



No. 65

N° 65

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Première session, 41^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 2 April 2015

Jeudi 2 avril 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



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Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 2 April 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 2 avril 2015

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES
ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR DES CHOIX
PLUS SAINS

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 1, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act / Projet de loi 45, Loi visant à améliorer la santé publique par l'édiction de la Loi de 2015 pour des choix santé dans les menus et de la Loi de 2015 sur les cigarettes électroniques et la modification de la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): When this item of business was last debated, the member from Perth–Wellington had completed his speech. Therefore, we will continue further debate. The member from Huron–Bruce.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Are you guys putting anybody up?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Interjection.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay, very good. And we're off.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You don't have to listen to him. Listen to me.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Very good. You don't carry the whip.

Good morning, Speaker. It's a pleasure to join the debate with regard to Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act. This is a piece of legislation that I welcome all efforts to improve, in terms of our efforts collectively here in the Legislature. Bill 45 addresses a number of things. It talks about banning the marketing of tobacco products to children, obesity and labelling menus with calorie counts. There are a number of things that we need to point out, in order to address them properly.

First is health care versus the deficit. This week, the Minister of Finance announced that the deficit has risen to \$10.9 billion. That's up half a billion dollars from last

year. When I hear an astronomical number such as this, I think of how it will affect our front-line services such as education and health care, which are two basic services that we need and two important components of this particular bill. While we have a government that cannot get its fiscal house in order, we see cuts where our services should be a priority: education and health care. It's happening across this province.

The Auditor General warned of this very thing. In her most recent report, she explained that Ontario's debt and deficit will result in a "crowding out" of spending on essential services. As I've said, we hear of nurses being cut across the province, we see a decline in services such as cutting off coverage for diabetes testing strips, cutting off physiotherapy for seniors, and cataract surgeries. I would suggest that this government has its priorities upside down, and they need to get their spending habits under control so that we can indeed focus on priority services. While I support this bill, Speaker, I have to tell you that I have not seen any evidence that builds my confidence in this government that it is prepared to balance this budget to ensure that essential services are available to protect our health care system.

A second point I need to make is on childhood obesity. In Ontario today, we have nearly one third of children and youth who are overweight or obese. This is a staggering number. Obesity can result in chronic diseases like diabetes, cancer and heart disease. There are reasons a child can experience obesity, from a socio-economic perspective or from family, individual and community factors, but it all boils down to the imbalance between food intake and physical activity.

By labelling menus with calorie count to make it a little bit easier for families to prepare healthier choices for their children—I see that as a step in the right direction but it cannot stop there. We need a strategy in place to make sure that children and youth can increase their physical activity. Keeping active for at least one hour a day lowers the risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke and high blood pressure. We need more physical education within our school curriculums to ensure a healthier generation. We need a comprehensive plan moving forward to address this public health issue that we currently have on our hands.

I do have to recognize that this past fall I was pleased to learn that the county of Huron had been selected for the Healthy Kids Community Challenge. The Healthy Kids Community Challenge delivers programs and activities focused on promoting healthy eating, physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices. The county of

Huron will be receiving funding, training and marketing resources over the next four years from the province to support these local initiatives. This is an excellent opportunity to educate our youth on the importance of healthy living.

When doing research for this particular bill, I found that, according to the Health and Fitness Journal of Canada, in 2009, the cost associated with obesity in Ontario was \$4.5 billion. That's \$1.65 billion in direct health care costs and \$2.87 billion in indirect costs. We need to continue to invest in our children's health today. We need to allow for the sustainability of our health care system for tomorrow as well. Simply applying a label to food will certainly help, but it's not a solution.

Once again, we see industry in Ontario being proactive. We found that as many as 60% of restaurants voluntarily brought in calorie stickers—and again, how much red tape do we need to stifle industry initiatives? I worry about that and I raise a flag in that regard.

I see this industry constantly innovating and being proactive. With the introduction of Bill 75, the Microbead Elimination and Monitoring Act, I have to share with you that when the legislation was brought in, industry was already setting their own targets, many for 2017, to entirely eliminate microbeads from their products. Again, that's another example of industry leading by example.

I'd also like to talk to you about what the agri-food industry is doing in terms of being proactive and working toward bringing awareness and education to the classroom outside of government legislation. There's an organization called the Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc. Commodity organizations in this province support OAFE so that they can develop curriculum for teachers to use in the classroom to educate people about how food production is initiated in this province and, more importantly, healthy eating. That's why we need to have the Legislature in this province recognize what industry is already doing outside of legislation. We can't stifle that innovation.

When I think about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, I really think it's going to be important. When I come back to my private member's initiative later this fall, I'm going to be introducing a motion to gently nudge this government to make mandatory in grade 9 and 10 guidance and career education curriculum a component talking about the agri-food industry, the food that's produced in Ontario. Ultimately, that leads to awareness of healthy living and healthy eating. I hope, when you look at all the different pieces of legislation coming together to support a healthy lifestyle, that this government also recognizes the importance that my private member's initiative will bring and why it's important to support it as well.

With that, I would like to carry on about the banning of marketing of tobacco products to children. According to StatsCan, in Canada today we have nearly 5.8 million smokers. Although this is fewer than a decade ago, it is still a high number. Of that, one in 10 15- to 17-year-

olds, which equals about 121,000 kids, were smokers in 2011. I think this is unacceptable. But one promising fact within this is that the smoking rate fell rapidly among teenagers in the last decade.

0910

Smoking is the leading cause of premature death in Canada, and recent studies have estimated that 21% of all deaths over the past decade are indeed due to smoking. Anything we can do to reduce these numbers is a step in the right direction.

I've been a long-standing advocate for lung health, Speaker, and I'm very pleased to be a member of the lung health caucus here at Queen's Park. Just this past summer, I was pleased to sign the lung health action plan, which called upon government to establish an action plan.

I will tip my hat to the member from Cambridge for bringing forth Bill 41, the Lung Health Act, which I was pleased to support and speak to. I appreciated how Bill 41 will ensure that individuals with lung disease and informal caregivers are included in discussions and decisions surrounding their health. This is definitely a step in the right direction.

Another step that I was very pleased to see happen is that this government finally was getting out of the way and allowing people access to drugs that are needed. I'd like to give my regards to Hugh Detzler. Hugh Detzler was a tremendous advocate for a drug called Esbriet, which improves lung health for folks experiencing idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. I want to say thank you to Hugh. He had to pay out of his own pocket for this drug. Unfortunately, by the time it became available in Ontario, it was too late for Hugh, and Hugh underwent a lung transplant. He is currently in Toronto, and I wish him the very best over this Easter weekend. Easter represents new beginnings, and I hope there are some parallels there with regard to his new lung and the next chapter in his life, and I hope it's healthy and happy for him and his family.

Speaker, we need to continue on this path. From all parties' perspectives, we need to work together to ensure that we can achieve a healthier population. I think that this legislation is important. I support it. It's a step in the right direction, but there's so much more we can do.

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

Questions and comments?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I appreciate the comments from the member from Huron-Bruce. She raised some valid points.

I think, in general, members of the House support the thrust of the bill. We all want to ensure that we have a healthier society. One of our main roles here, as legislators, is to review what the functions of not only us, as legislators—but how it cross-sects with the demands of our constituents.

Interjection: Tell them about your daughter at the dentist.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Okay, I'll tell you the story about my daughter at the dentist. My daughter went to

the dentist and had a great day, a great checkup—no cavities. She did really well.

Interjection.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: She does have a million-dollar smile.

When she was done, the dentist went to give her a coupon for maybe a Happy Meal at McDonald's. She looked up at him from the dentist's chair and said, "What are you doing? Trying to kill me? I don't want to eat that." She is conscious about her health and the nutritional value of the food that we have around us. Maybe the dentist was taken aback. He should be handing out apples and fresh fruit—

Interjection.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —or toothpaste or something. But it goes to show you how consciousness is shifting, certainly in the next generation. We want good, healthy, wholesome food, we want to know where it comes from, and we want to protect the sources.

We met with members of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. I want to give them a shout-out for all they do in protecting our food source, food security and, ultimately, food sovereignty. We need to know where it comes from and understand and value the process of our food production.

With that, I thank the members for their attention.

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

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: I'm pleased to speak on Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act. I appreciate the comments from the members from Essex and Huron-Bruce.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, healthy kids grow up to be healthy adults, and a—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock. Can we keep the noise down? There are about 10 conversations going on. I'm having trouble hearing the person speaking. Please.

Continue.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, a healthy start is better for our kids, and it is better for our health care system. That is why our government has re-introduced this legislation, which will make it easier for our families to make informed and healthy food choices.

This bill has been debated over 11 hours, and all parties support this bill. I think it's time to refer it to committee so that it can be debated in committee and so we can hear from stakeholders, and it can come back with necessary amendments and pass third reading so that families and children can get the benefit of it.

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

Mr. Steve Clark: It's a pleasure to have a few moments to speak. With all due respect to the previous speaker, the member for Brampton-Mississauga South—sorry, I flipped them the wrong way; I got the municipal name mixed up. I just want you to know, Speaker, that we still have 17 members in our caucus who haven't spoken to this bill. In fact, five of them are here with me

in the House this morning: Mr. Arnott, Mr. Fedeli, Mr. Harris, Ms. MacLeod and Mrs. Martow. They're all here; they're all very enthusiastic to speak to this bill. This is a very important bill, it covers many different topics, and in the very few minutes we have left this morning—we only have 58 minutes left before the House has a recess before question period—I would hope, and I would ask, that we be allowed to speak to this very important bill.

I spoke to this bill on Monday and got out a lot of concerns that some of my constituents had about the bill. Obviously there is a lot of support, as well, for the bill in the riding. I've had a number of individuals speak to me about Bill 45 and about ensuring that it gets to committee.

Again, I'm a little skeptical. This bill will probably get, for the most part, all-party support here this morning; there might be some who don't agree. However, what we saw this week with the government on another bill—the transportation bill, Bill 31—is that the opposition put many, many reasonable amendments to that bill, and the government members voted every single amendment down.

So I guess I'm looking for some direction from the government when they decide to speak on this bill: Are they going to hear the other side, are they going to listen to the opposition, and are we going to be able to take some of the comments we've heard from our constituents, put them through as amendments and make the bill better? That's my question to the government.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's a pleasure to be able to stand in my place this morning on behalf of my residents in the riding of Windsor-Tecumseh and speak to Bill 45.

We, on this side of the House, like to think that the "G" in G45 actually stands for "Gélinas." After bringing forth 11 private member's bills over six years, dealing with healthy eating choices, dealing with restrictions on tobacco, certainly the member from Nickel Belt, France Gélinas, has brought a certain fierceness to this debate, a certain—she won't give up on it.

Interjections.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's time that it's at the House; it's time that we're at this level, making decisions on making healthy choices and cutting back on flavoured tobacco. We all have paid it lip service over the years, but finally it looks like we're all headed in the same direction and are almost prepared to get on with it. That's what I'm hoping we will do.

There are still a few weaknesses in the bill, Speaker, as you've heard before. I don't know why, for example, sodium content on menu labelling isn't part of this bill. We can all count calories, and goodness knows I should be counting more than I have; I respect that. But sodium content is just as bad. If we're going to get serious—if we really want to do the right thing by all the people in Ontario—we should improve the bill to make sure that the sodium content of a meal is also included. More often

than not, some of the fast-food choices I make have more than the daily recommended count of sodium or salt in that meal. I try to think of it more now than I did in the past, but I know if it was right in front of me perhaps I would be making that better choice.

0920

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Huron–Bruce. You have two minutes for your reply.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I really appreciate everyone's comments, particularly the member from Leeds–Grenville, in the sense that it's important that we have time to debate this bill. Bill 45 is an important piece of legislation that we all deserve the right to speak to.

As I mentioned earlier, I had the opportunity to speak about the healthy lifestyles initiative that the county of Huron will be participating in. It's an opportunity, as we debate bills, to talk about the good things that are happening in our riding as well.

Just to revisit, banning of the marketing of tobacco products to children is an important step, but we also need to shut down illegal smoke shacks.

I appreciate all the comments from the members, particularly from Essex. I love the fact that his daughter is challenging people to ensure that she's receiving healthy lifestyle tips and that she is raising awareness for other professionals as well. I like that. It's a two-way street in terms of what we need to be doing.

But I would still like to take a moment to say we need to do more. Industry are innovators. They're taking the lead and doing so many things on a voluntary basis. I was just speaking to the member from Cambridge and a representative of the Ontario Lung Association. I was sharing how in my area, in terms of lung health, farmers are coming together with health researchers to figure out how to move forward to ensure healthy lifestyles and protect their lung health. That's another example of how industry is indeed moving forward without interference from government. We can't stifle that. No matter what we do, we always have to ensure that the red-tape burden is at minimum so that our industry can do the best and be the best they can be in this province.

Again, just to conclude, you know what? We need to move forward with physical activity in schools and healthy lifestyles.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'm going to warn members again: There are many, many conversations going on, and if I can't keep it quiet, I'll single you out.

Further debate?

Mr. Ted Arnott: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I just heard recently—I want to inform the government House leader that it is my hope and my intention to speak to Bill 45—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'm sorry to inform the member that that's not a point of order. Further debate?

Mr. Michael Harris: It's a pleasure to rise today in the House and speak to Bill 45. I, of course, wanted to be

able to speak to this bill. My colleague was cut off briefly there, but I know the member for Wellington–Halton Hills as well would like to speak to Bill 45 on behalf of his constituents. I know he couldn't get that out, and I wanted to make that point. As well, my colleague for Thornhill—we were fighting over who was going to speak this morning on this. I know she too would like to speak to this on behalf of her constituents.

This is a bill that concentrates on, obviously, three pieces of legislation: the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2014, requiring fast-food restaurants to display the calorie counts for their menu items; the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, primarily to prohibit the sale of flavoured tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes; and then there's the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2014, which brings in a number of restrictions on e-cigarettes, or electronic cigarettes, which include banning their sale to anyone under 19 and restricting display and promotion of e-cigarettes, much like we do today with the regular, more conventional cigarette products.

You know, when I spoke to one of the predecessors of this bill last year, Bill 131, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, I spoke about the many influences that encourage youth to smoke: peers, the media, actors and other entertainers. Again, I would like to spend most of my time concentrating on the youth smoking aspects of the bill today.

I spoke last year of the need, as parents and as government, to ensure those influences are countered by our own influence to encourage healthy decisions. Frankly, as I noted then, it's our responsibility to teach our young people about the effects of smoking. You only need to look at the statistics, which show that children are more likely to smoke if their parents do, to understand the impact and influence of our decisions as adults on choices our young people make. Speaker, I don't smoke; that's my choice. As a parent, I sure hope that my kids don't grow up and smoke either. I will be making them aware of that each and every day.

Fortunately, statistics also show that the percentage of kids and teens who smoke has declined in recent years, which is great news. According to a Youth Smoking Survey in Canada, 2% of youth in grades 5 to 9, and 11% of those in grades 10 to 12, reported that they were current smokers. Speaker, grade 5 is an awfully young age to be smoking—even grades 10 to 12. Of kids in grades 5 to 9, 82% of youth have never tried it, and thank God for that. By grades 10 to 12, 52% of youth reported that they still hadn't tried it at all. I think those stats are moving in the right direction. That said, while those numbers are improving, there is still room for further improvement. The trends are heading in the right direction, and today's bill will help those numbers get smaller. According to the Youth Smoking Survey, more than half of children will still try tobacco.

I have three young boys at home. I feel it's so important to teach them the dangers of cigarettes, and I hope that they make the healthy decision not to smoke as they grow older. I would encourage all parents to open up that

conversation with their children and keep that communication going as they grow up into teenagers and young adults.

Those conversations are essential, but no matter the communication and conversations, the temptations are always there. I regret the fact that one of the main sources of temptation is not even addressed by this bill. I speak of contraband tobacco, a huge contributor to youth smoking which cannot be taken lightly. According to the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco, there are more illegal cigarettes in Ontario than anywhere else in the country.

I've had the opportunity to meet with folks from the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco, and remember they had done a study at one of the local high schools. They collected the cigarette butts found in front of the school, and a good percentage of the tobacco butts they found were in fact contraband. This is an alarming issue that needs to be dealt with.

We talk about increasing the fines on the sale of tobacco products to underagers. It's important to start to crack down on youth smoking, but it doesn't go far enough towards stopping the sale of cigarettes out of the back of someone's truck in the parking lot of a high school or in someone's university dorm room.

They often say that contraband tobacco is fairly easy to get. You see the vans driving up and down the street, bringing the cigarettes right to the establishment or right to the schools in our own communities. I know that a lot of the stores do their best to ask for IDs and crack down on it at the store, but there's so much contraband going on, simply out of a van, that we need to deal with that.

I remember my colleague from Haldimand-Norfolk suggesting that the province put an end to illegal tobacco and smoke shacks by increasing enforcement and reducing tobacco taxes. The member for Haldimand-Norfolk has said that when this took place in the early 1990s, 300 smoke shacks vanished on the Six Nations overnight.

Illegal cigarettes pose an incredible threat to the health of our young people. These cigarettes are sold by criminals through a network of drug dealers, which can give greater access for youth to cigarettes, cigarillos, cigars, chewing tobacco and other products.

The price for 200 illegal cigarettes can range from \$4 to \$8. The low price of illegal cigarettes makes them incredibly attractive to smokers, especially young smokers, who may not be able to afford the legal product.

It is clear that Ontario has an illegal cigarette problem. It has been estimated that one of every three cigarettes in Ontario is illegal. A failure to combat the problem of contraband cigarettes will lead to better-funded organized crime and increased health care costs. This is a serious problem, which is why important organizations such as the Retail Council of Canada, Crime Stoppers, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation and the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters have called for government's attention to address the situation.

Instead of addressing contraband cigarettes, this act turns to the issue of e-cigarettes. In fact, this piece of

legislation would ban and restrict the sale, promotion and use of e-cigarettes, similar to tobacco. I think we all agree that we need to limit the exposure of our young people to tobacco, but I am also aware that there is a debate regarding how much of a health risk e-cigarettes actually pose.

0930

Some studies have shown that a puff of e-cigarette with the highest nicotine content contains 20% of the nicotine contained in a puff of a conventional cigarette. One fifth of the conventional cigarette is a significant reduction. I have also received countless emails from constituents who found that e-cigarettes are a healthier alternative to tobacco smoking. Some have even used it as an aid to actually quit smoking. The fact is, we simply don't have all the facts here when it comes to e-cigarettes. We simply do not know enough about this new technology. Without that data, that information, it may be too early to create regulations regarding e-cigarettes.

Speaker, there's little doubt that ultimately smoking is an issue that affects us all. We all have a friend or a family member who has gotten sick or even passed away. It's a sad and terrible thing to see, and I wish it upon no one. I believe that it's important to continue educating our young people of the dangers of smoking.

If you can only imagine, it was not too long ago when folks smoked in bars. In fact, you have to look at airplanes: a smoke-free environment. The thought that at one time, back in the day, folks were smoking on airplanes—we've certainly come a long way.

I can recall when I was in school, out occasionally the odd night, coming home with cigarette burns in my clothes just drove me crazy. We don't have to worry about that anymore. To get here it required a lot of work, work that continues as we look to keep our young people away from harmful second-hand smoke.

As I noted off the top, while Bill 45 aims to properly address youth smoking it also seeks to give more information to Ontarians who are simply looking to make healthier choices.

To be clear: Ontarians are looking for that information to make healthier choices. In fact, approximately 95% of Ontarians supported requiring fast-food restaurants to list their nutritional information on the menus, according to Ipsos.

If Bill 45 is passed, it will require owners and operators of regulated food services premises to display the number of calories in each standard food item sold at their premises. When we're talking about regulated food service premises, we're talking about the places that sell meals for immediate consumption. I believe the common term is "fast-food restaurant," of course. I think at the end of the day we can all understand the importance of making informed decisions when standing in line at a chain with 20 or more Ontario locations, or that are brought under this act by regulators.

I do see that I'm almost running out of time and I'll conclude at that. I look forward to questions and comments from my colleagues and then wrap it up.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I just want to say, up is down and down is up. These days we have Liberals talking like Conservatives and now we've got Conservatives talking about regulations. I tell you: This whole place is getting rather interesting.

I just want to put something on the record and I hope people take it for what it is. I think the bill is a good step forward. I think the point was made: by ensuring that restaurants of certain sizes post what calories you're going to be eating and what's good and bad as far as what's on the menu—it's a good thing because it allows the person to make a choice.

But really, this is the point that I want to make: You can try to regulate as much as you want but the biggest effect you're going to have is when you affect people's behaviour. The best way to affect people's behaviour is by education.

I look at where we are today compared to what we were 20 years ago when it comes to people's choices when it comes to health. What has really driven people to go to the gym, be more cautious about what they eat, what their lifestyle is, has been a constant bombardment of stuff that we saw on television, radio, within the papers, everything from—you remember participation, the federal program that encouraged people to get out and walk and take a bike, to various ads that we see that are more or less encouraging people to live healthier lifestyles.

I guess my point is this: We can try to regulate, but at the end of the day, regulation, unless it's done in cooperation with some type of advertising in order to affect people's choices, is really for naught. I think that's what we're trying to do with this particular bill: to make sure that we give people the information so that they're able to make the choices on how to live healthy.

Now, I can't understand what people see in some of these fast-food restaurants. I want to tell you, I've been in a few before—worst thing you ever can do for your health. I just encourage people to try to stay away from those places—bad food.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to commend the member from Kitchener–Conestoga on his remarks. I certainly agree with him, and I think we're on the same page on this—and the member for Timmins–James Bay, as well.

This is an important issue. Any of us who have had to quit smoking know how hard it is. I'm an ex-smoker. I was one of these guilt-ridden anglophones growing up in Montreal, and all my friends were French and cool, and I was guilt-ridden for hundreds of years of oppression. The way we compensated was we drank a lot of coffee and smoked Gauloises. It was one of ways an Anglo kid from the suburbs could be cool with their French university peers in downtown Montreal in the heyday of Quebec nationalism.

But anyway, I did quit. One of my buddies, on New Year's Eve, when I was 26 years old—we drank an enormous amount of Scotch and smoked an entire carton

of Russian cigarettes. It was very successful aversion therapy. I was so sick, for three months after, that I have never smoked since. But I'm glad that in 2014, we have much more progressive and less severe ways in which to quit smoking.

I would like to say one thing. I know my friend from Kitchener–Conestoga is not a big fan of red tape, and is one of those people in the House who, quite rightly, argues government should move more quickly and be less bureaucratic. I'm hoping he and his colleagues, since we seem to have—we've had over eight hours of debate now. We have, I think, unanimous agreement on this. Everyone wisely shares in the credit for this. So I'm hoping that maybe we can get this to committee.

I think that by using my particular technique of quitting smoking, several people could have quit by now, using the Murray aversion therapy Russian-cigarette process.

Mr. Speaker, since we are all concerned about young folks, let's try to get this bill passed, so we can get better supports for people of all ages who would like to quit.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm happy to get up just to speak for a couple of minutes and make some comments, because it doesn't look like I'm going to get a chance to speak to this bill directly.

We all know that we can all do better. We can all live healthier. We're all trying to set a good example for the next generation. I think that this generation is learning a lot in school about, certainly, saying no to drugs. We don't see drinking and driving being the issue that it once was.

But we also need to recognize that just making rules and just making regulations often isn't enough. We have to look at the illegal tobacco industry, which is providing very cheap cigarettes, often without filters, to our youth. I feel that this government isn't doing enough to address that problem. And I'm surprised, because we all know that we're running a bigger and bigger deficit every year, and there is certainly revenue to be made if the cigarettes were being sold legally. So if you're going to allow cigarettes on our streets to our youth, you'd think that you would want to recoup as much tax as possible.

In terms of listing calories for restaurants—especially, obviously, large-chain fast-food restaurants—well, there's more to it than just calories. We also have to consider the fat content and how the food was prepared.

I recall somebody who was a member of my family arguing—you couldn't even have the discussion—that a potato is a potato, and it doesn't matter if it's baked or if it's fried in a french fry. Obviously, this is somebody who went through the Canadian school system and didn't get the education, in terms of food preparation and healthy eating, that I believe this generation is getting.

We can do more. I think it really is about setting an example in education.

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

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to add comments to what the member from Kitchener–Conestoga, the Minister of Transportation and the member from Thornhill have already stated. I had the opportunity to stand and speak at some length about this the other day, and I'll just summarize what I had said then.

I think it's important to note what the member from Thornhill said about educating kids around healthy eating and around the downfall of smoking.

0940

It was interesting, because there was a member from the government side the other day who talked about e-cigarettes and the importance they have in helping those who would traditionally smoke tobacco cigarettes and being able to stop that unhealthy habit. He had made reference to some of them having aromas such as bread baking. I had pointed out at the time that when we're looking at kids, not only do they model what they see from their parents, but when we have things that give off an aroma that's pleasing, it's more enticing for kids to want to use it. So I think there definitely needs to be some sort of control around access to those particular items for kids so that they're not going to use e-cigarettes to then progress on to tobacco cigarettes down the road. There definitely needs to be an education piece and some sort of control around kids having access to e-cigarettes, because we certainly don't want them to pick up the smoking habit.

I think it's also important that kids have access to healthy foods at home, but also at school, and that they have access to community schools that they can walk to and are not being bused 45 minutes to an hour away and not getting the daily exercise that they need. They need to have the education piece around choosing healthy foods. I think labelling menus in the large chain restaurants is a great place to start to help parents educate their kids on making healthy choices as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I thank everyone for their comments. I now return to the member for Kitchener–Conestoga.

Mr. Michael Harris: I would like to thank those who chimed in there, the member for Timmins–James Bay, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, my colleague the member from Thornhill and finally the member for Windsor West.

I have to say, off the top, I somewhat enjoyed the comments from the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. Luckily we only gave him two minutes to talk about those wild days of his when he was in his early twenties or we could have been in for a real story, perhaps. But he obviously had to learn the hard way; I chose just to avoid it. Perhaps I had better things to spend my money on. I hope that my kids do the same—focus their time and energy in other places.

You see young athletes today—I was with a gentleman whose son is 14. He wouldn't even go out to have wings with his dad one night because he was conscious about the calories he was taking in, let alone filling his body with carcinogens and other things. I think our youth

are getting the message, similar to what my colleague mentioned about impaired driving. Through proper promotion, kids are getting the message that this is the wrong thing to do and that it is not a healthy choice.

You know, I'm a big fan, obviously, of a smoke-free environment now in our restaurants, our airplanes and even on our sports fields where kids are playing—to ensure that they're going to have to go somewhere else. It's a choice that they make. It's one that I make, not to smoke, and I don't want to be subject to second-hand smoke as well.

But I do want to get on the record that I had the fortunate pleasure of meeting with Heart and Stroke just last week. I told them that I would be speaking to the bill. I'm glad I've had the opportunity to. I hope that my colleagues do as well because our stakeholders like to know, see, hear and read the comments that we make about important pieces of legislation like this. So I thank you for the opportunity to bring my 10 minutes today. I'll conclude at that.

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's always a delight, the opportunity for me to speak on Bill 45 this morning, the Making Healthier Choices Act.

I just want to give a little context. During my time when I was a city councillor in the great city of Peterborough, from 1985 to the fall of 2003, the city of Peterborough was one of the first municipalities in the province of Ontario to develop an anti-smoking bylaw. I remember clearly that we had extensive consultations throughout the community. I think they lasted for almost 12 months. Then we got the bylaw put in place. A good friend of mine had a very distinguished career in the Royal Canadian Air Force, Dr. Garry Humphreys; he was our MOH in Peterborough. I know my colleague, Dr. Helena Jacek, the Minister of Community and Social Services was a colleague of Garry Humphreys. Garry was very determined. He was a bright guy, and as a military guy, it was a little like planning a major military operation. He brought that kind of focus to the issue of reducing smoking within the county and city of Peterborough, working with Mayor Sylvia Sutherland. Mayor Sutherland was the longest-serving mayor in the history of Peterborough. I know my good friend from Northumberland–Quinte West is well versed on the great leadership qualities of Ms. Sutherland, who now serves Ontario so ably as a member of the Ontario Municipal Board. It was during her leadership that we finally got the first anti-smoking bylaw in place, the first in the province of Ontario. The Peterborough bylaw, essentially, became the template for right across the province of Ontario. Dr. Humphreys, working with other MOHs right across the province, of course, collectively decided that smoking and the reduction of smoking would be very, very helpful for the health and well-being of all Ontarians. Of course, we've advanced since then. Bill 45 builds on that work.

Mr. Speaker, as I like to tell audiences when I'm in my hometown of Peterborough—by the way, happy Eas-

ter to everybody; there are going to be great events over the weekend in Peterborough—we always stand on the shoulders of others, so Bill 45 is essentially that. We're standing on the shoulders of others. Members on all sides here, the opposition and third party, collectively, have come together in terms of Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act.

Just last Sunday, I was at the Independent grocery store on Lansdowne Street East in Peterborough. It's perhaps a stone's throw from my home. Dave Morello, a wonderful guy, is the franchise owner of Morello's Independent Grocer. I recommend to all members of this House that if they ever get to Peterborough, visit Morello's grocery store on Lansdowne Street East. It's right beside the Pioneer gas bar, with the cheapest gas in Peterborough. So if you want to fill up your tank and get your groceries, you can do it all at one time.

What's interesting when you're in the grocery stores today is how the consumer public is taking the time to look at labels. That's why labels are so important. Everywhere I go, whether it's canned foods, fresh foods, processed foods, everybody is looking at labels to see the content of the food they are consuming. That is a great step forward. I know that's happening.

Last Friday, I had the distinct pleasure of being at the Foodland Ontario Retailer Awards. There were winners from right across the province of Ontario, but there's one thing in common: They want to make sure that Ontarians, whether you're in Halton Hills or Arthur, Ontario, or Forest, Ontario, all those great communities that people now—

Interjections.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Windsor, Ontario; Oshawa—who else wants to get on here?

Mr. Steve Clark: Athens.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Athens—my good friends in Athens. Everybody is taking the opportunity to look at labels because they want to know all about the food they're consuming, and Bill 45 is certainly an important step forward in making that happen.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of other public awareness, certainly the Local Food Act—and I always like to commend my good friend from Sarnia-Lambton. Mr. Bailey did an incredible job with the food donation tax credit, and he deserves recognition for that. Everywhere I go, I always identify Mr. Bailey's great work here. What has happened through that? Commodity groups in Ontario, whether it's Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Chicken Farmers of Ontario, the egg producers of Ontario or Ontario Pork, are all taking advantage of that tax credit to make sure that healthy, nutritious food is available to our food banks right across the province of Ontario. On all sides of this House, we all have a commitment. We know there are folks in all of our communities across the province of Ontario who face some challenges, and we want to make sure they have the opportunity to have access to fresh, nutritious food, and the food donation tax credit that was championed by Mr. Bailey is making that happen.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deviate for a moment here. My good friends, my advisers next to the chair, now tell me I

have to make the case for closure. So now I will make the case for closure.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know—

Mr. Steve Clark: Point of order.

0950

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

Mr. Steve Clark: Speaker, I have many members who are sitting here, ready to speak to this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I will advise the member that that is not a point of order.

Minister?

Hon. Jeff Leal: The honourable gentleman from Leeds-Grenville is a great guy. Oh, gosh—

Mr. Ted Arnott: Point of order.

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

Mr. Ted Arnott: I want to say that I've enjoyed the speech by the Minister of Agriculture and Food this morning. He's had a chance to speak on behalf of his constituents about Bill 45 today. I am asking him for that same opportunity. I'm asking him not to move closure. There are at least two members of our caucus who are present right now in the House, prepared and ready to speak to this bill. The government is routinely—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'll advise you that that's not a point of order.

Minister?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I have profound respect for my good friend and colleague the member from Wellington-Halton Hills. I keep trying to work with him to get his highway fixed, Highway 6—

Interjection.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Oh, I'm sorry. Now the case for closure, here.

We have reached 6.5 hours of debate on this bill, and we allowed the debate to continue so that more members would have the opportunity to present on the bill, and all the members support. This bill has received a phenomenal amount of debate—11 hours. That is incredible.

Let me tell you, I've always believed that we should have an active democracy in this Legislature. According to my count, 65 very distinguished members have either spoken to this bill or participated in the debate during questions and comments. That's great.

I believe that there has been considerable debate on this bill. We've heard a wide range of viewpoints, opinions and perspectives from the opposition, the third party and government benches. It is time that this bill be put to a vote for second reading and, hopefully, be referred to committee, where the real work in this Legislature takes place.

As members know, in committee, members from all parties will hear from all presenters, who will add their invaluable opinion and perspective. Also in committee, members from all three parties will have an opportunity to move important amendments to strengthen this already very good piece of legislation.

At the same time, this House can move on to debate substantive issues. There are a number of pieces of im-

portant legislation, already introduced, which the government would like to debate and move through the legislative process. Mr. Speaker, for those who are listening in Peterborough this morning, let me give you that list:

—Bill 6, Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, something I know the opposition wants;

—Bill 9, Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act: very important;

—Bill 37, Invasive Species Act: We've got to get rid of that Asian carp that might be invading the Great Lakes;

—Bill 52, Protection of Public Participation Act, known as the anti-SLAPP legislation;

—Bill 73—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order, the member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I believe the member is filibustering his own motion.

Interjections.

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

To the minister again, and would you speak to the bill.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I know that everybody on this side wants me to conclude.

We'd like to spend time debating some of the other important pieces of legislation currently before the House, but we can't until Bill 45 has been dealt with. As a result, I now move that the question be put.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Leal has moved that the question now be put. Considering the hours that this particular bill has been debated, and the number of members who have spoken to it, I'm going to allow the question.

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

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This vote will be taken during deferred votes.

Vote deferred.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Orders of the day.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Mr. Speaker, I know this is a riveting day in the Ontario Legislature before the Easter weekend, so I'll rise and say we want to proceed to government order G80.

ONTARIO SOCIETY
FOR THE PREVENTION
OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
AMENDMENT ACT, 2015
LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ
DE PROTECTION DES ANIMAUX
DE L'ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 31, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care / *Projet de loi 80, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario et la Loi sur les animaux destinés à la recherche en ce qui concerne la possession et l'élevage d'épaulards ainsi que les exigences administratives relatives aux soins dispensés aux animaux.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): When this item of business was last debated, we had completed questions and comments on the speech of the member for Parkdale–High Park.

Further debate?

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'll be sharing my time with the members from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Ottawa South and Scarborough Southwest.

I'm delighted to be able to speak for a few minutes on this bill. It's a very important bill. I think it's one that touches on ethics and morals. I know that others have quoted from people like Gandhi, who, to summarize, said something along the lines of, "We're measured by how well we treat those who can't take care of themselves." I certainly believe that.

Mr. Speaker, animal welfare is a key priority for the residents of Newmarket–Aurora. When we posted this bill to our page, we got incredible input from residents of Newmarket–Aurora who were very supportive of the fact that we were moving ahead to protect orcas and other marine animals. I'd say it's been the second- or third-best-read article on our website and probably in the top two or three items that people are in touch with us about all the time.

It goes without saying that marine mammals are complex and magnificent creatures. If you've ever seen them in the wild—and I've had the opportunity to do that off the coast of BC. They're phenomenal animals. They have unique needs that require the right standard of care. That's why this government has introduced the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, otherwise known as Bill 80. If passed, Bill 80 would prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario, and I think that's a good thing. The people of Newmarket–Aurora are telling me that they think that's a great thing.

The bill would create a framework to establish animal welfare committees, as recommended in Dr. Rosen's report. These committees would ensure the planning, protection and oversight for the animals' care: things like animal care plans, access to veterinarians with expertise in marine mammals, and enhanced record-keeping. Our government is putting in place the strongest possible standards of care and protection for marine mammals in captivity in Canada. Our government is committed to the strongest possible standards of care and protection for marine mammals in captivity because that's what Ontarians expect, and it's what these amazing animals deserve. As I said earlier, I have certainly heard from the residents

of Newmarket–Aurora that they believe in this legislation.

This legislation builds on our existing protections and follows through on our government's commitment to develop the best standards and protections for marine mammals in captivity. We're not stopping with this legislation; we're taking the next step. We're establishing a technical advisory group of scientific experts, industry, enforcement and advocacy to give advice to us on the final, enhanced standards of care. In his report, Dr. Rosen outlined what elements those standards should govern in terms of light, sound, water quality and enclosure size. We look forward to hearing the advice, discussion and feedback of all interested parties.

The proposed standards of care will be posted publicly for comment this spring, we hope, before being enacted by regulation in the summer of 2015. Facilities with marine mammals in Ontario would need to adhere to the new standards. Both the legislation and the process we're going through with the technical advisory group are about ensuring that Ontario has the best standards of care possible for marine mammals. These enhanced standards will give the public confidence that these magnificent creatures are being properly cared for and protected.

The government has had the opportunity to meet with many of our partners on this issue. I'm optimistic about Marineland's willingness to work with us as we move to ensure that we have the best standards of care in place and they remain a strong part of Niagara's economy.

1000

I just wanted to touch on a couple of facts and figures. Some of the questions that have surfaced around the orca prohibition debate—one of the questions is, how will people who violate the orca prohibition be punished? I can tell you the proposal. Six months after royal assent, a person found to possess an orca that was acquired after the introduction of the bill would be liable, on conviction, to a fine of not more than \$60,000 and imprisonment of up to two years—pretty profound, Mr. Speaker.

How will the ban be enforced? The OSPCA would be empowered to enforce the new standards of care and orca prohibitions, based on their existing authority under the OSPCA Act to enforce any law in force in Ontario “pertaining to the welfare of or the prevention of cruelty to animals.”

The proposed bill would not grant OSPCA inspectors additional powers to investigate, but it would allow them to enforce, using the general provisions.

Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to be able to stand today and speak on this very important bill—important for a number of reasons, but, I think, primarily above them, it's a very moral bill that we've introduced to make sure that orcas are treated well and that we have no more of them moved to Ontario.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would turn the spotlight to our member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore for his comments.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Who are the orcas, and why do they matter? Mr. Speaker, these are some of the most beautiful and majestic animals on the earth. They are very large. They're very complex. They're very intelligent. They matter in that we should be humane to all living beings, but particularly to such tremendous creatures that live in the wild and who rightfully should only live in the wild.

Some of the most passionate interactions I have with my constituents are when they raise issues of animal welfare, whether it be for domestic animals or for animals in the wild. That is why, for our government, the treatment of animals is very important.

In my own home, my wife, Rose, and my daughter, Ariana, are self-described animal advocates, so my position on this today is something that's going to be very closely scrutinized by all of my constituents, including those at home.

This legislation will build on our existing protections and follows through on our government's commitment to develop the best standards and protection for marine mammals in captivity. If passed, Bill 80 will prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario, and it will dramatically improve conditions for all captive marine mammals. This is about ensuring that Ontario has the best standards of care possible for marine mammals.

I'm very pleased that the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act includes a fine of up to \$60,000 and/or two years in prison on the first conviction for either breeding or buying and selling orcas. This is very important, Mr. Speaker, because it's important, when we pass legislation, that it has teeth to it, real penalties for those who would try to go against the intent of the legislation.

Also, the minister will be working on a series of additional improvements regarding the care of marine mammals. This will include better standards for larger enclosures, water quality inspections, higher standards for noise and lighting as well as improved standards for the handling and display of these mammals. Those changes are expected in approximately six months.

I'm pleased that if this legislation is passed, it will make Ontario the first Canadian jurisdiction to have specific standards for the care of marine animals.

Mr. Speaker, the minister is not stopping at this legislation to ensure that we increase standards of care for marine mammals. We're moving forward with action to establish a technical advisory group of scientific experts, industry, enforcement and advocacy groups to give advice on the final enhanced standards of care.

It's very encouraging to hear support for this legislation coming from my colleagues in the third party. I'm very pleased to see that they do see the bigger picture here.

I know that the question has been raised as to why we're focusing on orcas in this legislation. That's because these are particularly complex and extraordinary animals and exceptionally large. There is no way to establish human-built habitats for them that would be

acceptable. As we get a better understanding of the science behind these animals, it's clear that we need to take action and enact a ban on the breeding and acquisition of orcas in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, there's much more that can be said on this, but I am sharing my time with the member from Ottawa South, so I'll allow him to build upon the remarks.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: It's a pleasure today to speak to Bill 80, essentially an act to protect marine mammals.

It's very encouraging to hear the debate—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: Yes, Free Willy.

As the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore said, “Who are the orcas?”

It's interesting that we've always had relationships with the animals that we share this planet with. We often have to get to the point where we realize that they're there, that we have a special relationship with them and that things like very large animals being kept in very tight quarters—I think the member from Algoma–Manitoulin mentioned, how would we react if we went by a house in a yard where you had my lab, Jackie, on a three-foot chain? She's meant to be out and running. That's what we're looking at.

I think, if you listen to the debate, we have a very close relationship with animals. We want to make sure that we respect them, that we treat them humanely. This bill moves to do that and moves to not only ban the purchase and breeding of orcas here in Ontario but also to make sure that we establish a committee that's going to ensure the protection of marine mammals.

My daughter is probably not listening. I think it's important that we have a relationship and that we have places like Marineland for the educational purpose. It had captured her imagination. She's now 36. We unfortunately have never got there. I just want to tell her this morning, I promise we'll get there. She hasn't forgiven me yet. But she was very captured by the whales. I think that she understands now that keeping animals in those kind of quarters isn't fair to them. That's the humane thing to do. It's the thing we would want to do for each other.

I also want to commend the member from Parkdale–High Park, who gave a very impassioned speech the other day, which I had the opportunity to listen to. I think it's very clear that most of us in this Legislature support this bill. At least that's what I've understood from the debate.

I look forward to the continuation of the debate, the continuation, I reckon, in Ontario of ensuring that we look after the safety and the proper care of animals we share this planet with.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Scarborough Southwest.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: It's a pleasure to be able to say a few words about Bill 80. My colleagues have

spoken about what the bill is about: It's basically to protect the orca whale from being kept in captivity or from being bred.

I just want to say a little bit about the orca whale. Orca whales are highly social, almost like they have a family. They communicate with each other, which is very rare.

1010

Also, they do hunt. When they go hunting, they have highly sophisticated ways of hunting. Some of the whales will be up at one end and some will be at the back end, and they'll chase after their prey and try to catch it. So, again, as previous colleagues have said, imagine chaining a dog or an animal that is highly sophisticated on a four- or five-foot chain and limiting it to that.

The thing also about the orcas is that they have certain sounds they make with each other, for communication. We haven't yet discovered what exactly they're saying, but we know they are talking with each other.

The bill in front of us says you can't keep these animals in an aquarium area. It's just not right.

I'll give you an example. I tabled a private member's bill last session to do with elephants. Elephants are in the same category, probably a little bit smarter. I have three cats at home. My wife and I have three stray cats that we brought into the house. Once in a while, I pick up a cat and put it in front of the mirror. The cat doesn't really understand or make sense of the fact that the cat is being reflected off the mirror. Most animals can't do that. However, if you put a piece of masking tape forming an X on the cheek of an elephant and put a mirror in front of the elephant, the elephant will actually, with its trunk, try to remove the masking tape, because the elephant realizes, “There is something on my cheek,” which other animals, as I was saying, don't do.

Elephants, again, are very sophisticated. Out in the wild, they go out in families, and if a family member dies, they hold a kind of funeral. They'll get together around the dead elephant and they will wail or bellow—I'm not sure what the exact word is—in sadness, almost like crying, because one of their colleagues, one of their friends or family members, has died.

So the orcas are in a similar category. We moved, here in Toronto, to take the elephants out of the Toronto Zoo and move them to a sanctuary in California, just north of San Francisco. They've joined other elephants there and they go out together as a family. When they're walking around the sanctuary, it's not that each one will go separately; they get together. They're highly social and they go out together and take walks and then decide, “Let's have some food; let's eat some branches here.” They work together. One may find water and make a certain sound, and the other elephants will go over and have a drink of water.

It's the same with orcas—not the same examples, but the same sophisticated communication techniques. I think one day we'll be able to figure out exactly what the orcas are saying to each other, the way they talk to each other, what their sounds actually mean. They're probably talking to each other at a different vibration.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: They're saying, "Vote NDP."

Mr. Taras Natyshak: They're saying, "Free Willy."

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: My colleagues across the aisle here, members of the NDP, have made some comments, and I can't address them all. I've only got a minute and 13 seconds left. But there was a movie that came out, *Free Willy*, and I know what that was about. It was to free a whale out of a marine facility.

But I think this bill is something that is really, really important and that it comes at the right time. More and more trainers that work with these animals are realizing that these animals are highly intelligent, and, "What am I doing, as a trainer, enclosing this animal or putting food out so it can grab food from my hand and make a group of people in a marine facility be very happy?"

This bill—again, I like it. I think the opposition members like it. We're having a discussion on it. I look forward to hearing from the opposition members. I look forward to this going to committee. Maybe some amendments will be passed and then brought back to this Legislature for third reading. Thank you.

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

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

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

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I have a couple of people to introduce this morning. First are Edward Numajiri from my riding of Pickering–Scarborough East and his aunt, Grace Smith—welcome; and Margaret Spoelstra, who is the executive director of Autism Ontario, who is here to mark World Autism Awareness Day.

I want to say welcome to all of you. Thanks for being here.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I'd like to welcome visitors from Asheville, North Carolina: Bill Smith, Ann Smith, Darden Smith, Ann Caton Smith and Elizabeth Smith. Welcome. I hope you enjoy today.

Mr. Bob Delaney: On behalf of the member for Ottawa West–Nepean and page captain Jade Proulx, I'm pleased to introduce her mother, Sarah Johnston-Proulx, who will be in the public gallery this morning. Welcome.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am very pleased to welcome today Alison Hearn and Vanessa Brown, who have joined us from the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association.

Mr. Han Dong: On behalf of my constituent and page Caleb Woolcott, I would like to welcome his friend Laurie. Laurie is in the public gallery somewhere—oh, there she is. Welcome.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: It gives me great pleasure to introduce to the Legislature this morning Ms. Montarras's grade 10 civics class from Oakwood Collegiate

in my riding of Davenport. Welcome to Queen's Park, students.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm absolutely delighted to welcome today to Queen's Park, from my riding of Burlington, Dana Anderson; her son, Alex; and Andrea Kovacs, founder of PAATH, Parents of Adults with Autism Transitioning with Hope. Welcome to Queen's Park. Thank you for being here.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd like to welcome Henry "Bubba" Ludwa. He's a great friend of mine. He supported me my entire adult life. Unfortunately, Bubba passed away this week and he's being buried this morning at 10:30. I know he's here in spirit, and I just want him to rest in peace.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: It's a pleasure for me to introduce my father, Mr. Antonio Berardinetti, who is here today. He's wearing the red sweater.

I fight with him sometimes; I say to him, "You're the reason I got into politics"—because I wanted to become a teacher, and he said, "No, you've got to become a lawyer, then a politician." I guess I have mixed feelings, but it's a pleasure to introduce him today: Mr. Antonio Berardinetti.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): One of the conventions of this place is not to have a family fight on the floor.

Further introductions?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's my pleasure today to introduce, from Ottawa, the mother of our page Jade Johnston, Sarah Johnston, here in the east members' gallery. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'd like to welcome Stephanie Pause to our Legislature today. Stephanie is visiting us from Copenhagen, Denmark. Stephanie, please wave if you're over there. I can't—yes, there you are. Hello.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I'd like to introduce my good friend and a member of my riding association, Sukhpal Tutt, as well as his colleague Matt Kim.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I just wanted to ask all members to welcome Chris Yaccato from the Ontario Lung Association.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'd like to welcome all of the members of the Autism Society here this morning. My statement this afternoon at 1 p.m. will be on Autism Awareness Day.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It gives me great pleasure to introduce two students sponsored by the Rotary Club of Brighton, which is my Rotary club: Chloe Chazottes from Toulouse, France, and Kaisa Uoti from Eura, Finland—and of course, my wife, Diane, in the east gallery. Welcome.

Mr. Harinder S. Takhar: I would like to introduce Rachel Matthews. She is the mother of Sarah John, the page from my riding of Mississauga–Erindale, and I want to welcome her.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): This morning in the Speaker's gallery, we do have guests of the page captain, Thomas Dubois: his mom, Suzanne, his dad, Greg, and his older sister, who was another page—

Thomas says he's doing a better job—Rosalin Dubois. Welcome.

WEARING OF RIBBONS

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Point of order, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order from the Minister of Children and Youth Services and responsible for women's issues.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I believe we have unanimous consent to wear ribbons to recognize Autism Awareness Day today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Children and Youth Services and responsible for women's issues is asking for unanimous consent to wear ribbons to recognize Autism Awareness Day. Do we agree? Agreed.

MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Scarborough—Agingcourt.

Ms. Soo Wong: I believe one of our colleagues is having a birthday. My seatmate from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell is having a birthday. I think all of us want to wish him a happy birthday.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On that joyous occasion, it is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier. In 1998, as Minister of Energy, I undertook the restructuring of hydro in Ontario, and we created an organization—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. I've said before that I want the question put and the answer given in quiet.

Please.

Mr. Jim Wilson: At that time, we created an organization called the Ontario Electricity Financing Corp. The purpose of the OEFC was simple: It was responsible for paying off all electricity debt in the province.

As of March 31, 2013—that's the last year that numbers are available—that electricity debt was \$27 billion. That's about \$5,400 per ratepayer.

The law requires that all money coming from a sale of any share in Hydro One, including Brampton, must be used to pay down that electricity debt. Premier, if money from your sale of Hydro One goes to infrastructure, as you claim, where will you find the \$27 billion to pay off hydro's debt?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Energy is going to want to comment on the details of that question.

I want to just first say that I want to make it clear to the member opposite and to the people of Ontario that the

reason we are looking at the assets in this province, the reason we asked Ed Clark and his group to review the assets in the province of Ontario, was—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm asking for the same thing in an answer as I did for the question.

Carry on, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —was so that we would have the ability to leverage those assets, to invest in the assets that are needed for the 21st century.

We need badly to build highways, to build roads and bridges and public transit. Quite frankly, there's a deficit of infrastructure across the country, but in Ontario, we are doing the right thing: We are investing in that infrastructure.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Mr. Speaker, we saw this coming. In 1998, we feared that, one day, a Liberal government would come along and look to sell off assets with no regard to paying down the debt. That's why, when the PC government passed the Electricity Act, we legislated that every dollar from the sale of Hydro One had to go to the OEFC to pay down the province's electricity debt.

That law still stands, Premier, and it prevents you from putting that money toward anything but the \$27-billion debt.

Premier, are you going to obey the law, or will you simply ignore it?

1040

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I know that the minister is going to want to speak to the specifics, but I just think it is very important that people understand that this is a member of a party that sold the 407, that took absolutely no care to make sure that there would be an ongoing revenue stream, that there would be ownership on the part of the province or that the money realized from that sale would be used for a specific—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I am going to ask the member from Simcoe North to come to order. I'm also going to indicate to the government side that when she's answering, there should be no comments, and I'm going to insist on it.

Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: There was absolutely no thought, Mr. Speaker, to the investment of the money that was realized from that sale into the future benefit or future assets of the people of the province. All of those things are things that we are taking into account. We are not going to follow the path that the previous government laid out.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the Premier gets it. Premier, if you use the proceeds from the sale of any part of Hydro One for infrastructure, for example, that \$27-billion electricity debt will remain there for ratepayers or taxpayers to pay for many decades to come.

Premier, is the cost of new infrastructure in Ontario going to become another expensive line item on our hydro bills?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: The member opposite brings forward and highlights some issues that are of concern to us because that's the legacy they left when they tried working with this asset. We want to make certain that we do not do a repeat of the damage—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: —that they created for generations to come—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I suspect he didn't hear me. The member from Renfrew will come to order. The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry will come to order.

Carry on, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we are not going to speculate on matters that are still being discussed. We have asked the advisory council reporting to the Premier as to the valuations on maximizing the returns to the people of Ontario. It's critical, as part of those principles, that we provide incremental value to the people of Ontario, that we protect the public interest and that it be open and transparent and independently validated. That's exactly what we're doing. Anything that's created will be there to ensure that we protect the people of Ontario and the ratepayers.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, let me help by laying out how the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. works under the law. Currently, the OEFC has about \$11.2 billion in stranded debt on top of the \$17 billion it is guaranteed from a Hydro One sale. The OEFC currently pays down that \$11.2-billion debt through the profits made at Hydro One and OPG. But Minister, if you sell any portion of Hydro One, that revenue stream that is used to pay down the debt will shrink.

How will the OEFC pay down the electricity debt if you take away its primary source of income?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Minister of Finance.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The members will come to order.

Minister.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It's a great question coming from a member, the critic, who actually was part of the government that created the residual debt, and now there's a retirement charge that the people of Ontario and ratepayers have to repay. As a result, we have taken the precautions and the necessary steps to bring it down.

The member opposite should also know, and he knows fully well, that it's a function of the revenues coming through that stream, and when those change, it changes

the amount of the residual debt. We're taking every precaution and every care necessary to get it reduced. We're helping the people of Ontario because of the damages that they created in the past.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, Speaker, I've never actually sat in government, but I am looking forward to the day.

Again to the Minister of Energy: Minister, we know how you're going to pay down the debt at OEFC if you sell Hydro One: You're going to introduce new charges on the bills of electricity ratepayers. It's the only way you people know how to do business.

Hydro prices are already unaffordable. Just last week, you admitted that they're going to go up by about \$140 per year per customer. I can only imagine what the increase will be when you realize you have to pay down the OEFC debt with less revenue coming from less ownership in Hydro One.

Minister, what new charges will the electricity ratepayers of Ontario see on their bills in order to pay down the debt that you are ignoring?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Well, Mr. Speaker, a couple of things. The OEB is going to be a regulator; it is now and it will continue to be as we proceed forward in any initiatives in regard to pricing. Of course, the minister, and I'll let him take the next supplementary, has done an excellent job of finding ways to mitigate and protect the people of Ontario and ratepayers as we proceed forward.

The member opposite is also part of a party whose potential leader is talking about looking at this very issue. They're working on the premise that they want to be able to look at the valuations and the assets that we have before us to see how we can improve upon them. The member opposite and his team are the ones that have also initiated some of these ideas as they follow our lead.

We will lead. We will continue to do what's right to protect the interests of the public.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: After 12 years of this mess, they've even confused themselves, Speaker. So let's recap.

Again to the Minister of Energy: The OEFC needs revenue to pay down the \$11.2 billion of debt that it currently holds, but by selling off Hydro One, you're going to have to share that revenue with the new buyer. That means less money for the OEFC to pay down that debt. The only way your Liberal government will make up that lost revenue is by hosing electricity ratepayers yet again.

Minister, when are you going to tell the ratepayers that electricity bills are going to continue to skyrocket when you try to pay down the \$11-billion debt that you're responsible for?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member is beginning with a false premise. He's beginning with a supposition or a speculation as to what we might be bringing forward.

But let's talk about the general principle. I have a quote here that I'd like to read. This quote says—

Interjections.

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

Carry on.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The quote I have says, “As Premier, I will order an immediate review of all assets owned by government. Assets that don't serve the core functions of government will be divested. And every dollar made will be invested in new infrastructure right across the province.”

And “Let's use the full value of these assets to build the roads, highways, subways and infrastructure that every Ontarian can use.”

That is from Christine Elliott, member from Whitby–Oshawa, in her campaign. If that's part of her campaign, she should walk over here and join us.

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No. Your own caucus members were heckling.

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. The energy minister went on live TV to say, “The government has decided that we will be selling a portion of Hydro One.” But in spite of an accidental moment of truth from the energy minister, there are fundamental issues that the Liberals have not addressed.

We've seen that the Premier can't control private power companies; as an example, Eastern Power. You remember Eastern Power, right? They were involved in the Mississauga gas plant scandal. This company has apparently been building pipelines without permission and forcing workers into unsafe work conditions. It seems the gas plant scandal continues.

But we also know that private power costs us more money. So can the Premier promise Ontarians that hydro bills won't go up after the government privatizes Hydro One and local utilities?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, as the Minister of Finance has said and as the Minister of Energy has said, one of the principles we're using in the conversation that we're having with Mr. Clark and the conversation that he's having about the assets is that the controlling of price is very important to us; it's extremely important to the people of Ontario. The regulatory regime is extremely important. So the protections of the people of Ontario are at the core of what we know we need to do.

But at the same time, I say to the leader of the third party, she ran on a platform that was exactly the same as ours in terms of looking at assets and building the real-

ization and the leveraging of those assets—the money that could be realized from that—into the plan to build transit and transit infrastructure. The reality is that we are moving forward. We are implementing the plan that we ran on, that she ran on, so that we can invest in—

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

1050

Ms. Andrea Horwath: What's really clear is that New Democrats are the only party in this House that fundamentally disagrees with the selling-off of our public assets, including our hydro assets.

The Premier will not make the promise that selling off Hydro One and local hydro companies won't cost Ontarians more, because she knows full well that power bills are going up. It's going to hurt families. It's going to hurt manufacturing. It's going to hurt our resource sector. It's going to hurt innovators. This morning we heard from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture that it's going to hurt agriculture. It's going to hurt everybody, except for a very small handful of private energy interests. Will the Premier finally pull the plug on this ridiculous plan?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What is very clear is that the leader of the third party is a member of one of two parties in this Legislature who don't believe that investing in infrastructure for the future is necessary to economic growth in this province. There is no plan that has come forward from either party, particularly not from the NDP, on how to invest in infrastructure: how to build the transit, the roads and the bridges that are needed across this province.

That, Mr. Speaker, is irresponsible. It speaks to a lack of understanding of how the economy in Ontario works, it speaks to a lack of understanding of the needs for the 21st century and it speaks to a lack of understanding of Ontario's position in the world. Well, we understand that. We're going to invest in infrastructure.

Interjections.

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

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: What the Premier doesn't understand is that this asset is owned by the people of Ontario, and should be owned by them and their children and their grandchildren and their great-grandchildren from here on in.

It used to be that the only way to pay for transit in this province was by tolling the roads. When the Liberals found that that was not going to fly with the public, all of a sudden they're going to have an asset sale and sell off everything that Ontarians own.

You know what? It's not just New Democrats who see the privatization plan of the Premier for the nonsense that it actually is. It's not just the thousands of people who are taking to social media and sending letters telling the Liberals that their plan is wrong. The Toronto Star editorial says, “Privatizing the electricity grid was a bad idea when Mike Harris' Conservatives came up with it in 2001. It still is.”

The Globe and Mail says, “The mandate Ontario's Liberal government handed former TD Bank chief Ed

Clark was flawed from the outset. Selling off prized electricity assets to pay for transit projects smacked more of a cash grab than a considered approach....” It’s—

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We are going to be extremely, extremely thoughtful and careful in all of the work that we do around leveraging assets, Mr. Speaker—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins—James Bay will come to order. Thank you.

Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It is extremely important to the future economy, and to the present economy, of this province that we demonstrate the will to make the investments that are necessary. We cannot talk to people in other countries—we can’t talk to people in China or South America about investing in Ontario, Mr. Speaker, unless we have demonstrated the will to make the investments that are necessary.

The fact is that we have to leverage our assets, and we have to work with the private sector. Because that’s really at the root of what the leader of the third party is talking about: She doesn’t want to work with the private sector, except that when her party was in office, they signed nine private power generation contracts, so apparently—

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

GOVERNMENT’S AGENDA

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. A cut is a cut, no matter what the Premier calls it. Yesterday, the Premier called a half-a-billion-dollar education cut an “adjustment.” People are being fired, but the Premier says boards have staffed differently. Firing is firing, no matter what the Premier calls it.

Will the Premier admit that she’s cutting education and tell Ontarians how many more schools are going to be closed and how many more education workers are going to be fired in her 2015 budget?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let’s just begin with the fact that we’ve built 725 schools in this province since this government has been in office, and that there are more than 700 renovations. So on balance, there has been much more building, renovation and enhancement of school buildings, if that’s what we’re talking about, than there has been otherwise.

At the same time, if the leader of the third party understood how staffing models work across boards and in classrooms—

Interjections.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: No, seriously. If the leader of the third party understood that boards make decisions, and in fact, schools make decisions about how they’re going to allocate staff—as enrollment declines, there are decisions that boards have to make across the province. But even in the face of declining enrollment,

education funding in this province is stable in the face of fewer students in our schools.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I think what we need to do is renovate this chamber so that it’s big enough for the Premier’s ego.

Yesterday the Premier said that if a board chooses to change their staffing because their funding is changing, that’s their prerogative. I think Ontarians might appreciate a translation from Liberalese into plain old English. What the Premier was really saying was that the Liberals are cutting school board funding, and education workers, therefore, are being fired.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order on all sides, please.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Liberals are cutting school board funding, and education workers are getting fired. Gee, that’s so hard to understand.

The Premier is trying to duck responsibility by blaming the boards. The Premier said she got into politics because of cuts to education. Most people thought she was talking about fighting those cuts, not implementing them.

Will she stop her cuts to education?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: In my previous answer, I was talking about staffing. The fact is that 30 years ago, I was cutting my teeth on staffing committees; I was on staffing committees as a parent. I was working with the school board to try to understand how staffing worked—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I’ll get my work-out, but I’m going to ask for quiet, please. Thank you.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It was at that point that I learned how education was working. The member for Kitchener—Waterloo was talking about those years. Those were difficult years because we were working up to having to fight the cuts that Mike Harris was making, and they were the amalgamations. Those were very, very difficult years.

Well, Mr. Speaker, those years are gone. There are billions and billions more dollars in education. That funding is stable, despite the fact that there are fewer students in our schools.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It’s not just schools that the Premier is cutting; the Liberals are also cutting health care. Just this week, we learned there are new nursing cuts in London and Kitchener. Earlier today, we were joined by the Ontario Health Coalition, together with international health experts who are standing up for health care in Niagara.

Will the Premier do the right thing—if not in education, then perhaps in health care—and ensure that the people of the Niagara region have access to health care when and where they need it and keep the Niagara region hospitals open instead of closing them?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I just want to speak to the theme of these questions. The theme is that we can't change anything, that nothing should change. There should be no transit built. There should be no roads and bridges built because we can't raise the money to do that. There should be no change at the local school board level, no consolidation of schools, no community hubs created and no renovation of new schools so that new programs can be given to kids. There should be no transformation of the health care system. There should be no more home care in our communities because that would require change, and that would require a different kind of staffing.

1100

So the theme of the NDP is, "Everything's fine. We can't change a thing because we cannot look ahead. We cannot use our imagination. We cannot work with the private sector or school boards or hospitals to make the changes that are necessary."

That's not who we are, Mr. Speaker. That's who they are.

Interjections.

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

New question.

POWER PLANT

Mr. Victor Fedeli: My question is for the Premier. Just when you hoped the smell from your gas plant scandal was dissipating, today the odour is as strong as ever. The company you gave a sweetheart deal to as part of your Liberal seat-saver program is at it again. Eastern Power and its subsidiary Greenfield South have now apparently built a pipeline, without a permit, to service your wrongly relocated Mississauga gas plant. This is the same company you gave a \$36-million payout to for sunk costs and a \$45-million no-interest loan. According to the Auditor General, the total cost of the cancellation is \$275 million.

Premier, you can't cut a tree down in Ontario without a permit. How did you allow your buddies to build a pipeline without one?

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I've made this point before:

When I stand up and I get quiet, it stays that way, and you don't use it for a chance to get another one in.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, it sounds like the sky is falling down over this dispute and this contract. The reality is, what is going on here is a dispute over where a link will be, where a pipe will go, to provide the gas to this particular facility. It's an issue that is under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Energy Board. The dispute

has been brought before the Ontario Energy Board. I understand that the Ontario Energy Board is going to decide sometime today or tomorrow, to say, "The pipe is going here," or "It's going there." That's the issue.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary? The member from Nepean—Carleton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Back to the Premier: She contracted for a power plant where it wasn't wanted and where it should never have been put in the first place. Then she cancelled it to save Liberal seats in the 2011 election, as the campaign co-chair. Later, when her friends at Eastern Power and Greenfield wouldn't stop construction for another two months after the election, she bent over backwards, opening the public purse to pay for a purely political promise.

Now we find that this Liberal government has turned a blind eye to what Eastern Power is doing at the newly relocated site in Lambton. They are doing whatever they want.

Given the gas plant scandal and, more recently, the Sudbury by-election scandal, should Ontarians really be surprised that this Premier is willing to ignore the law if it suits her own public participation interest?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, let's start with the fact that that particular plant is being built with a willing host community. That's number one.

Number two, this dispute has to do with where a connecting link—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nepean—Carleton, come to order, and the member from Nipissing, come to order.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —to bring gas to the site.

That is a dispute that is being resolved between the parties and that has been brought before the Ontario Energy Board. They'll be issuing a decision as to where that particular pipe will go, and the issue will be resolved.

They're making a mountain out of a molehill. They're trying to go back to the days when they could stand up here every day and talk about the gas plant scandal.

The reality is, we built 20 new gas plants in this province. They're working and functioning. There are two new ones going under construction. This one has a dispute about a connection for a gas line.

Mr. Speaker, they should get—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nepean—Carleton will come to order. I do remind her to use the titles or ridings, and I will be forceful on that.

New question.

BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Premier. We know that you're about to have an interview with the Ontario Provincial Police in regard to the bribery scandal. We know that it's reported that the Ontario Provincial Police do want to interview Mrs. Sorbara, Mr. Lougheed and the MPP from Sudbury, Mr. Thibeault. Can you con-

firm if those meetings are to take place and the interviews will go forward?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I've been clear that I will be having an interview before the end of the month. The investigation is taking place outside of this House. It's not taking place in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, and I'll work with the authorities outside of the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I asked a very simple question. There are three people who are also under investigation: Madam Sorbara, Mr. Lougheed and Mr. Thibeault. The question is, are the Ontario Provincial Police setting up meetings, and have your members agreed to have those meetings with the OPP, to be interviewed in regard to the Sudbury bribery scandal: yes or no?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I can only speak for my schedule. Some days I can barely speak for my schedule. I know that I am going to be meeting with the OPP before the end of the month. I will work with the authorities outside of this Legislature. But that is the point: The investigation is taking place outside of the Legislature with the authorities, and I will work with them in that process.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Ms. Daiene Vernile: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. We know that farmers feed cities and are an integral part of our \$34-billion agri-food industry. But if it's going to grow and continue to compete internationally, more needs to be done.

In October 2013, the Premier challenged our agri-food industry to double its growth rate to create 120,000 new jobs by 2020. In order to help meet this challenge, we need to work with that industry to identify opportunities for growth and innovation.

Just last weekend in Waterloo region, for instance, the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival attracted a crowd of thousands. They ate 10,000 pancakes smothered with over 680 litres of maple syrup made by local producers. One of them is a good friend of mine, Dennis Weber, who's a third-generation maple syrup producer near St. Jacob's.

I'd like to ask the minister to update this House on the status of the Premier's growth plan.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the great member from Kitchener Centre for asking this question. She had a very distinguished career with CTV News before she arrived here, so she has a great perspective of what's going on right in the province of Ontario.

Maple syrup is one of our province's oldest traditional agricultural products. We have more than 2,500 producers right across the province of Ontario, and we all know that Lanark county, in eastern Ontario, is the maple syrup capital of Ontario. Together, we harvest about 1.5 million litres of syrup, making Ontario one of the top three producers in Canada, grossing more than \$32 million in maple product sales and contributing over \$53 million to Canada's GDP.

Mr. Speaker, our government—your government—is here to work with our agri-food industry partners, like maple syrup producers, to help them meet the Premier's growth challenge. We will measure progress as we move along the way, with our new growth steering committee that we recently announced—

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

Interjection.

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

Supplementary?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. We'll hear some more from you in just a moment. It's encouraging to hear that our government is committed to working with our maple syrup producers.

Minister, in December 2014, the federal government announced changes to the federal maple products regulations under the Canada Agricultural Products Act. This is for common standards for grading, colour classifications and labelling for maple products across all maple-producing jurisdictions. The approved regulation came into effect in December of last year, with a two-year implementation period to allow time for the industry to meet the new requirements.

Spokespeople with the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association are telling us that regulatory harmonization would provide a number of benefits to their industry. Can the minister please inform this House on a timeline when Ontario producers can expect to see changes?

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

We are very aware of the new standards that have been brought in by the government of Canada. We'll be starting a consultation with small, medium and large maple syrup producers throughout Ontario. Consultations will help to identify and address requests made by maple syrup producers, including the grading and classification of maple products.

1110

We want to ensure, as the Premier says, that we have a very robust conversation, encouraging growth and exploring how the sector can contribute to the Premier's Agri-Food Growth Challenge. Our government—your government—is committed to working with our maple syrup producers to meet their needs and support them in their efforts to grow their businesses and contribute positively to Ontario's economy.

I do know that those pancakes in Elmira came from Peterborough, from Quaker Oats.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Mr. Bill Walker: To the Minister of Community and Social Services: Yesterday, you released the SAMS—such a mess system—interim report. Sadly, it was 20 pages of nothing. In fact, the scope of the report explicitly says it does not provide an assessment of the overall system or infrastructure performance of SAMS. Minister, vulnerable citizens who depend on social assistance want answers. Front-line workers want answers. Yet this report

is obviously just an attempt by your government to deflect people from the real problem, and a waste of \$200,000.

Minister, can you explain why these key areas were omitted from the report, and how the people of Ontario can trust you to manage this file going forward?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Certainly, we have acknowledged the problems with SAMS, and we know that there is a lot more work to do. This is why we commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers to help us going forward in terms of improving the system.

In terms of the functionality of the system, of course, the proof really is, how are we helping vulnerable Ontarians? We have now had five successful pay runs for both ODSP and OW, payment to 570,000 families, over three million payments to our most vulnerable Ontarians.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Walker: Back to the Minister of Community and Social Services: Minister, yesterday in scrums, when asked why you implemented a system that clearly wasn't ready, you responded by saying, "Hindsight is 20/20." When you say it will be a seamless rollout, despite warnings from front-line workers and the opposition, you had better be certain.

I'm going to challenge your five seamless runs. Yesterday was cheque day, and hundreds of thousands of people did not get their cheques. You are playing with people's lives. Our vulnerable recipients deserve better, and so do our front-line staff.

Minister, people have lost confidence. Will you do the honourable thing, accept responsibility for the continuing SAMS boondoggle and resign today?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: There is some incorrect information related to yesterday's cheque run. I've been assured that it was a success.

I have visited a number of front-line offices—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, second time.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I have visited Hamilton ODSP, Brantford OW, Toronto OW, North Bay DSAB and the ODSP office there, Peterborough OW and ODSP, and Ottawa OW. I was able to thank some of the social assistance workers in Mississauga for their great efforts. I have listened to front-line workers. I want to thank them for their dedication. I want to thank them for their frankness in speaking directly to me with their concerns.

This is precisely what PricewaterhouseCoopers is addressing in the final report. We look forward to their recommendations.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is to the Premier. No one is above accountability in this Legislature, but the Minister of Community and Social Services—

Interjections.

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

Carry on.

Miss Monique Taylor: —the Minister of Community and Social Services refuses to take responsibility for the SAMS fiasco.

Since November, families have been underpaid. Cheques have been too late to pay the rent. Staff are overwhelmed and exhausted. Just yesterday, SAMS had to be rebooted, forcing staff to reassess many of their cases.

SAMS is a nightmare, but the Liberals still think they aren't accountable to the people of Ontario. What will it take for the Premier to ask for the minister's resignation?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Community and Social Services will want to speak to the supplementary, but I believe I just heard her take responsibility. I believe I just heard her say that we recognize that there have been problems with the implementation of SAMS. Absolutely, we understand that there have been problems.

Furthermore, we understand that there has been stress on front-line workers. That's why the minister has been visiting offices. That's why she has been listening to what they have to say. That's why there is a report being written.

The fact is, there needed to be a change. There needed to be a new system put in place so the service could be better.

Interjection.

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: There have been problems with the implementation of that system. The fact is, we are addressing those problems so that the front-line workers will have the support that they need and so that the service to recipients will be improved.

Interjection.

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

Supplementary?

Miss Monique Taylor: The minister told us last Thursday, "We have been extremely successful." But here's how the Liberals measure success: 21 weeks of chaos, 500,000 T5s shredded, privacy of 720 clients breached, \$240 million and counting wasted on software that doesn't work, and now \$200,000 spent on a report that ignores the biggest issues that staff and recipients have been telling the Liberals about for months: The functionality of the system doesn't work.

How much needs to go wrong before the Premier asks this minister to resign?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: My responsibility certainly lies, looking forward, to ensuring that SAMS does come to full implementation. I'm taking that extremely seriously. This is why we wanted a fresh set of eyes with PricewaterhouseCoopers to give us some good advice going forward. In fact, they have acknowledged some of the

successes to date. Some 57 priority issues have been addressed. We have opened help lines to assist those staff who are clearly quite stressed, we have developed new and updated job aids, and we are releasing updates regularly to staff to improve communication.

I am given the mandate by our Premier to continue to work as hard as I can to ensure that all our officials are also doing that, to ensure that vulnerable Ontarians are looked after appropriately.

PAN AM GAMES

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Yesterday at the Legislature, I was able to see the medals for the Pan/Parapan Am Games up close and personal. Let me tell you—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The question is to?

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I'm sorry. The question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

As I was saying, those medals are simply amazing. I was able to see how they were made and learn the story behind them.

The artwork of the medals was designed in collaboration with Christi Belcourt, a Métis visual artist. This is the first time that Braille has been incorporated into the medals for the Pan/Parapan Am Games. Seeing the medals here in the Legislature allowed everything to really sink in: The Pan/Parapan Am Games are coming. Yesterday marked 100 days until the games, and I'm so excited to be welcoming so many people to our province.

Can the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games update us on where we are, 99 days out from the games?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to thank the member from Davenport for her advocacy and for working within her community to really push these games. Thank you so much. I know you're a big supporter, and you've been doing a great job in engaging your community.

We're 99 days away from the games, and the excitement is building. Over 60,000 people have signed up to volunteer. We've sold over 350,000 tickets. Fifteen of the capital venues, including 11 of the athletic facilities, have been completed and are open for community use.

Yesterday, we marked the 100th day until the games by welcoming 100 new Canadians with a citizenship ceremony held at our spectacular athletes' village. This was a great example of how these games embody so much more than just the Pan/Parapan Am Games; they represent the diversity that we value here in the province of Ontario. I'm so proud to support these games.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Excitement for the games is building up in my riding of Davenport and across the province. The celebrations have already begun.

Last week, I attended the IGNITE event held in the Legislature. Through the IGNITE program, Ontario is supporting celebrations across the province to connect residents and visitors with the spirit and cultural diversity of the Pan/Parapan Am Games. At the event last week, there was food from Latin America and the Caribbean,

steel band performers, and people painting murals, among other performances. The event gave only a sneak peek of what we can expect as the games begin and into the excitement that will take over our province over the next 99 days.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can you tell us more about how our government is supporting communities in celebrations of the Pan/Parapan Am Games?

1120

Hon. Michael Coteau: Again, thank you to the member.

When we won the bid for these games, we felt it was important to have these games in 16 municipalities across the Golden Horseshoe. The torch will stop at 130 communities, starting in beautiful Thunder Bay.

We want people from across this province to share in this excitement and, of course, to support a wide range of events and organizations helping to promote and celebrate the spirit of these games. That's why I'm proud that our government has funded 103 IGNITE celebrations in communities across the great province of Ontario to engage communities.

So 2015 is a time for celebrating our Pan-American connection and the spirit of sport. In 99 days, we will host the largest multi-sport event in the history of this nation, and I am so proud to be a part of these games, Speaker.

PROVINCIAL DEFICIT

Mr. Toby Barrett: Speaker, to the Premier: Premier, just before you became Liberal leader in 2012, you stated, "When I say we need to stay on our government's fiscal plan of balancing the budget by 2017-18, I mean it." So you want us to believe in a balanced budget in two years despite the fact that your deficits have been increasing over the past three years, not decreasing. Your hand-picked economist, Don Drummond, predicts a \$30.2-billion deficit in two years; you say zero.

Who are we to believe: you or your repeatedly misleading numbers from Don Drummond?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm going to ask the member to withdraw that.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Withdraw.

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It's an interesting question, given the fact that we released a report back in November talking about some of the challenges before us over the next 20 years. We commissioned the report from Mr. Drummond, who provided a number of recommendations, of which we are now applying well over 80%. He himself has acknowledged that we far exceeded even his expectations.

But to answer your question more directly, you should believe the numbers that are being reported. The numbers that are being reported show that \$1.6 billion has been saved by this government over this year. We're on track

to balance by 2017-18, and I'm very proud of the work that all Ontarians are doing to step it up.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Toby Barrett: I certainly don't believe either one of you. Year after year, you present to this House phony deficit numbers, fake numbers, purposely designed to confuse the people of Ontario into thinking—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. The member from Beaches–East York will withdraw.

Mr. Arthur Potts: Withdraw, Speaker.

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: You confuse the people of Ontario into thinking that your increasing deficits aren't that significant. Your inflated deficit projections are a deliberate scam to obfuscate the real deficit numbers that—

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish.

Mr. Toby Barrett: A bit of a trick, to obfuscate. Premier, you have done this three years—

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Now I will ask the Minister of Finance to answer.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, and really to all members of this House, we try to do our best with integrity, and we are being very forthright in what we do.

Interjections.

Hon. Charles Sousa: No, seriously. We respect—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

To me, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: We certainly respect questions that come before us, and I believe people's intentions, regardless of political stripe, are good. But frankly, to suggest that we are trying to do something other than to try to bring forward something that is real to the people of Ontario, as we've done—the Conference Board of Canada has already cited that Ontario far exceeds every other government in Canada for its integrity.

We do believe that Ontarians want what we're about to put forward, and that's improved numbers on track to balance by 2017-18, and we'll work together.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, I have asked the Premier three times this week if she will prohibit university boards of governors from negotiating million-dollar salaries for university presidents. Yesterday, the President of the Treasury Board said that Bill 8 would address this issue.

The problem is Bill 8 does nothing to prevent double salary payouts from being negotiated in the future. Ontarians could be seeing more double salary deals for

university presidents, paid for by public dollars, rising student tuition fees and cuts to university budgets.

Premier, university presidents are already among the highest-paid public sector employees in Ontario. How can your government defend a system that allows university presidents to earn twice their salary if they don't go on leave?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: In fact, none of us on this side of the House is defending that. In fact, I'm very pleased to know that a portion of the president's salary will be returned.

We know that there's a problem with executive compensation. That's why we brought in Bill 8. That's why we brought in the accountability act.

Just to correct what the member said: In fact, the accountability act does enable the government to prohibit pay in lieu of leave when looking at compensation frameworks. I asked that question explicitly, Mr. Speaker. As we look at the whole compensation, the executive compensation, it is possible within the scope of Bill 8 to look at exactly this kind of thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're not defending it. We're not defending it. We are looking at the whole compensation package, including this kind of mechanism.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary? The member from Kitchener–Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Again to the Premier: In September 2012, the Liberal government told Ontarians that "executive pay would be permanently capped at no more than double the Premier's salary—\$418,000 per year."

We now know that last year, 181 individuals made more than twice the Premier's salary, an increase of 24% from the year before. So the problem of skyrocketing public sector CEO salaries in Ontario is clearly getting worse; it's not getting better.

Yesterday, the Deputy Premier assured this House that Bill 8 sets limits on public sector CEO compensation. Of course, anyone who reads the bill knows that it does not cap compensation. However, on Monday, the Liberal member for Kitchener Centre told CBC KW something completely different. When asked about the out-of-control public sector CEO salaries, she said that "we're going to see hard cap, so look for that in the upcoming budget." Which is it, Premier?

In the face of cuts to hospitals and schools, and soaring public CEO pay, it's an insult to hard-working families.

Speaker, can the Premier tell Ontarians whether her government will follow through on its promise to cap public sector CEO salaries, or just keep telling Ontarians one thing and doing another?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We've been very clear that there will be caps. That's what Bill 8 was about; the accountability act is there. What's remarkable is that this party, the NDP, didn't vote for that act.

The member opposite knows full well that there will be caps, she knows that there will be a range. She also knows that her leader also said that there need to be exemptions. She said—this is November 27, 2013—the NDP leader said, "When we're talking about people—the

top nuclear engineers in the world, for example—we've made an exemption for that type of case in the bill. We would have to look at those folks on a case-by-case basis. That's why the exemption exists."

The NDP understands that we need caps. We've got caps in the bill. The NDP understands that there has to be a range of salaries. That's in the bill. The NDP understands that there have to be exemptions. That's in the bill. And they didn't vote for it.

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

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

Start the clock, please.

New question.

AUTISM TREATMENT TRAITEMENT DE L'AUTISME

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, I think it is safe to say that all of us in this House can agree that giving our children and youth the best start possible in life is a top priority. I know this is a top priority for you and for your ministry.

This is especially true for children and youth with autism spectrum disorder, as well as for the families and loved ones who take care of them.

Minister, as today is World Autism Awareness Day, pourriez-vous, s'il vous plaît, nous informer sur le travail entrepris par le ministère des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse concernant l'autisme? Merci.

1130

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I'd like to thank the member for this very important question on this very important day.

Children living with autism, as well as the family members who help and support them, are indeed some of the most inspiring people I have met since becoming the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

C'est pour cela que je suis heureuse du progrès de notre gouvernement durant les 12 dernières années pour les jeunes personnes avec autisme.

We've expanded applied behaviour analysis-based services and supports, which are helping 8,000 children each year become more independent and improve their communication and social skills. Through our Autism Intervention Program, we've increased intensive behaviour intervention services to children and youth with autism across the province. Most importantly, we've more than quadrupled the investments in autism services for children and youth.

I thank the member for giving me the opportunity to speak to this.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm very encouraged by the strong action being taken by this government to help improve the lives of children and youth with autism.

Je suis très heureuse d'apprendre que des investissements substantiels sont faits dans ce domaine.

But, Mr. Speaker, as the member from Ottawa—Orléans, I hear from families in my riding about autism services frequently. This issue is very close to my heart and close to home.

Having a place to go to get answers to these questions would be a valuable resource for any parent trying to find opportunities for their son or daughter and the services in their area. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, I ask through you to the Minister of Children and Youth Services: Can you please tell this House about the places parents can go to find current information on autism and the services that may be available?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Again, I'd like to thank the member for the question.

Notre gouvernement continue de fournir du financement pour aider les familles, incluant durant la semaine de relâche et pour les programmes de camps d'été. Ces merveilleux programmes aident à réduire le stress familial, à donner aux jeunes avec autisme une chance de se faire des amis, de développer des talents et de participer à de belles activités comme la natation, les arts et la musique.

My ministry has also created the Autism Parent Resource Kit. It includes tracking links to available services and the latest research, information on supports, treatments, transitions, coping strategies and so much more.

I'd like to acknowledge a very special guest with us in the House today, six-year-old Aiden Lee, an inspiring young man and the artist behind the autism resource kit. Thank you, Aiden, for your beautiful artwork.

PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

Ms. Christine Elliott: My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, in 2010, Mr. Jim McEwen, a Durham region resident, suffered a stroke at the age of 55. Like many post-stroke patients, Mr. McEwen has required hundreds of physiotherapy treatments to regain mobility and improve his quality of life.

However, when Mr. McEwen needed our health care system the most, he was afforded only a dozen treatments and then was forgotten about. In fact, the OHIP model for physiotherapy greatly limits the coverage of those between the ages of 20 and 64. As a result, post-stroke patients in this age range struggle for access to the rehabilitation services they need and deserve.

Minister, my question is simple. Will you take steps to ensure that all post-stroke patients, regardless of age, have access to sufficient rehabilitation services?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the very thoughtful question from the member opposite. I've received her letter on this issue. I know there's a private member's bill this afternoon that's going to be debated on the same issue as well. It's an issue that I know is important to many, many Ontarians.

The member opposite, I believe, does know that the ministry, for several years now, has—as part of our transformation away from program- and service-focused funding to funding which is focused on quality evidenced

in outcomes—begun that important work on stroke services. We've made some important changes and now we're moving on our intention—and we have been for some time, through the ministry—on precisely the issue that the member opposite has raised, and that's to ensure that our approach to rehabilitation of post-stroke patients is focused on the same quality and positive-outcomes evidence that we would hope will lead to the best possible outcome for patients.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Christine Elliott: Minister, as you will know, this is not a question about the changes that were made in physiotherapy several years ago, with which we strongly disagree; it is more a question of age discrimination. The fact of the matter is that people who suffer from strokes do not get the services they need if they're between the ages of 20 and 64.

There is a large body of evidence indicating that with consistent rehabilitation, post-stroke patients can show dramatic improvements to their health well past the six-month mark. However, the Ontario Stroke Network says that the rehabilitation needs of only about 50% of post-stroke patients are now being met. We need to recognize that there is a great need for comprehensive and integrated post-stroke management that reflects the long-term nature of stroke recovery.

Minister, as you've indicated, you're aware that this afternoon I'm bringing forward a private member's motion asking your government to find the necessary in-house savings for all post-stroke patients. Will you commit to supporting my motion this afternoon?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I certainly don't want to imply that this isn't an important issue, but I do want to reiterate the fact that this is an issue that my ministry is, and has been for some time, working on—the elements that are expressed in her letter and in her private member's bill. She knows—I believe she does—that our government is not only committed to providing the best possible care for stroke patients but is moving on that important issue of ensuring that it's also provided on the rehabilitative side of things.

In fact, just last week, I made an important announcement, both on the physio side as well as on what's known as assess-and-restore, at Toronto Rehab, which focuses specifically on the issue that she's raising: how to make sure that we get these individuals back to full independence.

We have made important changes with regard to stroke services. My ministry for some time has been working on the precise issue that she has raised.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr. Wayne Gates: My question is to the Premier. Premier, as you may know, the town of Fort Erie passed a resolution to once again give \$500,000 of the town's money to the racetrack in order to keep the track open and in operation.

Premier, this money is being given by the town to cover the loss of the gaming funds that resulted when your government ripped out the slot machines in Fort

Erie and never put them back. This is important, Premier. I'd like you to listen to this line: The track itself has a plan to become self-sustainable and not require any money from the province or from the taxpayers of Fort Erie.

The town fully supports keeping the track open. Will this government return the slots to Fort Erie Race Track so that the track can thrive and the burden is not on the taxpayers of Fort Erie?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I do appreciate the question from my good friend the member from Niagara Falls. In fact, it seems just a short time ago that I extended an invitation to my good friend the member from Niagara Falls when I had the opportunity to be in Fort Erie with the leaders of the thoroughbred horse racing industry in order to announce that, indeed, this government has allocated more racing days for the great track in Fort Erie, which is something that's very important.

Mr. Speaker, we've listened carefully. We had a panel made up of three of the most distinguished individuals who have served in this Legislature: My good friend the honourable Elmer Buchanan, who sat with that party, a very distinguished member; the honourable John Snobelen, who sat on those benches over there; and, of course, our friend the honourable John Wilkinson. That panel put forward a framework for horse racing in Ontario. We're galloping forward when it comes to horse racing in Ontario.

Interjections.

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

The member from Huron–Bruce.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I just want to share with the House that the page from Huron–Bruce, Rahul Pandya, won the right to compete in the provincial Legion public speaking contest on April 25, and I wish him the best of luck.

VISITORS

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

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I have people from the South Asian Autism Awareness Centre in Scarborough—Geetha Moorthy and three others—are here joining us today to celebrate Autism Awareness Day.

DEFERRED VOTES

MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR DES CHOIX PLUS SAINS

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free

Ontario Act / Projet de loi 45, Loi visant à améliorer la santé publique par l'édiction de la Loi de 2015 pour des choix santé dans les menus et de la Loi de 2015 sur les cigarettes électroniques et la modification de la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have a deferred vote on a motion for closure on the motion for second reading of Bill 45.

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

The division bells rang from 1140 to 1145.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On December 3, 2014, Ms. Damerla moved second reading of Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2014 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2014 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

Mr. Leal has moved that the question now be put. All those in favour of Mr. Leal's motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Hoggarth, Ann	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Hoskins, Eric	Moridi, Reza
Balkissoon, Bas	Hunter, Mitzie	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Jaczek, Helena	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kiwala, Sophie	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	Malhi, Harinder	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Del Duca, Steven	Martins, Cristina	Thibeault, Glenn
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	McGarry, Kathryn	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	McMahon, Eleanor	
Fraser, John	McMeekin, Ted	

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

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gretzky, Lisa	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Natyshak, Taras
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Michael	Pettapiece, Randy
Barrett, Toby	Hatfield, Percy	Sattler, Peggy
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Jones, Sylvia	Smith, Todd
Dunlop, Garfield	MacLaren, Jack	Tabuns, Peter
Elliott, Christine	MacLeod, Lisa	Taylor, Monique
Fedeli, Victor	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fife, Catherine	Martow, Gila	Vanhof, John
Forster, Cindy	McDonell, Jim	Walker, Bill
French, Jennifer K.	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 52; the nays are 41.

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

Ms. Damerla has moved second reading of Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2014 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2014 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): So ordered.

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

The House recessed from 1149 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: We will note that we have the distinct pleasure of having Rev. Brent Hawkes with us here today. Welcome to the Legislature.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: This afternoon in the House we have Aiden Lee, who designed the Autism Parent Resource Kit, and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lee. Thank you so much for being here today. Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TED PAISLEY

Mr. Robert Bailey: I rise today to inform this House of a very special recognition that was made recently in my hometown of Petrolia, Ontario. On March 31, 2015, Petrolia resident Mr. Ted Paisley was awarded the French republic's Legion of Honour medal at a special ceremony, which I had the good fortune to attend, at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 216 in Petrolia.

The Legion of Honour is the highest decoration and order of merit bestowed by the French government and was awarded to Mr. Paisley in recognition of his significant contribution to the liberation of France in 1944. During World War II, Lance Corporal Paisley, who enlisted at age 16, was a motorcycle dispatch rider with the 4th Canadian Division and participated in the break-out from Caen, the closing of the Falaise Gap, the capture of Caen and the capture of Cussy and l'Abbaye d'Ardenne. His unit was engaged in the attack on Verrières Ridge, the operation to seize Bretteville-sur-Laize and the operation to capture Falaise. He also fought in Belgium, Holland and Germany and was in Germany when the unconditional surrender of the German army occurred.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Paisley. He is truly deserving of this special honour and our unwavering

gratitude, and now is addressed as Chevalier Ted Paisley. Merci.

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, today is World Autism Awareness Day. In Ontario, support is provided for children with autism until they turn 18. Wouldn't it be great and magical and fantastic if autism was cured on everyone's 18th birthday? Obviously, that'll never happen.

Many of us have heard about the family in Ottawa who could no longer care for their severely autistic son and so they left him at a government office.

In recent weeks, my Windsor office heard from a mom with an autistic child. Her first email came to us with the subject line, "In need of help, from a struggling mom." Chassidy Theoret is a single parent with three kids, and one of them, Celia, is autistic. Celia will be turning 18 later this month. The plug will soon be pulled on her provincial support system. Celia needs care 24/7. Chassidy can't work outside the home because she cares for Celia. Without the financial help that she used to receive, the family will suffer.

Group homes cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Why not pay the primary caregivers to keep autistic adults in the family home?

Speaker, people with autism have feelings just like everyone else. They may express them differently, but they too feel love, happiness, sadness and pain.

As we commemorate World Autism Awareness Day, let us join our autism families and look for ways that the government can improve their quality of life. Let's open our minds and our hearts to ensure that new opportunities are put in place as they pursue stable and meaningful lives with dignity and respect.

SIKH HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, in 2013, the Ontario Legislature passed a bill to recognize April as Sikh Heritage Month. April is a time when Sikh Canadians celebrate Vaisakhi, a day that marks the establishment of the Khalsa and the Sikh articles of faith.

By proclaiming the month of April to be Sikh Heritage Month, we acknowledge the significant contributions made by Ontario's Sikh community to our province's social, cultural and economic fabric. In fact, just last night I joined the Premier and many of my caucus colleagues at a reception to mark this special occasion. It was a memorable evening. It was also a reminder of our province's incredible diversity.

In my riding of Halton, for example, the Sikh cultural association has had a strong and active presence in our community for close to 20 years. In addition to offering religious services, the association provides important cultural and social supports to Halton's Sikh residents, including Punjabi classes, traditional music lessons, translation services and granting access to a library. The

association also contributes to our local Canada Day festivities, supports the Red Cross, Salvation Army and food banks, and offers shelter to the homeless.

The Sikh cultural association is an inspiring example of an organization working tirelessly to strengthen our province's cultural richness while giving back to our local community in many ways, including Seva. There is no question that Ontario's Sikh community plays an important role in our province.

ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

Ms. Sylvia Jones: April is organ and tissue donation awareness month, more commonly known as Be A Donor Month. I want to recognize the efforts of the Trillium Gift of Life Network, who were able to register over 254,000 individuals to become an organ and tissue donor last year alone. More than three million Ontarians, almost 27%, have already registered their consent to donate organs or tissue after their death. It's an important milestone we can celebrate, but we need to do more.

The good news: Last year, 265 organ donors saved more than 1,000 individual lives because of a transplant—a new record. As we know, one organ donor can save up to eight individuals. The challenge, the reality, is that today in Ontario there are still over 1,500 people waiting for a life-saving organ transplant.

This Easter weekend, many of us will be with our families. Potential donations have been lost because family members were not aware of their loved ones' wishes. Talk about the importance of signing up at beadonor.ca with your family, and why organ donation is important to you. While organ and tissue donation has increased significantly in Ontario, a person still dies every three days because there are not enough donors to meet the need.

The Trillium Gift of Life Network, Ontario's organ and tissue donation and transplant agency, is marking Be A Donor Month throughout the province with awareness-raising events being held in co-operation with local advocacy groups, as well as many organ donor registration drives, including 25 being held by Ontario hospitals.

It only takes two minutes to register online at www.beadonor.ca or at your local ServiceOntario centre. Let's all do our part and register to be a donor.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Wayne Gates: Earlier this week I was happy to attend a press conference with Unifor president Jerry Dias, Unifor economist Jim Stanford and the leadership from all the GM Ontario locations on the importance of the auto sector in this province. They were here to deliver a report on the damage that would be done to Ontario if the GM plants in Oshawa and St. Catharines are closed.

The case they made is undeniable. There is a GM plant in Niagara that employs 2,000 people, many of whom live, shop and spend their time in my riding of Niagara Falls. So you see that these jobs are extremely

important to our community. These employees, most of whom make decent wages, buy their groceries, raise their kids and pay their taxes in the surrounding ridings. It's the same spinoff effect we can see in businesses. GM makes its products and supports our local manufacturers.

Our retirees depend on the sector, too: 6,000 retirees who need to know that their pensions and their futures are secure. These are workers and retirees who generate vital tax revenue to support our health care, our education, our communities and our businesses.

Mr. Speaker, they say every one job in the auto sector creates eight spinoff jobs, and you can clearly see how important a strong auto sector is. This is exactly why we need to support and extend the footprint agreement that was signed in 2009. It was a loan that kept GM from going under here in Ontario and protected thousands of jobs in the province. Unfortunately, the PC Party didn't support those loans.

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This government—and, quite frankly, this Legislature—needs to work with GM, Ford, Chrysler, and the unions to make sure the auto sector grows in Windsor, Oshawa and St. Catharines instead of disappearing. Communities depend on it; 26,000 jobs could be lost. These facilities are the economic anchors, and it's easy to see why this government needs to step up and support the industry in Ontario.

LUNG HEALTH

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Speaker, I rise on your behalf today, as the neighbouring MPP of Cambridge, to acknowledge the tremendous partnership that has taken place in your riding of Brant between the Ontario Lung Association, Dave Shoots from Brantford Hyundai, and Hyundai Canada.

It's fitting that I also stand here in your place, Speaker, as we both sit on the Ontario lung health caucus and are strong advocates for lung health issues. I moved the Lung Health Act, which will help all Ontarians breathe easier.

When Dave Shoots partnered with the Ontario Lung Association more than seven years ago, they didn't dream of the loyal bond that would develop. Dave, who suffers from Aspergillosis disease, understands the struggles many lung health sufferers go through when they're suddenly short of breath.

Today Dave, at a photo-op with Brantford Hyundai, is making a \$20,000 donation to the Ontario Lung Association, marking \$120,000 he has now donated to the cause over the past seven years. Between matching contributions from Hyundai Canada, Dave Shoots, and revenue earned from sponsorship of the Walter Gretzky Street Hockey Tournament and the annual Phyllis Gretzky Memorial Golf Classic, over \$245,000 have been raised towards lung health research.

On your behalf, I'd like to thank Dave Shoots for his generosity, Hyundai Canada, and Sandy Lee, who is the Ontario Lung Association Volunteer Fund and Development Coordinator.

This partnership, Speaker, is a partnership between commerce and not-for-profit, and should be held up as a classic example for why it's so very important to acknowledge and encourage corporate gift giving.

DREAM BIG

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Last Thursday, I had the pleasure of attending the Dream Big event in the town of Clinton. The Dream Big event aims to help those with developmental disabilities realize that they can achieve their dreams. The theme of the event was "Inclusion, Reaching Goals and Overcoming Obstacles." Actress Lauren Potter, who portrays Becky Jackson on the TV show Glee, was the guest speaker, and she just shone at that event. She was indeed very motivational.

Foundations Huron is a not-for-profit organization that falls under Community Living—Central Huron, and it was the foundation that hosted this evening. The foundation aims to assist young adults with developmental disabilities to make the transition from high school to adult life. Foundations Huron works with individuals to set goals; engage in community activities and events; increase employment, volunteer and social opportunities; and learn self-advocacy and leadership skills.

In terms of self-advocacy and realizing a dream, I'd like to give a shout-out to a young champion from Seaforth, Ontario, by the name of Morgan. He's 11 years old and he suffers from ASD, a form of autism. This morning he had his dream realized by hosting a school assembly to talk more about autism and ASD so that the kids in his school understand what he lives with every day. His goal was to raise \$750. I'd like to congratulate him because, as of noon hour today, he raised \$1,000, and the Brussels Optimists donated \$10,000 as well. Congratulations, Morgan.

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's my pleasure to stand in the House today to commemorate World Autism Awareness Day.

Designated in 2008 by the UN General Assembly, World Autism Awareness Day aims to increase awareness about autism amongst all levels of society around the world. I'm also happy to say that the city of Burlington in my riding, along with other municipalities from Halton region, have also declared today to be Autism Awareness Day.

I recently I had the privilege of meeting with members of PAATH, Parents of Adults with Autism Transitioning with Hope, a support group of parents of high-functioning adults with autism. Located in Halton region, PAATH is the only adult-focused autism group in central-west Ontario. Their mission is to bridge the gap between exclusion and community inclusion, between services for children with autism and young adults who fall between the cracks as those supports end. PAATH participants are researching ways to improve appropriate

supports and inclusion in the areas of employment, social activities, housing, health, education and financial assistance.

In the last seven years the number of children in Ontario schools with ASD has gone from 700 to 18,000. These children are supported throughout school, but when they are graduating from high school they want to continue to evolve as adults, as all young people do. They want to become contributing members of society, and they need appropriate supports.

Organizations like PAATH and the loving parents who are members are leading the way in this endeavour. Through World Autism Awareness Day, we can help them and other groups like them to fulfill their goals of helping Ontarians living with autism to be happy, healthy and productive members of our communities.

SIKH HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Mr. Speaker, Sikhs have lived in Ontario since the middle of the 20th century, and they represent a growing and dynamic population. They have contributed to the development and the prosperity of this province and this country.

April 1, the beginning of Sikh Heritage Month, gives Ontarians of all faiths and backgrounds the opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate not only themselves but future generations on the contributions of Sikhs in Ontario.

The month of April is significant to Sikhs as it includes the celebration of Vaisakhi. Vaisakhi marks the establishment of the Khalsa.

One of the teachings of Sikhism is selfless service, also known as Seva. Equality and Seva are the guiding principles of the Sikh region. Seva is the principle of volunteer or charitable work being performed without any thought of reward or return. It is defined beautifully by Guru Ram Dass, who said, "Helping out is not some special skill. It is not the domain of rare individuals. It is not confined to a single part of our lives. We simply heed the call of that natural impulse within and follow it where it leads us."

Mr. Speaker, as a proud Sikh myself, I encourage all members of the House and all Ontarians to partake in the many events this month celebrating Sikhs and their contribution to our communities, our province and our country.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As all my colleagues know, I usually have a checklist of issues that I need to bring to your attention. I missed a couple, so I want to bring them to you today—and that is, now, for you to show your appreciation, because this is the last day for our pages. I think we should say thank you to them for the wonderful work they did.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): They did an absolutely wonderful job, and I thank them for that—especially the one from Brantford; I don't know why.

Also, I did have a message for the House, and I'll give it now. I wish for you all a safe, happy, holy Easter, and that you spend some time with your family, and you have an opportunity to do some constituency work, which I know all of you will be doing during the const week.

Happy Easter to each and every one of you.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING GOVERNMENT ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE RENFORCEMENT ET L'AMÉLIORATION DE LA GESTION PUBLIQUE

Madame Meilleur moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 85, An Act to strengthen and improve government by amending or repealing various Acts / Projet de loi 85, Loi visant à renforcer et à améliorer la gestion publique en modifiant ou en abrogeant diverses lois.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: The proposed Strengthening and Improving Government Act includes a number of small but important measures that will improve the efficiency and responsiveness of the government.

La première version de ce projet de loi a été présentée il y a plus d'une année, mais la Loi sur le renforcement et l'amélioration de la gestion publique, dont je parle aujourd'hui, va plus loin. La loi proposée modifie désormais jusqu'à 15 lois différentes.

While some of these changes are as small as refreshing the wording in current statutes, others have the potential to impact the lives of Ontarians every day.

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE INNOVATION ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2015

Ms. Fife moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

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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): Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

BROADER PUBLIC SECTOR
EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION
AMENDMENT ACT (SENIOR
ADMINISTRATORS OF UNIVERSITIES
AND COLLEGES), 2015

LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LA RÉMUNÉRATION
DES CADRES DU SECTEUR PARAPUBLIC
(CADRES SUPÉRIEURS
DES UNIVERSITÉS ET COLLÈGES)

Ms. Sattler moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 86, An Act to amend the Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014 to prohibit additional compensation in lieu of administrative leave / Projet de loi 86, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2014 sur la rémunération des cadres du secteur parapublic pour interdire le versement d'une rémunération additionnelle en remplacement d'un congé administratif.

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. Peggy Sattler: This bill amends the Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014, otherwise known as Bill 8, to prevent university and college boards of governors from negotiating contracts that compensate senior administrators if they forgo an administrative leave to which they are otherwise entitled.

The legislation would disallow any future contracts like that negotiated with the president of Western University.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introduction of bills? Motions?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm hoping the member doesn't get caught on heckling in the afternoon.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY
JOURNÉE MONDIALE
DE LA SENSIBILISATION À L'AUTISME

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I rise in the House today to recognize World Autism Awareness Day. Every year on April 2, we join together to promote greater understanding of autism spectrum disorder and to celebrate the accomplishments made by those who live with ASD each and every day.

For the last 12 years, this government has been committed to making a difference in the lives of those affected by ASD. We have more than quadrupled the investments in autism services for children and youth.

Ces investissements ont permis à un plus grand nombre d'enfants et de jeunes d'accéder aux services nécessaires plus tôt, notamment l'intervention comportementale intensive, ou thérapie ICI.

In addition to the added supports and services, these investments have allowed service providers to diversify the services they provide, giving children and youth with ASD and their families a more tailored approach to therapy through things like:

—applied behaviour analysis-based services;

—respite programs that provide families with temporary relief from the stress of caring for children with ASD;

—summer and March break camps for children and youth with autism where they can broaden their experiences in a new setting; and

—joint initiatives with other ministries, such as connections for students with the Ministry of Education to help children with ASD transition through school successfully.

Our government has also invested heavily in ASD research, specifically into the genetic causes of ASD, evidence-based best practices, and we've established the ASD clinical expert committee to provide the ministry with ongoing clinical advice and guidance.

Speaker, I'm sure everyone will agree that every child deserves supports that can enable him or her to reach their absolute full potential. Every child with autism is unique, as are their personal circumstances, and how best to address their needs can vary. This is why, as part of my mandate letter, I've been asked by the Premier to develop an autism strategy, a strategy that will focus on developing and implementing programs that will improve the experience and outcomes for children and youth with ASD.

The Autism Parent Resource Kit that was launched last spring is another way we are helping families to get the services they need more efficiently, effectively and earlier. This Web-based resource kit provides information and resources to support families of children with ASD at all stages of their child's progress and development.

I want to acknowledge the very important contribution of Aiden Lee, who is here in the Legislature, for his important initiative. Aiden is a remarkable child and someone living with ASD. He's the artist behind the beautiful cover on the resource kit, and it's called "the Autism Dragon." Aiden's dragon is a fierce fighter in the campaign to raise awareness and acceptance of ASD all over the world. Thank you very much, Aiden, for what you've done.

Applause.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I had breakfast with Aiden and his family today. He painted me a beautiful black salmon painting for my office. I learned a lot about black salmon and how they're different and how they don't always swim with the pack but they have a plan and they have a direction. Thank you so much, Aiden. It's very, very meaningful.

En tant que gouvernement, nous écoutons les familles, les cliniciens, les enseignants et les spécialistes et nous collaborons avec eux, y compris avec les personnes auxquelles j'ai parlé durant mes consultations exhaustives en tant qu'adjointe parlementaire au ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse d'alors, le D^r Eric Hoskins, il y a trois ans de cela. Merci, Docteur Hoskins.

This experience armed us with the right information, from the people on the ground, from the people living with children with special needs, to give us a better understanding of the bigger picture and to develop a long-term strategy for children and youth with all kinds of special needs, including ASD. We want to have the greatest impact. That means seizing opportunities to do more and be more effective in what we already do.

Our Special Needs Strategy, launched in February of last year, is focused on strengthening service for children and youth with special needs, including those with ASD by:

- identifying needs earlier and getting the help they need through a developmental screen;
- better coordinating service planning for children with multiple and/or complex special needs, including ASD; and
- making rehab services more seamless from birth right through the school years.

It's a long-term strategy that involves four ministries working together with families, the sector and service providers. The strategy will continue to evolve and adapt as we continue to listen to and learn from young people with special needs, parents, service providers, researchers and advocates. It's part of our ongoing commitment to helping everyone touched by ASD.

Thank you again for allowing me the time to recognize this very important day—and I want to thank all my colleagues who have done so in the House here today, as well—to highlight the dedication of families touched by ASD and the people who provide unwavering support to those in need. You are all a wonderful example to live by.

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

Mr. Jim McDonell: I am proud to rise today to speak on World Autism Awareness Day, and to welcome to the Legislature representatives from the autism society. On December 18, 2007, the United Nations unanimously adopted a resolution that designated April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day.

Autism is generally defined as a developmental disorder characterized by difficulty with social interaction and forming relationships, as well as perceptual, cognitive and behavioural symptoms.

Each and every case of autism is unique in the ways it manifests and in the ways it affects the person, and this is reflected in the symbol chosen to represent the autism awareness campaign: a puzzle of colours that highlights the diversity of people living with autism, but also a

wonderful reminder that autistic people are part of our communities and deserve our support and care.

When the autism society asked its followers to describe what the puzzle ribbon meant to them, some of the answers included:

- “that I am not alone”;
- “that I am part of the great puzzle of life”;

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- “It means that I am a major confusion to people”;
- “That even though we're all different, we all belong and are needed.”

Despite the significant progress made over the years in understanding autism and developing new methods for managing the condition and working with people affected by it, we still do not know what causes autism, nor have we determined whether a cure is possible.

Parenting an autistic child or caring for an autistic adult requires outstanding levels of commitment, empathy and determination. Because of the complexity of the autism spectrum, many children and adults with autism continue to face the daily challenge of stigma, unemployment and lack of adequate support services. Their best chance to realize their potential is through early intervention as soon as the signs of autism appear.

As public officials, it is our duty to ensure that this is made available to all families who suspect their child may be autistic. In Ontario, there still needs to be a lot of work done in order to make this aim a reality.

In my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, developmental services agencies have not seen a funding increase in years, despite a strong surge in demand, a growing wait-list, and an ongoing challenge with staff retention. When there have been no funding increases for more than five years—and, for one social services agency in my riding, for more than 11 years—the only way to cover increases in hydro rates, heating and fuel costs, wage increases and general inflation is to lay off staff.

The system is failing too many children and families, and something must change. Without steady and early developmental aid, children with autism will find it harder to integrate into the educational system and into the workforce. By the United Nations' own estimate, 80% of adults with autism are unemployed. We know that people affected by autism can and do flourish when they are given the right support and we welcome them with an open mind.

Autism Awareness Day initiatives remind the public that autism exists and comes in many forms. If we are to tackle unemployment among autistic adults, our efforts must extend beyond supportive words every April 2. We must take immediate and meaningful action to clear our developmental services wait-lists, ensure our educational system can cater to the needs of autistic children, and help employers who are willing to give autistic adults the stability, dignity and social integration that a job can provide.

Speaker, I have a nephew who suffers from autism. He is one of the lucky ones, for he received an early diagnosis which allowed his parents to proactively seek

out the early interventions that are crucial in letting Kieran live a full and rewarding life. It wasn't easy, but the speech therapy and the one-on-one time spent with him working on his strengths have made a difference.

The member from Thornhill relayed to me a story from a mother in her riding whose autistic son had a meltdown in the local mall. A female security guard went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the situation was not triggered further by remaining calm and professional during what was an intense time, helping prevent a meltdown from escalating.

We are all aware of autism and how it affects its sufferers. We can all make our community a more welcoming and safe place for autistic people and their families. We need to remember that it takes a village to raise a child.

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

Miss Monique Taylor: Today, flags are being raised in communities all across Ontario in recognition of Autism Awareness Day. Those communities are responding to the call from Autism Ontario and their Raise the Flag campaign. They have a website dedicated to the campaign: raisetheflagforautism.com. It includes a wonderful video that does an excellent job of raising awareness of what it means to live with autism, and I would encourage all members and anyone who's watching to log on and to watch it.

The video helps us realize that people with autism are just, as they say, a little bit different. They might think a little bit different; they might act or react a little bit different. Each case is different and it manifests in different ways.

Parents often talk about the challenges involved with taking their autistic child out to public places and the stress that this adds to their lives. This video explains how we can all help by understanding and being more accepting.

Since some of us in this Legislature have not had the ability to see that video yet, I would like to share a few quotes:

"We need to help educate those that don't understand or are a little afraid, and see the beauty that each child has," or, "It makes a difference if the whole community is on board with accepting that this is an everyday thing now."

One of the parents in the video was Wayne Griffiths. He's the treasurer of the Hamilton chapter of Autism Ontario. Wayne and countless other families have a harder job as parents than most of us, but they still find the time to hold events to raise funds and offer support to each other as they try to find their way through the maze of services and supports for people with autism spectrum disorder.

I've spent some time with Wayne and other families, and I take my hat off to them for the fantastic work they do just trying to get what is best for their children. The video is very uplifting, and focuses on the potential within those who have autism. It talks about what can be done, and from the story I heard today, Aiden's dragon is

part of that story. And it makes us think about what the future could be like. As the video ends, we are left with one silent statement on the screen: "Imagine a community that sees the potential in each and every one of them." That, Speaker, is what "awareness" means. That is why today we have this day.

Perhaps with all that awareness will come a broader realization that the government must take action to ensure that services, treatments and supports are there when they are needed. We know that IBI treatment is most effective when it starts before the age of four. We know that early diagnosis, preferably before the age of two, is crucial to the well-being of a child. It can also cut down the cost through reduced need for supports and services later in life. But, as the Auditor General has pointed out, the median age for diagnosis of autism is three years old, and treatment regularly does not get under way until the child is almost seven. There continue to be more children on wait-lists for IBI treatment than there are receiving it.

In an attempt to reduce the wait-lists, some children get cut off. Their parents have seen the marked improvements in their child from the treatment and are left wondering where they will go, what they will do and how they will now manage to provide the best possible future for their child. And they'd better not look at our schools, because recent Liberal cuts to education are going to have a devastating effect on special needs education. Already terribly underfunded, supports for children with autism in our schools will be even less.

In addition to kids already struggling to get the help they need, they are joined by kids transitioning to school too soon with access to less services. All the work put into intensive therapy will be lost. This typical Liberal short-sightedness makes absolutely no sense.

But autism isn't just about children—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Miss Monique Taylor: But autism isn't just about children; it's a lifelong condition that doesn't go away as you age. After high school, there is little support for youth who want post-secondary education. There is a huge need for affordable, safe, supported housing. People with autism want to be, can be and deserve to be a meaningful part of our communities. With understanding, acceptance, timely services and appropriate supports, they can be just that.

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

PETITIONS

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Sylvia Jones: "Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

“Whereas the billion-dollar gas plants cancellation, wasteful and unaccountable spending at Ontario Power Generation and the unaffordable subsidies in the Green Energy Act will result in electricity bills climbing by another 35% by 2017 and 45% by 2020; and

“Whereas the Liberal government wasted \$2 billion on the flawed smart meter program; and

“Whereas the recent announcement to implement the Ontario Electricity Support Program will see average household hydro bills increase” by “an additional \$137 per year starting in 2016; and

“Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and small businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

“Whereas home heating and electricity are a necessity for families in Ontario who cannot afford to continue footing the bill for the government’s mismanagement of the energy sector;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately implement policies ensuring Ontario’s power consumers, including families, farmers and employers, have affordable and reliable electricity.”

I support this petition and affix my name to it and give it to page Rahul.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Percy Hatfield: “To the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas the community of Windsor–Essex county has one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada resulting in stressful lives and financial inadequacies for many of its residents and businesses; and

“Whereas recently the Ford Motor Company was considering Windsor, Ontario, as a potential site for a new global engine that would” have created “1,000 new jobs (and as many as 7,000 spinoff jobs) for our community; and

“Whereas partnership with government was critical to secure this investment from Ford; and

“Whereas the inability of Ford and ... Ontario to come to an agreement for partnership contributed to the loss of this project;

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

“To insist that the Ontario government exhaust all available opportunities to reopen the discussions around the Ford investment in Windsor and to develop a national auto strategy and review current policy meant to attract investment in the auto sector.”

I fully agree with this. I will affix my name and give it to page Emma to take up to the desk.

PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: « À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que les microbilles sont de petites particules de plastique de moins de 1 mm de diamètre, qui passent à travers nos systèmes de filtration de l'eau et sont présentes dans nos rivières et dans les Grands Lacs;

« Attendu que la présence de ces microbilles dans les Grands Lacs augmente et qu'elles contribuent à la pollution par le plastique de nos lacs et rivières d'eau douce;

« Attendu que la recherche scientifique et les données recueillies jusqu'à présent révèlent que les microbilles qui sont présentes dans notre système d'alimentation en eau stockent des toxines, que les organismes confondent ces microbilles avec des aliments et que ces microbilles peuvent se retrouver dans notre chaîne alimentaire;

« Nous, les soussignés, présentons une pétition à l'Assemblée législative aux fins suivantes :

« Mandater le gouvernement de l'Ontario pour qu'il interdise la création et l'ajout de microbilles aux produits cosmétiques et à tous les autres produits de santé et de beauté connexes et demander au ministère de l'Environnement d'effectuer une étude annuelle des Grands Lacs pour analyser les eaux et déceler la présence de microbilles. »

C'est avec fierté que je vais signer cette pétition.

PERSONAL-INJURY LAWYERS

Mrs. Julia Munro: My petition:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas personal-injury lawyers often charge contingency fees of up to 45% of a settlement; and

“Whereas it is in the public interest for reasons of transparency, consumer protection and public accountability that the Ontario superintendent of insurance be authorized to collect from personal-injury lawyers and paralegals representing claimants on tort and accident benefits claims, information on case-specific fee arrangements, costs, disbursements and referral fees to determine the impact of such fee arrangements on the cost of auto insurance in Ontario;

“Whereas consumers do not understand how these fees are calculated;

“Whereas the high costs of hiring a lawyer are preventing Ontarians from accessing justice;

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

“That the government introduce legislation to cap the maximum rates that personal-injury lawyers charge injured motorists;

“That personal-injury lawyers be required to submit to the superintendent of insurance information on fees, disbursements and referral arrangements;

“That the superintendent publicly publish an annual report on the information collected;

“That the superintendent develop a consumer-friendly fee disclosure statement that must be used by personal-injury lawyers.”

I'm pleased to add my signature to this petition and give it to page Demily.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Wayne Gates: “To the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas the community of Windsor-Essex county has one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada resulting in stressful lives and financial inadequacies for many of its residents and businesses; and

“Whereas recently the Ford Motor Company was considering Windsor, Ontario, as a potential site for a new global engine that would create 1,000 new jobs (and as many as 7,000 spinoff jobs) for our community; and

“Whereas partnership with government was critical to secure this investment from Ford; and

“Whereas the inability of Ford and ... Ontario to come to an agreement for partnership contributed to the loss of this project;

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

“To insist that the Ontario government exhaust all available opportunities to reopen the discussions around the Ford investment in Windsor and to develop a national auto strategy and review current policy meant to attract investment in the auto sector.”

I fully agree and will add my name and give it to the page for submission to the Clerk.

STUDENT SAFETY

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

“Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

“Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

“Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

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

“To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers.”

I agree with this petition, affix my signature and give it to page Aiden.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the purpose of Ontario’s Environmental Protection Act (EPA) is to ‘provide for the protection and conservation of the natural environment.’ RSO 1990, c. E.19, s. 3; and

“Whereas ‘all landfills will eventually release leachate to the surrounding environment and therefore all landfills will have some impact on the water quality of the local ecosystem.’—Threats to Sources of Drinking Water and Aquatic Health in Canada;

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

“That section 27 of the EPA should be reviewed and amended immediately to prohibit the establishment of new or expanded landfills at fractured bedrock sites and other hydrogeologically unsuitable locations within the province of Ontario.”

I affix my signature as I agree with this petition.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, as follows:

“Whereas there are an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 unpaid internships in Canada each year; and

“Whereas youth unemployment in Ontario is over 15%; and

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

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

“(1) Proactively enforce the law on unpaid internships;

“(2) Engage in an educational campaign to inform students, youth, employers, educational institutions and the general public of the laws surrounding unpaid internships; and

“(3) Undertake a comprehensive review of the current laws surrounding unpaid internships in Ontario.”

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

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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

“Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

“Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto (Beaches–East York and Toronto–Danforth) and those numbers continue to grow; and

“Whereas there is no French secondary school (grades 7-12) yet in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school, while several English schools in east Toronto sit half-empty since there are no requirements or incentives for school boards to release underutilized schools to other boards in need; and

“Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system between grades 7 and 9 due to the inaccessibility of French-language secondary schools, and that it is also well established that being educated in French at the elementary level is not sufficient to solidify French-language skills for life; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of

French-language schools in all of Toronto and even provided funds to open some secondary schools, and yet, not a single French secondary school has opened in east Toronto; and

1350

“Whereas the commissioner of French-language services stated in a report in June 2011 that ‘... time is running out to address the serious shortage of at least one new French-language school at the secondary level in the eastern part of the city of Toronto’; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education and that the various components of our education system should be aligned to serve the needs of students; and

“Whereas parents and students from both French Catholic and French public elementary schools in east Toronto are prepared to find common ground across all language school systems to secure space for a French-language secondary school in east Toronto;

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

“That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating” a suitable “underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary school (grades 7-12) in the community by September 2015, so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live.”

I support the petition. I will give my petition to page Cameron.

TRESPASSING

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas when private property is damaged it is left to property owners to repair these damages, and the costs can quickly add up to thousands of dollars. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has asked for a minimum fine for trespassing and an increase on the maximum limit on compensation for damages;

“Whereas Sylvia Jones’s private member’s Bill 36, the Respecting Private Property Act, will amend the current Trespass to Property Act by creating a minimum fine of \$500 for trespassing and increasing the maximum compensation for damages to \$25,000; and

“Whereas the Respecting Private Property Act will allow property owners to be fairly compensated for destruction to their property, and will also send a message that trespassing is a serious issue by creating a minimum fine;

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

“To support Sylvia Jones’s private member’s Bill 36, the Respecting Private Property Act, and schedule public hearings so that Bill 36 can be passed without further delay.”

For obvious reasons, I support this bill and pass it to the great page Ranen from Dufferin–Caledon.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr. Percy Hatfield: This is a petition collected from people in Windsor, Essex county and Chatham–Kent.

“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 fully agree with this petition, will sign my name and give it to Kari to take to the Clerk.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I rise here this afternoon to read this petition entitled “Elimination of Microbeads from Cosmetic Products.” It is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas microbeads are tiny plastics less than one millimetre in diameter which pass through our water filtration systems and get into our rivers and the Great Lakes; and

“Whereas these microbeads represent a growing presence in our Great Lakes and are contributing to the plastic pollution of our freshwater lakes and rivers; and

“Whereas the scientific research and data collected to date has shown that microbeads that get into our water system collect toxins and organisms mistake these microbeads for food and these microbeads can move up our food chain;

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

“Mandate the Ontario government to ban the creation and addition of microbeads to cosmetic products and all other related health and beauty products; and

“The Ministry of the Environment conduct an annual study of the Great Lakes analyzing the waters for the presence of microbeads.”

I couldn’t agree more with this petition. I’m going to affix my name to it and send it down to the table with Marin.

VISITORS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: On a point of order, sir: I want to introduce some of the wonderful people who are sitting in the gallery, whom I didn’t have a chance to introduce earlier: Reverend Brent Hawkes from MCC Toronto; trans lobby group members Christin Milloy, Susan Gapka, Stephanie Walsh, Serena Vyanoski and Melissa Rhind; lawyer and activist Maurice Tomlinson; activist Jackie Lucas; the mother of a trans youth, Jessica Skinner, with her kids Stella Skinner, Darwin Skinner and Gray Skinner; Toronto psychotherapist Hershel Russell; Fred Hahn is making his way here from CUPE; lawyer Nicole Nussbaum; all those watching internationally from Spain and the UK; and a whole school

full of kids in Hamilton, at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS'
PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**AFFIRMING SEXUAL ORIENTATION
AND GENDER IDENTITY ACT, 2015**

**LOI DE 2015 SUR L’AFFIRMATION
DE L’ORIENTATION SEXUELLE
ET DE L’IDENTITÉ SEXUELLE**

Ms. DiNovo moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change or direct sexual orientation or gender identity / *Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l’assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l’égard des interventions visant à changer ou à influencer l’orientation sexuelle ou l’identité sexuelle.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation. The member for Parkdale–High Park.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to everyone who is here, and certainly to everyone who is watching out there, too, in fact, around the world.

This bill does two very simple things: It bans conversion or reparative therapy for those who are 18 and under, and it delists it for everyone. Adults are free to do what adults will do, but we shouldn’t be paying for this through OHIP.

I also want to dedicate it to some folk. I want to dedicate it to Leelah Alcorn, a 17-year-old who committed suicide December 28. She was a trans young person, and her final words were, “Fix society. Please.”

Applause.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Yes, thank you.

She came out to her parents. They tried to fix her; they couldn’t. They took her to a therapist. The therapist tried to fix her; he couldn’t. And those were her final words.

Because of Leelah Alcorn, there was a change.org online petition. It gained 300,000 signatures; by now, probably more.

So I want to dedicate it to her.

I also want to dedicate it to all of those victims—and these are all actions that have been taken under the heading “conversion” or “reparative” therapy—who have been electroshocked, shamed, have suffered induced vomiting or induced paralysis, been told they’re not female or male enough to be female or male, and, from the horrible to the ridiculous, to those who have been told that snapping an elastic on their wrist every time they felt same-sex attraction was going to make them straight—to all of those victims of reparative or conversion therapy.

We should know by now—there have been studies done—that those children who have been through conversion therapy are eight times—eight times—more likely to commit suicide than those who have not.

Let’s talk about this community, the LGBTQ community. By the way, I’m honoured to be the very first LGBTQ critic at Queen’s Park ever. The LGBTQ community has double the post-traumatic stress disorder risk; triple the suicide risk among youth. When you’re looking at trans youth, it’s even worse: 77% have considered suicide, 48% have attempted suicide, 20% suffer physical violence, and 50% of our trans population live on less than \$15,000 a year.

If we think that violence, if we think that suicide, if we think that this is all getting better, there’s a very frightening statistic. This is an American statistic, but it bears note here as well because we’re not that different. Between 2007 and 2009, hate crimes doubled against those who are LGBT.

Just in terms of the ex-gay movement and reparative or conversion therapy, there’s something that I think viewers would be very interested in knowing. The man who started Exodus, the largest ex-gay movement ever in the world, in the United States—it was operating for 40 years. This came out of a right-wing fundamentalist background. Of course, their aim was to turn LGBT folk straight. This is a quote from him. It’s from the #BornPerfect site.

He said, “Instead, the people who came to us for help [became] more troubled and depressed.” Remember, this is the man who started Exodus. “One man ... slashed his genitals with a razor and poured Drano on the wounds....

“In the almost 40 years since I started Exodus, I never met a gay person who became heterosexual through conversion therapy or ex-gay programs”—40 years of the Exodus movement. He was the founder. He’s now, we will all be happy to know, out, proud and living with his partner.

1400

I want to read a few quotes here from a number of professional organizations that come out, of course, against reparative or conversion therapy.

The Canadian Association for Social Work Education has declared, “Any professional’s attempt to alter the gender identity or expression of a young person to align with social norms is considered unethical and an abuse of power and authority.”

Here’s another one—and this was from a panellist at our presser, Dr. Joey Bonifacio, a pediatrician and lead at the transgender youth clinic at SickKids. He said, “We need more dialogue around helping lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. Such legislation is deeply needed and will certainly help countless LGBT youth, a population whose mental and physical health and well-being are at risk.”

I also want to quote from Jack Pyne, who is a Trudeau scholar and researcher at McMaster, who wrote a wonderful column in this week’s *Now*. He wrote, “This ... legislation is ground-breaking. MPP Cheri DiNovo is

sending a strong message to health and mental health practitioners ... : 'If your practice does not respect gender diversity, if in fact, you insist on treating gender diversity in young people as a disorder to be cured or prevented, then you will no longer have the use of public funds to do so.' This bill is the first step in bringing OHIP funding in line with our new Ontario human rights protections for gender identity and gender expression."

I could go on: The Canadian Psychological Association, the American Psychological Association, the Canadian Paediatric Society, the World Professional Association of Transgender Health, the International Federation of Social Workers and on. There is in fact not one professional body anywhere in the world that you could find that would support conversion or reparative therapy.

But here's the problem: It's still going on. Folk have asked me why I brought this bill forward. I can tell you that when I was on the gay-straight alliance committee and we travelled the province with that bill, we had psychiatrists come before that committee who testified that the majority of their practice was conversion therapy. Now, of course, many of them were informed by fundamentalist religious convictions. I'm delighted to see that Brent Hawkes is here. I myself am a reverend doctor. We stand, as do many others across the faith spectrum, to say that this has nothing to do with faith or religion.

We've seen the psychiatrists come forward. We know that this has been going on. We know that some of our largest institutions are reviewing their policies and practices because of the effect on victims. We've heard the testimony of the victims, Erika Muse and others. She was on our presser, and came out very vocally and publicly and said that when she came out at 16, she went to an institution that was supposed to help her, the only place that she could go, and there she was told she looked too male to ever be female. She was told this not one on-one in a counselling session; she was told this before interns and other students of medicine.

We've heard from those who teach psychiatrists, who clearly condone these practices. If publicity, if simply coming out with strongly worded statements, if the victims' testimony was enough, I wouldn't be standing here. Why do we need this bill? Why do we need an outright ban? Because these are children we're talking about. These are eight-year-olds; these are five-year-olds. I was on CBC today and we heard from a mother with a five-year-old who took her to a therapist to try to fix her, to try to change her. This mother had the wherewithal to know that something wasn't right and found someone like Dr. Bonifacio at SickKids who helped her. But the first point of intake didn't at all. We have to protect those children. They're not going to come forward to any regulatory body. Children are not going to make complaints to the College of Physicians and Surgeons. Children are not going to be able to do that. We have to do it for them. That is why California, Washington, New Jersey—all have brought in outright bans.

Again, particularly here in Ontario where we have a health care program, we should not be paying for it. We

should not be condoning it, and in fact we need to ban it for children. That's why an outright ban.

I want to just briefly talk about—I've only got a couple of minutes left—the theory, the philosophy behind conversion or reparative therapy. Even when the therapists say it's done to help the child, the simple reality is that the theory behind it is this: that there's something better about being straight than there is about being LGBT, that there's something more perfect, more normal, more desirable about being straight than being LGBT. That is exactly the philosophy and the theory. That's exactly what we should absolutely condemn, that there is nothing better about being straight than being LGBT. In fact we are, as the hashtag says, all of us, born perfect.

In fact, it's our diversity that makes us the province that we are, and we are already a beacon to the world where this is concerned; I have no doubt. That's again another reason why this is so retrograde, that it's going on is so overdue—and our action is so necessary.

Usually the reaction I get from folk—when I talk about this bill and when I talk about the movement to ban it and delist it from OHIP, the first thing I hear is that people can't believe it's actually being done. They can't believe it's going on. They thought this was over a long time ago. The second reaction is, "We're paying for this and we can't even get an eye exam under OHIP? We can't get dental care under OHIP, but we're paying for reparative and conversion therapy?" That's the second reaction. So it's to those two reactions that we stand here in this place and say, "Absolutely. Ontario has moved beyond this. It's time to do the right thing."

Every caller who called into CBC, with one exception, over noon talked about the damages of reparative or conversion therapy still going on on their children. Again, it's not billed under any particular DSM code. It's billed as counselling hours. Again, that's the reason it has to be banned, because it will still be billed under counselling hours if we don't act and if we don't act decisively.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm looking forward to the debate here today. I'm looking forward to the response. And I'm doing it—I think we're all doing it—for our children.

Applause.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would like to say to the audience that you are always welcome in the chamber, but I'd ask you to refrain from participating in the clapping that is going on.

Further debate?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm very pleased to be here this afternoon, and I'm very pleased to be able to be here to speak in favour of this bill and to thank the member for Parkdale–High Park for bringing it forward.

Ensuring the protection and the rights of Ontario's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community is something that is very important to me, and it's important to our government. The concept of conversion therapy contrasts starkly with the fundamental values on which

Ontario is built. It's so important that we make it clear that people have the right to be who they are in Ontario.

Ontario is a province of acceptance, a province of tolerance and a province that draws strength from its diversity. In Ontario people have the right to be who they are. There is no place in Ontario for conversion therapy. It is a practice, as the member has said, that is based on the premise that being gay or transgendered is wrong and needs to be corrected.

In Ontario we work to ensure that health care patients receive evidence-based care and that they're treated ethically, equitably and fairly. The use of conversion therapy to dissuade a person from self-identifying results in neither outcome and should not be tolerated in Ontario.

I want to point out that no current medical guidelines in Ontario support treatment that would aim to change or convert someone away from being LGBT, and I think the member has alluded to that. Conversion therapy, as such, is not in accordance with the standards of medical practice. But let me be clear: If there is more that we need to do to make the medical community aware of this, then we will absolutely do that. In fact, Minister Hoskins will be sending a letter to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and other relevant colleges explaining that their rules should not allow conversion therapy. We'll work with them, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that nobody is subject to this treatment and that this is clear to all Ontarians, because the idea of conversion therapy is dangerous.

1410

When I came out at the age of 37, I had the benefit of 36 years of life experience, and I understood my journey in a way that an eight-year-old or a nine-year-old or a 13-year-old or a 14-year-old cannot possibly. They don't have the advantage of those years and that understanding. They can be vulnerable to the notion that being gay is a choice rather than being integral to who you are.

It's unacceptable for anyone to be told that they need to be something different than who they are. There have been generations of people whose families and society have tried to make them change. Those people, as the member has said, are right here with us—people who have been told over and over again that they are not what they should be.

We should have moved on from that. We should have moved beyond the mentality that being gay or trans is a choice. The unfortunate thing is that some people have not moved beyond those ideas. That's why we have to remain vigilant and we have to continually work to uphold the rights that we enjoy.

I think what we have all seen recently in Indiana and in Arkansas points to that need for vigilance. I'm encouraged to hear of the changes that are being made in the legislation, but the fact that such a divisive law could be signed in the first place in 2015 is so troubling. As I said yesterday, it is totally unacceptable in the 21st century for a law to undermine basic human rights. What's even more offensive is that there are politicians

who believe that they can win elections by creating wedges that seek to divide. I am proud to say that it's not the way we see things in Ontario; it's not who we are in Ontario.

Having said that, I'm disappointed to see that our own federal government recently took steps to weaken the transgender bill of rights, which would add gender identity to the federal human rights code. I'm proud that our member for Ottawa Centre and the member for Parkdale–High Park joined together to voice their disappointment, as well.

My job as Premier of this province is to bring people together, to find ways that we can live more safely together in more harmony; not to create hostility. The work that we're doing with our Sexual Violence Action Plan is part of that goal.

The supports that Ontario provides specifically for health issues affecting LGBT and gender non-conforming people are part of that, as well. In 2008 OHIP re-insured sex reassignment surgery, and CAMH's gender identity clinic uses the World Professional Association for Transgender Health guidelines. The Ministry of Health funds a research and knowledge translation organization called Rainbow Health Ontario, which has long served the health needs of the LGBT community. RHO works with LHINs across the province and has now trained close to 700 health care practitioners in the best practices of trans and gender non-conforming patients across Ontario.

But I know, and we all know, that there's more work that has to be done. Part of that is the vigilance that I just referred to. Part of it is also taking part in debates like the one that we're having today—and I'm very glad that we are.

I want to thank again the member for Parkdale–High Park for bringing this bill to the Legislature. I hope that it will spark more conversation, more support and more acceptance, because that is what we should all be about. I'm happy to support the bill in principle, and, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to it being studied at committee.

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

Ms. Christine Elliott: I am honoured to rise on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus to speak in support of Bill 77, the Affirming Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Act. I will be splitting my time with the member from Nepean–Carleton as well as the member from Thornhill.

I would like to start by thanking my colleague the member from Parkdale–High Park for bringing forward this bill. She has been a true trailblazer on LGBT issues since being elected to office and continues to be a champion for the community. Thank you very much.

I was very pleased to join her to co-sponsor Toby's law several years ago, which furthered efforts to build a province free from discrimination. I'm proud of the efforts taken through Toby's Act to stand up for equal treatment without discrimination on the basis of gender identity or gender expression. But, as the member from Parkdale–High Park's current bill indicates, there are still

steps that need to be taken to eradicate injustice and enshrine the rights of the LGBT community into law.

Even though the American Psychiatric Association and the US National Association of Social Workers have long ago repudiated so-called conversion therapy, we have been confronted with the reality that this dubious practice still exists in Ontario today. Unfortunately, the price that is paid if we don't take action is far too great. Suicide rates among LGBT individuals are frighteningly high. Approximately 41% of people who are transgender or gender non-conforming have attempted suicide sometime in their lives.

Last year, the world witnessed the heartbreaking death of Ohio teen Leelah Alcorn. After her parents sent her to a therapist who attempted to so-called fix her, Leelah had had enough and decided to take her own life. Her tragic and senseless death should serve as a reminder for everyone here of the severe consequences associated with continuing to permit discrimination in the form of conversion therapy.

For those who have suffered a lifetime of hardship just on the basis of being who they are, I hope that the fact that we're at least debating this issue here in this Legislature today provides some optimism of the future of our province. Perhaps the fact that we are here today in support of Bill 77 will provide some hope that here in Ontario we will not tolerate questionable practices that attempt to suppress people's true identities.

As with any piece of legislation, we are going to endeavour to get this right. Certainly Ontario offers some of the most well-developed psychological methods and practices in the world.

I look forward to the committee deliberations on Bill 77 and having the experts coming forward to offer us their best advice. I'm sure that forum will provide useful information that will make sure that this harmful practice is abolished in the province of Ontario. I'm very pleased to hear that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care has taken steps to discuss the issue with the regulatory colleges in making sure that this practice goes no further.

I think that this is going to take the work of many people, including all of us here in this Legislature, and so I think it's fair to say that probably all of the members are going to be supporting it here today. But bravo again to the member from Parkdale–High Park for bringing this forward. Thank you for your strength in this.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm truly honoured to rise today to speak to Bill 77, the Affirming Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Act. I want to start by recognizing and thanking all of the people who joined us here in the chamber today in the various galleries to watch this important debate. Of course, I also want to recognize the fantastic work of the MPP for Parkdale–High Park, Cheri DiNovo, that she does overall, but also specifically that she has done for LGBTQ issues in this province. Not only has she been doing that work here in this House, but she has been doing that work over the course of her

career. In fact, she has been doing that work for her entire life. She has dedicated much of her life to LGBTQ issues, to justice for the LGBTQ community, and her hard work has made great changes in this province.

It was, in fact, thanks to her hard work—in part to her hard work and the work of others—that students have the right to form gay-straight alliances in their schools in this province, and it's because of Toby's law and the protections that it provided that, in fact, we are now building on that with Bill 77.

It's an important piece of legislation, Speaker. It addresses an issue that has been perhaps overlooked, but it's an issue that is causing extraordinary and incredible pain to some of our most vulnerable young people.

1420

The issue was ignored so completely that even the Minister of Health did not know it was a problem when Cheri first raised it here in the Legislature. Since then, I believe that the minister has talked about the issue and has acknowledged that it exists here in this province. In fact, shortly after it became public, in terms of being in the public discourse, we saw CAMH actually launch a complete review of their treatment of trans children and youth.

It was a problem, and continues to be a problem. It took the hard work of the LGBTQ community to bring that issue forward and find a way to make it more public, to make it more amplified. That is what Cheri has been doing. She has worked with the LGBTQ community to bring the issue more into the public realm, and I want to thank those folks in the community who have had the courage to do that work. Again, thanks to Cheri DiNovo, MPP for Parkdale–High Park—who is a very strong MPP—for bringing this to our Legislature.

We all know what a challenging time our own developmental years are. Imagine being told by your parents and by a doctor, a person of authority, that something you know about yourself fundamentally, something that you know truly to be who you are—imagine being told by those people that it is wrong, that what you believe about yourself and who you are is simply wrong and has to be fixed or changed. Imagine the damage that would cause to a young person.

We know, and all the research tells us, how important family support for a youth's self-identified sexual orientation and gender identity are to their self-esteem, how important that is for their well-being and for their personal safety. However, we know that there are doctors—respected practitioners of medicine and psychotherapy—who continue to practise so-called conversion therapy. We know that these doctors are doing irreparable harm to vulnerable youth in our province. This is happening when we know that trans youth already face high rates of assault and harassment just because of who they are.

We know that nearly half of all trans youth have attempted suicide, and many more have considered it. This clearly means that we, as a society, are failing these kids, and that we need to do much, much better to protect

them and support them. This bill is an extremely important step in that direction.

The Canadian Association of Social Workers has said in a statement that, “Any professional’s attempt to alter the gender identity or expression of a young person to align with social norms is considered unethical and an abuse of power and authority.” I agree, Speaker. New Democrats agree. That is why this bill is necessary in Ontario.

All Ontarians deserve the right to be the people that they are—period—and to live and study and work, and to be free of harassment and discrimination in any activity they undertake. This legislation ensures that Ontario’s youth have a right to be who they are, to self-identify their gender. This legislation will protect them from an immoral practice that has no place in the province of Ontario or, frankly, in any free and accepting society.

This bill is important. It’s necessary. New Democrats are very proud of our MPP, Cheri DiNovo, for bringing it forward, and we are proudly going to be supporting this bill.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I was elected 26 years ago, in the Prairies, and if you had told me when I was a little kid, when I was 10, 11 or 12 years old, that that would ever happen, I would have told you that that just didn’t happen. When I actually look at the life I have, I would say that, for most of it, it’s been unimaginable. Remember, I came out almost this month 44 years ago. I was just barely 14, and I remember my first friend—I played football, and I had a buddy. I played football because I figured out that if I imitated what straight guys were like I wouldn’t get beaten up. And I have to tell you, straight guys are easy to imitate. I remember, after I told my friend John Kotter that I was gay—and he never was my friend after that—I went home and I threw up and I cried and I told my mother, who told me that it was a treatable disease and I should go see a psychiatrist. If you’ve met my mother, she has come a long way. You don’t say that about her son anymore.

Forty-four years as an out gay man—the only role model I had before me, really, was Harvey Milk, who was in San Francisco, who was rather remarkable but was assassinated 11 months inside that.

I remember, when I was elected mayor, the first thing they did—17 police cars showed up in Winnipeg, locked my mother and me in a vault, put a Kevlar jacket on me and told me there had never been more death threats in history that they could find in that one thing. I went into a room with about 20,000 people—and I know I share with Kathleen, having been mayor of a city, when she became Premier. Those are moments we’ll never forget.

It’s also with a mixed amount of feeling that we’re still having these debates.

To my friend Cheri: We’ve been talking about this, and I commend her for her leadership and her work. But I always feel a little other—I spent my entire life so that this wouldn’t matter, so that we don’t need to have these

bills or these speeches—because in some ways it reminds each of us of how different we are from the others and that somehow that still matters.

I really don’t like the word “ethnic.” My friend Dr. Moridi and I are both ethnic. My friend Dipika Damerla and I—we Irish folks actually have ethnicities. Especially if you’re gay and Irish, you’ve got ethnicity and then some, Oscar Wilde-like. I’m very proud as I look around this Legislature because all of us have the experience of being told we’re different in some way—*parce que nous parlons français ou parce que je suis chinois*.

I’m very proud to be part of the most diverse caucus, maybe, in the world. I say that to all members of this House. Won’t it be nice when we don’t need to do anything anymore in law?

To my friends Christin and these extraordinary men and women in the trans community who are doing more than just achieving trans rights: They’re breaking down this idea of a binary nature of male-female. Do you know what I mean? Our sexuality is so complicated.

I’ll never forget the day when my friend Liz Sandals and I were talking about the need to have options on drivers’ licences: F, M and X. She said, “I’m a woman. I want those choices. We don’t put race on drivers’ licences. Why do we define each other?” Only if we want to treat people differently do we make people other.

I was an independent municipal politician because no party thought gay people could get elected when I ran for city council and mayor. The reason I left partisan politics for a long time was simply because I couldn’t get a nomination. I’ll never forget that. I’ll never forget that those things matter.

But we also live in an idea—where we learn from feminism, which is what is at the very core of this bill: Other people don’t have the right to define us, never mind shock-therapy us into something and reinvent our bodies and our souls and our spirits and our capacity for love and intimacy. No one has the right to do that.

It’s hard. We have some tough problems. What do you say to an 11-year-old kid who is transgender, a young woman who has the body, outwardly, of a boy, or is intersex, and really wants to be a girl and doesn’t want to wait till 18?

We have to start having those conversations: that women and men own their body. It’s not about the physicality that you have. Your gender comes from your soul and your humanity.

We all know who we were. I always say, does anyone ever doubt who they were sexually attracted to at 14, when your hormones were raging? If there’s one thing we know, it’s not a choice. No matter what your body may look like when you stand in front of the mirror, it doesn’t define who you are.

I was amazed; Minister Matthews and I were going through a list. One in 100 babies born don’t have completely defined gender characteristics—one in 100. You know how many thousands of babies are born? This is not a small thing, and we have to do more.

I want to thank all of you. I want to thank these courageous people who are breaking down stereotypes,

breaking up the binary world we're living in, and thanks to the children who are here. Hopefully you'll have better choices.

Applause.

1430

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: How do you follow that? I don't think you do it justice.

I want to say, this is probably the most nervous I've ever been speaking in this assembly—and I think we all know I've spoken quite a few times—but this is a pretty important issue, and it's one I think the Legislature needs to take very seriously.

I say at the outset that I am right-wing, I'm a Conservative, but I support Cheri DiNovo's bill. I support what she's intending to do, and I support what the Minister of Health is doing with respect to the regulatory regime with the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

I'm a mother first and foremost before I am an MPP. I look at two children in the gallery today. They bring tears to my eyes, and I'll tell you why. My daughter, at 10 years old, knows exactly who she is, and I couldn't be more proud of that little girl because she does. That means that I know that those two children up there—they're about the same age as her—know exactly who they are as well. I ask any parent in the province of Ontario, whether you go to church like I do on Sundays—well, maybe not so much anymore, since I've been elected—or whether you live in downtown Toronto and you question faith, it doesn't matter: What would you do if that were your child? I know I would go to the end of the earth for my child, and I know you're going to the end of the earth for yours, and that's why I will support you. That is why the Progressive Conservative caucus will support you here today.

I don't know much about this issue, other than to say that I appreciate the words of the member from Whitby–Oshawa, who I think for a Conservative has been very outspoken on these issues, and I appreciate that. I appreciate the Premier and the member for Toronto Centre for speaking up with their own experiences. I think that's important when we stand in the assembly, that sometimes we learn about one another and what brought us to this place, not just the fact that we wear a partisan badge on our shirt.

I want to say thank you to the member for Parkdale–High Park. Over the years, I have gotten to know her. She has been a very strong advocate for her beliefs. Probably 90% of the time she and I do not agree on very much. But we have become very good friends, because we respect one another. When I was growing up and went to university at Saint FX, I was once told that you don't have to accept someone else's position; you have to respect that they have it. Today, I think we're showing the ultimate respect to our constituents when we talk about stopping conversion therapy in the province of Ontario and stopping the funding of it.

I find this debate for us to be very liberating, one that's very important and one that I think will send a very

important message—not so much to other adults and not so much to our voters, but to the next generation—that we are a tolerant, accepting and great society, where there will be a great amount of opportunity for children who are eight years old and 10 years old and 12 years old.

So, with that, I want to say thank you so much for the opportunity to participate in this debate, but in particular I'd like to say thank you to the other members, who I think all gave moving examples of why this bill should move forward and why this practice should be stopped. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member for London West.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am proud to rise today in this House to speak in support of Bill 77, the Affirming Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Act, and I want to congratulate the member for Parkdale–High Park for her advocacy on this issue and for taking a stand on behalf of people who are gender-non-conforming, which in our gender-binary society can be very, very difficult.

It was important for me to be able to speak to this bill because I wanted to honour a close friend of mine in London who two months ago spoke publicly for the first time about his trans son, now a young man of 23, and their family's journey—a journey of love, pain and, finally, hope. I want to use the same words my friend used when he shared his story, because his words convey, in a way that statistics can't, what an abomination conversion therapy is and how we cannot—we must not—be complicit in its practice by allowing OHIP billing.

My friend's son Sean was born biologically female. Consciously or not, gender expectations are imposed on our children right from birth, and Sean was aware, from a very young age, what those gender expectations meant: how he was supposed to walk, dress, talk, and even what he was supposed to think and talk about.

In early childhood, Sean loved playing sports, especially baseball and football with the boys, and was a high academic achiever at school. But his father notes, the “tough-girl tomboy thing” only works so long.

When puberty hit, Sean found himself growing into a body and a gender that he didn't identify with and didn't understand. Sean felt suffocated by the pressures from family and friends and society to be everything that he was not. He was a young boy in a girl's body, and he felt he had no place, that he was living a lie every day.

At school, a place he used to love, he survived unimaginable bullying and assault. He felt confused and angry, which led to serious self-harm and substance abuse.

At the age of 17, Sean decided to quit school and began transitioning from female into the male he knew he was. When Sean told his father what he was doing, my friend felt deep worry and uncertainty. But he says, “My uncertainty grew into resolve when I started to see something I hadn't seen in a long time: hope, and a sense of future.”

Today, Sean is a student at the University of Toronto, studying on a prestigious scholarship and determined to change the world.

Unfortunately, many trans youth do not get this kind of support from their families. They are told they need to be fixed. In despair, they take their own lives.

If I had asked my friend during Sean's painful teen years what he needed to support Sean, his answer would not have been "conversion therapy." What my friend says is, "I dream for these children that we can change society, to offer more hope, to bring diversity out of shame and hiding, and to provide the education and role models that they need in order to understand who they are, all they have to offer, and their place in our society."

For Sean and all other young people like him, we must pass this bill.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: It is an honour, specifically, to speak today with such illustrious speakers on the member from Parkdale–High Park's really historic private member's bill.

I just want to mention that the member from Parkdale–High Park was a minister, professionally, at one point.

Today is Passover, so I want to wish anybody who's listening, and the members opposite, happy Passover—Chag Sameach—and happy Easter as well.

This is a diverse Legislature, I would say—not specific caucuses, but all of us altogether. We should all feel very proud, because we're not just colleagues. I think that we are kind of a family. I would hope that if we all ever got stranded somewhere, we would come to each other's aid.

As what I call a former optometrist, I'm chagrined to think that professionals would engage in what I believe the general public of Ontario do not support, which is conversion types of therapies and not accepting. As the leader of the third party said, all Ontarians deserve the right to be who they are. Everybody deserves the right to be who they are, whether they are a child or an adult.

I think that it's wrong to tell a child they are wrong. My mother used to say that you should never tell a child they're bad, because, boy, will they show you what bad is. Nobody is wrong. I think we're all different, and I think that the world would be pretty boring if we were all the same.

We're all here to offer support for each other. Just as, today, we spoke about autism, we're here to support each other, not just monetarily but to support families who have children with autism. We're here to support each other with any struggles that we have, physically, emotionally, academically. We really need to build a society where we're there to help. If your neighbour's child is struggling in math, why not go there and help them?

1440

I think the fact that there's eight times the suicide rate for anybody who has gone through conversion therapy—the conversion therapy might not be the cause, but it's certainly indicative of what it means. It means this was an individual who was rejected—rejected by their family, maybe rejected by their friends—and it's the rejection that is causing the suicide.

We as legislators have to set an example. I think that, too often, parents see children as an extension of themselves and not as individuals. Maybe that's different generations. Maybe it's even different cultures and different people from different backgrounds.

But I know, myself, having grown up in a house with two parents who were there to see me into adulthood—I had a father who struggled with that. He liked opera, and we should therefore like opera. If he liked certain foods—to this day, he can't understand why I don't eat tomatoes. It's a struggle for him, and it's always been a struggle for him, whereas my mother was so much more open. I would say that she actually preferred it if her children were a little different and taught her different things and took her to different places and gave her a different point of view and a different outlook.

I think it served her well, as a college teacher working with adolescents. She would come home and often talk about children who were struggling with gender identity and would go during her office time. She said that about half her office time was actually talking about accounting, and the rest of the time, she was talking to kids whose parents weren't supporting them—weren't supporting them for who they are, weren't supporting them in terms of the choice of their profession, weren't supporting them in terms of even what recreational activities they wanted to play. I think that it made her a better parent, when she started to be a teacher and started to work with others.

I like to mention Israel often in the Legislature. My time is running out. But Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has a gay pride parade, and I want to remind everybody about that today.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: I think we can all agree that you don't get to be part of a debate like this very often in this House, and it's clearly a very special Thursday for us.

I'm reminded of a quote from June Callwood. She said, "Once you witness an injustice, you are no longer an observer but a participant," unless you fix it. What a privilege it is to be in this House today and honour the life of Leelah Alcorn, to honour her courage and to honour the fact that she threw out a challenge to all of us to fix this. We have the privilege to do that in this House today, and I want to thank the member from Parkdale–High Park for bringing forward this bill.

I want to read very quickly from an op-ed from Brent Hawkes, who joins us here in the Legislature today, because I think that he encapsulates some of the issues that we've been talking about.

He says: "Unfortunately, we have consistently seen opposition to human rights and protections for LGBTQ people coming from the radical religious right. Clearly, LGBTQ people, youth in particular, face discrimination and abuse in our society. The radical religious right does not speak for all people of faith; as a progressive Christian, I am called to seek justice for all people, especially LGBTQ youth. Religious oppression is still

oppression, and purported religious motivation can never be used to trump human rights.”

I think those are very powerful words, so I want to thank you for that.

“Efforts to ‘cure homosexuality’ have been heavily criticized for decades and were declared unethical by” multiple organizations. “Treatment methods aimed at correcting gender non-conformity or preventing transsexuals from beginning to inspire similar levels of outrage”—as they should, and that is partly why we are here today.

I want to say a special thank you to the gay-straight alliances and the students in Waterloo region who collected petitions. They get it. Often, youth are so much further ahead of us; sometimes we’re catching up. They collected signatures, and they knew, fundamentally, that other people don’t get the right to define us, and, obviously, they shouldn’t receive OHIP for that.

Today, this bill will close that door, close that loophole. That needs to happen. That’s why this legislation needs to pass with our full support.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you all for your comments. I now return to the member from Parkdale–High Park: two minutes for your response.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I first want to thank the Premier for being here and for speaking. I want to thank the future leader of the official opposition for speaking. I want to thank the leader of the third party, the Minister of the Environment, and the members for London West, Thornhill, Nepean–Carleton and Kitchener–Waterloo for speaking—I hope I haven’t left anybody out.

This is Holy Week. This is Maundy Thursday. I can’t think of a more holy moment that I’ve witnessed in this place. It’s wonderful when all parties can come together and speak with one voice about an injustice.

I want to hearken back to the Premier’s words. I think I heard her say “in principle.” I hope what she meant was that this bill will not only pass second reading but will go to committee, will get through committee and will come back and be passed into law. I hope that’s what she meant.

We are the province that put in place Toby’s Law, and that was an all-party effort too. We set the gold standard with Toby’s Law. I don’t want to see that gold tarnish. I think we should move ahead. We should show the world just what it looks like to be an inclusive and diverse society, and we can. We can do that today, and we can continue to do that. I’d like to see this bill become law by this Pride—and that’s in June—so there’s a time limit on it. That’s what got Toby’s Law going too.

What are we talking about? Two things. Banning this practice. Why is it necessary to ban the practice? Because children cannot complain to professional bodies. They need us to act. It’s for our children. It needs to be banned outright—end of story. That’s number one—for 18 and under. Number two, it needs to be delisted. We shouldn’t be paying for this anymore.

We need to act. For Leelah Alcorn; for every child who has died, in their memory; for their families; for all who love everyone; and, of course, for our own sakes, let’s celebrate this holy moment by making it real.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We’ll take the vote on this item at the end of private members’ business.

MAGNA CARTA DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR DE LA GRANDE CHARTE

Mrs. Munro moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 23, An Act to proclaim Magna Carta Day / Projet de loi 23, Loi proclamant le Jour de la Grande Charte.

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

Mrs. Julia Munro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m excited today to debate my private member’s bill, Bill 23, the Magna Carta Day Act, which proclaims June 15 each year as Magna Carta Day.

Magna Carta is a revolutionary document that influenced the English system of common law and was a precursor in the development of England’s and Canada’s constitutional monarchy. Living in Canada, it is easy to take our rights for granted. We are all blessed to live in a safe, peaceful, lawful country. However, it is important to remember the history of these rights and to remember those who do not enjoy the same freedoms as we do today.

On June 15, 1215, King John affixed his seal to Magna Carta. This placed limits on the monarch’s power to overrule the law and protected the rights of ordinary people. The document introduced key principles that hold true in democratic societies today: equal justice for everyone, freedom from unlawful detention, the right to a trial by jury, and rights for women.

However, to fully understand Magna Carta, we have to look at the time period in which it was signed and the underlying conditions that necessitated its creation. One of the pre-emptive conditions for the signing of Magna Carta was a weak economy.

1450

King John had lost the Battle of Bouvines. In order to reclaim territory that was lost in the battle, he needed large sums of money for his campaigns to reclaim Normandy. For this reason he was forced to maximize all possible sources of income. He increased and created every tax he could think of.

King John levied estate payments—those would be the 13th-century version of property taxes—11 times in his 17 years as king. He demanded higher taxes on inherited property, sometimes charging enormous sums beyond the barons’ ability to pay. He increased taxes on widows who wished to remain single. He also created an income tax as well as an import-export tax.

Increasing taxes and creating new taxes: Apparently not much changes in 800 years.

With his high taxes, King John added insult to injury. At the start of John's reign, there had been a sudden change in prices and inflation due to bad harvests and high demand for food. As well, there was a shortage of silver coinage as King John had been hoarding and using the currency for military purposes. These economic factors plus the increased taxes clearly did not help John's popularity.

No wonder the barons revolted. They wanted to avoid a civil war where the barons were divided against each other. With economic hardship and fewer rights, the barons eventually felt that they had no choice but to fight their own monarch and take control of the situation. They didn't like that reality, so they took control as peacefully as they could and they changed it with Magna Carta.

As parliamentarians we have a duty to uphold the traditional values that Magna Carta laid out 800 years ago. Although the Magna Carta placed specific limits on the power of the monarch, we must remember that, although elected by the citizens, we, as lawmakers, are also not above the law. When members of the government forget this—that all laws apply to us as well—voters become disengaged, sceptical, cynical and, indeed, apathetic.

The law demands respect. It is legal as civic leaders to change the law but illegal to break the law. As the Magna Carta declares, nobody is above the law, not even the king.

I believe that my bill, the Magna Carta Day Act, would serve to remind us every year in this Legislature that we are the keepers of democracy, that our actions do have consequences and that our words have weight.

It is important for Magna Carta to be honoured and remembered as a document that changed the course of history. The fundamental traditions of equality and freedom that characterize our democratic society—particularly that nobody, not even the crown, is above the law—originated in this important document.

I would like to congratulate some outstanding Ontarians for their work on educating Canadians about the Magna Carta, specifically Len and Suzy Rodness of Magna Carta Canada, and Dr. Carolyn Harris. Suzy Rodness and Dr. Carolyn Harris are here in the gallery today. I'd ask all to please welcome them to the gallery for their leadership. They are here today to observe this debate. I certainly welcome you to Queen's Park.

In recognition of the 800th anniversary, Magna Carta Canada has organized a tour of a copy of the Magna Carta, with stops in Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg and Edmonton. Making this historic document available to the Canadian public is a commendable task which I know has required years of work to coordinate.

I encourage all educators in the province to discuss the Magna Carta with their students so that the next generation understands the history of their freedoms and the importance of equality. I've received support from several educational and historical associations and I want

to thank them for their support, and look forward to passing Bill 23, as well as the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta, with all of you.

I should also just point out, while we're looking at 800 years ago and the influence that we have in what happens to us today, that this is also the 600th anniversary of the role of the Sergeant-at-Arms. We have the privilege, as members here, to stand steeped in this kind of tradition and, obviously, the obligation to make sure that generations to come will appreciate how important these foundations are to the quality of life we enjoy here in this country and, quite frankly, many other countries of the world that are the inheritors of the principles of the Magna Carta.

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

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, the Magna Carta is part of Canada's cultural and political heritage. It laid the foundation for the common-law legal system and was a direct influence on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is a document wrapped in story, legend and not just a few myths.

The appeal of the Magna Carta lies not in its specific details, many of which have lost relevance with the passage of time. No, it lies in its unshackled defence and declaration of the rule of law.

There are two general narratives about the Magna Carta, narratives that have played out over the last 800 years. The first is that of the establishment. It praises gradual reform, the slow extension of liberties and the gradual encroachment of the citizenry upon the sovereign power of the king. It tells of noble barons who fought the good fight in defence of English liberty against the cruel and capricious tyrant King John.

There is some truth in this. The rights won by the nobility in the Magna Carta paved the way for the parliamentary system, were eventually extended to all persons, not just free men, and in the 17th century were invoked to check Charles I's attempt to establish an absolute monarchy.

But there is a darker side to the story too. The nobility were oppressed by the king, but they were the oppressors of the whole English society. The serfs and peasants who lived under the nobility's arbitrary power received little from the Magna Carta, initially, at least, for the Magna Carta was, in its day, a charter of the 1%. To the oppressed 99% of English society, the nobles said, "Liberty for me, but not for thee."

That brings me to the second story of the Magna Carta. In this story, the Magna Carta has inspired the truly oppressed around the world. For eight centuries, the Magna Carta has fired the hearts and minds of those who seek justice in the face of tyranny and exploitation. The oppressed of the world have taken the Magna Carta as a totem in their demands for equality before the law, trial by their peers, immunity from illegal imprisonment and taxation only by the consent of the citizenry.

During the English Civil War, the Levellers drew on the Magna Carta's promise of equality before the law as

the grounds for an equal, classless society. It inspired the American revolutionaries and abolitionists alike. It influenced the Chartist movement in 19th-century England, which sought one man/one vote, no property qualification and the secret ballot.

Nelson Mandela cited the Magna Carta in his defence at the Rivonia trial. He lived in an unjust society under a tyrannical government that denied the rule of law by denying the equality of the people it was meant to serve. Apartheid in South Africa denied the promises of the Magna Carta.

And in the 21st century, when governments defend unlawful detention in the name of security, the writ of habeas corpus is the means by which the promises of the Magna Carta must be fulfilled.

Human rights are still being denied and trampled on in many corners of our world. We in Ontario and Canada cannot claim an unblemished record. For as long as governments act above the law, act arbitrarily and deny justice for their peoples, the Magna Carta will retain its significance. We in the House are tasked with drafting the law, the government across the floor is tasked with executing the law, but none of us here are above that law. We are its servants. Governments must be subject to the law, and true democracy cannot exist without respect, indeed reverence, for the rule of law. That is why we call for the highest standards in this House and in this province.

However, the rule of law is nothing if those of low or middle-class incomes cannot afford to access the courts.

1500

I praise the extra funding to Legal Aid Ontario, but much more is needed before all applicants are truly equal before the law.

Money and status buy power and influence—we cannot deny that. Our democracy is strong enough to prevent them from buying guilt or innocence outright, but money and status are the most potent players in those several shades of grey between.

I speak not only of inequality in criminal justice but in all forms of justice and fairness. The deferred wages of pensioners, such as those at Stelco, play second fiddle to the claims of banks and parent corporations; students eat at food banks while their tuition bankrolls executives; and one man at the top of a corporate pyramid has amassed unimaginable wealth by laying off 18,000 Canadian workers.

There is a different tier of justice for today's nobility—the rich, the powerful and the well-connected. We cannot forget that in its day the Magna Carta was a charter for the top 1%. It offered little solace to the un-free peasantry.

Less celebrated, but more important to them, was the Magna Carta's companion of 1217, the Charter of the Forest. This was a charter for the common man, the widow and the little guy. It allowed the common people to use the resources of the forests without being barred by the aristocracy, who liked to restrict access so they could enjoy the pleasures of the hunt. The common

people depended on the forests for their food, their furniture and their medicine. In its own way, the Charter of the Forest was a great cry against the privatization of our public assets—and how we could use a new Charter of the Forest today in Ontario.

The battle for the commons—for public ownership of our air, our water and our essential public services—never ends. There are those who would have us sell outright our birthright for a bauble, then rent them back at the cost of all our gold and silver. There are those who seek to privatize every resource necessary for human life and dignity. We in the NDP have always opposed that, for we believe and we know that true liberty and true equality before the law cannot exist where there is poverty, homelessness, discrimination and gross inequality of wealth. They cannot exist where access to education is unequal. They cannot exist when life and work are a struggle to survive.

So, Speaker, I celebrate the Magna Carta and I applaud this bill, but I know that the hard-won liberties of 1215 are not enough. I also celebrate the Charter of the Forest, which laid the seed of the idea that every human being had the right to the resources necessary to live. I celebrate all those who defied oppression and built on these two great charters to expand our rights and our opportunities here in Canada and abroad.

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

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I'm honoured today to speak on this bill that recognizes the great importance the Magna Carta played in developing our modern justice and parliamentary systems. I thank the member for York-Simcoe for introducing it.

On June 15, 1215, King John of England was forced by his rebelling barons to grant royal assent to this wrinkled parchment immortalized as the Magna Carta or "Great Charter," and agreed to be bound by its 63 clauses. The Magna Carta gave rise to the rule of law affirming that no one is above the law, not even the King, and ensured people's freedom against arbitrary rule. It is also credited for securing trial by jury and the right of habeas corpus, protecting citizens from illegal imprisonment and guaranteeing the right of due process. It is also a step forward for women's rights, albeit a small one. It stated that a widow could not be forced to marry and give up her property.

This historic shift revealed that absolute power is a perilous illusion that breeds only unrest, regress and upheaval. It is the liberty of the individual collectively expressed that must be upheld.

The Magna Carta formed the foundation of the common law system and constitutional liberties. The principles of the Magna Carta are reflected in the charters of governments around the world, including the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, the American Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. For Canadians, it has informed key documents from the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which shaped the then-British colonies and their relations with First Nations, to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In its storied reinterpretation and evolution, the Magna Carta has charted the length and breadth of continued political thought relating to the expansion and assertion of human rights. Its ideals transcend cultures and ideologies as a powerful and lasting expression of freedom and justice.

The government of Ontario upholds these principles and continues to work towards extending human rights to marginalized groups. Our government understands that it has a duty to protect fundamental liberties and serve the best interests of all its citizens. It lies at the very core of what our government stands for, and I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we will continue to operate this way for the rest of time, no matter what party is at the helm.

Although rarely invoked in courts today, and with most of its legal rights guarantees assured through other rights and charters, Magna Carta's symbolic and historical influence is unparalleled. As my colleague has noted in her bill, Magna Carta is a document that changed the course of history.

I have no doubt that it will be with great pride that Ontarians celebrate our high regard for human rights with dignity with Magna Carta's 800th anniversary this year on June 15.

I also encourage all Ontarians to visit the original Great Charter and its companion document, England's Charter of the Forest, while they're on display at the limited-time exhibits this year in Fort York National Historic Site in Toronto and the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa.

It is my pleasure to lend my wholehearted support to this bill, a bill that aims to institute a day of reflection on the history and importance of the rights and freedoms we enjoy today.

Monsieur le Président, c'est avec le plus grand plaisir que je donne mon appui à ce projet de loi ayant pour but l'institution d'une journée de réflexion sur l'histoire et l'importance des droits et libertés que nous apprécions tous tant aujourd'hui.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I am proud to stand in my place today and add my voice in strong support of this bill, the Magna Carta Day Act, put forward by my colleague from York-Simcoe.

I'd like to give more background on this topic by highlighting one of Canada's leading historians on the subject, Dr. Carolyn Harris, who is with us today in the members' gallery. Dr. Harris completed her PhD in European history at Queen's University in 2012. Her dissertation examined the English Civil Wars and the French Revolution, two instances of political change that drew upon ideas first codified in the Magna Carta in 1215.

Currently, she teaches history at the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies. She also provides frequent royal and historical commentary for the media, including CBC Radio and the CTV News Channel. Her writing on history and the monarchy has been published

in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, the *Smithsonian*, the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, and the *BBC News* magazine.

Dr. Harris's forthcoming book, *Magna Carta and Its Gifts to Canada: Democracy, Law and Human Rights*, discusses the history of Magna Carta and the profound impact of the Great Charter on modern Canadian institutions, including Canada's system of government and the common-law system.

Magna Carta is the first example of an English King accepting limits on his power imposed by his subjects, beginning the development of the modern constitutional monarchy that was formalized with the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

Magna Carta also informs the common-law system. The rights to due process, trial by peers and equality before the law were enshrined in Magna Carta. The charter contains early references to women's rights, confirming freedom from forced marriage for noble widows. Magna Carta has informed the development of human rights around the world, including the English Petition of Right from 1628, the American Constitution, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

With Dr. Harris's permission, here is an excerpt from her forthcoming book regarding Magna Carta and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms:

"The text of the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms reflects the influence of Magna Carta and the 1960 Canadian Bill of Rights. Section 9 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees freedom from arbitrary detainment or imprisonment, reflecting the lasting influence of clause 39 of the 1215 Magna Carta. Section 10 guarantees habeas corpus, a summons with the force of court order, proving lawful authority to detain a prisoner, a right that dates back to the Five Knights case that precipitated the Petition of Right in 1628, a document that reflects Sir Edward Coke's interpretation of Magna Carta. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms also affirms the primacy of the Royal Proclamation of 1763 as Canada's first constitutional document, stating that the current charter does not abrogate from any of the rights or freedoms recognized by the proclamation."

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Here's the book's conclusion: "800 years after its creation, the ideals codified in Magna Carta have spread around the world, shaping politics and law in a global context. In Canada, Magna Carta has a unique history, influencing the relationship between the crown and First Nations from the Royal Proclamation of 1763, Canada's Confederation in 1867 and the modern Bill of Rights and Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Magna Carta shaped the development of common law in English Canada and continues to be cited in judicial proceedings. Canada's constitutional monarchy reflects the precedents set by Magna Carta, the Petition of Right and the British Bill of Rights. For 800 years, Magna Carta has given its gifts to

Canada and the world and will continue to do so for centuries to come.”

I want to thank Dr. Harris for being the careful and charismatic historian that she is, and, most importantly, for her support of this important bill to recognize the 800th anniversary of this very consequential document.

Mr. Speaker, there was still snow on the ground—hopefully by today the snow is gone—and I was out on the front lawn for a ceremony marking Magna Carta Day, and I met Carolyn Harris in person. She was there, as was the member from York–Simcoe. There’s an actual society for recognizing the importance of Magna Carta, and many teachers and historians were there to commemorate this important event.

I think that it’s important for us to know our history, because if we don’t know our history we don’t know where we came from, and we certainly won’t be able to have proper vision into where we’re going.

I think that we have a lot to commemorate here in this Legislature—not just our history, but many important events, many important cultures that we recognized yesterday. I was at the event for Sikh Heritage Month. The fun part of what we do here is to look back and look in the future and debate bills and offer our opinions.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity. I want to thank the member from York–Simcoe for all of her efforts, not just in commemorating the Magna Carta, but in mentoring me a little bit here since I arrived a little over a year ago and teaching me the ropes. I really want to thank her, and I want to wish her and her family a happy Easter, as I wish everybody else here in the Legislature happy Easter, happy Passover, chag sameach—I have to keep spelling it for the person who’s writing it; maybe she kept my notes from previously.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, I’m obviously going to vote for the bill, but I’m going to come at it a little bit differently.

This is a question of a family squabble; that’s where the Magna Carta actually comes from. King Henry II had a number of children who were warring with him in order to steal the crown from their own father. They had a mother who was assisting at the time, who was quite helpful. What was her name again? How can we forget that queen? She’s in everybody’s memory, but it escapes me. What is it?

Interjection: Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Eleanor of Aquitaine and her three sons fought against the father in order to arrest the crown.

The one brother who could have gotten the crown decided, “To heck with it. I don’t want to fight about this anymore,” and decided to go out on the Crusades.

The other brother, who ended up becoming the king—King Richard Coeur de Lion, as they called him—became king of England and spent very little time in England. He spent most of his time in the Middle East, fighting in the wars of the time put on by the Pope when it came to the—

Interjection: The Crusades.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —the Crusades. Exactly. Thank you for the prompts. I really appreciate that.

They ended up with King John, who should have never been king—because King Richard was killed when he got back to France. He was besieging a castle somewhere in northern France and ended up receiving an arrow at a point where it essentially killed him, and King John became king. He was a truly bad king. This is what this is all about: They had a truly bad monarch who decided that he was just going to do what he wanted, and to heck with everybody else.

What happened? The top 1% revolted. This is the point that I want to make: It was the top 1% who revolted. Unlike today, when the bottom 99% are revolting, back then it was the top 1%. It was those with the power, the very top echelon of British society back then—which was really a French society, because those kings at that time were French kings. We forget that the Normans who invaded in 1066 were a line of francophone Normans who went into England. I always tease that the reason they went was that they wanted to bring the sauce, in order to undo all the bad food they had in England at the time. But nonetheless—I’m not going to have enough time here—it was a revolt of the top 1%.

King John was forced to sign the Magna Carta, which is essentially what everybody here described, which was a reining in of the power of the King to be able to tax the nobles in the way that the King was doing, to keep it very simple.

What’s interesting about this history is that the moment after he signed the Magna Carta, what did he do? He tried to renege. Essentially, it took the Pope at that time to put power and pressure on the King. The Pope excommunicated King John, and King John found himself in a position where he had no allies to defend himself against the warring barons in England, the warring barons in Aquitaine and in Normandy, and, certainly, the King of France at the time, Louis.

Here is a little bit of history that nobody realizes: This is the time that we had a king who was actually a French king from France who became the King of England after the death of King John, because the Normans of the day decided they wanted no more of the lineage of King John, so they decided to take a chance on King Louis. I forget what his term was; I don’t remember what number of Louis he was, but he was King Louis nonetheless. He became the King of England for a little less than a year. After a while, the Normans figured out, “My God, this guy is just as bad as John, so let’s get rid of King Louis.” They decided to undo King Louis, because he had not been crowned. There was an issue in regard to how all of that happened. So they ended up recognizing who ended up becoming Henry III, I believe, who was the son of King John who became the King.

From that time forward, most kings have accepted the idea of Magna Carta. What’s interesting is, some of the kings that we remember as being the better ones actually took the heart of Magna Carta and brought it further and

decided, “You know what? If I’m going to rule, I just can’t rule as a complete monarch without any respect for the public.” They started to understand, as a monarchy, that they had to move in a different direction.

I think what’s truly remarkable about the British monarchy is that 1,000-plus years later, you still have a monarchy in England. Why? Because the Queen and her forebears were smart enough to realize that the people wanted to be able to get ascendancy when it came to the decision-making of day-to-day things that affected us and our nations.

If you look at the history of the British monarchy, its resilience has been, I think, a couple of things. One is their recognition that at one point, even though it took a civil war with King Charles—which is a whole other issue—the kings and the queens—because Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary, Queen Anne and others understood that you had to relent to a certain degree if you wanted to hold on to the monarchy and keep the country going in the direction that they wanted it to go.

But the other thing is, England is one of these countries that, every now and then, when they most needed it, had some of the best generals and leaders leading in a time of peril. We think of Wellington; we think even of Cromwell—which was interesting, because Cromwell had his own effect on English history—and we certainly think of people like Winston Churchill. We look at Lloyd George and we look at Asquith in regard to what they did for the modern democracy that we have today, that we actually practise here in Canada.

Certainly, we’re going to support the bill. But I’ll tell you, one of the most fascinating reads you’ll ever do is a read of European history and the monarchies of Europe in regard to how we have gone so far in so long a time.

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

Hon. David Zimmer: I am very pleased to participate in this debate for a few minutes, and I am very happy that the member has brought this bill forward.

I’ve been sitting through the debate, and it feels like my days back when I was an undergraduate. I studied history, and I remember studying at length the Magna Carta. I remember having to write a paper on the Magna Carta. It all sort of rushed back and reminded me of the seminar that I sat in at university. So thank you very much, Professor Harris, for briefing some of the members here on the work that you’re doing, and congratulations on the work that you’re doing.

1520

Then I listened to the member for Thornhill. You sounded like a history professor yourself, in your comments—and the same for the member for James Bay.

In fact, I was so impressed and taken with the study of medieval history, especially medieval English and French history, that I decided I was going to become a historian. I finished my undergraduate, and that summer, I went to England. The very first place I went was to view a copy of the Magna Carta.

I grew up in Waterloo, and I hadn’t been anywhere. I’d been to Toronto a few times. This overwhelming

feeling that I had, standing in England in front of this iconic document, the Magna Carta—I can’t tell you what that did to me. So I decided I was going to become a historian.

Anyway, my mother found out about it, and she made me become a lawyer. It’s a long story—

Ms. Soo Wong: It’s always the mother.

Hon. David Zimmer: There’s always a mother behind—

Mrs. Gila Martow: Conversion therapy.

Hon. David Zimmer: In a sense, yes.

But let me just say something about the Magna Carta, because we’ve heard some very high-level comments about it. To put the Magna Carta in its simplest basis, there was a king, King John, who ruled as an absolute monarch. His whim was law; his whim was the decision of the land. He did what he wanted to do when he wanted to do it, and basically, everybody had to fall in line.

Not surprisingly, that generated a reaction among many other people in England at the time. It was led by a group of barons who essentially said to King John, “Look, you can be the king, but there are certain limits on what you can do.” The Magna Carta set out, essentially, a number of those limits, and we’ve heard reference to those limits.

The other important thing the Magna Carta essentially said was that these decisions that the king, to date, had made on his own, without reference to the people that he was supposedly governing—that he should take into consideration their views, their wishes, and their thoughts. That is the germinal seed of our democracy.

The member for Hamilton referred to the Charter of the Forest, which was a couple of years later. The Magna Carta gave people in England a thirst or an appetite for making further inroads into King John’s authority. The first one that occurred, as the member for Hamilton has said, was the Charter of the Forest, which added a number of additional rights that the king had to consider, on behalf of the people, when he made decisions. So our last 800 years of history have been a series of building blocks built on the Magna Carta.

The member for Thornhill referenced the English Revolution in the 17th century, and then the French Revolution in the 18th century. Both of those great revolutions were reactions against royal authority. They built on those seminal ideas set out in the Magna Carta. Then in the American Revolution, they built on those ideas in the Magna Carta.

In fact, the democracy that we enjoy today, members in this Legislature, federal members in Ottawa, in all of the western democracies and democracies developing around the world in other countries—if you look at it closely, the concept, the seminal idea, moves back and back and back to the Magna Carta. It said that nobody can run the country on their own; consult and interact with the good citizens of the country.

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It’s a pleasure to rise today as we debate part of Ontario’s history and, certainly, the

beginning of Canadians' political history, and of course, the beginning of the Commonwealth and British history as it pertains to our democracy that we practise today.

When we talk about the Great Charter, or the Magna Carta, we see the very foundation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms that we have here today, but this is about 600 years older than that.

I'm really pleased to be speaking on behalf of the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus to support Julia Munro, the member from York-Simcoe, on this piece of legislation, which I believe is important for us to recognize, as most of the Commonwealth nations around the world are doing at this particular time, given the importance of this document in the fundamental ways we govern ourselves.

It is my understanding, for example, that other nations right across the world will be celebrating the 800th anniversary in June 2015. I think it's incumbent upon all of us as legislators to support this resolution and this bill because it speaks to the values that we hold dear and that we support.

The member from York-Simcoe, I might add, has been a long-serving member of this assembly. I believe she is the longest-serving female MPP that we have here, so I think it is only appropriate that she puts forward this historic and landmark legislation and a proclamation that will ensure and enshrine a Magna Carta Day.

We all know that the Magna Carta, the Great Charter, has worldwide significance. It is celebrated by most of the English-speaking world. It certainly is supported by many who support democracies.

The Magna Carta, as the other speakers have said, was originated to put limits on the king's powers, particularly as they pertained to spending and taxation. Although today we see it's a very different time than it was 800 years ago, we still place limits on our elected government. We make sure that those residents that we have across the province have a say in their democracy and the values that we debate here in the Ontario Legislature. We still debate taxation. In fact, the very foundation of the way we engage in bills here in this assembly is directly derived from that period in time.

In the short period that I do have to speak to this—only a few more minutes—I wanted to talk about a project that is being undertaken by two individuals, two journalists who are well known to this assembly: Brigitte Pellerin, who has, from time to time, written for the Ottawa Citizen, as well as her husband, John Robson, who is a contributor on the former Sun News and also on CFRA. They have crowd-sourced in order to put forward a documentary called Magna Carta—and its history here in Canada, talking about how it has shaped our democracy and its very foundations.

I'd like to read a little bit about that in the small time that I have here, Speaker, if you'll indulge me. They say on their website: "The documentary will explain the origins of our government: How control of the purse by the Commons, freedom of speech in Parliament, the specific, accessible legal remedies that protect ordinary people from arbitrary arrest and the seizure of their

property were all affirmed in Magna Carta, and preserved over succeeding centuries by men and women clear on their rights and brave in their defence."

A few weeks ago in this chamber we talked about a man named Ernest Côté. He was fundamental, I believe, in the shaping of our history after World War II, the Second World War. He fought at Vimy. Vimy Ridge is perhaps the greatest-known military success that we've ever had as Canadians, and we still celebrate that. Ernest Côté had been in charge of operations.

I spoke about it here in the assembly. You will recall that the Premier spoke, as well as the leader of the third party. We talked about the rights and freedoms that we have.

What was important: Not only did we talk about the rights and freedoms that they protected for us, we talked about the rights and freedoms that Ernest Côté and his generation were able to retain.

It's appropriate that my colleague from Oxford sits beside me at this moment while we talk about that part in our history and in world history. It is appropriate because when he was growing up in Holland he lost his rights, the rights that are enshrined in documents like the Great Charter, Magna Carta, the rights that are enshrined in our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They are the very freedoms that the colleague who sits beside me to my right lost when he was a child.

1530

So when we think that this is just a proclamation and another one of those fluff bills, I can say here today that that couldn't be any further from the truth. We're talking here today about proclaiming a day that is recognized worldwide, that celebrates 800 years of freedom and rights for people in democracies. I think it's important that we do that today. I commend the member from York-Simcoe, and I thank the Speaker for his indulgence.

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

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'm glad to speak to this bill today. I know my middle daughter would be delighted to see me speaking to this bill, because this was her area of specialty when she was in university. I'm sure, no doubt, that she will be reviewing this tape and I will get corrections immediately upon sitting down, but I will do my best. Michelle, if you're listening, I will do my best.

I just wanted to say that this is a bill that holds significance for our philosophy of law and the government which I'm proud to be part of. I wanted to thank the member from York-Simcoe for bringing this bill forward.

The British Empire lasted more than 300 years and spanned the globe. During this time, Magna Carta Libertatum was used to justify global ambition, and by indigenous people to demand liberty and justice. So I'm grateful for the opportunity it presents us to take a look at our modern government and its history, our style of government, and our relationships with constituents, the law and the crown.

As a matter for our Constitution in Canada, the remnants of Magna Carta have been replaced. What it

lent to our province is now well provisioned for by laws by Ontarians for Ontarians. It does not mean, however, that the evolution of modern democracy does not owe itself to the foundation laid by this seminal document, nor that its accession by King John of England in 1215 is any less significant.

Providing Ontarians with opportunities to commemorate and reflect on how we got to where we are today is vital to the future of our democracy. My hope would be that this act would provide such an occasion.

As I mentioned, I also believe that discussing this bill gives us an opportunity to look more closely at our modern government, how we elect it and maintain it, and how we view our relationship with the crown. As times change and systems of government evolve, and as other democracies evaluate the status of their constitutional monarchies, so too should Canada and Ontario. Nine provinces and three territories are federated under a common Constitution, with another province thoroughly involved as a nation within a nation, and the world looks to us as an example of success.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you all for your comments. I now return to the member for York–Simcoe: two minutes for your reply.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I want to thank the members for Newmarket–Aurora, Thornhill, Kingston and the Islands, Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, Willowdale, Timmins–James Bay and Nepean–Carleton.

In trying to bring together in a very brief moment the essence of today's debate, I think there are three things that I would like to leave viewers with.

The first is that it's clear, from the information that has been given to us today, that we have an obligation to continue to defend the principles of Magna Carta, because when you look at those principles, they are the foundations of what we have today with charters of rights and freedoms and various constitutions that have been named, fundamental justice things like habeas corpus and the role of the rule of law.

So today we want to be able to honour that origin in recognizing Magna Carta Day—defending the principles of Magna Carta and recognizing the value of the various pieces of legislation that owe their essence to Magna Carta.

The third thing is the importance of recognizing how important it is to pass on to future generations so that people have an understanding of the manner in which these things developed. The most important thing about their development is that it was peaceful. When you look at the revolutions that took place, particularly in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries, they demonstrated an inability to come to the same place as King John brought us 800 years ago.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will take the vote at the end of private members' business.

POST-STROKE RECOVERY SERVICES

Ms. Christine Elliott: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should take

immediate steps to find the necessary in-year savings to extend post-stroke recovery services to those aged 20 through 64 years of age, who, unless covered by private insurance, cannot receive, but still require, rehabilitation services, which, if provided, not only reduce reliance and dependency upon Ontario's health care system but help those patients recover more quickly and return to the workforce.

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

Ms. Christine Elliott: At the outside, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to apologize to you, my fellow members and those people listening: I've got more than a little bit of laryngitis today. So I do apologize, and I hope you'll bear with me.

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to rise today to speak to this very important issue, critical for so many individuals and families who, as we speak, are waiting for expanded post-stroke recovery services as soon as we're able to deliver them. I must say that I'm very pleased to be joined today by a resident of Durham region, Mr. Jim McEwen, who has been an advocate for post-stroke recovery services, and Mrs. Lorraine McEwen. Thank you so much for being here.

Since I was first elected as an MPP, I have maintained that good governance is defined by a government's ability to manage the public purse wisely, so that we can invest in programs and services that make a positive difference in the lives of all Ontarians. Good fiscal policy enables good social policy. Fair and equal access is at the core of what it means to be a Canadian. It's at the core of what it means to live in Ontario.

As critic for health care and long-term care for the Ontario PC Party, these are the principles for which I've long fought, and it's these principles that drove me today to introduce this motion, which would compel the government of Ontario to take immediate steps to find the in-year savings necessary to expand post-stroke recovery services to people between the ages of 20 and 64 who have suffered a stroke.

I have already introduced Mr. McEwen, but I'd like to say that Jim has been a dedicated community leader. He fights not only for his family, but for many thousands of families across the province of Ontario. It's through people like Mr. McEwen that we can better inform ourselves of this issue, to make good and effective public policy.

Mr. McEwen himself suffered a stroke in 2010. As he, or close to 90,000 other post-stroke patients in Ontario, can tell you, the recovery process following a stroke is challenging and can extend for many years. Currently, unless covered by private insurance, these post-stroke patients cannot receive the essential rehabilitation services needed for recovery. Post-stroke patients have found that once they are discharged from hospital, our publicly funded health care system provides only a fraction of the rehabilitation services they need. After that, Mr. Speaker, patients are simply on their own.

While there are many individual programs and institutions that provide exceptional post-stroke coverage, the coverage of these programs is inconsistent across the province. This has resulted in far too many patients facing financial hardship once they are required to pay for their substantial rehabilitation costs out of pocket.

To understand this process, it would be helpful to outline the nature of strokes and how they affect patients and their families. Most commonly, post-stroke patients will experience one or a combination of motor, sensory, cognitive or communication deficits. Patients will spend many hours relearning how to walk, how to speak or how to perform everyday tasks that most of us take for granted. Again, it is important to note that each patient's recovery path will be different, depending on the severity of their stroke and the post-stroke effects they experience. This perhaps explains the challenges we face when trying to build an integrated and effective stroke management system. The reality is that the one-size-fits-all approach certainly does not fit in this case. If we try to impose one, patients with complex health challenges will inevitably be left behind.

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Each day that the government continues to delay funding these services means that these survivors are kept waiting. The good news is that more and more research has found that frequent and consistent post-stroke community-based rehabilitation, like speech language pathology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, can significantly enhance the health and mobility of patients.

I encourage everyone here to review the Canadian Institute for Health Information report entitled *Pathways of Care for People with Stroke in Ontario* to better understand the complex nature of stroke management. In this report, the institute attempts to map the most common pathways through the health care apparatus that stroke patients experience. A brief examination of stroke patient flow will help to clearly articulate the gap in service that I hope to address with this motion.

Typically at the onset of a stroke, depending on the severity, a patient will arrive at a hospital through the emergency department, where they will receive an assessment, diagnosis and stroke management services. Acute in-patient management is generally necessary to get someone through the worst of the stroke and into stable condition. From there, a patient will be provided with in-patient rehabilitation services for varying lengths of time. After that, a patient can either be discharged either to a long-term-care facility, complex continuing care programs, palliative care or, in the case of 55% of stroke patients, be discharged home.

It is patients who are discharged home who face the least consistent, least integrated and least accessible rehabilitation services. The Ontario Stroke Network estimates that current out-patient rehabilitation resources are sufficient to meet the needs of only 50% of patients being discharged home from in-patient rehabilitation. This was certainly the case following Mr. McEwen's

stroke. After only 12 therapy treatments following his discharge from hospital, he more or less had to pay for the treatment he continues to need.

Physiotherapy is one of the most crucial treatments for post-stroke recovery. However, two years ago the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care reformed the funding formula for physiotherapy services. The updated criteria, because they're not specific to stroke recovery, mean that stroke patients from the ages of 20 to 64 have restricted access to rehabilitation services immediately upon discharge from hospital. Essentially, while the criteria may suit knee surgery recovery well, they do not reflect the long-term nature of stroke recovery.

Under this funding model, OHIP covers a maximum of \$318 for physiotherapy services for individuals between the ages of 19 and 65, provided they have experienced a health event that requires an overnight hospital stay. In many cases, hundreds of rehab sessions are needed for post-stroke recovery, yet publicly funded services are capped at a much lower level.

For example, consider the case of Julie, a 28-year-old stroke patient from Ottawa. Specialists told her that she would require hundreds of rehabilitation sessions to regain the use of her right side. This rehab included speech therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy. Julie received coverage for 20 sessions of each type of therapy. She has since had to postpone her wedding because she and her family have to pay thousands of dollars per month to ensure she has access to the treatment she needs.

It is time for us as legislators to recognize that stroke rehabilitation is long-term in nature and it is unacceptable to expect post-stroke patients to drain retirement savings or sell their homes just to get the care they need.

Another aspect of this issue that requires some attention is the role a patient's age plays in the pursuit of post-stroke rehabilitation. We all know that strokes do not discriminate on the basis of age. Strokes can afflict teenagers, young adults, middle-aged individuals and seniors, yet the current model for rehabilitation services, particularly physiotherapy, does not reflect this reality and disadvantages non-senior and non-youth stroke patients. All of Ontario's post-stroke patients deserve access to essential recovery programs and services.

The Ontario Stroke Network estimated in the report *The Impact of Moving to Stroke Rehabilitation Best Practices in Ontario* that a reinvestment of \$11 million per year into out-patient and community-based care could provide expanded care for 1,706 additional stroke patients annually. This is a fair price to pay to ensure that all post-stroke patients in Ontario have access to the care they deserve.

I'd also like to note that this is even more than an issue of fairness for post-stroke patients in Ontario. Expanding post-stroke recovery services will lessen the burden on our health care system, which is under increasing pressure—pressure that will only escalate as our population ages.

It will also help our economy. In Canada, strokes cost the economy \$3.6 billion per year. Expanding these

services will help post-stroke patients recover faster so they can return to the workplace sooner. Businesses succeed when their employees are healthy and productive. If a patient recovers well enough, they can return to work. Otherwise, they'll continue to be out of work, and that puts additional strain on our economy.

I, for one, find it shameful that some people's experience with our health care system has left such a bad impression that they can't but feel that the system has forgotten about them once they leave the hospital. This is particularly troubling at a time when the government is trying, supposedly, to integrate more home and community-based care into the system. We need to do better, and I believe we can do better.

This motion is a common-sense solution to a growing problem. It will help expand and improve care. It will help contain costs. I'm glad to deliver this critical message to the government, a message that is both supported enthusiastically by the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Durham region Stroke Recovery Group. I urge all members to join with us to support this motion.

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

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm glad to have the opportunity to speak to this motion and I want to thank the member from Whitby-Oshawa for bringing it forward: so good job.

Sometimes patients who experience a stroke can have a full recovery or go on to live their life to its full capacity, but there are many who experience the serious, debilitating effects of a stroke.

Yes, we can do things in our lives that will reduce the risk of stroke, such as healthy eating and being physically active. The Heart and Stroke Foundation offers a useful risk assessment tool on their website that helps us review our lifestyle, assesses our risks and how we might reduce them. But there are no guarantees, especially as some causes are inherited.

According to the Ministry of Health, over 90,000 Ontarians live with the effects of a stroke. In fact, stroke is the leading cause of adult disability in Canada. The effects of a stroke can vary considerably, and the intent of this motion is to address those effects through rehabilitation services so that people can live as independently in life as possible after the fact.

Rehabilitation cannot reverse brain damage, but it can help relearn skills that were lost or learn new skills that can help accommodate for some lost abilities. With access to rehabilitation, patients can make remarkable recoveries, but unfortunately, outpatient post-stroke rehabilitation is not publicly funded. Yes, a small number of sessions are covered, but once they have been used, patients have to pay the costs themselves.

The Toronto Star reported in 2013 that some patients were paying more than \$1,000 a week for private therapy. Families are draining their retirement savings for these essential services. Others are simply doing without.

Let me take a few minutes to talk about a couple of the possible effects from a stroke. After a stroke, some

people might lose the use of one side of their body. They might lose the ability to use a hand, an arm or a leg. Perhaps the muscles in the face aren't working properly, causing speech to be slurred. It can mean losing sight in one eye or one side of both eyes, causing peripheral vision to be lost.

1550

If we are healthy, with full use of the various parts of our body, we tend to take it for granted in things that we do every day. If we lose the use of one hand, for example, life becomes a lot different. I can challenge anyone to stick one hand in their pocket just for a day to see how much longer and how much more difficult it is to button a shirt, type a memo or just peel a potato.

Consider for a minute the effect of losing peripheral vision to one side. Let us imagine a person who, when looking straight ahead, cannot see anything that is more than about five degrees off to one side, even though both eyes are wide open and looking straight ahead.

In the case of a person losing the use of a hand, others would likely notice pretty quickly and would probably take note and put it into consideration when interacting with that person. In the case of the person who lacks peripheral vision, however, it's not apparent to others, so they don't know how to compensate for it. Much of our communication is non-verbal—more than you might think. We show things to people. We point to something. We smile. We frown. We nod our head in agreement. We cringe in disgust. And we assume that if we are standing close to a person within what is a normal field of vision, we are understanding and interpreting those visual cues.

Non-response, or what we perceive to be an inappropriate response, would give us a completely different view of that person than the reality—their thoughts, their opinions or their personality. Imagine what it is like to go through life being misunderstood, false assumptions being made about you each and every day, and you have no idea that it's happening.

These are just a couple of examples, but generally, stroke can cause five types of disabilities: paralysis or problems controlling movement; sensory disturbances, including pain; problems using or understanding language; problems with thinking and memory; and emotional disturbances.

Rehabilitation can start within 24 to 48 hours of a stroke and sometimes it can be a lifelong process, yet there is precious little funding to cover it.

Just last year the Ontario Stroke Evaluation Report by Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences said that there is an ongoing need for rehab system change such as access to hospital-based outpatient rehabilitation services in addition to CCAC.

And: "More work is needed to transition patients from the acute care setting into the appropriate rehabilitation setting.... As in previous years, deficiencies in community-based rehabilitation and care remain...."

They also reported that stroke rehabilitation varied widely across the LHINs. A statement justifies the Auditor General's remark. The previous year he said:

“There is a need for a provincially coordinated rehabilitation system.”

And things are getting worse. Constituents have contacted my office because of outpatient therapy being cut at St. Peter's Hospital. They are told that they need to get therapy in the community, but often it simply doesn't exist, even if they did have the money to pay for it. That's the state of our health care in Ontario today: More and more hospital services are being cut.

Post-stroke recovery care should be universally accessible to all Ontarians who need it and they shouldn't have to rely on private insurance, personal savings or selling their home to pay for it.

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

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm pleased to stand here today to speak to this motion. I would like to thank the member from Whitby–Oshawa for bringing forward this very important discussion to the House and for facilitating this conversation, and congratulate her on her work as critic for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Our government is fully committed to health care in the province of Ontario. We are dedicated to putting patients first and improving the quality of care for every Ontarian all across the province. This is reflected in every decision that we make. This is further exemplified in the next phase of our plan Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care, which we introduced in February of this year and which clearly states our commitment to responsible, efficient health care.

I know about this commitment to health care first-hand, as just this week it was announced that Joseph Brant Hospital, in my riding of Burlington, will be expanding with a virtually brand new hospital built by 2018, including the refurbishment of existing facilities now undergoing renovations.

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and I were on hand on Monday for the ground-breaking of this state-of-the-art facility, one which will lead to a higher quality of patient care in Burlington.

It is investments like this one that prove that our government is making important investments in health care right across our province.

Stroke rehabilitation services and care are as important to our government as all other health care services, and, as such, we are committed to ensuring equitable access for all Ontarians. In fact, as the minister outlined in the House earlier today during question period, in response to the honourable member across, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is seized with this issue and is ensuring that patients are able to access services within their own communities.

Physiotherapy initiatives are going forward which will go a long way to reaching this goal. In fact, with the changes our government is introducing, the number of publicly funded physiotherapy clinics will double. This will provide access to care for more than 200,000 additional seniors, including high-quality physiotherapy,

exercise and fall-prevention classes. Of course, this is of critical importance in my riding of Burlington, where I hear support for our work in this regard, and because almost one in five residents in my riding is a senior.

CCACs are also helping to address the problem. As you know, health care in Ontario is about a patient-centred focus. CCACs are helping to ensure that patients are able to stay in their homes during their recovery periods, reducing the toll on hospitals and saving taxpayers' dollars simultaneously.

More than 60,000 additional seniors and community clients have access to in-home physiotherapy services, thanks to CCACs, and 60,000 more Ontarians will have access by the end of 2015. There will be no limits set on the number of physiotherapy sessions available to patients, and they will continue to receive as many sessions as determined by their provider.

As I pointed out earlier—and I think it is important to address and say—any change and increase in services also comes with a change or increase in associated costs. As with any such increase in cost, the funding for these initiatives has to come from somewhere. I look forward to hearing more about suggestions and solutions from the member opposite as how to do so. Revenue needs to be generated in order to pay for services, and I would therefore make the observation that cutting \$1 billion through corporate tax cuts does just the opposite.

As always, governing requires difficult choices. The unfortunate truth is that you cannot have it both ways. One cannot promise to cut billions in health care funding and government revenue while also seeking to increase spending in the same area. This motion asks for an increase in health care spending while offering very little in terms of corresponding specifics as to how it will be funded.

While I support this motion, I would respectfully suggest that the practicalities of it need to be addressed. I would ask all members in the House, as I mentioned earlier, to join my support for this motion—but again, the practicalities, Speaker. You need to fill in the blanks a little bit here.

I would like to thank the member from Whitby–Oshawa for raising this issue here in the House, for having the conversation, because it's an important one. I look forward to the opportunity for further debate and discussion.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I want to welcome Mr. McEwen and Mrs. McEwen to hear us debate this important motion, this private member's bill.

We have all witnessed in our communities, possibly even in our families, the struggle that people go through when they've had a stroke. We all understand that when there is rehabilitation that is so likely to help people, we must, as a community, find a way to fund it.

We're seeing a province that's in debt. We're seeing a province that has wasted billions of dollars on moving gas plants, on eHealth. I don't have to go on and on with

all the wasted revenue. We're seeing a province that is investing \$2 billion in the Pan Am Games, yet we're also seeing a province that is promising to build hospitals at the same time, with no revenue to fund these hospitals, and cutting services from existing hospitals and existing avenues of patient care.

The member from Burlington just said that revenue has to be generated. I question that, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that brought in the health premium. Our residents are paying very high tax in Ontario. We don't need a government that looks for more revenue tools. We need a government that prioritizes its spending on what the citizens of the province want to see their hard-earned tax dollars go to.

As an optometrist, I had many patients who were stroke patients and had lost peripheral vision. They were unable to drive, even after they were rehabilitated and they were doing very well. If you'd met them and spoke to them and walked with them, you wouldn't have thought they had had a stroke. The fact is that they weren't able to drive, and oftentimes, that made work very difficult and family life very difficult.

1600

Just today, we spoke about eating healthy, about stopping smoking, about e-cigarettes. All of these contribute to stroke. It's important that we recognize what we can do, as legislators, not just to help people once they've had a stroke, but to diminish the likelihood of strokes.

We recall, when women were on very high doses of birth control pills, it was found that they were at a much greater risk of stroke—to the point where they were told not to take birth control pills, decades ago—if they were smokers.

We heard today about autism in the community, and what the community can do to help families who are experiencing the difficulties of having a family member with autism.

Two years ago, the government changed the funding criteria, and now we're seeing that people between the ages of 20 and 64 are not receiving the same coverage for stroke rehabilitation that people younger than 20 or older than 64 are receiving. That's discriminatory, Mr. Speaker. Why is this government assuming that, somehow, people between the ages of 20 and 64 have the funding to pay for it? Why is this government assuming that people somehow should know, before they turn 20, that maybe they should take out private health insurance? Why isn't this government having a public awareness campaign to tell people, "You know what? We're not going to fund you, so maybe take out private health insurance." Maybe those people shouldn't be paying the health premium. That money instead should go for private health coverage.

Why? Because they're playing this game that I could call misleading, or I'll even go so far as to say dishonest, which is, "We're providing full health coverage. You don't have to worry." But the fact is, they're not providing full health coverage, and that's really what the debate comes down to—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member to withdraw.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Withdrawn, Mr. Speaker, but we all know it's the truth—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the member to just withdraw and continue the debate on the bill.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Withdrawn.

I would like to see the government focus on the priorities. People are paying their tax dollars, and they're paying such high taxes that they don't believe they also have to, on top of that, take out private health insurance. But I think many stroke patients between the ages of 20 and 64, if you ask them—and I hope that members of the media will ask them—"What would you have done differently?", that's what they're going to say they would have done differently. They would have taken out better, private health insurance, because now they find themselves at their wits' end.

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

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's an honour to speak to this motion on behalf of New Democrats, and we're pleased to support it.

Speaker, there are 15,000 people hospitalized each year because of strokes. The need for stroke rehab, as we've heard from the various people speaking to this, is needed today, not years from now.

There have been reports done, and clearly, without access to rehab, mildly disabled stroke patients will continue to be a major source of acute-care/alternate-level-of-care days and long-term-care admissions.

I heard, from the member from Burlington here, actually speaking to the official opposition, saying, "Well, you can't have it both ways. You need to come up with some ideas. How are we going to fund this?" I say: That's the government's job, Speaker. It's up to the government to find ways to pay for these very needed services for a large segment of our population.

The Liberals talk a good game about aging-at-home strategies. At the same time, they're not making any investments in long-term-care beds, with thousands across the province waiting to go into a long-term-care bed. There are long wait-lists in the community care sector. In my own riding alone, a couple of years ago, there were as many as 500 people on the wait-list for personal support work. They're not making any investments in outpatient treatment that is affordable to many of the people who suffer from strokes. But at the same time they're fast and furiously cutting acute care beds across this province, including in the riding of Niagara, where they propose to close five hospitals over the next few years, at least two of those hospitals with these beds that people with strokes are staying in while they're waiting to receive some kind of treatment.

At the same time, the government has wasted billions of dollars on Ornge, on cancelling gas plants, on P3s—all dollars that actually could have been used to provide this much-needed service.

In 2007, in my riding of Niagara, the Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre sent a proposal to the government asking to build a new space to house an additional 64 rehab restorative beds. The proposal spoke to an expansion and distribution of in-patient rehab beds as a means of providing capacity, configuration and programming to improve access of patient care, facilitate service integration and promote system performance across Niagara for these people who have had strokes who are in need of rehabilitation.

That was in 2007. In 2014, they sent the letters off again to the minister at the time, the Honourable Deb Matthews, to the Honourable Jim Bradley and to Donna Cripps, who is the CEO of the LHIN. They got a response on February 5, 2014, from Jim Bradley, the minister without portfolio: "While I'm very much aware that the number of requests received by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for capital projects of this kind is extensive, and the budgetary circumstances facing the provincial government will not permit the approval of all of these projects, I will continue to advocate" on your behalf "for this special project."

Well, they've been waiting—I guess that's eight years. They've raised a significant amount of money—I think \$10 million or \$11 million—for this cause. These beds are greatly needed in Niagara. In fact, I believe that the Niagara region has the fourth-largest seniors population in Canada—not in Ontario, but countrywide. The stats show that residents in the region display a higher average prevalence of chronic conditions requiring rehab services. Many of them have multiple complex health issues which require a longer period of time to address and resolve.

The Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre in my riding is a facility that specializes and excels in the provision of complex care, geriatrics, out-patient, in-patient and restorative services. What they've told me today was that unless they get approval for this 64-bed project that they've been asking for for eight years, they will not be able to provide any expanded post-stroke services in the Niagara region. Clearly, our acute care hospitals are not doing that either.

I'm thankful to have the opportunity. I'm thankful that this important motion has been brought forward today by the member from—

Ms. Christine Elliott: Whitby–Oshawa.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Whitby–Oshawa.

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

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I would like to thank the member from Whitby–Oshawa for introducing this important motion and for allowing me to speak to the Legislature on health care in our province. It's particularly important to me to be speaking on this as the parliamentary assistant to health and long-term care. I also want to make sure that I do welcome Mr. McEwen here today to the House. I want you to know that we are listening to what you have to say.

There's no question that post-stroke recovery services are vital for patients, and equity when it comes to those

services is extremely important. That's why I am proud to be supporting this motion.

However, I do want to point out a few things. I am proud of the health care system that we have built in this province. We understand that there is more work to do. However, the government of Ontario continues to be working hard to make improvement to the system to ensure that the quality of care remains high and that patients remain at the centre of every health care decision.

In fact, I recently visited two hospitals serving the residents in my riding.

1610

As the member from Burlington mentioned, I was there at the ground-breaking for the Joe Brant hospital. I was also recently touring the hospital in Oakville, the Oakville-Trafalgar hospital, which will be opening within the year and is a state-of-the-art facility.

As I'm sure the member opposite knows, in February 2015, Minister Hoskins introduced our Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care. That plan is a commitment to transform our health care system. I think this is one of the most important initiatives under way right now in our province. This plan signifies a vital shift of focus in the health care system. We are moving away from a health care provider-focused system to a more patient-centred system. This is a response to the changing health care needs of the people in this province, and it's something that ensures we will be delivering better, more focused and more efficient care.

What this all means is that the member opposite, in my opinion, is late to this issue. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is already moving forward with the work necessary to ensure that all patients get access to stroke rehabilitation services in their own communities. So we have to ask ourselves: Why does the member from Whitby–Oshawa want to focus on this now? We're already working on delivering quality care. We're already working on improving the quality care that we're delivering, and I have to ask about the timing.

For example, in my riding of Halton there are several local community services, like Milton Stroke, Oakville Stokers and the Halton Stroke Fellowship, which provide social, physical and emotional services to individuals who have suffered a stroke and offer supports for their family members and care partners. There are also other supports through local hospitals.

Our government is committed and has been committed for some time to improving equitable access to high-quality stroke rehab care across the province. The previous government, however, was tearing down hospitals, firing nurses and doctors, forcing ERs to lock their doors and leaving one million people without a doctor. Think about that: The previous government cut funding to vital services, starved health care budgets and left our system teetering on the edge of ruin. In fact, my own daughter wasn't born in our local hospital in our riding. I actually had to go to another hospital outside of my riding in order to deliver her.

It looks like the opposition party would like to return to those dark days. In fact, the member from Whitby–

Oshawa stood on the front lawn of Queen's Park recently promising to cut billions in funding. The member opposite told reporters that her leadership platform included reducing government revenues by \$1 billion by cutting corporate taxes and saying, "I will lower Ontario's business tax rate to 10% lower over three years."

Mr. Speaker, I ask this House, how can the member opposite have it both ways? The member cannot ask for increased spending in our health care system and promote ways to reduce the province's revenues. Increased programs and services cost money, and that of course will often mean higher taxes. The member from Whitby-Oshawa plans to lower the tax rate while balancing the budget in an unbalanced, unfair way which would put our health care system at risk. Quality health care costs money.

I want to make sure that I am saying quite clearly that while we do support this motion, I do have concerns about how the member opposite plans on paying for it, and I do want to point out to the members here that we are on track and we do have a plan to transform the system and make sure that we are paying for the services that we want to increase. The member from Whitby-Oshawa's plan just doesn't add up.

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It is a pleasure to rise in support of the member from Whitby-Oshawa, and certainly for her constituent Mr. McEwen, for better health care in the province of Ontario. I heard the members from the government tell a tale today about how we don't have enough money to provide quality health care in the province of Ontario. That is a shame because their number one duty and obligation should be to provide positive health care coverage in this province.

Their second obligation should be to ensure we have quality education in this province. In order to do that, this government should understand that the best way for us to provide Ontarians with good health is to ensure that our province has good fiscal health.

Just two days ago, this government announced that instead of reducing their deficit to \$10.5 billion, it grew by almost half a billion dollars to \$10.9 billion. I'm going to tell you what the implications are for what the government has done, Speaker.

I'm sure you'll be interested to know that the third-largest spending priority of this Liberal government, outside of health care and education, Mr. McEwen, is servicing the debt and the deficit. So when the members opposite, over there, speak to you and say there is no money to provide health care for you—they like this as a noble idea—what they're really trying to say is that that dollar they are taking away from your health care to fund the debt and the deficit is more important to them because they want to continue to spend on other things.

In fact, what this government wants to do—

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Point of order.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It is the tradition, convention and rules of this place that we address the Speaker and not talk directly to people in the gallery.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Speaker, I'd also like to speak to the people at home—the audience—and those in the gallery, because I believe that is who sent me to Queen's Park and that is whom I am accountable to.

If the Liberal government is too ashamed to speak directly to the people of this province because of their rapidly increasing debt and deficit and their inability to properly fund health care in the province, that's their problem. It's not the member for Whitby-Oshawa's problem, it's not my problem and it certainly should never be Mr. McEwen's problem.

I'll tell you another thing, Speaker, when I hear the members opposite talk about priorities: If this isn't a priority, I don't know what is.

Let's talk about the sunshine list. It was released a week ago yesterday.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'd ask the member to stick to the bill.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I am, Speaker, because we're talking about health care funding. I'll tell you directly what I said to CUPE just last week. For the first time in Ontario's history, over 100,000 people are making over \$100,000 on the public payroll. It has grown by 14%—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would say to the member: I'd like you to speak to the motion that's in front of us.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'll speak to health care and how this is impacted, if you'll allow me, Speaker.

Here is the direct challenge: The more people who are making more money on that list during a wage freeze or a wage envelope freeze means there will be cuts in services. So as we're talking here today about trying to fund another part of our health care continuum, this is a Liberal government that not only has not contributed to this; they have fired nurses at CHEO—

Mr. Bob Delaney: Point of order.

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

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, I have great respect for the ability of my colleague opposite, but standing order 23(b)(i) mandates her to speak to the motion, not to something that the motion affects.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you for that point of order. I have spoken to the member, and I believe she's back on track.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I think I have always been on track when I talk about necessary in-year savings in order to provide Mr. McEwen with the health care he deserves and the health care that the member from Whitby-Oshawa is fighting for. That said, this is a Liberal government that doesn't like to hear that they're failing the people of this province with respect to health care.

But don't worry. My voice will continue to speak loudly, strongly and proudly in opposition to this government. The louder they speak and the more they try to shut us down, I'm going to stand here and remind them of

their failings. I'll remind them of how they're not delivering on their promise and their commitment to the people of this province, and I'll remind them—I will remind them each and every day—of how they are failing Mr. McEwen, and how they have consistently failed Mr. McEwen.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, come to order.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I will continue to listen to the insults of the members opposite. When the member in the back row there someday advances to the front row before the age of 40, just like I did, I'll encourage him to have as much fun as I am here today.

But I'm going to cede my time to the member for Dufferin-Caledon, who will speak directly of her experience of her mother having a stroke. I think that's important, ladies and gentlemen of this chamber and people watching at home, because this is actually impacting real people; not just Mr. McEwen, but many others. When this government doesn't take its fiscal health seriously, they don't take seriously the health of the people of Ontario.

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

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to speak on the motion from the member from Whitby-Oshawa. Let me begin by thanking the member opposite for bringing the motion in, because this particular issue is very dear to my heart as a former registered nurse, but also as someone who taught rehabilitation nursing for a number of years. So I totally understand what the member opposite is trying to do in terms of improving health care across the system.

1620

In my very short period of time, I want to remind the audience watching and also here in the chamber of what the government has been doing in the area of awareness and prevention, because at the end of the day, the focus is not just on after you have a stroke; the focus is always finding out how to prevent the stroke—like Bill 45, which we just passed this afternoon, making that particular bill go to committee. The government has been doing a lot of work on stroke prevention. Advertisement of the awareness campaign in the community since last year, a four-month campaign targeting awareness and the whole issue of early intervention in stroke prevention is a good thing to do. Yes, more needs to be done.

The other piece is that I just want to remind the member opposite as well as those watching that last year, we also put additional funding on select stroke services funded through quality-based procedures. We're updating the stroke clinical handbook. More importantly, we have recently announced the expansion of physiotherapy.

The conversation is on the shifting of the health care dollars. I know the member from Welland keeps talking about cuts in the hospitals. Let's all remember there's evidence-based demonstrations that funding through the

community is the right thing to do. Anybody who says more money must be in the acute care setting—it's the wrong message. There's enough evidence that health care must be delivered closest to the patient in the community. There's evidence that talks about that. There's evidence that shows that we have expanded physiotherapy across the province through community services.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm not a health care practitioner. I'm not a doctor. I've never worked in the health care industry. But as my colleague said, my mom had a stroke, and I was a family advocate, as we all are when our family members or friends go through those health care challenges. I understand that rehab is absolutely critical.

This resolution is a resolution about fairness. What we offer to people who have a stroke under the age of 20 and what we offer the people who have a stroke over the age of 64 is not the same as what is available to people who are 20 to 64. That, to me, is ultimately about fairness.

I'll pick on my mother because she's not here, and I'm pretty sure I'm okay—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Never pick on your mother. She'll pick back at you.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Mum was a fairly stubborn—I'm sorry; I mean determined—woman. After her stroke, we had a lot of conversations with the health care advisers, who said, "Rehab will bring her back with the quality of life that she wants, that she expects." That determination and the rehab meant that she was able to be part of our family, part of our relationships for a lot more years to come.

Women of a certain age have beautiful cursive writing. I don't know if you've ever seen it, but they were taught beautiful cursive writing in school. I couldn't tell the difference between my mom's and all of her sisters' because they all had this beautiful cursive writing. You know what? After rehab, she got that back. That meant so much to her and so much to us as family.

I understand how rehab is so important and why this resolution talks to that fairness. Speaker, my time is up, so thank you.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I would like you to humour me on a point of order recognizing that we have some of the Vanthof children here with their dad, John Vanthof.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): That's not a point of order, but we welcome them here.

I now recognize the member for Whitby-Oshawa. You have two minutes for a reply.

Ms. Christine Elliott: This has been a really interesting conversation this afternoon. I really do appreciate all of the members who spoke in favour of this motion. The members from the third party: Thank you very much. The members from the Liberal Party: Even though it was pretty backhanded and reluctant, thank you for the support on this.

I would really like to thank Jim McEwen for being here today, for all of the work that he's doing on behalf of the Durham Region Stroke Recovery Group and for his provincial advocacy. I'd also like to thank Lorraine McEwen, his wife, for all the work that she has done to help him in his efforts to achieve full rehabilitation. You're both wonderful. Thank you so much for being here today.

Mr. Speaker, I would just submit to you that this is a win-win proposition for the people of Ontario. It's important that we make sure that we expand post-stroke rehabilitation services so that people can live happy and productive lives. It's good for them and it's good for their families, but it's also good for the province of Ontario. It helps boost our economy and helps people get back into the workforce.

The member from Burlington suggested that I should come up with some ideas about how we can find those in-house savings. Well, I'm happy to oblige. Let's start by not spending a billion dollars of taxpayers' money on cancelled gas plants to make sure that a few Liberal members could get elected. Let's not spend hundreds of millions of dollars on consultants to create a situation where we can build electronic medical records that may never happen. And let's not spend money on building Ornge air ambulances that cannot safely transport passengers. Let's stop doing that, and I'm pretty sure we're going to be able to find the savings that we need to be able to provide these vital services to the people of Ontario.

I really hope that what we will be able to do is to concentrate on spending money on things like making sure we have the nurses we need in our hospitals, making sure that people have diagnostic test strips like diabetes test strips, and making sure that people have access to essential post-stroke rehabilitation services.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The time for private members' business has expired.

AFFIRMING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'AFFIRMATION DE L'ORIENTATION SEXUELLE ET DE L'IDENTITÉ SEXUELLE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will deal first with ballot item number 40, standing in the name of Ms. DiNovo.

Ms. DiNovo has moved second reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change or direct sexual orientation or gender identity. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll take the vote at the end of private members' business.

MAGNA CARTA DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR DE LA GRANDE CHARTE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mrs. Munro has moved second reading of Bill 23, An Act to proclaim Magna Carta Day. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is being referred to—Mrs. Munro?

Mrs. Julia Munro: The Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has requested that it be referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills. Agreed? So ordered.

POST-STROKE RECOVERY SERVICES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Elliott has moved private member's notice of motion number 43. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

AFFIRMING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'AFFIRMATION DE L'ORIENTATION SEXUELLE ET DE L'IDENTITÉ SEXUELLE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Call in the members. It'll be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1629 to 1634.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Would members please return to their seats?

Ms. DiNovo has moved second reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, regarding efforts to change or direct sexual orientation or gender identity. All those in favour please rise and remain standing.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Forster, Cindy	McMahon, Eleanor
Anderson, Granville	French, Jennifer K.	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul
Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Hatfield, Percy	Munro, Julia
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Horwath, Andrea	Naidoo-Harris, Indra
Bisson, Gilles	Hoskins, Eric	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Coteau, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Sandals, Liz
Damerla, Dipika	Jones, Sylvia	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	MacCharles, Tracy	Vanhof, John
Dickson, Joe	MacLeod, Lisa	Wong, Soo
DiNovo, Cheri	Malhi, Harinder	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	Martins, Cristina	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Martow, Gila	
Elliott, Christine	McGarry, Kathryn	

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 52; the nays are 0.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is being referred to the committee—Ms. DiNovo?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: To the justice policy committee.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has requested that it be referred to the justice policy committee. Agreed? Agreed. So ordered.

Orders of the day. The deputy government House leader.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Reluctant as I am to do so, and much as I'd like to see us debate bills until 6 o'clock, I move adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The deputy House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Agreed?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I want to wish everyone a happy Easter. This House stands adjourned until Monday, April 13, at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1637.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
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
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
		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
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	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	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
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

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonnell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
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 permanent de l'Assemblée législative

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 des comptes publics

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Randy Hillier
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
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Hon. Michael Coteau	3330

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