first I would like to commend the member from Windsor—

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Windsor–Tecumseh.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Windsor–Tecumseh. The reason that he was singled out this morning is because the chemotherapy scandal had such an impact on people in his area. He agreed with me that it was a good thing that he could take the time to talk about that.

I would like to spend the few minutes that I have talking about the dilution of the chemotherapy drugs. When someone is diagnosed with cancer, for the family of the person who is diagnosed, it's probably one of the most vulnerable times in their lives. It's one of those times when you expect the system to work. In this case, it didn't.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize some of the people who actually identified the problem, because if you think about—wasn't it in Peterborough that it was identified?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Yes.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Can you imagine that moment when someone realized there was a problem? If you've ever been involved sometime in a supply chain issue, and you're the one sticking up your hand saying, "Whoa, hold the phone. There's a problem"—but when you're dealing with people's lives, can you imagine that moment? Can you imagine how much those people put on the line to say, "Whoa, wait a second"?

It's been our experience since with this issue that when the system appears to be working and someone puts up their hand and says, "Excuse me, it's not"—the system isn't always that reflective: "Oh, yes, I think there's a problem." The wheels want to keep turning. They don't want to stop and recalibrate. For the people who did that and who made this system stop, our hats should be off to them all.

We're here now discussing after the fact. The true problem is that there were no natural checks and balances. That's what we're here discussing today and what this bill is trying to change. There were no natural checks and balances in the system to make sure this doesn't happen again. We support this bill, but what we're worried about is that although we're trying to plug a couple of holes—and my colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton said the same thing—it hasn't been demonstrated to us that the government is really looking at making sure natural checks and balances will be inserted into the system to prevent cases like this from happening in other parts of the health care system. That's what we're con-

cerned about. We're really concerned that the government, in their haste—yes, they're going to plug a couple of holes; that's why we're in favour. But in their haste, it will only be a couple of holes. It will be a Swiss cheese with a couple of holes plugged, but lots of other holes.

We're sure that those holes are identifiable. This is a great system—our health care system is a great system—but we see problems all the time. It's our hope that when this bill comes to committee, we are actually allowed to take the time to look and fix as much as we can to make the system work as well as it should on behalf of the people who trust it with their lives.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.*

#### SPECIAL REPORT, AUDITOR GENERAL

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that I've laid upon the table a special report from the Auditor General entitled Education Sector Collective Agreements (September 1, 2012-August 31, 2014).

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm very pleased to welcome Jennifer Blunt from Portage Ontario, who is here with us in the members' gallery. Ms. Blunt is here to recognize National Addictions Awareness Week and to raise awareness of the fine work that the Portage facility in Elora is doing to help treat youth with serious substance abuse and addiction issues. Please join me in welcoming Ms. Blunt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ça me fait extrêmement plaisir de présenter M<sup>me</sup> Andree-Anne McPhail. She is a youth from the Canadian Cancer Society. She is joined by Janika Francis, Sabrina Bailey, Devanshi Adhvaryu, Sinthiha Krishnan, Vithusha Ganesh, Kalaisan Kalaichelvan and Shadi Mousavi Nia.

We also have some representatives from the Canadian Cancer Society: Nicole McInerney, Joanne Di Nardo, Kelly Gorman, Florentina Stancu-Soare and Julie Datta.

Please extend a warm welcome to them. They're here to support a ban on flavoured tobacco.

**Mr. John Fraser:** I'd like to welcome back to Queen's Park Salima Lakhani, the mother of Moiz Lakhani, who is the page captain today, from Ottawa South.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I want to welcome Ryan Konopny. He's my high school co-op student. Wave to us, Ryan. He goes to Thornhill Secondary School in my riding. It's nice to see you, Ryan.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I would like to introduce Dr. Sheri Findlay and Dr. Brandon Meaney, both children's physicians at McMaster Children's Hospital. Speaker, they actually paid at a silent auction to be my guest, to spend a day with me. I know I speak on behalf of the whole House and yourself in welcoming the doctors here to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, I would like members to join me in welcoming Andrew Clark, who joined us, with the Federation of Community Power Co-operatives, this morning for breakfast downstairs.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'd like to welcome a grade 8 class at De La Salle College here in Toronto. The students are in the balcony there. Wave, students. How are you? I'd also like to extend a very special welcome to Evelyn Locke, who is one of the students there. She is the daughter of my chief of staff, Pina Martino.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Speaker, in the east lobby members' gallery, from the city of Salemi in sunny Sicily, we have the mayor, Domenico Venuti, and councillor Vito Scalisi. We also have, from Toronto, Domenic Renda and Carlo Augusta. I hope they enjoy their stay here.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'd like members to join me in welcoming the Ontario Home Builders' Association to the Legislature this morning. A good Hamiltonian, president Vince Molinaro, is here, as well as their CEO, Joe Vaccaro.

The OHBA day at Queen's Park will be hosted from 5:30 to 6:30 this afternoon, and I'd invite everybody to attend.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'd like to welcome Heather Bone, Faizul Mohee, Raphael Redmond Fernandes, Mitchell Keay, Jaya Deonandan and Zhe Tang. They are students from the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University PC campus clubs.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to welcome Sabrina Bailey, who is a youth with the Canadian Cancer Society and also a student at Carleton University, which is located in my community in Ottawa Centre. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to recognize Brenda Hodgson, who is here. She's the provincial director of the Nation at Prayer organization. Welcome, Brenda.

I also want to welcome everyone from the Ontario Home Builders' Association, especially from Durham. I'll be meeting with those folks later today.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'm delighted to welcome to the Legislature today representatives from the Canadian Cancer Society: Nicole McInerney, Joanne Di Nardo, Kelly Gorman, Florentina Stancu-Soare and Julie Datta, as well as youths Andree-Anne McPhail, Janika Francis, Sabrina Bailey, Devanshi Adhvaryu, Sinthiha Krishnan, Vithusha Ganesh, Kalaisan Kalaichelvan, Shadi Mousavi Nia and Krissy Truong. Please welcome them all.

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

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to the world's most awesome canvasser, 13-year-old Ethan McCready-Branch. Please stand. Hello.

Ethan was by my side almost every day during the campaign. He got here today thanks to his dad, Greg Branch, who took the day off work. They are here from Kitchener Centre.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** With your indulgence, on behalf of the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, we have with us visiting in the west members' gallery Aidan Niedbala and his mom, Jennifer Niedbala. We welcome them. Thank you.

With us in the Speaker's gallery on my left, on the premise of a silent auction bid for the Rotary Club air show, are David and Michelle Gowling. Welcome for a day at Queen's Park with Dave.

Also, we have special guests in the Speaker's gallery today: a complete delegation from the Party History Research Centre of the People's Republic of China. Please welcome our guests.

#### USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Last but not least, if I could have—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. I do need your attention for this announcement.

I find myself once again needing to address the House on the issue of the use of electronic devices in the chamber and in committees. Regrettably, my attention has been drawn to the fact that photos taken from the floor of the House or from a committee while they are meeting have been showing up on members' social media accounts and elsewhere.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I find this an extremely important point to make, and I would appreciate your attention.

As I have previously advised all members, as have my predecessors in the Speaker's chair, it is never permissible for pictures to be taken from your BlackBerrys or other devices here in the chamber or in a committee. The practice of the Speaker overlooking members using certain devices as long as their use is silent and unobtrusive does not extend to their camera functions.

Let me lay out the rules once again. Devices must always be set in silent mode. The members may not read directly from them while they have the floor, nor may the telephone or camera functions ever be used either here in the chamber or in committees. I expect all members to comply with this directive.

1040

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### FOREST INDUSTRY

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'm happy to hear that Jim Bradley will no longer be able to bring his Polaroid camera onto the floor of this assembly.

My question is for the Premier. Premier, the members for Parry Sound–Muskoka, North Bay and Kenora–Rainy River have all demanded action to save the pulp mill in Fort Frances. Even the Minister of Natural Resources—

*Interjection.*

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** —yesterday grudgingly admitted, “Timelines are tight and we need to ensure the building is heated.”

Some 200 direct northern jobs are at stake and another 800 indirect, yet the government remains complacent, unable or unwilling to secure employment and opportunity for Fort Frances. Given the government floundered on the sale of the mill to Expera, will the Premier commit today that she will instruct her minister to find a way to heat the mill this winter?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry will want to comment on the supplementary, but I will just say to the member opposite that I think it is laudable that she is taking an interest in a northern issue because, as we have always said, this is one Ontario, and it's very important that everyone in this House understand that.

As the minister has said repeatedly in question period, we have been engaged on this file from the beginning. We are in conversation; the minister has been in conversation with the owner of the mill. We are doing everything in our power, if there's a deal to be had, but these are private sector entities that have to deal with market realities and deal with each other. But we are doing everything in our power to stay engaged and, if there is a resolution, to help facilitate that.

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** What I heard there is that she and her minister do not understand the importance of 200 local well-paying jobs in remote and rural Ontario. But I can assure her of one thing: The Progressive Conservative caucus does understand that. We understand that a good job is a good opportunity. We also understand that in Fort Frances, to create this investment opportunity, the government must act today, not grandstand with blustery bravado, as the minister has done in the assembly.

We know that heating the mill this winter would extend the timeline for Resolute Forest Products to sell the mill. Will the Premier and her caucus put as much time into Fort Frances's crisis as they have just done on her recent trip to China?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** This is a very serious issue, and the economy in the north is a very serious issue. That's why I have made it my business to travel repeatedly to the north to meet with companies and municipal leaders in the north.

It's extremely important to me that I was part of the northern debate and that I gave people in the north the opportunity to interact with me—and that was not the first time I had been in the north.

The fact is that we have taken this issue very seriously. It's why in our platform we made it clear and in our practice we have made it clear that partnering with business, working with business, is a fundamental part of the trajectory for economic success in this province.

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Again, I heard no response to the people of Fort Frances that you're taking their concerns seriously.

I grew up in a small town, in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, where the pulp and paper mill was one of a handful of steady employers, so I understand more than anybody that an industry like this could be the bread and butter of the local economy. It can mean prosperity in good times and paucity in bad.

I am asking the Premier to think of Fort Frances: the mothers and fathers who want to work, their kids who want to go to post-secondary education and the municipality that is right now worried about what negative spinoff effects this is going to have if this mill is closed for good. Think of them and act now.

I finally ask you one more time: Will the Premier waste no more time and move today to save Fort Frances's pulp and paper mill so that there will be good jobs that go with that?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** To the member, maybe if, during the election, you or your leader or your party had gone north of Barrie, somebody would be taking you seriously here today in the Legislature. Maybe if you would have shown up, then we would be taking this seriously.

I guess if I wanted to speculate today as to why this particular member is asking this particular question, we could all have a little fun here this morning, but it is a very serious issue.

Just a month ago, the member from Parry Sound was in Thunder Bay complaining about money that we had contributed to private sector businesses, calling it "picking winners and losers," calling it "corporate welfare." Well, maybe the next time the member stands up today in the Legislature and asks a question about this particular enterprise, and this particular business-to-business relationship, she can explain why this one isn't picking winners and losers, and she can explain why this one isn't corporate welfare.

#### STEEL INDUSTRY

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I dare say the minister should stop talking about losers, but my question goes back to the Premier. On September 16, US Steel officially filed for bankruptcy. The plant permanently shut down back in December 2013—

*Interjection.*

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:**—ending more than a century of steel production at the Hamilton plant.

For years, Ontario steel was the staple of building modern cities and supporting a number of key Ontario industries, including the automotive, energy, construction and mining sectors. But under 10 years of Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector and uncompetitive tax regimes, giants of industry have fled and been driven out of Ontario as a result of the loss of thousands of direct and indirect steel industry jobs.

Can the Premier explain how her government can claim economic growth on the one hand while, in fact,

the evidence on the other is clear that her policies are driving jobs and prosperity out of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I know that the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is going to want to speak to this in the supplementary, but let me just put a couple of numbers on the table. The unemployment rate in Ontario is 6.5%. That is the lowest rate since 2008, Mr. Speaker. That is one number. The other number I want to put on the table is: more than 500,000 net new jobs since the economic downturn.

So the reality is that the economic plan that we have been acting on, and that we have put in place—the investment in infrastructure, the partnering with businesses, the understanding that our economy is changing, the industry is changing, the investment in the talent and skills that our young people are going to need for the future, the recognition that supporting our education sector and helping it to link better with the labour market—those are the pillars of our economic plan, and they are working as we go through this transition in Ontario.

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Look, I understand that the Liberals are supposedly excited about bringing 80 new steel manufacturing jobs from China, but this is a Liberal government that has missed crucial opportunities, not only in Ontario, but in the rest of Canada, to promote hundreds of jobs right here.

Let's take, for example, the Alberta oil sands. They need a considerable amount of steel products. Companies working in the oil sands—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Excuse me. Stop the clock. The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is warned.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Yay!

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock has been told now.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Laurie, behave. Your mother is watching.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No. Just let me do mine.

Please finish.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Companies working in the oil sands import around \$5.6 billion annually in manufactured goods. But illegally dumped and subsidized imports from countries like China are being used instead of Ontario steel, which has hurt key regions in Ontario, including Hamilton and including the north.

So my question is, why does the government continue to stifle Ontario manufacturing and export jobs overseas rather than working to stimulate our economy right here in Ontario?

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, the Ontario steel industry's GDP is up 38% since the recessionary low in 2009, but this is a sector that globally is having some

serious challenges and Ontario can't remove itself from the global challenges, with regard to the steel industry.

What we can do is keep investing in the things that are important to help the steel sector: for instance, the auto sector. Investments that you call "corporate welfare" we call "strong investments to build a supply chain in this province." We're seeing record sales right now in auto, Mr. Speaker. If they had their way, we would have abandoned the auto sector, and those opportunities wouldn't be there.

Let me give you another example. The wind turbine production that has taken place across this province—a huge boost for our steel sector in this province. Those are the kinds of investments that are supporting the steel sector. Those are the kinds of investments that the party opposite has rejected.

1050

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Typical of that minister: It is rhetoric over reality every single time.

We are continuing to lose good and well-paying manufacturing jobs and Canadian jobs in the steel production industry because of illegally dumped imports and an uncompetitive businesses climate.

There are major opportunities out there. We are the fourth-largest market in the world. We should be embracing that. There are opportunities for Ontario steel from northern Ontario, Hamilton and elsewhere to contribute to projects in our province, Alberta and the rest of Canada, but you're making it more difficult.

Can you explain to me why you would rather import steel from China than look at local opportunities here and production in Ontario?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Well, the protectionist party on the opposite side has kind of changed their tune. Their federal cousins talk about free trade; they're talking about protectionism. We're a trading nation. We're a trading province. We need to be open to trade. We can't get away from that.

But when she talks about an uncompetitive environment for investment, she's dead wrong. We're number one in North America for foreign direct investment.

We have just seen an increase of 37,000 net new jobs in this province last month alone, Mr. Speaker. We're up over half a million net new jobs since the global recession. That's almost 200% job recovery. When you compare that to the US, they're at about 115%. I call that progress.

There are still more people out of work in Ontario than we'd like, but we're going to keep investing in our people. We're going to keep investing in building a strong economy. We're going to keep putting Ontarians back—

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

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. The fall economic statement says that the annual

Auto Insurance Transparency and Accountability Expert Report has been given to the Minister of Finance. Why is the Premier keeping this hidden from Ontarians?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It's not hidden. In fact, we would have received the report much sooner had we not been forced into an election and had it not been delayed. As a result, the report is now before us. We're having it reviewed. It will be released very shortly.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** When the Premier was worried about her political future, she promised to lead the most transparent government in Canada. She even named the auto insurance expert report the transparency and accountability report. I'm sure George Orwell would be having a chuckle about that, Speaker. But now she's keeping transparency reports hidden. In fact, when I asked the question, the Premier and the Minister of Finance wouldn't even admit that the transparency report even existed.

Is the Premier going to deny the existence of the auto insurance transparency report?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, obviously the member opposite doesn't seem to understand the response that I just gave moments ago. The fact of the matter is, the report was commissioned. We issued it, we initiated it, and we anticipated it long ago. But it didn't come because of the delays that were caused by the opposition, by the unfortunate resolve for an election, which for us and for the people of Ontario was a welcome relief, because now we've got a majority enabling us to act quickly on the issue of reducing auto insurance rates.

The report will be released momentarily. It's before us. It's being reviewed.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Apparently the secret transparency report on auto insurance shows that the Liberals claim that they cut auto insurance by 8%, and now the Liberals are keeping the report hidden from the public. What other embarrassing details are in the report that the government is so interested in keeping hidden?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, maybe the member opposite can revise her questioning as opposed to looking at a script, and maybe listen to the answer. The report is before us. It's being reviewed. It will be released momentarily, in time. Let's get it done.

But what we need is time to review it. Had it not been for the delays made by the opposition—and frankly, they have actually voted down the very measures necessary to reduce auto insurance rates. It looks like we're going to have to do this without their help. It will be released shortly, it will be before the House, and it will come out in time.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Let's hope the report is original and not cleansed by the Liberal Party.

My next question is to the Premier, Speaker. People are wondering how they can actually trust this Premier. On April 20, 2014, the Premier said, "We won't cut education," but education consultation documents say that the Premier's plan is to cut \$500 million from education. Why is the Premier breaking the promise she made to Ontarians just seven months ago? Besides the election being over, what else has changed?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Education will want to speak to the specifics, but the fact is that education funding continues to go up under this government. The reality is that we have a very strong record in terms of increasing education, but also supporting the publicly funded education of our students, and we will continue to do that.

The nine-page platform that the NDP put out actually had a \$600-million-a-year cut that would have had to take more funding out of education than the member opposite has frankly admitted. The reality is that we continue to put more money into education. We continue to support the publicly funded education system. That is part of the DNA of this government. We will continue to do that work.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier went on the campaign trail saying she wouldn't cut education, but here she is, cutting education and leaving students behind. The Premier seems to be in denial. I call cutting \$500 million out of education an education cut. What does the Premier call it?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Yes, thank you very much. I think what we do need to recognize is that this is a province where we have fewer children than we used to have. We need to have savings in the education system to account for the fact that we have fewer kids than we used to, but that doesn't change the fact that we continue to increase the funding for education. We have invested this year \$22.5 billion in education. That's a 56.5% increase since 2003. The funding for each and every child in Ontario's education system has gone up over \$4,000 per child since we took time—so yes, we do have the demographic reality, which not even the opposition can change, that the average family today has 1.1 children. They used to have four or five children. The opposition leader—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Pre-election, the Premier said that she wouldn't cut education. Post-election, the Liberal government is slashing \$500 million from education. Pre-election, she said auto rates had come down by 8%. Post-election, we see that they haven't. Pre-election, she said she wouldn't sell off assets. Post-election, she's planning to sell off local hydro utilities. Pre-election, she said Ontarians would get answers on the gas plants. Post-election, she's protecting key witnesses. Pre-election, she promised that child poverty would be reduced by 25%. Post-election, the government hasn't even come close.

It has been five months since the election, and that's five broken promises by this Premier, so I ask her again: What has changed, except that the election is over?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Unlike the party opposite, we understand that this is about finding savings. We actually think that what we want to do is fund the children who are in our school system, not fund empty seats.

Speaker, do you know that we are currently spending about \$1 billion on empty seats? We think that there are some efficiencies and savings there, and in fact, our school board partners agree. They have done things like amalgamating back offices to get savings from joint back offices. They have amalgamated transportation. They're sharing school space. We think that that's a great use of school space, to have two boards come and share one school. That's the sort of efficiency that we believe our school system can have, and still have a wonderful education system which is fully funded for students, not seats.

## JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is for the Attorney General. As you know, when a person is released on bail, there are conditions imposed on them, such as house arrest or limiting where they can go. But if they break their bail conditions, they must return to court for further restrictions or go back to jail.

There are disturbing examples like Christopher Husbands, who is facing charges in connection with the Eaton Centre shooting while he was under house arrest. Clearly, no one was monitoring him.

**1100**

Minister, how many individuals in Ontario are currently released on bail, and what happens when their bail conditions are broken?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Thank you very much. It's a very important question, and it's a very unfortunate situation.

When someone is released on bail, there are some conditions attached or there are no conditions attached. Where there are conditions attached, this person needs to respect the conditions that are attached to their release on bail, and if they fail to comply with the conditions, then they will be back in jail.

But I know there is some concern about the bail system. We're told that there are too many people who have many conditions attached to their bail. There is a committee that was put together by my ministry to review the bail system.

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

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Minister, I'm looking for numbers. I want a quantitative idea of how many people in Ontario are out on bail with a condition. You say you want to crack down on the underground economy, but you can't even track the criminals who are already out there. How can it be that your ministry is not tracking this information? This is a matter of public safety. You have an

obligation to follow through and make sure that those who break their bail conditions are punished.

Given that you have already admitted in an order paper question that you do not track this critical information, what steps will you take to ensure that people are following their bail conditions and that the people of Ontario are safe?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** The member is right. We do not collect statistics provincially on the number of people released on bail, because I can give a number today and the number is different tomorrow.

Copies of bail orders are provided to the appropriate police service, and the individual police services establish their own system and practices to monitor those who are out on bail. The police know which accused persons have been released on bail, and they pay special attention to high-risk individuals.

#### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games. We know, despite the government's mantra that everything is on budget and on time, that many of the construction projects for the Pan/Parapan Am Games are behind schedule. How far behind? Well, that information is going to cost you.

I suppose when you're the government and you stage the most expensive multi-sports game in Canadian history and the costs keep going up, we shouldn't be surprised when they demand over \$4,000 from Canada's most widely read newspaper to release documents about just how far behind they really are on these venues.

Will this government dispense with the outrageous fee requests and tell Ontarians the real status of the 10 new sports facilities under construction—information asked for by the Toronto Star—and any delays that are involved?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I'd like to thank the member for the important question today.

These are the most open and transparent games in the history of this country. In fact, if you look at multi-sporting games internationally, these are the most open and transparent games that have ever come forward.

We know that TO2015 is working with the requester to refine the scope of the FOI, to reduce the costs. But I think it's important to understand that this process is an independent process. It's impartial, and it's conducted by the public service. In fact, it's consistent with all other provinces. It's the same process that was in place when the Conservatives were in power, and it's the same process that was in place when the NDP was in power.

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Speaker, the government has not released this information to the members of this House, and not to the Toronto Star and to all Ontarians, without a price.

Game organizers, in this electronic era, say they cannot provide the requested information on a disk, some-

thing routinely done by other ministries and agencies at all levels of this government.

These games' organizations ultimately report to the minister and his ministry on how to provide electronic information. So will this minister and the government either require Pan/Parapan Am Games organizers to release the information right now or have the ministry obtain and then immediately release the requested information to the Ontario public?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Again, these games are the most open and transparent games ever brought forward in the history of this province and in the history of this country. We made sure that TO2015 was brought under the FOI legislation. It's the first time that any games have been brought under this legislation.

TO2015 has fully complied with the FOI regulations, and again, it's consistent with all other jurisdictions across this country. There are 6,000 pages that have been requested. TO2015 is working with the requester to ensure that information can be brought forward that is cost-effective. They'll continue to work with them.

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Han Dong:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. As the proud member for Trinity–Spadina, I know how much my constituents care about public transit. It was, in fact, the most concerning issue in my riding during the last provincial election. The constituents use transit to get to work and to school in the morning and then home to their family and friends at end of the day. They want me to make sure that our government is doing everything we can to help keep public transit both safe and efficient.

I'm proud to have one of Canada's busiest transportation hubs, Union Station, in my riding. Many people in my constituency use this hub to move around the city and the region.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: I heard a few weeks ago that there were some improvements to be made to the signalling system at Union Station. Could the minister provide the House with some more information on those improvements?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank the member from Trinity–Spadina not only for the question but also for his continued advocacy on behalf of those that he represents so well in this Legislature.

That member is correct. Two weeks ago, I was very happy to announce that our government is working to make transit more efficient for commuters in and around the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. We will be making improvements to the entire signalling system within the Union Station rail corridor. These improvements will ultimately enhance service reliability, eliminate track bottlenecks, increase train speeds and reduce operating costs. Work on this project will begin in 2015 and is expected to be completed by 2019.

Decisive actions like this help ensure that we are making it easier for transit riders to make seamless connec-

tions when travelling. It also ensures that we're prepared ahead of time for the anticipated doubling of transit ridership over the next 20 years.

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

**Mr. Han Dong:** I want to thank the minister for his response. I know my constituents will be very happy to hear about these great improvements.

I recently heard an announcement by our government alongside Metrolinx and Ivanhoé Cambridge to further the redevelopment of Union Station by connecting it to a new downtown GO bus terminal. This is a very exciting announcement as this development will provide more travel options to my constituents and the GTHA.

Can the minister tell the House what implications these new bus terminals will have for commuters both in my riding and around the GTHA?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Again, I want to thank the member from Trinity–Spadina for that question.

I am very proud to be a member of a government that actually invests in public transit. I can say that there are so many tangible examples to prove this fact. The member is right: This September, I was pleased to announce that Metrolinx will be partnering with Ivanhoé Cambridge to build a new downtown GO bus terminal at 45 Bay Street. This new terminal will provide commuters with better convenience and choice by having inter-city bus carriers GO, Via Rail, TTC and the UP Express all at one central location. This terminal will also welcome GO Transit's fleet of environmentally friendly double-decker buses to downtown Toronto. Construction of the terminal is expected to start in the spring of 2015 and will take approximately three years to complete.

Projects like these are an excellent example of what can happen when we work together with our private and public sector partners to invest in our communities. Thanks to the advocacy of that member and others on this side of the House, we're getting the job done.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. A month ago, I introduced my private member's bill to bring more transparency and accountability to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. Since then, I've heard from people across our province. Their stories of running into the wall of silence as CPSO closed ranks, foiling attempts to get answers after the death of a loved one, are heartbreaking. They've convinced me that something needs to change, but the reality is, 3% of private members' bills introduced here have received royal assent since 1975.

1110

Minister, do you agree that the current complaints reporting system is broken, and will you work with me on my reasonable reforms in my bill to make some changes at CPSO?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Of course I'm always happy to work with my esteemed colleague from across the other side, but I want to point out that we've already made and

are making important changes in terms of transparency, accountability and oversight for all of our regulatory bodies, including the CPSO.

In fact, several weeks ago, I wrote to all of the regulatory bodies that have a role to play in oversight in the health care sector, asking them to incorporate additional transparency measures in their business plans and to report back to the ministry by December 1 with regard to the specific activities they will undertake on a go-forward basis with regard to further transparency and accountability. I believe it's good for the colleges, it's certainly good for our health sector and it's good for Ontario.

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

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Back to the minister: Minister, I know you're a doctor, but I think we have to acknowledge that the system is broken and you have the authority to fix it.

Media reports indicate that just 2% of the 2,294 complaints investigated by CPSO last year were publicly available. What about the other 98%? Shouldn't the veil of secrecy be lifted from those investigations? Only you have the power to give Ontarians the information that CPSO won't voluntarily. The buck stops with you.

My question is, are you going to stand with patients and transparency, or are you going to close ranks with fellow doctors and the CPSO?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'm not sure if the member opposite was actually listening to the first response I made to the question—that we are taking action. I think it goes without saying that my top priority and the priority of this government is the health and safety and well-being of all Ontarians. The mandate of the CPSO, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, as with all regulatory bodies in the health sector, is that same objective: the health, safety and protection of Ontarians. I know that the CPSO and the other bodies are working diligently toward that object.

We are not standing still on this issue whatsoever. We have taken a number of measures that I articulated in the first part of my answer. Transparency is of utmost importance. It makes for a better health care system. An informed patient in Ontario is important in terms of strengthening the quality of care that they receive. It's certainly something that we continue to work diligently on, Mr. Speaker.

#### TOBACCO CONTROL

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est également pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

In 2008, my private member's bill to prevent the sale of flavoured cigarillos passed. You know about this very well; we co-sponsored it. But tobacco companies worked overtime to find loopholes in the law. The tobacco companies' unwillingness to co-operate motivated the Big Tobacco Lies campaign from the youth group of the cancer society, and they are here with us today.

Last year, your government said that they wanted to ban flavoured tobacco. I've reintroduced the bill to ban

flavoured tobacco products. My question is simple: Will you support the bill?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** To the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I want to thank the member opposite for the question. I also want to thank her for coming out today, as she was out with me and a number of other MPPs. We had a great tug-of-war organized by the Canadian Cancer Society. On the one side we had flavoured tobacco, and on the other side was the good side. I'm happy to say that the good side won and flavoured tobacco lost the tug-of-war.

But it's important that we win the real war against flavoured tobacco and the way they are trying to make inroads into our youth. This government and I are committed to doing everything that we need to do to ensure that we make Ontario the lowest-smoking jurisdiction.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Speaker, did you know that today, 57,000 youth are going to use flavoured tobacco right here in Ontario?

We know that the packaging, the price, the distribution and the marketing of flavoured tobacco target young people. Flavoured tobacco is, most of the time, the first product that youth consume. Other products, such as smokeless and imitation tobacco, follow the exact same business model. They are all meant to seem harmless, but they encourage experimentation, and they make sure that the next generation of smokers gets addicted.

Youth are in attendance today, and they want to know: How much longer will we have to wait before we protect our youth and before the government acts and bans flavoured tobacco in Ontario?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I really appreciate the question from the member opposite, but I do want to point out that before the election, this government introduced legislation that would have banned flavoured tobacco. If that side had supported us and not brought forward an unwarranted election, by now flavoured tobacco would be banned in Ontario.

On this side of the House, we walk the talk. We actually do things to reduce smoking, and that is why you probably heard my announcement last week, when we banned smoking on outdoor patios, and we re-committed to bringing back legislation to ban flavoured tobacco, legislation that would have passed if you had supported us.

#### CHILD CARE

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Ma question est pour la ministre de l'Éducation.

Minister, the safety of our children is something we, and I, take very seriously. Since 2003, this government has prioritized child care and early childhood education. We know it's important to families that they have access to safe and modern child care in order to make sure our kids get the best possible start. This is why we've introduced Bill 10, the Child Care Modernization Act.

I know that when you hear about the four deaths in unlicensed care, and the call from the Ombudsman to take urgent action, it is imperative we move fast in getting this legislation passed. That is why, Minister, I was so pleased to welcome you to Ottawa to meet with several members of the CICPO in Ottawa. Minister, can you please tell us about these discussions?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'd like to thank the member from Ottawa-Orléans for the question.

Last Friday, I was very pleased to meet, with my Ottawa colleagues, with a number of representatives from the CICPO—that's the association representing the independent child care providers in the Ottawa area. We had a very good discussion with them. I do take their concerns very seriously, and we had a good discussion of the issues. There will be some areas where we disagree.

Passing this bill, Bill 10, which is what we were talking about—we do need to remember that it's about the safety of our children in care, and that we can't afford to delay it any further. By playing games, the opposition is delaying implementing safety measures for our children.

The recently released Ombudsman report is crystal clear that if we don't make some of these fundamental legislative changes to the child care sector, we are putting children—

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

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Minister, on behalf of my colleagues in Ottawa, I want to say thank you—merci—for coming to meet with members of the CICPO. The open and transparent conversation was appreciated by those in attendance. There were some constructive ideas that emerged, and I look forward to working with those in my own riding to ensure further progress on those ideas.

However, Minister, we keep hearing irresponsible comments coming from the party opposite. They themselves are creating confusion that they say exists in this sector. Minister, my understanding from my colleagues on the committee is that there are many stakeholders who have expressed their support for Bill 10. Can you please elaborate?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I do want to acknowledge that after the discussions in Ottawa, we were able to get back to the Ottawa members with some updated information for their constituents.

But with respect to the public hearings on Bill 10, I think it's interesting to note what some of the presenters have said. For example, the Home Child Care Association Of Ontario said, "Bill 10 represents a very important step forward to increasing the basic safety for these children."

#### 1120

Anne Laws from Montessori Quality Assurance said, "The government of Ontario has strived to ensure the safety and well-being of young children by introducing Bill 10."

Carolyn Ferns from the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care said, "There is broad support ... for the many

protective measures provided for in Bill 10. ...it's an excellent bill.... We have ... support for it.”

The Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development concluded, “A modernization of child care legislation is long overdue.”

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, will you commit to fund and implement John Tory's \$15-billion SmartTrack plan? Yes or no?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** What an interesting—fascinating, in fact—question from this particular member. I say “fascinating” because repeatedly, week after week, this member stands up and does his very best to throw cold water and to suggest there are all kinds of reasons that we shouldn't move forward with building Ontario up.

I know that over the last number of weeks, and certainly going forward, this Premier and our government on transit and on transportation infrastructure projects that are so crucial to communities like Toronto, like Kitchener-Waterloo and so many others—we'll work, of course, closely with all of our municipal partners. That is the best way to move the province forward and also the best way to make sure that, as we invest the \$29 billion over the next 10 years—\$29 billion that that member and his party opposed in our budget—that we'll get the job done right.

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

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Such a simple question. John Tory won a mandate for his seven-year SmartTrack plan last month—in fact, the clock is already ticking—and it's your responsibility to ensure that concurrent plans using our tracks and tax dollars make sense.

Now that the finance minister has admitted to a gaping half-billion-dollar hole in your tax-and-spend barrel, major financial commitments like the \$15 billion you will use for GTA transit plans must have stable funding, in fact, to move forward.

We already know you plan to tax us with HOT lanes and gas tax for transit, but can you commit today that the \$15 billion announced for GTA transit will not mean other new and increased taxes for Ontarians?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank the member for that supplementary question that kind of went all over the place. I think what's really important to remember, Speaker, for that member in particular, given that he represents the wonderful community of Kitchener-Waterloo, is that we actually have a plan to move his community forward, to build the province up. We plan and will, in fact, deliver over the next 10 years on two-way all-day GO service, regional express rail, which will provide the people of his community with the extraordinary opportunity to take the GO train service. That is part of our \$29-billion plan over the next 10 years to build the province up.

We will work closely with Mayor-Elect Tory. We'll work closely with mayors from his community, mayors right across the province of Ontario to—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener–Waterloo, come to order.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** —and I sincerely hope, Speaker, that that member and his party will belatedly get on board with our plan to move the province forward. It's never too late for that member and his party to do the right thing.

#### ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** My question is to the Premier. When the Premier ran for the leadership, she promised 1.8 million Ontarians with disabilities that she would make Ontario fully accessible by 2025. During the election, the Premier promised to instruct all ministers on their duties to meet that promise. But the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance reviewed her mandate letters, and they were shocked by the silence on full accessibility.

Why did the Premier say one thing during the election and break her promise to persons with disabilities now?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is going to want to speak to this because the issues around helping people with disabilities to get into the workforce and making sure that we have an accessible society are very much a part of his mandate.

I just want to be very clear that our commitment to making Ontario accessible is firm. The reason that the accountability rests with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is that we know that one of the fundamental challenges for people with disabilities is accessing the labour market, becoming part of the economy, being able to use their skills and their talents. It's a fundamental part of the work that the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is doing, and I know that he will want to speak to the specifics.

I understand that the standards that have been put in place are being enacted and being enforced, and that we have more standards that we are going to be working on.

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

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** The Premier's mandate letters give ministers their marching orders, but the letter asks the minister to do nothing but explore new standards.

Even the former minister admitted that compliance was unacceptably low; that 70% of private sector companies with 20-plus employees are in violation of the act.

Speaker, accessibility enforcement must be a real priority for this government. Will the Premier now issue an order to the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to effectively enforce the AODA?

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, that order was issued loud and clear when the Premier gave me this file. This is not a side file for my ministry at all; in fact, it's an absolute necessity, a priority. That's why we just recently appointed David Onley as a special adviser on accessibility: to be a champion both inside and outside of government for us.

We're determined to continue to make progress. We're talking about billions of dollars of economic opportunity that will be there for our private sector, will be there for our taxpayers, will be there for our economy if we're able to achieve these very ambitious goals that we've set out to achieve. We're the first jurisdiction in the world to set out in a legislative way to move forward in this way.

We still have plenty of work to do. With the help of David Onley, the accessibility community and others, we're determined to make this happen.

#### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL POLICIES

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** My question is for the Premier, in her capacity as the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. I think this is an important question, and I certainly want to hear the answer to this.

Premier, I understand that you have written to the Prime Minister on a number of occasions wanting to meet with him to talk about shared goals; for instance, talking about economic growth, developing safe and prosperous communities and building a strong Ontario within Canada.

There are other things to talk about, including working collaboratively with Ottawa on public infrastructure.

Given the number of severe projects we have in Canada that need attending to, it would be a good idea to get together to talk about this. How about talking about the auto sector, international trade and the reduction of trade barriers?

Premier, has the federal government been willing to meet with you to talk about these important interests?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to thank the member for the question.

As many in this House know, it has been more than 11 months since I've had the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Stephen Harper face to face.

On September 16, I wrote to the Prime Minister, requesting a meeting to discuss a variety of issues relating to economic growth, developing safe and prosperous communities, and building a strong Ontario within a strong Canada, because I think those things are connected. As the member mentioned, there are several areas where I think we can have a more collaborative relationship; working together to create opportunities to build more security throughout people's lives.

Just yesterday, Prime Minister Harper replied, but he made no mention of my meeting request.

That's why I've written again this morning, requesting a meeting before the end of 2014. I believe that it's a

much better situation when the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of our country's biggest province are able to work together collaboratively, so I look forward to hearing the Prime Minister's answer.

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

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Thank you for that answer, Premier.

I think that there are other things that we need to talk about; for instance, federal transfers. How about talking about our employment insurance system that really does not seem to meet the realities of our modern labour market?

We are also moving on in Ontario with a provincial public pension plan that's aimed at securing better retirement for our future and for our citizens, but could we be talking with Ottawa about making sure that all Canadians coast to coast have the same?

Finally, this House has called on the federal government to take action to address violence against aboriginal women and girls.

Premier, how can we work collaboratively with Ottawa? How do you do this job?

1130

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You know, Mr. Speaker, I'm listening to some of the heckling on the other side, but this is not a partisan issue. This is about the Prime Minister of Canada meeting with the Premier of the largest province in Canada. I think that working collaboratively is exactly what needs to happen: creating jobs and growth in the economy, working together to reduce congestion so that we spend less time commuting and more time with our families, and building and renovating the schools, hospitals and roads that allow Ontarians to function.

My concern is that the current system of federal/provincial fiscal arrangements is working against, not for, the people of Ontario, and that is a discussion that needs to happen. My fear is, as the federal government has been missing in action in terms of working with the province, that that would continue, and I don't think that that's acceptable.

We have asked for that meeting. I hope we'll be able to talk about investment in the Ring of Fire, infrastructure and the ways that we can collaborate.

#### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is to the Premier. A Chatham-Kent constituent of mine found an 18-inch section of a wind turbine blade on his farm while farming this spring. He found a blade on his property some 400 feet from the base of the turbine in question. I have documented proof, and I will be sending these pictures over to you for review.

Fortunately, there was no damage to his property or personal injury to anyone, but this raises a very serious safety issue. Picture a 2.3-megawatt turbine with a blade length of 135 feet, standing some 400 feet tall. It should also be noted that the blade tip speed rate rotates at 164 miles per hour.

I, along with many of my riding, am rightly concerned for the safety of my residents. Premier, my question to you is simply this: Will your government do the right thing and put a moratorium on turbine developments until there is a thorough review of safety standards pertaining to industrial wind turbines?

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

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** First of all, I want to thank the member for bringing that particular issue to our attention. It's not something that I had been advised of previously, but certainly we will take that under advisement. We'll look at the circumstances around this particular issue.

We do have a very robust environmental assessment process moving forward, but I think we have to understand that, when something like this happens, we need to look at it very carefully in terms of public safety. It's the same as a piece of metal falling off an airplane, which occasionally occurs; you try to avoid those things happening as much as possible.

I take your question seriously. We'll look into the circumstances. I will consult with my colleague the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change with respect to environmental assessments—

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

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** —and we will check with our—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I shouldn't have to say "thank you" twice.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Well, the message from the government could very well be that public safety isn't a problem, but Premier, recently Transport Canada ordered GDF SUEZ in my riding to take down eight industrial wind turbines that have violated airport zoning regulations at the Chatham municipal airport.

Premier, I've spoken with many pilots, and they all say that it's too dangerous to fly in and out of that airport, especially when there are adverse weather conditions. These turbines pose a huge safety issue around any airport, whether it be in Chatham or even Collingwood. Literally translated, Premier, an encounter with one of these imposing turbines or pieces of shrapnel will result in body bags. None of us want that.

Premier, safety trumps all, and I know you know that. I'm not an aerospace engineer, but I do know that shrapnel travelling at close to 200 miles per hour poses a significant safety risk for aircraft and humans.

My question, Premier, is this: Will your government take the initiative, since you are paying huge subsidies, and review turbine placement and provincial safety standards for turbine erection in all of Ontario?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** First, I want to say that we take these things very seriously, and safety standards have to be second to none, so I want to assure the member that both myself and my colleagues on this side will take it seriously.

I do want to make sure that we have perspective on this, because I know you live about two blocks from here, and I know that the building next door to you had

several large pieces fall off of it, and glass fell to the street. That was one of about seven buildings in central Toronto at which that happened. That is also an equally serious problem. No one opposite suggested that we put a moratorium on condominium construction in Toronto, because you know what the reaction would be.

We have to make sure that we're taking all of these problems seriously. We take this very seriously when we see glass falling out of a condo tower or when we see a piece coming off a wind turbine. But wind turbines cannot be held to a higher standard of safety than any other similar situation. I hope that we'll get as many questions on condo towers as we'll get on wind turbines.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Premier. Statistics Canada job numbers released earlier this month were bad news for London. At 7.5%, London's unemployment rate is now a full percentage point higher than the Ontario average. Not only has the unemployment gap widened between London and the rest of the province, but the stats also show fewer people are working in London and fewer people are looking for work.

Will the Premier admit that her jobs plan is failing to address London's economic challenges?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Actually, Mr. Speaker, no, I won't do that, and I will ask the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to speak to the supplementary.

But what I will say is that we recognize that the economic recovery has looked different in different parts of the province. We absolutely understand that. I know that there are people in this province who are still not able to get the jobs that they are capable of, and that businesses still need support. That's why we have different strategies in different parts of the province. That's why we have regional development funds, such as the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund. That's why we have taken the initiative to make sure that we understand the economy of different regions in the province.

We know our work is not done, but we also know that the direction we're going in is exactly the one we need, and that the economic recovery is taking hold but not evenly in all parts of the province.

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

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** Speaker, the numbers speak for themselves. Last month, we saw 1,100 people leave the London-area labour force, followed by another 200 people this month. In fact, since 2008, London has lost over 30,000 positions. Many of those leaving are young people, depleting our labour pool of the young talent needed to move our city forward.

I'm glad the Premier talked about different job creation strategies. We want to know when this government will introduce strategies that actually work for London.

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Strategies that work: the member should have been paying attention when our finance

minister made his economic statement this week and he talked about our youth employment strategy. There are thousands of young people in London who are getting job experiences through that—23,000 young people across this province are.

The member should pay attention to some of the programs that are going on in her community. The Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, for instance, provided over \$2.6 million, leveraging \$30 million, in creating and sustaining 806 jobs in the London area. There are others as well.

We're working very hard. We recognize some of the challenges London has had. The unemployment rate in London has gone down, but there are still too many people out of work in that part of the province. We're going to continue to work really hard to bring down that unemployment rate. It's now at a record low since 2008 across this province.

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

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, I'd love to continue to talk to the member about other initiatives going on in London, but my time is running out.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It sure has.

#### TOBACCO CONTROL

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I want to acknowledge and thank the young people and the Canadian Cancer Society for organizing this morning's tug-of-war to raise awareness of candy-flavoured tobacco products.

In my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, I have many young people who are championing a smoke-free Ontario. We have come a long way when it comes to a smoke-free Ontario, but the use of tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Ontario. More than two million Ontarians continue to smoke, and thousands of young people are taking up smoking every year.

Recently, I hosted a 10,000 Coffees event in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt. Many young people continued to complain to me about the flooded market of candy- and fruit-flavoured tobacco products appealing to young people.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can she please explain to us what she is doing to protect young people in Ontario?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'd like to begin by thanking the member from Agincourt for her question and also thanking her for joining us this morning at the tug-of-war against flavoured tobacco.

I completely agree with the member that we here in Ontario need to do everything we can to make sure that Ontario is the lowest smoking jurisdiction. That is why, last week, I was pleased to announce new regulations to prohibit smoking in restaurant and bar patios, sports fields and around playgrounds starting January 1.

Also, as this House will recall, last year we brought forward legislation that, if passed, would have banned flavoured tobacco products. It would also have increased

penalties for selling tobacco to kids, making them the highest in Canada, and strengthened tobacco enforcement.

I have been very clear that I intend to reintroduce this proposed legislation. I look forward to tabling it soon and receiving the support of this House.

#### DEFERRED VOTES

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

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

Deferred vote 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'édiction de la Loi de 2014 sur la rémunération des cadres du secteur parapublic et la modification de diverses lois.*

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

*The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Would the members please take their seats?

On October 29, Ms. Matthews moved second reading of Bill 8. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Anderson, Granville	Hoskins, Eric	Murray, Glen R.
Arnott, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Baker, Yvan	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Balkissoon, Bas	Jaczek, Helena	Nicholls, Rick
Ballard, Chris	Jones, Sylvia	Oraziotti, David
Barrett, Toby	Kiwala, Sophie	Pettapiece, Randy
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kwinter, Monte	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Marie-France	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	MacCharles, Tracy	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	MacLaren, Jack	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	MacLeod, Lisa	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Malhi, Harinder	Smith, Todd
Crack, Grant	Mangat, Amrit	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Martins, Cristina	Takhar, Harinder S.
Del Duca, Steven	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Walker, Bill
Dong, Han	McDonell, Jim	Wilson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	McGarry, Kathryn	Wong, Soo
Fedeli, Victor	McMahon, Eleanor	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fraser, John	McMeekin, Ted	Yakubuski, John
Gravelle, Michael	Meilleur, Madeleine	Yurek, Jeff
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm	Zimmer, David
Harris, Michael	Moridi, Reza	
Hoggarth, Ann	Munro, Julia	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time to be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Sattler, Peggy
Bisson, Gilles	Gretzky, Lisa	Singh, Jagmeet
Campbell, Sarah	Hatfield, Percy	Tabuns, Peter
Fife, Catherine	Horwath, Andrea	Taylor, Monique
Forster, Cindy	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Paul	
Gates, Wayne	Natyshak, Taras	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 76; the nays are 19.

**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 18, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

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

*The House recessed from 1150 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce members in the east gallery here from the Ontario Lung Association. We've got George Habib, the president and CEO, Chris Yaccato, Andrea Stevens-Lavigne, Sherry Zarins and Vivien Agyapong. Welcome.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### FAMILY HEALTH TEAMS

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Last Wednesday, my interim leader, Jim Wilson, and I had the pleasure of hosting a round table discussion in Belgrave with seven family health teams from across my riding of Huron–Bruce. The number of concerns and challenges facing family health teams in our province has been expressed by the participants, and it was truly eye-opening.

For instance, restrictive funding agreements with zero budget flexibility and the “use it or lose it” budgeting system these teams are forced to work under do not make for smart or efficient health care planning. Costs of doing business continue to rise, and all the while family health teams are struggling with allotments set back in 2008. There are huge salary discrepancies caused by uneven government funding to health care providers, and that's crippling family health teams in terms of their ability to hire and keep staff. There is a burden on front-line workers and inaccurate and inconsistent measurements of performance and service provision. And it's important to note that 110 out of 185 family health teams are located in rural and northern communities.

I suggest that this government must get out of their urban bubble and recognize the diverse health care needs of communities across Ontario, and enable all providers to do their best. Family health teams deserve to be respected, and allowed the tools needed to effectively support their communities.

### OPP COMMISSIONER'S CITATION FOR LIFESAVING

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I rise today to pay tribute to two extraordinary women that I'm very proud to say are from my riding of Cambridge. On Friday, November 7, at the Ontario Provincial Police's annual awards ceremony where officers and community members are recognized for acts of bravery, dedication and service, Rachel Grant and her mother, Rebecca Mantynen, were awarded the OPP Commissioner's Citation for Lifesaving.

One morning while vacationing at the Peninsula Lake resort, Rebecca and Rachel were walking along the beach when they noticed a man and a woman in the lake. When they realized that the man and woman were in trouble, and seeing that there was no lifeguard on duty at that early hour and no one else rushing to their aid, Rebecca jumped into the lake and swam towards the victims, followed by Rachel close by, having grabbed a nearby stray life jacket that she had found on the ground.

When they reached the man and the woman, they discovered the man was drowning and, in a panic, was pulling his sister down with him. Acting quickly, they saved the man from drowning, put the life jacket on him and waited for a nearby buoy line from a rescue boat to arrive.

I must also mention that Rachel's mother, Rebecca Mantynen, was a former work colleague of mine. I, along with the rest of my community, am extremely proud of both her and her daughter's selfless acts of bravery.

### TAXATION

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I rise today to share the concerns of the Tillsonburg District Chamber of Commerce about this government's 148% aviation fuel tax increase. They said:

“We view our airports as one of the main drivers of growth in our region's economy and we take a keen interest in the competitiveness of Canadian airports.

“We are specifically concerned over the impact this tax change has at local and regional levels. We want and need to see business and industrial traffic grow at our own Tillsonburg Regional Airport, and we want to stem the flow of thousands of people in the Tillsonburg and London region who regularly head to Detroit, Buffalo or Niagara over price issues.”

Earlier this week, we heard that government revenues once again failed to meet the projections. The chamber of commerce understands, as we do, that attempting to increase revenues by implementing huge tax increases is short-sighted. Other jurisdictions are reducing or elimin-

ating fuel taxes because it creates new jobs, fuels economic growth and will result in increased government revenue.

This increase will be a cost to everyday people and companies—the people who live in remote communities, the child going to visit their grandparents, and a cost for companies to ship items by air. Some of those people will just make sacrifices as a result of this tax increase, and some will look for options outside our borders.

That's why the Tillsonburg chamber of commerce and my colleagues on this side of the Legislature agree: It's time to ground the flight tax increase.

### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Today I rise to share with the members of this Legislature a tragedy that recently occurred in my hometown of London. A fatal fire broke out on Oxford Street, in what was known to be an unlicensed group home for people living with mental illness and addictions. This house had a long-standing history of violating fire code regulations and was visited on more than 10 occasions by city of London fire inspectors. Further, this location was also known to the city of London by law enforcement and public health officials because of numerous complaints, ranging from bed bugs to sewage issues, broken windows and overcrowding.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission made recommendations to the government last year that would protect people with mental illness and addictions to ensure they had access to safe housing and supports.

We believe this tragedy highlights the lack of oversight into programs for people with mental illness and raises concerns about the lack of licensing and regulation for homes like this. Had this been a licensed group home, this incident would have triggered an immediate inquest by the coroner's office, as many leaders in mental health organizations have called for. My colleague from London West and I have joined their calls for a coroner's inquest and will be following their investigation closely.

New Democrats believe that access to safe and affordable housing is a basic human right for all Ontarians. Conducting a coroner's inquest is the best way to achieve transparency and to help our community get the answers they are looking for. Only then can we move forward with real solutions to prevent this type of tragedy from happening again.

### CROHN'S AND COLITIS AWARENESS MONTH

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm honoured to rise today in support of Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Month. Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are the two most common forms of inflammatory bowel disease, or IBD. These are lifelong diseases that cause inflammation in the gut and have no known cures and no known causes.

Ontarians have more reason to be concerned about Crohn's and colitis than anyone else in the world. With

nearly 95,000 Ontarians living with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, our province has the largest population of people living with these chronic diseases in Canada. One in every 150 Canadians suffers from Crohn's and colitis. Our country, on the whole, has a rate that ranks among the highest worldwide. Families new to Canada are developing Crohn's and colitis for the first time, often within the first generation. These diseases are escalating in children at an alarming rate, especially those under 10 years of age.

With over 10,000 new diagnoses every year, in addition to the nearly quarter million Canadians living with Crohn's and colitis, these diseases are more than twice as common as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease, and are about as common as type 1 diabetes and epilepsy.

My family has been touched by this disease and I've seen first-hand how devastating it is.

Today I'd like to recognize Aida Fernandes, Helen Silbiger and Natasha Mistry from Crohn's and Colitis Canada, who are here to help raise awareness about these chronic diseases.

### ONTARIO SENIOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Last month, I attended the 2014 senior achievement awards at Queen's Park, where two distinguished constituents in my riding were selected to receive awards in honour of their outstanding and generous community contributions.

I was honoured to meet and greet Mae Smith of Chesley and her four children at the awards ceremony on October 30, where Mae was recognized for her exemplary service to her community. Her list of community involvement is a long one: Chesley Legion Ladies' Auxiliary, where she served as the group's secretary for 60 years, and Branch 144 of the Royal Canadian Legion, where she still continues to serve as the archivist. She has also served as a member of the horticulture society for 30 years, the Louise Women's Institute, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, St. Mark's ELW group, Worthy Mistress of the Chesley LOBA, the Chesley hospital auxiliary and the palliative care team, the Chesley Agricultural Society and as chair of the Chesley Fall Fair's arts and crafts division.

**1510**

I was also honoured to meet and greet Shirley Johnstone, and members of her family, of Tobermory on receiving this prestigious award for her valuable contributions over the years. Shirley has volunteered with the Royal Canadian Legion for more than 30 years. She is president of the Seniors Connect program, a founding member of the local Bruce Trail Association, the friends of the Tobermory library, chair of Grey-Bruce tourism association and a member of the Trillium foundation board and Tobermory Health Services Auxiliary.

I believe Shirley's and Mae's Senior Achievement Awards, the highest provincial honour for senior citizens in Ontario, are indeed well-deserved. Congratulations to this pair of outstanding senior citizens from the great

riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, and all the best for many more years of good health and voluntary activities in the future.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, anyone who has walked outside in the last 24 hours and anyone who has looked at clips on YouTube or on the news will know that we're experiencing unusually cold weather. In Buffalo, they have had snow coming down in ways that people have not seen for many decades, some never at all.

As the world is warming up, heating up, weather patterns are changing. What was normal is being disrupted. Where it was cold, it's getting hotter; where it's hot, it's getting cold. Right now, Alaska is on track to be 70% above norm for this time of year while people in Buffalo and as far south as Texas are freezing.

At the same time, the world is on track to overshoot the amount of carbon it can emit, to go way past the amount of carbon in the atmosphere that would limit temperature increases to 2 degrees centigrade. We're looking at closer to 4. At 4, we look at extraordinarily disruptive weather patterns.

We need a climate plan in this country and in this province that sees us continuously reducing our greenhouse gas emissions over the next few decades. Speaker, people need to have an opening, an opportunity and support from governments so that they can cut their greenhouse gas emissions dramatically.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT CONNECTIONS

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Constituency week was a very busy time in my riding of Kitchener Centre. I had the opportunity to visit with a lot of individuals and groups who are providing important services in my community, including one group called Community Support Connections, which provides the Meals on Wheels program. Having a hot meal show up at your door means that those seniors and adults living with disabilities can continue living at home independently and with dignity.

Did you know that close to 300 people a day in Waterloo region are getting meals delivered to their doors? Of course, none of this would be possible without a small army of volunteers. About 600 of them rotate through the cooking, the packaging and the delivery of these meals. Mr. Speaker, even I had a chance to roll up my sleeves and put on a hairnet and join the food line.

Here's a very interesting aspect of this service: Executive director Dale Howatt told me that for many of these seniors, seeing one of these volunteers come to the door with a meal is the only human interaction that they have all day, and for some, all week. Based on this, the agency has decided to set up an added service where volunteers go back to visit the isolated individuals and they have a visit.

Mr. Speaker, it makes me very proud to know that there are people in my community who are kind enough to give of their time and their energy to reach out to those

in need with such a terrific program like Meals on Wheels.

### CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** Speaker, today I would like to recognize World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Day. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, known as COPD, is a general term used to describe chronic lung diseases, such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema, which cause limitations in lung airflow. Key risk factors for COPD include tobacco smoking, air pollution and exposure to occupational dusts and chemicals.

About 840,000 people in Ontario have COPD. Over 5,000 hospital emergency department visits related to COPD each year take place in my riding's local health integration network of Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant.

Awareness about this disease is vital, and the research-based pharmaceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim is doing their part. This important company, located in my riding of Burlington, recently partnered with the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, the CFHI, in an effort to bring better care and outcomes to COPD patients through a program called, appropriately, INSPIRED: Implementing a Novel and Supportive Program of Individualized care for patients and families living with REspiratory Disease.

The World Health Organization predicts that COPD will become the third leading cause of death worldwide in 2030. The Ontario Lung Association and Boehringer Ingelheim are doing their part in the prevention and management of chronic lung disease, tobacco cessation and prevention, and air quality with respect to its effects on lung health. I salute them both on this important occasion, World COPD Day.

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

### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I see the member for Essex rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Speaker, I beg your indulgence and that of the members to introduce some friends who are here today at Queen's Park from my riding of Essex. We have Ben Klundert, who is the president of the Greater Windsor Home Builders Association and, I'm proud to say, is currently building our new home in Essex. I'm very happy to have him here today, as well as Dennis Gerrard, who is the executive officer of the Greater Windsor Home Builders Association. They're here today with the Ontario Home Builders' Association to meet with us all as parliamentarians to discuss the issues around home building in the province of Ontario. I want to welcome them here.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** While that's not a point of order, welcome. We're glad you're here.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr2, An Act to revive 1474486 Ontario Limited.

Bill Pr11, An Act to revive 469118 Ontario Limited.

Bill Pr12, An Act to revive 658055 Ontario Inc.

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

*Report adopted.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### AGRICULTURE INSURANCE ACT (AMENDING THE CROP INSURANCE ACT, 1996), 2014

### LOI DE 2014 SUR L'ASSURANCE AGRICOLE (MODIFIANT LA LOI DE 1996 SUR L'ASSURANCE-RÉCOLTE)

Mr. Leal moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte (Ontario) et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I'll make a statement during ministerial statements.

### LUNG HEALTH ACT, 2014

### LOI DE 2014 SUR LA SANTÉ PULMONAIRE

Mrs. McGarry moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 41, An Act to establish the Lung Health Advisory Council and develop a provincial action plan respecting lung disease / Projet de loi 41, Loi créant le Conseil consultatif de la maladie pulmonaire et visant l'élaboration d'un plan d'action provincial à l'égard des maladies pulmonaires.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

1520

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

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It is my pleasure to rise today to introduce my proposed private member's bill, entitled An Act to establish the Lung Health Advisory Council.

The broad goal of the bill is to develop a provincial action plan respecting lung disease. Interestingly, as we've heard, today is World COPD Day. Almost 850,000 Ontarians are living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which is the province's leading cause of hospitalization and is one of the leading causes of death.

This bill would establish the Lung Health Advisory Council for the purpose of making recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care regarding lung health issues, would focus on research, prevention and treatment of lung disease, and would raise lung health awareness of the risk factors for developing lung disease.

### MUNICIPAL AMENDMENT ACT (ELECTION OF CHAIR OF YORK REGION), 2014

### LOI DE 2014 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES MUNICIPALITÉS (ÉLECTION DU PRÉSIDENT DE LA RÉGION DE YORK)

Mr. Ballard moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 42, An Act to amend the Municipal Act, 2001 to provide that the head of council of The Regional Municipality of York must be elected / Projet de loi 42, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités pour prévoir que le président du conseil de la municipalité régionale de York doit être élu.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I would like to thank you for the opportunity to rise today to reintroduce the Municipal Amendment Act (Election of Chair of York Region), 2014.

First, I would like to thank my colleagues from Oak Ridges–Markham and Richmond Hill for the tremendous effort that they put into crafting this bill in years gone by. This session, the constituents of Newmarket–Aurora urged me to move this bill ahead and get it passed.

Specifically, the bill would amend the Municipal Act, 2001, to provide that the head of council of the regional municipality of York region must be elected and may not be appointed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Introduction of bills?

Just before I start with the next section of routine proceedings, I do want to remind all members and ask you

that you pass this on to your colleagues. The tradition is to read from the explanatory notes of the bill. Doing it that way keeps us to the succinct message of what the bill is. If you start writing speeches, it takes you off that particular task. I would ask all members to stay focused on doing the explanatory notes. If the explanatory notes are long, you can précis them and just shrink them down. The idea is to simply get the idea of what the bill is. I would appreciate all your co-operation on this.

It is now time for statements by ministries.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### HOLODOMOR MEMORIAL DAY

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Speaker, this Saturday is Holodomor Memorial Day. This day marks the anniversary of the mass starvation of millions of Ukrainians in the early 1930s. This was a tragic event in our world's history. It can never be undone and should never be forgotten.

Ukraine has long been known as the breadbasket of Europe because of its fertile lands, so it was no accident that famine occurred in the midst of plenty. It was intentional. Holodomor was a man-made famine imposed by dictator Joseph Stalin to gain control of Ukraine. The word itself translates to "hunger-extermination."

During this time, Stalin's Soviet brigades seized food stored in Ukraine to help people survive the long and cold bitter winter, and then they deliberately blocked Ukrainians from leaving the famine-struck areas to find sustenance elsewhere. The results were relentless and harsh. Entire villages were wiped out. Corpses littered cities and roads. Generations were lost—men, women and children. An estimated five million to 10 million perished without record.

Today, we remember their sacrifice and pay tribute to the strength and resilience of the people of Ukraine. We salute the courage of the survivors, their descendants and the Ukrainian community here in Ontario and around the world. We support their fight to preserve their identity and expose the destruction left by the Holodomor. We share their heavy hearts as they remember those who perished in that traumatic winter and spring of 1933. We stand with them united.

Ontario MPPs unanimously passed the Holodomor Memorial Day Act in April 2009. It was the first tri-sponsored private bill of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

Today, more than 330,000 Canadians of Ukrainian heritage call Ontario home. They contribute to our culture, our economy and our growth. We are proud so many people from across the world have chosen Ontario as a place of safety, of opportunity, of hope. We are proud of this diversity. We are proud to be a province of equality, where freedom of faith and expression are valued.

Today, we join with the Ukrainian community in sorrow and remembrance. We reaffirm our commitment

to freedom and human rights, and we renew our promise to fight human injustice in all its forms.

## BULLYING AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WEEK

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm proud to stand in the House today on behalf of Ontario's two million students to acknowledge Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week.

We know that a safe, inclusive and accepting school environment is essential for students to succeed in the classroom and beyond. It's the responsibility of everyone in the school community to promote respectful and caring relationships that support the cognitive, emotional, social and physical development of our children and students. That is why today and every day this week thousands of students and educators across Ontario will be recognizing Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week.

We have been leaders in bullying prevention policies. Our government has led the way by developing strong legislation, such as the Accepting Schools Act, followed by resources for school boards that address bullying and victimization through prevention, intervention and student support.

The Accepting Schools Act, introduced in 2012, is the first legislation of its kind in Canada. It provides a definition of bullying and cyberbullying, and also requires school boards to take measures to prevent and address inappropriate student behaviour. This important legislation is helping to make every school in Ontario a safe, inclusive and accepting place to learn, while at the same time ensuring every student has the support to reach their full potential.

As Ontarians, we must all work together to make our schools safe, inclusive and accepting places to learn. Let's use this week to help promote awareness and prevention of bullying each and every day of the year.

Today, as we recognize Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week, I'm pleased to announce the 11 recipients of the 2013-14 Premier's Awards for Accepting Schools. The winning schools this year are Agnes Taylor Public School in Brampton; Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Elementary School in Hamilton; Blessed Trinity Catholic Secondary School in Grimsby; Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary in Aurora; École élémentaire Carrefour des jeunes in Brampton; Erindale Secondary School in Mississauga; St. David Catholic school in Sudbury; St. Edmund Campion Secondary School in Brampton; St. Joseph Secondary School in Mississauga; Stanley Mills Public School in Brampton; and Valley View Public School in Pickering.

1530

Speaker, these annual awards recognize and celebrate Ontario's safe and accepting schools teams for the innovative work they have done in promoting a positive school environment and supporting student achievement and well-being.

There are incredible initiatives happening in our schools, and I know that is due in large part to the work of our safe schools teams.

At this time, as we celebrate the work of these teams, I'm pleased to officially launch this year's—or next year's, depending on how you look at it—Premier's Awards for Accepting Schools. I encourage students, teachers, educators, parents and community members across Ontario to recognize the great work of their safe and accepting schools teams by nominating them for a Premier's Award for Accepting Schools.

More information on the nomination process can be found on the Ministry of Education website in the coming weeks. On our website, you'll see a few videos that show initiatives to make our schools safer and more accepting places to learn.

Speaker, promoting student well-being is one of the key goals of Ontario's renewed vision for education. The other goals of this vision include achieving excellence, ensuring equity, and enhancing public confidence. We're very proud of our renewed vision for education, and we know that this vision for education will help prepare our students for a productive and successful future. Eliminating bullying is a key part of achieving that vision.

In fact, everyone has a part to play in creating a positive school climate and in fostering healthy and respectful relationships. Inappropriate behaviour, such as bullying, cyberbullying, sexual assault, gender-based violence, and incidents based on homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, are totally unacceptable.

I encourage every member in the House today to recognize Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week, and to continue to promote the well-being of our students so everyone feels respected, valued and accepted.

Let's take this opportunity to come together to make a difference in the lives of Ontario's children, students and families.

#### AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to share with my colleagues my intention to seek approval of the proposed amendments to the Crop Insurance Act. One of the proposed amendments seeks to change the act's name to the Agricultural Products Insurance Act. If the proposed amendments are passed, the change in the act's name will better reflect what the act will allow in the future.

If passed, the proposed amendments would allow more types of agricultural products to be covered by production insurance. For those of my colleagues who may not be familiar with the concept, production insurance helps farmers deal with losses from natural events like weather, pests and disease. The costs of production insurance are cost-shared by producers and the provincial and federal governments.

Canada has a national suite of business risk management programs. There is a recognition that production insurance plans need to move beyond just crops to

include insurance for other agricultural products. The agricultural sector needs production insurance, not just crop insurance. Ontario is the only province without the underlying authority to meet this commitment.

Amending the Crop Insurance Act would let us better meet producers' needs and bring us in line with the other provinces. The proposed legislation would not only help producers manage risks, it would also encourage greater innovation, profitability and job creation in the agri-food sector.

In Ontario, production insurance is currently only available for crops like corn, soybeans and certain fresh vegetables. As we all know, Ontario produces a rich variety of foods that feed our citizens. If passed, expanded production insurance would give farmers who produce agricultural products other than crop and perennial plants access to the protection they need to safeguard their important investments. By allowing more types of products to be covered by production insurance, we would fulfill a commitment we made to Ontario's farmers under their Growing Forward 2 agreement in 2013.

All businesses need the right tools to help them manage risk. An expanded production insurance program will help Ontario's farmers continue to grow, innovate and, indeed, drive our economy.

Mr. Speaker, expanding our production insurance program would also help us responsibly manage the province's finances. When producers suffer losses and don't have production insurance coverage, they may come to us for direct or ad hoc assistance. We've seen ad hoc programs cost the province millions of dollars in a single year. An expanded production insurance program could have provided similar financial assistance but divided the cost between the federal government, provincial government and producers in a predictable and incremental way over a much longer period.

If our production insurance program is expanded, we would always know what our insurance expenses will be for the year. Even if we're surprised by a catastrophic event that negatively impacts our farmers, our expense to address lost production won't change, and we'll still be able to provide our farmers with the appropriate help in a timely manner. Production insurance protects both farmers and the government from unexpected costs.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendment would set the stage for improved fiscal responsibility and has no immediate cost to our government. If passed, the proposed amendments would provide the authority to allow for an expansion in the number of commodities that can be covered under production insurance beyond crops and perennial plants. This would in turn level the playing field so that our producers can access the same kind of protection as every other farmer in Canada today.

Having the authority to expand the number of products eligible for production insurance would help us build a better business climate in Ontario, strengthen our province's valuable agri-food industry and, indeed, strengthen our farm sector. Thank you very much.

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

### HOLODOMOR MEMORIAL DAY

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I would like to join the Ukrainian community, and indeed all Ontarians, in observing the 81st anniversary of the Holodomor genocide. We must never forget the tragedy that swept across the Ukraine in 1932 and 1933. The land that was known as the breadbasket of Europe was ravaged by an artificial famine orchestrated deliberately by Stalin and his Communist regime. Ukrainians call this the Holodomor, often simply translated as “murder by hunger.”

People from Ontario and around the world will pause to remember the millions of men, women and children murdered by starvation. We must all stand with Ukrainian Canadians at commemoration ceremonies taking place across the country to honour both the victims and the survivors of this tragedy.

Six years ago, Canada was the first country to recognize this deliberate and systematic starvation of millions of civilians in an act of genocide. Today, the Ukraine and its people are being forced once again to defend their sovereignty and fundamental human rights. We must continue to stand against this type of aggression, and I commend Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s call for Russia to remove troops from Ukraine.

So on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I stand with Ontario’s Ukrainians as they observe this solemn occasion. We owe it to the victims, the survivors and our future generations. Thank you.

### BULLYING AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WEEK

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I’m pleased to respond today to the comments by the minister on bullying awareness week. I want to thank her for the comments and, going back to the Accepting Schools Act, I want to thank the government and I also want to thank our former education minister and education critic, Elizabeth Witmer, for her leading-edge work on that particular legislation.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the city of Orillia and the anti-bullying work that goes on there. It is not just for a week, Mr. Speaker; it takes place throughout the year. We have a group, the Orillia Youth Centre, run under the leadership of Kevin Gangloff. Kevin is the executive director of the youth centre. He brings neat ideas to the anti-bullying work each year.

Last year, we had an opportunity in the summer of 2013 to have Arlo Guthrie come to the Orillia Youth Centre prior to a concert at the Mariposa Folk Festival. He talked about anti-bullying at that event. The place was filled with children of all different ages from all different schools around the community.

1540

Even this week, anti-bullying week, we had the rock band Styx playing a concert at Casino Rama. One of the organizers of the rock band, Chuck Panozzo, and his brother John, who formed the band—Chuck will be at the

Orillia Youth Centre this Saturday afternoon meeting with youth and talking about anti-bullying.

I’m very fortunate that, through my riding association, each and every year, we buy a number of pink T-shirts that say “Stand Up! Orillia Against Bullying.” We’re very proud of the fact that children from all over the community wear these shirts and promote anti-bullying in our community.

Finally, I would like to thank the Couchiching Community Initiative and Stand Up! Orillia Against Bullying. Ross McIntyre is the coordinator of that and does a great job every year. I want to thank all these people for standing up for people in my community against bullying.

### AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I’ve got a minute and a half to respond to this amended production insurance legislation for livestock. It is important, and it’s overdue.

Any new PI program should provide incentive for producers to enrol, and I have a question: Will there be a premium holiday in the first year? Other questions: Will it be easy for farmers to forecast the amount and timing of payments? Can the payments be processed rapidly to get them into the hands of farmers quickly? Will program calculations be clear and transparent? Will each participant get a detailed statement, something like, say, the income tax forms that we receive back?

We wonder, will the program provide adequate response if there is—heaven forbid—another disastrous situation? I think of BSE and the impact on cattle. More recently, our pork industry was hard hit by the PED virus, resulting in a loss of 30% of Ontario’s pork producing capacity. We know Ontario Pork has stressed the need for the province to take a look at mortality insurance. Also, will this enabling legislation help those beginning hog farmers who were frozen out of assistance back in 2007?

### BULLYING AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WEEK

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I want to thank all those who have worked hard to make our schools safer, and I want to congratulate those 11 schools that are being given awards for their efforts to make schools safer and more accepting.

But at the same time, we need to recognize that much more has to be done. When I went through the legislative process for adoption of the Accepting Schools Act, I talked to teachers, I talked to students, and I talked to parents. It was clear to me that much more needed to be done than any one bill was going to deal with.

There’s a lack of social and psychological services in our schools. That means that some youth are more vulnerable. Youth who are at risk of getting into trouble or into conflict are at greater risk of getting into conflict. I know that unemployment and tough home situations make for stress, make for difficult psychological times,

for children who are going to school. Frankly, Speaker, our loss of education workers and teachers means a lack of adult supervision where it's absolutely needed.

My thanks again to everyone who has fought hard and worked hard to make our schools safer, and a clear statement that a lot more needs to be done.

#### HOLODOMOR MEMORIAL DAY

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** When residents of Kitchener–Waterloo pass by the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Transfiguration on Victoria Street, they see a memorial recognizing the Ukrainian heritage in our region.

One inscription commemorates those who lost their lives during the Holodomor, or the famine genocide of millions of Ukrainians from 1932 to 1933. That inscription and others like it across Ontario and Canada help us to remember the suffering of millions.

Survivors of the Holodomor and their descendants are parts of our communities, and we must remember with them. There are over 300,000 people of Ukrainian origin in Ontario, and many have direct family connections to this tragedy.

The Holodomor has been called the forgotten genocide primarily because calling the actions of Stalin's regime a famine was forbidden in the USSR until the late 1980s glasnost period. However, the Holodomor, which is translated into English as "to kill by hunger," was a famine. It was catastrophic, and its scale remains unknown. It is estimated that at least four million Ukrainians were killed, but possibly as many as 10 million.

The famine was manufactured by Stalin's regime as a genocide of the Ukrainian people. Farms were forced to fill impossible grain quotas. Food was taken, leaving villages with nothing. One Holodomor survivor who came to Toronto, Mykola Latyshko, said in 2008, "Those who protested were beaten up, quite often to death. Those who were protesting even more were simply shot in front of their children, wives, mothers." There are also many stories from survivors of those desperate to survive resorting to cannibalism.

We must remember what happened in 1932 and 1933. In Ontario we mark the fourth Saturday of November as Holodomor Memorial Day. On November 23, take a moment to remember. The Ukrainian communities across Ontario will be remembering. I know that when I drive down Victoria Street in Kitchener this weekend and see that memorial at the Ukrainian Catholic church, I will also remember.

#### AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's a pleasure to stand on behalf of my NDP caucus and our leader, Andrea Horwath, to make a few comments on the government's proposed changes from the Crop Insurance Act to the Agriculture Insurance Act.

Crop insurance is one of the basic cornerstones on which our agricultural economy is built, because farmers

are at the mercy of the weather, and Mother Nature can be a cruel partner. As my counterparts in Timiskaming–Cochrane know, for many of them this year, crop insurance will mean the difference between paying the bills and losing the farm. The minister's proposal, I think, is 10 years too late. Nevertheless, to change the act so it could cover more commodities, and specifically livestock, is a step in the right direction.

This is enabling legislation, so there are a lot of rules and regulations to worry about. But if we just take a couple of recent examples, like PED in pork, BSE in beef and colony collapse in bees, those are examples of farms and farmers that could have and should have been insured. That will make the difference between paying the bills and losing your livelihood. When people pay their bills, they create jobs here.

We are looking forward to working with the minister and the ministry to make sure that this is done correctly and that it's done right the first time.

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

#### PETITIONS

##### LYME DISEASE

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

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

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

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

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

"To request that the Minister of Health direct that the Ontario public health system and OHIP include all currently available and scientifically verified tests for acute and chronic Lyme diagnosis and to have everything necessary to create public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario, and to have internationally developed diagnostic and successful treatment protocols available to patients and physicians."

I agree with this and will be passing it to page Moiz.

## ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease is a degenerative brain disease that causes thinking and memory impairment. Alzheimer’s disease is progressive, worsens over time and will eventually lead to death;

“Whereas there is an estimated 208,000 Ontarians diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and related dementia today, and that number is set to increase by 40% in the next 10 years;

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease creates emotional, social and economic burdens on the family and supports of those suffering with the disease—over 25% of those providing personal supports to survivors of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia are seniors;

“Whereas the total economic burden of dementia in Ontario is expected to increase by more than \$770 million per year through to 2020; and

“Whereas Ontario’s strategy for Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia has not been revised since the implementation of a five-year strategy in 1999;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately review, revise and implement an updated, research-informed, comprehensive strategy to respond to and prepare for the rapidly growing needs of those living with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia.”

I affix my name to this, fully support it and give it to page Vida to take to the table.

1550

## LEGAL AID

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** “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 2012-13 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 agree with this petition and affix my name to it.

## LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I also have a Lyme disease petition, Speaker.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

I affix my signature to these other names.

## MISSING PERSONS

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** “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.”

It’s my pleasure to affix my signature and give this to page Maja.

## HEALTH CARE

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

“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 fully support the petition and I give my petition to page Johann.

## LEGAL AID

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Petitions? Seeing none—the member from Kitchener Centre.

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In your peripheral here, this is a petition with regard to 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 2012-13 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 support this and I will give this petition to Jenny.

## DIABETES

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

“Whereas the Liberal government implemented cuts to the Ontario health insurance program such that Ontario residents suffering from diabetes saw their annual eligibility for blood sugar test strips reduced to 200 per year, less than one a day; and

“Whereas a blood sugar test strip costs approximately 70 cents; and

“Whereas this latest cut to services to Ontario patients is just another misguided measure to nickel-and-dime Ontarians; and

“Whereas a focus on preventing disease and hospitalization is in the long-term interest of patients, their families and the province;

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

“To immediately reinstate full and unlimited eligibility for blood sugar test strips covered by OHIP for all Ontario residents suffering from diabetes.”

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Ella. Thank you.

## EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** “Whereas there are an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 unpaid internships in Canada each year, depriving young people of economic opportunity and potentially displacing paid workers; and

“Whereas unpaid internships perpetuate poorer labour market outcomes for marginalized groups and those who cannot afford to participate; and

“Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Labour is not adequately enforcing existing laws on unpaid internships;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 22, the Greater Protection for Interns and Vulnerable Workers Act, which:

“(1) extends basic protections under the Employment Standards Act (ESA) to those currently excluded;

“(2) requires that posters with information about interns’ rights in Ontario be conspicuously displayed in the workplace;

“(3) requires that employers provide interns with written notice about conditions of work, length of employment, hours of work, and job description, to be submitted to the ministry to enable the collection of data on internships; and

“(4) creates a system to allow anonymous and third party complaints about unpaid internships.”

I fully support this petition, affix my name to it and give it to page Maja to take to the table.

## SHINGLES VACCINE

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

“Whereas one in three Ontarians will experience shingles in their lifetime; and

“Whereas shingles is a painful and stressful condition; and

“Whereas a vaccine is available for preventing shingles and is recommended for all seniors; and

“Whereas the shingles vaccine is currently not covered by OHIP;

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

“To ensure the shingles vaccine is covered under OHIP for all Ontarians.”

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Nicole.

1600

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** “Whereas there are an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 unpaid internships in Canada each year, depriving young people of economic opportunity and potentially displacing paid workers; and

“Whereas unpaid internships perpetuate poorer labour market outcomes for marginalized groups and those who cannot afford to participate; and

“Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Labour is not adequately enforcing existing laws on unpaid internships;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 22, the Greater Protection for Interns and Vulnerable Workers Act, which:

“(1) extends basic protections under the Employment Standards Act (ESA) to those currently excluded;

“(2) requires that posters with information about interns’ rights in Ontario be conspicuously displayed in the workplace;

“(3) requires that employers provide interns with written notice about conditions of work, length of employment, hours of work, and job description, to be submitted to the ministry to enable the collection of data on internships; and

“(4) creates a system to allow anonymous and third party complaints about unpaid internships.”

I sign this petition and give it to page Claudia to deliver to the Clerks.

#### STUDENT WORK EXPERIENCE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Petitions? You’re very busy today. The member from London West.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** “Whereas youth unemployment in Ontario is over 15%; and

“Whereas research suggests that work experience is a crucial factor in ensuring positive labour market outcomes for post-secondary students; and

“Whereas many post-secondary students are unable to gain relevant work experience, or participate in work experiences that do not effectively integrate with their academic program of study; and

“Whereas a 2013 report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives recommended that Ontario make much greater use of innovative work-integrated learning programs to combat youth unemployment;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“(1) bring together students, post-secondary institutions and employers in a provincial advisory council on work-integrated learning, mandated to make recommen-

dations to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities on various issues including:

“(a) how to engage more employers in providing paid work-integrated learning (WIL), and to improve regulation of unpaid WIL;

“(b) how to support post-secondary institutions in delivering quality WIL experiences for students;

“(c) how to ensure that all qualified students who are interested in participating in WIL are able to participate across different faculties and fields of study.”

I affix my name to this petition, fully support it and give it to page Maja to take to the table.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### FIGHTING FRAUD AND REDUCING AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES ACT, 2014

##### LOI DE 2014 DE LUTTE CONTRE LA FRAUDE ET DE RÉDUCTION DES TAUX D’ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE

M<sup>me</sup> Meilleur, on behalf of Mr. Sousa, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 15, An Act to amend various statutes in the interest of reducing insurance fraud, enhancing tow and storage service and providing for other matters regarding vehicles and highways / Projet de loi 15, Loi visant à modifier diverses lois dans le but de réduire la fraude à l’assurance, d’améliorer les services de remorquage et d’entreposage et de traiter d’autres questions touchant aux véhicules et aux voies publiques.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I recognize the minister.

**L’hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je prends la parole aujourd’hui devant l’Assemblée pour exprimer mon soutien au projet de loi de 2014 de lutte contre la fraude et de réduction des taux d’assurance-automobile. Cette loi propose quelques réformes nécessaires pour régler des problèmes importants dans le système de l’assurance-automobile. Ensemble, elles visent à lutter contre la fraude et à réduire les taux pour les conducteurs de l’Ontario.

Les mesures qu’introduit le projet de loi 15 permettront d’instaurer un système d’assurance-automobile juste et abordable pour la population ontarienne.

Nous savons que la fraude est un facteur qui fait monter les coûts de l’assurance-automobile. Ce projet de loi propose des mesures importantes pour poursuivre notre combat contre la fraude dans le domaine de l’assurance-automobile par le biais de réformes visant à réduire les abus du système. La réduction de la fraude contribuera à réduire les coûts, et la réduction des coûts permettra de réduire les taux.

Cette loi propose plusieurs solutions additionnelles pour protéger les conducteurs de l’Ontario et réduire les

coûts ainsi que l'incertitude dans le système de l'assurance-automobile de l'Ontario.

Bill 15 would change the dispute resolution system to help injured Ontario drivers settle disputes faster.

If passed, administration of the system would move from the Financial Services Commission of Ontario to the Ministry of the Attorney General's Licence Appeal Tribunal. This change would make the system more efficient and effective, while ensuring it remains accessible for accident victims.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would also implement measures to reform the prejudgment interest rate on general damages that are part of bodily injury claims for motor vehicle collisions. We are proposing to lower this interest rate by linking it to market conditions. This would help to reduce the cost of bodily injury claims in the auto insurance system, while still ensuring fairness for consumers.

We have also created a project team to provide the government with advice to help improve the investigation and prosecution of serious fraud, including auto insurance fraud. Their report is expected in early 2015.

Our government is committed to protecting the more than nine million drivers in this province.

I fully support the Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act, and I encourage my colleagues in the House to support it as well.

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

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to rise today and to add to the debate of Bill 15, the Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act of 2014.

Let me start off by thanking our critics, the member from Nipissing and the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, for the hard work that they do to promote this particular issue. Of course, our member from Elgin-Middlesex-London has also worked on the insurance industry file extensively over the years, and his efforts have been vitally important as we look to reduce auto insurance rates for Ontarians.

Mr. Speaker, we do find ourselves yet again debating a bill from this government with the intention of getting auto insurance rates down in the province of Ontario. This goes all the way back to the spring of 2013, when the Liberals were strong-armed, in my opinion, by the NDP into promising to magically cut auto insurance rates by 15% across the board. They might have this idea that 15 is a magic number: The NDP wanted a \$15 minimum wage and \$15 daycare as well. Anyway, at the time, they said that they would accomplish this goal within two years; that is, reducing auto insurance rates by 15%.

Members of the PC caucus said from the get-go that the NDP's demand for a 15% auto insurance premium reduction would have plenty of spillover effects and negative consequences, but we certainly agreed that Ontarians need a break when it comes to their auto insurance rates. We honestly felt that the bumper sticker promises were not the way to go, and we had our doubts.

Not long after the Liberals announced their promise, auto insurance rates actually increased. I remember hearing from my constituents in the riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex that they were upset and confused over why their rates were going up after hearing of the news that they were supposed to be dropping. I received calls from all over my riding: from Highgate to Blenheim to Leamington; of course, Chatham as well. Many of these people felt that they had been deceived.

As I mentioned, Ontario PCs were concerned that an oversimplified solution to a complex problem may not work. Time appears to be proving us right, as several news outlets are now reporting that this government is falling behind on delivering their promised premium reductions.

Many residents in the riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex are counting on the government to come through with their promise, and were surely shocked when CTV London reported a very familiar-sounding headline just last week: "Auto Insurance Rate Cut Behind Schedule; Ontario Insists It Will Meet Target." The report went on to say that the finance minister says that "with less than one year to go they have only seen a 6% decrease." That means with less than a year to go, the government will have to reduce auto insurance premiums by 9% in order to meet their original target. We all know, Mr. Speaker, what this government is like when it comes to meeting targets.

**1610**

That explains why they have quickly introduced this bill, Bill 15. Alongside my colleagues in the Ontario PC caucus, I firmly support the spirit of the bill and will be voting in favour of it at second reading, with the hopes that helpful amendments can be made in committee.

Fighting fraud and reducing automobile insurance premiums are goals that we can all agree on regardless of political stripe. If the Liberals wish to truly be an open and collaborative government, they will be willing to listen to all ideas when it comes to bringing some relief to Ontarians who are currently faced with the largest auto insurance rates in the entire country.

In addition to having the nation's highest premiums, the auto insurance market in Ontario has been described by some companies as "high risk."

Late last year, State Farm Insurance sold its entire property and casualty business in Canada to Desjardins Group. Moody's Investors Service noted that 65% of State Farm's Canadian business is concentrated in Ontario, an auto insurance market which is described as "a competitive and higher-risk market." But State Farm pulled out. This is especially significant given that State Farm held roughly 11% of the auto insurance market in Ontario. When a company of that size packs up and leaves the province while citing the auto insurance market as the main reason, I think I hear alarm bells sounding.

While some companies are leaving the province all altogether, others remain that are dropping drivers as they try to get even moderate-risk drivers off their books. The

following quote from a Globe and Mail article written in July 2013 predicted this potential negative consequence: “Without the right cost reduction measures, the decrease in premiums would be a challenge for insurers to implement, and could curtail the availability of coverage in the province.”

We need to ensure that the cost reduction measures that we implement are the right ones or else we may cause more harm than good. There are examples of this happening in the past outside of Ontario. Those who follow their auto insurance history would be reminded of New Jersey’s similar experience back in 1998 when New Jersey promised to cut their auto insurance rates by 15%. Many companies left the state, which made it difficult for drivers to get insurance. While the rates did come down by 15% over two years, the lack of available insurance led to a 27% spike in premiums in 2000.

What we don’t want to see is insurance become scarcer for Ontario drivers. If that happens, it will leave many in this province in the dark without insurance. It will also drive rates up overall. That’s a very serious and a very dangerous scenario. Let’s hope that doesn’t get played out.

While we all agree that costs should come down, we also need to do it in a very responsible and collaborative way to ensure that we mitigate the potential for unintended consequences that see rates rise even higher. This is an outcome that no member of this Legislature wants.

Another troubling pattern with the Liberals’ plan so far is that the worst drivers in the province are the ones on the receiving end of the largest discounts. In the most recent premium filings it was found that three companies that write insurance policies solely for people with drunk driving convictions and multiple accidents had the biggest reductions. These reductions were 15%, 14.5% and 8.7% respectively. These drivers rightly pay the highest rates, and the government is allowing convicted drivers to get a break on their premiums and get a big discount in order to inflate the average reduction so that it looks like auto insurance rates are coming down more than what they actually are.

This is what causes many people to get upset and call their local MPP. I get lots of calls, and I’m sure each member of this Legislature can provide an example or two or three of constituents calling them about auto insurance rates.

After many calls for the government to do something, we are now presented with Bill 15. For those keeping score at home, this bill merges Bills 171 and 189 from the previous session and addresses five key priority areas regarding auto insurance right here in Ontario. The Liberals are heralding the bill as part of their cost reduction strategy, as the Minister of Finance might put it, to finally help deliver on their past promises of a 15% cut to insurance rates. Insurance industry insiders are generally supportive of the bill, but many are unconvinced that it will be enough to get the job done. Bill 15 takes a step in the right direction, but at the end of the day, there are few

significant cost savings that will be achieved by this piece of legislation in its current form.

The main components of the bill are reform of the dispute resolution system—a bad idea—prejudgment interest charges, licences for service providers, clarifying the licensing of insurance agents and adjusters, some changes to the Consumer Protection Act for towing providers and, finally, storage and lien reforms. In my opinion, they’re trying to combine way too much in this particular bill.

Now, the storage and lien reform component of this bill is meant to cut down on fraud, and that is a goal we support. If passed, Bill 15 would require body shops and tow truck drivers to give notice of vehicles in their possession to the owners of the vehicles in a reasonable amount of time. We support that component.

But one of the larger changes found in this bill is the reform of the dispute resolution system. The bill proposes moving responsibility for the system from the industry-funded Financial Services Commission of Ontario, FSCO, to an existing tribunal administered by the taxpayer-funded Ministry of the Attorney General; specifically, the Licence Appeal Tribunal. The costs of the dispute resolution system will still be there, but they will be taken from your tax dollars instead of your insurance premiums. If you have auto insurance and pay taxes, you’re just paying out of a different pocket. When it comes to costs, this is basically a shell game.

To be fair, the government is not trying to sell this as a cost reduction. They are promoting this as a way to cut down on wait times. They argue that moving the dispute resolution system to the Ministry of the Attorney General will help resolve disputes faster than FSCO.

Well, in 2011, the Auditor General stated that the mediation phase was a severe bottleneck that caused a significant delay in the overall process. At that time, there were 30,000 cases in the backlog. They’ve since been able to whittle that number down to roughly 16,000, but this sizable backlog continues to delay settlements being reached and adds additional costs to the system.

While speeding up the process for individual cases is important, it doesn’t get to the heart of the matter. The real problem is the massive queue of cases waiting to be heard. That is where the long wait times come from. A quicker tribunal process helps, but to make a meaningful change, we must address the issue of why so many cases go to dispute in the first place.

We in the PC Party have recommended using existing medical assessment guidelines to have truly independent third-party assessments. This would make injury classifications more black and white as well as eliminate the need for mediation in several cases. We’ve also recommended giving claimants and insurers the option of using private mediators. This would give claimants more choice and allow them to avoid long wait times while also reducing the number of claims waiting to be heard by the tribunal overall.

It remains to be seen if this bill will be enough to get auto insurance rates down by 15% next year. That’s the

danger of making promises with arbitrary and specific numbers. What this bill will do is help push auto insurance premiums down across the province as well as in my great riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex, and that is certainly something I'm in favour of. In conclusion, Speaker, I support this bill at second reading, and I look forward to it being strengthened through further debate in the Legislature and some friendly amendments in committee.

1620

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

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** First and foremost, I want to make it clear that, as New Democrats, we proudly are not supporting this bill. This bill is named, very conveniently, An Act to amend various statutes in the interest of reducing insurance fraud, enhancing tow and storage service and providing for other matters regarding vehicles and highways. While the latter portion of the bill makes a lot of sense, the beginning of the bill, “reducing insurance fraud”—I'm very interested to see how the Liberals can convince us that this reduces insurance fraud.

Now, I was present at the anti-fraud task force. They went to some great lengths about what is actually causing fraud, and I'll go into some depth on this. But this bill is going to implement some very minor changes—good changes, but very minor changes—to the storage of vehicles and to the tow trucking industry. That is somehow fighting fraud? I mean, that's a very ambitious title. What this bill is really doing is—I'll rename the bill, the appropriate name: the “putting more money in the pockets of insurance companies bill,” the “bill that does very little to actually guarantee reductions for auto insurance premiums for drivers in Ontario bill,” the “bill that, again, shows the Liberals' priorities, putting insurance companies and profits before the drivers of Ontario.” That's the name of this bill. That's really what this bill is doing.

Why are we voting against this bill? Let me put it to you very simply: This bill strips Ontarians of the right to sue an insurance company if they deny benefits. Let me say that one more time to make it absolutely clear: We're voting against this bill because this bill strips Ontarians of the right to sue insurance companies if they deny benefits to an injured person. How horrible is that? If an insurance company denies benefits to an individual, and you want to sue that insurance company because, hey, you were entitled to those benefits—you've been denied benefits—this bill says, “Hey, you can no longer do that. You can no longer sue an insurance company.” That's unacceptable.

In addition, this bill reduces the interest rates on pre-judgment damages from 5% to 1.3%. What does that do? The Attorney General indicated that that's going to reduce costs and maintain fairness for Ontarians. Well, it's certainly going to reduce costs, but there is absolutely no justification for how that's in any way going to benefit Ontarians.

In fact, what's going to happen is, if an insurance company—at one point, they dealt with 5% interest rates. That meant that if there was a settlement of \$100,000 that they had to pay out to somebody, and they're paying 5% interest on that, it's a pretty big incentive for them to settle that, because they're paying such a high rate of interest. But now, reducing that from 5% to 1.3%, there's absolutely no incentive to settle. Insurance companies can just take that settlement amount—if it's \$100,000, if it's \$200,000, whatever the amount that's owed to the individual or whatever settlement they should be receiving. It's only going to have a 1.3% interest rate, so they can take that money, put it into any investment, beat 1.3% interest and delay the case as long as they want.

We are voting against this bill, again, because it strips the right to sue an insurance company for denying benefits to drivers in Ontario. We're voting against this bill because it puts more money in the pockets of insurance companies but offers no benefit to drivers in Ontario. It reduces the interest rates charged to insurance companies on judgments that they should settle, and instead reduces that so there's not incentive for an insurance company to settle and actually pay an injured person.

We've heard time and time again the concept of taking costs out of the system. I've heard this phrase used time and time again. Now, what does that mean? What you're asking us to believe is that if you reduce costs, if you take down the costs that insurance companies incur, then you're going to translate that into reduced premiums. That's what you're saying, essentially.

Let me give you an example, because one of the best ways to predict the future is to look at the past. So let's look at the past. Now, what was one of the biggest cost reductions that has ever happened in the insurance industry? Well, in 2010, this Liberal government slashed, destroyed, cut benefits to such a colossal degree that in one year alone—when they implemented this in September 2010, a year later, this government reduced the cost of benefit payouts, the cost incurred by insurance companies, the amount of money that they actually pay to people, by 50%. So the insurance industry saved—and they admit this—\$2 billion a year. Now, this savings didn't happen for one year. This didn't happen for two years. This happened forever. Because the changes you implemented put in a cap. The cap is not going anywhere. You saved the insurance industry, every year, \$2 billion—50% of the cost that used to be incurred has been reduced.

Now, you talk about, “We need to take costs out of the system.” You took costs out of the system. Let's look back at history and see what happened. Because you're saying, “Oh, we're going to take the costs out of the system. This is going to benefit drivers because it's going to bring down premiums.” I know that your measures aren't going to reduce the cost by 50%. I challenge you to prove to me that they're going to reduce the cost by 50%, because they're not. You've already done that. You've reduced the costs by 50%: Guess which way the premiums went from that same period of time? Just

guess. Which way are you thinking, down or up? You'd think that the costs went down by 50%, so naturally, the premiums probably went down by a couple per cent. Right? No. They went up by approximately 5%. They went up by 5%. How does that make any sense?

You took costs out of the system by 50%—some \$2 billion—like you always talk about: “Oh, we've got to take costs out of the system.” You did that. You took costs out of the system. What happened? Where was the premium reduction for drivers? It didn't happen. Just like it's not going to happen this way either. The same thing again. You're saying, “Oh, we've got to take costs out of the system. We're going reduce the cost to the insurance companies”—i.e., we're going to put more money in their pockets—“and just hope for a reduction down the road.” Well, it's not going to happen because you've shown before that a reduction in costs actually increased our premiums somehow. I wanted to raise that issue.

You talk a lot about fraud and how fraud's a big deal. Let's make it very clear: No one is going to say that fraud is a good thing. Obviously, we're all against fraud. So it's very tricky that you named your bill fighting insurance fraud. Of course everyone's against insurance fraud. But let's actually be somewhat analytical about this issue. Let's apply some critical thinking—and this is all factual: If the costs to the insurance companies have gone down by 50%—the money that they actually pay out—they're saving \$2 billion. They claim that fraud accounts for about \$1 billion. Well, if you put a cap in, and 80% of people are only getting \$3,500 in coverage now, you've naturally cut out people who are legitimately injured. They're no longer getting benefits because they're now being capped. You also cut out a whole chunk of people who were fraudulent as well—naturally. So you talk about reducing fraud, you've already reduced both legitimately injured people and the small percentage of people who are actually fraudulent. You've already done that. You've already tackled it to the highest degree ever in history. Did it result in any savings for drivers? Not really.

Now, again, you're saying, “You're working against us.” We're not working against you. You promised to reduce insurance—your own promise. We asked you to do 15%. You said, “We can't do 15% in one year; we'll do it over two years.” Okay; you're trying to be reasonable. You said, “We'll do 8% in one year.” Well, you haven't done 8%. You broke that promise. You've only done 6%. And you're going to come out and say—I'll predict your answer—“Oh, it's because you didn't let this bill pass.” It's not about this bill, because how much is this really saving? Compare what you've done in 2010. You've cut the benefits that we receive—colossal cuts to those benefits. You've reduced the costs that insurance companies incur. Out of those cost savings you should be able to find a 15% reduction—easily. But you haven't. You've broken your promise.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Several times. Several times.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Several times, in fact. So this is another example of a great PR mechanism. And I have to

applaud you. Whoever works in your public relations department is doing a phenomenal job.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** StrategyCorp.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Your strategy is beautiful, but your content is really weak. That's a problem. I mean, it's great to be able to make a nice fluffy title, but we'd like to see some content. We'd like to see something that actually helps people.

*Interjections.*

1630

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I would love for anyone on that side of the House to get up and explain to me how you're fighting fraud by this bill. I'd love for you to show me something else.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** That's a challenge.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I challenge you to show me how you're fighting fraud. These are the three measures that you're talking about doing, essentially. Let's just talk about those measures and if there is any evidentiary basis for your measures, because I like evidence. Blame me. I believe we should have evidence-based decisions instead of emotion-based decisions, instead of confusing-people-based decisions. I believe in evidence. So let's look at what you're doing.

Can you tell me what percentage of towing accounts for fraudulent costs in the system? Can you tell me what the number is? What is the impact to the insurance industry on fraud related to the tow truck industry? You can't; there's no number for that. You're not going to be able to show me a number for it. What's the number? How much of a value is it? You can't tell me that.

How about the storage? How much do storage costs relate to fraud? What's the number? What percentage of fraud? What's the value of the impact to the industry? You can't tell me that. You're somehow trying to suggest that some minor changes requiring some notice for storage fees are somehow going to fight fraud? Come on, no one buys that. You're going to change the tow truck industry by a very insignificant amount, by a little incremental change, and that's somehow going to tackle fraud? How? Where is the evidence? Has anyone got up and said, “If we do this change to the tow trucking industry, we're going to reduce fraud by 5%; we're going to reduce fraud by \$10 million”? You've not given one piece of evidence to back up that this is fighting fraud. Show me the evidence. Is there any evidence that you can come forward with that actually supports that this is actually fighting fraud?

On top of that, your other big idea to fight fraud is, “Let's license insurance adjusters.” The guys that work for the insurance companies: You think that they're committing fraud? You're thinking that the insurance industry is committing fraud itself? If it is, how much? Did they provide you with any numbers saying, “Our insurance adjusters are responsible for \$100 million of fraud a year”? You don't have any numbers to back this up. You don't have any evidence to back this up. You have no proof to show me that any of these measures will actually reduce fraud in any meaningful way. Where is the evidence?

I can tell you some evidence. Maybe you're not used to evidence; maybe you're not familiar with it. Let me show you some evidence. There is an anti-fraud task force which you commissioned. Your own anti-fraud task force provided three areas where fraud occurs. They said that one is organized crime; the second, they said, was systemic health care providers that were bad operators; and they said that there was some opportunistic fraud related to everyday folks. I asked that anti-fraud task force chairperson, "What is the most significant? First of all, how much does this total to?" The individual was not able to say how much it cost. He could not say the total amount of fraud that all this accounted for, but he was able to say that organized crime and systemic health care providers were the major ones. Okay; there's a little bit of evidence there.

Your attempts here to regulate the tow truck industry, to look at storage and to license insurance adjusters do nothing to tackle the major areas that your own anti-fraud task force talked about. You're not addressing the major areas that your own task force talked about; you're addressing some ancillary, corollary side issues—fine. There's nothing, again, in what you're doing that connects to the major problems that were presented by your own anti-fraud task force, and we already know that when it comes to the health providers, there was a small percentage of them that were perhaps not working in a manner that was appropriate. They've all been dealt with by the fact that you slashed the benefits. People who were legitimately injured, and those who weren't injured and who were fraudulent: All of them have been cut from benefits—blanket. You cut out so many of the costs; where are the premium savings? How do we have any faith that you'll actually do it when you've broken your promise and when this bill has nothing to do with fighting fraud in a significant way? It's incremental; it's minor; it's a passing thought. It's not actually focused on that.

Let's make it very clear that this is the "putting more money in the pockets of insurance companies" bill; that's what it is. This is the "taking away the rights of Ontario drivers" bill. This is the "taking away the rights of injured people in Ontario" bill. That's what your bill is. This is the "stripping the right to sue so insurance companies don't have to provide benefits for people who are injured" bill. That's the bill you're enacting.

So, no, we don't support this bill. You can ask me any time you want, and I'll tell you very proudly and very clearly, "No, I do not support this bill." In fact, in the committee, I thought, "Hey, this bill is in committee. Let's try to make it a bit better." The major problem with this bill is, one, you're stripping the right to sue, so I voted against that part of the amendment. I asked you to put in an exception. In fact, I said, "Okay, if you're not going to honour the fact that people who are denied benefits"—these aren't people who are just walking down the street and saying, "I want to sue an insurance company." These are people who are injured in an automobile accident. After they're injured, they're claiming a benefit. They're saying, "Hey, we need to get a wheel-

chair. We need to get some physiotherapy. We need to get better; we want to get better." The insurance company is supposed to cover that. The insurance company says, "No, we're not going to cover that."

A person, before, could bring a lawsuit and say, "Hey, you're not covering something that I'm entitled to. Let me see if a judge agrees with this. Let me show you the evidence, show you the insurance claim and show you what the insurance says it covers. Let's bring it to a court and get justice." That's called access to justice. What you are doing is, you are stripping people of access to justice. If they've been denied a benefit, they can no longer sue in court.

You talk about, "There is access to justice. You can appeal it; you can do a judicial review." Let's make it very clear. The appeal process and a judicial review are completely different from a regular lawsuit. An appeal means you have to find that there was an error in law. If there was no error in law, if the judge makes or if the tribunal made a decision with no error in law, you can't appeal it then. The burden is much higher. You can bring a lawsuit much easier than you can bring an appeal of a tribunal decision.

Then you talk about a judicial review. A judicial review is even more narrow. A judicial review is, you could have had everything—all the decisions were absolutely wrong, but if due process was followed, there is no judicial review. You can't review that decision if due process was followed. So the tribunal could have done everything right but come out with a completely unfair decision, and there is no judicial review to that.

How is that access to justice? It is not. At least be clear, at least admit, "Hey, you know what? We want to help out the insurance companies. We want them to make more profits, so we're taking away the right to sue." At least be forthright. Admit that you're taking away the right to sue. Admit that you're reducing access to justice. I wouldn't mind it as much. I would mind it personally and I would mind it for the people of Ontario, but at least I could respect that you were being straightforward, that you were telling me exactly what is going on. But when you go in a roundabout way and say, "No, there's still access to justice," that bothers me, because you're not being straight with the people of Ontario. You're not telling them exactly what's in the bill. That's one of the reasons why we have to vote against this bill.

On the interest argument, I can't fathom how you could dare say that this in any way benefits drivers or the victims. How does this benefit them? Reducing the interest rates that are charged to insurance companies on a chunk of money, a settlement that they're entitled to give to an individual—how does that benefit drivers? How can you say that? Don't say that. At least be straight-up and say, "Hey, this is going to help insurance companies. We're going to give them more profits, and we're going to hope"—throw a Hail Mary—"maybe this is going to reduce the cost for drivers." That would be a bit more realistic. You could say, "We're hoping. We think maybe it will possibly happen sometime down the road."

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Maybe.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** With a lot of “maybes.” Then I’d say, “Hey, cool. You’re actually being straight-up with us.” So that’s a problem with the way you’re approaching this bill.

Now, I have to talk about this issue again and make it more clear. In committee hearings, like I said, I voted against taking away the right to sue, but I thought, “At the minimum, if you’re not going to allow people to sue when their benefits are denied, at least recognize that there’s a difference between everyday claimants and those who are catastrophically injured.” So our amendment read—our first approach was to say, “Listen, take that component out of the bill, let people continue to sue, and that would be a somewhat better bill.” You voted against that change.

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We asked for you to create a different category, that folks who are catastrophically injured—these are people who are so desperately injured, so grievously injured, that their lives are completely changed. These are folks who are paraplegic, people who lose functioning in their limbs, people who have had such a devastating injury that they are catastrophically injured and their entire lives are completely changed. For those folks who are so vulnerable, who are so injured—someone who is catastrophically injured—and they’re being denied a claim, at least in those cases, allow that individual to sue the insurance company to get benefits, because that person is in such dire need of help. At least let that person sue.

Guess where you guys voted on that. You voted against it. That would have at least added some fairness into the bill that you acknowledge that if someone is catastrophically injured, if they’re that seriously, grievously injured, they should be entitled to a remedy in court. They should be able to go to court and say, “Hey, this insurance company is denying me the benefit. I don’t get it. They’re not allowing me to pay for a wheelchair” or “They’re not covering this physiotherapy that I need to get better.” At least for those folks, you should have allowed an exception that they could actually sue the insurance companies.

Why have you sold out so much to the insurance companies that you won’t let the people of Ontario bring a claim in court, have their day in court and fight for a little bit of justice? Why wouldn’t you allow it to those catastrophically injured people? That’s pretty bad if you think about it. It’s not fair. Right? At least for those folks, you should allow them to have the right to go to court.

You’ve also done something else that is very important to note. This is another area where this bill is significantly flawed. You cited Justice Cunningham. Justice Cunningham had a report on how to address the auto insurance system. In the report, Justice Cunningham stated a principle. You’ve taken the principle very literally, but you’ve lost the spirit of what Justice Cunningham wanted you to achieve.

Justice Cunningham said that you have FSCO, the Financial Services Commission of Ontario, which regu-

lates the auto insurance industry. It also houses the arbitrators who make decisions on cases. Justice Cunningham said it doesn’t make sense to have the same body that regulates make decisions on whether or not someone should be approved for a benefit. True. That makes sense. On a legal principle, you shouldn’t have the same body regulating and also decision-making. So Justice Cunningham’s report said, “Separate them.” That part of it you understood and are applying. You separated those arbitrators out of FSCO and put them into the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

But here is where you made a mistake. If you had kept those same arbitrators, those same trained folks with independence who have a salaried position, who have a wealth of knowledge about how to deal with these cases—if you had kept them and transitioned them to the Licence Appeal Tribunal, that would have been fine. What you’re doing instead is that now you’re getting rid of those experienced tribunal folks, the ones who have a wealth of institutional knowledge, and you’re replacing them with Licence Appeal Tribunal folks who are per diem, who are appointed at the mercy of the minister and are great at doing what they do—which is dealing with tickets, dealing with parking fines, dealing with those types of licence-appeal-related issues—but don’t have any of the knowledge, any of the institutional knowledge, to deal with these complex cases around benefits, negligence and about if the insurance company is entitled to pay or not.

You say that this is somehow making it more fair, that this is somehow making it more efficient. It’s not making it more efficient. When you lose that wealth of knowledge, you’re not actually increasing efficiency. You’re actually decreasing efficiency. You’re actually making it more unfair, because people who are trained, who had knowledge, who had the experience, who had the case law to be able to make a good decision, a reasoned decision are no longer there. That’s a serious problem.

The Attorney General gets up and says this transition from FSCO to the Licence Appeal Tribunal will result in more fairness. No, it won’t. It will create the appearance of fairness, which is what Justice Cunningham wanted, and part of that makes sense. But if you lose the actual decision-makers who have the institutional knowledge, you’re not making it more fair. In fact, you’re probably making it less fair, because people who don’t know how to deal with these cases, who don’t have the experience, who don’t have the institutional knowledge are going to be making decisions.

On top of that, there’s also a question about their independence. Decision-makers need to be independent. Independence is one of the key factors in making sure you have a just system. That’s why judges in Canada aren’t voted in. We select a judge and we want the judge to make a decision based on law and not be subject to the whim of the public, not be subject to the whim of the government of the day and not be subject to the whim of whatever interest group it is. But in this case, you have decision-makers who are appointed, and many of them

are per diem. The decision-making independence of someone who is appointed and per diem versus a salaried individual—there's clearly a difference. You have a salaried, permanent employee making decisions and you have a per diem appointed by the ministry. The appearance of justice—and often it's not necessarily whether there is a bias or not, but whether there's a reasonable apprehension of bias, whether a reasonable person could look at those two scenarios and say, "Well, I could reasonably perceive that there might be a bias in this case, that it may not be as fair." That's a serious problem.

That's another reason why I will proudly, with my colleagues from the NPD and our leader, Andrea Horwath, vote against this bill, because a vote against this bill is a vote for the people of Ontario. We're proud to always stand up for the people of Ontario. We're proud to stand up for justice and fairness, and that's why we're proud to vote against this bill.

We've talked about why we're voting against the bill. We've talked about the idea of reduction of costs. I think we need to just talk a little bit more about the changes to the system and how they've impacted the overall lay of the land.

One of the major problems with this bill, and with, frankly, many of the decisions that you've taken when it comes to the auto insurance regime, is that you continually talk about taking the costs out of the system. That's been your approach: taking costs out of the system. When you bring the costs out of the system, your theory is that costs out of the system mean that premiums will go down. That's your theory. Well, the theory isn't working, because we see that when costs come out of the system, premiums are not going down. Why is that? Because you're not tying the cost reductions to premium reductions. You're not guaranteeing that if there's a cost reduction, that will provide a premium reduction. You're not requiring that the industry actually reduce premiums. If their costs go down, you have to ensure that a cost reduction actually translates to a premium reduction. If you don't ensure that, if there's no guarantee for that, then what faith do the people of Ontario have?

You can talk about fraud reduction all day long; you can talk about cost reduction all day long. If there's no mechanism to guarantee that a cost reduction—that if you save the insurance industry some money, that that's actually going to result in premiums going down. If there's no mechanism to guarantee that, then there's no hope or there's no actual guarantee that this will reduce premiums for drivers. That's one of the biggest problems here. There's no tie-in, there's no guarantee, there's no connection.

That's another reason why we will proudly vote against this bill, because all of these measures are simply implemented with a hope that it will reduce premiums. There's nothing guaranteeing or tying in any of the cost savings with actual reductions.

I guess I should quickly mention the parts of the bill that were non-problematic.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Are there any?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Yes, there are some parts of the bill that are not.

Schedule 1 of the bill, like I said, is tow and storage services. The majority of the tow and storage services component of this bill talks about notice, and the fact that folks should be entitled to notice about where their car has been towed to. The rental agency organization came forward and said that this is a big issue. Cars get towed and they don't know where it is, so they wanted increased notice.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The CAA did too.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** The CAA also raised this issue as a significant issue, that they want to know where cars are being towed to. It seems very reasonable. How does that fight fraud? Providing more notice is somewhat fair, but how is that fighting fraud? How is that reducing auto insurance?

There's been a considerable amount of talk about concerns around the tow truck industry. While there are some phenomenal tow truck drivers and organizations that do great work, there are obviously some very troublesome players in this industry as well. I've met with tow truck drivers, and they've said very clearly, "Yes, we have a problem. There are some drivers who are creating a problem for the rest of us. Some of them are engaging in inappropriate activities."

While the tow truck industry definitely needs to be addressed in terms of improving it, one of the things they called for was a province-wide licensing regime, something that would actually be implemented province-wide, because as it currently stands, if you're towing between multiple municipalities, you actually have to carry a different licence for each municipality.

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If you tow someone from the 400 series, from the 401, and you're stuck somewhere in the middle on your way from Toronto to, let's say, Windsor to visit my good colleague from Essex, and you need a tow ride, tow truck drivers have to go through multiple jurisdictions to get there. There is a different licensing regime for each municipality. There's no consistency. Tow truck drivers have complained about that, saying, "Listen, we need a standardized licensing regime for the entire province." This bill doesn't do anything to address that. That would have been something that would have actually improved the tow truck industry and would have provided some standardization for the entire province.

You address tow truck drivers, you address storage, and in addition to that, you have a component of this bill that talks about licensing insurance adjusters. I'm just curious: Where did that component come from? Why is that something that was so important that you thought, in your fighting-fraud legislation, you needed to implement licensing for insurance company adjusters? Perhaps someone could answer that for me when you get a shot.

If you would have taken these three components out, the changes to towing and storage and the licensing of insurance adjusters, and put that into a new bill and renamed that new bill the "very minor, incremental,

insignificant changes to the insurance regime that will somehow help a little bit in tackling some problems that these industries face” bill or act, I would have happily voted for that, because incremental, small changes to help the insurance industry a little bit by addressing small parts of it are fine. There’s no real big deal with that. But I have a problem with the component of your bill which is the “putting more money into the pockets of the insurance companies act” and the “denying the right to sue bill.” That’s a big problem. That’s really the crux of the bill. If you really wanted to be serious about addressing the issues and making sure that your bill actually matches up with its name, you could have separated those two out and put two different bills forward. We would have been very happy to support the one and not the other.

Let’s look at some of the history of what has gone on in terms of the rates. What I want to break down in terms of the specifics is: When we look at the auto insurance regime and we look at what’s going on across the province, we notice that in 2010-11, like I said, there was a big reduction in costs to the insurance industry. We actually followed that reduction from 2011-12 to 2012-13 and we looked at some of the numbers to see, hey—we would assume that the rates would continue as we projected; that the reductions would continue. Guess what? The reductions continued. The cost savings were maintained. By and large, the insurance companies continued to enjoy those cost reductions that they saw in 2011.

Let’s tally that up a little bit. If they saved about \$2 billion from 2010 to 2011, another \$2 billion from 2011 to 2012—we’re at \$4 billion—and from 2012 to 2013 another \$2 billion, we’re at \$6 billion of savings. Wow; that’s a lot of savings for one industry. We’ll look forward to seeing the 2014 numbers when the year ends, and we’re probably going to see the same thing. So you have, every year after your 2010 changes—let’s call them what they are: the 2010 benefits slashing. Every year, the insurance industry has continued to see its costs stay at that level of \$2 billion less than they were prior to the changes. So they’ve maintained that reduction.

Let’s look at something called the loss ratio. The loss ratio is what insurance companies talk about at the end of the day. They say, “Listen, we need to make a profit.” Sure. We live in a society where we want to ensure that companies make a profit. That’s what makes them exist. But here’s the big difference: This is a product that you have to purchase by law. The government mandates that people have to purchase auto insurance. It’s like owning a restaurant that everyone has to dine at. You have to go to that restaurant. If you make it a law to go to that restaurant, you’d better also make it affordable and fair to go to it. It’s similar with auto insurance. If you make it a law that you have to have auto insurance, you’ve got to make it affordable. You have to ensure that it’s fair. Otherwise, you’ve just created a really unfair system where you’ve made sure that the suppliers will get that sale. You’ve made sure the industry is going to get that

sale, but you haven’t made sure they do that sale in a fair way. That’s why you regulate auto insurance, because it’s mandatory. But if you’re regulating something that’s mandatory, you have to make it affordable.

What is the way to measure if something is affordable or not? One way to do that: The insurance industry has premiums that are coming in—that’s the payments they receive—and they have costs going out. Those are the benefits they pay out. It’s pretty straightforward. On top of that, insurance companies have some other costs associated with their buildings, their staff and their other running costs. If you add up the running costs and expenses in total, add in the costs in terms of the payouts and compare that to the premiums, you get the loss ratio.

What do you guys think the loss ratio is? Do you think insurance companies are making money or losing money? What’s your guess? Do you guys have a guess? Hey, how about I help you out?

They’re making money. Their loss ratios are not in the negative. No sirree. They are not in the negative at all. Insurance companies in this province are posting some of the best loss ratios they’ve ever seen. Their loss ratios are excellent, meaning they are taking more money in than they’re paying out. Awesome. They’re taking in more money than they’re paying out.

On top of that, they make money on their investment income. Imagine this: The insurance industry is one of the only industries where you pay them monthly and get nothing for it. If you don’t make a claim, you don’t get anything. If you pay them every month for a year, they take the money that they’re entitled to and they’re not actually paying you anything for it. What do they do with that money? Well, they take that money and invest it. It’s a great business scheme, if you think about it. They’re getting paid month after month and you, the consumer, are not getting anything for that. You’re just getting the protection, but you’re not actually getting anything paid out to you.

So the insurance industry takes the money that they get rightfully—I mean, they’re entitled to it—and they invest it and then they make investment income. Do you think they’re making money on their investment income? Yes, they are. So they make money on their investment income, and they make money on their loss ratio—the premiums coming in versus the costs going out. They’re making money on both sides. Both of those are in the plus. So they’re making good profits.

Now, you would think, “Hey, I’m the government. I want to regulate this industry. How would I do that?” You should know what their profits are. Does this government have a fair and clear handle on the profits? They don’t. I implore you: If you want to regulate this industry, you need to know how much they’re making. You need to know their profits. If you don’t have a handle on the profits, how can you effectively regulate?

If one accountant says the insurance industry is making approximately \$500 million in profits, and another one, using the same numbers, says it’s making \$300 million, that’s a \$200-million difference. That’s

what we saw: Two different accounting firms came up with two numbers, in terms of profits, that were hundreds of millions of dollars different. They couldn't even agree on the profits. So if we want to be serious about regulating this industry, we need to make sure we have a fair handle on the profits.

I want to summarize really quickly now, in a short manner, why we're not supporting this bill—let's make this really clear. This bill is entitled the Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act. This bill does very little to fight fraud and absolutely nothing to guarantee a reduction in auto insurance. What this bill actually does—I want you to all stay with me, because I've said it a couple of times now—is strip the right of auto insurance holders, of drivers in Ontario, to sue insurance companies if their benefits are denied.

This bill reduces the interest rates on pre-judgement settlements, which in effect puts money in the pockets of insurance companies. This bill puts money in the pockets of insurance companies but does not benefit the drivers of Ontario. This bill takes away our right to sue insurance companies when we're wrongfully denied benefits, when we're wrongfully denied what we're entitled to, but does nothing to reduce auto insurance rates. There is no guarantee in this bill that rates will go down.

This is another example of an attempt to reduce costs but no guarantee to reduce premiums. You're putting more profits in for the insurance companies, but what are you doing for the drivers of Ontario? Nothing. This bill is another way of giving a big handout to the insurance industry but not putting the needs of drivers first.

We know that drivers in this province are paying the highest auto insurance rates in the entire country. We know that certain regions in a small area, like Toronto, are being charged disproportionately for where they live. There's so much unfairness, and this bill does nothing to address that unfairness. That's why we're voting against this bill, and I'm proud to do so.

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**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Chatham–Kent–Essex.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I chose not to interrupt the previous speaker in his debate, but I would like to correct my record. In my previous debate, I had stated “second reading,” and I want to correct the record. It is, in fact, third reading.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member has the right, at any time, to correct his record. Thank you.

Further debate?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm speaking today on behalf of my minister at the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and on behalf of the Ministries of Transportation and Finance.

I rise today for the third reading of Bill 15, the Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act, 2014. This legislation in fact does propose important measures that will help protect Ontario drivers, tackle fraud and abuse, and reduce costs and uncertainty in

Ontario's auto insurance market. Bill 15 is a combination of two pieces of legislation that died on the order paper when the 40th Parliament of Ontario was dissolved, and one wonders how far we would be towards that 15% savings if both those pieces had been allowed to live.

Our government made a commitment to the more than nine million drivers in Ontario to make auto insurance more affordable, while keeping the system fair and reliable. Bill 15 is the next step in keeping that commitment. Bill 15 proposes significant measures that continue our government's crackdown on fraud and abuse in the auto insurance system.

According to the Auto Insurance Anti-Fraud Task Force in its 2010 report, fraud and abuse in the Ontario auto insurance system was estimated to cost between \$768 million and \$1.56 billion. That means hard-working Ontario drivers were paying, on average, between \$116 and \$236 to cover the cost of fraud and abuse. That simply is not acceptable. Ontario drivers deserve better. From these 2010 findings, it's not surprising the task force concluded that auto insurance fraud and abuse is substantial and indeed has a significant impact on premiums.

Our government is doing its part. So far, we have taken action to address more than half of the task force recommendations, and we're committed to addressing more recommendations in the coming months while also encouraging others to take action on proposals outside the government's control.

An area of concern to the anti-fraud task force was the vehicle towing and storage industries. The task force heard from many with concerns about organized auto insurance fraud originating at collisions, with unscrupulous tow truck operators taking advantage of drivers involved in these collisions. Most in the industry are law-abiding citizens, providing much needed service, but there are problems with some individuals. I want to reference the words of the task force in its final report:

“As we became more familiar with the issues and the existing regulatory framework, it became apparent that concerns about the current state of the industry were much broader than auto insurance fraud, and included:

“—road safety concerns...;

“—consumer protection concerns ... and

“—mechanical, operating and employee training concerns....”

As a result of these findings, the task force recommended a province-wide licensing scheme for the towing industry, as well as the need to address fraudulent practices, road safety and consumer protection issues. The task force also recommended amending the Repair and Storage Liens Act “to reduce unreasonable storage costs for vehicles damaged in a collision.”

If passed, the measures proposed in Bill 15 will help Ontario drivers make informed decisions when getting their vehicle towed or having it held in a storage facility. The proposed changes would require tow and storage providers to have permission from a consumer or someone acting on behalf of the consumer before charging for

towing and storage services; make their rates publicly available; provide an itemized invoice listing services and total cost before demanding or receiving payment; accept alternative forms of payment, such as payment by credit card; and give a consumer access to their towed vehicle to remove any personal property contained in that vehicle, such as a purse or a briefcase.

The new legislation would allow us to set qualifications and standards governing the operation and use of tow trucks, including driver certification and training requirements. The new legislation would also prescribe penalties for violators.

If passed, the amendments proposed by Bill 15 would help address the task force's concern about towing, reduce abusive storage practices and remove associated costs from the auto insurance system.

By continuing the crackdown on fraud and abuse, Ontario is seeing results in protecting consumers and reducing costs in the auto insurance system. From August 2013 to August 2014, for example, auto insurance rates dropped by an average of over 6% across the province. In my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, we saw that happen. While we're pleased with this reduction, we're still focused on our 15% average rate reduction target, and we're determined to get there.

Mr. Speaker, if passed, Bill 15 would build on the work done to stabilize and bring down auto insurance rates for Ontario drivers. Previous reforms streamlined the system, gave consumers more choice in their auto insurance policies and cracked down on fraud and abuse. The legislation we're proposing now would continue to fight against fraud and improve consumer protection. We all want a strong, fair, reliable auto insurance system. Ontario drivers deserve nothing less.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It is a pleasure to speak about auto insurance in Ontario and ways to fix a system that has been driving up premiums for decades.

In my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, car ownership isn't just an option; it's a necessity. Half of our population is rural and needs to commute to either Cornwall or Ottawa to work. In the city of Cornwall itself, the transit infrastructure is in need of expansion in order to improve residents' access to the city's businesses and services. We receive, however, a fraction of the gas tax collected in the region. Therefore, city residents find a car necessary to access goods and services when they need them.

We're discussing the provision of a product that is both mandatory and necessary, for in Ontario you cannot drive without auto insurance, period. By extension, most residents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry can't live or work in the region without an auto insurance policy because they have to drive.

Let's begin by examining what this government has done with auto insurance. I think everybody here will remember, back in 2003, the Liberal government promising to freeze auto insurance rates if they got elected. Of

course, that was one of the first promises broken, along with promises of no tax increases and not running a deficit.

A couple of years ago, in their push to stay in power and promise Ontarians some financial relief, they announced an imminent 15% premium cut. Although this was done to cement NDP support in an upcoming budget, it did little for law-abiding drivers across the province.

The 2013 budget created a framework in which certain policies of certain insurers would be reviewed with the aim of bringing premiums down on average across the province. What the government failed to disclose to Ontarians was that if half the province saved 30% and the other half saved nothing, the policy commitment would still hold.

Many local residents came to my constituency office complaining about their insurance premiums not being cut. Although eastern Ontario premiums tend to be lower than the GTA's, the promised 15% savings were still a considerable help to families' budgets. After grasping the details of the government's rate reduction initiative, they were of course disappointed. They resented being led by Liberal spin to believe that relief was coming.

This Liberal government has made an art of raising hopes and crushing them shortly after. The government's approach has so far yielded the best results for bad drivers. Insurers specializing in uninsured motorists have made significant decreases in their premiums. This may not have been the intended outcome to the government's effort, but it's the reality that we have to contend with.

Clients and stakeholders have seen other insurance-product premiums creeping higher, such as home and life insurance. It is imperative to get this right. Some insurers have already left the Ontario market, citing difficulty in operating in the auto sector. When you use a blunt instrument such as the promise of an across-the-board 15% cut, without any effort to tackle claim costs and fraud, you have created artificial losses for all the players.

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Those whose business model focuses on consumer value and the lowest possible rate will be damaged the most, as their operations won't allow them to absorb a rate cut of that magnitude. Simply, supply will dwindle, destroying the chances of seeing real, meaningful price competition amongst rival insurers.

The government's efforts to bring down prices without tackling costs have also resulted in Ontarians' coverage being dropped when their policies were up for new renewal. This same principle would apply to us as financial consumers. If the government regulated down the maximum interest that a bond could pay, we would naturally move our savings to a lower-risk debt at the same rate. The government's initiative has not reduced our chances of costing the insurer a significant amount for a claim.

The bill is a very small step in the right direction, but it does not tackle the rigidity of the insurance rate-setting mechanisms. The amount of regulation involved in altering rates is mind-boggling, and the process takes almost a

year to complete. This has created a very rigid market, where all players are apprehensive about bringing down premiums. In the case of a sudden spike in costs, such as more claims or higher claim costs, the costs could be significant. The government's attitude to discussion and feedback on this bill, reducing public input to a token formality, also shows that they're not interested in addressing the bottleneck any time soon.

The Ontario PC caucus had proposed an easier-to-understand system, where insurers could notify FSCO of rate changes and use them while they awaited a commission response. This would allow rates to come down faster while keeping FSCO's review and oversight powers. Simply put, if landlords were subject to the same rent-setting mechanism as auto insurers, our rental market would evaporate. We need clear guidelines and strong oversight by FSCO. But our insurance providers must be able to set their rates quickly and deliver savings to consumers.

One of the most upsetting aspects of the auto insurance market today is the large caseload for dispute resolution. We have too many claims in Ontario that end up being disputed in various courts and tribunals. This hurts consumers who are dealing with the medical and financial consequences of an accident. The distress of repeated reviews, medical visits, legal paperwork and waiting for a final settlement is an unfair burden placed on those whom the system should be protecting in the first place.

Bill 15 moves some dispute resolution to another forum, which may help address the tens of thousands of backlogged cases currently before FSCO. However, moving disputes from an industry-funded tribunal to a taxpayer-funded one is a shell game unless the causes of so many disputes are eliminated. Saving on premiums only to pay higher taxes or receive less government service delivers no tangible benefits to Ontarians.

This bill implements changes to the licensing of health facilities that provide services to accident victims. This section is designed to hold those providers who over-billed insurers and drove up claim costs to account. Their bad practices caused premiums to rise for everyone. While we agree that the clinics must be held accountable for services and practices, additional paperwork is not the only way to achieve this. We have proposed that government instead create a framework whereby medical professionals in the clinics would be accountable to the regulatory body. This would cut through the red tape while ensuring bad players lost their licence to practise their profession altogether, not just the licence to do business. However, the government didn't incorporate this proposal into the bill.

It is clear that the auto insurance market in Ontario needs fixing. Government regulation has not brought premiums down, and has created a system where bad drivers are rewarded and good drivers foot the bill. This has to change. However, government baby steps in this direction fall very short of Ontarians' expectations. We could have done more and we could have done better, if

only we had just listened to consumers, insurers, service providers and their own hand-picked task force experts whose recommendations are still, for the most part, shelved.

Speaker, while we support this bill in principle, we asked that public consultation be set up to allow us to hear from industry stakeholders. For instance, tow truck operators in my riding asked for changes. For the most part, they just asked to be heard. The issues between the tow truck operators in Toronto and my riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry are very different. Unfortunately, this bill does not address them. It doesn't solve the problems of my stakeholders, who came in just last week to talk about the issues of tow truck operations in the Cornwall area. Unfortunately, we must settle for a bill that only has part of what Ontarians need. It's time to put the people of Ontario first.

Kind of a funny issue: We were looking through some instances when I was working on this bill, and going back to that promise in 2013—a colleague here asked that I go to Google to look for the promise that McGuinty broke. Unfortunately, so many promises came up, I couldn't find the one that I needed, so I had to go with some generalities around the taxpayer—and that was one of their first and most highlighted changes to insurance. They put that promise in that they would immediately freeze rates. I remember, back in 2003, my insurance rates going up and phoning the insurance company and them saying, "Yup, we're ready for this legislation, and if it comes through, we'll roll the rates back." Of course, that never happened.

Here we are, 11 years later, and we're still dealing with the same problem. This is a government of inaction: promises made, promises broken. One of the issues with the tax freeze—I was having a problem because it was re-promised in 2007—they're saying that now that they knew the state of the economy, the state of the deficit, that they would be better suited to handling the deficit. Of course, now we know what's happened. It has almost doubled since 2007.

So we're looking forward to some changes to this. We're hearing that most of the recommendations by the government's own expert panel have not been dealt with yet. It's unfortunate. There's no explanation for why they aren't being dealt with. There are some important issues that the insurers are looking for in this bill, and we'll support it. But we're also going to look for some of the changes. With this time allocation motion before us, it did not allow some of the important stakeholders in my riding—I mean, they aren't in and around Toronto; they can't just leave their businesses and get up here. They weren't able, with the short time allowed, to be heard.

Unfortunately, some of these changes will be detrimental and they will restrict the availability of tow truck facilities in my riding. I think they need to be heard. They tend to be small operators. They aren't large companies that you might see up here on the 401. There needs to be some rules in place to make it fair. But they are different in small-town Ontario. Again, this government's lack of

ability to listen to rural Ontario is reflected in the electoral map. When you look at it, outside of Toronto, the map is blue, and to the north it's orange. That's because this is a government that has done, strategically, what it has to do to retain power, but it hasn't looked after the needs of all of Ontario.

Anyway, I'm pleased to talk about this bill. I am looking forward to future changes that are promised. Again, we'll see if those promises come through. We're not holding our breath on this side. We need some of these changes that are in this bill, but we need more.

Thank you, Speaker. I look forward to hearing the rest of the discussion.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to have a few minutes in which to make some comments with regard to Bill 15 in its third reading. I think it's really important for people to understand a little bit more of the background to Bill 15 than perhaps we would normally include in debate. It represents the bringing together of two bills: Bill 171, the Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act, and Bill 189, the Roadside Assistance Protection Act. These numbers were assigned to these two bills prior to the last election. A week before the writ dropped, Bill 171, the insurance rates issue, was before the general government committee. It had sort of sprung to life. It was organized as a single bill, as was Bill 189, the Roadside Assistance Protection Act. It had been introduced two weeks before the writ dropped. The idea, then, obviously, in the mind of the government, was that these were two separate legislative initiatives that were better presented as individual bills.

1720

The other thing to keep in mind is that Bill 171 reflected work that had been done back in 2012 with the anti-fraud task force. I remember that there was quite a lot of discussion at the time by the task force on trying to ferret out what were the reasonable parts of normal insurance and where there were issues that fraud was taking place. It was driven by the fact that people recognized that the insurance rates that Ontario drivers and sometimes geographically smaller groups than that—individual parts of the province had much higher insurance rates than other parts. That sort of triggered this anti-fraud task force. I want to give you a sense of that. That was back in 2012, and there were some key political ideas that were presented there.

As we came closer, there was also a deal with the NDP with regard to the budget of 2013. They wanted a commitment in there that there would be a 15% drop in the cost of insurance rates. I think there's a fundamental lack of understanding that we're talking about private sector insurance companies. The government agreed that it would provide for the 15% decrease, and that meant that the minority government would survive another year, as it turned out, by this deal, because the NDP would vote for the arrangement that the Liberals had provided.

We fast-forward to after the election, this summer. We were greeted, then, on the legislative agenda, with Bill

15. Bill 15 was these two bills put together. Not only was the process hastened by putting them together—obviously, one pass through the legislative process instead of two separate journeys—but it became very obvious that the government's view was that the time was up. So Bill 15 was treated to a time allocation motion which simply said that after six and a half hours of debate, the question would be put and this would move on. I think, actually, in the whole process there were something like 15 speakers out of 106.

Part of this time allocation motion, then, also included what would happen when the bill went to committee. When the bill went to committee, the public had four days' warning and four hours of hearings. Let me just explain what that means. There was a decision made four days before the actual hearing date, so people had four days in which to find out about it and respond. The amount of time was two hours in the afternoon and two hours in the evening. That was it. The deputants who wished to come forward had four days' warning, and it was a question of first-come, first-served.

People, I know, in my riding were very interested in the original Roadside Assistance Protection Act, and they were waiting for that bill to come. As I say, it was introduced a couple of weeks before the writ was dropped, and so I had to explain to them that that was the end of the process and it would have to start up again. I didn't realize that it would be starting up again as part of Bill 15.

When I call my independent tow truck owners, they don't have the ability to drop everything and drive to Toronto, and they do need more than four days' warning, or they need an opportunity to talk to the members of their associations and things like that, to be able to come together and know how they want to respond to the problems.

In the role of the opposition, obviously the most important thing is to be able to ensure that the process is fair for people, because, obviously, whatever the government of the day puts forward, there are always going to be other issues, other ways of looking at it, whatever is the content of the bill—and how it affects people and who hasn't been heard. In fact, the government has, right up on the top corner, by its gallery, a message, which is, "Hear the other side." That's exactly what the opposition's role is: to make sure that the government hears the other side.

When the time allocation bill was being debated, we raised the issue, certainly, of the limited number of hours given over to the hearings. Remember that this is a bill that is two bills that have come together and two bills that each deserve some kind of process of public hearing. Certainly, the insurance side of the bill has some complicated issues, most of which I will not get time to mention. But each bill on its own had enough to warrant a more fulsome opportunity for people to come.

What happens now, as we wind down the debate on third reading, is that much is left to regulation. I think people need to understand that when we are in the public

eye and able to debate a bill, it's a very different story when it goes to the question of the details of how it will be implemented, and those details are worked out and identified as regulations. The regulations are done by consultation, at the whim of the government, and it will include people who are invited to come and offer input into that process. So it's a very different process than the one that takes place here in the chamber. I think that people naturally have some apprehension about the kind of role that those regulations will have and how, at the end of the day, it's going to affect them.

1730

I think I have a few moments to look at one example of the kind of thing that still becomes an issue with this bill, and that is the question of the raising or lowering of insurance rates. This is overseen by the Financial Services Commission of Ontario, which I will refer to as FSCO. The insurance industry has to identify and apply for a reduction or an increase in auto insurance. What this means, to be clear, is that an insurance company cannot raise or lower their own rate to their customers without getting approval from a government agency. But that's not, by itself, the crux of the problem. The problem, says the industry, is the unreasonable time it takes to receive an approval from the government-run FSCO. It usually takes between six months and one year for a rate change application to be ruled on. This is totally unacceptable, and this bill does little or nothing to change that.

Insurance companies are forced to project what they want their rate to be in six months' or a year's time. They're not able to respond to market forces, as can other types of private sector companies. To apply for an increase in the insurance rate, the rate applied for must include all the increases the company would like to be allowed to charge its customers as far as a year in the future. This results in the insurance company applying for a higher rate than they would like to charge when they made the application in order to protect the business from market forces it may encounter down the road. The company needs to do this to keep itself viable. An insurance company cannot take a chance on having a rate too low for a significant length of time, or bankruptcy looms. The snail's pace that FSCO operates at has the effect of inspiring higher rates.

Conversely, FSCO's rate approval process provides a disincentive for insurance companies to lower rates. If a rate reduction is applied for on the basis of current market forces that a company may wish to respond to, the company risks receiving rate approval too late. To mitigate this risk, companies do not apply for reductions.

You can just get a sense from this that it's no wonder Ontario has some of the highest auto insurance rates in Canada.

The other part of this is to demonstrate the importance of being able to have a process of more fulsome debate and the committee hearing process to provide people with an opportunity to look at the parts of the bill that affect them. I think that one of the problems that we have to recognize is that this bill has been put through with

this kind of speed and it's going to be up to the work done after the bill has passed, when the regulations are created and come into force. It's at that time that we'll really see how well this process has worked, as we look at some of the limitations that are presented by this bill.

Having said that, however, I would also say that we agree that while this is not the perfect bill, it does move some of the issues forward by passing this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? Last call for further debate.

Pursuant to the order of the House of October 29, 2014, I am now required to put the question.

Madame Meilleur has moved third reading of Bill 15, An Act to amend various statutes in the interest of reducing insurance fraud, enhancing tow and storage service and providing for other matters regarding vehicles and highways.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it.

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

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I believe we have a deferral. "Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on third reading of Bill 15 be deferred until deferred votes on Thursday, November 20, 2014."

*Third reading vote deferred.*

## BETTER BUSINESS CLIMATE ACT, 2014

### LOI DE 2014 VISANT À INSTAURER UN CLIMAT PLUS PROPICE AUX AFFAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 18, 2014, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 7, An Act to enact the Burden Reduction Reporting Act, 2014 and the Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act, 2014 / Projet de loi 7, Loi édictant la Loi de 2014 sur l'obligation de faire rapport concernant la réduction des fardeaux administratifs et la Loi de 2014 sur les partenariats pour la création d'emplois et la croissance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** When Bill 7 was last before this House, the member for Wellington–Halton Hills had the floor. I recognize the member from Wellington–Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Before I was so rudely interrupted yesterday, I was giving my presentation on second reading of Bill 7, An Act to enact the Burden Reduction Reporting Act, 2014 and the Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act, 2014. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the leadoff speech for each political party allows, and the standing orders provide for, an hour presentation. I had a chance to speak for about 25 minutes

yesterday on this bill, and now that the government has called Bill 7 for debate this afternoon, I still have the floor, and I'm glad to continue my comments and my remarks on this particular bill.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, this bill was first introduced by the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure on July 7 when this House sat in its special summer sitting following the provincial election that took place in June. We have been now debating this for over a couple of days, and I gather the government wants to call it again for debate tomorrow, so they are proceeding with this debate.

It is an important debate, broadly speaking, because we're discussing the issue of economic competitiveness. This bill has two schedules, so it's kind of like a mini-omnibus bill. It's not very long. It's only six pages, but there are two schedules that are somewhat related but very different. The first schedule is the Burden Reduction Reporting Act, 2014, and the second schedule is the Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Essex.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The first schedule, of course, requires the Minister of Economic Development to provide an annual report on what the government is doing to reduce so-called burdens affecting small business. I wanted to also point out the fact that I had a chance to speak to the Minister of Transportation today on a very important issue involving my riding, involving the economic competitiveness of my riding—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Essex and the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton are having fun over there. Would you like to go outside and have fun, please? Thanks.

Continue.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** We need the government to put the Highway 6 Morriston bypass project on the ministry's five-year plan for new construction. This is an important issue in terms of economic competitiveness for my riding, and I just wanted to thank the minister for listening attentively to my most recent pitch. I want to talk about that a little later, but again, I wanted to thank the minister for his interest in this issue so far, but we need his follow-up and his action to place that project on the five-year plan for new construction, which, as you know, Mr. Speaker, is called the Southern Highways Program.

But I digress, so I will return to the bill. Again, schedule 1 forces the minister to publish an annual report with respect to actions taken by the government of Ontario to reduce burdens or, as we sometimes call it, red tape. This report, we maintain, is something that is probably in the public interest. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has encouraged the government to do this. But as far as I know, I don't think the minister has to pass legislation to do this. Obviously, the minister will be compelled to do this on an annual basis if Bill 7

passes in its current form, but to suggest that he needs this legislation in order to release this report is, quite frankly, a stretch, Mr. Speaker.

**1740**

The other concern that we've talked about and I talked about yesterday is the fact that while the government would be compelled to release this report on the burdens, there's no requirement upon the government to do anything about it. That's what we'd like to see: a commitment on the government's part to actually reduce red tape—not just to quantify it, not just to talk about it, not just to release a report about it, but to reduce unnecessary regulations and red tape. That is our challenge to the government.

Schedule 2, of course, states that the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure would prepare plans with respect to the development of economic clusters. Again, that is something that is well and good as far as it goes, but we don't believe that it is necessary to bring in legislation to compel the government to take this approach, yet the government brings forward these two schedules in the form of a bill.

In greater detail, the proposed Better Business Climate Act, 2014, if passed, would enact two acts: the Burden Reduction Reporting Act, 2014, and the Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act, 2014.

The proposed Burden Reduction Reporting Act would require the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to annually publish a report with respect to actions taken by the government to reduce said burdens.

Section 1 of the proposed legislation sets out certain definitions. This section defines “burden” as “a cost that may be measured in terms of money, time or resources and is considered by the minister in consultation with other members of the government of Ontario to be unnecessary to achieve the purpose of the statutory, regulatory, procedural, administrative or other requirement that creates the cost....”

Section 2 sets out the requirement to publish this annual report that I referred to earlier and sets out how the minister may provide the report to the public.

Section 3 provides the minister the authority to make certain regulations, including regulations that specify any actions to reduce burdens that may be referred to in the report, and regulations that prescribe the manner in which the minister must evaluate, quantify or describe actions of the government of Ontario in the report.

The Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act, the second schedule of the bill: The proposed Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act, 2014, would enable the minister to prepare plans with respect to the development of clusters and would also impose certain obligations on the minister with respect to the preparation and review of such plans.

Section 1 of the proposed legislation sets out certain definitions, including that “cluster” means “a geographically concentrated group of interconnected businesses and related entities....”

Section 2 provides that the minister may prepare plans with respect to the development of clusters.

Section 3 requires that any plan with respect to the development of a cluster shall include certain information, including: a description of the cluster; an assessment of challenges and opportunities with respect to the development of the cluster; the objectives and intended outcomes of the plan; performance measures to be used to evaluate the plan; and a description of actions that could be taken by the minister, or the businesses or entities that form the cluster, to achieve the objectives and intended outcomes of the plan.

Section 4 requires the minister to make public a draft plan, consult in respect of the draft plan and then make a final version of the plan public.

Section 5 enables the minister to make amendments to the plan at any time by making public the intended plan along with an explanation of the purpose of the amendments.

Section 6 enables the minister to revoke the plan at any time by making public the minister's decision.

Section 7 requires the minister to conduct a review of the plan within five years of the date the minister made the plan public. In conducting the review, the minister would have to evaluate whether the objectives and intended outcomes of the plan had been met, consult, and make public a report summarizing the review, which states whether the plan was being revoked or continued. If the plan was continued, the minister would have to conduct another review within five years.

Section 8 sets out how documents may be made public.

Section 9 enables the minister to make regulations prescribing additional requirements regarding the plan with respect to the development of clusters.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, the information I just presented comes directly from the government—the compendium notes that went with the bill.

I also want to express my appreciation to the minister's staff for allowing me to be briefed on this bill back in July, on July 16, when we had the opportunity to have the briefing. More recently, I've been approached by ministry staff yet again to be briefed yet again. I've responded indicating some times next week. Unfortunately, it would be better to be briefed on the bill before making the presentation in the House, but at the same time, I do appreciate the willingness of the minister's staff to fully brief our caucus on this bill.

I've also had a chance to discuss it with members of the senior leadership team of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. Of course, as the minister pointed out when he led off the debate, and as well I think his parliamentary assistant mentioned, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business were here yesterday. They do support the bill because they believe that the government is responding to their urging and their request with respect to the first schedule of the bill.

I think it's also important to point out that the CFIB, for many, many years, has been concerned about excessive red tape and regulation. I talked about that a bit yesterday. In my conversations with small business

people through the 24 years that I've been privileged to serve in the Legislature, the vast majority of small business people just want to serve their customers and want to expand their customer base so as to be able to make money and employ people. That's the mission of the entrepreneur. That is in turn what motivates the vast majority of them. They're good people in our communities.

It's also true to point out, I believe, that, coming out of an economic downturn, the vast majority of new jobs that are created in our economy historically—and again, I think, confirmed by recent numbers after the economic downturn that we experienced in 2008-09—between 65% and 80% of the new jobs that are created tend to be created by small business. So this is the most dynamic sector of the economy. This is the sector of the economy that's in all our ridings. I think we need to pay heed and listen to the small business people. I know that you would agree, Mr. Speaker, with the focus of your party on small business issues.

The fact is, the CFIB has presented a number of suggestions and recommendations with respect to red tape reduction for 2014, and they've put this case to the government. They asked that there be legislation introduced on regulation accountability. The specific request of the CFIB was that the government should introduce legislation with requirements to publicly report and measure the impact of regulatory compliance on a regular basis, making it harder for future governments to abandon public accountability. Such legislation was passed in both BC and Saskatchewan. The legislation should also prescribe regulatory reduction targets to ensure that there is zero net growth, helping to reinforce the one-to-two rule whereby for every new regulation, two must be eliminated.

That was the specific request. The government's response, of course, is Bill 7. I would have to say that I don't think anybody looking at this specific request—anybody who is objective, anyway—would conclude that Bill 7 meets the entire request of the CFIB, but certainly the part of that request with the Burden Reduction Reporting Act probably has been responded to. Certainly we would encourage the government to do more in that respect to respond to the specific suggestion and recommendation of the CFIB. We hope to do that if this bill passes second reading and if it, indeed, goes to a standing committee of the Legislature. I hope, if it does pass, that the government will allow for some public hearings on this bill so that we can refine it, improve it, strengthen it. Again, I think the CFIB and other groups would probably have a sincere interest in coming to committee and making recommendations for improvements. We certainly hope that that can happen.

Another recommendation that the CFIB has made to the government this year is to “fully implement the regular review of high-impact regulations to ensure that regulations keep up with changing financial and political circumstances. They must be reviewed regularly to assess their impact and applicability. The Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment has taken strides

in implementing regular reviews of high-impact regulations, but we encourage the ministry to fully implement this measure across all of government.”

I heard the minister leading off this debate yesterday. I didn't hear him address that recommendation. I would encourage him to do so as this debate unfolds, in some manner at least, and encourage, when we hear comments from other government members that we'll hear more on that. We would encourage the government to have that recommendation in mind as this debate unfolds and try to find ways to strengthen Bill 7 such that that recommendation is reflected.

The third recommendation with respect to red tape reduction: Review the regulatory implementation process at all government agencies and delegated administrative authorities. Agencies and delegated administrative authorities, or DAAs, as they're sometimes called, such as the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, Stewardship Ontario, the Ontario Electronic Stewardship, Ontario Tire Stewardship—all of these organizations bypass the standard regulatory administration process the ministries have to undergo in order to introduce regulations.

**1750**

Again, the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment should take leadership on this issue and ensure that this process is reviewed and streamlined, ensuring that all government entities are subject to the same regulatory implementation process. Again, this is not something that I heard the government talk about yesterday when the minister led off the debate, and we would encourage them to look at it and try to find ways to implement the spirit of this recommendation.

Recommendation number 4 that the CFIB has put to the government this year: Rebrand the online regulatory feedback form and make the tool permanent. At the beginning of this year, the CFIB says, the ministry introduced the regulatory feedback form on a pilot basis and this tool allows business owners and the public to inquire about regulations with the option of receiving a written response from the government. The tool should be rebranded, made permanent, and a communication strategy should be established to promote it going forward. In addition, all ministry department and agency contact pages should have a link to the form and most frequently asked questions should be fed back into the one-window FAQs.

Again, it's a sensible recommendation by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business that makes sense, I think, to a lot of us. It would no doubt have come from their membership and been evaluated and streamlined and brought forward and presented to the government. We would hope that the government will indeed give it some consideration and try to find a way to ensure that the spirit of that recommendation is included in Bill 7.

Improve services through bizpal.ca: BizPaL provides business owners with information on permits, licences, permissions, approvals, registration, certifications and other requirements needed to establish and run a business in Ontario. While this service somewhat simplifies complying with government regulations, it could also

benefit from further improvements. The CFIB says, for example, that currently, applications are not available online for most permits and licences. Surely in the 21st century we can find a way to have those applications made online. Business owners are also required to submit forms to various locations: “We recommend streamlining the applications process and allowing business owners to submit forms and payments online.”

Again, in 2014, the 21st century, surely we can find a way to use the latest technology to streamline the process for small business people with respect to this recommendation.

Again, these are good ideas from the CFIB. While at the same time they have given their indication of support for this bill, they've got a lot of other recommendations. We would encourage the government to consider them and pay heed to them, and not just congratulate itself and pat itself on the back for bringing in Bill 7, which is only covering a part of the first recommendation, not the whole of it. There's much, much more work to do.

Earlier, when the Minister of Transportation was still here, I tried to point out and again reemphasize the importance of the Highway 6 Morriston bypass. Of course, the government would have us believe this whole bill, Bill 7, is about enhancing the economic competitiveness of our province, strengthening our economy. That's what the minister would have us believe. I submit that one of the most important projects for strengthening the economic competitiveness, not just of my riding but a whole part of the province, including the city of Hamilton and the Niagara region, is to eliminate the traffic bottleneck at Morriston on Highway 6 just south of the 401. There is a proposal that has been talked about now for about 30 years to build a bypass around Morriston to the west of Morriston, from Highway 6 up to the 401. I've been raising this in the House for some time now, in every possible way that I can think of, most recently today, speaking to the Minister of Transportation after question period, and earlier this week speaking to the Premier, trying to impress upon them the importance of this project and asking the project be put on the ministry's five-year plan for new construction, the Southern Highways Program.

In the township of Puslinch, the mayor, Dennis Lever, has responded to a challenge that was issued to him by a former Minister of Transportation. Actually, it was Bob Chiarelli, who at the time was the Minister of Transportation, and who, in a meeting that we had a couple of years ago—maybe three years ago—said to the mayor, “If you want this project to move forward, you've got to get the business community and other local community organizations to speak up.”

Well, the mayor took him up on that challenge and they have put together something called the Morriston Bypass Coalition, which includes the city of Hamilton, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, the city of Guelph, Guelph Chamber of Commerce, the county of Wellington, the township of Puslinch and big companies like Con Cast Pipe, Sleeman, Canada Bread, Nestlé Waters, Tim Hortons, Maple Leaf Foods, Grain Farmers of Ontario,

Cargill and a number of other large community organizations—the Hamilton Port Authority, Hamilton airport—all of these organizations coming together to form the Morriston Bypass Coalition.

This group was here at Queen's Park a few weeks ago and had a number of meetings with senior staff in various ministries.

I know the member for Cambridge is aware of this idea too, and I appreciate her listening to it.

The fact is, there's a large group of people who are coming together to push the government to get this on the five-year plan, and I am certainly delighted to support their efforts and will continue to do so.

As I said, I had the chance to speak to the Premier this week and, earlier today, with the Minister of Transportation. We know that the minister told us at the estimates committee that the five-year plan for new construction is going to be finalized and released soon. So we're putting

on this full-court press to try to get the government to do the right thing this year, get it on the five-year plan, and then of course we would expect to see a time frame for construction. This is important to the economic competitiveness of not just my riding but a large swath of the province of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I see it's fairly close to 6 of the clock, and I think that with the weather out there, we're all anxious as to how we're going to get home. I appreciate you listening to me this afternoon and the indulgence of the other members of the House as we continue this debate on Bill 7.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being close to 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1757.*

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Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	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
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	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
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

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Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
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Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
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Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
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Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: France Gélinas  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, France Gélinas  
Marie-France Lalonde, Amrit Mangat  
Gila Martow, Kathryn McGarry  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim



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