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Wednesday 10 December 2014

Mercredi 10 décembre 2014

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 10 December 2014

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 10 décembre 2014

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**PROTECTION OF PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION ACT, 2014**

**LOI DE 2014 SUR LA PROTECTION
DU DROIT À LA PARTICIPATION
AUX AFFAIRES PUBLIQUES**

Madame Meilleur moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest / *Projet de loi 52, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les tribunaux judiciaires, la Loi sur la diffamation et la Loi sur l'exercice des compétences légales afin de protéger l'expression sur les affaires d'intérêt public.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Madame Meilleur.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough Southwest.

Today, I would like to begin second reading debate on the proposed Protection of Public Participation Act.

L'Ontario est doté d'un bon système judiciaire, mais il n'est pas parfait. Les litiges sont coûteux et longs. Notre gouvernement sait bien que cette réalité de notre système de justice doit changer. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous travaillons avec nos partenaires du secteur de la justice pour mettre en place diverses approches.

Last month, I launched Better Justice Together, a strategy aimed at building a more accessible justice system. While many of our plans will be adopted incrementally, there are many things we can do now to bring about real, positive change.

Raising the legal aid eligibility threshold on November 1 was one such thing. It has expanded access to legal aid for many low-income people. Implementing this bill could be our next step forward.

As I mentioned a moment ago, going to court can be expensive and time-consuming for everyone, but this is of particular concern when one party has much greater resources than the other. In a strategic suit, that party chooses to exploit the imbalance by taking a weaker op-

ponent to court with a frivolous claim. Sometimes, these cases have little or no merit. Most are dropped before the lawsuit goes to trial, sometimes just weeks later. Meanwhile, the damage is done. Financially and emotionally drained, the target of a strategic suit is effectively silenced.

Comme mon prédécesseur, l'honorable John Gerretsen, l'a dit simplement, nous ne pensons pas que ce soit juste. C'est pourquoi je suis fière de redonner vie à ce projet de loi, qui équipera nos tribunaux d'une méthode plus efficace pour reconnaître les poursuites stratégiques et les régler.

Le projet de loi vise à protéger la liberté d'expression. Il vise à faire triompher la justice. Il vise à faire des progrès en tant que province et en tant que société. Et il vise à atteindre un équilibre important, à l'avantage de toutes les parties à un litige.

Ces deux dernières années, les députés ont beaucoup entendu parler de ce projet de loi : ici, à l'Assemblée législative, dans les couloirs de cet édifice; dans la presse; dans les lettres exprimant des inquiétudes; et dans les lettres de soutien.

L'équilibre est un thème qui revient sans arrêt : le besoin d'établir un équilibre qui mettra fin aux poursuites abusives tout en autorisant des actions légitimes. Je peux vous assurer que nous avons entendu tout ce qu'on nous a dit. L'équilibre est une caractéristique clé de ce projet de loi.

D'un côté, il aide ceux qui estiment avoir été injustement ciblés en prévoyant un traitement accéléré de leur plainte. Il est certain que la question de l'accès à la justice est une question sur laquelle mon ministère et ses partenaires travaillent d'arrache-pied.

Meanwhile, this proposal could go a long way towards easing the financial and emotional strain of defending oneself against a strategic lawsuit. It would do so by giving our courts a way to quickly identify and deal with such a suit, with minimal time or expense to any party.

Catching strategic lawsuits early also has benefits for the courts, by minimizing the amount of valuable public resources wasted on those matters. This, of course, benefits all court users.

Since the bill will give the court a speedy way to identify a case as strategic, the plaintiff who has been accused of launching a strategic suit would not be greatly delayed by the motion. Those with legitimate claims would be heard through the normal course.

We recognize that reputation is one of the most valuable assets a person or a business can possess.

Now, some members may have read about objections to this bill from the forestry industry and some northern

municipalities. With respect, their concerns are not well-founded. The bill does not open the floodgates to destructive criticism of our natural resources industries. It does not create a so-called “licence to slander.” Instead, the bill aims to protect expression of matters of public interest. What the bill would do is let a court review lawsuits brought against such expression at an early stage. It would then be up to the court to decide whether the expression at issue is likely to cause serious harm. If so, the court may allow the lawsuit to continue in the normal course of litigation.

I strongly believe that the law must defend reputation, but not at any cost and not in every case. I do not believe that a mere technical case—without actual harm—should be allowed to suppress the kind of democratic expression that is crucial for our democracy.

That’s why 65 municipalities have resolved that this bill should pass. That’s why the Ontario Bar Association, which represents interests on all sides of litigation, has said it welcomes the bill. That is why the Canadian Civil Liberties Association wants the bill passed.

Mr. Speaker, this is about identifying strategic lawsuits and putting the parties to a dispute on a more equal footing. If legitimate harm has been done, I would encourage anyone who has been defamed to use the existing legal means before them to seek redress.

0910

Atteindre l’équilibre prudent entre les intérêts en jeu que je viens de décrire n’a pas été chose facile, et c’est la raison pour laquelle l’élaboration du projet de loi a pris tant de temps. Il y a quatre ans, face aux inquiétudes croissantes à l’égard des poursuites stratégiques en Ontario, notre gouvernement a pris la décision d’examiner la question et de convoquer un comité d’experts. Nous voulions savoir ce qui pourrait être fait, le cas échéant, pour régler ce problème qui n’avait jusque-là touché principalement que les États-Unis.

Four years ago, amid growing concerns about strategic lawsuits here in Ontario, our government made a decision to study the issue and convened an expert panel. The panel was itself balanced between plaintiff and media lawyers, including some of the foremost thinkers on issues surrounding the balance of protection of public participation with the protection of reputation and economic interests. The panel was chaired by Dr. Mayo Moran, dean of the University of Toronto law school, a respected academic and expert in constitutional law and the private law of civil wrongs. The other two members were Peter Downard, partner at Fasken Martineau, who has written many legal texts on libel and defamation, and Brian MacLeod Rogers, adjunct professor at Ryerson University School of Journalism. As practising barristers, these individuals brought great expertise on the rules of civil procedure and courtroom dynamics.

All these outstanding individuals were present at the launch of Bill 83 last year. It was a proud moment for the panel members, whom our government had tasked with a great challenge. Specifically, we asked them to determine: a test the court could use to quickly recognize a

strategic lawsuit; an appropriate remedy for strategic suits; an appropriate limit to the protection of any proposed legislation; appropriate parties to benefit from those protections, and finally, what methods could be used to prevent abuse of any further legislation aimed at strategic lawsuits.

Après des mois de recherche et de consultation auprès de divers particuliers et groupes tels que l’Association canadienne des libertés civiles, l’Association canadienne du droit de l’environnement, l’Association du Barreau de l’Ontario, l’Association des infirmières et infirmiers autorisés de l’Ontario et bien d’autres organismes, le comité a produit un rapport détaillé et a posé la base d’une démarche future.

Monsieur le Président, avec quelques ajustements, le projet de loi que nous avons devant nous aujourd’hui est le fruit direct du travail du comité, s’inspirant notamment des leçons tirées ailleurs—aux États-Unis, au Québec et en Colombie-Britannique. Le projet de loi propose une solution unique au problème des poursuites stratégiques qui se fonde sur les lois et libertés existantes en Ontario et les renforce.

The proposed legislation contains many important provisions that support our goal of building a fairer society and a stronger, more accessible justice system. Thanks to the efforts of the panel members and the many groups and individuals who have contributed to its development, this bill reflects the variety of perspectives necessary to achieve a truly balanced approach to addressing the issue of strategic litigation.

Que vous vous sentiez réduit au silence par une personne aux poches plus larges que les vôtres ou que vous croyiez que votre réputation durement acquise a été injustement ternie, ce projet de loi a été élaboré dans l’idée de protéger vos intérêts.

Today, I urge all members to stand together in support of our proposed bill, the Protection of Public Participation Act.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Scarborough Southwest.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: Good morning. I rise in the House today to continue debate on the proposed Protection of Public Participation Act. I am pleased to once again be part of this landmark bill, which seeks to balance the protection of public participation and freedom of expression and the protection of reputation and economic interests. I strongly believe, Mr. Speaker, that this bill will create important benefits for both the province’s justice system and the many people and businesses it serves.

I just want to talk now about how strategic lawsuits work. It is widely understood that robust public debate is a vital component of a healthy, well-functioning democracy. This freedom to speak up and speak out on the things that matter is particularly important when we feel that the well-being of our families and communities is at stake. Strategic lawsuits curtail that freedom by discouraging people from speaking out and, in doing so, interfere with the democratic functioning of our society.

It is also important that we recognize the strain that frivolous lawsuits place on our province's busy court system. The time and energy our courts spend dealing with strategic litigation is a misuse of public resources that I find unacceptable. It's important that the time and attention of our courts be reserved for serious, legitimate complaints, where a lawsuit is a genuine means to address a harm committed by one party against another—not a way to bully an opponent.

Mr. Speaker, with this bill, our government is seeking to send a clear signal that the practice of using lawsuits to exploit a weaker party or a busy court system will not be tolerated. I just want to talk a bit about how it works. As the Attorney General noted earlier, the work of developing this complex proposal was not an easy task, but one that required the help of an expert panel. The expert panel embraced it. After months of consultation and a careful study of the issue, the panel produced a truly unique and balanced solution that not only built upon, but strengthened, existing Ontario laws.

I would like now to take this opportunity to outline a few key aspects of the legislation we are proposing, which require changes to three existing laws: the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act.

First of all, the centerpiece of our legislation: Amendments to the Courts of Justice Act are meant to create a fast-track review process for all lawsuits alleged to be brought for strategic reasons.

It is important to keep in mind that strategic suits do not pertain to just any dispute; rather, they must be matters of public interest. For example, in a defamation claim, the suit would be considered strategic if the act of suing an individual has the effect of shutting down public debate on a matter that could reasonably be expected to be of concern to an entire community. In this situation, the provision will give the person making the comment—the defendant—the opportunity to ask the court to dismiss the case before a potentially long and expensive court battle gets under way.

At this party's request, the court would use a special test to determine whether or not the lawsuit should be allowed to proceed. In applying the test, the court would ask the following three questions:

Firstly, is the lawsuit about a matter of public interest? It would be up to the defendant to convince the court that the dispute is not simply a private matter, but that the public good is truly at stake.

Second, if it is a matter of public interest, does the case of the plaintiff—the person to whom the comments pertain—have substantial merit? This is what the plaintiff would have to demonstrate.

Finally, in addition to proving that the case has sufficient merit, our test includes a third step, of asking that the plaintiff—the person to whom the comments pertain—show that he or she has suffered or is likely to suffer harm serious enough to justify stopping public expression or debate on a matter of public interest. We know that the United Kingdom and Australia have taken

similar steps in recent years after seeing their own defamation laws misused by stronger parties—mainly large corporations—against weaker opponents. If this harm, or risk of harm, cannot be shown, then under the proposed legislation the case would be dismissed.

0920

Mr. Speaker, speed is a crucial aspect of this provision, because it provides clarity for all parties while carefully balancing their interests quickly, and before significant amounts of time and money have been expended. Under the proposed fast-track review process, the request to dismiss the lawsuit must be heard within 60 days of the party's motion to have the test applied, and before the case could proceed any further in court. This expedited process is a key provision in nearly every US statute of this kind.

Secondly, I want to talk about the amendments to the Libel and Slander Act. I want to tell members about two other related changes that are proposed through this bill, which would amend both the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act.

Under the current law, conversations between two or more people on a matter of shared concern are to be considered privileged. In other words, because the parties share a direct interest in a particular topic, their conversations about that matter are protected by law. That means that neither person can be sued for libel or slander so long as they are speaking truthfully. So under the current law, when a group of people gather to discuss a shared problem, they can be confident that those conversations will be protected. So long as they are without malice, those conversations are what we call privileged. However, that same group of citizens is no longer protected in the event that their conversations are reported by a third party, such as a reporter or blogger. Like the chilling effect of a strategic lawsuit, this nuance in libel law can deter frank conversations about matters of public concern, potentially preventing an important matter from receiving the open discussion it deserves just because somebody records a conversation on a smartphone.

I'm glad that with this provision, we can support our province's strongly held democratic values, even in a seemingly small way.

Thirdly, I want to talk a little bit about the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. Our proposed bill would change the law governing procedures before regulatory bodies and administrative tribunals. Currently, administrative tribunals may hold hearings to determine if one party should pay the other's legal costs after a case has been decided. These hearings are conducted in person, which can be costly and time-consuming, especially for vulnerable parties.

Our proposed amendment to the Statutory Powers Procedure Act would allow parties to make their arguments about how costs should be awarded in a written submission to the tribunal. Like the proposed fast-track review process, it is our hope that this provision would encourage cases to be dealt with more quickly, contributing to a more efficient justice system that makes the best possible use of public resources.

The proposed Protection of Public Participation Act contains many important provisions that support our goal of building a more accessible justice system and a stronger democracy. We want to create faster, more efficient civil processes that provide better clarity for the parties involved. We want to safeguard reputations and protect economic interests. We want to empower our citizens to take part in the democratic process, which is far more than marking an X on a ballot every few years, but is about being informed and engaging the public in participation publicly.

Our bill supports some of the most cherished values of people living in a free and democratic society—our most cherished values as Ontarians. So today, I urge all members in this House to stand together to support these freedoms and values by supporting this bill.

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

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm pleased to be here this morning speaking on Bill 52, the Protection of Public Participation Act. I know this legislation has been out there over the last couple of years. We've had a number of cases and some planning decisions where people have asked the government or people to bring private members' bills or a government bill forward to address the concerns, but primarily the concerns where the development industry may want to actually give a threat to someone who has any kind of an objection to a certain project. That I can support.

I'll be interested in the debate on this. This is the lead-off today. I'm not sure this is a kind of bill they'll want to time-allocate—not like they did Bill 10. And now we know why they wanted to time-allocate Bill 10: because there were 29,000 incidents in licensed daycare, and for some reason we had to get that bill through the House quickly.

Mr. Speaker, you know what? This place has become a charade. That's the reality. Here we are pushing legislation through and then we're dealing with basically nothing legislation that will take months and months and months to get through. This is the kind of bill they'll want to travel. They'll probably want to travel it to Thunder Bay and up to the forestry country and way down to Windsor. But, boy, we couldn't travel Bill 10. That was too important for our children, on the safety issues. Now that we know there were 29,000 incidents, six deaths in licensed daycares, we know why Bill 10 was put through the House at rapid speed. It's an embarrassment to be here, and it's an embarrassment to work with the Minister of Education and the Minister of Energy, when I see the kinds of comments that were made yesterday.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House and speak on behalf of my colleagues and on behalf of the people of Timiskaming–Cochrane. This is a very important issue, and it has been a very important issue in the past in Timiskaming–Cochrane because we've gone through a period in our history

when some of our residents were served by SLAPP suits during the Adams mine—it was a big issue in our area and it almost caused the destruction of several family businesses. That's why this legislation is necessary.

But we have to be extremely, extremely careful how this legislation is put forward and make sure that everyone understands it, because we also had cases in my part of the world where very well organized groups have used the courts to basically hurt jobs. That's something that we have to be very careful with. We have to make sure that the public is protected; we also have to make sure that people who drive our economy aren't attacked for things they didn't do, and that's a big issue. I think that's one of the things that, in my part of the world, the forestry industry is still worried about, and rightfully so.

Having said that, we know how important this legislation is. I know it personally, when I was sued for Adams mine and I almost lost my farm because of the lack of this type of legislation. I know how important it is. We know how important it is in Timiskaming. But it has to be balanced and everyone has to understand going in how it's going to impact all sectors of the economy and all the people of the province.

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

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'm pleased to be able to speak for a couple of minutes to this important piece of legislation. I think back to a couple of careers that I've held, once as a newspaper reporter and a second time as a town councillor. I know as a newspaper reporter, more than once someone or an organization that did not appreciate the coverage and the scrutiny we were applying to their activities and their organizations would threaten to sue us, or even go so far as to file papers. Thankfully, I've always had a good publisher who said, "It's not if you're sued, it's only if you're sued successfully, that we need to talk."

But for those who don't have the backing of a large organization, it is extremely anti-democratic to be able to pour cold water on a citizen's right to talk and to raise important issues. So I'm happy to see that, if passed, this legislation will protect the right of Ontario residents to speak out on matters that are of importance to us.

0930

At the same time, I think it's important to understand that this legislation provides some balance. It balances the interests of defendants and plaintiffs in defamation suits. It balances the protection of public participation and freedom of expression against the protection of reputation and economic interests. I think that's important because, especially in today's social media world, it's very easy for people to attack reputation and economic interest.

I think this legislation will set the balance and provide our justice system with some good direction so that they can provide balance.

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

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I listened with interest to some of the comments and certainly to the speeches that

were given this morning on this SLAPP legislation. It's interesting to hear about balance in legislation; certainly, that's something we all need to look at and strive for. It's quite interesting, the balance that was not struck yesterday with the Auditor General's report; it's a terrible, terrible thing.

I would like to say that this legislation protects the people from frivolous lawsuits, and it's something that the people of Ontario have looked forward to. But there's something else I'd like to bring up. You know, we had over 200 municipalities support another piece of legislation that we hoped would be brought forward last year, a decision that should have been made on joint and several liability. Yet this government ignored it. It's similar to this, where municipalities can get sued for just being 1% at fault for an accident or something that happens in a municipality. They ignored that, yet they bring the SLAPP legislation forward.

I would suggest that if we're going to have a balanced government, we have to look at all aspects of law in Ontario. For some reason, the Auditor General just completely ignored over 200 municipalities on joint and several liability—just ignored them. I would suggest that she take another look at this type of thing. It's something that municipalities have asked me not to give up on and I certainly won't.

I'm glad the government is looking at the SLAPP legislation. I think it's something that's been important to the people of Ontario and I look forward to hearing more on the debate. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The Attorney General has two minutes.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I want to thank the members from Simcoe North, Timiskaming–Cochrane, Newmarket–Aurora and Perth–Wellington.

I listened very carefully to the members from the two opposition parties. I'm not sure if they're going to support it, by what they were saying, but I hope that they will. Because using intimidation tactics to silence one's opponents is a misuse of our democratic system. It's a misuse of our court system, one of the central institutions of a fair and democratic society.

If passed, this legislation will allow courts to quickly identify and deal with strategic lawsuits, minimizing the emotional and financial strain on defendants, as well as the waste of court resources.

I'm sure there's not one person in this room who has not heard about someone who was a victim of these strategic lawsuits. Our proposed legislation strikes a balance that will help ensure abusive litigation is stopped, but legitimate action can continue.

This proposed legislation is about preventing strategic lawsuits. Anyone who has a legitimate claim of libel or slander should not be discouraged by this legislation. We're proposing a made-in-Ontario approach to address the issue of strategic lawsuits based on consensus, recommendations of an expert advisory panel and extensive stakeholder consultation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank the three experts of our panel for their wise advice on this

bill. Also, I want to thank my predecessor, Minister John Gerretsen, for introducing this bill, the Protection of Public Participation Act.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's an honour to rise this morning to talk about anti-SLAPP. I think for the purposes of people who are listening, though, I have to first do a bit of a legislative lesson on why we are not talking about the Auditor General's report. A very substantial, damning—can I use “damning”?—report came out late yesterday afternoon. It's all over the newspapers this morning, and I'm sure if anyone is tuning in now they are questioning why we are talking about the anti-SLAPP legislation and not some of the terrible, terrible indictments in the Auditor General's annual report.

It is, of course, because by legislative precedent we must speak to the bills that the government brings forward, and today, of course, they brought forward the anti-SLAPP legislation, which means that I am not allowed to make reference and talk about specifics in the Auditor General's report because it doesn't relate to the chosen topic that the House leader of the government has brought forward.

To that point, I will talk about Bill 52, the Protection of Public Participation Act. I think it's important to put this bill in context. To give credit where credit is due, there have been a number of private members' bills on this very specific topic. One, of course, is from the now leader of the third party and the member from Hamilton Centre and, of course, the government House leader, the member from Ottawa Centre. Both, in previous Parliaments, in previous governments, have brought forward very similar legislation to Bill 52. We also had, I think it was, Bill 83 in the previous government where, to the minister's point, John Gerretsen, now retired, as the Attorney General also brought forward this anti-SLAPP legislation.

This bill came forward as a result of a report from 2010. There was a panel struck at the request of the Attorney General to study how to ensure that we could actually come forward and bring protections for people who want to have a public voice on issues of concern to the general public, but also, quite frankly, protect the rights of people who want to move forward on ideas or make changes to their own community. So I think we would call it, to quote Rohinton Mistry, that “fine balance.” The Protection of Public Participation Act attempts to do that in its third reiteration—fourth reiteration, if you include the private members' bills—and I would like to take some time this morning to go over past cases that are commonly referred to when we talk about SLAPPs.

SLAPP, of course, is short form for strategic litigation against public participation. I think that giving some specific examples of SLAPPs, or at the very least what are commonly accepted as examples of SLAPPs, will be beneficial because it allows us and our constituents to understand just what we are discussing here today.

I know when I've spoken about this issue with people before, it often falls flat. If you have not been part of, or the victim of, a SLAPP, it's probably something that you don't spend a lot of time thinking about. To be honest, it can be considered rather legal and trivial to the average person, but that's why it's important to reflect on some specific SLAPPs. It puts into context the issue, and allows us to see the human side and the human impacts of this. When we debate these things in the legal lexicon, it can often become muddled and abstract, but when we focus on specific examples, specific people, that's when we can truly start to see what a difference legislation can make.

0940

I also think it's important for our constituents and the people watching at home to know how SLAPPs typically come about, so that they are aware of what a SLAPP is and when or how to spot one. That's why I will be using some of my time to reflect on past SLAPP cases and their various effects and motivations.

I also intend to cover the bill itself and then analyze how the measures contained within Bill 52 match or don't match with the problems demonstrated by the examples I will go over. Some of these cases, as you will see, are quite daunting, and the fact of the matter is that we need to make sure this legislation is capable of doing what it is meant to do, because no Ontarian should have to choose between having a say on a development or a change in their community or risking being sued into financial ruin.

Finally, I will conclude by summarizing why SLAPPs should absolutely be stopped from occurring and thus why this legislation should be supported by all members of the House.

Bill 52 is a reintroduction, as I said, of Bill 83, which died on the order paper when the government called the election this spring. It's important to mention that many other jurisdictions have some form of anti-SLAPP legislation already in place. For example, roughly half of the states in the US have some form of anti-SLAPP legislation already in place. In addition, England and Australia, which, if you're a legal expert, are more closely matched to our system here in Canada, have some form of anti-SLAPP legislation as well.

Bill 52 and its predecessors stem from the Anti-SLAPP Advisory Panel, which submitted its final report to the Attorney General over four years ago, in October 2010. Don't ever accuse the Ontario government of moving quickly. Of course, that's what we are really talking about here today: SLAPPs. A SLAPP is a lawsuit that is brought against an individual for the primary purpose of silencing that individual's public opinions. SLAPPs are almost always some form of libel or slander allegation and almost always are for unrealistic and unreasonable amounts in damages. That's the point of a SLAPP: not to win the lawsuit, but rather to scare the defendants so that they dare not speak out against a claim.

The reason that this is particularly problematic, however, aside from a gross misuse and waste of taxpayers' dollars by clogging down our justice system, is because

it's not only an injustice to the defendant but also to the community and free speech. This is because the community's planning procedures are manipulated. Community members who could have valuable contributions to make are instead intimidated out of commenting. Another word for the SLAPP is—I can't remember it—the ability to silence someone, cease-and-desist letters; there are all kinds of ways to say it. The end result is a community planning process without the community. This is an entirely undesirable situation.

That being said, while typically SLAPPs involve developers and residents, there are also a number of instances and examples where this is not, in fact, the case. But I will get into that later on in my details.

For now, going into a discussion on past SLAPPs, please bear in mind the key factor here is whether the lawsuit's prime function is either to prevent someone from participating in a public process or to punish them for doing so. That is a certain principle that's important when discussing SLAPPs: that an individual has had their rights to express their opinion severely limited due to coercion.

I would now like to move on and discuss two specific SLAPP cases, very different in their examples. They are unique from each other because each of them involves a different type of claimant pursuing the SLAPP. They are identical with one another, however, in that in each case, the claimant has clearly pursued litigation for the purposes of silencing or punishing the defendant. It is this second point that primarily qualifies each as a SLAPP. In all cases I'm about to discuss, however, I'm not going to refer to either of the litigants by their names, as I don't believe it's relevant to the purposes of Bill 52. These cases are to illustrate SLAPPs, not to consider the particular individuals involved. As such, I will refer to the party bringing forward the SLAPP as the claimant and the party the SLAPP is being used against as the defendant.

The first SLAPP I'd like to discuss actually occurred in British Columbia. This SLAPP arose from the following context: The claimant wanted to convert his land, which was forested, into farmland. To do this, however, he had to dump approximately 750,000 cubic metres of soil on his property to properly level it so that it would be sustainable for farming. But in order to do this, he needed a permit, and so in October 2009, he submitted a permit application to his local township.

Now, the defendant in this case owns land very near to the claimant's property. When the defendant became aware of the claimant's permit application, she became quite concerned about a possible negative impact on the streams that flowed through his land. The defendant also happened to be a member of a local organization whose mission it is to protect and enhance the integrity of the watersheds in the area, so the defendant decided to take action against the claimant's permit application. Consequently, the defendant and the local water preservation organization she was part of began speaking out against the claimant's permit application. The organization came

out with written material opposing the permit, and the defendant produced a report outlining the potential damage that the claimant's permit might cause to the local watershed. There was also a meeting held where the defendant spoke about her objections to the claimant's permit application and her concerns for the wider region.

In light of all these developments, the local township decided to put the claimant's permit application on hold. The township argued that it needed more time to measure the environmental impact of the application. On September 1, 2010, two weeks before the township placed the permit on hold, the claimant sued the defendant, the organization which she was involved with and another individual, claiming \$13 million in damages against all three. The claim against the defendant herself was for \$5.5 million.

The defendant's lawyer soon advised the claimant via letter that his lawsuit was bound to fail because it disclosed no viable cause of action. In essence, the claimant had no case as there were no facts to support the lawsuit. On February 9, 2011, the defendant even offered to pay the claimant \$2,000 in full settlement of his claim, but to no avail.

The claimant made serious allegations against the defendant, including that she made unfounded and false statements to local residents about his permit application. The claimant argued that this was done for the purpose of gathering signatures on a petition opposing his application and for the purpose of intentionally harming him. He also alleged that the defendant organized public meetings only to spread false information about his permit application and that the defendant made false statements about the permit to the local member of the provincial Legislature. The claimant also argued that the defendant endangered the public by using a low-flying aircraft to photograph him and acted maliciously by making false statements to make him lose his farming career.

All in all, the claimant basically argued that the defendant defamed him and conspired to injure him and his property. The claimant made similar allegations about the local water preservation organization as well.

So to recount, an individual, the claimant, sought to obtain a permit to alter his property, and their neighbour, the defendant, objected to this alteration on the basis that it would have had a negative effect on the larger area in the community. Speaker, clearly, this is an example of an individual staying involved in their community and trying to participate in its growth and development. In other words, this was clearly an individual participating in a public matter, namely, whether or not the claimant's proposed alterations would have an effect on the larger area the public inhabits.

Thus, by undertaking such vigorous and overwhelming legal action in response, the claimant has already partially demonstrated this case to be a SLAPP, as one could conceivably argue that the claimant is attempting to punish the defendant via a lawsuit. What further demonstrates this to be a SLAPP, however, is the claimant's clear lack of interest in actually pursuing the case as a

legitimate legal matter—and this is a very important part of Bill 52, that shortened process to ensure that the legal system can basically do a review and say, “Is it a SLAPP or isn't it?” Because there are going to be examples, Speaker, and we can all name some, where people and businesses have been defamed, and they have absolutely every right to defend their character and their business. Bill 52 does not prevent that.

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For example, when the defendant brought an application to dismiss the claimant's lawsuit and provided notice to the claimant, he didn't attend the hearing. That being said, all the material the claimant filed with the court was still considered, even though he didn't show up. What the judge determined was that the claimant had provided no evidence of his allegations against the defendant. The judge eventually concluded that the claimant had merely asserted what he believed had occurred with no evidence to support his claims. The judge determined that not only had the defendant not acted maliciously or intended to harm the claimant but was instead merely exercising her right of free speech to disagree with the claimant's permit application, and as a result, the defendant was naturally voicing her opposition to the permit application and had done nothing unlawful whatsoever. Clearly, Speaker, there can be no mistaking this for anything short of a typical SLAPP suit.

To demonstrate the negative effects that SLAPPs can have, however, consider the fallout from this one example I have discussed. As a result of the SLAPP brought against her and the ordeal she went through fighting it, the defendant ended her community involvement out of fear that she may again be the target of another SLAPP. She stopped attending the water preservation organization's meetings and stopped participating in other environmental causes. Furthermore, she no longer gave advice to her neighbours on similar issues and discontinued her volunteer work.

Just think of the negative impact this SLAPP caused the defendant, to say nothing of the community. Here we have an extremely engaged citizen who is concerned about her neighbours and her community's well-being, and thanks to a SLAPP, she is totally shell-shocked into forgoing all efforts to improve her community. I think it says a lot about the kind of damage SLAPPs can cause.

The defendant ended up paying over \$20,000 in legal fees and over \$4,000 in disbursements due to this SLAPP, all because she wanted to be involved in her community's future. And that is just the individual defendant in this case. When it comes to the organization she was involved with, the damages, respectively, were just as onerous.

The SLAPP had a severe negative impact on the work of the organization, as all of its time had been spent on defending the lawsuit. There were little resources or time left to devote to organizing other activities or initiatives. The SLAPP basically silenced the organization, as it did not speak out against the claimant's permit application from the moment the SLAPP was filed. Some would say

that was the complete and 100% intention. Unfortunately, as a result of this litigation, the organization was forced to consider ceasing operations altogether once the SLAPP had been settled. Ultimately, the directors of the organization did buy public liability insurance, mostly because they were concerned about future SLAPPs, or litigation chill.

Eventually, on May 25, 2011, the claimant's claim was dismissed, with costs awarded to the defendants. Speaker, this is the epitome of a SLAPP: long, fruitless, expensive and highly damaging. This legal action was clearly brought forward to limit the defendant's ability and desire to participate in public matters.

This is an example of a private individual pursuing a SLAPP against another private individual. Again, it is, for the same reason as the next example, limiting or stopping public participation.

I want to pause for a minute and talk briefly about how technology may impact Bill 52. Because this bill is a result of a report from over four years ago, in 2010, because it is basically a reintroduction, based on Bill 83 in the last government, I think that we actually have an opportunity, at the public participation stage—I truly hope that we have fulsome public hearings on this, because, if nothing else, this anti-SLAPP legislation is about the ability of the public to participate in a discussion for their benefit. I would hate to see the government have closure or suggest that we need very truncated public hearings on a bill that is all about public participation.

I'm not going to try to foreshadow what is going to happen with discussions in House leaders', but I can assure you that if we end up having a very limited public hearing process for Bill 52, I'm going to make some hay with that, because that's all wrong. This is all about public participation, and we'd better have a committee that actually travels and is prepared to listen and is prepared to come forward with amendments.

I want to talk briefly about Twitter and Facebook. In the 2010 report, they don't talk a lot about how that impacts SLAPPs, if Twitter and Facebook posts would be considered when they talk about defamation or have issues there. So I think there is an opportunity for some positive amendments that will basically acknowledge the role that technology has in both participation at a political level, of course, and as an aid to informing our communities.

But I digress. I'm going to go to my next example. This offers perhaps the most startling but also clear case of a SLAPP example that I can discuss here today.

In this case, the claimant was the mayor of an Ontario town—so, a politician—and the defendants were members of the town's news media. One of them was also a former town councillor. In essence, Speaker, one of the defendants was known for commenting on the town's municipal issues, not unusual in our local papers. He frequently wrote articles dealing with municipal issues as a recurring column that was published on the Internet on a local website focused on current events in the town. The other defendant was a former town councillor and was the website's moderator.

Throughout the mayor's first term in office, both defendants were vocal critics of the mayor's policies. In 2010, the mayor was running for a second term. Election day was set for October 25. On August 20, 2010, a little over two months from the election day, one of the defendants wrote an article that was critical of the mayor and posted it on the website. In it, he prompted the website's visitors to write over 50 comments about his original article. As is typical with such sites, the comments on an article appear directly beneath the article and are published online as soon as they are submitted.

There were many comments on the website in response to the article, and many were far more critical of the mayor than the article itself. Furthermore, many of the commentators used pseudonyms and fake names so they didn't have to identify themselves.

Then, on September 15, 2010, a little over a month from election day, the town council passed a resolution authorizing the town solicitor to "retain external legal counsel to take any and all actions to bring resolution to the matter of defamation of the mayor." What it basically meant was that a SLAPP would be commenced against the defendants and the town would pay for the legal fees, since the town's solicitor was retaining the external legal counsel to pursue the legal action.

Surely one can see how, as I mentioned earlier, this particular example gives us perhaps the clearest example of how a SLAPP gets its name. It's pretty hard to find a more clear-cut case of an individual's right to participate in the public process being violated than when an elected politician sues someone for criticizing them in their elected role. Why, Speaker, dare I say just about every member in this chamber would be embroiled in a SLAPP with one another if this is how we operated here.

I shouldn't kid, but you get my point. It is preposterous to think that a politician who is elected by the people is so above criticism that their detractors should dare not speak against them lest they risk being sued. That, Speaker, is a SLAPP.

Anyway, on October 8, 2010, now a little over two weeks before the election, the mayor proceeded with the lawsuit.

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Similar to the last SLAPP example I gave, where I pointed to a lack of legal follow-through on the part of the claimant as further proof that his claim was indeed a SLAPP, here again we see a disregard for typical legal procedure. Bear with me here, Speaker, because this may be a little technical, but it's definitely an important point to make. I'll try to get through it relatively quickly, but I certainly hope my point is not lost to the viewers.

Remember, this legal action was commenced by the mayor a little over two weeks from election day.

Typically, most legal actions of this nature are initiated by having what is known as a statement of claim issued. In this case, however, the action was initiated by having a notice of action issued under what is known as sub-rule 14.03(2)—I'm sure the legal minds in the chamber are loving this.

“What does this matter?” you may be asking. Well, here’s why. Because the sub-rule 14.03(2) states the following: “Where there is insufficient time to prepare a statement of claim, an action may be commenced by the issuing of a notice of action ... that contains a short statement of the nature of the claim.”

The question is, why was there insufficient time for the mayor to initiate the legal proceedings properly? The answer, I think, is obvious: Because the only timeline of relevance was the impending election, which was now, as I said, under three weeks away.

The mayor sued the two defendants, as well as five others, and claimed \$6 million in damages from all of the defendants. Two defendants were served with the notice of action on the same day the action was commenced, October 8, whereas one of the original two defendants was served with the notice of action on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 10, 2010, while he was having Thanksgiving dinner with his family.

Here’s the catch. Remember sub-rule 14.03(2) that I just mentioned? Well, there is an accompanying rule, sub-rule 14.03(4), which very clearly states: “The notice of action shall not be served separately from the statement of claim.” So serving defendants with the notice of action, but no statement of claim, directly contravened the rules.

My point of getting down into the weeds with this is not to bore you or my colleagues, I promise. No, the reason I bring this up is because it demonstrates quite clearly that in this case, the mayor was far less concerned with taking the appropriate legal action properly and, instead, far more concerned with simply proceeding in any way possible, as long as it was before the election.

It should come as no surprise, then, that one of the defendants swore in an affidavit that the mayor commenced the legal action in order to silence him days before the October 25, 2010, election. Moreover, the mayor did not file an affidavit in response to a motion by the defendants to have their legal costs recovered, nor did the mayor give any evidence that her motive was not to silence her critics as election day quickly approached.

The defendants in this instance outright alleged that this was a SLAPP. Furthermore, the defendants argued that because this was a SLAPP, they were entitled to an elevated award of costs.

The master presiding over a motion by the defendants to have the mayor pay for their legal costs ultimately sided with the defendants resoundingly. The master found that the evidence was indisputable. The master was convinced that the mayor brought the lawsuit forward in her capacity as mayor of the corporation and the town.

Moreover, because the mayor had access to the town’s municipal money until December 14, 2010, the taxpayers, in effect, funded this SLAPP litigation.

This is a totally clear case of a SLAPP being used to silence and intimidate those of a different view. Because the party initiating the legal action is a politician, it becomes a SLAPP even more clearly, since they have a large vested interest in silencing their opponents.

Even more shocking in this case is the fact that, technically, this legal action was commenced without complying with the prior-notice provisions of the Libel and Slander Act respecting broadcasts.

The mayor expressly sought damages of \$6 million from the defendants, but the presiding master took issue with this, pointing out that, “In an action for damages, it is unusual for the plaintiff to claim a specific amount of damages in the notice of action.”

As you can see, Speaker, it’s difficult to not see this case from the beginning as nothing more than a desperate and ill-advised scheme to silence the mayor’s political opponents in the leadup to and including the municipal campaign.

Perhaps more tellingly, the master concluded that the legal action initiated by the mayor was indeed SLAPP litigation. Ultimately, this SLAPP was put to rest when the mayor dropped the case and delivered a notice of discontinuance on October 17, 2011, over a year from when it was first initiated. Really, what good did it serve at all? Here was this SLAPP sucking precious court resources and time, dragging on for over a year, when it had absolutely zero credibility.

As I mentioned earlier, the second example I have given is a clear case of an elected or public official using a SLAPP against an individual in their community. Clearly, the mayor was only interested in silencing her critics prior to the election, and she resorted to outrageous measures to do so.

I have now spoken about an example of a private individual pursuing a SLAPP against another and a public, elected figure pursuing a SLAPP against a private individual, both of whom were trying to silence their critics. I do understand the need for Bill 52 because, as we’ve seen by the examples I’ve listed, these can take many months, or even years, to resolve. By instituting a timeline to decide if a matter is a SLAPP, Bill 52 will go a long way to ensuring these frivolous claims are taken care of.

Now, we’ve gone over two SLAPP examples: one a private individual pursuing a SLAPP against another private individual, and one a public, elected official pursuing a SLAPP against critics. I think the second one is actually more egregious.

We, as politicians, as public figures, basically sign on to agree to a public review of our job, quite frankly. We do that municipally, we do that provincially, and we do that federally. For an elected member who is serving in public service to suggest that they can use town resources or take it to a different level, provincial resources—imagine the outrage we would have if the various ministers who were chastised in this Auditor General report actually attempted to sue the Auditor General. There would be, I hope, riots on the street. People would be so offended that our elected officials, our appointed cabinet ministers, can’t take the heat and, instead, want to silence their opposition and their opponents.

There would be no stomach in Ontario for that kind of action, so by putting in place Bill 52, we are attempting to say, “You, as an elected official, cannot use your staff

resources, your municipally funded resources—or provincially or federally—to in effect silence your opposition.” This, in a very specific way, demonstrates that a SLAPP is not always a big development company trying to silence individuals. This is an often-held stereotype that is simply not true, as I’ve demonstrated here today with my examples.

Yes, there are instances where the situation follows that narrative. There are also other vastly different contexts for SLAPPs as well. My point here is that a SLAPP is something that could be pursued by a variety of individuals for a variety of reasons, all of which have to do with silencing someone’s public views. That’s important to bear in mind when considering Bill 52 because it becomes particularly relevant to institute a mechanism for addressing potential SLAPPs, and that’s something that Bill 52 does.

That is why Bill 52’s proposal to institute a 60-day time limit on deciding whether or not a lawsuit is a SLAPP is a critical component of this legislation, but that’s not the only good proposal in Bill 52, and I’d like to take some time now to go over the bill itself.

Now that we’ve had some chance to review some common examples of SLAPPs, I think the viewers at home, and my colleagues here in the chamber, will perhaps have a better understanding of how Bill 52 could help remedy the problem that SLAPPs pose.

Bill 52, the Protection of Public Participation Act, 2014, sets out to combat SLAPPs by amending multiple pieces of legislation to basically create a process to determine if a lawsuit is a SLAPP and to have it dismissed accordingly, if so. In order to set up this process, Bill 52 amends the Courts of Justice Act to allow for fast-tracking of motions to determine whether legal actions are in fact SLAPPs.

Essentially, how Bill 52 will work, if enacted, is that if a defendant believes they have been targeted by a SLAPP, they will be able to bring forward a motion to have the presiding judge determine if in fact the legal action is a SLAPP. If the judge determines the action to be a SLAPP, then the judge shall dismiss the legal action within that 60-day time period. It remains incumbent on the defendant, however, to prove that the legal action brought against them in fact is a SLAPP. If they are unsuccessful in proving this to the judge, then their motion will be dismissed and the case would proceed. It’s also important to note that when rendering a decision on this motion, the judge would be able to award compensation regarding costs on the motion, if they deem it appropriate. Moreover, the judge would also be able to award the defendant damages, as the judge considered appropriate, if the judge determined that the claimant brought an initial legal action forward in bad faith.

A key component of Bill 52 is the 60-day timeline on the motion for determining if a legal action is a SLAPP. This timeline is essential for ensuring that SLAPPs do not bog down our already overburdened court system. If I have a concern with Bill 52, this is it: I don’t want to be in a place where we are expediting one legal proceeding

and then in two years finding out that we’ve actually made it worse for another legal proceeding; I’ll pick on sexual assaults. I don’t want this to be a case where the courts end up, by law, having to deal with one group of issues and then have another group have a longer waiting list.

By instituting a 60-day timeline for a decision, Bill 52 ensures that vexatious and unwarranted SLAPP suits are dismissed in quick order. That’s a central premise of Bill 52, I would suggest, and an important one.

Another reason why the 60-day timeline on the hearing of the motion proposed under Bill 52 is so critical is due to the tribunal connection Bill 52 establishes. I’ll confess, Speaker, that this is one section of the bill that does make me somewhat uneasy. Bill 52 establishes that if a claimant has proceedings before a tribunal—and I’ll pick on the OMB—then the defendant moving the motion to dismiss the legal proceedings can provide written notice to the respective tribunal informing them of the filed motion. At that point, the claimant’s proceedings at the tribunal are deemed to be stayed until the motion is dealt with. My reservations come from the thought that this measure could potentially lead to backups at multiple tribunals. In theory, you could have multiple instances of these motions being filed and, thus, multiple proceedings being stayed at other tribunals. Again, though, that is why the 60-day timeline is critical: because we must be mindful that balance is the key to situations like this. If there was no 60-day limit, then a claimant’s tribunal proceedings could all be stayed indefinitely while the motion proceeds only to, in the end, be vindicated if the motion was defeated. That wouldn’t be right, however, so having the 60-day timeline ensures that these motions are dealt with.

Bill 52 amends two other pieces of legislation: the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. The Statutory Powers Procedure Act is amended to provide that submissions for cost shall be made in writing. The Libel and Slander Act amendment, however, is somewhat more significant.

I don’t know if you want me to pause there, Speaker. I’ll defer to you.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): This House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Robert Bailey: I’d like to introduce today a number of guests I have from my riding of Sarnia–Lambton. Representing the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario: Tom Lacey from Nova Chemicals; Chris Ciccarelli with Saint-Gobain; Kevin Vance, Shell Oil Products; David Meade from Praxair; and Mike Peters from Air Products Canada. They’ve asked me to remind everyone to come to the reception this evening. They’re in the west members’ gallery.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Thank you—and women's issues. Speaker, I'd like to welcome a delegation from the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario, specifically Mary Potter, their president.

This is an organization with a long history in Ontario. It's my pleasure to welcome them to Queen's Park.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I also wish to introduce representatives here from AMPCO: Susan Olynyk, ArcelorMittal Dofasco; Michael Peters, Air Products; Cameron Moffat, Westcast, Brantford headquarters; and Andy Mahut, US Steel Canada.

Mr. Bob Delaney: It gives me great pleasure to introduce to the House two old friends of mine from my undergraduate days at Concordia University in Montreal. I'd like members to join me in welcoming Mr. George Chiarucci and Mr. John Discenza, who are in the members' east gallery. Enjoy the show, boys.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's my pleasure today to introduce Adam White of the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario. Adam and a number of AMPCO supporters are here today, many of whom are in the west gallery.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: As Minister of Energy, I'm also pleased to acknowledge the large power consumers in the province of Ontario and welcome them to Queen's Park.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: It's a pleasure to welcome to the Legislature today Ron and Rhonda Stevenson. They're the parents of my amazing legislative assistant, Victoria Stevenson. Welcome.

Miss Monique Taylor: I would like to introduce to the House the family of today's page captain, Steven. They are his mother, Angie Kottaras; his father, George Kottaras; his sister Helen; and his grandparents Helen and Sam Sutter. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Mario Sergio: From the riding of York West, I have the pleasure to introduce my page, Jenny Doan. I want to thank her for the service that she has provided to the House. She's right here. Jenny, thank you so much. I hope your experience will serve you well here at Queen's Park.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I have three special guests from my riding. I'd like to introduce Pastor Mike Hollen, Pastor Dr. Al Stone and Tom Johnston, who have joined us today. We had our private bill passed today and I thought it was a great day. Welcome, gentlemen. Thank you for coming to Queen's Park.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'd like to welcome today Paul Kossta to the House. He's a regular visitor here and I just wanted to say hello. He's from OSSTF.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I have a few visitors in attendance here today. I would like to recognize and welcome Kris Sousa to Queen's Park, who's sitting in the east members' gallery. If you can stand up, Kris. Kris is a university student who is very involved in the Davenport community, having been a camp counsellor for the Dovercourt Boys and Girls Club and also the chair of the

Youth Community Police Liaison Committee for 14 Division of the Toronto Police Service.

I'd also like to welcome to the Legislature the Regal Road Junior Public School choir, led by Ms. Abbey-Colborne. They will be performing on the grand staircase at 12:15. I'm really looking forward to their performance and encourage everyone in the House today to also partake in that.

Mr. Todd Smith: I'd like to welcome a group of students from Thornlea Secondary School in Thornhill this morning: Shahzad Bharda, Yuho Kim, Tiffany Chan, Christopher Poulos, Kelvin Zeng, Alexander Dober, John Lee, and Stephen Fish, all up in the east public gallery. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I just want to welcome some special guests today: Elaine Campbell, president and CEO of AstraZeneca; Brian Maloney, director of government affairs; Jon Feairs, Ontario government affairs; and Eni Rukaj. All four of them are from AstraZeneca.

I had the pleasure this morning of speaking at an announcement where AstraZeneca donated a million-dollar gift to the Banting and Best Diabetes Centre at the University of Toronto, for diabetes research. On behalf of our government, I want to thank you for this generous gift. Welcome.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd also like to recognize Cameron Moffat, the energy manager at Westcast Industries, and also the grandparents of Nicole Eaton, who is our page here today—her grandparents, Allan and Pat Lee.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Our page from Thunder Bay—Superior North, Albany Sutherland, is the page captain today. In the public gallery, we have her step-grandmother, Alanna Downey-Baxter, and I believe her mother, Denise Baxter, is here. If we could welcome them, I'd be grateful.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Today, we have a guest in the members' gallery. I'd like the whole assembly to welcome Jeffrey Kroeker here, a wonderful fellow who is back in Queen's Park and watching today's events.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It gives me great pleasure today to introduce the son of one of my colleagues, a person I was first elected with in 2006, when he was just a little boy. Now he's a major campaign contributor for his mother: Galen Flaherty.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm pleased to welcome Thornlea Secondary students who are here today. Thornlea Secondary School is on Yonge Street in my riding, and I'm glad they braved the gridlock to make it down here on time for question period. Shahzad Bharda, Yuho Kim, Tiffany Chan, Christopher Poulos, Kelvin Zeng, Alexander Dober, John Lee and Stephen Fish: Welcome.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce Mr. Jeffrey Kroeker, who is the former assistant for the House leader of the official opposition. He's in the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introductions? Last call for introductions. Thank you very much.

It is now time for question period.

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order on overdue order paper questions. On October 21, I made several inquiries to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, including questions on relief funding for the ice storm in December 2013 and the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program. Mr. Speaker, I have not received a response to any of these questions.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would appreciate an opportunity to make my ruling.

That is a point of order, and I would defer to the government House leader that I understand it is overdue, and what steps would be taken to have those answers replied to. Thank you.

Further, the member from Perth–Wellington, on a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Speaker, the clock is running. There are no points of order during question period.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Speaker, I'd like to bring to the minister's attention an overdue question that hasn't been answered. It's to the Minister of Transportation. Would he please clarify the government's—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I apologize to the House. I was under the impression that the person who was standing was starting question period, because I did invite the first question. Because of such, that they were points of order, I'm going to ask that the clock be reset, and I'll deal with the points of order.

The member from Perth–Wellington—quickly, please.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I would like to bring this to the attention of the Ministry of Transportation. The question was—it's an overdue question—would the Minister of Transportation please clarify the government's policy on extending GO's transit service to Stratford, confirming or denying the Premier's intention to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Okay. I will also make this: If there are any further, I will deal with them after question period, because the time is allotted for question period during this particular time frame. I will defer to the House leader again, that if this is an unanswered question, if it's past time, it will be dealt with as quickly and expeditiously as possible.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will get that. Thank you.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Ms. Christine Elliott: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday's Auditor General's report revealed that the incompetence of your Liberal government has reached

new heights: \$2 billion wasted on so-called smart meters, project costs nearly double the original estimate, and hard-working Ontarians left to pay the bill. A debt ballooning to \$325 billion will mean a burden of \$23,000 for every child born in 2018.

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There's one word that keeps coming up over and over again in this report, Premier, and that's "failure": a failure to manage money, a failure to manage projects, a failure to manage people, a failure to take care of our most vulnerable and a complete failure of leadership.

Premier, when will you stop failing Ontarians and get your fiscal house in order?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I have said, as I said in the House yesterday and as I said this morning, we welcome the scrutiny of the Auditor General, as governments before us have—

Interjections.

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

Hon. David Zimmer: Listen to the answer.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs will come to order.

Now, I anticipate—I shouldn't, but I anticipate—that this will be emotional, and if it gets too emotional, I'm going to shut it down, and that includes anyone making any comments at all. Let's get through this properly.

Premier, please finish.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, we welcome the scrutiny of the Auditor General. We welcome the opportunity to improve services, and in fact Bill 8, which passed yesterday, actually increases the accountability of the government. We have worked with the Auditor General, and we will continue to work with the Auditor General.

Many of the recommendations that the Auditor General made, many of the areas of concern, are areas where we have already taken action, whether it's child care, the review of the immunization system, adult community corrections and the Ontario Parole Board. Many of those are areas where we have already taken action.

On the other areas of concern, we will continue to work with the Auditor General.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Christine Elliott: Mr. Speaker, the disrespect for taxpayers' dollars from this government is nothing short of appalling.

Premier, we thought we had seen it all when we saw a billion dollars lost in the gas plant scandal. Now we learn that you and your reappointed energy minister have doubled down by wasting \$2 billion more on smart meters that don't work. The \$2 billion in costs have raised energy prices on families and seniors who now can't even afford to turn on a space heater. There's nothing smart about wasting \$2 billion and getting no results.

Is anyone in your government willing to stand up and be held accountable for this abject failure of management and leadership?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I have said, and I will continue to say, that there are many areas—and the majority of the recommendations the Auditor General has made are things that we agree with, and we are completely aligned and will work with her, or we have already started to work to make those improvements.

But there are a couple of areas—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin–Caledon, come to order. The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, come to order. Your names are on a list.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: There are a couple of areas where there is a disagreement, and I will address the issue of smart meters. If the member opposite had the opportunity yesterday to hear the head of Toronto Hydro speak, she will recognize that there is concrete success that we can see on the ground: 3% of Toronto hydro has been shifted off peak to save the equivalent of the power to fuel 97 condominium buildings. That's a serious reduction—

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

Final supplementary.

Ms. Christine Elliott: Premier, you can't get away from this smart meter fiasco, billions wasted on scandal, billions in forgone tax revenues from jobs you have driven out of this province, not to mention the \$11 billion we spend servicing our debt. All of that could be redirected to schools, to hospitals, to those with disabilities, to paying down our debt, but instead, all that money goes to pay for your scandals and ineptitude.

Premier, these scandals have to stop. Will you show Ontarians the respect they deserve and demand your energy minister resign today?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Order. The member from Huron–Bruce, come to order.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Just to the issue of smart meters, let me relay to the member opposite what some of the people who are experts in the field have said about them. The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario said that they are absolutely necessary for the proper functioning and future functioning of the distribution system for electricity. Smart grid technologies have the potential to improve reliability, reduce system costs, empower customers and lower the environmental impact of the electricity that we use.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is, because of the smart meters that are in place, we have data that we would not have otherwise. We are able to implement conservation mechanisms that we would not be able to implement without smart meters.

I know the member opposite is not particularly interested in conservation, but the fact is that we are. That's why smart meters are in place—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

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

New question.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Ms. Christine Elliott: Again to the Premier: Yesterday, I watched the Minister of Energy try to defend the indefensible. Rather than accept the Auditor General's indictment of his tenure as Minister of Energy, we watched the minister attack an independent and impartial officer of our Legislature. He accused her of getting her facts wrong and being in over her head. His disrespect showed just how out of touch with reality this minister is.

Premier, yesterday you said—and you said it again today—that your government welcomes accountability. Will you live up to those words and show your energy minister the door?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What the member opposite saw yesterday was a couple of ministers of this government making sure that people understand where we are aligned with the Auditor General and where there are some differences.

I think if the member opposite looks back to 2002 and some comments by a former minister of her party, she will see that there are times when ministers and governments disagree with some of the recommendations and some of the concerns of the Auditor General. That is not an unheard-of circumstance.

What the member opposite also should have heard is experts in the electricity field making it clear what smart meters are doing: how they are helping us gather data that will allow us to conserve, and how they are already allowing us to gather data on residential usage, on commercial usage, that will allow us to conserve into the future.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Christine Elliott: You know what, Mr. Speaker? The saddest part of the AG's report is the devastating human cost attached to this government's reckless management. From patients to pensioners, to families with children, to businesses and job creators, to our most vulnerable citizens who need our help—all have been failed by this government on so many fronts.

Premier, it's about priorities. You don't spend \$2 billion on not-so-smart meters when people nearing the end of their lives can't get the hospice and palliative care services they deserve. You don't spend \$2 billion on a program that doesn't work when developmentally challenged adults are in crisis and are waiting years for residential placements.

Premier, when will your government address the massive human cost attached to your government's incompetence?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: There's a massive human cost to us not conserving energy. There's a massive human cost to not having access to information.

Yesterday, Anthony Haines, the head of Toronto Hydro—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Yesterday, Anthony Haines, the head of Toronto Hydro, commented that during the ice storm last year, Toronto Hydro was able to identify people who were medically fragile, who were at risk. Because they had smart meters, they were able to identify where those people were and whether they had power, and move to address those concerns. So smart meters are helping us to gather data that is extremely necessary.

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On the general issue of the Auditor General, we have worked closely with her and we will continue to work closely with her. There are many, many areas of agreement where we have already started to implement the changes she recommends, Mr. Speaker, or we will do that. There are a few areas where there are discrepancies and we will continue to work with that.

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

Ms. Christine Elliott: Obviously, you can tell by these responses that things have to change.

Yesterday's report showed a complete policy failure, a failure to respect Ontario taxpayers and a failure to take care of our most vulnerable citizens. The callous response from the energy minister cannot stand. Premier, signal to Ontarians that you truly believe in accountability, that you believe in priorities, that you recognize the human cost of your policies, and fire your energy minister.

Interjections.

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I reject the premise of the comment and the question, Mr. Speaker. We are working extremely hard to make sure that we do exactly that: to take the actions that we know are in the best interests of the people of this province.

As I have said, it is not unprecedented that there would be some small area of disagreement between the government and the Auditor General. I'm fairly certain that in 2002 Minister Bob Runciman did not lose his job, and Minister Bob Runciman, at that point, said that the auditor's report was misleading and inaccurate. That's what the minister said in 2002.

The reality is, it is extremely important that when there is a disagreement or when there is alignment or agreement, we are clear about that and we're clear about what our actions are to make sure that we conserve energy, that we gather information about immunization, that we make sure child care is safe. All of those are the work that we're doing right now.

ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Yesterday, the Minister of Energy attacked the independent Auditor General of Ontario. Frankly, Speaker, I have never seen anything like this since I was elected to this Legislature. The minister said, "The electricity system is very complex; it's very difficult to understand." And he said that the auditor, "didn't understand" the issues. Speaker, not only is that patronizing, but that is sexist. The Premier and her minister should know that Bonnie—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. The deputy House leader will come to order. The member from Nepean–Carleton will come to order. The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek will come to order. That's two for the deputy House leader and two for the member from Nepean–Carleton—sorry, one. I have a list; I checked.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No, you're not. Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier and her minister should know that Bonnie Lysyk spent 10 years at Manitoba Hydro.

Will this Premier do the right thing and fire her Minister of Energy for his shameful behaviour towards an independent officer of this Legislature?

Interjections.

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me just say that the Auditor General of Ontario is a professional. She is perfectly capable of engaging with the government on any of the issues that she has an opinion on. The Minister of Energy and his ministry have worked closely with the Auditor General. We have a great respect for her, for the office and for the work she has done. The vast majority of the recommendations and the concerns she has raised, we are aligned with, we are working on or we were already working on before she wrote her report.

The fact is that it is not unprecedented for there to be some narrow area of disagreement in terms of the report of the Auditor General. The fact is that the numbers and the commentary about smart meters in the report were not signed off on by energy officials in the ministry. We will continue to work with the Auditor General until we get those final reports.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Smart meters have not brought down consumption, and instead of going down, bills are just going up. The minister wasted \$1.9 billion on smart meters that are not smart, but instead of taking responsibility, he shoots the messenger by attacking the auditor.

The Liberals need to start taking responsibility for their incompetence. Will the Premier tell her incompetent

minister that his job is over and fire that Minister of Energy?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Energy is very eager to speak to some of the specifics in the supplementary, but let me just address the issue of what smart meters have done or have not done.

Anthony Haines, who's the president and CEO of Toronto Hydro, said this after the press conference that the AG did yesterday: "We've seen about a 3% shift off the peak here in the city of Toronto; 3% is 97 condominium buildings—97 condominiums buildings that came on the grid over the same period of time. We didn't have to make any additional capital investment because that shift of that 3% provided the capacity within our grid. I often get asked the question, 'My goodness, with all these condominiums going up, your grid must be absolutely stretched beyond belief.' But, in fact, the time-of-use program has allowed for that capacity to be there."

Mr. Speaker, the smart meters have allowed for that. They have allowed for that degree of conservation, and that is happening all over the province. They are working.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Liberals wasted \$2 billion on smart meters, but instead of taking any responsibility, the minister just denied the facts put forward by the Auditor General. And the Premier is just doing it again.

The Auditor General is an independent officer. It is her job to give Ontarians the straight facts, without politics. But instead of listening to the auditor, the Minister of Energy attacked her competence and Liberal ministers have been taking to Twitter to support that disgraceful attack.

Speaker, I was astounded by the Premier's press conference this morning, where she actually defended his behaviour as well. How can this Premier, the first elected woman Premier of this province, not only support but pile onto this minister's arrogant and sexist behaviour?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, one of the quotes from the auditor's report states that "the benefits of smart metering have not been achieved...." I have some third-party validation for the fact that they have been achieved.

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario stated that smart meters are "a shrewd investment that will benefit both individual consumers of power and society as a whole," and "They are necessary—absolutely necessary for the proper functioning and future functioning of the distribution system for electricity."

Brian Bentz, CEO of PowerStream, representing Aurora, Barrie, Markham and Vaughan: "Ontario is seen as a world leader in smart meter implementation."

Don McCabe, vice-president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture: "With the new time-of-use"—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew, come to order—second time.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli:—"all customers will pay closer to the actual cost for the power they use.... Advantages"—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me. The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned.

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ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. For years, the Liberals have insisted that smart meters would reduce consumption, save people money and cost about a billion dollars. None of this is true, none of it. They haven't reduced consumption, people are paying more, and the Liberals spent \$2 billion, not \$1 billion, on smart meters. This incompetence is obvious. It is incompetence, plain and simple, no matter how you cut it. Ontarians expect and deserve much better.

If the Premier won't fire her minister for incompetence, will she at least fire him for his arrogance?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Energy.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me just—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me; it was the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: No, this is her new question.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Fine. Sorry.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, let me just go to the substance of the question around the smart meters because, as I have said, the smart meters actually are having the effect that we were looking for, and that is they are reducing consumption. Otherwise, the head of Toronto Hydro wouldn't be talking about 3% of power moving off grid. He wouldn't be talking about the capacity having been increased in the city of Toronto because of smart meters.

The fact is that independent, impartial officers of the Legislature actually disagree. We've got the Environmental Commissioner supporting and saying that the smart meters are a very important aspect of the system, and we've got the Auditor General who has a different opinion. So there is a disagreement; we understand that.

We will continue to work with the Auditor General, and we will make it very clear what the costs actually are, because so far, estimates have only been—

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

Just before you start, I want to remind the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke that he was warned. I may have been hasty with that, but if he decides to say another thing, he will be named.

Carry on.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: There is nothing smart about smart meters. They went 100% over budget. They haven't brought down bills. In fact, the auditor says rate-payers are paying significantly more, and off-peak prices are up more than 100%. Smart meters haven't saved energy. In fact, the auditor says reductions "have not yet been achieved."

Smart meters simply are not doing their job, but in spite of that, the minister still has his job. Why won't the Premier give her Minister of Energy his walking papers and do right by the people of Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: In 2013, the Ontario Energy Board commissioned a study by the expert energy—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli:—that showed commodity costs per customer are estimated to be approximately \$12 per year lower because of load shifting and conservation driven by smart-meter-enabled time-of-use pricing. Over three years, that represents approximately \$150 million in savings which have not been accounted for by the Auditor General. What's more, an estimated 3.3% reduction—the same number used by Mr. Haines, from Toronto Hydro—in residential summer consumption was attributed to smart meter policies.

Smart meters represent an ongoing platform for which new applications are being added almost on a monthly basis. One of the expanding uses of smart meters is a wide range of already-in-service conservation and demand-management initiatives which are enabled by smart meters, suppressing the costs of electricity—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Since the Liberals were elected, they have staggered—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Prince Edward–Hastings, come to order—second time.

Ms. Andrea Horwath:—from one energy boondoggle to another. Hydro bills have gone up by more than 300%. They cancelled two gas plants and wasted \$1.1 billion. They overspent on their smart meter program by \$1 billion.

The Liberal track record, frankly, is absolutely abysmal in the energy file. But no Liberal ever pays the price, Speaker. Will the Premier hold someone responsible—finally, for once—and fire her Minister of Energy?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, that leader of the opposition has voted for every price mitigation measure that was brought before this House, including in the budget that was brought forward first in May, then the

actual budget, wherein we're removing the debt retirement charge—a legacy tax from the Harris government—two years earlier than planned, saving the average family \$70 per year in hydro bills.

The Ontario Energy Board is working on an OESP, an Ontario Electricity Support Program, which is in our budget and which will save them an additional \$180 off their bills.

Interjection.

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

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: That leader of the opposition third party voted against those provisions to mitigate rates for low- and modest-income people. Shame on her, Mr. Speaker.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's disgusting, shameful, ignorant. You are an ignorant man.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins–James Bay will come to order, and the leader of the third party will withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw, Speaker, and I think the minister—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm here. Please stand and withdraw only.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw, Speaker.

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

CHILD CARE

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is also to the Premier. This has to be the morning after the worst day in the history of your government. I say this because yesterday was the worst and most scathing Auditor General's report I have seen in my four terms at Queen's Park.

The auditor confirmed that debt will cripple our government; smart meters have increased bills for seniors, small business owners and families; and procurement policies have hosed taxpayers.

But above all, since 2009, since you were the Minister of Education, this government has radically reduced inspections into licensed child care facilities in Ontario, putting 29,000 of Ontario's children at risk. There is no Harper or Harris to blame anymore. It's all with you.

Will you scrap Bill 10 and put more enforcement into the regulatory regime for our children in child care, or will you continue on this path of putting our children—

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: In terms of the accusation that you're making, I think it's really important to understand that Bill 10 is actually what allows us to fix some of the problems.

However, with respect to the backlog and inspections—and we are doing the inspections—we have actually added inspectors and we've already cut the backlog in half. With the assistance of Bill 10, we'll actually be legally able to move to a risk-based inspection system.

We've also been able to introduce a dedicated team of enforcement officers who are dealing with complaints against the unlicensed home care sector, which means that there's an enforcement unit that is doing that work, again freeing up time for inspectors to deal with licensing issues.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: That's not adequate at all. We all know what this really is: It's a move to universal child care.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, come to order.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We already know that this government has failed in its four mandates in order to protect children in licensed child care settings.

Today, there shouldn't just be one minister who should be asked to resign or who should be fired. There are actually three: It's the Minister of Energy, the Minister of Economic Development, and now the Minister of Education for continued negligence under Bill 10.

We now know that both the Auditor General and the Ombudsman—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Order. Minister of Government and Consumer Services, please come to order. The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, please come to order.

Please.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Back to the Premier: This isn't just about education. It's about failure in energy, failure in public procurement, and it's about failure in education. This is a government that has gotten it wrong, and they need to have some accountability, and their bill that they passed through the House the other day isn't going to cut it.

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So I ask her again: Will you ensure that Bill 10 is repealed, and will you ensure our children's safety by having more inspectors in licensed child care settings and allowing those that are, right now, unlicensed to regulate themselves? Yes or no?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the member from Trinity–Spadina, come to order.

Minister.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you. I'm not surprised that the member opposite wants Bill 10 repealed. They voted against it because they thought we should delete all the new enforcement methods that are in it. They wanted us to delete them.

We believe we actually should have Bill 10 and have the enforcement tools to ensure that all forms of child

care, be they licensed child care centres, licensed home care or unlicensed home care—we want them all to be safe.

Another thing that Bill 10 allows us to do is, it actually allows us to carry out another of the auditor's recommendations. We will be able, with Bill 10, to require a vulnerable sector criminal reference check which we have not been able to do previously. With Bill 10, we have greater capacity to make sure our children are safe, no matter what form of child care the parent chooses.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. Let's look at the front bench of the Liberal government. Ornge air ambulance wasted millions and put Ontarians at risk, but that minister got a promotion. MaRS is a boondoggle and the costs keep going up. Now, we see \$8 billion wasted on P3s that are nothing but sweetheart deals for Liberal friends, but that minister is still sitting on the front bench.

The Liberals wasted \$1.1 billion on gas plants and not a single Liberal lost their job. And \$2 billion has been wasted on smart meters that don't reduce consumption or bills. That's \$10 billion, Speaker. That's almost our entire deficit right there, but no one has taken responsibility and no one has paid the price.

Is this Premier so arrogant and irresponsible that she thinks her front bench can waste billions, fail Ontarians and never be held accountable?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: In terms of accountability, I have to say, I was very, very surprised because we're talking about accountability of government and scrutiny on government. I was very surprised to see the NDP not support—vote against—Bill 8, which actually increases scrutiny. This is a party that goes on and on about the need to expand the scrutiny on government, so I would have thought they would have voted for Bill 8.

On the issues of building transit and transportation infrastructure, which is one of the things the leader of the third party's talking about, and on the issue of conservation, which is what smart meters are part of, we are doing everything in our power to make sure we build the infrastructure that's needed. I was at the UP Express announcement today. That's a piece of infrastructure that has been built and has been possible because of our procurement policies.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Weak cheese Liberal legislation is exactly why this province is in the mess that it's in, and we're proud not to support that kind of nonsense.

Apparently, though, being a Liberal minister is just about the safest job in Ontario. The Liberals are cutting health care, but the minister just denies the facts. The Liberals are cutting schools, but the minister just denies the facts. The Liberals are not inspecting long-term care homes, but the minister just denies the facts. The Liberals wasted \$2 billion on smart meters that didn't do their job, but the minister just denies the facts. The Liberals wasted

\$8 billion on P3s that are just sweetheart deals for insiders, but the minister just denies the facts. The Liberals wasted over a billion dollars on gas plants and deleted the evidence and not a single Liberal faces a job loss.

Just how many chances does a Liberal minister get before the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. I would ask during the round of questions that the members from Trinity–Spadina and Barrie do not engage in a conversation with the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, which means the three of you have been warned.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You just don't believe what it looks like from here.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Not one of us on this side of the House denies the facts and denies the complexity of the issues that we're tackling. We do not deny that it is a challenge right now for Ontario that we have to build infrastructure—we have to build transit, transportation infrastructure, roads and bridges across the province—and that we need to do that in a way that allows the private sector to work with us, because government doesn't have the project-management capacity to do all of that building. So we are doing it in a way that allows those projects to get built, whether it's hospitals or schools or transit projects.

We don't deny the fact that there's complexity involved in gathering immunization information or implementing electronic health records.

All of those things are complex, and I actually would welcome an exchange of ideas across the floor that acknowledged that complexity and didn't—

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

Interjections.

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

Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

New question.

PORK INDUSTRY

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Minister, the pork industry is an important part of our diverse agricultural industry here in Ontario. Made up of family farms dedicated to producing safe, nutritious pork, this industry contributes over \$5.6 billion to the provincial economy.

My riding of Halton is home to a large agribusiness sector that is a key pillar of our local economy. Our farmers are responsible for providing residents, both inside and outside of the riding, with a wide variety of local, fresh and delicious food, and pork is a key product.

When it comes to local food, Ontario pork is definitely a fan favourite, with seven out of 10 consumers regularly buying pork in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please inform the House on how our government is helping the pork industry adapt to the challenges faced today while evolving to meet the pressing needs of tomorrow?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member from Halton for the question and for her commitment to the agriculture sector in the wonderful riding of Halton.

Our government's support for Ontario pork producers is clear. Since 2010, we've supported research and development on innovative insurance products for the province's hog sector; we increased the sector's ability to execute emergency responses; we've been expanding the Ontario Pork brand at retail and foodservice; we commenced industry-wide enhancements to biosecurity across the province, including a special intake under Growing Forward 2 to assist with PED's impact earlier this year, and to mitigate this disease as we head into the fall and winter, representing about \$9 million in funding.

My ministry has worked and will continue to work with our industry partners, ensuring the vitality of Ontario's pork industry.

In the spirit of the season, members should enjoy an Ontario ham with an Ontario turkey this Christmas season.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Thank you to the minister for his answer.

Ontario's pork industry is resilient, having faced challenges like PED and Russian sanctions, and time and time again they come out strongly.

In addition, our government's swift response to PED has empowered producers and industry partners to carry out a dedicated and systematic approach to biosecurity that is unequalled across North America.

From small family farms to major operations, 2,500 pork-producing farms contribute over \$1 billion to Ontario's farm cash receipts, helping to build a strong, successful agri-food sector in Ontario.

Minister, last year, Premier Wynne issued the agri-food growth challenge and called on the sector to double its rate of growth and create 120,000 new jobs.

Considering my riding of Halton's vast agri-food industry, can the minister please inform the House on how our government is working with the pork industry to help it meet the Premier's challenge moving forward?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member for the supplementary.

It's a big goal, but every day I see farmers, including those in the pork industry, embracing that challenge.

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I can tell you that we're happy to support Ontario's pork branding and marketing to help meet that challenge. Just recently I announced that our government is providing Ontario pork with up to \$2 million to help marketing efforts. These funds support a campaign that encourages more people to choose Ontario pork where they shop, whether it's at a butcher shop, a grocery store, restaurants or farmers' market. Ontarians are happy when they can

access delicious local food, and our farmers are happy when the demand for their product increases.

Working together with Ontario's pork producers, our government is strengthening Ontario's agri-food sector and ensuring that all Ontarians have access to excellent, locally produced food.

SMART METERS

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, yesterday, when you were pressed by the reporters on why the public should accept your numbers while rejecting those of the Auditor General, you shamelessly said: "I'm not going to have a further debate on these details in public." Well, Minister, I've got news for you: When you blow a billion dollars, you're accountable to the public, and you'll be asked questions in public.

The Auditor General stands by her numbers. We the opposition, the press and the public stand by her numbers. We all know you blew \$1.9 billion on smart meters.

Will you rise in your place, retract your comments attacking the Auditor General and her report, and apologize for so egregiously mismanaging the smart meter program?

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I didn't get quiet for you to carry on, and you are on very thin ice right now. It's an old trick but I was here before you.

Minister?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I have a quote here. It says, "I'm telling you, [the smart meter program] was a deal changer." And "That smart meter program is the best thing we've done in the decade." That's from Anthony Haines, president and CEO of Toronto Hydro.

Again, Brian Bentz, CEO of PowerStream—Aurora, Barrie, Markham and Vaughan, all communities with PowerStream's responsibility: "Ontario is seen as a world leader in smart meter implementation. PowerStream continues to be a strong supporter and advocate of the provincial government's smart meter initiative and recognizes it as being a key component to further developing Ontario's conservation and demand management programs."

Smart meters have been instrumental in enabling us to move forward with our conservation programs that are saving businesses and families hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Minister, your failure to take responsibility for the smart meter fiasco shows how complacent and arrogant your government has become. This smart meter disaster is another billion-dollar scandal. Your attacks on the AG are unprecedented. Your unwillingness to take responsibility right here and now proves that you've held power for too long.

Minister, will you do the ethical thing—take responsibility for your actions and your failures and this smart meter mess—do the honourable thing and tender your resignation?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I have a professional disagreement with the Auditor General—that's number one.

In terms of disagreeing with an Auditor General, the PCs say that disputing the Auditor General's findings is unprecedented and it's a resigning issue. They clearly don't remember former Public Safety and Security Minister Bob Runciman calling an Auditor General report "misleading and inaccurate." I would never use those terms, Mr. Speaker. We had a professional disagreement, and they should look at their own record before they start throwing stones.

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's about the third time, so the member from Prince Edward—Hastings is warned. For those who don't remember: no more chances.

New question.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FUNDING

Mr. Percy Hatfield: My question this morning is for the Premier. Good morning, Premier.

Yesterday's Auditor General's report made clear that since 2005, the government has overpaid \$8 billion of hard-earned taxpayers' money on P3 infrastructure projects; \$6.5 billion of that wasted money came from the higher private sector borrowing costs that P3s incur.

Earlier today, the Premier toured one of those P3 projects, the spur line of the Union Pearson Express project. Financing for that project was provided by some of Canada's largest and most profitable banks. How does this government justify picking the pockets of the people of Ontario to fatten the profits of Canada's largest banks?

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

Hon. Brad Duguid: Let me begin by thanking the Auditor General for the recommendations that she did make with regard to Infrastructure Ontario. I have a letter from the board of Infrastructure Ontario that was submitted to me yesterday, saying that they will indeed look into and work with all of those recommendations.

What I can say, though, is that it's incorrect to suggest, as the member is suggesting, that \$8 billion has somehow been lost in these projects. The fact of the matter is, you can't point to a cost without also including the benefit. The benefit, Mr. Speaker—and it's in the report—is \$14 billion in savings as a result of costs that

have been shifted to the private sector, which means, when you analyze that with the costs, it's about \$6.6 billion in net savings to Ontarians as a result of the 74 AFP projects that we have presided over. That's the full story. That's what the member should be referring to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: The minister can try to spin this all he wants, but the auditor made it clear there was no solid evidence for going the privatization route on these 74 projects. In fact, her predecessor said the same thing in 2012 about the Union Pearson Express spur line. He said very clearly that the numbers used to justify the P3 were basically made up.

The government didn't listen then; it refuses to listen now. The government has already wasted \$8 billion on public-private partnerships. How many more billions will the government waste before it listens to the advice of not one, but two Auditors General?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I know this member to be a sensible member of this Legislature, so it sort of surprises me when he would throw out a cost without also referring to the benefit. So I refer him to page 203 of the report, where it clearly outlines the differences between what he's saying and what the auditor has said.

The auditor's report indicates on page 203 that there are \$46.6 billion that have been spent under the traditional program. Under AFP, those costs are \$40 billion, which is a saving of \$6.6 billion. A saving is a saving. You've got to include the benefits when you talk about the costs. It's that simple.

SENIOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: My question is for the minister responsible for seniors' affairs. Recently, the minister, along with some of my colleagues, attended the Ontario Senior Achievement Awards right here at Queen's Park, honouring 20 outstanding seniors who, after the age of 65, have made significant contributions to their communities.

Seniors across Ontario have given a lifetime of service towards building this country, our province and their communities. They are part of a proud history of giving back and are lifelong contributors both in their working life and now as volunteers. I was humbled and inspired by the remarkable achievements of all the recipients.

Would the minister kindly please provide us with additional details regarding this wonderful event and program and how Ontario continues to recognize and celebrate our seniors?

Hon. Mario Sergio: I thank the member from Burlington for the question, a good question, actually.

Celebrating our seniors is part of Ontario's commitment to build a successful, compassionate province where everyone has the opportunity to connect, contribute and enjoy a high quality of life. We have celebrated the extensive contributions of Ontario seniors for the past 28 years with the Ontario Senior Achievement Awards, and each year we are reminded of just how much they have done for us.

1130

Along with the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, I had the pleasure of presenting 20 incredible seniors with this honour. For every hour and every act of dedication these seniors have made, our quality of life improves, our community spirit grows and our province is made stronger because of the extraordinary work that they do on our behalf.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'd like to thank the minister for his response. I'm delighted to inform this Legislature that an outstanding senior from my riding of Burlington, Mr. William K. Ferris, was celebrated at the ceremony.

Applause.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Indeed.

Mr. Ferris has volunteered with the Canadian Red Cross for more than 20 years. He has taken on various leadership roles and assisted with deployments to the Mississippi and Manitoba floods and northern Ontario wildfires, as well as Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Ike aftermaths in the United States. He's quite an exceptional person, as you can see. I was very humbled by the accomplishments of this incredible senior from my community and I was pleased to recently congratulate him on receiving this important award.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please tell us more about the recipients who received this wonderful honour?

Hon. Mario Sergio: I have to thank the member for Burlington for her very strong advocacy and representation on behalf of the seniors in her community.

Seniors over the age of 65 who qualify for this award have contributed in many different fields, including art, literature, community service, volunteerism, education, environment, fitness, humanitarian and others. These exemplary seniors have taught others how to overcome late-life depression. They have brought the gift of music to young and old alike. They have preserved beauty and nature in their communities for all to enjoy and so much more.

The awards they have received are symbolic of how much we respect, honour and admire them all. They represent the collective wisdom and compassion that have brightened the lives of many others and their accomplishments are an inspiration to us all. We will continue to do more for seniors, Speaker.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Minister of Economic Development. Minister, over the past few months, you've used baffle-gab and gobbledygook in this House to deflect from your utter mismanagement and incompetence while taking taxpayers for a ride to MaRS.

Let's review your litany of malfeasance: You couldn't loan money to MaRS, so you changed the law. MaRS still couldn't lease the building to 80%, so you broke the law—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm going to ask the member to withdraw. I would not advise him to say that other thing he just said. Withdraw, please.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I withdraw.

So you bended the law that you had just made. MaRS got the loan, but couldn't make the monthly payments, so you had another ministry make the interest payments for MaRS. Then you bailed out ARE to get back to square one.

Minister, why should anyone in this province have any trust in you to turn this mess around?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Litany of personal insults aside, I'm pleased to respond to this question. Again, I want to thank the auditor for her coverage of the MaRS issue in the Auditor General's report. She spent a great deal of time rolling out the narrative on this from the very beginning, right through to today. I think that's a valuable piece of work because what it does is indicate the challenges. It verifies that that building would have been left one more winter rotting in the ground, which would have created some great expense, and it indicates when and why the government had to step in to provide support to MaRS.

I'm looking forward later today to getting together with our expert panel in announcing a positive step forward. I hope that the member wants to join us in putting this project on to solid footing. I suspect he has alternative agendas.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Minister, I was at your press conference. You did not welcome the Auditor General's report whatsoever.

But let's also look at your terrible list of decisions as cabinet minister. First, you cancelled a gas plant and wasted a billion dollars, and your colleague took the fall for that mistake. You were caught using franking stickers that you weren't legally allowed to, so you let your staff member resign in disgrace.

It's quite clear that you have an impeccable record of skirting your responsibility. And now you have the gall to question the Auditor General's numbers yesterday in a press conference, and that she got it wrong.

Minister, I know that MaRS stands for medical and research services, but I think it's more like to really mean the minister's annual repeated screw-ups. I'll be at the technical meeting today, and—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. I'm going to ask him to temper his language.

Minister.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I would never respond by attacking the member's integrity. His own party will do that for us, I suspect, because they tend to do that on a regular basis, and that's fine.

What I will say, Mr. Speaker, is I am looking forward to the announcement we will be making this afternoon. This project needs to be put on solid footing. We need to protect the taxpayer investment in this project. The announcement we're going to make later today will do just that.

We need to see this project be finished because that's going to create jobs, that's going to create economic growth, and that's going to help build a stronger innovation climate in the city of Toronto and the province of

Ontario. We're looking forward to making that announcement.

I don't expect to have the member's support on this. That member wanted this building to rot in the ground. We're going to build it up. We're going to create jobs. We're going to create economic development. Mr. Speaker, we're going to finish that project.

MINISTER'S COMMENTS

Ms. Catherine Fife: To the Premier: Yesterday the Minister of Energy patronized the Auditor General by saying that the electricity system was too complicated for her to understand. It was patronizing; it was sexist. Today he said this about—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order, please. Please finish.

Ms. Catherine Fife: —and it was shocking yesterday. But today, he said this about the leader of our party: "I won't take lessons from that woman." You said that in this House this morning. You didn't say "the leader of the party." You didn't say "the member from Hamilton Centre." You said "that woman."

Will the Premier do the progressive thing and have her minister apologize for that kind of language in this House?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let's talk about the substance of the issue, because I think what the party opposite is trying to do is to deflect from what we're really talking about.

We're actually not talking about gender, Mr. Speaker. We're actually talking about a competent and a respected officer of this Legislature who wrote a report that we have accepted. We understand that there are concerns that need to be addressed. We will continue to work with that professional officer of the Legislature.

But what we also will do is, we will point out where there are points of difference. What our Minister of Energy has done is, he has simply said we agree with much of what the Auditor General has said, but there are some points of disagreement, and we need to continue to work with her on those, so that the people of Ontario will know exactly what the programs we've put in place have accomplished.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Premier, you're missing an opportunity to address the very issue that this House is facing around sexist behaviour. You're missing it right now.

The Minister of Energy has attacked the auditor. He's on the record as doing so. Now he's using sexist, unparliamentary language to refer to our leader. I don't know what's going on in the minister's head, but he should be more respectful when things come out of his mouth.

Will the Premier fire her minister for his behaviour toward the auditor and toward the leader of this party, the member from Hamilton Centre? Do it right now.

Interjections.

1140

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I have five adult daughters. They come over and have dinner with me at my house frequently. They're very, very interested in public policy issues and discussions, and we get involved in some very animated debates. Sometimes they're fairly heated debates, but they're very respectful. I respect my daughters.

I respect the Auditor General. We had a professional disagreement. She came to my office. I met with her with my staff. We discussed some of the issues. We explained our position to her, and we agreed to disagree. That has nothing to do with the allegations that are being made on the other side.

When I'm dealing with people—with women, I see my daughters across the table.

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

Interjections.

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

Start the clock, please.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order, please. The member from Timmins–James Bay will come to order. The leader of the third party will come to order, please. Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. The Minister of Labour will come to order. Thank you.

New question.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: My question is to our incredible Minister of Education. Student well-being is one of our key priorities. My daughter and tens of thousands of other young Ontarians are already benefitting from full-day kindergarten, but we know, as children grow older, physical activity does more than improve health and well-being. It also builds confidence, leadership, productivity and creativity.

Research and science also show that physical activity in school improves a student's concentration, attention span and mood, ensuring they're prepared to learn. Providing more opportunities for children and youth to stay healthy and succeed in school supports our government's economic plan for Ontario as well. That's why I was so pleased to hear about the 60 minutes of physical activity initiative that you and the Premier announced recently. Could you please elaborate on this announcement and how it will get more children active throughout the day?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you to the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, and I wish his daughter well in school.

I was pleased to join the Premier and the Associate Minister of Health last week—it seems like ages ago now, but just last week—to announce a partnership with Active at School and the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association, which we refer to as Ophea, to get children more active each and every day. Active at School will be working with Ontario and Ophea to provide kids with the opportunity to participate in 60 minutes of physical activity for kids, connected to the school day in some way or another.

Meeting this goal of 60 minutes of physical activity a day is part of our government's renewed focus on student well-being, including healthy eating, physical activity, a supportive and safe school climate and mental health—

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

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Thank you, Minister, for your fulsome response. Student well-being is one of our key priorities. We know that when children and youth are physically active, they're healthier and better able to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

My five-year-old daughter is already fascinated by the lure of electronics and video games. My wife and I certainly don't want her and her friends just sitting on a couch playing games. We want her and her friends to be healthy and active. So our goal as parents, and I know your goal as minister, is to ensure that our children are getting at least an hour a day of physical activity by 2018. We're trying to give her that already now.

Minister, can you please explain how the partnership between Ophea and Active at School will help to meet our goal of 60 minutes of physical activity a day?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you so much. When I think about my grandchildren, they're really active. They spend a lot of time biking, skating and swimming. They're really active, but that isn't true of all kids. We want to make sure that all kids are getting the physical activity that they need to thrive.

So when we think about this initiative, there are a number of ways in which we can reach that 60 minutes. It might be through an organized sport. It might be through extracurricular activities. It might be through the gym class. It might be through activities in the regular curriculum. It could be in what we call active transportation and encouraging kids to walk or bike to school. There are so many ways, Speaker, that we can do an excellent job of getting our children more active than they are today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, on a point of order.

Mr. Bill Walker: Just wondering, in the spirit of transparency and accountability, if we could have unanimous consent for me to do my question.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is seeking unanimous consent to ask his question. Do we agree? No.

MEMBERS' PHOTOS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I find this rather interesting announcement that I have to make. I'm going to remind everybody before we do the deferred vote not to run away because this is the opportunity that you've been presented with: A collective photograph of the entire House is immediately after the vote. Immediately after that, the women's parliamentary picture will be taken, as well.

We have a deferred vote—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I think I've been pretty patient, but I'm getting heckled just to make an announcement. That's regrettable.

DEFERRED VOTES

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

Deferred vote on the motion for third 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): Please call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1147 to 1152.

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

On December 9, Mr. Bradley moved third reading of Bill 21. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm
Anderson, Granville	Gravelle, Michael	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gretzky, Lisa	Moridi, Reza
Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Michael	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Baker, Yvan	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Natyshak, Taras
Ballard, Chris	Horwath, Andrea	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Jones, Sylvia	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Kiwala, Sophie	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Leal, Jeff	Sattler, Peggy
Colle, Mike	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Coteau, Michael	MacLaren, Jack	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	MacLeod, Lisa	Singh, Jagmeet

Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Smith, Todd
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Martins, Cristina	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dickson, Joe	Martow, Gila	Vanhof, John
Dong, Han	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Duguid, Brad	Mauro, Bill	Walker, Bill
Elliott, Christine	McDonell, Jim	Wilson, Jim
Fife, Catherine	McGarry, Kathryn	Wong, Soo
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMahon, Eleanor	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Forster, Cindy	McMeekin, Ted	Yakabuski, John
Fraser, John	Meilleur, Madeleine	Yurek, Jeff
French, Jennifer K.	Milczyn, Peter Z.	Zimmer, David

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 93; the nays are 0.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1156 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: We have a number of people in the gallery. As you know, a little bit later we'll be doing a tribute to a good friend and colleague who served in this Legislature for a long time, and I'd like to introduce a number of friends and a number of former colleagues. I'll do it in that order:

Bill Baulch, Sandra Bussin, Lisa Christensen, Russell Hahn, Carolyn Lemon, Bruce Logan, Trish Nember and Eleanor O'Connor.

I also would like to introduce—and I don't want to steal your thunder here—former Speaker of the Legislature David Warner, who is here with us.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You are stealing my thunder, but carry on.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I am. Thank you very much, Speaker. I'm trying as best I can.

A former Treasurer of Ontario, Floyd Laughren, is here as well, in the members' west gallery; along with Frances Lankin, a former minister of the crown; along with our good friend Ruth Grier, a former minister of the crown. Apparently, Marilyn Churley is here somewhere. Wherever you are, Marilyn, we say hello. Thank you and welcome back.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I do like it when we all get along.

Further introductions?

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'd like to introduce the Woodfield Road residents, who are sitting in the gallery. They are from an area of my riding, and I'm pleased to have them here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Now, with a little less thunder, it is the habit of this particular Speaker and, I think, previous Speakers to introduce our former members.

In the members' west gallery, we have Floyd Laughren, from Nickel Belt in the 30th to the 36th Parliaments; Frances Lankin, from Beaches–Woodbine in the 35th and 36th Parliaments and from Beaches–East York in the 37th Parliament; and Ruth Grier, from Lakeshore in the 33rd Parliament and Etobicoke–Lakeshore in the 34th and 35th Parliaments. We welcome you to the west members' gallery.

In the Speaker's gallery is the former member from Scarborough–Ellesmere in the 30th, 31st, 33rd and 35th Parliaments, and Speaker in the 35th Parliament, David Warner.

Welcome to all our former members. We're glad you're here.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): With no insult to the member from Timmins–James Bay, that one's got more thunder than if you had let me have it. I just thought I'd let you know. Anyway, it's nice to be introduced twice.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. Ted Arnott: Last year's Christmas ice storm was an event that we will not soon forget. Our riding of Wellington–Halton Hills was among the hardest-hit areas. In the aftermath of the storm, the provincial government quickly committed to providing assistance to municipalities to help cover cleanup costs.

On February 18, I spoke in this House and urged the government to work with our municipal partners to ensure that they were properly compensated for legitimate ice storm costs. I also wrote directly to the previous minister several times in support of our local municipalities.

However, almost a year has now passed, and they are growing increasingly frustrated with a process that seems to keep changing on them and is much more complex and complicated than it perhaps needs to be.

The town of Halton Hills originally submitted a claim for \$1.8 million. The government then changed the guidelines on them, and they're now working toward a new unofficial deadline of year's end. The township of Puslinch had to compile 330 pages to support their claim of \$45,000. The township of Centre Wellington is working hard to complete a \$302,000 claim. The township of Guelph/Eramosa is also working to finish their submission before the deadline.

The Grand River Conservation Authority needs \$550,000, Conservation Halton is requesting \$129,000 and I found out today that the Hamilton Conservation Authority is also planning to submit a claim.

I trust our local partners, and I am confident that they would submit verifiable claims or I wouldn't be standing

in this House now and raising this issue. They should listen to my colleague the member for Oxford. Let's work together and get this done.

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY BRANCH

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I rise today to bring attention to the excellent work done by the Windsor-Essex branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. Since their first very meeting in 1971, the Windsor-Essex branch CMHA has evolved to become a vital local resource for people suffering from mental health challenges in Windsor and Essex county.

The Windsor-Essex branch offers client-focused, community-based programs, such as their homeless initiative program or their employment support program. These programs help keep people out of hospital, and assist them in becoming self-empowered and ultimately fully invested members of their local community.

In order to build on their mandate, the CMHA is looking to develop community training programs. These programs would allow mental health professionals to train other front-line workers—like firefighters, police officers, paramedics, nurses and correctional officers—to properly care for people suffering from mental illness in their various work environments. Professionals in my community want this training and the CMHA is willing to provide it, but they need financial assistance.

I hope all members of this chamber can agree to help find ways to provide assistance and support to the development of CMHA community training programs in Windsor West and in their own communities.

TORONTO FAIR TRADE SHOW

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Last week, I had the opportunity to attend the Toronto Fair Trade Show hosted in Davenport's very own Gladstone Hotel, an iconic institution for the arts known not just in my riding, but across the country and the world.

Organized by Rafik Riad, the fair trade show was the first of its kind in Canada, developing awareness of fair trade products and supporting producers and local artisans from over 25 developing countries.

The overarching theme of this fantastic event was to raise public awareness and consciousness that our individual consumer choices can raise the standard of living for countless people everywhere.

The show demonstrated the importance of ensuring the goods we purchase are produced in an ethical and sustainable way. Indeed, hundreds of Torontonians came to Davenport for the fair trade show to do just that.

There was tremendous energy in the room as participants roamed around the Gladstone Hotel learning about fair trade. Fifteen fantastic vendors were featured with a unique set of products from different artisans and producers around the world.

The company Social Gem sold jewellery produced by female artisans in Indonesia, whom they fund to assist with school fees.

As a matter of fact, the necklace I'm wearing right now is from the fair trade show. This necklace is made from rice-straw paper and was produced by deaf and mute women involved in El Nafeza, an Egyptian charity working in the field of craftsmanship and social development.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy that this wonderful event took place in my riding of Davenport, and I'm looking forward to next year's event.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I rise today to challenge the government to take responsibility for their gross fiscal mismanagement and the devastating economic and human costs associated.

Yesterday's report from the Auditor General again highlighted the failures of this Liberal government. The lack of value for money found in this audit is extremely disturbing: for instance, \$2 billion spent on smart meters, a decision that the AG points out was not supported by a cost-benefit analysis. Speaker, I ask, who does that? If you are running a business, you must take a look at your analysis in that regard. And they spent over \$1 billion beyond the original estimated cost.

There is also another problem: global adjustment. By next year the total cost will be \$50 billion over and above the market costs of electricity. We all know in Ontario we can't afford higher electricity costs, because we're paying subsidies out for energy that we no longer need. Global adjustment has significantly impacted time-of-use rates, now accounting for 70% of electricity costs.

This mismanagement of energy and the economy has created hardships for the people and businesses of my riding of Huron-Bruce and across this province. Even the manufacturing sector in my riding, which I have spoken with, told me they have been forced to send people home during operational hours as opposed to paying global adjustment, all because energy prices are too high.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for this government to start making smart economic decisions.

TRUCKING SAFETY

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Today I rise to discuss the issue of aggregate and dump truck drivers. There's a serious issue that has been going on for over a decade, and this government has done nothing to address it. Whether it's dump truck drivers whose trucks are being overloaded because the loaders are putting too much weight into that truck and the drivers have no control over it, and the drivers end up getting the fines—this government has not addressed this problem.

1510

When it comes to aggregate drivers, aggregate drivers also don't have any control over where the loads are

placed, but when they pull into an MTO enforcement facility, the MTO then gives them fines and tickets for axle weight. They can't control which axle the loader puts the material onto.

To address the situation, the government needs to implement realistic policies—implement proper legislation that addresses the realities that these drivers face. This government has, time and time again, given makeshift solutions to this problem by providing exemptions that sometimes work and sometimes don't work. Drivers need to be treated with respect. This government can make the proper changes but is not committed to doing it.

Providing fake solutions, makeshift solutions is not the answer. The government needs to have a systemic overhaul of the system and ensure there's true fairness. At the end of the day, the loaders—the companies that load the trucks—need to be held responsible, not the drivers. I ask this government to do something. A decade of lack of action is simply unacceptable.

CHRISTKINDL MARKET

Ms. Daiene Vernile: You've heard me share with you and the members of this House how, in my riding of Kitchener Centre, we are the oldest and the largest German community in Canada. This past week, Kitchener city hall turned the clock back to celebrate an ancient Germanic tradition called the Christkindl Market. For four days, our city hall was transformed into a medieval marketplace, and 40,000 people showed up to celebrate this wonderful, unique experience over the course of the festival.

Many people these days are complaining that Christmas is too commercial, too fast and too flashy. If you feel that way, then you need to experience the Christkindl Market. There were booths and stalls full of traditional handmade Christmas ornaments, nutcrackers, wood-carved toys, hand-crafted jewellery, handmade knitted sweaters and scarves, and of course, we had lots of tasty German foods.

But wait, there's more. Choirs and dancers wandered through city hall over the course of the festival depicting various Christmas characters. They are traditional characters and they welcomed everyone.

For 18 years, this very festive market has shown us how Christmas was celebrated in a much simpler time. It showed us how in the city of Kitchener, once called Berlin, people marked the holiday season.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wish everyone a very safe and happy holiday. Merry Christmas and, as the Germans say, frohe Weihnachten.

WINCHESTER DISTRICT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mr. Jim McDonell: In my riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, we are blessed with many wonderful and caring people and organizations. One such organization is the Winchester District Memorial Hospital.

The hospital has gained a high level of confidence and support in our community due to its superior level of care. In fact, just last month, it once again was acknowledged with two awards: the first, a Quality Healthcare Workplace Award from the Ontario Hospital Association in recognition of its efforts made to improve the quality of work life as well as the quality of care delivered; and second, a Workplace Health Award from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit for exceeding expectations in encouraging employees to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. I have come to expect such awards as they are a regular occurrence at this hospital, which is reflected in the community support received during its recent fundraising activities.

The riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry is geographically a very large riding, stretching over 100 kilometres from the Quebec border westerly to include Bainsville, Cornwall, Long Sault, Iroquois and Winchester. It is not unusual that people where I live in the far east of the riding tell me that they are travelling to Winchester over an hour away to receive health care at the hospital, driving by numerous other health care options. I believe that says it all.

Once again, congratulations to the staff and front-line workers at the Winchester District Memorial Hospital—a job well done.

GO TRANSIT

Mr. Bob Delaney: Yesterday, my esteemed colleague from Halton had the pleasure of announcing new GO service on the Milton line for all of us who are served by GO Transit on Milton. Those seven stations serve commuters in Halton region—in particular, Milton—Lisgar, Meadowvale, Streetsville, Erin Mills, Cooksville and Dixie.

These are two badly needed new trains providing service on the Milton line, one which is going to connect in Lisgar, Meadowvale and Streetsville somewhere just shortly before 9—between 8:40 and 9—which is going to enable people to be able to get down who don't need to spend a full day in Toronto and most valuably, one that's going to leave Union Station at 3:40. So if yours is a short day to spend in Toronto, you're now going to have an opportunity to take that GO train instead of taking your car downtown and paying the price to park downtown.

In the last 11 years, we have more than doubled capacity on the Milton line—gone from five trains to nine in January, with the new service taking effect on Monday, January 5. The trains have all expanded from 10 to 12 cars. We've expanded all of the platforms at the stations to accommodate 12 cars, especially at Streetsville—expanded parking; built a new parking lot on the north side; resurfaced the station; implemented the Presto card; and, of course, built the new Streetsville GO bus repair facility—all great news for people in Mississauga and Milton.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: In a country where all but our First Nations peoples are immigrants and where our diversity, ethnicity, colour and religion are not just tolerated but celebrated in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it is deeply troubling that there are some who seek to perpetuate the hatred and fear of another.

As you may be aware, Mr. Speaker, recently the Islamic Centre of Kingston was vandalized by persons as yet unknown. I stand here today to denounce these mindless acts unequivocally. This hateful criminal behaviour is reprehensible and has no place in our city or our society.

Kingston prides itself on its multicultural strength and its deep embrace of minorities. It's a community that cares. If my Muslim sisters and brothers are hurt, then I am hurt too. We are one, and I stand with our Muslim community.

The Islamic community in Kingston is in fact a shining example of inclusivity and kindness to others. They are bright, welcoming, respectful, inquisitive and a loving and generous people.

Fellow members, I urge you to stand up against racism in all forms, in words and in acts, no matter how small or large. Shukran. Toda. Thank you. Teşekkür ederim. Meegwetch.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just before I turn to the Minister of Education, as was guessed by the member from Timmins–James Bay, we do have another visitor in the members' west gallery, and that's Marilyn Churley from Riverdale in the 35th and 36th Parliaments, Broadview–Greenwood in the 37th Parliament, and Toronto–Danforth in the 37th and 38th Parliaments. Marilyn Churley, welcome.

MARION BRYDEN

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We'll turn to the Minister of Education on a point of order.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to pay tribute to Marion Bryden, a former member of this Legislature for the then riding of Beaches–Woodbine from 1975 to 1990, with a representative from each caucus speaking for up to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Education is seeking unanimous consent to pay tribute. Do we agree? Agreed.

I will turn to the member from Beaches–East York.

Mr. Arthur Potts: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome, guests and friends of Marion Bryden.

On behalf of the government caucus, I am honoured to have this opportunity to pay tribute to Marion Bryden, a very respected former member of this House who represented my riding of Beaches–East York, which was then known as Beaches–Woodbine. I'm particularly

pleased to be able to deliver these remarks in front of a previous member of my riding, Frances Lankin, and my previous member of provincial Parliament for Toronto–Danforth, Marilyn Churley. Welcome to both of you. You served this House well with distinction.

Marion Bryden served this Legislature for 15 years, making her one of the longest-serving women in the history of this Legislature. I'm sure that many of my colleagues in this room are familiar with Marion's exceptional work in politics, especially my colleagues from the third party. But if I may, I would like to provide a bit of background for those who are not as familiar.

Marion Bryden, a native of Winnipeg, was born in 1918 and passed away just two years ago. She received her post-secondary education at the University of Manitoba and was a scholarship student at the University of Toronto. Though coming from a Conservative family, Marion developed a growing interest in socialist and progressive ideas at the University of Toronto and became increasingly active in the Canadian Co-operative Federation.

After school, Marion joined the federal Department of Labour as a researcher, and this is where Marion met her future husband, Kenneth Bryden.

1520

As it turns out, her tremendous work in research at this time would become the launching pad for her very impressive career in politics. Her researching expertise is what thrust her into the history books as one of the greatest pioneers of the New Democratic Party.

In 1944, Ken moved to Saskatchewan to work for Tommy Douglas's new CCF party in government. Marion resigned her post in Ottawa to join her husband out west, stopping along the way at her family home in Winnipeg, where she and Ken were married.

Although this was a time where it was frowned upon for a married woman to be working in government, it wasn't long before Marion was hired by the CCF. The opposition and the media made a major issue of her employment, but to the credit of Tommy Douglas, he insisted that only the qualifications of an employee were relevant, and that Marion more than exceeded the requirements.

Marion was greatly affected by the treatment that she received in her bid for government work. It was outright wrong that gender should ever be a consideration in hiring processes for a government, and Marion would make sure that this attitude changed.

As we all know, Marion and her husband were key figures in forming the Ontario New Democratic Party in the early 1960s, but in 1949, Marion and Ken had moved back to Toronto, where she worked on analysis and budget issues for the following decades while she helped out with the Ontario branch of the CCF. During this period she also wrote several books on taxation.

In 1966, Marion joined Ken, who had been an MPP since 1959 at Queen's Park, where she was hired to do research for the NDP caucus in the Ontario Legislature. Her excellent work during this time led to her rise in the

ranks of the NDP, and she laid the foundation for the NDP research department, to the admiration of her colleagues. She was renowned for her very aggressive and thorough research and those biting questions she put to members of the government at the time, and probably set the stage for some of the great questions we get from the other side of the House now.

In 1975, Marion brought the provincial riding of Beaches–Woodbine back to the NDP fold after the riding had been lost to Tom Wardle in 1971. We should know that Beaches–East York, previously Beaches–Woodbine, was a CCF and NDP stronghold for more than 50 years. Marion held the riding from 1975 to 1990. She was then, of course, followed by former NDP Health Minister Frances Lankin, who held the seat for 11 years, and my predecessor, Mr. Prue, who held it for 13 years.

Members from all parties greatly admired the work that Marion did for her 15 years here at the Legislature, and here are a few quotes from June 1990 that I would like to share with everyone here in tribute. First, from Progressive Conservative Don Cousens: "I know the people of Beaches–Woodbine have been well served by a lady who has conscientiously given her best and who has been among the best of any legislators in this place."

Then Liberal Chris Ward, MPP, Wentworth North said, "The commitment" that Marion "gives to her duties and responsibilities here as critic, as a committee person and as an advocate for the causes that she believes in, I think all of us could do well to emulate."

Finally, NDP leader at the time Bob Rae, the MPP for York South, said, "Members from other parties will have an opportunity to reflect on Marion's contributions to this place, on her dedication to her constituents, the fact that we would not have legislation on equal pay, for example, if we had not had the pioneer work that Marion did long before it was fashionable and long before it had the support of other parties."

Mr. Speaker, as I have highlighted throughout this tribute, one of Marion's most passionate subjects was her fight for equal rights for women. She was greatly affected by the backlash and the treatment she had received in her bid to work for government, and as a result of this endemic sexism, Marion believed that all women carry a dual role in the House. She believed that no matter what their appointed tasks, they must also, while they're here, represent women.

She was passionate about many causes. She demonstrated that passion by wearing a different pin daily promoting her favourite cause of the day. This was before we had to seek unanimous consent to wear pins for different causes.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Marion from her own resignation speech of June 28, 1990: "Every one of the 130 members here brings to me an awareness of the diversity of our great province...."

"I would have liked to have seen more women among the faces surrounding me.... I would have liked to have seen a more multicultural House, more visible minorities and some members who could truly call themselves first Canadians."

I think Marion would be very pleased to see what I see here today. This past spring, more women were elected to this chamber than ever before. Two of the three party leaders are women, with perhaps all three being led by women come the next spring.

It's quite clear to me and I'm sure to everyone else in this House that Marion Bryden's dedication to these issues has become a resounding success, and we have all benefited from her efforts. Thank you, Marion, for all you have done for this great province.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to introduce some folks in the gallery who are here today to honour Marion: friends Bill Baulch, Sandra Bussin and Lisa Christensen; former MPP and friend Marilyn Churley; former MPP and friend Ruth Grier; friend Russell Hahn; former MPP and friend Frances Lankin; friend Carolyn Lemon; friend Bruce Logan; friend Eleanor O'Connor; friend and former MPP Michael Prue; and former MPP and former Speaker David Warner. Welcome to Queen's Park.

It's my pleasure to rise on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus and pay tribute to Marion Bryden. Marion served as an NDP member of provincial Parliament from 1975 to 1990 for the riding of Beaches–Woodbine. During her 15 years at Queen's Park, Marion served as her party's critic for colleges and universities, the solicitor general, correctional services, seniors' issues, revenue and transport.

As a native of Winnipeg, Marion embodied the vision and courageous spirit and personified the very best of Canadian values. By the time she arrived to Queen's Park in 1975, Marion was a force to reckon with. She went from being a scholarship student at the University of Toronto to an expert and published author of several books and publications on taxation policy. Marion also served as a member of the Canadian Council on Social Development, the Elizabeth Fry Society, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and as president of the Ontario Woodsworth Memorial Foundation. She was an active union drive organizer. One of her campaigns, albeit unfortunately unsuccessful, included the drive to organize Eaton's.

After serving as a member of the federal NDP council for six years, Marion went on to help found the Ontario New Democratic Party in 1961. A few years later, she was hired to do research for the NDP caucus in the Ontario Legislature, and later she was instrumental in putting together the NDP caucus's first official research team.

She was an exemplary representative of the people who was re-elected 14 times. She passed away on February 12, 2013. We thank Marion posthumously for her service and efforts to make our community, our province and our country the best it can be. May you rest in peace.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm proud to stand on behalf of the New Democratic caucus here in the Legislature to say a few words about Marion Bryden.

Being a woman in politics carries all the challenges of leadership, and then some. It takes toughness, intelligence, empathy and compassion. Behind every woman who dedicates her life to public service stands another strong woman, and another and another.

In fact, we women here today followed Marion Bryden under the limestone arches of this Legislature just as she followed CCF pioneers Agnes Macphail, Margaret Rae Luckock and NDP MPP Margaret Renwick. Today we honour her in the chamber where she once sat as the member of provincial Parliament for the riding of Beaches–Woodbine.

Marion was an incredible woman, as you've heard from the remarks already made by my colleagues in the other two parties, a fierce champion for those less fortunate than herself. She was a member of the Canadian Council on Social Development and the Elizabeth Fry Society. Marion worked tirelessly as a union organizer and, later, a researcher for Tommy Douglas during his first term in office.

Once elected to office herself, she quickly became a political legend. She was an original CCFer and a founding figure for New Democrats everywhere. Marion is, to this day, one of the longest-serving female MPPs in Ontario's history, having served for 15 years in this House.

I know that her friends and colleagues who are here with us today in the spectators' gallery will agree that for Marion, politics was personal and it carried a duty of service. She believed that no one deserved to be left behind in a province as fortunate as Ontario, in a country as rich as Canada. She devoted her career to righting wrongs, to opening every door and to affording equal opportunity to women, to our elders, to young people, to First Nations people, to people of every faith and background, to people who are able-bodied, to people with disabilities, to healthy people, to people who are sick.

Just like her husband, Ken, who preceded her as MPP for Beaches–Woodbine, Marion wasn't afraid to speak up, to take a stand, and to haul cabinet ministers—and the Premier—on the carpet when it came to issues that mattered to Ontarians, like affordable housing and creating jobs for people, no matter where they live in the province.

1530

Marion understood her role as a mentor, and she felt a responsibility to encourage girls and women to get involved in the political process. She lived the struggle. In 1944, when she was called to Saskatchewan to serve as a researcher in Tommy Douglas's first social-democratic government, Marion also became a test case.

It's hard to believe it now, but back then married women weren't supposed to hold jobs in government. The opposition had a field day, but Tommy argued that a person's qualification for the job, not her gender and not her marital status, was all that mattered. The same kind of clear-headed reasoning and basic respect for the rights of individuals gave Canadians universal health care.

Marion earned that job, just like she earned all of the jobs that would follow, through grit, determination and,

frankly, sheer brilliance. We've come a long way since 1917, when Ontario women first fought our way onto the voters' list, and we've made great strides since women began to serve in public office in our province, but we still have a way to go before the gender balance of our Legislature more accurately reflects our voting population.

There are reasons to celebrate. Thanks to the pioneering work of Marion, we're breaking records all the time. In the last election, Ontarians sent a record 38 women from across the province and the political spectrum to represent them at Queen's Park; 44 women ran as New Democrat candidates, the most of any party, and I'm proud to count 10 women as my colleagues in the New Democratic caucus. I think Marion would be proud of us, particularly being able to achieve the milestone of being the first caucus to serve with more than 50% women here at the Ontario Legislature.

There's no doubt that, together, women are making our voices heard, but I think we acknowledge that there is yet more to do. It is up to all of us to continue Marion's work. There is no better way to honour her memory than by keeping up the good fight.

Former NDP MP for Beaches–Woodbine Neil Young summed up Marion well when he said, "Marion was a force to be reckoned with at Queen's Park. She always sought out the best in people and encouraged them to get involved. Marion was instrumental in the building of the NDP, not only in Ontario but across Canada, and above all she gave of herself to our community and gained the respect of us all. She was much loved by us in return."

Today we remember Marion's contribution to the NDP, to the Beaches community, to Ontario and to the country, and we promise to keep fighting for the ideals that she dedicated her life to serving. Together we can make Ontario a fairer province for our children and for our grandchildren. Marion would expect nothing less from us.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their very thoughtful and heartfelt tributes. As is custom and tradition, we will make Hansard and DVDs available upon request. I thank all the members again, and I thank our visitors for being here for a great show of support.

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 bill, as amended:

Bill Pr5, An Act respecting Bible Baptist Temple (St. Thomas).

Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr8, An Act respecting Saint Paul University.

Bill Pr10, An Act to revive 752458 Ontario Ltd.

Bill Pr13, An Act to revive Walker Towne Centre Inc.

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

Report adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GASOLINE TAX FAIRNESS FOR ALL ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ POUR TOUS À L'ÉGARD DE LA TAXE SUR L'ESSENCE

Mr. Yakabuski moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 59, An Act to amend the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act with respect to matching rebates of gasoline tax that the Minister provides to municipalities / Projet de loi 59, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement des voies publiques et des transports en commun à l'égard des remboursements de la taxe sur l'essence similaires consentis aux municipalités par le ministre.

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. John Yakabuski: I'll put my glasses on for this.

The bill amends the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act. If the minister, under section 116 of the act, enters into an agreement with a municipality to provide a rebate of tax, under the Gasoline Tax Act, to the municipality for the purpose of constructing, maintaining or operating a rapid transit or public transportation system, the minister shall not refuse to enter into an agreement to provide a rebate of tax under that act to any other municipality for a purpose related to public highways under the jurisdiction of the latter municipality. The amount of the rebate that the latter municipality receives shall be based on the number of inhabitants in the municipality and the total distance of public highways under the jurisdiction of the municipality.

TARION ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LA RESPONSABILISATION ET LA SURVEILLANCE DE TARION

Mr. Singh moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to amend various Acts in respect of the corporation designated under the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act / Projet de loi 60, Loi modifiant diverses lois à l'égard de la société désignée en application de la Loi sur le Régime de garanties des logements neufs de l'Ontario.

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. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce in the House concerned members of the community around the issue of Tarion and members of Canadians for Properly Built Homes; also, members of HOWA. Dr. Karen Somerville is here. Please stand up and be acknowledged.

Applause.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you so much.

The act is the Tarion Accountability and Oversight Act, 2014. The act, essentially, seeks to offer accountability and oversight to Tarion, which is much needed.

I'll just summarize some of the salient issues from the explanatory note.

There's an Ombudsman Act, which would permit the Ombudsman to conduct investigations in respect to Tarion.

This act would also allow the Auditor General to have authority to audit Tarion.

This act would also prescribe Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act amendments which would require the Tarion board members to provide and disclose their salaries.

This act would also require that Tarion bylaws be subject to approval by the government to ensure there's transparency.

The main issue here is, Tarion is not receiving proper oversight and accountability. Numerous members of our community are complaining about it, and we need to address that. This act is a step in the right direction.

1540

TERRY FOX DAY ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LE JOUR DE TERRY FOX

Ms. Wong moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 61, An Act to proclaim Terry Fox Day / Projet de loi 61, Loi proclamant le Jour de Terry Fox.

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.

Ms. Soo Wong: The bill proclaims the second Sunday after Labour Day in each year as Terry Fox Day.

FAIRNESS IN LABOUR RELATIONS ACT (BARGAINING UNITS AND CERTIFICATION OF TRADE UNIONS), 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ DANS LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL (UNITÉS DE NÉGOCIATION ET ACCRÉDITATION DES SYNDICATS)

Mr. McDonnell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 62, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to the determination of bargaining units and the certification of trade unions / Projet de loi 62, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail en ce qui concerne la détermination des unités de négociation et l'accréditation des syndicats.

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. Jim McDonnell: The bill, also titled the Fairness in Labour Relations Act, applies to the construction industry and is looking at ensuring that before certification happens there is a representative vote held. A few of the other things included: The board is prohibited from certifying a trade union as a bargaining agent of the employees in a bargaining unit unless a representation vote is held amongst the employees. At present, if a complaint alleges an employer or employers' organization has contravened the act with respect to employment practices, the burden of proof at the inquiry by the board into compliance lies with the employer or the employers' organization. The bill transfers the burden of proof to the complainant.

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT (HST REBATE FOR HOME HEATING), 2014

LOI DE 2014 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA TAXE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL (REMBOURSEMENT DE LA TVH POUR LE CHAUFFAGE DOMESTIQUE)

Mr. Mantha moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 63, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to provide for a rebate of the Ontario portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax in respect of certain home heating costs / Projet de loi 63, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail pour prévoir un remboursement de la composante ontarienne de la taxe de vente harmonisée à l'égard de certains frais de chauffage domestique.

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. Michael Mantha: The bill amends the Retail Sales Tax Act to provide for a rebate in respect to the Ontario portion of the harmonized sales tax for the supply of home heating energy sources, home heating equipment and home heating services. The Lieutenant Governor in Council can make regulations prescribing rules relating to the rebate. The bill provides that the rebate is available upon the comprehensive integrated tax coordination agreement between Ontario and Canada and is amended accordingly.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introduction of bills? The member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I move second reading of Bill Pr13, An Act to revive Walker Town Centre—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's not doable. It's a PR bill. It's got to go to committee. Sorry.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): To the member from Windsor–Tecumseh, it will be part of orders of the day.

Before we move to the next section, I just want to remind members on an ongoing basis—a gentle reminder—that we do introduce bills. The tradition and the practice is to read from the explanatory notes. I've heard some good examples and I've also heard examples of not reading from the explanatory notes. You also can condense the explanatory notes—which I acknowledge one member did—which is a good thing. The idea is: no commentary, no introductions; just the explanatory notes. So I'd appreciate your co-operation.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that pursuant to standing order 6(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. tonight, Wednesday, December 10, 2014, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. tonight, Wednesday, December 10, 2014, for the purpose of considering government business. Do we agree? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1546 to 1551.

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

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

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan

Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Fraser, John
Gravelle, Michael

McMahon, Eleanor
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milczyn, Peter Z.

Balkissoon, Bas
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bradley, James J.
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han

Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzi
Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Lalonde, Marie-France
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn

Naidoo-Harris, Indra
Naqvi, Yasir
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

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

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnott, Ted
Barrett, Toby
Bisson, Gilles
Clark, Steve
Fife, Catherine
Forster, Cindy
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne
Gretzky, Lisa
Hardeman, Ernie
Hatfield, Percy

Hillier, Randy
Horwath, Andrea
MacLeod, Lisa
Mantha, Michael
McDonell, Jim
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia
Natyshak, Taras
Nicholls, Rick
Pettpiece, Randy

Sattler, Peggy
Scott, Laurie
Singh, Jagmeet
Smith, Todd
Taylor, Monique
Vanhof, John
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakubski, John
Yurek, Jeff

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 43; the nays are 34.

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

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr. Rick Nicholls: This is perhaps the shortest petition in the history of this Legislature.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We request that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario keep the obstetrics unit open at Leamington District Memorial Hospital."

I approve of this petition, affix my name to it and give it to Mikaila, who is from Leamington.

FIRST RESPONDERS

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to present a petition that reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas emergency response workers (paramedics, police officers, and firefighters) confront traumatic events on a nearly daily basis to provide safety to the public; and

"Whereas many emergency response workers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of their work; and

"Whereas Bill 2 'An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder' sets out that if an emergency

response worker suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, the disorder is presumed to be an occupational disease that occurred due to their employment as an emergency response worker, unless the contrary is shown;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to unanimously endorse and quickly pass Bill 2 ‘An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder.’”

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and will give it to page Moiz to deliver to the Clerks’ table.

COAL-FIRED GENERATING STATIONS

Ms. Daiene Vernile: This is a petition on ending coal for cleaner air in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontarians have growing concerns surrounding climate change and the quality of our air, it is integral that more is done to provide Ontarians with cleaner air;

“Whereas the combustion of coal to generate electricity is conducive toward higher levels of carbon dioxide emissions, which pollute the air and contribute immensely toward climate change;

“Whereas the cessation of coal use as a means of generating electricity in the Atikokan, Lambton, Nanticoke, and Thunder Bay generating facilities will result in cleaner air for Ontarians, which will ensure the long-term preservation of our air, environment, and public health;

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

“That all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario support Bill 9, the Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act, to stop generating facilities from using coal to produce electricity, which will eliminate high levels of carbon dioxide emissions and will in turn ensure cleaner air for Ontarians now and for future generations.”

Mr. Speaker, if I can have your attention, I sign this petition, and I shall give it to Albany.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

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

“Whereas recent hospital bed closures at Winchester District Memorial Hospital highlighted the need for stable and reliable funding for hospitals in order to maintain their ability to provide sufficient beds, staffing and resources to patients; and

“Whereas other cuts to health services such as those to in-residence physiotherapy and blood sugar test strips leave vulnerable citizens, especially seniors, at higher risk of debilitating conditions and accidents; and

“Whereas all Ontario residents deserve an efficient, affordable and accessible health care system;

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

“To immediately review health funding levels and strategies with a view to increasing patients’ access to both acute and chronic care, including through increased funding for hospital, retirement and long-term-care beds, increased home care provision, health support supplies such as insulin pumps and increased access to affordable or free preventive care.”

I agree with this and will be handing it off to page Tyler.

1600

ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I have a petition from right across Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Speaker, I agree with this petition. I will sign my name to it and give it to Ella to take up to the desk.

HYDRO RATES

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

“Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for

certain energy sources, including the world's highest subsidies for solar power; and

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

"Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario's residents, especially" those on fixed incomes; and

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

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

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

I will pass it off to page Elijah. I agree with the petition.

LYME DISEASE

Ms. Cindy Forster: "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 disease, Alzheimer's, depression, chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia is increasingly endemic in Canada, but current testing is extremely limited in terms of accuracy of detecting the causative spirochete (Health Canada, 2012);

"Whereas persistence of infection beyond the recommended duration of antibiotic regime has been shown to occur (Sapi et al., 2011). Formation of biofilm and cystic forms of *B. burgdorferi*, the causative agent of Lyme disease, has been shown to exist, further complicating treatment options (Sapi et al., 2012);

"Whereas existence of co-infective species of bacteria often persists along with infection of *B. burgdorferi* (Swanson et al., 2006);

"Whereas the CDC itself has recently promoted the yearly incidence of Lyme disease from 30,000 cases per year to 300,000 (CDC, 2013);

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

"To request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to direct the Ontario public health system and OHIP to both include all currently available and scientifically verified tests, including non-antibody-based testing kits, for acute and chronic Lyme disease in Ontario and to fund research and development efforts on more accurate, reliable and direct diagnostic and treatment protocols which take into account co-infection and other complications."

I support this petition and will sign it and deliver it with page Johann.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Michael Mantha: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the customers of Algoma Power, are being charged astronomical costs referred to as 'delivery fees';

"Whereas we, the customers of Algoma Power, would like the 'delivery fees' looked into and regulated so as to protect the consumer from big businesses gouging the consumer;

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

"Stop Algoma Power's influx of fees for delivery and stop the onset of increasing these fees another 40% within four years."

I agree with this petition, affix my signature and present it to page Moiz to bring it down to the Clerk.

CREDIT UNIONS

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

"—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

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

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

I agree with this petition, affix my signature to it and give it to page Steven to bring to the Clerk.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

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

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

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

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encour-

aging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the Wynne government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

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

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

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

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads:

“Whereas quality care for the 77,000 residents of long-term-care (LTC) homes is a priority for many Ontario families;

“Whereas over the last 10 years 50% of Ontario's hospital-based complex continuing care beds have been closed by the provincial government; and, there has been a 29.7% increase in the acuity level of LTC residents and 73% of LTC residents in Ontario suffer from some form of Alzheimer's or dementia;

“Whereas the provincial government does not provide adequate funding to ensure care and staffing levels in long-term-care homes keeps pace with residents' increasing acuity and a growing number of residents with complex behaviours such as dementia and Alzheimer's;

“Whereas there is extensive evidence that a care standard can result in increased staff levels, which translates into improved quality of care for residents;

“Whereas for over a decade several Ontario coroner's inquests into nursing deaths have recommended an increase in direct hands-on care for residents and increase in staffing levels;

“Whereas the Ontario Liberal government first promised a legislated care standard for residents in the province's long-term-care homes in 2003 but in 2013 they have yet to make good on their promise;

“Whereas the Long-Term Care Homes Act (2007) empowers the provincial government to create a minimum standard—but falls short of actually creating one;

“Whereas the most detailed and reputable study of minimum care standards recommends 4.1 hours of direct care per day; and

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

“(1) An amendment must be made to the Long-Term Care Homes Act (2007) for a legislated care standard of a minimum four hours per resident each day adjusted for acuity level and case mix;

“(2) The province must increase funding in order for long-term-care homes to achieve a staffing and care standard and tie public funding for homes to the provision of quality care and staffing levels that meet the legislated minimum care standard of four hours;

“(3) To ensure accountability the province must make public reporting of staffing levels at each Ontario LTC home mandatory;

“(4) The province must immediately provide funding for specialized facilities for persons with cognitive impairment who have been assessed as potentially aggressive, and staff them with sufficient numbers of appropriately trained workers;

“(5) The province must stop closing complex continuing care beds and alternative-level-of-care beds to end the downloading of hospital patients with complex medical conditions to long-term-care homes.”

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition, will sign it and send it with page Elijah.

1600

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have another petition here, also addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario is home to over 400,000 first-, second- and third-generation Hispanic Canadians who originate from the 23 Hispanic countries around the world; and who have made significant contributions to the growth and vibrancy of the province of Ontario;

“Whereas October is a month of great significance for the Hispanic community worldwide; and allows an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the outstanding achievements of Hispanic peoples to our province's social, economic and multicultural fabric;

“We, the undersigned, call upon members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support proclaiming October of each year as Hispanic Heritage Month and support Bill 28 by MPP Cristina Martins from the riding of Davenport.”

I agree with this petition, affix my signature to it and give it to page Kate to bring forward.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Jeff Leal: Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private bills.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The minister has moved a motion to move ahead with private members' bills and is seeking unanimous consent. All in favour? Agreed.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively and that the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills be put immediately without debate: Bills Pr1, Pr2, Pr3, Pr4, Pr5, Pr6, Pr8, Pr9, Pr10, Pr11, Pr12 and Pr13; and that Mr. Vanthof may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr2 on behalf of Ms. Sattler, that Mr. Vanthof may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr4 on behalf of Ms. Gélinas, that Mr. Clark may move

the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr9 on behalf of Mr. Fedeli, and that Mr. Vanthof may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr10 on behalf of Mr. Singh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Agreed? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

LORETTO LADIES' COLLEGES
AND SCHOOLS ACT, 2014

Mr. Colle moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr1, An Act respecting The Loretto Ladies' Colleges and Schools.

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

Second reading agreed to.

LORETTO LADIES' COLLEGES
AND SCHOOLS ACT, 2014

Mr. Colle moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr1, An Act respecting The Loretto Ladies' Colleges and Schools.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

1474486 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2014

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Ms. Sattler, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr2, An Act to revive 1474486 Ontario Limited.

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

Second reading agreed to.

1474486 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2014

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Ms. Sattler, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr2, An Act to revive 1474486 Ontario Limited.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

BENSFORT WOOD INC. ACT, 2014

Ms. Scott moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr3, An Act to revive Bensfort Wood Inc.

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

Second reading agreed to.

BENSFORT WOOD INC. ACT, 2014

Ms. Scott moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr3, An Act to revive Bensfort Wood Inc.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

BRUNO'S ALIGNMENT
LIMITED ACT, 2014

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of M^{me} Gélinas, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr4, An Act to revive Bruno's Alignment Limited.

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

Second reading agreed to.

BRUNO'S ALIGNMENT
LIMITED ACT, 2014

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of M^{me} Gélinas, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr4, An Act to revive Bruno's Alignment Limited.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

BIBLE BAPTIST TEMPLE (ST. THOMAS)
ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2014

Mr. Yurek moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr5, An Act respecting Bible Baptist Temple (St. Thomas).

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

Second reading agreed to.

BIBLE BAPTIST TEMPLE (ST. THOMAS)
ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2014

Mr. Yurek moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr5, An Act respecting Bible Baptist Temple (St. Thomas).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carried. Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

ART GALLERY OF GUELPH ACT, 2014

Mr. Arnott moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr6, An Act respecting The Macdonald Stewart Community Art Centre.

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

Second reading agreed to.

ART GALLERY OF GUELPH ACT, 2014

Mr. Arnott moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr6, An Act respecting The Macdonald Stewart Community Art Centre.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY ACT, 2014

Mr. Fraser moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr8, An Act respecting Saint Paul University.

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

Second reading agreed to.

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SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY ACT, 2014

Mr. Fraser moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr8, An Act respecting Saint Paul University.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

1807041 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2014

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Fedeli, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr9, An Act to revive 1807041 Ontario Inc.

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

Second reading agreed to.

1807041 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2014

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Fedeli, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr9, An Act to revive 1807041 Ontario Inc.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

752458 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2014

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Mr. Singh, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr10, An Act to revive 752458 Ontario Ltd.

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

Second reading agreed to.

752458 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2014

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Mr. Singh, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr10, An Act to revive 752458 Ontario Ltd.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

469118 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2014

Mr. Colle moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr11, An Act to revive 469118 Ontario Limited.

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

Second reading agreed to.

469118 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2014

Mr. Colle moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr11, An Act to revive 469118 Ontario Limited.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

658055 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2014

Mr. Colle moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr12, An Act to revive 658055 Ontario Inc.

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

Second reading agreed to.

658055 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2014

Mr. Colle moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr12, An Act to revive 658055 Ontario Inc.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

WALKER TOWNE CENTRE
INC. ACT, 2014

Mr. Hatfield moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr13, An Act to revive Walker Towne Centre Inc.

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

Second reading agreed to.

WALKER TOWNE CENTRE
INC. ACT, 2014

Mr. Hatfield moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr13, An Act to revive Walker Towne Centre Inc.

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BETTER BUSINESS CLIMATE ACT, 2014
LOI DE 2014 VISANT À INSTAURER
UN CLIMAT PLUS PROPICE
AUX AFFAIRES

Mr. Leal, on behalf of Mr. Duguid, moved third 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.

Mr. Leal.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Mr. Speaker, I just want to let you know that I will be sharing my time with the very competent new member, MPP Lalonde, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and the outstanding member from Ottawa–Orléans.

This legislation is a clear reflection of our government working with key stakeholders to continue to grow Ontario's economy through burden reduction and cluster development. One of CFIB's biggest asks from governments across the country is an open and transparent commitment to burden reduction. They are strongly supportive of this outstanding bill.

Ian Howcroft, whom I just had the opportunity to meet this morning, the vice-president of CME Ontario, agrees with CFIB: "Bill 7 will establish the reporting framework necessary to drive results in this area. The legislation also sends a strong signal to investors that the government is prepared to support industry-driven cluster development

where appropriate. We applaud this step in the right direction."

Our government—your government—understands that creating a successful business climate means reducing unnecessary regulations and practices. This is why, through this legislation, governments will report on burden reduction on an annual basis, Mr. Speaker, holding our feet to the fire—very important.

This isn't about what we regulate but how we do it. Bill 7 goes further than burden reduction to keep our economy on track as it's going. Our government understands the critical importance of cluster development. As the Toronto Board of Trade puts it, clusters collaborate to compete. This will be the first legislation of its kind in North America—

Interjections: Wow.

Hon. Jeff Leal: —wow—to focus on cluster development. That's outstanding. Bill 7 will help businesses grow and clusters stay competitive, even in Perth county, to continue to create jobs for today and tomorrow.

As I said, I will be sharing my time with the very able parliamentary assistant, and at this time, I will turn it over to the PA, the member from Ottawa–Orléans.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I'm sorry; it's a rotation. You have to share your time.

Further debate?

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm pleased to have this opportunity to very briefly comment on Bill 7 at third reading. As you know, Mr. Speaker, this bill has been the subject of some debate at second reading. Unfortunately, the government used time allocation to curtail the debate, which prevented a number of our members from speaking on the bill, and they would have liked to have had that opportunity.

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However, the bill was sent to a standing committee of the Legislature. We had one day of public hearings and we heard from a number of groups, including, I believe, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business—actually, I'm sorry; they sent a brief. It was a written brief. But we appreciated their recommendations. As the minister correctly pointed out, the CFIB is supportive of this bill, and I'm pleased to inform the House that our caucus is going to be supporting it as well.

But we also want to express our appreciation for the fact that some of our amendments were actually adopted and accepted by the committee. I want to thank the member for Lanark—

Mr. Randy Hillier: —Frontenac–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Ted Arnott: —Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, who served on the committee—subbed in, actually, to serve on the committee—earlier this week, on Monday, to assist in the—

Mr. Randy Hillier: I fell off my chair when the Liberal government accepted our amendments.

Mr. Ted Arnott: We brought forward our amendments in the spirit of constructive co-operation, hoping that the government would listen, and we have to

acknowledge, of course, that they did, and a couple of our amendments were adopted into law to strengthen the bill. So we again express our appreciation to the members who participated in the committee, and we look forward to the government keeping its commitments in this respect.

But we would really add that the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has a long list of red-tape-reduction requests. I talked about that during the second reading debate, and I would say to the Minister of Economic Development to continue to work with the CFIB and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. We've got to do far more than we've been doing in the last 11 years in terms of reducing the red tape burden on small business.

We must remember at all times that it is the small business sector that creates the majority of new jobs in Ontario, especially coming out of an economic downturn. Every hour that a small business person is forced to set aside to spend time working on the requests and the expectations of government, whether it be red tape or government forms, is an hour that is, in many cases, wasted. It takes away the time that those small business people have in terms of servicing their customers and finding new ones.

So we again recommend to the government that they have to keep their commitments with respect to reducing red tape, and we will certainly do our job in opposition to ensure that—or at least to draw attention to the excessive red tape burden in the future. We encourage the government to really take a sincere effort to reduce the red tape burden in the province of Ontario.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. It looks like this debate isn't going to go on too long, but we certainly look forward to the other comments that the members will have over the course of this debate. As I said, it is our caucus's intention to support this bill when it comes to a third reading vote.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's again an honour to be able to stand in this chamber and speak to this bill on behalf of my constituents in Windsor–Tecumseh. The bill, better known as the Better Business Climate Act, is also known as the Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act and the Burden Reduction Reporting Act.

Bill 7 speaks to the importance of industry clusters, and as you know, Speaker, Windsor and Essex county is home to a major cluster of automotive-related industries, be it mould-making, tool and die or plastics. They all complement our vehicle and engine plants. We in the Windsor region build the best minivans in the world at Chrysler and we build the best engines in the world at Ford. Speaker, don't let anyone try to tell you differently. We have the best employees. They're well-trained and dedicated workers, and they wish to see their companies thrive well into the future.

We can argue and disagree about many things in this House, some things big, some things small, but one thing I believe we can all agree on is that we have lost about

300,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs in Ontario in the past 10 years or so. I'm not one to point fingers; I'm not laying this at the feet of the minister or the feet of the Premier or the government. I'm just saying, these jobs are gone. We must do everything in our power on both sides of the House to preserve the manufacturing jobs that remain in Ontario. And we must find a way to attract more manufacturing jobs to this province before it's too late.

This bill will cut some of the regulatory burdens, the red tape that can be a nuisance and a barrier to quick decisions and approvals, but that's not to say that all red tape is bad, or all regulations. Much of the red tape in the industry is here to protect our workers on the plant floor. We need those regulations to ensure we have strong health and safety guidelines that are adhered to.

What we need in this province—actually, what we need in this country—is a government policy, a long-term manufacturing strategy. Specifically, what with all the talk these days about more automotive jobs on the chopping block, our priority in this bill should be to develop a coherent automotive strategy. We need policy initiatives that send a clear signal to the corporate manufacturing boardrooms around the globe: “Ontario wants your business. Ontario welcomes your business. Ontario wants to be a partner with you to grow your business. We can help train your workforce. We want to hear more about your plans for research and development. Tell us what you need by way of new equipment, new technology and new machinery.” We should be asking, “How can we improve your productivity?” We need improvements to this bill that create the right business climate that will convince companies to invest in Ontario again.

We need a commitment that Ontario is developing a manufacturing vision for the future, for the next 10, 20, even 30 years. We need to know and understand the manufacturing trends. We have to get ahead of the industry curve and stay there. We need an educated workforce that is prepared for the products that industry will be building in the future. We need to be designing and testing those products, we need to be talking to the leading experts in the field and we need to be listening to what they say. We need to take their advice.

We need the conversations, yes, but more than anything, we need the action. We need to be seen as actually doing something to protect our manufacturing base as we set into place the initiatives that are needed to grow our industrial clusters. This bill can be a launching pad for those discussions for those actions, but we need deadlines and we need a firm resolve to make it happen.

There's a group called the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council. They represent all five of Ontario's car manufacturers and the big parts producers. They represent Unifor as well as the University of Windsor. They have a keen interest in this bill. The chair of that group is Don Walker, who is also the chair of the board at Magna International. He was calling on the provincial and federal governments to have an industry-led advisory board in order to promote automotive investment in Canada.

Members of the Automotive Partnership Council are united in their commitment to ensuring the automotive industry continues to provide high-quality jobs, high-paying jobs for Canadians and for economic growth. They want to work with government to advance a clear and achievable strategy for the future growth of the manufacturing industry.

That's exactly what the state of Michigan did. Michigan has reaped the rewards from that strategy. They've secured most of North America's automotive investment in recent years. In fact, Michigan overtook us last year and now assembles more vehicles than Ontario, and has become the largest manufacturer of vehicles by state or province in North America.

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But when the group met with federal Industry Minister James Moore about their concerns, they got the cold shoulder. The feds questioned how an industry-led investment advisory board could be of any help to them.

Automotive expert Tony Feria, a friend of mine from the University of Windsor—he's co-director of the office of automotive research at the university—was quoted in the Windsor Star in a story detailing what happened at this meeting with the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council. He says, "CAPC represents people who are clearly on top of what's going on in the auto industry. If you don't listen to this group, who are you going to listen to?"

I just shake my head when I hear that. Senior ministers can't be bothered to listen to the experts when there is so much at stake for our country. We should be on the shop floor talking to the men and women who work in Ontario's industrial sector. They live it every day. We should be listening to their union reps, as well as company managers and CEOs.

Speaker, you may have heard the name Flavio Volpe. He's head of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association. He says we should be looking to Michigan and Mexico, and adopting their best practices, if we hope to be a player in the global competition for automotive investment. Michigan and Mexico each have a coordinated, proactive, aggressive approach toward chasing and securing automotive investment. We've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs. This bill won't bring all of them back, but a new policy, a strategy for the future, would help to secure jobs that otherwise may go elsewhere.

It's a sad fact of life that the number of people currently working in our provincial manufacturing sector is at a 40-year low. Since Statistics Canada started counting such numbers back in 1976, our manufacturing job numbers have never been as low as they are today. Where one in five jobs in Ontario was once related to our manufacturing base, now we're below 11%. We went from 20% to a drop to 11% and beyond. We need to reposition our manufacturing sector. We need to do whatever it takes to get our house in order before it's too late.

Job numbers: I know that, no matter whom you talk to, there will be different sets of numbers used in an attempt

to win an argument when it comes to jobs. The facts are that while we may see a slight increase in job numbers, those jobs were in the service industry. They are not full-time jobs. They don't come with benefits. They are for precarious employment—part-time work—and unfortunately, many of our friends and relatives are taking them involuntarily for the simple reason that they need work and can't find a full-time job.

There was a study not that long ago by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Economist Kaylie Tiessen deduced that we were seeing a seismic shift in employment. Our middle class, those of us earning between \$30,000 and \$60,000 a year, used to be 31% of the population. That study was quoting numbers in 2011. We used to be at 31%; it dropped to 26.5%. Service-industry jobs used to make up 73% of jobs, and now they're at 79%. She called it the hourglassing of employment, where the middle class is being squeezed from all sides.

When we lose our manufacturing jobs, our entire communities lose out. In my local newspaper, the Windsor Star, last weekend there was a story about the United Way campaign. The men and women who build the minivans I referenced earlier and the retirees who used to work at the Windsor assembly plant have donated, for the 27th year in a row—let me repeat that: For the 27th year in a row, Chrysler workers and retirees in Windsor and Essex county have donated more than \$1 million to the United Way campaign in Windsor and Essex county. I applaud their generosity. That's one plant, one campaign.

The Ford of Canada workers, although fewer in number, donate similarly on a prorated basis for the size of their reduced workforce, as do the men and women, other Unifor members, in the hundreds of plants which supply the parts to the engines and the vehicles built in Ontario.

This bill may hold a spark of promise for a brighter future in Ontario. That's what we need in my area. I'll tell you why we need a promise of better times ahead: The poverty level in Windsor and Essex county is the highest in the country. It doesn't make me proud to say it, but I won't shrink away from saying it, either. Our economy is based on the automotive sector. That manufacturing cluster is not doing as well as it used to.

The latest statistics show that 33% of the people in my area live in poverty. That's the highest rate in Canada. You have to go to Sherbrooke, Quebec to find the second-highest rate. Ours is 33%; theirs is 21%. In Ontario, we're at 33%. Sudbury, in second place, is at 18.6%.

Our United Way campaign, which last year raised \$5 million and assisted 47,000 people, has set a goal this year of \$5.2 million. The United Way's CEO Lorraine Goddard recently told the Windsor Star that because of the number of people living in poverty in our area and the ratio of those who eventually find a way out of poverty, we'll still be left with 4,000 children who will never break out of the poverty cycle—never. Four thousand kids. So when we speak of the need to do something in this House before it's too late to save Ontario's auto

sector, to save our manufacturing base, don't dare tell me we're doing everything we possibly can.

We need to do more. We need a strategy. We need policies. We've seen first-hand in Windsor and Essex county what a loss of manufacturing jobs can do to a community. We know we would be a heck of a lot worse if it wasn't for the generosity of the donors to the United Way, most of whom are union members still employed in the automotive sector.

We see the long lineups at our food banks. We see the lineups when the Unemployed Help Centre puts on their Coats for Kids campaign. We know the struggles others are having to put food on the table across our province. We know the greed that some companies have, and we don't have to go far from this chamber to see it first-hand here in Toronto.

There's a manufacturing company not far from here, Crown Holdings. They make more than five million cans a day, and most of those cans go to Labatt and Molson for beer. Last year, in 2013, the workers were honoured with a team award for dedication, commitment, teamwork and personal accountability. The company was honoured by its American head office for outstanding safety, productivity, quality and budget management.

And then contract talks rolled around. The company was making money hand over fist, yet said it was going to cut wages by 42% and get rid of the cost-of-living clause, introduce a two-tier wage system, and continue the nine-year freeze on pensions. And then, they forced the workers out—locked them out until the company's demands were met.

1650

That was in early September 2013, the same week that I took my seat here in this Legislature. Those proud United Steelworkers are still on the picket line, still locked out by a greedy American employer. That's why I won't be buying my beer in cans until this strike is over. Those men and women can return to work with their heads held high. They are standing up for manufacturing jobs in this province.

I call in the labour minister to intervene. I call on him to send the scabs home and get the two sides back to the bargaining table. This lockout was caused by company greed, pure and simple. The bill speaks to partnerships. The labour minister could partner with the company and the union on behalf of the labour climate in this province. This bill could be improved with the minister's intervention.

I talked to the minister about this yesterday. I've called on him to get his people working on this and get those people back to work.

I also ask anyone within earshot today to order your beer in bottles this holiday season. Stay away from the cans; stick with the bottles until this lockout is over and the steelworkers are back on the job where they belong.

Let's think about the future for a moment. Experts vary on this, but for every automotive job created in Ontario, there are between six and nine or 10 other jobs created in the spinoff from those well-paying automotive

jobs. If that's true, and I, for one, have no doubt about it, as I've seen the results in my riding of Windsor–Tecumseh—I tend to agree with the higher number, by the way, that nine or 10 spinoff jobs are created for every automotive manufacturing job—then it makes sense that for every automotive job lost, there will be a higher number of jobs cut from the service industry. Think about it: When you don't have as many people coming into your store or your bar or your restaurant, you may say you don't need as many salespeople or servers or mechanics or whatever.

So when we speak of the number of automotive jobs or manufacturing jobs, we have to use that six to nine or 10 jobs multiplier to get a clear sense of what the trickle-down effects are on Ontario's economy. That's why it is so important, so timely, so absolutely necessary for the government to get serious about a made-in-Ontario automotive policy, a made-in-Ontario manufacturing strategy.

We have to do more to be competitive with the so-called right-to-work states, otherwise known as the right-to-work-for-less states in America, and we have to have discussions with the auto manufacturers to send more business to Ontario instead of Mexico.

I'm told that someone working in a car plant in Mexico is paid \$8 an hour. That benefits the people who own shares in the big car companies, but what does that say to those of us who have seen the social consequences of people thrown out of work in our communities because jobs have been lost, plants closed and the work transferred to the company's assembly plant in Mexico?

There is another side of this. We all know the challenges facing us with global warming. Here's the rub, the sand being kicked in our faces, if you will: We lose the jobs to Mexico, and Mexico continues to pollute the air as ever before. We close our coal plants, we struggle to cut our emissions to improve the air we breathe in Ontario as part of a worldwide campaign to combat global warming, and yet Mexico is still the world's 13th-largest emitter of carbon dioxide. They don't have penalties for failing to meet the emissions targets. Mexico's air is bad. Some say Mexico's air is really bad. But the manufacturers can build vehicles there cheaper than they can build them here. So Mexico wins; we lose. We all lose if we don't do more to save our manufacturing jobs.

When word leaked recently that a new Ford engine plant was headed to Mexico instead of Windsor, two of the company's employees from my area decided to do something about it. Jessica John and Heather MacDonald started an online petition. Jessica works on the assembly line manufacturing the five-litre V8s at Ford's Essex engine plant. Heather builds the 5.4-litre V8s. Both are mums with young children. They're worried about their future, worried about the future of the Canadian manufacturing industry, worried that automotive jobs are on the line and worried that the provincial government isn't seen to be doing much about it. That's a scary thing in my riding of Windsor–Tecumseh: Because there is no automotive policy or strategy to secure and maintain manufacturing jobs, mums with small kids, worried about

the future of their families, have taken it upon themselves to do something because they don't believe the provincial government is taking their concerns very seriously.

We on this side of the House, members of the New Democratic Party caucus, are taking this matter seriously. We see this bill as an opportunity to turn around and jumpstart the economy in this province; improve it; bring in a real automotive and manufacturing strategy; make policies to save our automotive industry, save our jobs, save our communities and protect our future.

When I was putting this together, I came across some interesting statistics about poverty in Ontario and poverty in Canada. In Ontario, nearly 20% more people are using food banks today than there were in 2008. Some 176,000 families are relying on food banks—375,000 individuals—each week, each month and each year in Ontario; 35% of them are children under the age of 18.

One in five kids still live poverty, according to a new study—one in five in Canada. Some 1.2 million Canadian children go to school hungry every day, 550,000 children here in Ontario. Worse still, if you're a child in a single-parent family in Ontario, the rate of poverty is 44%. One half of all children born to immigrant parents live in poverty in Toronto. Nearly one third of the city's children live in poverty.

We can do something about that if we get together on this bill. If we can get together and do something to make improvements, to create more jobs, to save our manufacturing industry, to save our automotive strategy—we need something, Speaker. Thank you for your time this afternoon.

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

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Merci, monsieur le Président. Today, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to discuss this proposed legislation, which all three parties supported through second reading last week. If passed, this bill will create a better business climate by reducing burdens and drive economic growth by supporting the development of clusters.

I am pleased to report that a collaborative approach was taken in committee. Considering one of my colleagues almost fell off of his chair, it's glad to report. The proposed legislation is key to building on stronger partnerships across the economy. It's about providing more streamlined government services to businesses and reducing regulatory burden. But let me be clear: We must take care in balancing regulations needed to protect the welfare of our people while reducing unnecessary burdens for business.

Mr. Speaker, we're committed to reducing unnecessary burdens on an ongoing basis and making Ontario one of the few places in the world that measures and reports on the time and financial savings to business.

We are pleased to be recognized as a leader in the reduction of unnecessary regulatory requirements by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, who applauded us when we announced our intention to legislate burden reduction.

1700

Holding the government accountable on burden reduction also has strong support from stakeholders such as the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Toronto Financial Services Alliance and the Toronto Region Board of Trade. Since 2008, we have eliminated over 80,000 burdens, and we're making further improvements that will save businesses \$100 million over the next three years. The world of business is constantly changing, and government needs to keep pace by continually making government-to-business interactions faster, smarter and easier.

By committing government to annual reporting, this legislation will ensure that all future governments stay focused on reducing burden and modernizing processes. Ontario will not only catch up to other leading jurisdictions; it will leap to the head of the line.

The second component to the proposed Better Business Climate Act is supporting cluster development which, through collaboration and a cluster-focused lens, is as important as reducing burdens to businesses. Clusters exist across the province, and Ontario is home to some of the most impressive clusters in the world. For example, the Toronto region is North America's second-largest financial services hub after New York, and contributes over \$54 billion in GDP to Canada.

If passed, our government will be the first jurisdiction in North America to legislate the importance of cluster development. This legislation, if passed, will provide our government with a new tool to help clusters through cluster development plans. This tool will help facilitate stronger planning and collaboration with industry and partner ministries. Ontario will facilitate new partnerships by working with industry leaders, research institutions and local governments to identify policies that will support a long-term vision and plan for cluster growth. The role of industry in the development of cluster plans will be critical.

We understand that government cannot create clusters, but we can collaborate with our partners to develop a plan. Collaboration with Ontario's key clusters will allow governments to better allocate and coordinate access to government programs and help shape future policy.

To build upon the success of these cluster plans and ensure they are aligned with changing industry and economic trends, mandatory reviews of the plans will be required every five years.

As always, we encourage discussion and input from all members of the House. So, whether it's reducing burdens to help improve our business climate and save businesses time and money, our government's economic plan will continue to get results and will continue to create jobs for today and tomorrow by focusing on our greatest strengths, our people and the partnerships we can foster together.

I thank you very much. Merci, monsieur le Président.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to join the debate. In fact, I'm honoured to join the debate, and following

my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh I had some thoughts.

He spoke very eloquently on our region, Windsor–Essex. We have a long and proud history of being the automotive capital of Canada and indeed know the nature of industrial clusters. I want to commend him for bringing some of those really important points and facts into the debate. He’s someone who’s incredibly knowledgeable about our area, our industry, our needs, our challenges, our history. He’s been telling the stories of our community. For many years, prior to being elected as a member of provincial Parliament, he was a journalist with the CBC, and I certainly appreciate and welcome his thoughts on it. He touched on so many different aspects about the challenges that face various regions, but particularly in our region of Windsor and Essex county when it comes to the industrial base and the manufacturing base. We, of course, have tier 1 automotive suppliers: GM, Chrysler and Ford. Unfortunately, we don’t have GM any longer. We had the transmission plant and the trim plant, the trim plant where my mom worked for 35 years as an industrial seamstress, sewing head—

Interjection: Seats.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —seats and everything else. But that plant is gone. Then we lost the transmission plant that was building transmissions for Cavaliers and Cobalts. That left town. So there are a couple of thousand—I would say upwards of 5,000—good-paying manufacturing jobs, unionized jobs that came with benefits and pensions. Those are gone.

What are the factors that have led to the massive exodus of good-paying manufacturing jobs? Well, I would point to, primarily, the imposition of the initial free trade agreement, the precursor to the free trade agreement, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and then the subsequent North American Free Trade Agreement that opened the doors to cheap imported products from other jurisdictions, mainly Mexico, that definitely, as we’ve seen over the years, have led to a lower standard in manufacturing but higher profits for the manufacturers. I point, as a number one causal effect of our decrease in manufacturing jobs, specifically in the automotive sector, to the free trade agreement.

There are other ramifications of free trade that are playing out around our province. We see it in London with the exodus of the Kellogg’s plant. There are our food—

Interjection: Agriculture.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —agriculture and food industries that are leaving. We see the federal government and policies that have bolstered oil production—consumption, really, but also production, certainly—in the west, that have tied our dollar artificially and inflated our dollar to a petro dollar and have made domestic manufacturing out of reach. That can’t be argued. We know. We’re seeing it today: As the price per barrel goes down, the value of the dollar follows.

There are so many different aspects of this bill that the government put forward that fall short of what we need.

The member from Windsor–Tecumseh specifically highlighted an automotive policy, a provincial strategy that would address the issues that we all know need to be addressed. It is our hope that the government comes out with something substantive at some point in their four-year tenure to actually address those problems in a real, tangible way.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: I am pleased to rise today on behalf of my constituents in the beautiful riding of Algoma–Manitoulin to add my voice to the debate on Bill 7. It is unfortunate that not many of my colleagues here are following suit.

First, I would like to mention that this bill was time-allocated. So as much as I was looking forward to talking about the contents of this bill, the government has limited the amount of time we can debate as it moves the bill quickly through the House so that they can pass it.

My colleagues and I are opposed to the time allocation motion. Debate around proposed legislation is important. It’s important to people in Algoma–Manitoulin; it’s important to people across this province.

Debate is a discussion of questions of public interest in Parliament. Debate is a method of interactive and representational arguments. Debate is a robust analysis of questions at hand. Debate is a rigorous self-examination. Most importantly, debate is an essential tool for developing and maintaining democracy in an open society.

When debate is silenced, our democracy suffers. The people of Ontario are not heard.

Les mots de Joseph Joubert sonnent clair quand nous sommes présentés avec des propositions comme celle-ci. Il a dit : « Il vaut mieux débattre d’une question sans la régler que la régler sans en avoir débattu. » Normalement, nous avons jusqu’à 12 heures de débat pour un projet de loi tel quel. Présentement, ce sont seulement six heures de débat que nous voyons. La sagesse de M. Joubert fait écho à Queen’s Park ces jours-ci.

1710

Bill 7, similar to so many other bills we have seen presented in this House since the Liberals took office, also has a very positive title—perhaps another bill presented by this government that appears to sound good but doesn’t do very much. It seems so.

Bill 7 combines two pieces of legislation previously introduced, under one title. The first enacts the Burden Reduction Reporting Act, 2014, which requires the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to publish an annual report with respect to actions taken by the government of Ontario to reduce regulatory burdens. The second enacts the Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act, 2014, which states that the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure may prepare plans with respect to the development of clusters.

The bill goes on to stipulate that as part of the preparation of the plan, the minister must consult with persons or

entities that have an interest in the development of clusters. The plan must contain specific items, including the objectives and intended outcomes of the cluster plan and performance measures. The minister is required to review the plan and make public a report with respect to the results in its review. The minister is given various regulation-making powers with respect to the plan.

What does this all mean? Well, today, I will spend my time focusing on the cluster, or, en français, une grappe industrielle—un gros mot pour toi.

M. Shafiq Qadri: Un réseau industriel?

M. Michael Mantha: Une grappe industrielle.

M. Shafiq Qadri: Grappe?

Mr. Michael Mantha: Grappe. G-R-A-P-P-E. And hopefully we can have a better understanding of what this bill actually does specifically in regard to clusters.

« Une grappe industrielle...est une concentration d'entreprises et d'institutions interreliées dans un domaine particulier sur un territoire géographique. Les grappes couvrent un ensemble d'industries liées et d'autres entités importantes pour la compétitivité. Elles comprennent, par exemple, des fournisseurs de produits spécialisés comme des composantes, de la machinerie, des services et des fournisseurs d'infrastructures spécialisées. »

The cluster aspect of this bill, if there was any substance to it, could directly support and affect how the Ring of Fire is developed, something that I hold very near and dear. Of course, first we would need some substance to the Ring of Fire plan, but for now, let's leave that discussion to another day.

The second schedule specifically states that the minister may prepare plans regarding the development of clusters, and then goes on to explain the necessary information to be included if these plans are actually possible—a piece of legislation stating that the minister could, maybe, possibly, do something, but not necessarily. I'm a bit lost as to how this “possibly” of action creates a better business climate in Ontario.

What I do know is that a study done by the Rockefeller Foundation supports regional clusters as one of the best ways to create more jobs. According to the authors of the study, Mark Muro and Kenan Fikri—did I say that right? You're usually good to correct me.

Interjection.

Mr. Michael Mantha: OK, c'est beau. I said it right.

“Properly designed, cluster strategies are a low-cost way to stimulate innovation, new firm start-ups and job creation.”

Where regional clusters are concerned, the government needs to include the usual formula of research and development, tax credits, training programs and physical infrastructure. But additionally, the government needs to develop and use data and rigorous analysis to identify clusters, target policies and track performance; establish a modest grant program to address discrete gaps in cluster performances; and reorient existing economic development programs, policies and initiatives to support clusters. However, this bill, the Better Business Climate

Act, does not include any of these strategies. The government needs to include some regulatory framework, some dollars to support cluster initiatives, some incentives to bring firms together in a specific regional cluster strategy, and some resources to encourage cluster innovation through regional networking.

Like my previous private member's bill calling for resources mined in Ontario to be refined in Ontario, when we look at a project as a whole and come up with a real job creation plan, we can get people back to work across this province. When we look at the potential, all the possibilities in the Ring of Fire, we don't just have thousands of mining jobs; we have transportation jobs. We can build refineries and create jobs in refining.

We have seen steel companies closing up shop in Canada; it's time for a strategy here in manufacturing. We will have raw resources. We need to refine and manufacture, rather than shipping raw resources abroad and buying back the finished product. We can make this happen. We can get the people working. We can pull the province out of deficit. As I have said before, we need action on the Ring of Fire, and we need to get people moving.

In closing, we should have had more time to discuss this bill, more time to put forward ideas to improve a good proposition, but a proposition that lacks structure and substance. We will support this bill, not because it will do anything beneficial to the business climate in Ontario, but because it is absolutely needed for us to create these jobs, so that we can actually move forward.

I want to close my comments by talking about a particular cluster that we've had in my riding of Algoma-Manitoulin, in particular in the community of Chapleau, where there was a—unfortunately, he's no longer with us. His name is Bill Ivey. The man introduced me to the field of engineering. It was through my discussions with him while he was working at a steam plant up in White River that I had the pleasure of making his acquaintance, seeing his vision and actually working with him to enhance his business.

He relocated from White River to Chapleau, and while he lived in Chapleau he made an acquaintance with a local businessman, a man by the name of Larry Lacroix, along with the local mayor at the time, which was André Byham. They had looked at an exact cluster of what they were doing. I wish I had more time to discuss this, so that I could give you the length of time that they spent identifying the potential for this cluster. It involved biomass energy, new generation, new forestry projects, building houses and First Nations opportunities. It involved jobs, it involved jobs and it involved jobs, and it was there, available, at their grasp.

When I sat with them, and when I first discussed their project, I couldn't believe how they were given the roller-coaster ride in how they were introducing their cluster. So I said, “Do you know what? With a fresh set of eyes, I'm going to start this process over.”

I don't have much time left, Mr. Speaker, and that's unfortunate. That's the problem with time allocation: I

don't have the voice or the time to speak on behalf of the people in my riding. But this whole initiative started in 2007. I got involved with it in late 2011, and to this day they're still struggling to move that project forward.

Mr. Speaker, again, I'm frustrated. Thank you for giving me the amount of time that you have given me, but this is the frustrating part of having time allocation on bills: You don't have a chance to speak.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate. The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Speaker, on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Point of order, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Just on petition number P-56, on the Cornwall recreation and trout area: It's overdue, and I'm waiting for an answer.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member is waiting for an answer. Is the minister or the House leader available?

I would remind the House leader, or whoever is taking his place, that it has been mentioned and should be dealt with. Thank you.

Further debate? Further debate—last call.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You've been up once, thanks.

Pursuant to the order of the House of November 27, 2014, I'm now required to put the question.

Mr. Leal has moved third reading of Bill 7, An Act to enact the Burden Reduction Reporting Act, 2014 and the Partnerships for Jobs and Growth Act, 2014. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

1720

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; this will be a five-minute bell.

I have a vote deferral, pursuant to standing order 28(h), that the vote on third reading of Bill 7 be deferred until Thursday, December 11, 2014, after question period.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day? This has been a busy day.

SECURITY FOR COURTS, ELECTRICITY
GENERATING FACILITIES
AND NUCLEAR FACILITIES ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR
LA SÉCURITÉ DES TRIBUNAUX,
DES CENTRALES ÉLECTRIQUES
ET DES INSTALLATIONS NUCLÉAIRES

Mr. Flynn, on behalf of Mr. Naqvi, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 35, An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act with respect to court

security and enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2014 / Projet de loi 35, Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics, modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers en ce qui concerne la sécurité des tribunaux et édictant la Loi de 2014 sur la sécurité des centrales électriques et des installations nucléaires.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Minister.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Our government is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all Ontarians, and the legislation I have just put on the floor is certainly a vital step in that direction. On October 30 this year, we reintroduced this legislation. It's going to repeal and replace the Public Works Protection Act.

Speaker, this is the third time the legislation has been introduced in the House. The act will repeal the outdated Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act to address court security, and also set out stand-alone legislation respecting security at electrical generating facilities and other critical infrastructure that is defined in the act.

With respect to the court security component, the bill is going to require any person who is entering or is inside a courthouse to identify themselves and provide information to the authorities so they can have their security risk assessed. With respect to court security, it also allows search without warrant of any person or vehicle that is entering the premises.

With respect to electricity generating and our nuclear facilities, this bill will require any person who wishes to enter or is on the premises to produce identification and provide information for the purpose of assessing that person's security risk.

We have consulted with civil liberties advocates to be sure that the appropriate balance has been struck between the security of our people and civil liberty of our society. Speaker, it's time to get this bill passed. Thank you.

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

The member from—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Renfrew—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): —Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: You certainly remember the riding when you're calling me to order, Speaker. I guess it's a different circumstance.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member is very special.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm sure I am, in your eyes.

This is about the fifth or so time that I have had a chance to speak to this bill in the three different times it was introduced. The first time, I was the critic for community safety and correctional services. The second time, I was a member of the Legislature, as I am still today. And today, I'm speaking as a person who sat on the committee as this bill was brought to this place for third reading. So I've had the opportunity to see this bill from every angle, upside down and sideways, and I share the view of the Minister of Labour—I'm sure we'll hear

from the parliamentary assistant, as well, on this bill. I don't often say this, but I think we've got it about right. I don't often say that about a government bill, but I think they've got this about right.

Now, as I say, the first time this bill was introduced in the Legislature was back in 2012, and Ms. Meilleur, the Attorney General today, was Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I'll say that we worked pretty closely on the bill, because there were a lot of amendments to the bill, and the government, to their credit, did—

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Incorporate.

Mr. John Yakabuski: —incorporate—thank you very much, Bas—most of those amendments into the bill.

So when we brought it back this time—of course, it came back in the Parliament before that, but then, with the election, it died on the order paper in the Parliament before this one. But in this Parliament, we did have some more input from stakeholders, and it seems that you're going to have some stakeholders who aren't happy with the bill.

But at the same time, those provisions that we've incorporated into the bill, I think, strike the right balance between the protection of the public and the individual rights and freedoms of people. Whenever you're protecting people, in my opinion, it is a fair trade-off to relinquish some of your own individual rights for the safety of others. The bill does just about get it right.

What I wish I was talking about today is not Bill 35, because we're going to vote for this bill tomorrow. After question period, there will be a deferred vote on this bill. We're going to vote in favour of it, because we believe it's right. But what I really would have liked to have been talking about in debate today—we should have been having a special debate on the Auditor General's report, because I think that's the issue that the people in Ontario would really like to sink their teeth into.

Yes, we did have a little bit of an exchange during question period today. Where's the report? I don't have it with me. Yes, it's a big one—what, 500-and-some pages?

Mr. Ted Arnott: It's like the Eaton's catalogue.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, it's like the old Eaton's catalogue. You know, the poor people up in my area, like me—we used to have to use these for shin pads playing hockey. Oh my goodness, 595 pages. She's a pretty big report, and there's not a whole lot of good said about the Liberal government in this report. There weren't a whole lot of kudos for the government in this report.

In fact, it prompted the government—members of the government, members of the cabinet, members of the executive council—to actually question the competence of our Auditor General. Now, that takes you down, in my opinion, a very slippery slope, because the people of Ontario have to have confidence that the report of the Auditor General is, in fact—you know, when you get your taxes done, and if you have your taxes done at an accounting firm, you get the audited version. Once you get the audited version, that is like, "Okay, the stamp is on that of the top dog." It has been approved by the top level—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Well, I've been rather nice. The member is drifting. Let's stick to the bill a little bit.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Certainly. Thank you very much.

Bill 35 repeals the Public Works Protection Act. Well, if you want to talk about protection, nobody is protecting the taxpayer of Ontario on that side of the House, but the auditor—that's her job: to protect the taxpayer. So it is all about protection.

But I realize that I'm running out of time here, and I'm going to pass the floor on to my colleagues, because we're going to vote for Bill 35. But we should have a special debate in this House on the auditor's report so we can hold this government properly to account before they recess for Christmas and hope that everybody has forgotten about it after Family Day.

Interjections.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm not even going to try to follow that act, Speaker, but it is entertaining at such a late hour of the day.

Thank you very much, Speaker. It is, of course, an honour to rise in this chamber to speak on behalf of my constituents and my riding about the bill before us right now. It's Bill 35, the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act. It is one that I have had the honour to speak about and speak to about a year or maybe a year and a half ago in its previous incarnation, one that was introduced by the then minister of corrections and community safety, Madame Meilleur.

At that time it had some serious flaws that New Democrats on this side of this House were concerned about—serious questions around the infringement of civil liberties that we were concerned about. We now continue to be concerned about some of those provisions built into the bill, and I will attempt to outline them for the pleasure of the House, as everyone is certainly attentive, listening to every word that I say.

1730

While they sign their Christmas cards, I want to wish everybody a merry Christmas, certainly, because I don't think I'll get a chance to do that. I know it's an important thing to do this late in the day in our sitting.

Speaker, Bill 35 contains three schedules that would (1) repeal the Public Works Protection Act, (2) amend the Police Services Act in relation to court security, and (3) enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act. Let me explain what those mechanisms do.

Bill 35: Of course, the first provision, the first schedule, repealing the Public Works Protection Act—something that New Democrats absolutely agree with; something that was outlined and highlighted in Justice McMurtry's report; something that we believe should be done, needs to be done and can be done through the provisions of this bill; something that we certainly support.

The need to remove the Public Works Protection Act, an act that was first initiated in, I believe, 1936, if I'm not mistaken—

Interjection.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —1933, somebody is telling me. It was brought in, I assume, to ensure the safety and security of our public spaces, whether they be courts or hydro generating facilities or even our very own Legislature here. Certainly, Speaker, we understand the nature and the need to provide security and safety for not only those who work in our public spaces but also those who visit our public spaces. However, there has to be a balance struck between the need for and the provisions of safety and the need to keep our spaces open and accessible to the public. They are fundamental in our democratic system: the ability for people to avail themselves of the process, to come and visit us, to visit our courts, to visit the Legislature and to see what happens, and to hold us accountable, really.

The need to remove the Public Works Protection Act and replace it with something else was born out of the G20 fiasco, really, that happened here in Toronto, where members of society from all walks gathered to protest the G20 summit that was held here in Toronto and other parts of Ontario. They were here to protest in a peaceful way. They were here to express their democratic right to assemble and to voice their opinion on what governments around the world were doing, whether it be trade agreements or human rights or environmental policies. It is, of course, their right, and as is the history of various G20, G7, G8 summits, there is always public protest; there is always dissent on what's happening. So it certainly was anticipated by levels of government, both provincial and federal, and certainly municipal, that there would be a need for a security presence.

However, this government of the day, under then-Premier—what's his name, again? I forget. He has been gone so—

Interjection: McGuinty.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Dalton McGuinty. Man, we miss him. We miss him. Don't we miss him around here?

In the dark hours of the evening, he brought in provisions of the then Public Works Protection Act that infringed on the civil liberties of those protesters in such a way that it has been referred to—and, Speaker, these aren't my words—as one of the worst civil rights violations in the history of Ontario, in the history of this province, where over 1,000 people were rounded up, “kettled”—that was a new word that we learned during the G20 protests. They were kettling peaceful protesters, rounding them up, holding them for three days, sometimes, without laying charges—these extreme, extraordinary powers that were given to police to, really, infringe on what should be a normal, democratic, peaceful process. Various human rights experts and civil liberties experts have denounced the actions of this government at that time. It has been referred to as a black mark on civil liberties that I hope will never be replayed. However, the government has, to date, still not

apologized for using those extraordinary powers—really, war measures—to infringe on those actions.

Speaker, we heard of people who weren't even a part of the protest, were not even within an assembly, who weren't on the street, who were just watching, who were rounded up and held without charge. We heard of people who were amputees who required prosthetics and having their prosthetics taken away from them—not charged but taken and held without charge and denied the prosthetic limbs they required—a massive infringement on civil liberties and peaceful democratic protesting.

Speaker, I can tell you from personal experience, as somebody who has grown up, thankfully, within the labour movement, that I've been part of a lot of protests—good ones. As a young kid, 12 years old, my parents put me on the bus to Ottawa to protest the GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. I hopped on a bus all by myself with a bunch of local farmers and auto workers—

Interjection.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Yes—and went to Ottawa and protested the GATT. It was where I cut my teeth in terms of political action, and was something that I think was formative in my political career.

Imagine that. Imagine what we would be doing to the dissent with this message that we're sending to young activists out there. Is this what the government is attempting to do, to say, “Don't even bother assembling and protesting because we're going to crack down hard on you. We're going to be able to infringe on your rights, hold you without charge. We're going to be able to search your vehicle without warrant. We're going to ask you a whole bunch of questions about who you are, why you're there, without any reasonable requirement”? “Without any reasonable grounds” is the official legal term.

I heard from the official opposition that they're in full support of these new measures that are going to be brought in under G35, which will specifically act and be targeted at our courts and our electricity generating facilities—two very different entities within our province. Let me try to expand on that.

Our colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton is our lead on the G35 bill, and he explained the difference between the nature of the public court system, the invaluable aspect that they are in terms of being accountable as our judicial branch and having to be accessible for them to be really fully functioning in a functioning democracy. People need to be able to go, see court proceedings, understand that the process is working correctly, and not feel as though that isn't a space for them to play a role.

What G35 does is, it gives new powers to court security to identify or question the intent, the reasoning, the rationale, the persona of that person going into the court prior to them entering: “Who are you? Why are you here? What do you do? What's your political affiliation?” They can really ask them anything, any question they want. What does that do? What type of message does that

send to those who want to play an active role in our functioning democracy? That they're no longer welcome? That you will be guilty until presumed innocent? That, without reasonable grounds, we can in fact question your actions?

Certainly, I understand, and New Democrats understand, the need to provide security and safety to Ontarians. I actually believe it is our fundamental role here. Aside from everything else we do, we have to ensure the protection of people in our province. Whether that's road safety, health and safety in the workplace, food safety—all measures, all mechanisms—that is our first and foremost goal, and I hope that is a priority on behalf of the government. However, there has to be a balance between providing the safety and security of people and ensuring that civil liberties are respected and human rights are respected.

We on this side believe that the government fails to make that balance. Don't take it from me, Speaker; take it from Justice McMurtry, who certainly agreed that the Public Works Protection Act should be removed, but not replaced with something that goes even further in terms of inhibiting civil action, inhibiting people's participation in our public spaces. We understand, of course, the reasonable nature of ensuring that there aren't weapons taken into our courts. That makes sense to us, and I think it would make sense to any reasonable person. Let's ensure that there are no weapons, no bombs, certainly nothing that could harm anyone else in our public spaces. But to do that without reasonable grounds, to do that without warrant, I think, goes beyond what reasonable people would think.

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The government of Manitoba has dealt with court security specifically. The Court Security Act was, in fact, tested by the Supreme Court: very progressive. It didn't infringe on civil liberties as we see that Bill 35 does. It actually ensured that the public was protected. It ensured that there were reasonable grounds that the police could act on and search individuals who posed a risk. However, it wasn't arbitrary. It was specific. Its prescription was, again, tested by the Supreme Court and found to be valid.

Getting back to the G20, you would wonder why a government that purports to be progressive would act in such a way to its own citizens, would be so aggressive towards its own citizens gathering in peaceful protest. We know that within the melee, within the chaos that was the G20 protests—and certainly it got violent. There were definitely people who broke the law and most likely deserved to be charged and ultimately, potentially, punished. However, we know now, after the fact, that there were agents provocateurs—

Interjection: Agents—

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Agents provocateurs. That is a reference to folks who are in the police forces who would have been dressed up as protesters and played a role, potentially, in provoquer—

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Provoking.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —provoking, merci; I get my français mixed up—provoking, potentially, civil unrest.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Provocateur.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: “Provocateur” is not the word I was looking for.

But how do we deal with that? How did this government deal with that? They understood that that was out there. They understood that these were actions on the policing side. However, they went after those peaceful protesters en masse without regard, without identifying or qualifying those who were actually the real offenders. It's something that I think sends a chill to those who have put their life's work on the line in terms of being a part of the peaceful process and being activists.

Are we no longer able to assemble? Are we no longer able to provide public oversight in our court system? Is this reaching even further than what the Public Works Protection Act did?

So we have some fundamental problems with this bill, unquestionably, and ones that we haven't seen the government address, ones that they've heard not only from us as New Democrats but also from those experts in civil liberties and human rights: that to infuse a measure of confidence in our public system, to infuse a measure of accountability and oversight that is essential in a democratic process and society, the public has to play a vital role. They have to play an inclusive role. Putting more roadblocks in front of them actually being a part of it inhibits the entire process. What does it do fundamentally to our system? That's the question. That's the real, fundamental problem that we have with this legislation, one that we're not certain the government understands.

There's a third part of this that deals with the same provisions of security, search, seizure and access within our electricity generating facilities and nuclear facilities. I don't think anyone would argue that those aren't important public entities to protect, and they are currently already fiercely protected, and a lot of resources go into making sure that the perimeters aren't breached and that no one who shouldn't be there gets in. We definitely don't want nefarious actors around our generating facilities—including nuclear, for obvious reasons.

However, these are contentious entities in our various communities. Sometimes when a gas plant goes up in a community, a gas plant that's supposed to generate electricity, sometimes when they are proposed or built in a community, the public don't want them there.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: No way.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Yeah way. What's up with that? Sometimes when generating facilities go up in communities, the public don't want them, and they actually gather and protest the building of these facilities, or the costs, God forbid. Sometimes that happens, and we have to ensure that their voices are heard. Sometimes that means them being there, near, close to those facilities, with signs, with placards, saying, potentially, “Don't waste our money. Stop wasting our money, please.” Who knows?

This bill certainly gives security forces, whether they be peace officers, police officers or private security firms, new powers to search and seize without warrant.

That's pretty extreme. That's something that I think would send a chill in communities like Oakville and Mississauga if they were to have a power plant slated for their communities, that they wouldn't be able to raise their voice; I don't know. But it's one that we raise as a part of the debate here that we believe the government hasn't considered fully.

We understand, of course, the need to provide those security measures; it's one that is reasonable within our civil society. We understand the need to balance the protection of those facilities, but when it comes to granting those powers to security forces that may not be up to the same standard of training as our police and peace forces and allowing them, by regulation, these new provisions—even stakeholders such as OPSEU, who represent those security forces in our generating facilities are not in agreement with expanding these types of powers. OPSEU president Smokey Thomas presented a survey of his members around court security which rejected limits placed on public access to courts, as proposed in Bill 35, as well as generating facilities.

I think it's quite clear that New Democrats continue to have some serious reservations around Bill 35. We understand that it is born out of the failure and aggressive actions taken on behalf of the government in relation to G20. It's born out of a black mark that should continue to haunt the Liberal government and their actions around peaceful protest in Toronto. We see them as going way too far in finding a balance. To withdraw the Public Works Protection Act should have been enough, could have been enough. Replacing it with something that we see as being far too encroaching on civil liberties I don't think will have the desired effect, and I think it certainly can send a chill through all those who believe and stand up for peaceful democratic process and protest in our country and in the province.

I thank you very much, Speaker, for the time you've given me today. I cede my time to my colleagues who are going to speak to this bill as well.

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

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I'm pleased to join this debate as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

A few weeks ago, our government demonstrated commitment to protecting our critical infrastructure like electricity generating stations, nuclear facilities and courthouses in a way that would also ensure that our civil liberties are safeguarded.

That is why it's truly a pleasure to rise in this House for the third reading of the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2014. The act, if passed, will repeal and replace the Public Works Protection Act, PWPA, ensuring we strike the right balance between protecting Ontario courthouses, electricity generating plants and nuclear facilities, and respecting the civil rights of the people of this province.

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Our government agrees with those concerned that the PWPA, which was passed 75 years ago, was too vague

and had outlived its usefulness. That is why the government asked the Honourable Roy McMurtry, a former chief justice, to review that particular legislation. This legislation builds on the recommendations from Justice McMurtry and incorporates many of the recommendations made from stakeholders and, importantly, opposition members.

The bill is about protecting the safety of individuals while also protecting individual rights. It achieves the necessary and delicate balance between protecting our communities and protecting our civil rights, and has led to a broad consensus among all our partners.

We sought input and advice from nuclear operators and regulators, electricity producers, justice partners and municipalities. We also consulted with civil liberties advocates to be sure that the appropriate balance was struck between security and civil liberty. MPPs from all three parties already had an opportunity to speak on this proposed legislation when the bill came forward in the previous House; 16 amendments put forward by the opposition have been incorporated into this particular piece of legislation.

I want to thank the civil liberties organizations, public safety experts, community associations and all Ontarians who provided advice and feedback on this piece of legislation. We value their input and thank them for their continued efforts in speaking on such an important issue. Much of this feedback is reflected in this legislation, and we look forward to hopefully continuing to work together during the implementation of the bill and the regulations that may follow. The results of this process show that from our productive conversation and constructive dialogue comes real action to protect Ontarians.

During the debate and the committee process, we heard that everyone should have access to our courts. We totally agree. This bill does not impede an individual's access to our courts. This bill will maintain the legislative framework that relates to court security that has been in existence in Ontario for the past 75 years.

In his report, Chief Justice McMurtry recommended that the provisions related to court security in the old legislation must be maintained in the new legislation. As Justice McMurtry emphasized, there is an ongoing need for searches at our courthouses. That is why the Police Services Act would be amended to maintain existing security measures at courthouses, ensuring both the safety and the accessibility of our courthouses. That means that the framework for court security, based on the principle of reasonableness—I say that again, Mr. Speaker: based on the principle of reasonableness—and with an overarching view of maintaining the openness in place today, will be in place tomorrow.

Currently, any officer may require a person who enters the court to provide identification. Currently, an officer may require a person who enters a court to provide information for the purpose of assessing any security risk. That is the system that would be in place if this bill passes. These provisions are permissive. The individual has the right to walk away.

If court security is not in a position to determine the identity of individuals attending the courthouse, the potential for violence may increase. The powers afforded in this bill are not arbitrary. The provisions must be read in the context of reasonableness. I wanted to make sure that it was very clear what this legislation does and does not do.

It is also important to note that the proposed legislation also limits the types of essential public infrastructure that it covers to prescribed electricity generating and nuclear facilities. Adding other categories of infrastructure would require amendments to the act, not just a new regulation. It would therefore be open to debate in this House. The process for changing an act is very transparent and open, and the content of any proposed amendments would be subject to public debate.

There is also one important aspect of the PWPA that we have not replicated. The PWPA gives guards the authority to exercise their powers in the approaches to a public work. The “approach” to a facility was a concern for Mr. McMurtry and civil liberties groups because it is vague and very hard to define. We listened to those concerns and we acted. This proposed bill would outline specified powers for guards that can only be used on the premises. These powers would not apply off the premises. Since the approach falls outside the premises of the nuclear facility, any security issues should be addressed in partnership with the police of the particular jurisdiction.

Our government recognizes and echoes Ontarians’ value and celebration of human and civil rights.

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to Ontarians to ensure that our courts and critical infrastructure are protected. We have an equally great responsibility to protect and strengthen their civil liberties, like the freedom of assembly, and the principles of an open and transparent justice system. I believe that this legislation does indeed strike that necessary balance.

We heard from our partners, we heard from our civil liberty groups, we heard from our community safety partners, and we heard from the opposition. Now is the time to act, and I urge all members of this House to support this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues in the third party disagree with some of the identification issues in our court system, but I want to share with you: I had several gangs operating in my riding when I first got elected. To have the trial for those members who were arrested by the police, we actually had to build a brand new court because the regular courthouse was not secure enough. So I disagree with them.

There are certain instances that you will have to secure our courthouses, and this legislation provides for that.

I know the member spoke very passionately, but I totally disagree with him.

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

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I have prepared 10 minutes. Clearly, I don’t have that much time, so I will just—

Interjection.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: You won’t hold it against me. Thank you.

I’m just going to speak to the piece from the previous speaker, who was talking about the numerous people that the government has consulted with on this bill. I find it ironic that they would speak about consultation when in fact they time-allocated the bill in order to stifle the debate and silence the people we represent on this side of the House.

The people I represent have concerns about entering courthouses and being searched by untrained security. If I take somebody to court, just because I’ve taken them to court, now I’m subject to having my vehicle searched—

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Point of order, Minister of Labour.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I hate to interrupt the speaker, but—notwithstanding standing order 6 and the order of the House earlier today, the House shall continue to meet past 6 p.m. until completion of the debate on the motion for third reading of Bill 35, at which time the Speaker shall adjourn the House without motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The minister is seeking unanimous consent on his request.

Is there unanimous consent? Carried.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You have to move it.

Boy, what a day this has been.

Well, I can’t read the writing, so—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): That’s your writing.

I think, notwithstanding standing order 6 and the order of the House earlier today, the House shall continue to meet past 6 p.m. until completion of the debate on the motion for third reading of Bill 35, at which time the Speaker shall adjourn the House without motion. Agreed? Okay.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Sorry? Was there a no?

Interjections.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): All right. It’s now 6 o’clock. This House stands recessed until 6:45 p.m.

The House recessed from 1800 to 1845.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
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Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

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

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Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
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Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
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Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

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French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
		Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

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Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Sudbury	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Présidente: Cindy Forster
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Han Dong
Cindy Forster, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
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Eleanor McMahan, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
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permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
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Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Eleanor McMahon
Laurie Scott, Jagmeet Singh
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
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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

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Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
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