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**Official Report
of Debates
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Monday 13 April 2015

Lundi 13 avril 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

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Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 13 April 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 13 avril 2015

The House met at 1030.

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

Prayers.

WEARING OF PINS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order from the member from Kitchener–Conestoga.

Mr. Michael Harris: Speaker, I'd ask for unanimous consent for members to wear the Vimy pin, recognizing the 98th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, April 9, 1917. Pins have been distributed this morning.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Kitchener–Conestoga is seeking unanimous consent to wear the distributed badges. Do we agree? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jim Wilson: I would ask all members to welcome Mrs. Brigitte McCague and several members of the McCague family; they're here this morning for George McCague's eulogy. Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introductions? The member from Haliburton—the member from—

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Northumberland–Quinte West.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): —Northumberland–Quinte West; sorry, I've been off too long.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Kim Rudd, the Liberal candidate for our next federal election from Northumberland–Peterborough South. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm pleased to stand and recognize in our public gallery today members of the Society of Energy Professionals who are holding a lobby day today. They're led by president Scott Travers and have members from across the province who help power Ontario. With over 8,000 members who work to generate, transmit, distribute and regulate the power that the province's people and businesses rely on, they are a key part of our energy sector.

I just want to remind members that the Society will be hosting a reception tonight beginning at 5 p.m. in the legislative dining room.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I'm pleased to welcome the grade 10 class from Francis Libermann Catholic secondary school in the great riding of Scarborough–Rouge River. They're accompanied today by their teachers, Mr. Ebreo and Mr. Ruggiero. They're here to observe the

Legislature as part of their civics program. They're in the west gallery, and I'd like to welcome them.

Mr. Bill Walker: It's my pleasure to introduce legislative page Cailyn Perry from Macphail Memorial Elementary School in the great riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I'd like to introduce a new page to everyone this morning. We have, from my riding of Davenport, Misha Davies Gedalof, from Winona Drive Senior Public School. Welcome, Misha.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: It gives me great pleasure to welcome the family of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex page Colton Tompkins to Queen's Park today: mother, Tanya Tompkins; father, Fred; and sister, Tatiana. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I have four members here from the Society of Energy Professionals from the great riding of Pickering–Scarborough East: Rob Berthelot, Tracy Miller, Vicki Power, Dave Romanowicz and Mary Byberg. Welcome to Queen's Park, and enjoy your day here.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'd like to welcome two guests to the gallery today: Donna Daffern and Martin Sarkisian.

Mr. Joe Dickson: On behalf of MPP Amrit Mangat, from Mississauga–Brampton South, I would like to welcome Cindy Atkinson, mother of page Thomas Atkinson. She is in the public gallery this morning.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'd like to welcome today a resident from my riding, Rick Marvell, who is in with his grandson Corey. Rick is an ex-VP at Zellers, and Corey is attending Ryerson University.

Rick had another accomplishment a few weeks ago, where he actually won a championship in Florida for a free-throw contest.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd like to welcome our new page, Ashton Corr, and I'd also like to welcome his mother, who is here today as well. I'm just trying to find out where she is. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: On behalf of MPP Chris Ballard from Newmarket–Aurora, I'd like to welcome the page captain today, Joshua Osborne; his mother, Jennifer Osborne, and his father, Raymond Osborne, who was a page in 1957. They are in the public gallery this morning.

Mr. Todd Smith: I'd like to welcome Daniel Gibson and Andrew Stock, both from the Ontario Society of Energy Professionals, who are with us this morning for question period.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce you to a new page, Ethan McCready-Branch, who is right here in front of the energy minister. I want to mention that Ethan is celebrating his 14th birthday today, so happy birthday, Ethan.

His father, Greg Branch, is here in the public gallery. Welcome.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm pleased to welcome Kylee Mazerolle, who is here from Hillsburgh today. She is receiving an Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers in the Lieutenant Governor's suite right now.

Mr. Han Dong: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be back. I would like to welcome one of my constituents. We have Shoshanna Saxe here today. She is a talented civil engineer who is currently finishing her PhD at the Cambridge University Centre for Sustainable Development. Welcome, Shoshanna.

Mr. John Yakubuski: I'd like to welcome—he's not a first-time visitor—a constituent of mine from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, in the west members' gallery today: Trevor Dick. It's great to have him here.

GEORGE MCCAGUE

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order from the deputy House leader.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to pay tribute to George McCague, a former member of this Legislature from the then riding of Dufferin-Simcoe, from 1978 to 1987, and the riding of Simcoe West, from 1987 to 1990, with a representative from each caucus speaking up to five minutes in tribute.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent to pay tribute to a deceased member. Do we agree? Agreed.

It is now time for those tributes.

Mr. John Vanthof: It is an honour to be able to take part in this tribute to George McCague, on behalf of the Ontario New Democrats.

"I think I can say without fear of contradiction from any side of the House that George McCague leaves with the respect of all members of the House from all parties. He is a man who has done his job and done it well. He is a man who has earned our respect." These words were spoken 15 years ago by a member when George announced his retirement from the Legislature, and I think they're very true.

1040

I never had the privilege of meeting Mr. McCague, but on doing the research for this tribute I learned that there were many aspects of his life that I could relate to. George McCague grew up on a dairy farm, and not just any dairy farm. He grew up on Glenafton Holsteins. His father, J.J. McCague, founded one of the most prominent herds not only in Ontario but in Canada. It's internationally known. Even years later, dairy farmers, like I used to be, when we see the name Glenafton in the history of a cow family, we take notice.

George graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College and worked on the family farm. He also had a keen personal understanding of the dangers of farming because he fell from a hay mound and broke his back, and he was in a body cast for six months. I think that's also a testament.

In a newspaper article, George related how he enjoyed field work and fondly remembered driving the first Cockshutt tractor that came to replace the horses on the farm. That brought a smile to my face. Although I never worked with horses, I fondly remember the day our Massey-Harris 44 with a trip plow was replaced with a 414 that had a three-point hitch. It was a great day. Progress is kind of a rite of passage on a farm. I think that impacts your whole life, and I think it impacted George's whole life, to our betterment.

George built up a real estate business in Alliston and later returned to active agricultural work with the purchase of a sod farm.

At first glance, it may not seem that farmers and politicians have much in common, but a closer look reveals some striking similarities. In both cases, it's not just a job, it's a calling. The hours can be long and the success of your harvest often depends on forces beyond your control, and in both, countless hours are spent tending crops in what others feel could just be a barren field. People outside farming, outside public service, in many cases, don't have a clue of what people actually do.

Citing his father's inspiration for public life, George's public service career began as an Alliston councillor in 1960 with stints as reeve, warden and mayor before taking his seat as MPP for Dufferin-Simcoe in 1975. He served five terms before his resignation in 1990, after which his career went full circle as he finished his service in electoral politics as the first mayor of the town of New Tecumseth.

Today, we welcome a number of George's family and friends who have made the trip for this tribute. Those of us who have been blessed with the privilege of serving our communities know that it is often the sacrifices of loved ones that make our work here possible. As we acknowledge George's service to the people of our great province, we also take this opportunity to thank you for the role you have played in establishing his legacy.

I would like to close with an excerpt from Hansard from the Standing Committee on Social Development on October 28, 1991, after Mr. McCague's retirement. The Chair had called the meeting to order with the following:

"I will follow the McCague rule. Apparently former member George McCague, at the appointed hour for starting many meetings, used to look around the room, and even if there was no one there used to say, 'I see a quorum,' and begin the meeting."

Being a man of faith, I am sure he knew the verse, "There is a time to sow and a time to reap," but coming from a farm I am sure he knew that you have to make hay when the sun shines and the rain waits for no man. For that, we are very thankful for his contribution. It's been a

privilege to take part on behalf of Ontario New Democrats in a tribute to Mr. George McCague.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I'm honoured today to rise to recognize the contributions made by a former member of this House, someone who truly dedicated his life to his community and to giving back through public service. I'm pleased to rise today to pay tribute to George McCague.

In preparing for this, I reached out to many of George's friends and former colleagues. During my conversations, one thing became clear: George was deeply loved and admired by his friends and his family. He was a pragmatic person and someone who knew his strengths and helped others realize theirs.

One of those close friends I spoke to was Dan Needles. Dan worked for George as his executive assistant for five years until 1981. During our conversation, Dan described George as a man of few words, who thought extremely carefully before saying anything. When solving issues, George would listen to all sides and synthesize complex issues to their simplest elements. That was his gift, bringing people together through consensus and solving those difficult problems.

George was born in Essa township, not far from my home in Barrie. Even from a young age, he was dedicated to his community. He joined the Junior Farmers and, as one friend told me, "He joined every group he could find."

After returning from school in Guelph, he entered public service as a councillor in Alliston in 1960. By 1969, he had served as deputy reeve, reeve, a public school board member, Simcoe county warden, and then as mayor of Alliston. In 1967, he was also appointed as the first chairman of Georgian College in Barrie, and we thank him for that. In 1975, he was elected as the member for Dufferin-Simcoe. He served 15 years here at Queen's Park, holding portfolios in government services, the environment, transportation and communications, and chair of Management Board of Cabinet.

George brought his judiciousness to Queen's Park as he consistently was a consensus-builder. Linda Collins, former mayor of Springwater, told me that George McCague represented his riding well, mindful of all people. He visited farmers at the farm and was very responsive to any questions from his constituents. He served with great distinction and credibility. His long-standing record speaks to the trust bestowed upon him.

He had many friends from all political parties, with one of his closest being Liberal member and agriculture critic Murray Gaunt. In the Legislature, they passionately debated the issues of the day, but once the House rose, they often went on fishing trips. Dan Needles told me that George once described public service to him as "a long meeting with the odd fishing trip."

George retired from Queen's Park in 1990, but he wasn't done yet. He returned to municipal politics and became the first elected mayor of the newly amalgamated town of New Tecumseth in 1992. I spoke to former New Tecumseth mayor Mike MacEachern about George's

local contributions. He described George as a "community builder" and a "champion of the community."

George had a quiet way of commanding a meeting. He would immediately display leadership and was an expert at steering past distractions and diving right into the heart of a matter. Mike also told me that George would also tell him to "never ask a question you don't already know the answer to." I think he said this because he understood the importance of truly understanding all the issues.

After retiring from public service, he continued to chair the New Tecumseth Improvement Society. He also loved to give back. He was a driver for cancer patients and continued volunteering into his retirement.

At his funeral last year, the leaflets contained a passage from 1 Peter 4:10-19. It read, "Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." George knew that his gift was the ability to build consensus and solve difficult issues. But he went further than that. He helped others see their gifts, and would consistently remind friends and colleagues of their strengths.

George was a remarkable man, who truly made his community, province and country a better place. Thank you, George.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'm privileged to have known George Raymond McCague. He was a great man, a great mentor and a great friend, not only to me but to all those who had the good fortune to be counted among his many friends.

As many of you will know, I worked as George McCague's assistant for about seven years, during my years at university here and for a few years after that. I followed the great playwright and author Dan Needles, as the honourable member for Barrie has just mentioned. A couple of weeks before George passed away, he asked me to be an honorary pallbearer. I thought I better ask him if he wants me to say anything at the funeral. He said, "No, I want somebody to do it right. I've already asked that Needles guy." So George Raymond McCague, here goes.

1050

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the proverb, "Say not in grief: 'He is no more,' but live in thankfulness that he was." I will be eternally grateful to George for the lasting memories he has given me and for the lessons I learned from him.

No matter what issues George was involved with over the course of 40 years of public service, he always knew the heart of the matter was addressing problems and people with respect. He knew that respect for all people is at the heart of politics.

Although our families have been lifelong friends, I first got to know George when I was a grade 8 student. He was running for re-election in the 1977 provincial campaign and came to my classroom, along with the other candidates, to speak with us. He stood out from the other two candidates because he treated us like young adults. He didn't deliver talking points or carefully crafted

campaign slogans. Of course, that was part of George's charm. He never spoke from a prepared text.

My friend Dan Needles, whom George nicknamed McNutt, wrote speeches for him over a seven-year period, as his executive assistant here at Queen's Park. George never delivered a single one of those speeches. But he valued Dan's work and would spend hours going back and forth with him and studying those speeches. Then he would put them back in his pocket and speak from the heart. Dan joked when he gave the eulogy for George that the funeral was the first time anything he wrote for George was actually delivered in whole.

Dan no doubt also wrote the speech George never delivered when he showed up at my grade 8 class. George spoke to us with sincerity and treated us with respect. He showed us he was interested in our thoughts even though we were too young to vote.

Of course, two or three days later George showed up at my parents' house. The next thing I knew, I was volunteering on his campaign. George was always pretty crafty, Mr. Speaker, in his own humble way.

He also never forgot the people who helped him and always looked for a chance to help them as well. He gave me my first opportunity to work in a political office when he needed to hire a driver. Actually, George didn't give me any choice. He once again called my mom up and asked what I was doing. She told him, "Well, he's working while trying to finish his degree at St. Michael's College." George then corrected her and said, "No, Theresa. Jim is going to drive for me and work on my correspondence part-time." Later, he encouraged me and supported me in going to work for the Honourable Perrin Beatty in Ottawa.

I credit George with setting me on my career path. Some days, I also blame him for that. But he always had the best of intentions.

George's respect and gratitude for everyone who worked with him inspired loyalty and deep friendship. George always referred to Henry Davis, who couldn't be with us today—Henry was his campaign manager for five campaigns—as a peach of a man. I'm a bit envious of Henry for the glowing praise George always heaped on him when he wasn't in the room.

After George swept all the polls in Alliston that were located near the Catholic church and school in the 1985 election, he went around telling everyone that it was the token dogan on his staff who made it possible. He was referring, of course, I learned many years later, to me, who was studying Catholic theology at St. Mike's.

George's own nickname here at Queen's Park was appropriate to his nature. He was called Quiet George because he never wanted to be, as he put it, a headline hunter, nor did he like to pick fights. He often said that one should never get into a spraying match with a skunk.

George's deep faith in democracy, coupled with his humble ego, made him a perfect fit when he served in the roles of Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and chair of cabinet concurrently for many, many years

in the Bill Davis government. He enjoyed these jobs immensely.

I remember him telling me with a wink that he appreciated that, as chairman, he was the person who got to interpret consensus at each meeting. Of course, I was to find out many years later from Premier Davis that he and George had already decided what that consensus was going to be before the meeting had even started.

George's wit was dry and often unexpected. After my nomination meeting to run as MPP for Simcoe West, after George retired from Queen's Park, his first words to me when I got off the stage at Creemore were, "Don't screw it up, kid." I thought that was rather strange. I thought he would congratulate me for being acclaimed, actually.

It was a few days later before it dawned on me, after a conversation with my father when he reminded me that the riding had been Conservative since Confederation and he didn't want me to be the first one to lose it. In doing so, George gave me the shove I needed rather than the pat on the back I expected, and I'm grateful for that.

Since I was elected, George never once played the armchair quarterback. He was always available for advice anytime I called, but he said I had to do my job the way I thought I should.

George Raymond McCague, I will always be grateful for your friendship, mentorship and leading example of integrity. Your memory will always burn brightly and warmly. We miss you very, very much.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'd like to thank all members for their very heartfelt and kind words. As a tribute to George and to his family and friends, we will make available a hard copy of Hansard and a DVD of these wonderful tributes to a wonderful man.

Thank you for being here today, and I thank all members for their constant and ever-vigilant respect for former members. I appreciate what was said today.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Jim Wilson: And now for something completely different, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Acting Premier. Cap and trade is a carbon tax by any other name. There is no way around it. This scheme isn't about reducing greenhouse gas emissions; it's about taking more money from the taxpayers to fund this government's spending addiction. It's pretty simple: When businesses pay more, consumers pay more. By imposing this tax on businesses, you will drive up the cost of everything in this province. It's a tax on everything.

Acting Premier, how much money will this scheme cost Ontario families?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I have to say that I'm disappointed at this approach. Climate change is already happening, and we are already paying the price for climate change. The record rain in Toronto in 2013 cost almost \$1 billion. The ice storm in 2013 cost \$200 million in insurance costs. Experts are predicting that the cost of climate change will grow dramatically over the next number of years if we don't take action.

What is very strange to me is that just a few weeks ago, all parties in this House voted in favour of a motion to take action on climate change. We are taking that action, and I expect you to stand with us.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Acting Premier: You recently cancelled the clean energy benefit. Many families, farms and small businesses will now see a 10% increase in their electricity rates. This province already has ridiculously high electricity prices, and ratepayers, we've been told, will see a further \$140 rise in their rates this year, as well as losing the 10%. Now you want to raise at least \$1 billion with your tax on everything.

Australia's carbon tax scheme cost the average family \$550 per year before common sense prevailed and the program was cancelled.

Acting Premier, with many people in Ontario already struggling to pay their bills, where will they find the money to pay this new carbon tax?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As I said before, people are already paying the cost of climate change. We are paying it in our insurance rates. We are paying it in the health of our children, our grandchildren, our parents and our grandparents. We must take action.

1100

If the party opposite is saying that we have to leave this problem to the next generation, we fundamentally disagree with you. That is a point of clear distinction between them and us.

We believe we have a responsibility to take action—to take action now. We've set our path. We will be going with a cap-and-trade approach, in concert with the province of Quebec, with the province of British Columbia. That's 75% of Canadians who will be operating under a cap-and-trade approach to reduce carbon emissions.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: To the Acting Premier: Your carbon tax will raise the price of everything that Ontarians buy on a store shelf. It will raise the price of every service they use that requires any form of transportation to deliver that service.

Acting Premier, after the gas plant scandal, the green energy windmill scandals and disaster, the \$2 billion on smart meters—Ornge and eHealth—everything you do in the energy sector you make into a boondoggle. Why should Ontarians trust that this won't be another multi-billion dollar boondoggle and tax grab?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: There are many people in the Conservative Party who are encouraging us to take

this action, including Preston Manning. Preston Manning, not known to be a Liberal, is saying, "Take action."

We have taken action. We've taken the largest climate change initiative in North America by shutting down our dirty coal plants. That's \$4.4 billion in avoided costs. It's like taking seven million cars off the road. We are committed to doing our part for a cleaner environment, a more sustainable environment. We're taking action. I'd love to hear your positive suggestions on what we need to do.

ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question is to the Acting Premier. Your carbon tax will make it more expensive to buy anything made in Ontario, more expensive to drive your car, buy your groceries, and more expensive to heat your home. The most vulnerable of Ontarians will be hurt by this tax.

For those already struggling to make ends meet, it's about to get even harder. Your consultations proved just that. I was there, and I heard from the people of Ontario. But unfortunately, I'm saddened to say that your government has chosen to ignore them. You don't care that they cannot afford this tax.

Acting Premier, will you rethink this disastrous tax on everything and admit that your climate change consultations were nothing but a sham?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We've been listening very, very carefully, and I wish the member opposite would also listen carefully to the voices that are supporting, including—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm going to end this quickly. I want to hear the answers.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, voices supporting this action include Don McCabe, president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. I think we should be listening to the farmers of Ontario. Don McCabe said, "The Ontario government's commitment to carbon pricing reinforces our fight against climate change and we look forward to working with them."

Listen to the farmers. Listen to your constituents. Climate change is costing us today; it will cost us only more in the future.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: To my colleagues in this House and to people watching today, I have to say: Don't be fooled by the comments we've just heard from the Deputy Premier. This announcement this morning has nothing to do with reducing emissions, but rather the introduction of a new revenue tool to cover off their wasteful spending. That's what it's all about.

Back to the Acting Premier: Since you won't rethink this disastrous plan and you're fully prepared to raise prices of everything in this province, I want you to remind you of a line from the Premier's throne speech. She promised to use "evidence before ideology and choose partnership over partisanship." Evidence shows that cap-

and-trade systems are riddled with scandal, corruption and fraud; all things, I would dare say, that your government well knows about. Billions and billions of dollars have been lost to cap-and-trade fraud across the globe, and it's no surprise that you're looking to jump on that train.

Acting Premier, will you prevent the fraud that comes hand in hand with cap and trade and—

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

Deputy Premier?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It's quite true that other jurisdictions have gone before us on this, and we are learning from their experiences. We will ensure that this is done right in Ontario; in fact, that this is done right in Canada.

The costs of climate change are staggering, and for the party opposite to ignore the costs of climate change and focus on the costs of cap and trade is disingenuous at best, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Withdraw, please.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I withdraw.

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy estimates the costs of climate change in Canada would go from \$5 billion in 2020 to at least \$21 billion by 2050. Those are real costs borne by real people. I wish the opposition party would have constructive ideas on how to address this very important global problem.

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

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, back to the Acting Premier: You have learned nothing from other jurisdictions. The Green Energy Act is a perfect example of the absolute destruction of our province, in terms of manufacturing, and our homes and families throughout this province.

There is a lot of evidence demonstrating the problems now with your carbon tax on everything, yet neither the Premier nor her minister could identify today where the revenue from this tax is going to end up. This is a worry.

Acting Premier, you've proven time and time again we cannot trust you. Will you admit that this cap and trade is just another general revenue tool to supplement your wasteful spending?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think it's time for the party opposite to pick a lane on this. A few weeks ago they voted in favour—in fact, the member from Huron-Bruce voted in favour of the motion from our member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, that reads, “in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislative Assembly recognizes that scientists agree that climate change is caused by man-made greenhouse gas emissions and poses a serious threat to Ontario's environment, businesses, communities and economy, that scientists and leaders of G8 countries—including Canada—have recognized the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a goal of avoiding more than two degrees of warming, and affirm that this House must take necessary action to reduce emissions, transition to a low-carbon economy and combat the effects of climate change.”

You supported that motion two weeks ago. Today you are standing in the way of—

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

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Deputy Premier. When is it that Ontarians are going to be able to see the Ed Clark report?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As the member knows, we are committed to putting our assets to work to create a better Ontario, to build Ontario up. We have asked Ed Clark to give us advice on what action we take. I suspect the Minister of Finance will be able to discuss in more detail when we might see the results of that work.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Perhaps the Deputy Premier can tell Ontarians why Liberals think it is a good idea to hold a fire sale of Hydro One and local utility companies.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: The member opposite, in her own platform, during the election made reference to the very things that we're talking about right now. She based her projections on the ability for us to maximize the value of our assets, to reinvest and repurpose those very issues so that we can afford the things that matter to Ontarians like transit and infrastructure, and ensure that we actually gain even greater value from those assets. That is what Mr. Clark and the advisory team are doing in looking at those opportunities, and we will release those in the coming days and weeks.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Selling Hydro One is going to mean higher hydro bills for families and businesses. It's going to mean an end to Ombudsman oversight. It's going to mean not being able to shed light on skyrocketing salaries at the hydro system, like we do right now through the sunshine list. The Liberals are doing all of this, despite decades of Liberals promising that they would never sell off Hydro One.

Now, they know that this is a strategic asset for Ontarians which supports health care and education year over year over year. They know it's an asset that helps us drive conservation, productivity and efficiency. It is too valuable to put on the auction block.

Will the Liberals simply rubber-stamp the sell-off of Hydro One—something the people own?

1110

Hon. Charles Sousa: What's important, and what it's going to mean, is greater efficiencies and more effectiveness of the very assets and crown corporations that we own so that we can repurpose and maximize their value. It's inappropriate for us not to look at these opportunities. These are indeed important assets for the province of Ontario and for the people of Ontario, as are the future assets that the people of Ontario are asking us to invest in. That's what we will do.

I've made it clear before that the council's work is guided by the following principles: that public interest remains paramount and protected, that decisions are aligned with maximizing value to Ontarians and that the decision process remains transparent, professional and independently validated. We are looking after the best interests of the public by ensuring that we look at those opportunities in their entirety.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Deputy Premier. The Liberals ran on a promise not to cut health care, but here we are, and that is exactly what they are doing.

Can the Deputy Premier explain why, every time there's a Liberal scandal that requires billions of dollars to cover up, the Liberals can find the money, but when it comes to health care and local hospitals, they say that the cupboard unfortunately is bare?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, I must say that this question is passing strange coming from that party, given that the member from Waterloo—

Interjection: Kitchener.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —Kitchener–Waterloo actually said in the campaign that she could find \$600 million more. Where would that come from? She said health care and education. This is the party that wanted to cut more from our health care, wanted to cut more from our education, so I am puzzled by this change of tack.

I can tell you that the Minister of Health, I know, wants to speak to some of the investments in health, but we'll leave it at that for now.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Last week I visited with families, nurses, doctors and front-line workers in the Niagara region. They're worried that the Liberal plan to close hospitals is going to put the health of themselves and their loved ones at real risk. There are reports by international experts showing that the Liberal plan "lacks any rational justification." Local Ontario Nurses' Association president Loretta Tirabassi-Olinski told me that she felt betrayed by the Liberals, saying, "They lied to us. They told us they were going to give us some home care and give us some real relief."

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We can't even use quotes in a way which would be unparliamentary, so I'm going to ask you to withdraw, please.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I withdraw.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: So the quote said, "They"—blanked—"to us. They told us they were going to give us some home care and give us some real relief."

My question is simply, when will the Liberals start—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No, no, no. I went through this once before. We just do not make that reference whatsoever, even indirectly, so I would ask you to again withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Now finish, please.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The local nurses' association was very disappointed with the rollout of the Liberals' lack of fulfillment of commitments they had made previously. So my question is, when will the Liberals start keeping their promises and stop cutting the health care system?

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

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to talk about our investments in the Niagara Health System, which we're very proud of. The funding in Niagara region for health care has gone up by 80% since we came to power in 2003. That's an increase of \$164 million.

But to me, what's really important is to look at the progress we've made in the outcomes that we're seeing, the improved outcomes. The wait times for hip replacements are down by 48%. That's a massive improvement. Knee replacement wait times are down by 144 days, an improvement of 41%. CT wait times in the Niagara Health System are down by 78 days, or 81%. We're seeing incredible progress as our investments, including investments specifically in decreasing those wait times, are beginning to pay off.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Last week I also visited with moms in Leamington. The Liberals are cutting health care there too, Speaker. They're firing nurses in Leamington, and Liberal cuts are threatening the closure of Leamington's obstetrics unit, meaning that moms will have to travel an hour or more, in order to have their babies in Windsor.

Now, I think that Leamington parents should be able to have Leamington babies.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Beaches–East York, come to order.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Will the Liberals actually do the right thing and stop firing nurses, cutting care and slashing hospitals? That's the question, Speaker. Will they actually do what they said they were going to do, and invest in health care—make sure they weren't cutting health care—bring home care services online the way they're supposed to do, and save the obstetric wards in Leamington?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm glad that the leader of the third party has finally addressed the issue of Leamington. It's a very important issue that I've been working on diligently for quite a number of months, frankly. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the work that that hospital—and the LHIN—under my direction, is doing.

When I first learned of the precarious state of the Leamington obstetrics ward, I asked the LHIN to get directly involved with the hospital. They put a pause on things, so we could have a full community and expert consultation to find out if there are options that would be

viable for that hospital that would meet with the confidence of the community. I met with a delegation of women, midwives and others, mothers who were expecting—that had come to Queen’s Park a month or so ago—and spoke with them about the real challenges that they’re facing, but also about the options that they’re bringing forward. I actually believe the process that we’ve put in place with an expert panel, the massive community consultation, quite frankly, looking at all innovative options may actually provide us with—

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

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is for the Deputy Premier. The Premier won’t cancel her trip to Quebec, which I might add would cost taxpayers even more with your new tax on everything.

When British Columbia implemented their carbon tax, they pledged to lower other taxes an equal amount, so the average family wouldn’t be paying more—no more taxes, just different taxes. Deputy Premier, in Economics 101 that’s called a tax shift. What your government is doing—that’s called a tax grab. You’re taking more from the average Ontarian’s pocketbook because you can’t and won’t control your spending.

I oppose your cap-and-tax scheme, but since we can’t stop your misguided decision will you ensure that this will not cost Ontario taxpayers more and that you will not turn this into your newest revenue tool?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think that the member opposite has raised an important question, and that is, where will the money raised go? I can tell you that we will be very transparent in how we spend that money. It will be reinvested back into projects that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Members will come to order.

Interjections.

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As I was saying—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Simcoe North will come to order, second time—right after I got quiet.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —the money will be invested transparently back into projects that help reduce pollution and help businesses remain competitive. Projects may include helping families to be more energy efficient—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —building more public transit to reduce congestion, helping plants and businesses reduce their pollution. We will be announcing the full plan later this year. But make no mistake, there are

savings associated for individual people. In fact, let’s look at the experience in California. I’ll save that for the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Only a Liberal could say that with a straight face, Speaker.

Again, to the Deputy Premier: When a cap-and-trade scheme was introduced in Europe, powerful industrial lobbyists armed with millions of dollars “convinced ... governments to issue more carbon credits than” were actually required, than there were “actual emissions.” That led to emissions going up, not down.

We’ve all seen what your government does when lobbyists come knocking, and you need money or votes. We’ve witnessed your party cost taxpayers billions, with the gas plant scandal, the eHealth scandal, the smart meter fiasco, and you handed out sweetheart deals to your Liberal friends through the Green Energy Act. I doubt this is going to be any different. This scheme sounds like another Liberal boondoggle in the making.

Deputy Premier, what do you plan to do when the lobbyists come calling?

1120

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think that it’s important to look at the experience of other jurisdictions that have implemented cap and trade: California, for example. It’s true that the University of California, Berkeley, estimated that cap and trade does add about 2.6 cents per litre. However—and this is the important “however” that seems to be beyond the ability of the—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is warned.

Carry on.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you. However, California estimates that the amount the average person spends on fuels declines from \$1,400 a year to \$1,000 a year because this kind of initiative actually results in improved vehicle efficiency and other measures to reduce fuel use.

There is a cost to climate change. I would love to hear what the party opposite is advising us to do on climate change, or are they just wanting to turn their back on the issue and leave—

Interjection.

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

New question.

BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can you tell us if the Premier, her deputy chief of staff, Madam Sorbara, along with the Liberal insider Gerry Loughheed and the member from Sudbury, have had an opportunity to talk to the OPP yet in regard to their involvement in the Sudbury bribery scandal?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The member opposite knows well that there is an investigation under way, that

all members are co-operating fully with that investigation and that investigation is happening outside the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: To the Deputy Premier: The Premier has said she was going to meet with the OPP in this the month of April. We're now more than halfway through the month. I asked you a very simple question: Has the Premier, has Madam Sorbara, has Mr. Lougheed and has the member from Sudbury met with the OPP in regard to that investigation?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

If the member needs time, he has 10 seconds to wrap.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Sorry. I couldn't see, Speaker.

My question is: Can you tell me when the Gang of Four is going to get those interviews? Will it happen this month?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I know the member opposite has a remarkable interest in the timing of the interviews. What I can tell you, Speaker, as you've heard from the Premier: We are co-operating fully with the investigation that is happening, and it is happening outside the Legislature.

CANCER CARE

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. In 2014, an estimated 73,800 Ontarians were diagnosed with cancer and 28,000 of those people died from the disease. This means that eight people are being diagnosed and three people are dying from this disease every hour of the day. I'm happy to say that I'm a 15-year survivor.

Applause.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you.

I hear from my constituents in Barrie who are affected by cancer, either themselves or their families. My heart goes out to all of those affected by the disease. Every day we are one step closer to finding a cure. The Canadian Cancer Society is a national community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Minister, I ask: What are we doing to raise awareness of the Canadian Cancer Society?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Thank you to the member from Barrie for asking this very important question.

We're in Daffodil Month, Mr. Speaker. It's held every April. It's the national fundraising campaign of the Canadian Cancer Society. Donations that are made during this month, the month of Daffodil Month, help cancer patients and their families in communities right across Ontario by funding life-saving research, support services and other important work so that fewer Canadians, hopefully, will be touched by cancer.

Thanks to Ontarians' generous support of Daffodil Month and the Canadian Cancer Society's other fundraising programs, the charity was actually able to fund more than \$20 million in world-class research to fight all

cancers last year. During this time, the society also provided critical support to more than 49,000 Ontarians.

Mr. Speaker, let's all do our part to support this important month. I thank the Canadian Cancer Society for their dedication to the cause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Ontario is a leader in cancer care in Canada and around the world. I have heard positive feedback from constituents in my riding about the cancer care system in Ontario. I thank our government for the wonderful cancer care centre that we have built in Barrie. In fact, an Ontarian who gets cancer has one of the best chances of survival anywhere in the world. But we know that too many Ontarians are diagnosed with cancer each year, which is why we continue to take action to fight this deadly disease.

Minister, could you please tell us: What is our government doing to ensure our cancer-screening process is robust?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Thank you again for the question. Cancer screening is easy and it definitely saves lives. It's imperative that Ontarians get screened for cancer, and we've worked hard as a government to expand screening services and their availability across this province.

We broadened the scope of the Ontario Breast Screening Program back in 2011 so high-risk women are screened earlier, starting at 30 years of age. This means 90,000 more screenings over a three-year period. In 2013-14 the Ontario Breast Screening Program provided over half a million breast screens for average- and high-risk women across the province. There are currently over 150 of these Ontario Breast Screening Program sites across the province.

We also launched Canada's first province-wide colorectal cancer screening program to combat the second deadliest form of cancer in the country, and in 2009 we further expanded cancer detection by funding the PSA test to help fight the most common cancer among Canadian men. There's always more work to be done.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Deputy Premier. We all agree that action must be taken on climate change, but it's your track record that leaves something to be desired. When you launched the Green Energy Act, then-Minister George Smitherman said that it could lead to a modest increase in electricity bills of about 1%.

Since then, the Auditor General told us, tens of billions of dollars later, that our hydro rates have tripled to amongst the highest in North America. People are forced now to choose between paying rent or keeping their lights on, between food or fuel. Now you've found a new way to put your hand even deeper into people's pockets.

How are you going to make sure that life doesn't become even more unaffordable for Ontarians?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am delighted to know that the member opposite actually believes that action must be taken. The next question is, of course: What action are they proposing?

The member from Huron–Bruce this morning offered her advice, and that was to address the issue of gridlock in the GTA. We couldn't agree more, Speaker. We want to see, though, the plan from the Progressive Conservative Party.

The easy part of being in opposition is that you get to oppose. The harder part of being in opposition—and it's a big responsibility—is to propose better ideas. Speaker, we have yet to hear a better idea coming from the people opposite.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Well, Deputy, we're here to talk about your plan today, so why don't we just call it what it is. It's nothing more than the latest cash grab to pay down your growing deficit. You're going to sell carbon credits in a costly and complex cap-and-trade tax scheme. There will be industry winners and losers.

Just like in the Green Energy Act, your Liberal friends are poised to benefit. It's you who will determine which industry is regulated, which sectors are given exemptions. This is your next scandal in waiting, all designed to bring in billions of dollars to satisfy your spending addiction and fool everyone into believing you're actually doing something about climate change.

The real concern is: how are you going to make sure the latest scheme won't cost us more jobs and more investment in Ontario?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I know that if the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change were here, he would want to say that we are creating enormous opportunities for people in Ontario. We are creating opportunities for farmers, for people in the forestry industry, for those people involved in the technology that will help companies bring down their emissions.

The member opposite cannot put his head in the sand and say that this isn't costing people today. It is costing people today. It's costing them in their insurance. It's costing governments when climate change creates havoc and devastation in our communities.

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy already pegs the cost of climate change by 2020 as \$5 billion, growing to at least \$21 billion by 2050. We are paying the price. The time for action is now.

1130

NURSES

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

We know that the government is cutting nursing hours and laying off nurses across our province. The minister tries to deflect the blame to hospitals, but we all know who funds those hospitals. They say that the nurses'

positions are not being eliminated; it is an ebb-and-flow affair.

Speaker, the Minister of Health is the steward of our health care system, so I hope he can tell us, altogether throughout the hospital system of Ontario, how many nurses and nursing hours have flown out of our hospital system so far, and how many more does he expect?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: What I can do is refer the member opposite to some of her colleagues, who no doubt already have this information about active and open postings for nurses, for hospitals in their ridings.

For example, the leader of the third party probably knows that in Hamilton, there are open, active postings to hire seven RNs and three RPNs at the Hamilton Health Sciences centre. In London West, at the London Health Sciences Centre, there are active postings to hire 11 RNs and two RPNs. In Kitchener-Waterloo as well, at the Grand River Hospital, there are active postings to hire 10 RNs and two RPNs. At Windsor Regional Hospital, as the member for Windsor West would know, there are active postings for two RNs and one RPN. These are new hirings. These are new nurses who are going to come into the system.

There is that ebb and flow as programs are created and programs are shifted and nurses are shifted around the hospital environment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I think everybody in this House knows that the first part in addressing a problem is admitting that you have one.

So far, I have counted the equivalent of 242 nurses who have already been laid off, and close to half a million hours of care that have been lost in Ontario hospitals. This is a massive decrease in nursing care across our hospitals.

If a change of this magnitude is not worth the minister's time, then what is? The government likes to say that nurses are the backbone of our health care system, but it doesn't keep them from cutting nurses and nursing hours across our hospitals.

My question is quite simple: How many more nursing positions need to be eliminated before the minister pays attention?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I expected better of the member opposite. She's a health care professional. She knows how the system works. She knows that we have 24,000 more nurses in this province since roughly a decade ago. She knows that there are 10% more RPNs who are practising in this province, across the hospitals, since 2009.

It is correct that at the Ottawa general hospital, for example, where they have made some reductions, there will be five fewer full-time-equivalents in nurses out of that complement of 11,000 staff that practise through that hospital. But she may not know, because she's not counting this side of the story, that there are 46 active postings on the website—she could go to it—of the Ottawa general hospital for RNs to be hired into that system.

I would ask the member opposite that she be genuine, as I am attempting to be, on this important issue.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Mr. Granville Anderson: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, in October 2013, the Premier challenged Ontario's agri-food industry to double its growth rate and create 120,000 new jobs by 2020. The Premier's challenge is an opportunity to show our province, and the world, the important contribution our agri-food sector makes to our economy and our quality of life.

As we know, expanding trade can be a key part of developing and strengthening Ontario's industries at home and abroad. Building relationships with foreign governments and businesses helps Ontario showcase and increase our exports and provide new opportunities for Ontarians like those in Durham.

China is a key partner in this growing and rapidly changing agricultural sector in Ontario. Can the minister please inform this House on his upcoming trade mission to China and how opportunities for—

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

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member from Durham for his question this morning. I know that he's a champion for agriculture in the Durham region, and I know that he works very closely with Nancy Rutherford, who is the economic development officer for agriculture in Durham region. She does an outstanding job.

Minister Chan and I will be leaving this Wednesday for China, a unique opportunity over the next 10 days to really showcase what Ontario has to offer. We all know, on all sides of the House, that Ontario has an outstanding reputation in terms of food safety and food quality. This is a really good opportunity for us, Minister Chan and I, to meet with Chinese agricultural leaders in four cities in China and their government leaders to make sure that the Ontario case is presented in China.

More importantly, too, on our last step in Hong Kong, Minister Chan and I will be laying wreaths at the—

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

Supplementary.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you to the minister for his excellent answer. Promoting increased trade and investment in Ontario's agricultural food sector will help meet the Premier's growth challenge while keeping Ontario's agri-food sector a world-class leader.

But Minister, if Ontario's industry is to be positioned to grow and continue to compete internationally, more needs to be done by both government and industry. In order to help meet this challenge, it is essential that government work with industry to promote our agri-food sector while identifying further opportunities for growth and innovation.

Mr. Speaker, through you, can the minister please update this House on additional steps our government is

taking to support growth in the province's agri-food sector?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member for his supplementary question. There's a great innovator in agriculture right in his riding of Durham, Algoma Orchards. I know many people from all sides of the House had the opportunity to visit that operation, which is truly unique, not only provincially but nationally and internationally.

We have established the growth steering committee. It's being co-chaired by Amy Cronin, the very distinguished chair of Ontario Pork, and by very distinguished Deputy Minister Dr. Deb Stark, who has an outstanding reputation in Ontario's public service. They are coming together with the growth steering committee to work on the Premier's challenge. Premier Wynne gave this sector a challenge: 120,000 new jobs by 2020. Mr. Speaker, I assure you that we're going to reach that goal.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Michael Harris: My question is to the Acting Premier. Premier Wynne promised the people of Ontario that she wouldn't bring in any kind of carbon tax, yet after a decade-long spending spree driving the province deep into debt, that's exactly what you're doing: a cap-and-tax scheme that will damage our economy, put Ontario companies at a competitive disadvantage, kill jobs and saddle Ontario families with higher prices. This is a carbon scheme that she told Ontarians was "not part of our plan." She lied straight to the face of every Ontarian—

Interjections.

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

Mr. Michael Harris: Withdraw.

So Deputy Premier, I have a simple question: Do you think the people of Ontario are ignorant or do you simply have no respect for them?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Wow. First of all, I want to ask the member opposite to look back and see that we have, for many years, said that we are going to be introducing a price on carbon. This morning, we announced that we will be moving forward with a cap-and-trade process.

We have enormous respect for the people of this province. We have enormous respect for our children, for our seniors and for all of the people who are paying the cost now, in their health and in their wallet, of climate change, of pollution and climate change. We are moving forward, and there is real support for this initiative.

The member opposite is part of a party that supported action on climate change just a couple of weeks ago. I think you were right then, and I think you're wrong today. We are moving forward on this because it's the right thing to do today and for future generations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Michael Harris: Deputy Premier, climate change is a serious issue that needs to be addressed, but not with

a carbon scheme that will hurt our economy, kill jobs and punish Ontarians with higher taxes and prices.

But here's another serious issue: your Liberal government's lack of integrity. The fact is, the Premier told the people of Ontario that a carbon tax was "not in our plan." The last time I asked in this House, I was told a carbon scheme simply does not exist and that I must be reading Alice in Wonderland. Now that you're broke, you've gone down the rabbit hole, you're turning your back on your word and turning toward a \$2-billion tax-and-cap scheme.

1140

Deputy Premier, be honest with Ontarians this time and admit what we all know: This scheme isn't about the environment; it's about the money.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, Speaker, there are many who would disagree with that statement, and I think the member opposite would like to know some of the people who are actually supporting this initiative.

Gideon Forman, the executive director of Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment: "Doctors are very pleased Ontario is moving forward with carbon pricing.... Ontario's visionary leadership in eliminating coal power—along with today's announcement on carbon pricing—stand in stark contrast to the federal government's inaction on this file."

Speaker, I think that the member opposite would like to know what Jim Lopez, the president and CEO of Tembec, has to say. "We congratulate the government of Ontario on announcing a carbon pricing system to reduce emissions while growing the local economy and jobs."

Peter Boag, the president of the Canadian Fuels Association, says, "The Canadian Fuels Association and its members support the Ontario government's commitment to implement a comprehensive climate change policy"—

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

New question.

PAN AM GAMES

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for the Pan Am Games.

The Hamilton soccer stadium was supposed to be ready last June. Nine and a half months later, the stadium is still not ready and, after inspections, there are still hundreds of deficiencies. Hamilton police say they need this stadium ready no later than May 1 to prepare for the games. There's now a risk that the stadium will not be ready for the Pan Am Games.

Will the city of Hamilton, its businesses and the residents be compensated if it isn't ready? Can the minister tell us what the government's plan B is? Or is there a double meaning, Speaker, when the song from the Pan Am TV spot says, "Ready or not, here I come"?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I know that the Minister of Economic Development will take the second part of this question.

We're proud of where the Hamilton stadium is at this point. It's 99% complete. The Tiger-Cats were undefeated

in that stadium, so it has been functioning. In addition to that we've seen concerts take place there.

I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, when I had the opportunity to go to the stadium, I saw something remarkable taking place. Not only has that development changed that stadium—which was 100 years old—it has changed the area around it. You're starting to see economic development in that part of town.

I think the member opposite should be out there pushing the success of this stadium to the people in his constituency because, I'll tell you, it's one of the best investments to come into Hamilton for years.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Paul Miller: What I love about this minister: Everything is always rosy.

My second question is to the Minister of Infrastructure. Why will Infrastructure Ontario be handing over the full \$89 million to Ontario Sports Solutions before the stadium is complete, which you withheld? Why is there no provision in that contract to reduce, not merely postpone, that \$89-million payment for an almost one-year delay? Why is it that the public and the local subcontractors are the only ones being penalized for the main contractor's incompetence? How many other P3 arrangements have been toothless to reimburse the public for costly delays caused by the incompetence of the contractor? And what has this cost the public?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. The deputy House leader will come to order.

The question has to be directed to the minister. They choose whether or not they move it to the other minister.

Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister responsible for infrastructure.

Hon. Brad Duguid: The last person we're going to take any advice from on this particular issue when it comes to the contract is the NDP, because if they had their way, we would have done this under traditional financing, which would have meant any cost of the delays would have been on the backs of the taxpayers. Because we did this through alternative financing procurement, any delays will not cost the taxpayers.

This project is 99% complete—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Maybe I'll share with the members some of the facts before they keep heckling. These are some of the things that still need to be done: water-proofing around the bleachers, IT systems integration, testing of IT and sound equipment, and some water-damage repairs to drywall. That's part of the 1% left to be completed. We're absolutely confident that this will be completed in time for the games, and because we didn't do it the NDP's way, any delays will not be on the backs of taxpayers.

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: My question is for the Associate Minister of Finance. Minister, I know that our government is very concerned about the undersavings problem. Several studies have shown that Ontarians are not saving enough and that, without action, many will face a decline in their standards of living in their retirement.

I know this is an issue that many of my constituents in Cambridge are particularly concerned about. They want to know that, after decades of working and contributing to the economy, both they and their children will be able to retire with dignity. That's why so many are pleased to see that our government is taking leadership by creating the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

Speaker, it was brought to my attention that McKinsey and Co. recently released a study that found that many Canadians are on track for saving for their retirement. Speaker, through you, can the minister please explain how our government is reconciling these different findings?

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Thank you to the wonderful member from Cambridge for that very important question. I'm pleased to clarify those findings for the members of this House.

When we look at McKinsey's findings, it's a question of demographics. The study shows that, while older generations may fare well in retirement, younger generations face different challenges. The author of the McKinsey study said this: "Projecting the situation in retirement for someone who is 55 or 60 today can be done with a lot of accuracy or confidence. With someone who is 25 or 30, any study will have a greater factor of uncertainty."

As well, Fred Vettese, the chief actuary at Morneau Shepell, has said that, while he believes that those a decade or so away from retirement may have enough saved, "Young people are definitely going to have some challenges." This is exactly why our government is taking action: to ensure that not only we but also our children and grandchildren can save for retirement.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you to the minister for that response. I'm pleased to know that our government is reviewing a variety of different studies as it continues to consider key design features of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

I've also noticed that a variety of new polls released by major Canadian institutions underscore how little Ontarians are saving. In the last few months, I've seen alarming findings from RBC, CIBC, Sun Life Financial and, just last week, BMO Financial that all point to a major undersavings problem. These polls highlight not only how few Ontarians feel prepared for retirement, but also how many Ontarians have not even begun to save.

Can the minister please share some of these recent findings with the members of this House and discuss how our government is addressing this issue?

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Thank you again to the member from Cambridge. Earlier this year, I travelled to 10 com-

munities across the province to speak with Ontarians. It was very clear that retirement is top-of-mind. It's easy to understand why people are concerned about retirement when you read the findings of recent studies. According to a study from BMO released last week, only 43% of Canadians are saving for retirement. An RBC study found that 30% of Canadians have not begun to save for retirement, and a Sun Life Financial study found that 60% of respondents now expect to work past 65, up from 48% in 2008.

These studies paint an alarming picture. It's hard to understand how our colleagues on the other side of the House can look at these numbers and still suggest that we do nothing to address this issue. Our government, on the other hand, is committed to taking leadership. That's why we're introducing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question is to the Deputy Premier.

Applause.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you.

Interjections.

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

Ask, please.

1150

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you, Speaker. My question is to the Deputy Premier. The European experience with cap and trade has proven to be what not to do for economies around the world.

Energy rates have skyrocketed across Europe. Germany's economics and energy minister stated that his country faces dramatic deindustrialization if energy costs cannot be reduced. However, today your government has announced that Ontario will commit to a cap-and-tax scheme, therefore committing to an increased burden on business and the people of Ontario with unacceptably high energy costs.

Deputy Premier, will this carbon tax raise energy costs in Ontario?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm very proud of the action that our Premier and our government have taken this morning: that we have joined with the province of Quebec, that we are implementing a very important initiative that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That is the right thing for us to be doing. Just a few weeks ago, the party opposite thought it was the right thing to do; today they have a different opinion.

As I said to a member earlier, you were right a couple of weeks ago when you supported the motion of the MPP from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Speaker, I really think it's time for constructive advice to come from the party opposite.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Robert Bailey: Again to the Deputy Premier: The evidence is overwhelming; your carbon tax is a cost taxpayers cannot afford.

In Germany, steel producers now pay double the US rate for electricity and four times as much for natural gas because of cap and tax. Just imagine how much higher Ontario's rates will rise.

Here in Canada, three of the five provinces that are furthest from their 2020 greenhouse gas reduction targets have carbon taxing schemes already. Clearly they are not working.

Deputy Premier, why are you ignoring the evidence? Does your government not realize that your carbon tax does nothing more than raise the price of all goods?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, let me one more time read into the record the motion that the party opposite supported just two weeks ago: "In the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislative Assembly recognizes that scientists agree that climate change is caused by man-made greenhouse gas emissions and poses a serious threat to Ontario's environment, businesses, communities and economy, that scientists and leaders of G8 countries—including Canada—have recognized the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a goal of avoiding more than two degrees of warming, and affirm that this House must take necessary action to reduce emissions, transition to a low-carbon economy and combat the effects of climate change."

Speaker, this government is acting in response to the will of this House.

EDUCATION

Ms. Jennifer K. French: My question is to the Acting Premier. Speaker, the Premier promised she would not make cuts to education, yet her government just handed out pink slips to 118 contract teachers at the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board. Our schools are already underfunded, but instead of investing in education, the Premier is choosing to gut the system.

Speaker, if the Premier isn't making cuts to education, how does she explain taking 118 teachers out of the classroom?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The NDP is fortunate, in that they have three former school board trustees within their caucus, Speaker. The member from Windsor West was a trustee on the Greater Essex County District School Board, and she actually supported motions to close J.L. Forster Secondary School and Victoria Public School. When asked to explain the board's decision, chair Helga Bailey said, "We have to do this because otherwise we are spending money on bricks, mortar and empty space."

The member from London West—I know her well—was a trustee at the Thames Valley District School Board. She voted to close Sir Winston Churchill Public School, Colborne Street Public School, Southdale Public School, Maple Lane Public School, Rolph Street Public School, West Elgin Senior Elementary School and Sir George Ross Secondary School.

The members opposite know that education is complex. These decisions are not easy. I don't know why

they continue to criticize government for doing what they actually did.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm pleased to respond to the Deputy Premier, and remind her that while we have three former trustees, we also have a former teacher. I'm pleased to say that I know first-hand just how squeezed our schools already are. I also know that we should be giving our students a leg up and not trying to balance the budget on their backs.

Speaker, every teacher that this government cuts directly affects our students' education experience. Will the Premier stay true to her word and stop cutting and gutting our education system?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to be able to answer this question and actually to remind my critic for the NDP that we haven't decreased the funding this year. In fact, the funding in the last school year was \$22.5 billion. The funding this year is \$22.5 billion. It doesn't sound like a cut to me. The funding is stable.

In fact, we've done some really interesting things this year. We've actually doubled the funding for school renewal projects. That's for that major repair of the roof, fixing the leaky window, replacing the boiler. Last year, there was \$250 million. This year, there's \$500 million so that boards can—boards have been telling me for ages that there's a backlog. We're going to fix that backlog.

FIRST NATIONS

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. My riding of Halton is home to a diverse and vibrant First Nations community that has played a vital role in our region's history. In fact, close to 10% of the entire aboriginal population that lives in and around the GTA reside in Halton. The Iroquoian Village at Crawford Lake continues to be one of the key educational and historical treasures in our community.

We all know that a strong and vibrant First Nation community strengthens Ontario culturally, socially and economically. I know that our government has demonstrated its commitment to invest in programs and services that cater to First Nation peoples in Ontario. Speaker, through you to the minister: What is our government doing to create a stronger relationship with the northern First Nation communities in Ontario?

Hon. David Zimmer: Developing meaningful relationships with First Nations is a priority for this government. In fact, last week, I travelled to Timmins, Ontario, to participate in the Mushkegowuk Council of Chiefs. That's made up of seven communities in the James Bay area. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss strengthening governance and economic development in First Nations. I met with the grand chief to hear about some of the priorities coming out of the region, and I'm eager to continue those discussions.

Premier Wynne has directed this government to move forward with a new treaty strategy tactic. It will facilitate constructive engagement on treaties, revitalize treaty relationships and promote improved socio-economic outcomes for aboriginal peoples. As we continue to move forward on these discussions to highlight an even stronger commitment to develop their economic interests as best we can, this is good for First Nations and for the people of Ontario.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order: the member for Kitchener–Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I hope everyone will join me in welcoming Scott Travers, president of the Society of Energy Professionals, who's here with many members today. I hope that you'll all be at the reception today at 5 p.m.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

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

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, I rise to correct my record. George McCague was the former member of this Legislature from the riding of Dufferin–Simcoe from 1975 to 1987, as I recall. My notes said “1978,” so I correct it as “1975.”

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. All members are allowed to correct their record.

The Minister of Energy on a point of order.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to seek unanimous consent supporting Ontario's only team, led by the Hamburglar, in the Stanley Cup playoffs this year.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Energy is seeking unanimous consent to support the Hamburglar. Do we agree? No. Okay, thank you.

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

The House recessed from 1159 to 1300.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

VIMY RIDGE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. Todd Smith: Brigadier-General Alexander Ross famously said that when he looked out across the battlefield at Vimy Ridge, he saw “Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific on parade.” He felt that he was witnessing “the birth of a nation.”

Every year we must reflect and pay our respects to the honourable Canadian soldiers who sacrificed their lives at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, France, Easter Monday, 1917.

I had the opportunity yesterday to lay a wreath on behalf of Ontario at a commemorative service in the warm

sunshine at the Belleville Cenotaph to remember the sacrifices at Vimy.

It was 98 years ago that the four divisions of the Canadian Forces came together for the first time to occupy the French hill at Vimy Ridge from the German army. This Allied victory was a significant milestone for our country as we joined together as one nation to defend our freedom during the First World War. However, we can't forget that this success came with great sacrifice.

Throughout the three-day battle, more than 15,000 brave Canadians overtook the Germans under heavy fire. At the highest peak of the ridge, where the memorial now stands, soldiers battled machine guns with their bayonets in a long, costly fight to victory. Some 3,600 Canadians were killed during the three days, and another 7,000 wounded.

With the 100th anniversary just two years away, I'm proud to stand here on behalf of all members of the Ontario Legislature to pay our respects to those who gave their lives so that we can live free in Canada.

Back in France, a radiant Vimy sculpture stands as a tribute to the fine men and women from the First World War. The memorial has a statue of a woman representing Canada, a young nation mourning her dead. Below is a tomb to remind us of the soldiers killed in France who have no graves. We will remember them.

HEATHER THEIJSMEIJER

Mr. Michael Mantha: Manitoulin Secondary School math and science teacher Heather Theijsmeijer has been named the recipient of the Ontario Association for Mathematics Education Award for Exceptional and Creative Teaching in Secondary Mathematics for 2015. This award recognizes an exceptional and creative secondary teacher who demonstrates excellence in mathematics education and contributes to the overall development of students. A letter of support for Heather's nomination provided a comprehensive picture of her exceptional and creative teaching, her contributions to mathematics education and her ongoing support for students.

Ms. Theijsmeijer was honoured to be recognized at a provincial level, and she is now looking forward to representing the Rainbow District School Board at the awards ceremony in May.

MSS principal Laurie Zahnow was part of the nomination process, saying, “Heather is an inspirational educator. Her passion for learning is very contagious. Her need to put students first and her drive is what makes her such an exceptional and creative teacher. She is very deserving of this award and we are all very proud of her. We are lucky to have her.”

Congratulations, Ms. Theijsmeijer. Teachers will teach and be fulfilled in touching many young lives. However, it is later in life that the student will reflect on and speak of the impact that one teacher had on their lives.

NORTH DUMFRIES HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: On Saturday, April 4, I was pleased to attend a pancake breakfast in my riding of Cambridge which was hosted by the North Dumfries Historical Preservation Society. The breakfast took place at the historic Clyde and Scott's Women's Institute, and about 55 tickets were sold in support of the society.

When I sat as a board member for Heritage Cambridge, we assisted the Clyde and Scott's Women's Institute to refurbish the bell tower. It was nice to see it.

The event featured a number of fascinating historical archives on display, including local Tweedsmuir books.

Speaker, it was an honour to attend the breakfast and it was a pleasure to hear you speak at the event as well. The attendees were interested to hear about the Speaker's role—your role—and it was wonderful that you could provide my constituents with an understanding of how Queen's Park functions.

Joanna Rickert-Hall, a historian based in Waterloo region, spoke about the founding of the Women's Institute by Adelaide Hunter Hoodless. Adelaide Hoodless was an activist and advocate for women's rights and education. We have her to thank for many of the leaps forward that we have made in terms of women's rights in Canada and abroad.

The North Dumfries Historical Preservation Society has a very important role in my community. Its mandate is to preserve history and culture in North Dumfries, and it aims to create an archive for the township. Organizations like this one truly remind us about how important it is to remember and honour our past and to preserve pieces of our history for future generations.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Randy Hillier: Every day, I receive calls from constituents complaining about their hydro bills. I've recently conducted a comparison that looked at the all-in cost of the average electricity bill in rural areas across the country. Hydro One's all-in cost far surpassed that of all other jurisdictions. It's an amazing 277% higher than for our neighbours in Quebec. The main cause for this was due to the outrageous delivery, regulatory and debt charges. These charges are unique to Ontario and are not found in other provinces.

There are countless cases where bills are more than double due to delivery charges, which are often more than the cost of the electricity. To charge more for delivery of electricity than the value of the electricity itself is a direct result not only of wasteful, inefficient and bloated bureaucracy in Ontario, but also the painful policies of this government and their disregard for oversight of these agencies.

But there's more: Tens of thousands of errors, over-billings, outrageous estimates and no bills at all for extended periods of time from Hydro One have resulted in

a crown corporation that people have lost, utterly, all confidence in.

It's now time to put an end to this disastrous Hydro One monopoly and the disastrous policies of this government.

UNIVERSITY FUNDING

Mr. Paul Miller: Universities in Ontario have been dealing with accumulated underfunding for years. The government's review of the funding formula for universities must not be motivated solely by the desire to slash funding; it must aim to improve the accessibility and quality of post-secondary education.

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations recently met with me to express their concerns. They have asked that the review of the funding formula protect and promote the two core activities of a university: excellent teaching and learning, and world-class research. Funding must be responsive to the number of students in the system and the programs in which those students are enrolled. Universities should receive adequate funding to support good jobs on their campuses. This means ensuring fair terms and conditions of employment for contract faculty and hiring enough tenure-stream professors to maintain high academic standards and fair workloads.

Funding should be stable and predictable to facilitate long-term planning and to avoid extreme fluctuations in institutional revenue. Funding should be allocated across institutions on a fair and equitable basis to protect against wide variations in quality across the system and to support student success in all universities.

This review must be an open-ended, public and inclusive process where outcomes have not been predetermined or artificially constrained at the outset. Above all, university funding must not be subject to short-term political objectives.

VOLUNTEERS

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I rise today to recognize National Volunteer Week. During this special week, we say thank you and celebrate the enormous impact volunteers have on our lives.

More than 5.2 million volunteers of all ages give their precious time to make our communities stronger and to build Ontario up. They do it by supporting caregivers, welcoming newcomers, supporting food banks, and knocking on doors for worthy causes. For many, volunteering is a lifetime commitment. They deserve our respect, recognition, support and heartfelt thanks.

We celebrate and honour our volunteers through a number of programs, including the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award, the Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers and the Lieutenant Governor's Community Volunteer Award for Students. As many of you are aware, the annual Ontario Volunteer Service Awards are now in full swing in communities across the prov-

ince. This year, more than 9,000 volunteers are being recognized for their outstanding community service.

With the Pan/Parapan Am Games coming this summer, it is important we recognize the tremendous role volunteers will play. Over 23,000 volunteers will deliver an unforgettable Pan/Parapan American Games experience to athletes, families and spectators.

In addition, the games present an opportunity to create a lasting legacy on Ontario's voluntary sector. A certificate of achievement will be provided to volunteers to recognize the training and experience they gained to assist with future employment opportunities.

1310

COREY CONNERS AND JOEY HISHON

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Today I'm pleased to recognize the accomplishments of two outstanding athletes in Perth–Wellington: Corey Connors and Joey Hishon.

Listowel native Corey Connors is one of two Canadians who played in last week's 79th Masters tournament. Corey is an exceptional golfer and has been a member of Team Canada for five years. He won his way into this year's Masters by placing second in last year's US Amateur Championship. In 2013, Corey was a semi-finalist in the same tournament and, along with Team Canada, finished second in last year's World Amateur Team Championships. I would like to congratulate Corey on his fine work at the Masters and all of his golfing accomplishments.

Another local athlete who earned great praise last week was Joey Hishon. On Tuesday, Joey scored his first NHL goal, breaking a tie between the Colorado Avalanche and the Nashville Predators. Joey grew up in Stratford, and has played hockey with the Stratford Minor Hockey Association, the Ontario Minor Hockey Association, the Ontario Hockey League and the American Hockey League, and now the NHL. He was a first-round pick of the Avalanche in the 2010 entry draft. I'm confident that this is the first goal of what will be a remarkable NHL career for Joey.

Again, congratulations to both Corey Connors and Joey Hishon for their outstanding athletic accomplishments.

VARIETY VILLAGE

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: On March 23, I had the opportunity to be part of a memorable event in my riding of Scarborough Southwest honouring the Honourable David C. Onley and Mrs. Ruth Ann Onley with a 2015 In the Spotlight Award. This award is in recognition of the support and friendship they have shown to Variety Village over the last 20 years. The Onleys have gone above and beyond to support Variety Village's customized recreation and fitness programs for people of all ages and levels of ability in an integrated, engaging and inclusive environment.

Variety Village's true accomplishments can be seen through client-specific recreation, fitness, wellness and

lifestyle programs. The Ontario government has always been a proud supporter of Variety Village and the continuous efforts to improve the lives of the people in our community. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to help support this dynamic organization through recognizing all the individuals who have gone to great lengths to help support Variety Village.

Finally, I'd like to say a big thank you to the Onleys on behalf of the residents of the riding of Scarborough Southwest.

VOLUNTEERS

Ms. Soo Wong: I rise in the House today to recognize constituents from my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt who have received this year's Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. This provincial award recognizes individual volunteers for their long-standing commitment and years of dedicated service to community organizations.

Last week, I had the privilege of being part of three different volunteer service award ceremonies held in Scarborough, where over 100 of my constituents were recognized for their work in our community. One of those constituents, Muriel Alvares, a staffer for my colleague Minister MacCharles, has joined us today in the House. Muriel was recognized for her 15-year involvement with Operation Springboard-Scarborough Youth Justice Committee, where she continues to support youth participation in restorative justice. Thank you, Muriel, for your commitment to community service.

Volunteers are the most important resource that community organizations have. Their dedication to devote their time to the betterment of our community is invaluable.

Speaker, this week is National Volunteer Week. Every year, more than six million Ontarians volunteer their time to causes they believe in. I believe that it is this dedicated community service that makes this province a great place to live, work and play.

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

TIM HODAY

Mr. Wayne Gates: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order from the member from Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise and offer my condolences to the family and friends of Tim Hoday. Tim was 55 years old and served 32 years on the Niagara Falls Fire Department. Tim passed away from cancer that resulted from his work in the line of duty. His incredible dedication to his community will be missed.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Tim's family and his co-workers.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Not to diminish the importance of your announcement, but I would recommend that all members seek their House leader's circumstances under these kinds so they don't be

misinterpreted as announcements or statements. But I obviously give sympathy to the family members. I appreciate that.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

LONG-TERM CARE HOMES AMENDMENT ACT (PREFERENCE FOR VETERANS), 2015

LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES FOYERS DE SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE (PRÉFÉRENCE ACCORDÉE AUX ANCIENS COMBATTANTS)

Ms. Forster moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 87, An Act to amend the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007 to give preference to veterans for access to beds / Projet de loi 87, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les foyers de soins de longue durée pour accorder la préférence aux anciens combattants qui veulent avoir accès à des lits.

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. Cindy Forster: This bill amends the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007, by enacting a definition of “veteran” that includes former officers and former non-commissioned members of the Canadian Forces.

The bill amends the act to require the minister to ensure that preference in admission to long-term-care homes is given to veterans.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Jeff Leal: Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the membership of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: I move that Mr. Mantha replace Mr. Singh on the membership of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Leal moves that Mr. Mantha replace Mr. Singh on the membership of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

TAXATION

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

“Whereas the government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn’t necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and households are paying almost \$700 more annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

“Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

“Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

“Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

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

“To abandon the idea of introducing yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses.”

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

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Miss Monique Taylor: I have a petition named “Ontario Is Not for Sale.

“Whereas the Liberal government of Ontario is currently reviewing proposals to sell off a significant amount of our shared public assets such as Ontario Power Generation (OPG), Hydro One, and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO); and

“Whereas our shared public assets provide more affordable hydro, develop environmentally friendly energy, create thousands of good Ontario jobs, and are accountable to all Ontarians; and

“Whereas our shared public assets put money in the public bank account so we can invest in hospitals, roads and schools; and

“Whereas this Liberal government is more interested in helping out wealthy shareholders and investors than they are in the hard-working Ontarians who are building this province; and

“Whereas Ontario is stronger when there is shared prosperity;

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

“Stop the selling-off of our shared public assets. Keep our public assets in public hands.”

I couldn't agree with this more, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to affix my name to it and give it to page Olivia to bring to the Clerk.

1320

TERRY FOX DAY

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

"Whereas on March 26, Bill 61, the Terry Fox Day Act, passed second reading with unanimous support from the Ontario Legislature;

"Whereas if passed at third reading before the Legislature rises in June, Bill 61 will proclaim the second Sunday after Labour Day in 2015, September 20, as Ontario's first Terry Fox Day;

"Whereas the second Sunday after Labour Day is the day on which the Terry Fox Run is traditionally held, and September 20, 2015, marks its 35th anniversary;

"Whereas on November 27, 2014, Terry Fox's home province of British Columbia passed similar legislation proclaiming this same day as Terry Fox Day starting this year;

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

"That the Legislative Assembly move quickly to pass Bill 61 at third reading before the end of the current session, ensuring that on September 20, 2015, Ontarians can celebrate Terry Fox Day."

I fully support the petition. I will give my petition to page Ryan.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. Norm Miller: I have received petitions from the Mattawa area, mailed to me in support of Bill 58, the Utility Task and All-Terrain Vehicles Act. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize the new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with the unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

"Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails they are legally permitted to use these off-road vehicles;

"Whereas owners ... should be able to legally access woodlots, trails, as well as hunting and fishing destinations;

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

"That the private member's Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature."

I support this and will give it to Misha.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mr. John Vanthof: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I wholeheartedly agree, add my signature and give it to page Luca.

HYDRO RATES

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

"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 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 am pleased to give it to page Carina to take to the table.

HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

Miss Monique Taylor: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

“Whereas accessibility to our public health care system is a foundational value of Ontario; and

“Whereas all individuals should have equal access to health care services regardless of their ability to pay; and

“Whereas patients requiring health care services often have to drive to a hospital to receive these services; and

“Whereas hospitals are increasingly using parking charges as an avenue for revenue generation thereby impacting some patients’ access based on their ability to pay; and

“Whereas the Liberal Party promised during the 2014 election campaign to cap hospital parking fees;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to demand that the government of Ontario follow through on the commitment to cap parking fees at Ontario’s hospitals at a level that ensures equitable access to health care.”

I couldn’t agree with this more, Mr. Speaker. I’m going to sign my name to it and give it to Ishika to bring to the Clerks’ table.

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly entitled “Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water,” and it reads as follows:

“Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

“Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

“Whereas dental decay is the second most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

“Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking

water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

“Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

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

“That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario.”

Speaker, I’m pleased to sign and to support this petition and to send it down with page Joshua.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

“Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

“Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

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

“That private member’s Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature.”

I’m proud to affix my name to this.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Mr. Arthur Potts: I have a petition 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 ... and those numbers continue to grow; and

“Whereas there is no French secondary school ... 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 ...; and

“Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system

... 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;...

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“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 ... in the community ... so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live.”

I agree with this petition. I sign my name to it and leave it with page Mira.

HYDRO RATES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CREDIT UNIONS

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I am proud to stand today and read this petition here that’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support our 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families

to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

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

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

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

“—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

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

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

I couldn’t agree more with this petition. I am proud to affix my name to it and send it down to the table with our page Jae Min.

WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE

Mr. Norm Miller: I’ve received hundreds more petitions with regard to improved winter roads maintenance. This reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the area maintenance contract system has failed Ontario drivers the past two winters;

“Whereas unsafe conditions led to the maintenance contractor being fined in the winter of 2013-14, as well as leading to a special investigation by the provincial Auditor General;

“Whereas the managed outsourcing system for winter roads maintenance, where the private contractor is responsible for maintenance, but MTO patrols the region and directs the contractor on the deployment of vehicles, sand and salt, has a proven track record for removing snow and ensuring that Ontario’s highways are safe for travellers;

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

“That the Ontario Ministry of Transportation take immediate action to improve the maintenance of winter roads based on the positive benefits of the previous delivery model, where MTO plays more of a role in directing the private contractor.”

I support this petition, have signed it, and will give it to page Ryan.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The time for petitions has now expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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 April 2, 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 Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): When we last debated this bill at second reading, we heard from the member for Scarborough Southwest and the member for Ottawa South. I'll now ask for questions and comments on their presentation to the Legislature. Questions and comments?

The Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Nobody's speaking? Okay. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak on Bill 80.

Marine mammals are complex, diverse and magnificent creatures with unique needs that require the right standards of care.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'd just remind the Attorney General that we're doing questions and comments. It's a two-minute questions and comments.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Yes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I apologize for interrupting you.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That is why we recently introduced the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, Bill 80. If passed, Bill 80 would prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario.

Why orca whales—the prohibition? First of all, let me say thank you to Dr. David Rosen, a respected marine biologist at the University of British Columbia who led the team of experts to prepare a report.

The reason why this provision is in the bill is because orcas are very unique animals. Orcas are the largest of the marine mammals in captivity in Ontario and anywhere else. They are over twice the length and four times the mass of the beluga, the next-largest marine mammal in captivity. They are very social animals and normally

live in pods of five to 30 whales in the wild. Some pods combine to form a group of 100 whales or more.

Orcas typically dive 500 feet or more and can swim up to 100 miles per day. So the unique features and the extraordinary magnitude of orcas leads us to determine that their well-being in captivity would be especially difficult to ensure, and so we would end the practice of keeping captive orcas in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm going to have my time to do 20 minutes on this bill, but I just wanted to respond to the Attorney General.

This is something that has been long coming. We know that the member from—Ms. DiNovo is from?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Parkdale–High Park.

Miss Monique Taylor: Parkdale–High Park; thank you, Speaker. The cold has got the cloud going on in the head today.

The member from Parkdale–High Park was ringing bells about this. She was talking about how trainers were being victimized by talking about the abuse and the things that were happening in Marineland. We all knew right then how important it was that we do something about this, about the orcas that are living in captivity. I'm happy to see this come forward.

As a child, I skipped and danced as I went to Marineland, as I'm sure most of us did, just to have the opportunity to see the whales and the dolphins and the wonderful, brilliant creatures that they are. Then, as an adult, I realized that they're beautiful and wonderful and it's sad that I'm looking at them in this tank. So I'm happy to see this come forward. I know that there are a lot of other things that I would have liked to have seen in this bill. When we're talking about lions and tigers and bears, oh my—that should be in the bill. We need a licence for a dog, but we don't, in some areas, need a licence to have a lion or a tiger. So that brings up the question of how well they're being taken care of. There just needs to be more strength in legislation to make sure that all animals, regardless of size, whether they're a toad, a fish or a whale, are taken care of to the best possible being as long as they're in captivity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It's a pleasure to join the debate. We're seeing that people are increasingly interested in the welfare of the other species that we share the planet with, and from time to time we take steps forward in that regard. That's how I describe Bill 80. I think it's a good step forward for this province. It's a good step forward for all of us in the House.

There was a report commissioned out at the University of British Columbia—a very respected marine biologist, Dr. David Rosen. He put together a team of experts and, I think, offered a lot of good advice that guided this bill, that provided the sort of information that this bill really needed to make it a bill of some substance and one that is

going to make a difference in the lives of marine mammals in the way that they're held in captivity, the types of conditions they live under, the physical environment they live in and the psychological environment they live in. We need to ensure that, if we're going to have marine mammals in these types of environments, they're not harmed, that contact with the general public doesn't cause any harm to them.

1340

We need to look at things like the size of the pools that they're housed in. I understand that around the world there are differing opinions, rules and regulations in other jurisdictions. This bill proposes to do something, I think, that meets the highest standards.

When you look at things like water bacteria, the amount of bacteria that's in the water they're in, the noise and the lighting, regulations for the feeding, for the care, for the handlings, how they're displayed, these are all things—I think there's a real interest in zoos and the interaction that we've been able to have with animals. What this bill is proposing to do is to make sure that that environment is one we can be proud of.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

We can now return to one of the members who spoke, the member for Scarborough–Southwest, to respond.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I listened to the comments made by the Attorney General, the member from Hamilton Mountain and the Minister of Labour on this bill. We all know it's an important bill. We have heard the NDP speak on this earlier. It was debated before. We know that they stand with us in favour of this legislation, and I hope that the PCs will do the same; I didn't hear anything when they spoke on this bill regarding supporting this bill.

I think we've realized that animals are much more sophisticated than we previously thought they were, and orca whales are one of the groups of animals that are very sophisticated. They communicate with each other. We've found that they use sophisticated techniques when they go out hunting in the wild. They go hunting as a group. They seem to communicate with each other when they're doing their hunt. In raising their children, there's a very close bond between the mother and the child—I don't have the exact word coming off my lips right now—

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Calves.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: The calf; that's right. Thank you very much.

I hope this goes to committee. I hope it has a good debate at committee and that the bill will move forward. It's important to get this in place. When Bill 80 was introduced, there was a realization by the minister that this kind of legislation was needed. We see it in other countries. Again, once this bill goes to committee, hopefully it will come back here for third reading and be implemented into law.

As I said before, it's important to get this bill through this House to become law. Hopefully, Ontario will be-

come one of the jurisdictions where animal welfare is kept to the highest standards.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to have the opportunity to debate Bill 80. I have to say that I'm a little surprised that we're here debating a bill that seems to deal with the one orca whale that's located in the province of Ontario, especially when we just got back from a constituency week and the issue that seems to be pressing that I'm hearing about when I'm back in the riding is certainly hydro bills, number one. Affordability of electricity seems to be something that people are really, really very concerned about and interested in, and there's a bunch of other issues—the debt and deficit of the province, of course.

However, we are debating Bill 80, Speaker, so I will take some time to talk about 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.

“The Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act is amended to prohibit possessing or breeding an orca in Ontario. There are two exceptions. First, a person who possesses an orca on the day before the bill is introduced may continue to possess the orca. Second, a person who first possesses an orca on or after the day the bill is introduced, but before the bill receives royal assent, may continue to possess the orca for six months after the day of royal assent....

“In addition to the power the minister already has to make regulations prescribing standards of care, the minister is given the power to make regulations prescribing administrative requirements with which a person who owns or has custody or care of an animal is required to comply”—just to give you a general outline of what the bill does.

I think I'll use some time to talk about how this bill came to be. It seems to me that it originated probably as much from media stories on Marineland in Niagara Falls, and I believe there was a Toronto Star article that probably was the impetus of how this bill came to be.

From that, there have been a few things that have happened. There's an organization called the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. They did an accreditation on Marineland after that incident, after the media series. I just want to note what they said because I think it's—you know, this bill is really about the one orca in Ontario. That one orca is at Marineland in Niagara Falls. I think it's worth noting that Marineland is a very significant employer in the Niagara area. There are some 700 jobs there and they spend \$4.5 million on marketing alone each year. It is very important to that area. I think we have to certainly balance having care for marine mammals but at the same time try not to drive jobs out of the province, because it's certainly obvious that we need those jobs in this province.

CAZA, the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums, actually did—I took a look—a Marineland investigation. I'll just read a bit of that to give you an idea of what they found:

“The Accreditation Commission of Canada’s Accredited Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) has conducted a special investigation into allegations that the welfare of animals at Marineland Canada has been negatively affected by water quality problems and inadequate staffing levels and that these problems were not appropriately addressed over a period of time. A three-person inspection team including two veterinary experts conducted a site inspection on August 23, and subsequently interviewed relevant witnesses and examined internal water logs and medical records.

“The commission has concluded that at the time of the site inspection the animals in question in the Marineland collection, including the marine mammals, were in overall good health and there was no evidence of animal abuse, that water quality in all the pools was very good, and it appeared that staffing levels were adequate.

“Detailed examination of water quality logs and animal health records as well as interviews with some employees, however, indicate that there were problems with maintaining water quality levels within accepted industry standards, and that these problems did impact the health of some animals in the collection.

“The commission found that Marineland’s veterinary program is comprehensive and includes regular veterinary inspections and treatment of animals where appropriate. The veterinarians are experienced, competent and assisted by specialists as needed.

“The commission and Marineland have agreed that Marineland will undertake an independent, external inspection of its water quality management systems for the pools in question. The engineering evaluation will be based partially on a thorough updating by Marineland of its water quality management protocols and is to be completed as soon as reasonably possible. CAZA is to be consulted regularly regarding the qualifications of the evaluators and is to be provided with a copy of the resulting report. Marineland has stated that they welcome this study and will use the results to ensure that the systems are entirely capable of providing an appropriate environment for the marine collection.”

That seems like a rational response to the criticism that was directed at Marineland. They did actually go on and have Stantec Consulting Ltd. come in and look at the water management systems for marine mammals at Marineland.

“The purpose of the study is to confirm whether the water management systems”—this is from Stantec—“at Marineland are capable of providing an appropriate aquatic environment for the marine mammals, currently and in the long term. The opinions and findings expressed in this study refer to all water systems for marine mammals at Marineland unless specifically stated otherwise.

1350

“No allegations have been made or concerns expressed regarding the balance of the water system at Marineland. No request was made by CAZA or a third party to expand the scope of the study. No information received from Marineland or reviewed by Stantec, or investigations conducted by Stantec indicated that an expansion of the study is necessary or appropriate.

“Marineland, however, requested and Stantec agreed to expand the scope of the study to include a review of the entire water system at Marineland in order that the results of the study be used to assist in maintaining the ‘best practice’ standards for the aquatic environment for the marine mammals. The study was expanded at Marineland’s request to include the Friendship Cove ... and Arctic Cove ... pools and all ancillary water system components.

“Given the public interest in the condition of the water systems at Marineland we have issued this study in a format intended to convey the technical results of our investigation in a manner that is clear and addresses the expressed concerns regarding the water systems at Marineland.

“Marineland has requested, and Stantec has agreed to provide, further explanation or clarification of its opinions or findings to the CAZA Accreditation Commission, as it may request.

“Marineland has also requested and Stantec has agreed to provide further explanation or clarification of its opinions or findings to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (the ‘OSPCA’).”

These were their findings:

“Summary of findings and opinions

“1. The water management system at Marineland has been developed over many years. The water management system has been upgraded over time to provide comprehensive treatment to meet modern standards and performance requirements associated with best practices, and ongoing research and development in the industry. Overall, the investment in the water management system has been significant from a capital cost perspective. The Marineland water management systems share similarities with modern water treatment systems designed and operated for production of potable water for human consumption.

“2. Based on our assessment of the life support system design in place at Marineland, and a review of the relevant literature, it was found that these systems are suitable for maintaining water quality parameters for the species and number of marine mammals under human care and are capable of providing an appropriate environment.

“3. The treatment systems, pumping systems, piping systems, and electrical systems generally are all in good condition and maintained.

“4. Redundancy for power and water supply is built into each system by providing parallel equipment that can be used while certain components of the system are offline for repair or for maintenance.

"5. The system design, redundancy, and operations and maintenance is capable of promptly correcting isolated fluctuations in water parameters if they should occur.

"6. Staffing is sufficient to ensure the proper functioning and maintenance of the water systems.

"7. Procedures are in place for operation of the water management systems and these procedures, at the request of Marineland, will be documented through standard operating procedures ... for all systems and processes."

Mr. Speaker, you can see that the reaction to the accusations—there was a CAZA accreditation study and then there was a Stantec study on the quality of water, and that seems to paint a good picture of what is currently being done at Marineland.

But this bill, really, originated because I think the government has reacted to what has happened in the media, and they commissioned their own study. They asked Dr. David Rosen to do a review. The purpose of the committee was:

"This committee was convened by the government of Ontario's Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services in October 2013 to (1) evaluate Ontario's current regulations pertaining to the care of marine mammals in captivity for public display, (2) consider whether current regulations are sufficient to ensure the care of these marine mammals, and ... (3) suggest how existing regulations could be improved."

Additionally, the committee was asked to give special consideration to the welfare of cetaceans in public display facilities.

As I mentioned, it was Dr. David Rosen from British Columbia who was asked to do this study. In his executive summary on this report he states: "A review of the current scientific literature on the well-being of captive cetaceans highlighted several areas of concern. There are several aspects specific to the aquarium environment that can potentially cause stress in captive cetaceans, although none are unique to this group, and most can be mitigated through proper husbandry and habitat design. The most critical issues identified are the need for adequate pool space and design, appropriate social groups, and environmental enrichment. Additional concerns relate to suitable light and sound exposure in the habitat."

Now, I think it was the Attorney General, in her comments, who talked for a couple of minutes about the social nature of orcas, and that in the wild, they like to be in pods of five to 30. I note that that is also one of the concerns here. So I'm a little surprised that the bill that is before us would actually, really, sentence the one orca at Marineland to a solitary life for the rest of the life of that particular whale.

I do have a little bit of information on that whale; Kiska the whale. Kiska the orca whale lives in the largest pool housing a killer whale in the world. The pool is larger than the entire Toronto aquarium by volume—just her pool alone. All the water in her pool is filtered through a modern, computerized filtration system that costs tens of millions of dollars. All of the water in her pool is filtered every three hours. A thorough techno-

logical review of the entire water system was conducted by an independent expert company, Stantec—that's the review I referred to—which found that the system was fully capable of providing an appropriate aquatic environment for Kiska.

Kiska already has several times the available space SeaWorld's whales will have when SeaWorld has completed its expansion and full renovations in four years' time. Based on what SeaWorld actually builds, Kiska's space could be five and a half times as large.

Kiska does not participate in any shows and has not done so for over a decade. Kiska is cared for by experienced professional marine mammal veterinarians who examine her every single day. Her teeth are examined and rinsed every day. Kiska participates in a complex enrichment program that has been reviewed and approved by leading marine mammal scientists, and reviewed and accepted by the OSPCA.

Kiska is fed a healthy diet of fish fit for human consumption. Everything she eats is recorded. All her activities and behaviour are recorded hourly. Her health is monitored on a continuous basis. A team of veterinarians and staff determine all issues related to her health and make constant adjustments to ensure the ongoing health and care of Kiska.

Kiska is now quite elderly and prefers particular routines. Everyone knows that it would be a benefit to her to provide her with an age-appropriate companion, if one could be found. Currently, a companion for Kiska is not available. Prohibiting any possibility of providing Kiska with an age-appropriate companion is not necessary to give effect to the legislative intent and is not in the best interests of Kiska. That seems to be confirmed by the comment in the executive summary by Dr. Rosen, talking about "appropriate social groups."

Marineland is one of the few unique facilities that can provide a temporary home to injured marine mammals and a permanent home to those animals that cannot be returned to the wild. A ban consigns an injured orca to death unnecessarily and contrary to all sensible conservation efforts.

Something to think about is that this bill actually has some consequences for the one orca that is within the boundaries of the province of Ontario, which the legislation seems to be geared toward. It's interesting that we're debating this bill, with all the other challenges going on. I can't say it has come up much in my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka.

An issue that has come up recently that is not marine-mammal-related—it is fish-related—has been the Almaguin Fish Improvement Association, a group of volunteers who have been stocking Ahmic and Cecebe lakes in my riding for the past 35 years. It really is, I think, a great group that is very dedicated to trying to improve the fishery, particularly in Ahmic and Cecebe lakes, but is also interested in stocking surrounding lakes as well. I've brought that issue up in the Legislature before: the fact that the Ministry of Natural Resources had, until recently, told the Almaguin Fish Improvement Association that

they weren't going to issue them the permits to be able to do the stocking they had planned for this year.

1400

I'm pleased to say—and I want to give credit to the Minister of Natural Resources, the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan—that on Friday I attended a meeting with the Ministry of Natural Resources, and the Almaguin Fish Improvement Association has been given the green light and will be getting the permits to do their stocking in Ahmic and Cecebe lakes this year. I'm very pleased about that.

I know they're a very dedicated group and are trying to do good work. I would say that the Ministry of Natural Resources should take advantage of this group of volunteers, because they have stated that they're willing to join the council for zone 15. They're willing to stock other lakes as well, and assist with rehabilitating spawning beds and doing other work that will improve the fisheries in Parry Sound–Muskoka. I'm very pleased that that has come to be.

Back to Bill 80, Mr. Speaker: Whatever new rules come out of this bill—obviously, we want to provide the best environment for marine mammals that are in captivity—I think it's important that we also realize that in probably one of the biggest businesses that deals with marine mammals, Marineland at Niagara Falls, there are 700 people who rely on their jobs to put food on the table and help pay their ever-increasing hydro bills. I think that's something the government should be taking into consideration as it brings forward Bill 80 for debate. That's something we can't lose sight of.

I do note that the majority of the public feel—I see that a poll was conducted in the Toronto Sun, March 23, 2015, and 89% of respondents agreed that Ontario should ban the importation of killer whales. I think that's probably generally supported, as it seems to be in the general public.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to have a chance to speak to Bill 80 this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I've got to give my colleague in the Conservative caucus full credit for being on topic and having done some pretty good research on the issue.

Listen: Over the years, this Legislature has seen a number of times when we have tried to deal with issues related to how we care for animals in captivity, be it zoos, roadside zoos or, in this case, an aquarium. Clearly, there needs to be good regulation in place to ensure that animals that are in the care of these establishments are being taken care of in as humane a way as possible, and make sure that the animal, or mammal in this particular case, is not particularly distressed.

I want to talk about the aquarium that has the most seals and the most whales in Ontario, and that's James and Hudson bays. If anybody wants to come and watch a live whale in Ontario, there are whales in this province, and a lot of people forget that. We have belugas. All

along James and Hudson bays, you have beluga whales that are quite something to see.

At a particular time in the year, later on in July, you will see belugas that will gather at the mouths of rivers by the hundreds and the thousands eating up the fish as they come down the rivers and eating whatever feed they can get off the rivers as the water runs into James Bay or Hudson Bay.

You're talking about pretty big rivers. You're talking rivers bigger than most rivers you see here in southern Ontario. It's quite something to see. I've seen it myself, flying up on the James Bay. Especially north of Attawapiskat is where you tend to see most of them, but you'll see them as far down as the Moose River.

If you book at the Eco Lodge—call my friend Greg at 658-6400. You can book a beautiful room at the Eco Lodge, and at particular times of the year you're actually able to see belugas and seals that exist in the province of Ontario. I'm just here to say there are other ways to see these animals in the wild, and if you want to come to James Bay and Hudson Bay, we've got room for you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege and an honour to rise today and speak about Bill 80.

I want to tell you that in my opinion, Bill 80 is really about doing the right thing. We all know that marine mammals are complex, diverse and magnificent creatures with unique needs that require the right standards of care. If you've ever seen an orca or a killer whale out there in the wild, you will understand what I mean.

I have spent much time on the west coast of British Columbia and have spent many hours in boats actually at times being surrounded by orcas or killer whales, and I can tell you that there is nothing more amazing than to be surrounded by a pod, to see how they are matrilineal in their behaviour, and to watch them as they take care of each other and interact with each other socially and sensitively to those of us who are in the boat—and in some ways, feel like they are looking after us when you're out there on the ocean.

I feel that this bill really drives home the idea that we also have a responsibility of our own towards these magnificent mammals.

If Bill 80 would be passed, it would prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales or killer whales in Ontario, and I really do think this is the right thing to do.

We've also introduced the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, Bill 80, because we want to make sure that we are putting the right kinds of programs in place to ensure that we are creating a framework to establish the right protections for marine mammals that are out there.

We would create a framework to establish animal welfare committees, for example, because this is going to be key in ensuring that we have in place rules that will look forward in terms of how, when these animals may

be in captivity, they are treated fairly, kindly and sensitively.

I feel very strongly about this bill, and I'm very pleased to support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to provide some additional comments to my colleague the member from—

Mr. Norm Miller: Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Parry Sound–Muskoka.

There are a number of issues with Bill 80 that raise some concerns with me. Of course, notwithstanding the example given with James Bay, we are talking about one orca, one animal. In part of Bill 80, subsection 11.4, we basically transfer the responsibility for oversight to the OSPCA: “An inspector or an agent of the society may, without a warrant, enter and inspect a building ... to determine whether the standards of care or administrative requirements prescribed ... are being complied with....”

I'm not a vet. I don't pretend to understand what is appropriate animal welfare. However, I do have some vets in the family. Most veterinarians who practise in the province of Ontario end up specializing. I actually have a member of my family, who does not practise in Ontario, who does fish pathology. He trained an additional two years to do that, and all he does is related to fish health, fish habitat.

I'm concerned: When we are talking about one animal, where are we going to find the necessary skills for someone to actually assess whether, in this case, Kiska at Marineland is being properly cared for? I don't think we can just leave it in the capable hands of the OSPCA because they're not looking at any other orcas. They will not have the necessary aptitude to be able to look at it and make the assessment and say yes or no. That's my concern with Bill 80.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to congratulate the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka on his well-researched remarks.

As I was listening to the member, I was reflecting on the debate that we held in this Legislature not so long ago about the Making Healthier Choices Act. Many members stood up and talked about their own experience, sometimes as former smokers, sometimes as children of smokers, and how as a society we have evolved. Our thinking has evolved to the point where we recognize the harm that smoking causes and we have taken measures as a society, as legislators. As a result, rates of smoking have gone down.

1410

For me, this bill represents a similar evolution of our awareness of the pain and suffering that we are causing to orcas when we hold them in captivity simply for the purpose of entertaining us. Bill 80 is a bill that will increase the size of enclosures that orcas are held in, and it would also limit sound exposure for the animals. It would prohibit the possession and breeding of orcas in Ontario except for any orca already in captivity in March

2015, which, as we know, is a single orca, Kiska, who is being held at Marineland.

I really appreciated the comments from the member for Timmins–James Bay, who talked about the ways that we can see these animals in the wild and what a transformative experience it can be for us to see the majesty of these animals in their natural habitat. As a school board trustee, I've always wondered what we are teaching children when we tell them it's okay to put animals in captivity for our own entertainment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I believe that concludes the time we have available for questions and comments, and so I return to the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka for his response.

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the members from London West, Dufferin–Caledon, Timmins–James Bay and—Kitchener Centre, I believe, was the other riding of the members who made comments.

Yes, the member from Timmins–James Bay certainly gave a very good sales pitch for his riding and for seeing whales in their natural environment, which certainly is the number one place to see them. He did a good job of talking about how you can fly into Moosonee or, I guess, take the train into Moosonee, and go across to Moose Factory where the Eco Lodge is located. I have stayed there one or two nights on committee business once. It's a great spot. It sounds like you can make arrangements to actually go out on the water of James Bay to get an opportunity to see whales in the wild, so that sounds like a great tourism opportunity for northern Ontario. I know how popular it is out in Newfoundland, the one place where I've had an opportunity to go out into the ocean to see whales in their natural environment.

Unfortunately, I can't make that pitch in Parry Sound–Muskoka. We do have some beautiful bodies of water—of course, Georgian Bay and the many, many lakes of Parry Sound–Muskoka—but there are no whales in Parry Sound–Muskoka. There are lots of other good reasons to come to visit, though, so I'd certainly encourage everyone to visit Parry Sound–Muskoka and enjoy kayaking up Georgian Bay or whatever else might be of interest to you.

I think the member from Dufferin–Caledon certainly raised some concerns with regard to the expertise that might not be within the OSPCA in dealing with this, as this bill deals with the one orca that is in captivity within the boundaries of the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm pleased to have the chance to speak to this bill brought forward by the government, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act. This bill deals with issues of animals in captivity, with a particular and specific reference to orcas, or, as they're often called, killer whales.

Speaker, in Ontario we have many facilities where wild animals are kept captive. Many families have enjoyed a day out with them. We and our kids can get a

chance to see and learn about animals that we are likely never to see in their natural habitat. By seeing and meeting these animals in the flesh and learning more about them, many people, we believe, generally become more understanding of the part a species plays in making our world tick, and this, as a result, raises a broader concern for the well-being of all animals.

They point to the research that is done and breeding programs to protect and enhance endangered species, but unfortunately that is not always the case. There are around 50 or 60 zoos and aquariums in Ontario, but less than 10 of them are accredited by the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. For the rest, there is little of them to be governed.

While seeing these exotic animals can be fun and interesting, it cannot compare to seeing them in the wild. Speaker, while I visit Florida, I always take a deep-sea-fishing trip. Probably one of the best parts of that trip is watching the dolphins as they swim and play in the waves that our boat is making. Now, of course, dolphins aren't good for fishing, because we know you're not catching a fish when there's a dolphin around, but watching them as they are out in their own natural habitat, swimming and jumping just as if you were watching them in Marineland or wherever—the experience is completely different. Knowing that they're doing all of these fun, playful acts out in their own habitat is absolutely amazing.

The fact is that when animals or marine mammals are confined to a space in a zoo or an aquarium, they are captive. They aren't free to be themselves, to roam, to find their own food and to engage in social relationships.

As I mentioned, this bill makes specific reference to killer whales. Passing this bill will make it illegal to possess or breed an orca in Ontario, with two exceptions. In the case of an orca that was in captivity before the bill was introduced, the orca will be allowed to remain where it is. In the case of a person who possesses an orca after the introduction of this bill but before it is passed into law, the person can keep the orca for another six months after the bill receives royal assent.

Let's think for a second what the natural life of a killer whale is like. They live in pods of two to 30 whales, sometimes as many as 50, and they swim up to 100 miles in a day. They prefer deep water, dive to depths of 500 feet, and usually spend 10% to 20% of their time at the surface. Some killer whales stay with their families for their lives as they travel in pods and sometimes join other pods for hunting or socializing. Each pod has its own dialect for communicating.

If we think about that, we're saying here that they live in pods of two to 30 whales, sometimes as many as 50, and they swim up to 100 miles a day. How could that possibly happen when we're keeping them out of their natural habitat and we're keeping them hostage for our own fun and entertainment? I'm sorry. I'm sorry that we, as a people, have decided that it's okay to do that to animals. I'll be happy for the day when that doesn't happen any longer.

They are complicated creatures who need a huge amount of space. As much as we like to see them, we have a responsibility to consider whether we can justify keeping them captive and in an enclosed space such as an aquarium.

The member from Timmins–James Bay talked about the beluga whales that you can see if you go to James Bay. This summer, I was actually planning a trip that would take me to Tadoussac, which is just on the other side of Quebec and the St. Lawrence. You can go there and you can see the whales in their own nature and their own space. I'm so looking forward to that day when I can watch the whales being in their own environment. I just think it will be quite magnificent to watch those amazing creatures.

The University of Guelph Animal Interest Network has this to say about the pros and cons of zoos, and I think this can be extended to aquariums:

“Zoos have the benefit of educating the public about species and the problems they face in their native environments. They also serve as a source of revenue to fund conservation effects. They serve as an emotional bridge for people to feel connected with animals and to better appreciate them. Zoos also serve as havens of protection for species who face insecurity in their homelands. They also allow people to study given animals in an environment where they can be easily observed.

“However, zoos also have their drawbacks. Zoos will never be able to completely replicate a given species' natural environment (especially in terms of space for larger animals). The degree to which some zoos contribute to education or conservation is debatable. Captive animals become acclimatized to living among humans and are dependent on them for survival, making it difficult to return to the wild. With endangered species, it is difficult managing breeding programs in zoos. Capturing wild animals to live in zoos also depletes the wild population, disrupting social structures in native animal collectives and possibly contributing to their insecurity.”

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This bill has taken quite some time to get to this Legislature. In the summer of 2012, the Toronto Star ran a series of articles about the treatment of marine mammals at Marineland in Niagara Falls, and a petition of 77,000 signatures had been presented to the Premier. In response, in October 2012, the then Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services said that the government would be introducing legislation in the spring. I assumed at the time that she meant the following spring, as most people did. I suppose she should have checked in with the Premier at the time because, within five days, he undemocratically shut down the Legislature and announced that he'd be running away from the mess that he created under his watch.

With the Legislature shutting down and the Liberals preoccupied with their internal shifting around of the deck chairs, I can understand why she didn't manage to introduce the legislation the following spring, but she could have at least got things moving. That October of

2012, she seemed to have an idea of where the government was headed. At the time, an article in the media said, “The Ontario government vowed Wednesday to strengthen its animal welfare laws following allegations of mistreatment of animals at one of the province’s amusement parks.

“Community Safety Minister Madeleine Meilleur said the province plans to introduce legislation by the spring that will beef up regulations to ensure the safety and health of animals kept in zoos and aquariums, including Marineland.”

A year later, in October 2013, the same minister did get around to appointing a committee headed up by David Rosen, a marine mammal expert at the University of British Columbia. According to their report—this is a quote: “This committee was convened by the government of Ontario’s Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services in October 2013 to (1) evaluate Ontario’s current regulations pertaining to the care of marine mammals in captivity for public display, (2) consider whether current regulations are sufficient to ensure the care of these marine mammals, and, if not, to (3) suggest how existing regulations could be improved. Additionally, the committee was asked to (4) give special consideration to the welfare of cetaceans in public display facilities.”

The committee submitted its final report in May of last year and has apparently provided the basis for some of the changes to come. The purpose talks about regulation rather than legislation, and a lot of the meat of any changes will be covered in regulation. So when this bill passes, the people of Ontario will be watching to see what those regulations are and whether or not they are sufficient.

The committee left no doubt that changes were certainly needed. To quote them again: “While we have given special consideration to the welfare of captive cetaceans according to the objectives set forth for the committee, we have considered all marine mammals in our review of existing regulations. It is our opinion that the present standards of care that apply to marine mammals in public display facilities are insufficient under the current Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. It is our opinion, based upon our review of the regulations and the available scientific evidence, that adequate care in captivity requires the adoption of an additional set of standards of care to address needs specific to this group of animals.”

The regulations to follow will provide rules regarding the keeping and caring of other marine mammals, such as walruses and dolphins, but only orcas will be banned. Other whales such as belugas will be able to be held captive in Ontario aquariums.

Many people in Ontario enjoy the experience of going to an aquarium. The delight on the faces of adults and children alike is unmistakable, but there is also a significant number of our population who are deeply concerned about the treatment experienced by those marine mammals. We, in the NDP, believe those attractions can thrive if the viewing public feels assured that effective

rules and good governance are in place, rules that are grounded in science and animal welfare.

The committee recommends that each facility must have an animal welfare committee that is responsible for all aspects of animal care and how they are used. They point out that it is important that the committee includes an external expert on marine mammals.

While the committee would report to the administrator of the facility, it must be fully independent of the administrator. That, I would say, is absolutely essential. Any animal welfare committee must have animal welfare as its number one priority and must be free to investigate and report without any fear of repercussion.

Dr. Rosen’s report suggested that a whistleblower policy written and posted at the facility would be helpful to the animal welfare committee’s work so that any concerns raised by staff about animal care are addressed and recorded properly.

The report offered other recommendations, including:

- an up-to-date provincial inventory of all animals, that includes lineage, acquisitions, births and deaths with causes when known, should be kept;

- a written veterinary care program should be developed in collaboration with veterinary experts and including a protocol for preventative medicine;

- water supply should, at all times, be reliable, with chlorine levels and bacterial counts that meet provincial standards;

- proper noise restrictions and appropriate light levels should be enforced; and

- there should be regulations on the handling and display of marine mammals and provisions for social and environmental enrichment.

Speaker, I want to talk for a minute about the idea of the provincial inventory in the broader context of exotic animals. Earlier I mentioned that a few of Ontario’s zoos are accredited by the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. In addition to those accredited facilities, we have many more that are often called “roadside zoos.” These are smaller facilities that can house lions, tigers, monkeys and other assorted animals that are aren’t native to Ontario or Canada, but, for some reason, they have no laws to govern how they operate or how animals are controlled. We don’t even require owners to have a licence. We require dog owners to have a licence, but not a lion owner. That seems unbelievable, and I think it’s completely unacceptable.

This isn’t a new matter by any stretch of the imagination. The member from Brant raised concerns about this a few years back and introduced a private member’s bill to address it. Unfortunately, that bill didn’t make it past first reading.

It is illegal in Ontario to keep native species as pets: foxes, squirrels, wolves—those types of animals. But when it comes to exotic animals, there is nothing unless a municipality has passed a bylaw that outlaws the keeping of those non-native species. Like I said, Speaker, lions and tigers and bears, oh my. There is nothing that stops people, unless the particular municipality has something

to prohibit the keeping of them. So I think that's something that needs to be looked at.

A couple of years ago, it was reported that of Ontario's 444 municipalities, less than 70 had a bylaw relating to the ownership of exotic animals. Even in those that do have a bylaw, the public is often very unaware of it.

In 2012, there was a media report from Muskoka of a cougar on the loose. One resident heard her dog yelping, and when she went to investigate, she saw a cougar with its teeth sunk into her pet husky. The police were called, who shot the cougar dead, but it was too late to save her dog, which had to be put down that night.

The dead cougar was taken to the University of Guelph for an autopsy. What they discovered was that this animal had most certainly been in captivity. It was well-fed and had been de-clawed. But there was no way to tell where it came from. There was a roadside zoo near where the attack had happened—a small facility with six lions, one jaguar and two cougars—but the owner strongly denied that the cougar that was on the loose was his.

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Just across the road from the zoo, another resident had a small dog-breeding operation. Every year, that facility had to be inspected. All the dogs are microchipped, so that if one does wander off, the owner always knows where it is and how to get it back. Why would we have stronger restrictions on dogs than we do on tigers?

There have been other reports of totally inadequate fencing at some of those roadside zoos, and indeed, some humans have died as a result. Between 1985 and 2010, there were media reports of 11 separate tiger escapes and four lion incidents. That is the strange, uncontrolled world of animals in captivity that we have, living here in Ontario today. In this, Ontario is the outlier in Canada. We are the only province that lacks legislation regarding the ownership of exotic animals.

Across Canada, the laws vary from province to province. In Alberta and PEI, it is illegal to own a pet that is considered to be dangerous. In British Columbia, they maintain a list of controlled alien species that includes the types of animals I have discussed. If you want to own an animal that's on that list, you have to apply for a permit. But only in Ontario is there nothing in place to record and control the ownership of exotic animals. It's time that we did something here in Ontario to bring some common sense to our laws regarding exotic animals.

In closing, we see this bill before us, we know that it's an important bill and we know that we need to do something regarding our orcas, captivity, how we go about that, how we do that and how we maintain jobs at Marineland, because it is a wonderful place to bring your family, right? We all know that. Like I said earlier in my speech, when I was a child, I skipped to Marineland. I was so excited to see the whales, the dolphins and all the wonderful animals that are there. Going to the Toronto zoo, of course, I tiptoed through that a little bit more, because there are snakes and stuff like that throughout that wonderful place.

But we have to have something in place to ensure that all these wonderful creatures we have in captivity that are there for our enjoyment, unless they're there as a rescue or they're being treated because they can't be sent back into the wild—it's our responsibility to make sure that people are getting it right, that they're making sure that their levels are adequate and their habitats are appropriate. It's our responsibility as legislators to make sure we get it right.

We know this has been going on for a long time in Ontario, and it's time to make sure that we put things in place to ensure the safety of all animals, whether it be a rare species of toad or frog that we can see at the Ontario Science Centre, or a large orca that we travel to Marineland to see. I think the member from James Bay said it best: Take a ride up to the north and see the belugas in their own space and enjoy them there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I'm happy to stand here and add a few comments to Bill 80, which is being put forward by the government at this time. I listened carefully to my colleague from Hamilton Mountain. She made reference to the work that the government has already done in overhauling the OSPCA Act.

I would just remind everybody in this chamber that when that was done in 2009, it was something that was being done for the first time in generations. The minister of the day was implementing stronger animal protection and stiffer penalties, including jail terms, fines and potential lifetime ownership bans, for those animals that were abused at the time. It enabled the OSPCA to inspect places where animals were kept for entertainment, exhibition, boarding, sale or hire.

I would say to you that this is the next step in protecting animals in our province, and especially, in this case, mammals. As we know, animal welfare is a key priority of the government. Marine mammals are very complex. They are diverse, and they are magnificent creatures, as was described both by the member from Hamilton Mountain and the member for Timmins—James Bay, inviting us up to his area so we could view it firsthand. This is why the recently introduced OSPCA Act was amended, and we're amending it again, this time to try and improve the controls that we have out there.

This particular act will probably create some of the strongest standards in Canada. We're looking forward to the support of all members who sit in this House so that this bill will go through very quickly and be adopted in law.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Robert Bailey: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise and make a few comments to the member from Hamilton Mountain, who had a very thorough overview of this bill, and of course of marine mammals in particular, and other animals that are kept in captivity.

I too have visited a number of these institutions over the years: Marineland, and there were a couple of others.

I was too young and it was too long ago to remember. I'm getting a little short in memory now. I've always thought that we should probably have more control. I have a lot of concerns from stories in the news media as time went on, and probably it's time for something like this.

I was very interested when the member for Timmins–James Bay talked about how we actually—I'll tell you, I learned something there. I didn't realize that these kinds of mammals were in the wild in Canada, in James Bay and Hudson Bay. It's certainly an eye-opener for me, and I intend to take him up on that sometime. I'd like to go up there—not in the winter, obviously. But when the weather is a little nicer, I'd certainly like to go up and see these animals at play. I think that's probably a hidden secret that a lot of people don't know about and is probably something that the member for Timmins–James Bay should talk a little more about and promote here in this House so that some of us members, when summer rolls around, could take a trip up there and actually go and see them.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It's an honour for me to rise and offer some thoughts about the remarks that were given to us by the member for Hamilton Mountain.

As she spoke about roadside zoos, I was reminded of my own experience as a parent volunteer when my daughter was in grade 1, I think it was. For the end-of-year school trip, we visited a roadside zoo, which was the saddest, most disturbing experience that I have had as a parent: to see those poor, tattered, sad-looking animals confined in dirty cages—no oversight, no educational value to the experience. I really worried about what kind of message we were conveying to the children who were on this class trip.

The member for Hamilton Mountain talked about the widespread concern that exists within Ontario about the humane treatment of animals, and marine animals in particular. One of the cautions I have about this amended act is that it provides for some care standards around the use of marine animals such as walrus and dolphins, but it continues to allow other animals, such as belugas, to be held captive in marine parks and aquariums.

I would hope that marine parks and aquariums in this province take some lessons from what we have done in London with Storybook Gardens, which has been a well-known attraction within our city for years. Some of you may be familiar with the iconic story of Slippery the Seal from the 1950s. Storybook Gardens has eliminated any animals in captivity in that attraction, and that is a lesson that I hope other marine parks and animal parks will follow.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We have time for one last question or comment.

Mr. John Fraser: It's a pleasure to respond to the comments from the member from Hamilton Mountain. I'm encouraged, actually, by the support I hear across the

House for this bill. I do hear what she said in terms of exotic animals and other animals in captivity. I think that there has to be a balance that exists out there with the humane treatment of animals to what our needs are. A number of the members commented on the educational purposes of things like aquariums and zoos. So it's important for us to create that balance.

I think the bill here does talk about creating a regulatory framework for marine mammals. I think that that's very important. I do believe that places like Marineland—I mentioned in previous comments that my oldest daughter, Kirsten, who's now 36, is still holding me to a promise to take her to Marineland, and I've had to make that commitment; I'm making it again today in Hansard, if you're out there, Kirsten.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: And for your grandson.

Mr. John Fraser: And for my grandson, Vaughan; yes, that's true.

But we have to make sure that the balance that exists there is that we are treating them as we would treat each other. We share this planet with the animal kingdom. The member made a comment about how we can't bring our own native animals into captivity; I had some experience with that with a baby deer that was brought into a home just outside the riding and what followed on that. That deer was being treated very humanely, but there was an outcome to that. The important thing is to focus on how, as the government, we did put forward legislation. We did put stiffer penalties in. We are doing this. It's continual work to make sure that we are treating animals humanely and that we hold people to account. I appreciate the members' comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): All right. That concludes our questions and comments. I return to the member for Hamilton Mountain for her reply.

Miss Monique Taylor: Thank you, Speaker. I'd like to thank the members from Scarborough–Rouge River and Sarnia–Lambton, my seatmate from London West and the member from Ottawa South. Some really great comments have been made. The member from Scarborough–Rouge River talked about 2009, when protection was brought forward. Again, we have protection in 2015. The member from Ottawa South talked about how it's continued work. So I hope that it is continued work and that we really do look at how we're governing and how we're overseeing these zoos and aquariums.

Like I said, we have 50 to 60 zoos and aquariums across Ontario, and only 10 of them are accredited by the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. I think that's very concerning.

The member from London West talked about a field trip with her daughter when she was young, going to a roadside zoo. I did go to one of those roadside zoos not too far from my riding when my daughter was quite young, and I swore I would never go back there again. It was absolutely horrific to see those animals haggard and just really not well kept at all. I think that if we had stronger penalties and if we were on top of the inspections and making sure that these animals that we're

keeping for our entertainment are loved and nourished and treated the way we would expect our home pets to be, then that would be a better day.

I'm happy to see that we're moving forward, that we're building into legislation and regulation new ways to ensure that animals—like I said, whether they're a toad that we see at an Ontario conservation area or whether they're a wonderful, beautiful orca and dolphin that we're seeing at Marineland, that they're being well cared for.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate.

Mr. Han Dong: It's my pleasure to debate Bill 80 in this Legislature. I'll be sharing my time with the members from Kitchener Centre, Scarborough–Agincourt and the Minister of Education. I'm very pleased to hear all of the support for this bill in this Legislature. I know that, if passed, Bill 80 would prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario. Additionally, the bill will create a framework to establish an animal welfare committee, as recommended in the UBC report.

I must share with this House that not too long ago I watched a documentary that talked about orca whales, actually, in comparison to great white sharks. Scientists observed a rare scene of an orca whale holding a great white shark upside down and hunting it as its prey. Later on, the scientists found out that if you place sharks upside down you put them in tonic immobility. Basically, they pass out. Somehow the orca whale found out about that and used it as a very effective technique to hunt down these great white sharks.

What is even more fascinating is that they develop this hunting culture and pass it on to the next generation. So the hunting culture of one pod could be very different from the hunting culture of another.

We've all heard about the orca rushing the seals onto the beach in order to capture them. That hunting culture is very, very different. That proves to us, again, that orcas are highly social and smart, and they are truly beautiful animals.

We can learn so much about them in the wild. I fully appreciate the fact that we are given this opportunity to see them when they are in captivity, but what we get out of it is very superficial: their appearance, their movement, the fact that they can learn from us, they can move, they can respond to their trainers. But we lose the opportunity to learn how they talk to each other, how they pass on their knowledge and how they hunt as group. All these wonderful things could be observed in nature.

I must confess that I, too, was fascinated by orcas and was paying to be entertained. Now I think back, and it was somewhat superficial, because under the surface of this lovely scene of everyone enjoying with their kids, with their families, the performance by an orca, there is a cruel fact. The cruel fact is that they're in captivity, whether it's the stress, the chemicals in the water, the noise from the audience, it is, in fact, shortening their lifespan. I think that cruelty is something we don't want to promote and pass on to our next generation.

I'm extremely proud of the government and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services for introducing this bill, and I'm very happy to hear all the support in the House. I think that we're elected to pursue a just, fair and sustainable society, and this is our opportunity to show our kids, and many generations to come, our respect for a way of life and for life itself.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Kitchener Centre.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I'm very pleased to enter this discussion today on Bill 80, amendments to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. If it is passed, these amendments are going to ban the possession or breeding of additional orcas in Ontario. That would be effective immediately. It would introduce penalties of up to \$60,000 and/or two years in jail for breaching this law, and it would allow the government to recommend administrative rules for animal care and record-keeping for businesses that do have marine mammals.

It should be noted that Ontario currently does have the strongest animal protection laws in Canada, and we would be the first jurisdiction in our country to set standards of care for marine mammals when these amendments are introduced this summer.

So what exactly are we talking about? These amendments target the size of the tanks that are used to house marine mammals. They also look at the environmental conditions, like the water quality, the noise and the lighting, that these creatures must live with. It considers social groupings, and the way they are handled and displayed to the public.

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We have heard some of the special features of orcas, and I'd like to stress them again. They are the largest of all marine mammals that are kept in captivity. They range from six to nine metres in length and four to seven tonnes in size. They can dive as deep as 500 feet or more. They can swim up to 100 miles per day. In the wild, orcas travel in pods of five to 30 whales, although some pods do combine to form larger groups of 100 whales or even larger.

But, Mr. Speaker, the practice of keeping killer whales in captivity is considered controversial by many. At aquariums and amusement parks around the world, there are currently 57 orcas in captivity, and here in Canada we have one at Marineland.

These exhibitions first started in the early 1960s when killer whales were captured in their natural habitat. Live captures peaked in the early 1970s, but many theme parks now maintain their population with captive breeding and artificial insemination.

These mammals are highly intelligent. They're easily trained and they appear to have no natural predators, as they are at the top of the food chain in their natural habitat. They're very social animals with sophisticated behaviour, vocal abilities and hunting skills.

But in captivity we've seen many issues with their health and their behaviour. Orcas in captivity can experi-

ence dorsal fin collapse. We see this in 100% of all captive males and also with female whales. The dorsal fin—this is the fin that protrudes on the back—is held erect by collagen. Scientists with the National Marine Fisheries Service have reported that the possible reasons for the fin collapse include changes in the water bacteria caused by the dietary changes when they're in captivity; they're getting less activity in a confined space and this is lowering blood pressure; and overheating of the collagen when the dorsal fin is exposed to air.

We have heard of attacks on humans by orcas housed in aquatic theme parks. Since the 1970s, nearly two dozen people and trainers have been attacked by killer whales. Some of these attacks have resulted in deaths. This aggressive behaviour includes ramming in the water, biting during feeding or holding a person under water. Studies of killer whales reveal that this aggressive behaviour is tied to confinement. When a highly intelligent creature which lives in a complex social group is separated from its family and then faces a lifetime confined to a concrete tank which does not resemble its natural order, should we be surprised by this aggressive behaviour?

The new standards of care that we're talking about are based on recommendations made in a University of British Columbia report. It was prepared by a team of scientists led by Dr. David Rosen, who is a well-known marine biologist. We also have a technical advisory group, which includes experts in science, industry, advocacy and enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, there are questions surrounding Canada's Marineland, which houses marine mammals. We recognize the importance of this attraction in the Niagara Falls area as a tourist draw, and it contributes greatly to the local economy, so it's very encouraging to see Marineland's willingness to work with us as we move forward to ensuring best standards for care of these magnificent creatures.

I want to conclude with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi, who said, "The greatness of a nation ... can be judged by the way its animals are treated." Our government is committed to protecting orcas that are currently in captivity; again, you heard that it's just one, Kiska, at Marineland. We also want to show leadership concerning these great creatures as we move forward with Bill 80.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to add my voice to support Bill 80. As my colleague from Scarborough—Rouge River said earlier, our government is committed to animal welfare as one of our priorities. I want to tell the audience who is watching here today as well as my colleagues here in the chamber the history of this particular legislation.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Kitchener Centre talked about the technical advisory group that is providing advice to the government in terms of the whole issue of animal welfare. But going back to 2009, our government has been implementing stronger animal protection legislation and stiffer penalties, including jail time, fines

and potential lifetime ownership bans for those who abuse animals.

We have put additional oversight and rules in place for roadside zoos.

We also required veterinarians to report suspected abuse and neglect and introduced measures to protect them from liability for doing so. We've heard that from time to time veterinarians have to report suspected abuse—because we know there's a relationship between animal abuse and abuse of women as well as children.

We also enabled the OSPCA to inspect places where animals are kept for entertainment, exhibition, boarding, sale or hire. We have heard those nightmarish stories on the front pages of newspapers from time to time. Giving extra authority to the OSPCA for inspections and furthering their ability to do their job is the right thing to do.

We also introduced additional penalties for those harming law enforcement service animals, such as dogs and horses; again, protecting animal welfare.

In 2012, the then Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, who is now the Attorney General, set out a framework to further strengthen animal welfare enforcement with a three-point plan: to improve province-wide enforcement of animal protection measures in the OSPCA Act, as well as strengthen the governance of the OSPCA; we also considered options for tougher inspections and registration of zoos and aquariums, because we have heard, although it's just one orca out there, there are other animals we are talking about every day—because most of us in this chamber have animals in our own families, right? They're part of the family. So at the end of the day, yes, there's conversation about one orca—animal welfare across the province, Mr. Speaker. And we have also created new regulations to further protect marine mammals in captivity.

Since that time, our government has been busy in terms of consulting but more importantly creating legislation to protect animal welfare. The proposed legislation, if passed, will strengthen animal protection across the entire province. Furthermore, there's also a big portion of this particular bill that talks about enforcement, because at the end of the day, you can have all kinds of legislation but without the teeth of enforcement it's going to be problematic for those officers of the court.

I'm going to encourage all members of this Legislature not just to support the bill but to bring this bill to a committee so we can have further consultation and bring this bill back for third reading before we recess for the summer.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to rise and participate in the debate on Bill 80 this afternoon.

If passed, Bill 80 would prohibit the future breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario. It would also create a framework to establish animal welfare committees, as recommended in one of the research reports that we received.

The committees would ensure the planning, protection and oversight for the marine mammals' care, and that would include animal care plans, access to veterinarians with expertise in marine mammals which, as the member from Dufferin–Caledon mentioned, is nontrivial—trying to find people who specialize in marine mammals—and finally enhanced record-keeping.

We've already actually established a technical advisory group of scientific experts, industry enforcement and advocacy experts to give advice on what these standards of care should look like. If Bill 80 passes, the plan would be that the proposed standards would be publicly posted for comment. Again, if the legislation is passed, then we would hope that we would have the regulatory support for that, the detailed standards of care, for the summer of 2015. Then facilities in Ontario which do hold marine mammals would need to come into line with the new standards, with enforcement going to the OSPCA under the OSPCA Act.

So let me tell you a little bit about what we are thinking about with the new standards for marine mammals. Of course, marine mammals come in a variety of sizes. So we're dealing with quite a range of animals that show up in various sorts of aquariums around the province.

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In October 2003, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, which has responsibility for the OSPCA, asked David Rosen, a marine biologist from the University of British Columbia, to lead a team of experts to prepare a report on the care and maintenance of marine mammals in captivity. Anybody who is interested can go to the ministry website and have a look at the report for themselves, but some of the highlights: first of all, the observation that "Facilities that hold marine mammals must meet their physical and psychological environmental needs." When we're thinking about animal care standards, we usually put an emphasis on physical standards, but we understand when we're dealing with marine mammals that we're dealing with very intelligent, sophisticated, social creatures, so we need to think about their behavioural requirements, not just their physical requirements. For example, in the environment in which marine mammals live, they need to have sufficient space for species-appropriate behaviour such as swimming and playing and interacting with each other. I think one of my colleagues talked earlier about the issues around quality of water supply, because if you live in water, obviously the water quality is integral to good health. But if you're going to hold these animals in captivity, you really do need to think about what they are going to do. They aren't just going to swim around in a circle all day. They actually do need to have the ability, as much as possible, to interact as they would in the wild.

For those of us who have had the pleasure of going whale watching on either the Pacific coast or the Atlantic coast—and one I hadn't thought of, the Hudson Bay and James Bay coasts, so we'll add that to where we should go whale watching—what you often see when you go

whale watching isn't just one whale, but a pod of whales, and how they interact, mother and baby or just a group of whales. So how do you arrange for that sort of treatment in some sort of an aquarium?

We also need to think about the safety of the general public, particularly if these are large marine mammals, because these are large animals and they can do harm to other creatures. We just heard about how orcas can outsmart sharks, but they're also smart enough to outsmart people. So we need to figure out how you handle the safety requirements for the audience.

But the UBC report gave us some direction around how we would have new standards for marine mammals such as dolphins, beluga whales, walruses, those sorts of marine mammals. I think generally you could summarize those as standards for the size of pools, which would be very species-specific, environmental considerations such as water bacterial content, noise and lighting, regulations for the feeding, care, handling and display of the mammals, and, as I said before, sufficiently large facilities so that you can have social interactions taking place among the animals.

Those are the things that we would be looking at coming out of this act with respect to the animals that would be allowed to be held in captivity in future, which is the marine mammal species other than the orca, the killer whale, which comes into a different category where we would be banning captivity in the future.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd like to add my comments to all those who spoke on this issue across the floor, and I've taken some interesting notes on what has been said.

If you were in the farming business, as I was at one time, you'd work out the square footage per animal—this was all engineered stuff. You'd work out how much room a pig needs or a cow needs, or whatever, to be successful. I'm certain that this could be done for these creatures we have in Marineland, or such places. We could study their habitats and certainly know what they would require to be healthy and content. I'm afraid those figures would scare the daylights out of you, because these animals want to be in the sea. They want wide open spaces.

I did listen with interest to those who have been lucky enough to go to the coasts and watch whales in their natural habitat. I got to thinking: When you're watching whales, you're searching around in the ocean, and you come across the pod. Some of them are going to take off on you. I have seen pictures of people watching whales, chasing these whales, who are trying to get away, because they don't want to be watched; they want to live in their own private world. Sometimes I've seen pictures where there are baby whales with them and mothers are trying to protect them, and yet the whale-watchers are still chasing them and trying to get pictures of them. Maybe that's something we should consider that should be curbed—doing those types of things—when we talk about the welfare of animals.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. John Vanthof: As always, it's an honour to be able to stand in this House and, today, speak on Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, specifically regarding orca whales.

I have listened intently. Most of the members—the members from Kitchener Centre, Scarborough—Agincourt and the Minister of Education—brought up a similar theme, and it struck me as poignant in another area: Orcas are highly intelligent, potentially aggressive and need enough room to be socially active. They need to have interaction with other animals of their own species. That's how they live best.

I agree. I'm not opposing this bill. If you really think that through, it perhaps answers the question why we have trouble when our prisons are overcrowded. We also are fairly aggressive and highly intelligent, and sometimes we wonder why, when people come out of our penal system, they aren't rehabilitated. Well, I think, on the other side, they're answering the question. As we look at orcas, we should also—this is a different issue; I'm very much aware of that. But as we look at orcas, we should also look at people and see what we could be doing better to make sure that people interact better among each other, and that is one of the cases that many people face. Also, a lot of people in lower-income brackets get very frustrated because there is no way out.

We can talk about orcas in the abstract, because, for many of us, it is in the abstract—it's a very important issue. But for most of us, people aren't in the abstract, and I think we should think of that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Hon. Bill Mauro: Let me begin by thanking all those who have spoken on this bill this afternoon, and offer my congratulations to our Minister Naqvi for bringing forward this legislation, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, or Bill 80, which would prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario.

Speaker, I think that the minister has struck on a good piece of legislation here. He has struck a chord. I think it is likely—I don't know for sure—a piece of legislation that is going to receive all-party support. We'll look forward to seeing if that is the case, and we would look forward to hopefully seeing this legislation passed, because I think it has struck a chord, not just here, but in the broader public sector.

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Speaker, one of the things you first learn, at least I certainly did, when you are first elected to public office—1997 for me, to city council in Thunder Bay—is that when it comes to issues related to animals, people tend to be more passionate. They tend to be more vocal. They tend to better attend public sessions, I would say, than on a host of other issues that you might think might garner that kind of attention. There is something, when it

comes to issues related to animals and animal welfare, that really sparks an interest in people. There is a relationship between people and animals that is sometimes difficult to put into words, but it's there. We all feel it, we all know it, we've all had those experiences, and I think we can see this in this legislation, so I congratulate our minister for bringing it forward.

I would say, as well, that this is not the first issue that we have really brought forward when it comes to issues related to animal welfare in the province of Ontario. There's a long list of things, going back as far as 2009, when we amended the OSPCA Act and brought in a new host of regulatory and legislative changes that speak to our interest in animal welfare in the province of Ontario. This is another one of them, and I thank the minister for bringing it forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Certainly this legislation does strike a bit of a chord amongst some members of the general public. I assume this was done by design or would be the reason for introducing legislation like this. There's a lot of emotion involved in these kinds of discussions.

Here we are on the cusp of yet another provincial budget coming forward. We're not talking about the budget; we're talking about marine mammals. I do find this a little passing strange. Most of the focus is on the killer whale, which is a marine mammal, but that's really a very small component of this legislation. I know members opposite are playing to the audience out there, but much of the impact of this bill goes beyond one killer whale down in the Niagara Falls area. Much of the impact will be found in the regulation. The regulation is not explained to us. It obviously will expand the powers of the minister considerably.

Over a number of decades now—we debate legislation in here. We don't debate regulation, by and large. By and large, elected members don't travel the province explaining to people what is in the regulation. We have an awful lot of regulation. It seems to vary from 365,000 up to 500,000 different regulatory powers in the province of Ontario, and the concern is that regulation is brought in to take decision-making power away from people who probably should be taking the responsibility on themselves.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Education, to reply.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you to the members from Perth—Wellington and Haldimand—Norfolk, the Minister of Natural Resources and the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane for their remarks. I was struck by the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane speaking about the effects of captivity on all sorts of mammals, including humans. I suppose maybe that's why we focus particularly on the negative effects of solitary confinement on individuals. When we look at prisons, hopefully they're designed so that there actually is at least part or all of the day when people can socialize and have opportunities to exercise, learn a trade or something. If we're really going to re-

habilitate people, it isn't by locking them in one little cell.

Certainly with land mammals, when you look at the larger land mammals in zoos, there are issues around: Can they have access to behaving like they would normally behave? Polar bears or the large apes: Do they get to socialize in ways that are normal? That is the logic particularly for pulling out the orcas from most of the legislation, where generally what we're talking about is regulating the standards for captivity for marine mammals. Just to put it in perspective, orcas, or killer whales, are twice the length and four times the mass of a beluga whale, and could easily swim from Toronto to Belleville in the course of a day. The natural habitat of this huge creature is something that's very difficult to duplicate in captivity, and that's why, if Bill 80 is passed, we would prohibit the future breeding and acquisition of orcas in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2015. I've had the opportunity to look over Bill 80, which is relatively short in length compared to many government bills that we have here from time to time. It appears to be fairly straightforward in what it is trying to achieve, which is not always the case with government and the legislation that it puts forward.

I do have some concerns with the way this bill has been drafted by the government in that it seems to leave out some important details, leaving those particular matters to be sorted out later in the regulation-setting process. As we always say, the devil is in the details. This is not an uncommon practice for legislation and not a major concern of mine if this bill only impacted the prohibition of orca whales. But the way this legislation is being amended, it leaves open the possibility that other individuals with care or custody of animals could find themselves impacted by these changes down the road.

That raises some concern for me, as although the main intent of the bill is obviously to end the captivity of orca whales in Ontario, I always wonder what the unintended consequence of creating all sorts of new regulations, enforcement mechanisms and powers will be, especially for a group like the OSPCA which, at times, has generated much criticism from the public in Ontario for its actions.

I would also like to point out that while this bill does address an issue that is always sure to garner a lot of media attention, in my opinion it may not be the best use of time in this House.

In my time as the MPP for the riding of Sarnia-Lambton, I have received thousands of phone calls and emails about many issues that are significantly impacting the lives of those in my riding, issues like the ongoing problems with family law and the Family Responsibility Office; the hoops they are forced to jump through for support programs like ODSP and Ontario Works; the ever-increasing cost of electricity; a stagnant provincial

economy; and a sense that the quality of government services, like health care and education, continues to erode, especially in communities outside of the GTA like Sarnia-Lambton. They're concerned that this government just doesn't care about what happens in our corner of the province.

I could be wrong, but I don't recall a single phone call or email from one of my constituents asking for an immediate prohibition on the possession of orca whales.

Anyone who has ever seen one of these majestic whales would agree that a man-made enclosure is no place for this type of beast to live. The debate on the actual benefits of having any species in captivity at a zoo or in an aquarium could certainly fill many hours in this Legislature, but I don't know how many people would see this matter as the most pressing issue for debate.

Speaking on behalf of my constituents, I would ask that this bill be moved through the House as quickly as possible so that government could then use what time is left in this session to get back to focusing on the tough issues that will have the greatest benefit on this province and its future. As such, I will be supporting this bill at second reading.

However, back to the specifics of Bill 80, I would like to touch on two major ideas in this bill, orca prohibition and standards of care, and some of the basic points that I feel are important to this debate and for the decision-making of this House when considering this bill.

On the matter of orca prohibitions, Bill 80 amends the OSPCA Act to include the definition of the term "orca" in its interpretation. For those who don't know, orcas are also referred to as killer whales. They are the largest member of the dolphin family and one of the world's most powerful predators. With the passing of Bill 80, the breeding and possession of orcas, or killer whales, would be prohibited in the province of Ontario. This prohibition does not apply to orcas possessed on the day prior to the bill's introduction.

One must assume that this clause was included to address the issue of Marineland as they possess the only captive orca, in my information, in Ontario. Nonetheless, if a person chose to acquire an orca after the introduction date but before royal assent, they would be granted six months after the assent to cease to possess this whale. If a person acquired one after royal assent, they would be immediately subject to charges. Further, a person found to possess an orca acquired after the introduction of the bill would be liable, on conviction, to a fine of not more than \$60,000 and imprisonment up to two years.

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Given the size of these whales, I don't think anybody is just going to drop one off on your doorstep. I don't think anybody is going to be acquiring any whales after this bill comes into effect. It wouldn't be like a stray dog or something coming by the house.

Bill 80 will also amend the Animals for Research Act so that the orca prohibitions would apply to registered research and research supply facilities. Our caucus research tells us that there are zero orcas being held in

research facilities in Ontario. However, it is important to include this clause to ensure that this does not become a loophole in the legislation.

I would also like to take this opportunity, when we're talking about research, to say that Lambton College in my riding of Sarnia–Lambton is consistently recognized as one of the top institutions for applied research in Canada. While they are not involved in the study of orca whales or marine biology, they are doing a lot of great work in many other advanced technology fields and in the area of health sciences. To that end, the leadership of Lambton College has been working very hard to qualify for funding through the Ministry of Economic Development and the Small Communities Fund in order to build their new Health Education and Sustainable Care Centre. I certainly hope this government will show that same level of interest in the development and funding of this project as they are showing here today in the prohibition of orca whales.

Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2015, also includes a number of amendments to the existing OSPCA Act that stem from the report by the very esteemed Dr. David Rosen. That report was titled *Developing Standards of Care for Marine Mammals in Captivity and Recommendations Regarding How Best to Ensure the Most Humane Treatment of Captive Cetaceans*.

Dr. Rosen is a marine biologist at the University of British Columbia who chaired the committee looking into the care of marine animals for the government last year. Dr. Rosen concluded that the current general animal welfare standards of care are insufficient to protect marine mammals in captivity. The recommendations that Dr. Rosen and the committee included in this report were:

“(1) We recommend additional regulation(s) to supplement the OSPCA Act that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of marine mammals that are not currently covered by other relevant sections of the act...”

“i. Facilities must demonstrate responsibility to the long-term well-being of marine mammals in their care.

“a. Each facility must have an established animal welfare committee.

“b. Each facility must have a written animal management plan that provides justification for all marine mammals housed in the facility.

“c. Each facility is required to help maintain a provincial inventory of marine mammals housed in display facilities.

“d. Each facility must have access to a qualified veterinarian with expertise in marine mammal medicine, who oversees a program of preventive veterinary medicine and clinical care for all marine mammals held in the facility, in accordance with professional standards of practice in Ontario.”

They have quite a few recommendations, Mr. Speaker.

“e. Each facility must have a written veterinary care program. This should be developed by a veterinarian in collaboration with other experts (biologists, trainers, cur-

ators, etc.) and should include an annual physical examination of each marine mammal”—on a yearly basis.

“ii. Facilities that hold marine mammals must meet their physical and psychological environmental needs.

“f. Consideration must be given to the three-dimensional environment in which marine mammals live and the need to provide sufficient space for species-appropriate activities both in and out of the water. Therefore, it is recommended that each facility adopt a set of minimum space requirements that are based upon established, internationally recognized codes.

“g. Marine mammals must be protected from exposure to noise that could cause auditory discomfort or distress and lead to injury.

“h. The water supply must be reliable and contribute to the good health and well-being of the marine mammals.

“i. Provisions must be made for appropriate light exposure, including consideration of the type, level, and cycle of exposure.

“j. Each facility must provide suitable social and environmental enrichment programs.

“iii. Facilities must ensure that marine mammals are not harmed in their contact with the general public.

“k. Facilities with public contact programs must ensure the programs are adequately designed and outfitted to minimize potential risks to the health and safety of the marine mammals and humans” that could come in contact with them.

“l. Facilities with a public contact program must have a written policy that clearly identifies and addresses the safety issues and concerns for all participants in the program, including the marine mammals, and specifies the qualifications of those conducting the public contact session.”

The second major recommendation in the Rosen report goes on to say:

“(2) We recommend additional regulation(s) through the OSPCA Act for facilities acquiring new wild-born animals. These regulations are designed to protect the welfare of cetaceans destined for public display, either through foreign or domestic acquisitions, with particular emphasis on safeguarding the health of wild populations.

“(3) We recommend the timely adoption of the Guidelines On: The Care and Maintenance of Marine Mammals established by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) as a specific standard of care for marine mammals under the OSPCA Act.”

At about 124 pages with citations, this was a very thorough report by Dr. Rosen and the committee. I was just giving you guys the highlights, the overview. The pages were listening intently; I can tell.

If you were listening, you will have noticed that this report stops short of calling for a prohibition on possessing orca whales in Ontario. The committee noted, “This report represents the scientific perspective of the committee and does not include other viewpoints such as those concerned with social, ethical, political, and economic factors.” This is a very interesting point, yet the main

thrust of the bill that came from the report is a prohibition on orca whales in Ontario.

Of course, everyone will remember that this report was initially called for following the news stories where Marineland trainers were alleging mistreatment of marine mammals at the facility in Niagara Falls. Personally, I believe that the vast majority of individuals who would choose to work with creatures in zoos and aquariums would do so because they care passionately about these creatures. I believe they are doing what they believe to be in the best interests of those creatures. Nonetheless, these are the recommendations being put forward by this committee.

Out of all the recommendations that the committee made that the government seems to have implemented into Bill 80, I believe the biggest impact may be felt from repealing subsection 11.1(1) of the act, which previously read, "Every person who owns or has custody or care of an animal shall comply with the prescribed standards of care with respect to every animal that the person owns or has custody or care of." That section is amended by Bill 80 to read, "Every person who owns or has custody or care of an animal shall comply with the prescribed standards of care, and the prescribed administrative requirements, with respect to every animal that the person owns or has custody or care of"—the difference in those two statements being that with the passing of Bill 80, persons caring for or in custody of animals that fall under this legislation will be required to follow "prescribed administrative requirements."

To its credit, this government has done what all Liberal governments seem to do, and that is create more bureaucracy. Those individuals caring for these animals will now have the added requirement of completing and submitting records on everything they do. What all of those final requirements will be, we don't know, and it will be some time before we will know. As I said, as always, the devil will be in the details.

Mr. Speaker, what is laid out in Bill 80 suggests that there will be administrative requirements, also known as paperwork, relating to the keeping of animals, the establishment of animal welfare committees, animal care plans, veterinary care programs, record-keeping and disclosure; in other words, as one of my colleagues from Haldimand-Norfolk said, more red tape.

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A technical advisory group will report in six months with suggestions for the final standards and a timeline for their implementation. This group will be comprised of experts from science, industry, advocacy and enforcement. The power to inspect would be amended to make it clear that all of the places, excluding owners' private dwellings, where animals are kept, including off-season locations, may be inspected if the animals are kept for the purpose of exhibition, boarding, hire or sale.

In the case of marine mammals, I am told that they are frequently moved to different parks' holding tanks and inspectors have been unable to view these areas. This is believed to have been a problem for inspectors in the

past. This change is meant to address that. That's my understanding.

OSPCA inspectors would be able to demand the production of records without physically inspecting the site. Hopefully, in reviewing this legislation at the committee stage, this government will seriously consider introducing some basic accountability measures to go along with the increased powers of the OSPCA.

There are many constituents in my riding of Sarnia-Lambton and also across Ontario who question the behaviour, from time to time, of the OSPCA. We've heard many talks about that here in speeches in this Legislature since I first came here in 2007, and there have been many so-called abuses.

Finally, as I mentioned before, the work of Dr. Rosen's committee and the drafting of Bill 80 are the result of many media stories generated over the last few years about care at Marineland in Niagara Falls. In the interest of fairness, I would like to read into the record Marineland's response to the tabling of Bill 80. This response was posted on their website on March 24, 2015:

"Marineland supports the government's commitment to seeking guidance and following the best advice from marine mammal experts regarding appropriate standards of care for marine mammals.

"The technical advisory committee provides essential input from independent marine mammal veterinarians and scientists who have decades of experience rescuing marine mammals, and providing for their ongoing health and care.

"Marineland trusts that the committee members can work co-operatively to provide the government with clear advice and direction towards meaningful standards that will ensure the continuing health of all marine mammals.

"Marineland believes it is essential that the process remain focused on the health and welfare of marine mammals, the decades of scientific research and experience that should inform the setting of standards, and on achieving clear and enforceable standards. We support the government's view that legal standards need to be based on science, not political ideologies or public relations, and the technical advisory committee and the government's own expert panel report should provide the basis on which to proceed.

"Marineland trusts the government will focus on the clear recommendations of its expert panel and its chairman, Dr. Rosen. Marineland supports the recommendation of Dr. Rosen that the recently released comprehensive, independent, and peer-reviewed Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines be adopted. The guidelines are detailed, comprehensive in scope, and provide clear direction to any facility that houses marine mammals. The guidelines represent over 10 years of work by virtually the entire Canadian scientific community with expertise in the marine mammal field and represent the best practices of marine mammal care.

"Marineland meets or exceeds those standards and is committed to maintaining and enhancing the health and care of all its marine mammals."

As I'm reaching the end of my time, I'd just like to reiterate that I will be supporting Bill 80 at second reading. I believe that the work that Dr. Rosen's committee has done is very thorough and that their suggestions form the basis for sound decision-making in moving forward. I'm encouraged to see that Marineland also supports the work of Dr. Rosen. It is my hope that when this government does get around to filling in the details of the bill and setting the regulations, they will follow the recommendations of Dr. Rosen and not allow politics to influence their final decision-making.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the people I represent in London West to offer a couple of thoughts on the comments from the member for Sarnia-Lambton.

First, I think he makes a really great point that there are a lot of very critical issues facing us in the province and that perhaps the care and captivity of a single orca whale at Marineland is not the highest priority for this Legislature. Having said that, of course we support the legislation very strongly. Many of us have spoken about our experiences viewing animals in captivity and the discomfort that we feel from using animals for our own entertainment, from confining sentient creatures and using them for fun.

I wanted to share with members something that's happening in my riding of London West, something I'm quite proud of. Storybook Gardens is a historic London landmark, founded in the 1950s. There is an international story, actually, of Slippery the seal, who escaped from Storybook Gardens, where he was held in captivity, and managed to swim over to Sandusky, Ohio, where he was captured and later returned to Storybook Gardens.

Storybook Gardens had four seals, a pair of lynx, beavers, otters and birds of prey, but they realized they could not care for these animals appropriately. They could not provide the appropriate habitat and, as a result, began a process of relocating those animals. Most recently, following last month, a decision was made that they're not even going to be keeping domestic animals in captivity. There's no reason for us to see animals in captivity for our own entertainment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Mr. Joe Dickson: It's a pleasure to be able to stand here today and speak to this bill. It was quite concerning when we heard some of the stories from the past about Marineland and what led to all of this, and the great concern expressed by members in this House from all parties to rectify the situation.

I can recall going to Marineland with our children being very, very young. It was a family outing. They loved it, and they began the road to a greater understanding of mammals. Marineland was a perfect place to start.

Animal welfare has become a key priority for our government. We do not take these very unfortunate incidents that have happened in the past very lightly. One of the

things that we did do, of course, is introduce the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act. That's our Bill 80, which is here. Our government is putting in place the strongest possible standards of care and protection for marine mammals in captivity in Canada.

Our children, and now our grandchildren, developed near water, because we lived on the Ajax waterfront and have for almost 50 years. I've had the good fortune of being the longest-serving chair of the Ajax waterfront, and it has taught me a lot. It has certainly brought me very close to this scenario of marine mammals and other securities that we have to put in place for animals.

My wife and I, having lived there for so long, knew it was something special. It was a great insight, a great learning process. Even now, our children are married, they have children and we're very fortunate that they have each bought cottages on the water in our cottage area, which is well represented by MPP Scott from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. I'm very glad that she is very much onside, and we—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Questions and comments.

Mr. Toby Barrett: An interesting presentation from the member from Sarnia-Lambton. He talked about cetaceans. I'm trying to get up to date on my grade 13 biology and zoology, but—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Tell them the story about the boat. Tell them your South American boat story.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Well, you know, when you spend time on the seven seas—and I did spend some time in Australia—it's interesting. As with the killer whales, I used to be really frightened of sharks. You see all these movies about sharks back in the 1960s, and there used to be movies about killer whales back in the 1960s. Then, working in Australia, you end up swimming with sharks, whether you want to or not, and you realize that some will bite you and some won't. You find out where they go and you move with them.

1540

When you're exposed to these animals, it's like livestock on a farm: You better understand. The case in point would be the killer whale, which was feared by so many people. Pythons, for example, until you live with them—I've lived with them, believe it or not, in a house in Toronto, and boas.

But until you're exposed to them, until you see these kinds of animals in captivity, it changes your perception. In many ways, by having the killer whale in captivity, there is more understanding, less fear, less persecution of the species as children get to see them upfront and personal. We've seen a change in the public's perception of the killer whale. Why is that? Because killer whales, here and there around the world, have been kept in captivity and it has transformed their image. So there are some pluses for having killer whales in captivity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): One last question or comment.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm pleased to be able to participate in this debate. I've had my 20 minutes, and there were a few things that I highlighted. I think I want to make sure when I leave this debate today that I'm going to refocus on those highlights.

First is the fact that I don't believe that orcas should be living in captivity. I think they belong in their natural surroundings where their friends and family play together, swim together, hunt together and eat together. I think that's where they're supposed to be. Having one orca completely in solitary on its own, I think, is quite sad.

The other part that I focused on was the fact that we have 50 to 60 zoos and aquariums in Ontario, and yet only 10 of them are under the accreditation of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. We talked about roadside zoos and the filth that I personally had seen them in. As well, my seatmate from London West had the exact same experience, and I'm sure it was probably not even at the same roadside zoo.

There is no oversight making sure that when we're keeping animals for our own pleasure that they're being maintained properly. I think that's something that hopefully we'll move forward, whether it's another bill that's brought forward—but I think when we have lions and tigers that don't need a licence, and yet we have to licence our dogs, and possibly in some municipalities we have to licence our cats—like I said, lions and tigers and bears, oh my; no licensing for any of those creatures, depending on where you live in the province of Ontario. I think that's something that we need to be looking at.

Again, like I said, I'm just pleased to have the opportunity to put my two cents into this debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We return to the member for Sarnia–Lambton for his reply.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and reply to the comments from the members from London West, Ajax–Pickering, Haldimand–Norfolk and Hamilton Mountain.

I had a chance to go through and outline some of the issues and concerns in the bill, things we support, things I support, concerns that I have with maybe overregulation in this province and this bill. Maybe we can take some regulations out somewhere else as we bring these regulations in. We were probably overdue for them a long time ago.

Another issue in my riding—which probably would have more concern than this here and these changes—would be the protection of sports fishing because of the Asian carp, which is a big issue in Michigan waters, and Illinois and Ohio. That's a real big concern. I had people contact me over a year ago, concerned that if they ever get into the Great Lakes, fishing would be decimated.

I think that's something that we should take a look at in this Legislature. I know it's been debated. I know the member from Haldimand–Norfolk and others have spoken about this before. I would think that's something we should really take a serious look at. While we're bringing this bill through—okay, let's get it to committee—let's also take a look at what can we do in some small way in

Ontario to protect sports fishing and to prevent the Asian carp, which would decimate the tourist industry and the sports fishing—and all those people who make their livelihood from that industry and the people who enjoy the Great Lakes.

I encourage everyone to come down to Sarnia–Lambton sometime and see the blue water land. I know that the member from Windsor–Tecumseh, Mr. Hatfield, knows that area very well. We would love to have you come down and see the bluest water in North America.

Mr. Bill Walker: Next to Georgian Bay.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Next to Georgian Bay, there, on Lake Huron, and of course the St. Clair River that goes all the way to the Windsor–Essex area, right along the side of Essex–Chatham.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I gave a bit of a primer a little while ago to what I'd like to talk about in this debate, and that is not just whales in captivity but actually whales in their natural environment.

It was good to hear different members of the assembly talk to that to a degree in regard to their experiences and those of others when it came to looking at various mammals and animals in the wild. I think the point is that there are more ways of being able to see animals than just going to a zoo. Going into the wild, properly supervised, with people who know what they're doing, is not a bad thing.

I just want to start off by saying: Of course we support the bill. How can you not? We understand that you need to have regulation in order to deal with how you deal with the captivity of animals or mammals in a zoo. You know, Mr. Speaker; you've been here as long as I have: How many bills like this have we dealt with? Roadside zoos—I can think of a number of them where either they were private members' bills or government bills that attempted to deal with the issue of how we make sure that those animals that are in captivity in fact are cared for safely and are not put in danger as a result of any of the activities that may be happening in that particular facility.

I don't pretend to know all of the ins and outs of the rules about how you take care of an orca whale. It seems to me it's a pretty big whale in a small tank. I'm sure there are things that you have to be able to do adequately.

I also want to say—and pardon the pun here—don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. That's not the first pun, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

I, as have many people, have taken my children to Marineland when they were younger, in order to be able to actually see a whale, because that was the only place that I can afford to bring my kids to see a whale here in Ontario. At the same time, we saw a lot of other animals and we got to get on some rides. I strongly recommend people to go to Marineland. It's quite the place to go to, as well as some of the other activities that the Niagara area has to offer. I think it is a great vacation for families to be able to go to, everything from the Niagara Falls to walking up—what do you call that? Clifton Hill, I think

it's called, where all those knock-off shops are and restaurants and all that. It's just great experience. I think Marineland is one of those jewels in a crown of what makes tourism work in the Niagara area. So I don't want this to be seen from our part as being an anti-Marineland tirade, because quite frankly, Marineland does do a lot of good stuff.

I think what the government is trying to do, and I think this is what we have to flesh out in committee, is: Is this the proper way of dealing with the issue? It will be interesting to see what the public has to say as the public comes to committee in order to talk about what they think about this bill. Should it or should it not be in its present form? Is the objective the right objective? Does the objective have to change or is it just strictly a question of the rules changing about how we do this? It will be very interesting to see it when it gets to its life in committee. We'll send it to a special committee of the Legislature big enough to be able to take such a mammal—I was talking about me—and we will have a chance to hear from the public when it comes to this.

I want to also speak about—I talked about it earlier when I had a chance to speak in response to one of the other members, and that is that a lot of people don't recognize that Ontario has whales that are native to Ontario. I was a little bit not taken aback but not completely unsurprised when I made the point that we actually have beluga whales in Ontario. A number of members, when I went to the back lobby to have a phone call with the Timmins and District Hospital over some stuff that we're dealing with, said, "Jeez, I didn't know that. I wasn't aware that we have whales in Ontario."

Let me tell you the story: "There be whales in Ontario, Captain." We all saw the Star Trek episode, right? I tried to do a good Scotty imitation there; it didn't quite work. My Scotty imitation—God rest Scotty; he's no longer with us—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: The captain is still around, though.

Interjections.

1550

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh, you guys are doing different kinds of things. You guys are doing different things.

Anyway, in Ontario are the James and Hudson bays. James and Hudson bays, as we all know, are saltwater bodies that are connected to the Atlantic Ocean through the Arctic Ocean, the Bering Sea—not the Bering Sea but the various straits north of Ontario and Quebec.

It is an ocean, and in that ocean we have beluga whales. Beluga whales, as is natural to beluga whales, have to travel to feed. That's what they do. Their whole existence, from the time they're born to the time they die, is how they go around this ocean called James and Hudson bays and actually feed themselves with what is available. Their whole migration is based on where they can get food.

In the summer, the belugas come to this part of the planet called Ontario. They come into James and Hudson bays to feed. Where they feed, by and large—not only,

but by and large—is that they go in pods in front of the large rivers—the Winisk River or the Attawapiskat River or whatever river it might be—and align themselves just down from the rivers into the ocean. So they're still in the ocean—in James Bay or Hudson Bay when they're doing this—and they align themselves in pods. It's something else to see, if you ever have an opportunity. Literally hundreds and hundreds of whales are lined up in pods just waiting for all the stuff that comes down the river to be able to feed—fish and various crustaceans and whatever the river has to offer by way of a menu for those whales on that particular day.

I've had the great fortune of being able to fly over and see some of this a large number of times, both in my own aircraft—Foxtrot Zulu Yankee Victor; if you ever see me flying, that's me—or sometimes, when I have to charter and bring staff and get into particular areas with charters. It's quite something to see. It tells you something about our planet: just how lucky and fortunate we are to live on a planet that has so much biodiversity and so much to offer when it comes to the beauty of what is nature. When you see hundreds of whales feeding at the mouth of a river, it is quite something.

The whales, at times, will come all the way down to the Moosonee/Moose Factory area. Now, they're not there a lot. I want to warn people, if you're going there and expect to see a whale every day, that you may have to wait a little bit to see one, because they, at times, come down. It really depends on what is going on in James and Hudson bays and what the feed is like. But we will see, from time to time, which is really kind of odd, whales that will come down the Moose River.

There are people who have seen belugas out between Moosonee and Moose Factory. Just to draw a picture, on the west bank of the Moose River is Moosonee, and if you move to the east, there's an island right in between, and the island itself is called Moose Factory. It's quite large. Moose Cree is the First Nation that is there, a very large, prosperous First Nation, and also MoCreebec, which is the only non-registered reserve in my riding, in the sense that they operate as a traditional First Nation, but they're not recognized under the Indian Act. We can have a discussion, one day, about the pros and cons of that, and also the federal and provincial lands that are there.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Is that where you took Kormos fishing?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That's where I took Kormos, yes. I can tell you stories about Kormos on James Bay. Well, maybe I won't tell stories about Kormos on James Bay. There are some things that happen on James Bay that are best left on James Bay.

I would just say that it is quite something to see, from time to time, that whales will come down the Moose River, and you'll either see them in Moosonee or you'll see them on the Moose Factory side in the river doing what whales naturally do, which is eat. You don't see them there a lot, but you do see them from time to time.

The other thing you see is seals. I've got to tell you that the first time I saw one, I had no—I knew there were whales, because I had been told there were whales in James Bay and Hudson Bay, but I had not seen any at the time, as a newly elected member for James Bay. I was in one of these boats that we use; they're freighters that we use to cross over from Moosonee to Moose Factory. They're actually the taxi. The only way you can get there in the summer is to get in one of these freighter boats.

I was in a freighter boat with Jimmy Kapashesit. His son was Randy Kapashesit, who some of you here know was the chief of MoCreebec and also the chair of the LHIN, the local health integration network, in our area. His dad had taken me out for a bit of a ride, looking around—actually, we were going fishing is what we were doing—and all of a sudden, I see a seal. There's this huge, humungous seal in the river out in front of our boat, and I'm telling you, that seal was as big as the Clerks' table. It's not a small mammal.

I'm looking over at it, and Jimmy, as Jimmy does, is running the motor in the boat, standing up and looking at all this as we're going by. We go zooming by the seal, and I go, "Jimmy, Jimmy, stop! Stop!"

"What?"

"What is that?" And I meant, "What kind of seal is that?"

And he goes, "What do you mean, 'What is it?' It's a seal."

"I know it's a seal, Jimmy, but you've got to tell me, what kind of seal is it? Is it a harp seal?"

He looks at me. He says, "You know, you guys have got a word for everything. We just call them seals. They're a seal. That's all they are. Leave me alone. You saw it; let's move on."

I thought it was funny. The humour there is that they didn't have particular words for different kinds of seals because for millennia, the Mushkegowuk Cree who lived on the bay had only one kind of seal to look at, so they only had one word for seals: the type of seals that they lived with. So that was that.

The interesting thing is, what Jimmy was telling me was that the seals—and you get to see this in the spring—will come down the river and beach themselves on sandbars in order to get sun. They do what seals do—sit there, digest and whatever—and they're something to see. They're—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Whatever. You guys are bad.

Anyway, they're quite something to see. They're a very large mammal. I don't know how much they weigh, but they probably weigh in the neighbourhood of 500, 600, 800 pounds. They're quite big. They're something to see. They're nature in its thing.

My point is, there is all kinds of beauty to be seen in places like the James Bay. If we, as a province, wanted to really be bold and outside of the box, to say, "How do we allow people in Ontario and across the world to see these natural beauties that we have in our nature?" We would be figuring out ways of being able to properly support

entrepreneurs on the James Bay and some of the institutions to build the infrastructure to allow tourists to be able to travel more easily to the James Bay.

I'm going to give some credit where credit is due. The province has done some stuff over the years. Right now, we're investing some money in the Ontario Northland train, the only train running and Ontario-owned. Ontario Northland actually starts in John's riding, the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane, and ends up in my riding in Moosonee. There's some money being invested there, and that's a good thing.

We did a very interesting federal-provincial program on a private sector venture with the MoCreebec when we built the Eco Lodge. Some of you members have been there. You've had the opportunity. If you want to go somewhere where there's a really nice facility and be able to experience the ecosystem on James Bay, contact the Eco Lodge: 658-6400. Again, the number is on the screen: 658-6400. You get to book not only a room, but they'll also assist you with booking excursions out onto the bay and into the river to take a look at some of these natural wonders that we see.

They can arrange for you to go out and see the northern lights. They can arrange for you to go out and look at the bay when the whales are down; hopefully you'll be able to get to see the whales. But they're another way that we can help people to see nature not in a tank, in captivity—and I'm going to get to this point that my colleague the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane had—but in the wild, where they're really in their own habitat, and we get to see them and what they do in their natural habitat. It's another way of being able to promote tourism, but at the same time help do some economic development in areas in which we have not naturally done that.

I want to make a point, and it was done as a bit of a jest during one of the members' speeches, but I thought it was a very interesting point. One of the members—and I don't remember the riding. Do you know the riding? Sorry, I don't know your riding.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Over there.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Over there; the member over there. I would never be the Speaker of the House because I don't know people's ridings. It's Kitchener something-or-other.

Interjection: Kitchener-Conestoga.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Kitchener-Conestoga. She made a point, and she was quite correct—

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Kitchener Centre.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Kitchener Centre? Okay; sorry about that. I should have known. That's my old friend John's riding. Okay, gotcha.

Anyway, the member made the point, which I thought was very good, that whales are being held in a confined area that is not so big, and it's pretty demoralizing for them psychologically, probably, to be in a caged-up area alone, with no other whales, having to live in that confined area. Somebody made a comment—the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane—and I thought it was

actually a very valid comment, which is: That's how we house our prisoners. When you think about it, if it doesn't work for whales, why do we think the confinement system we have today works any better for prisoners when it comes to rehabilitation? I thought that was actually an interesting link.

1600

I'm not arguing for a second that we shouldn't have prisons. Obviously, we have to have prisons. You have to take people out of circulation who have broken the law and are a danger to society. I'm not advocating that for a second. I'm not saying we should make a Taj Mahal to house prisoners, but the point is, if you're trying to rehabilitate somebody in the penal system, you have to have a system in place that is actually successful in rehabilitation.

By overcrowding prisoners, as we're seeing, especially in our federal system—the federal government has changed laws on the criminal side akin to what we saw in United States, where we're warehousing prisoners in institutions that were never designed to take that capacity. What you're going to end up with is a powder keg. It's kind of like Marineland, to an extent; that was the point the member from Kitchener Centre was making. But in the case of prisons, what the federal government has done by changing the laws and making it that more people are being incarcerated for lesser and lesser crimes—we're filling up our jails to overcapacity. That is not only not ethical; it doesn't work.

How do you do rehabilitation in that kind of system? It seems to me that you have to have laws that are straight and tough, and everybody understands what the rules are. But we have a responsibility, as federal and provincial governments, if we're going to have jails, to at least get it right and do something with the time that the prisoners are there so they're rehabilitated.

Provincially, we're two years less a day, so we have a little bit less effect than the feds have. They do longer sentences because they can put somebody away for 20 or 30 years. It seems to me that we have to have a real rehabilitation system that provides people with adequate shelter, considering it's a jail; some way so that people are able to do something useful with their time while they're there; and doing some rehabilitation so that, hopefully, when the person has served out their sentence, they actually have a chance to come back into society.

I want to digress a bit. One of the places I saw that was very interesting was with your former Solicitor General—Rob Simpson?

Mr. Robert Bailey: Sampson.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Sampson. He and I went to Edmonton, where there's now an election. It looks like we're going to elect a whole bunch of New Democrats, but that's a whole other story.

We went to visit—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: You're so funny.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It is embarrassing. The Tories are in third place in Alberta; go figure that one out.

Anyway, my point is, we visited a jail, a federal institution, in Hobbema. It's owned by the federal government, but it's run more or less under the auspices of the elders and the First Nations people of that community. What they've done is, they've taken incarceration for aboriginal people in a different way. They're trying to get them to heal themselves as people with their spirituality and then work with them in order to rehabilitate them back into the community. Their success rate, as far as rehabilitating and putting people back into society without the recidivism that we see today, is pretty amazing.

But back to whales, Mr. Speaker. I saw you; you were getting quick on the draw. You were really good in allowing me to stray a little bit off the line and talk about Hobbema and how the—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Alberta; go figure out Alberta.

Do they have whales in Alberta? Can I talk about that? There's a whale in Alberta and it's called Jim Prentice. He's the whale in the room, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I think I have an obligation to remind the member that we are in fact debating Bill 80, and ask him to bring his remarks back to the bill.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I appreciate that you're reeling me back in, Speaker. That was a Tory line. It was a very good one; I had to take it. I am not beyond taking someone else's line, but I do give you credit.

So I just come back to the intent of the bill. I hear in this debate that we probably have a fair degree of support in this Legislature. I think the question's going to become—the devil is in the details. Once we get this bill into committee it'll be interesting to hear what people have to say about it. Is the bill, in its current form, the way that it should be when it gets back to the House at third reading? In other words, should there be amendments made to it? It will be interesting to see that.

I want to say again upfront to my friends in the Niagara area, I love Marineland. I think it's a great place to bring your kids, and of course, anything we can do to help them do a better job of running Marineland and finding ways of making it more attractive, I think is great. It's one of those parts of the tourism system in Niagara that I think is just so key.

Again, I want to do a last plug for Eco Lodge in Moose Factory: 658-6400. The number is flashing on your screen as we're speaking.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Is that 705?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, 705, obviously. It's a great opportunity, for the Eco Lodge, to allow people to be able to contact them so that you're able to set up a tour to be able to see some of the animals and mammals that we talk about here today in real life, in the real environment, in a way that we should be seeing them, which is out in the wild.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you. But, again: 658-6400, Eco Lodge, Moose Factory, Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That's 705. Questions or comments?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I'm not sure what part of the member from Timmins–James Bay's remarks I should be commenting on, but let me give him credit: He does a fantastic job of promoting his community.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: 658-6400.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I get it. I get it.

So, yes, he deviated, but, to be fair, I think it's interesting to learn about things that are in parts of Ontario that we sometimes don't even know exist. So for him to bring that to the House, regardless of the bill—thank you for doing that. It's certainly appreciated.

But let me get back to commenting on something that he touched on very little, and that's the bill. What is frustrating for me in this House—and this is not the first time this has happened—is that we have pretty well unanimous consent on what we're trying to do. I think the proponents, or the people who are experts on these issues, are on our side, because they too want to protect, in this case, a mammal.

In the 12 years that I had the opportunity to serve on municipal government, when council decided on something—we jot down a motion, we move it and second it, we vote, and the job is done. So that's the frustration in this place. We really agree. We want to get this done. There are an awful lot of things that I think Ontarians want us to talk about that are just as important as this, but we do have 99.9% agreement, so I would say: Let's get this done. Let's stop regurgitating over and over and over again. Let's make life better for mammals—especially whales like this one—that I think we need to do.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments? The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand. I'm going to try to help you with your job, because the member did kind of wander off there and elaborate.

He was talking about something out in Alberta. To be honest, I don't pay much attention to Alberta, but I just want to make sure that we know for the record who is in third place in Ontario politics: that is the NDP in Ontario. I'm not certain about Alberta, but I think Mr. Prentice is doing a whale of a job, and he'll probably come out the other end okay.

Mr. Speaker, back to the bill—and I want to talk about the Eco Lodge here a little bit. He's got me intrigued. I didn't catch the number that he was advertising there.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: 658-6400.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'll give him that one other time: 658-6400; 705 area code, of course. Maybe I can go up in one of those junkets and see his area of the world. You see, I did not know there were beluga whales at our back door. That's kind of interesting to know.

But getting back to the bill: My colleague from Sarnia–Lambton actually brought up in his remarks that the devil is in the details. At first blush, thinking and talking about the prohibition of the only orca that is in captivity in Ontario is something that the bill talks about, and most people can say, "Well, that makes sense. We need to talk

about that." But it's the regulation and the other piece of this bill, Mr. Speaker, that talks about animal welfare and care. That's what my concern is. This government often brings things in through regulation which we don't have an opportunity to debate and we don't have an opportunity to have input on and ensure that it's a bill that truly is going to serve all Ontarians. It really is at their mercy to do that.

The member from Northumberland–Quinte West has talked about getting this bill passed. I think, again, my colleague from Sarnia–Lambton brought up a good point: Is this really the best use of time in this House?

Of all the people in my riding—I have not, in my three and half years, had one person call me about an orca in captivity. They do call me about hydro rates that are the highest on the continent, Mr. Speaker. They do call me about the Green Energy Act. They do call me about things like the loss of nurses in hospitals and schools in rural Ontario being closed. They do call me about ODSP and OW issues and the SAMS boondoggle.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

1610

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in the House. I was going to comment on Bill 80, on the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, but I think instead I'm going to focus my comments on the speech made by the member for Timmins–James Bay and perhaps continue the travelogue of northern Ontario.

Before you get to the eco centre—the best way to get there is on the Polar Bear Express, which is being refurbished. It would have been much better if you could take the train from Toronto to Cochrane, but unfortunately this government decided they had other things to do for northern Ontario, so they cut that. But while you're in Cochrane—and Cochrane had the polar bear habitat. I think it's better if you see polar bears in the wild, but not all of us will have that opportunity. In the polar bear habitat, they now have two bears, and they are studying the relationship with bears to try and see how to make a better wild habitat for bears. I think if you have the chance to come to northern Ontario, you should take that chance and, before you go to the Eco Lodge, go to the polar bear habitat. They're very friendly people in Cochrane—very friendly people throughout the north.

The member also spoke a few times about Marineland. I, too, took my kids when they were small. We all went to Marineland, because when I was young and my kids were younger, we couldn't afford to go whale-watching on the east coast or the west coast, or even in Mr. Bisson's riding.

We have to make sure that all animals are treated as well as possible, but we have to remember that, for a lot of people, seeing those animals creates a much bigger appreciation for them, because the majority of people are never going to be able to afford to see them in the wild. It's a privileged few—many of us are among that privil-

eged few—who have that ability. We should always remember that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): One last question or comment? The member for Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I remember, growing up, my sister and I wanted to have a pet dog or a pet cat. My mom never allowed that, but she did eventually give in and allow us to have a pet fish. When we had the fish, we learned a lot about compassion and respect for others.

You know, in my riding of Etobicoke Centre we don't have any marine mammals, but I think all members of this Legislature, on both sides, would like to have compassion and respect, and I think this is about compassion and respect. This is about putting in place guidelines, rules, that help protect animals and treat them with greater respect.

When I think about some of the elements of this that are important, there is prohibiting the possession and breeding of orcas in Ontario, and introducing stronger penalties. I think having that deterrent in place is really, really important, and making sure that we can put in place the administrative requirements requiring animal care plans and record-keeping of entities that possess marine mammals.

When I think about this, this adds on to our animal protection legislation, the rules that we currently have in place to protect animals in this province. I think this is just a continuation of the government's work on that. We know that this has been built off of recommendations by experts, by people who know a lot about this field, who know what the best practices and the best standards of care are. When I think about making sure we manage the size of enclosures, making sure we're thinking about water quality, noise and lighting, social groupings, and the handling and display of marine mammals, again, I just come back to the issue of respect and compassion.

When I was young, growing up, we were taught to have respect and compassion for other people and respect and compassion for animals. These animals are in our care collectively, and we need to make sure we treat them with respect and compassion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes the questions and comments. We return to the member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I now have lots of latitude, because everybody spoke on something, Mr. Speaker.

I want to tell a story, and I'm going to start there, because it has to do with polar bears. My good friend the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane talked about how he has a polar bear in his riding in captivity in Cochrane and that people come and see it.

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Two of them; excuse me. It allows me to talk about polar bears in the wild, and I've got to tell you this story.

A good friend of mine who some of you may know, the former chief of Attawapiskat, Mike Carpenter, was out on the land in the spring getting ready for the spring hunt to get the goose and to get the moose and do what

he has to do in order to feed his family, because there is still a very traditional lifestyle on the James Bay, where people still use hunting as a way of sustenance.

Anyway, he's out there with a buddy, getting the camp set up. You've got to imagine: You're out on your snow machines, you're out north of the Attawapiskat River, you're in the middle of basically nowhere, and you're setting up a hunt camp for him and his family to come do their spring hunt in a week or so. They're getting everything ready, so he's got a couple of tents set up, they're gathering wood and getting everything to get ready.

All of a sudden, they decide that they would like some tea, so they make some tea inside their tent. They're sitting in the tent, getting to the point where they're thinking about leaving, and lo and behold, a polar bear sticks its head in the tent flap.

If any of you have ever been live in front of a polar bear, it's enough to make you see Jesus in about two seconds. They are huge. A polar bear is a huge animal, and this thing stooped down, stuck its head into the tent and started sniffing around to see if there was anything to eat. The only thing there was two humans, and guess what? As some of you know, polar bears will eat humans. The guns that they had weren't in the tent; they were on the snow machines.

I said to Mike, "What the heck did you do, Mike?"—I had more colourful language. He says, "Well, I did what I could do. There was a log in the fire. I grabbed one end of it with one hand. The thing was on fire—you should've seen the burn on my hand—and I started whacking the thing on the forehead," until finally the bear retreated out of the tent. Mike Carpenter is still here today to talk about that hunting experience because of his calmness and wisdom in being able to get rid of the polar bear without having to shoot it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Arthur Potts: It's a pleasure, of course, to stand in the House and talk to a piece of legislation we're bringing forward, but I will be sharing my time today with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the member from Davenport and the member from York South–Weston.

What makes it particularly delightful for me to speak to this particular bill is how socially progressive it shows our government is on a whole raft of issues, not just looking after poor people; we're actually now looking at marine mammals in a way that's compassionate, which is important. It says something about who we are.

Speaking to Bill 80, the marine mammals act, we are doing something which actually recognizes that we weren't taking care in the past and we're prepared now to correct that for the future. This bill is essentially about balance: balance in how we care for mammals in our care, in our zoos, in our aquariums.

We do some large mammals very, very well. I remember, for instance, in the Toronto zoo—I used to attend there on a regular basis with my children. My daughter Robin is five years old, who happened to be born on May

5, so she's a fifth child of the fifth month. On her fifth birthday, we were up at the Toronto zoo and had a chance to go behind the scenes, and we were petting the tongue of an elephant. It was an extraordinary experience for both of us to be that up close and personal with an elephant. The tongue is very rough, with big bumps on it, which allows it to take grass off the ground. My five-year-old was up there with her hand inside an elephant's mouth.

Sadly, today that elephant is no longer at the Toronto zoo, because they also recognized how difficult it was for us in a zoo facility to care for an animal of that size, given our climate and our conditions. You probably read about Bob Barker of *The Price Is Right* coming out and helping the city of Toronto to move that animal to a sanctuary where it could be better looked after, considering the conditions it was facing up here.

Speaker, we also seem to be very much doing well with aquariums. At the zoo, of course, there are sea lions, seals and otters. You see them there playing, and the kids are thrilled to be there. We also do aquariums well. I had the pleasure of taking my stepkids to the Ripley's museum shortly after it opened. Being on those automatic pathways as you see sharks, barracudas and all sorts of marine life in that aquarium setting, where they're not in an environment where by any stretch of the imagination we would say they were being ill-treated—they were happy within their environment. They're protected, they're well fed and it's such an incredible learning experience for our children.

It was the same thing, when I was growing up, with the Riverdale Zoo, where I got for the first time, as a downtown-Toronto person, a chance to see cows, horses and donkeys—as a young child, at the Riverdale Zoo. They were contained in fairly tight quarters. At the time there were also lions and others, but in time we recognized that those facilities were too small to properly manage. The African wildlife was moved out to the Toronto zoo, and it just became a farm. That was an important experience to me, in helping me better understand the mammals in the world that we share.

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I had the pleasure of being in Japan with a very good friend of mine years ago. We went up to the north in Japan, on one of the high-speed bullet railroads, to an onsen. An onsen, as you know, is like a hot spring. Think about what we get out in Alberta, in the mountains, and the sulphur hot springs. Except there, they've got 700 or 800 years of tradition behind their onsens, where it's very competitive for people to come visit. In one particular onsen we visited, they had black bears contained in the smallest cages. It was so disheartening to see what they were doing in an attempt to draw people into that facility. In these close confines, they kept these bears. It was a delightful visit, but it was very disappointing to see the bears in that condition.

I realize that what we have here is a bill about balance.

I think we've recognized now that the orca is not an animal that it makes sense to contain, particularly on an

individual basis, inside a tank. The orca is an extraordinarily social character. I've heard stories of orca mothers so fretful over the loss of their pup that has been picked up and trapped that they've beached themselves in agony. It's terrible when we think about that. An orca tends to live in much larger pods. We've heard so many people here speak about that.

I was delighted: I was here earlier in the debate when the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex talked at great length about the history, the biology, what the orcas eat, and it was an extraordinarily well-detailed speech. I learned a lot more about orcas than I otherwise would have ever known.

We've also heard talk about Marineland. Marineland is a great, world-class organization. They do a lot of stuff really, really well. There are opportunities for people to go and visit that fantastic facility, to see all the other animals that are there: sea lions, dolphins, walruses, beluga whales. We know that they're doing everything they have been doing within the laws that applied at the time. But now times are changing, and they're looking to do things differently, and we accept the fact, because Kiska, we've heard, isn't doing well as an individual orca in captivity. Her dorsal fin bent over like that was a sign of depression.

So I'm very pleased that our government is moving forward to make Kiska the last orca in captivity in Ontario, that we won't be out bringing more into Ontario, but we will allow and continue to encourage this great organization to flourish, for tourists to come to Ontario to enjoy all that Ontario has to offer.

With that, I'll leave it to my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: I've been asked to speak to this bill. I didn't know much about the bill before today, or about orcas, as a matter of fact. It's one of those afternoons when it actually is nice to sit in the House and to learn something new.

Listening to the discussion, I have reason to believe that Bill 80 is something that there seems to be a consensus with respect to.

The thought occurs to me that the World Court, in many cases, holds that solitary confinement is cruel and unusual punishment. I know that how we relate to animals is a determinant, to a large extent, of how we relate to people. It's important that we hold these things to be self-evident and true and do what we can to protect all of Mother Nature's species.

Orcas like to hunt in pods, I'm told. They can't stand noise. They like to talk to each other. In fact, scientists tell us that they have their own language and, depending on the pod, even their own dialect. We don't know yet—we probably will in a few years—what they're saying. We just have to learn how to translate it into English, Mr. Speaker. But once we do that, I'm sure it'll be a fascinating conversation.

I want to just broaden it out a bit, though, because we can tend to romanticize these things—and it's important that we do that. *Free Willy* was a great film. All the kids and their parents who sat down with them loved the film. Willy was going to get away.

I've been reading an awful lot about climate change, lately, and particularly the impact on our oceans. We talk about Kiska and the water quality and being alone and all of that, in that place. But scientists are now telling us that we've so degraded the water, particularly in oceans, that they were estimating it could take 100 years to recover. Now they're saying it could take 800 to 1,000 years. That's just if we leave it alone: if we quit overfishing it, if we quit doing all the things we ought to intuit are not appropriate to do.

When we have the broader debate about climate change, as I'm sure we will, we need to think not only globally and act locally, as with the orca we've been talking about today, but recognize that thinking globally and acting locally is probably no longer a phrase we should be repeating, because everything we do in life vis-à-vis nature is of global importance, and we need to acknowledge that. I think that in many ways our initiative with respect to climate change is a very specific global response to the kind of issue we're talking about here.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Davenport.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: It gives me pleasure to rise today to speak on Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act.

Animal welfare is a key priority of our government, and the introduction of Bill 80 clearly underlines this point. Before I go forward, I'd like to outline some of the steps we have taken to support and protect animals in our province.

In 2009, this government implemented stronger animal protection legislation and stiffer penalties, including jail, fines and a potential lifetime ownership ban, for those who abuse animals. We put additional oversight and rules in place for roadside zoos. We required veterinarians to report suspected abuse and neglect, and introduced measures to protect them from liability for doing so.

We enabled the OSPCA to inspect places where animals are kept for entertainment, exhibition, boarding, sale or hire, and we introduced additional penalties for harming law enforcement service animals such as dogs and horses.

In October 2012, the then Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, now the Attorney General, set out a framework to further strengthen animal welfare enforcement with a three-point plan to improve province-wide enforcement of animal protection measures in the OSPCA Act and strengthened governance of the OSPCA, consider options for tougher inspections and registration of zoos and aquariums, and create new regulations to further protect marine animals in captivity. We also im-

proved the OSPCA's ability and capacity to carry on their good and important work.

This legislation, Bill 80, continues that good work and is the next logical step in this process to protect wildlife in our province. If passed, simply put, Bill 80 would prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario. The bill will establish the best standards of care for marine mammals in captivity. Additionally, the bill would create a framework to establish animal welfare committees, as recommended by Dr. Rosen's report.

I'd like to take a bit of time to discuss the report prepared by Dr. David Rosen, a respected marine biologist, on the care and maintenance of marine mammals in captivity. In his report, Dr. Rosen outlined what elements those standards should govern, in terms of light, sound, water quality and enclosure size.

Facilities with marine mammals in Ontario would need to adhere to the new standards. These include that facilities that hold marine mammals must meet their physical and psychological environmental needs. Consideration would be given to the environment in which marine mammals live. The water supply must be reliable and contribute to the good health and well-being of the marine mammals and, most importantly, facilities must ensure that marine mammals are not harmed in their contact with the general public.

These new standards, which will be brought forward this summer, will ensure both greater protection and improved treatment for marine mammals.

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With the framework in place, animal welfare committees would ensure planning, protection and oversight for the animals' care. For example, this includes animal care plans, access to veterinarians with expertise in marine mammals, and enhanced record-keeping.

This legislation, Bill 80, would put in place the strongest possible standards of care and protection for marine mammals in captivity in Canada.

This bill puts important protections in place for orcas, marine mammals sometimes referred to as killer whales. The ministry has looked closely at the issue and determined that new standards of care are required for orcas.

Orcas are the largest of the marine mammals in captivity, not just in Ontario but around the world. There are very large, mobile and social mammals. These unique features led our government to determine that their well-being in captivity would be especially difficult to ensure, and so we would end this practice in Ontario. Our government feels strongly that it is difficult to develop a suitable habitat for an animal of that magnitude.

If this bill is passed, any facility that possesses an orca after the introduction of the bill would be responsible for the removal of that animal within six months after royal assent. This is about making sure all marine mammals in captivity have the best standards of care and protections possible. These enhanced standards will help give the public confidence that these magnificent creatures are being properly cared for and protected.

Mr. Speaker, it was a pleasure to speak on this important bill and I look forward to further debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for York South–Weston.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I'm pleased to rise today in the House in support of Bill 80. I have been following the debate this afternoon and I think it's been quite interesting. I heard the member from Parry Sound, for example, speak about the history of this bill and how we came to the point of introducing Bill 80. The MPP from Timmins–James Bay spoke about where in Ontario we can go and see beluga whales. The MPP from Chatham–Kent gave us an “orcas 101” course, I guess, and the MPP from Halton said this is about doing the right thing.

It's about treating these animals in captivity as well as possible. I think in principle we're all in agreement. Perhaps the devil is in the details but that can be discussed in committee, I am sure.

Interjection.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: We can discuss that in committee; yes, we can.

Mr. Speaker, when I was raising my family, I was always resistant to take my kids to see animals in captivity, whether it was at the Toronto zoo, whether it was at Marineland; however, under great insistency, I did certainly take them at least once to both the Toronto zoo and to Marineland.

Kids have a natural attraction to pets and animals. I remember on one Halloween my son came home with two goldfish. I said, “Where did you that goldfish? How could it be that you knocked on a door and somebody gave you goldfish?” He said, “No, Ma, we went to the pet store at the corner and this is what I got for trick-or-treat.” We were now the owners of two goldfish and we had to provide for a good-sized aquarium. It was difficult to take care of two goldfish. Imagine how difficult it can be for orcas kept in captivity.

I can just imagine the difficulty that larger marine animals, and mammals in this case, can pose. As we know and we've heard this afternoon, orcas are extraordinarily complex and exceptionally large animals. I think that enacting a ban on the breeding and acquisition of orcas in Ontario is the right thing to do. Our government feels strongly that it is difficult to develop a suitable habitat for an animal of that size, and I think that all the members here are in agreement. That's why we have moved forward with this decision to prohibit the future acquisition and breeding of orcas in Ontario. They are magnificent creatures, as we have heard.

I want to point out that this bill, in addition, would create a framework to establish animal welfare committees, as recommended by the report. These committees would ensure that the planning, protection and oversight for the animals' care would take place.

Our government is trying to implement and put in place the strongest possible standards of care and protection for marine mammals in captivity here in Ontario and the strongest standards in all of Canada, and I agree with that.

It has been a pleasure to speak to this bill. I hope that we will see it going forward as soon as possible. We'll see it get to committee and then come back for third reading to have speedy approval.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions or comments.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm pleased to rise to speak for a couple of minutes on Bill 80. I guess this has been a terrible problem in our province, so we had better get rid of Kiska, out of Marineland, as soon as possible. Once again, we pound away at another business here in the province of Ontario.

You know, here we are talking about this bill today with the number of problems we actually have in this province—first of all, a \$300-billion debt; a lot of young people, about 20% not working—and we're spending our time on Bill 80.

I was at a home show on the weekend. It was basically a home and cottage show. Not one person mentioned Bill 80 to me or the fact that there shouldn't be orcas at Marineland or any location in Ontario. What they did tell me about, though—I ran into a few people who were from the farming community, agricultural stakeholders—is that they're very concerned about the coyotes. We've had a number of cases of coyote kills. There's a growing population. In fact, the large coyotes are moving down from the north, about 120-pound coyotes. What they're basically doing today to sheep and small cattle is they're actually eating them alive. They take the back end off of the cow and they leave the cow still breathing with no rear end on it. We've asked over and over again at MNR, at the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and you might as well talk to someone on Mars, because no one listens.

The reality is, this is what this government is doing. They're wasting our time here and neglecting the people of Ontario and the real issues: hydro, jobs, the economy, debt, all these sorts of things. Let's start getting together and start making this Parliament actually work. This bill is a joke.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's indeed a pleasure to stand in my place this afternoon and bring the voice of Windsor–Tecumseh to this hallowed chamber.

I guess I've been around whales one way or another most of my life. I was an army brat. I started school at Fort Churchill in Manitoba on the shores of Hudson Bay. In those days, the whaling industry was still very active. You could go down to the bay and you could see the beluga whales that had been harvested. They were used for food, fuel and art and any other number of purposes.

I told the House before about going cod jigging in Newfoundland just off the south coast, off of Burin, with a buddy of mine who lives down there and my father-in-law visiting. On a really foggy day, you're out there trying to catch a cod and all of a sudden there's the majesty of a whale breaching along the boat: small boat, big whale. It's a lot of fun. Your heart sort of goes pitter-

patter, pitter-patter. But you cannot believe the sense of wonder that one gets when you're that close to a whale in the wild, and that is something special.

I've also visited British Columbia, been out in a small fishing boat and seen the orcas jump that day. I also saw an eagle come down and try to take home a harbour seal. It had the seal in its claws about two feet out of the water before it was just too heavy and the eagle had to let it go. I said to my buddy, "Imagine going home tonight and the wife says, 'How was your day, dear?'" and the seal says, "I don't know, but I've got a splitting headache. I can't understand it."

It's just one of those things. When you see an eagle pick up a seal in the wild, or you see a whale breach in the wild, it's something special.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I am really pleased to speak on this bill today, Bill 80, on preventing the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario.

One of the aspects of this bill that hasn't been widely discussed is one of the main reasons for having these mammals in captivity—and the educational purposes that they serve there. Marineland, I think, has been doing an absolutely fabulous job of educating youth for quite some time about marine mammals. But one thing that I want to talk about today is, if this is one of the primary justifications, and the goal is to study marine mammal behaviour—whether it's breeding patterns or whether it's their social skills—how normal are those skills, those little pieces of evidence, going to be if the mammals are kept in aquariums? It's just not going to be their natural habitat, and they will not be behaving in a normal fashion.

I would personally like to see that we use modern technology to bring the educational aspects of our marine mammals to our youth, and perhaps Marineland can think about doing something like that in the future, and still be a centre for education on marine life.

I'm very, very pleased and proud that we are following through on our commitment to enhance animal welfare for all animals, especially marine animals. I think that this is an important bill, and I'm extremely pleased to support it.

Thank you for the opportunity to join with my colleagues and support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Again, I'm happy to provide some additional comments on Bill 80.

This afternoon's debate has been interesting. It has been lots of storytelling. But with the greatest of respect to all of us in this chamber, I don't think any of us are experts in animal husbandry, or certainly not orcas.

I really have concerns that we are debating a piece of legislation that deals with one whale in one facility. I've never been to Marineland. I haven't taken my kids to Marineland. We were fortunate enough to go to Newfoundland and saw lots of whales. I am by no means an

expert. But I do have concerns that we are enacting a piece of legislation that—by the very little research I do know, says whales don't want to be by themselves. They live in pods, they travel in pods, they hunt in pods, and yet this legislation is saying, "No. You must have only one. The name is Kiska. And it must not go beyond that."

I just don't think that we have the knowledge, the skills here in this Legislature to say that the OSPCA has an expert within their organization who can understand and appreciate and direct marine animals. We have one marine animal in the province of Ontario. How could we possibly have enough experts in the province of Ontario to give us the instruction and the direction that we need?

So do I have the issues with Bill 80? Yes, I do, most of it related to: Why are we doing this when we do not have the knowledge level to talk and direct one business for a business model? I'll leave it at that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I believe it's the member for Beaches–East York who's going to respond on behalf of the government members.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I'm glad to speak on behalf of my colleagues the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the member for Davenport, the member from York South–Weston and the member from Kingston and the Islands for their comments on the bill, and to respond to some of the comments of our friends on the other side: Simcoe North, Windsor–Tecumseh and Dufferin–Caledon.

The great thing that I think I heard, particularly from the member from Simcoe North, is there will be no objections to curtailing debate on this thing as fast as we can, so that we can move on to other pieces of important legislation. But let's not forget how important a piece of legislation this is. Notwithstanding the comments of the member from Dufferin–Caledon, this is not about one whale; this is about a whole bunch of regulations around not just that animal for the rest of its natural life, but all the other animals in the care of marine facilities in Ontario that are currently existing or will in the future exist. This is not about protecting this one whale by itself; it is about not allowing another whale to be brought out of the wild and into captivity in circumstances which are just not conducive to its psychological well-being.

That was a point that was underscored by David Rosen, that not just the physical but the psychological aspects of a sentient being, a sentient cetacean like Kiska, are absolutely essential so that, if we go back to the member from Kingston and the Islands and talk about the educational aspect, we are actually teaching our children the importance of empathy, the importance of not doing this to animals: keeping them, particularly sentient beings, in a condition which is abhorrent to their natural way of being.

When you think about an orca, which can swim easily 100 miles—that's from Toronto to my neighbour in Quinte West's house—each day: These animals are used to going a long distance. They're used to travelling in pods. It's very important that we get this bill forward as soon as possible. Thank you for all your comments on this matter.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I will speak to Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2015. The purpose of the act, as stated in the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act: “The object of the society”—meaning the OSPCA—“is to facilitate and provide for the prevention of cruelty to animals and their protection and relief therefrom.”

The OSPCA is a charitable organization that provides sheltering services for animals and has enforcement powers under the OSPCA Act. These powers include entering onto private property without a warrant, demanding the production of records and things, issuing orders, seizing animals, charging owners for the boarding, treatment and care of seized animals, destroying animals, and laying charges for provincial offences or under the Criminal Code of Canada.

The OSPCA and its affiliates have acquired these powers without being subject to any associated accountability or oversight. Given human nature, the combination of the lack of oversight and accountability of the OSPCA and the inherent conflict of interest of a private organization running both a private charity and a de facto private police force, it is not surprising that serious abuses of power and authority have developed at the OSPCA. The necessity to raise money to pay for enforcers’ salaries has resulted in orders being written and animals being seized for the purpose of fundraising.

So serious, in fact, are the reported abuses that Carl Noble, a former OSPCA director and member of the inspection/enforcement committee and a former mayor of South Bruce Peninsula, was one of the 29 directors who resigned en masse in 2006 in protest over the change in attitude of the OSPCA toward very aggressive enforcement. Carl and his 28 colleagues wrote letters to the Minister of Correctional Services expressing their strong concern over the aggressive actions of OSPCA inspectors and calling for government to create oversight and accountability of OSPCA enforcement.

Here is what he had to say in July 2008: “The reason I resigned from the OSPCA board was because of deficit budgeting and the fact that they took a 180-degree turn in training and appointment of investigators. The newly appointed chief investigator was of the opinion that if you were charged by the OSPCA, you were guilty until proven innocent, and this went directly against my grain.... What really upset me was the fact that they suggested bullet-proof vests, nightsticks and handcuffs.” Carl said, “I was of the opinion they should be taught some people skills.”

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Carl felt so strongly about this issue that he made a deputation on Bill 50 to the standing committee. From Hansard, I quote, “We need accountability for and to the people of Ontario.”

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The Attorney General on a point of order.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I don’t hear anything about Bill 80 coming from the member.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would have to say to the members again that while the debate this afternoon has been interesting, we are debating Bill 80. But I do find that, broadly speaking, the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills is discussing issues that are relevant with respect to Bill 80.

I return to the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is about Bill 80. Some of this is history, but it’s important history, as all of it pertains to the OSPCA Act and what I view to be flaws in the act that we should correct, and that correction should come from this House. I would say that to the member across the way, who has concerns and is in a position to make those changes.

The LeSage report: Following the decision of the OSPCA to kill 350 dogs in its Newmarket shelter rather than treat the curable condition of ringworm, and its subsequent reversal of that decision after the OSPCA came under widespread public criticism, the provincial government asked Justice Patrick LeSage and Dr. Alan Meek to conduct an independent review of the OSPCA.

The following recommendation was included in the LeSage report: “The OSPCA Act gives the OSPCA powers akin to those of a police force, but does not identify an agency responsible for overseeing the OSPCA in the execution of the legislative mandate.... The Ontario government should consider legislative amendments to provide for oversight of the OSPCA in order to remedy the current situation of having the OSPCA essentially policing itself.”

Yet to date, nothing has been done.

In Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan provincial government withdrew all funding from the Saskatchewan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in the fall of 2014, which resulted in the Saskatchewan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals being disbanded. The reason that the Saskatchewan provincial government withdrew funding was the very aggressive abuse of enforcement powers to write unfounded orders, and the wrongful seizure of horses from a farmer.

The farmer has charged the Saskatchewan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals with theft. The hurtful practice of abuse of power and authority by the Saskatchewan body had been going on for some time. Finally, an animal owner has stood up to them. Finally, they have been held to account. Finally, right has been done.

In Grey-Bruce, after numerous complaints of overreach and abuse on the part of the local OSPCA branch, particularly by an overly aggressive enforcement officer named Jennifer Bluhm, the local OSPCA office in Hanover, which served the counties of Grey-Bruce, was closed in 2013 and has not been reopened.

Other animal welfare organizations disapprove of the actions of the OSPCA. The Lanark Animal Welfare Soci-

ety was an affiliate of the OSPCA. They sent a young woman named Melanie Young for OSPCA training to be an inspector. The Lanark Animal Welfare Society was very proud of Melanie, because she had a strong sense of compassion for animals and also a healthy respect for the rights of people. The OSPCA failed Melanie as an inspector. They said she did not have an aggressive enough enforcement attitude. The Lanark Animal Welfare Society stood by Melanie and divorced themselves from the OSPCA and their aggressive ways. The Lanark Animal Welfare Society has been an independent, self-funding animal shelter since 1985.

Police powers: All police forces in Canada have oversight and accountability mechanisms in place so that police officers can be held accountable for their actions. This is a necessary, understood and accepted practice.

Without the necessary oversight and accountability, the OSPCA has become an organization run amok. But instead of fixing the blatant problems that have become glaringly obvious to anyone paying attention, the provincial government is expanding the powers of the OSPCA with this bill.

The case of Pauliuk versus the government, identified by a legislative library researcher at the request of my office, clearly documents the inherent conflict of interest that is embedded in the governance model of the OSPCA. The conflict of interest inherent in the private funding/private policing model was one of the main issues facing Justice A. Zuraw of the Ontario Court of Justice in the case of the crown versus Pauliuk, decided in 2005. Pauliuk involved the alleged mistreatment of 10 horses seized from her small farm by the Hamilton/Burlington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

At trial, the defence argued that the society's investigation was publicity-driven, financially motivated and dependent on the evidence of witnesses with financial interests. Indeed, the evidence presented to the court revealed these points:

The society had issued flowery press releases while the horses were in its custody. These included appeals for money, and stated that the society would be required to pay for all the expenses arising from the seizure and on-going care of the animals.

The society's inspector delayed laying charges for almost six months after the horses had been seized.

Dr. Mogavero, the veterinarian who signed the certificate authorizing the society to seize the horses, was also a member of the society's board of directors. His duties as a board member included fundraising.

Dr. Mogavero was on retainer with the society in his capacity as a veterinarian. His usual practice was to give the society a deep discount. In this case, however, he charged over \$6,000 for his services, for which he was paid in full.

In addressing the issue of the neutrality and fair-mindedness of the investigators, Judge Zuraw made the following observations about the society's operations:

"It hires its own agents and inspectors, determines the parameters of their employment, and using afore-

mentioned police powers, enters property, seizes animals as in this case (without warrant or judicial intervention) and lays charges—all the while attending to its own need to fundraise. In order to do the latter, it relies heavily on the publicity it can glean from high-profile seizures and charges. Indeed, there is a communications branch tasked with this. It is a not-for-profit organization and a registered charity. Without publicity and high-profile charges, the funds the society for the prevention of cruelty to animals needs to operate would no doubt dry up.

"It goes without saying that a strong and active enforcement of animal cruelty laws must be maintained. But I would be naïve to suggest that the current set-up could not foster the perception in reasonable, open-minded people, that bias may exist and that conflicts will result. However trite it may be, it is still true that 'Justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done.' It is unfortunate, for example, that Dr. Mogavero, a highly qualified and well-respected professional, was placed in the position he was in this case. He directed the operation of the society, he earned money from the society, he helped fundraise for the society, he was concerned for the budgetary needs of the society, he took part in the investigation, made the decision to seize the horses, made the decision to board and care for the horses, and profited from so doing."

1700

Judge Zuraw concluded that the perception of bias arising from these facts was fatal to the prosecution's case and dismissed the charges against the farm owner, Mrs. Pauliuk, who suffered a great deal of worry, stress, and financial loss, not to mention her horses.

Marineland is a responsible caretaker of their zoo. It is regularly inspected and is good to their animals. Animal rights activists infiltrated the staff and made unfounded reports about Kiska, the orca whale. The banning of the possession of orca whales in the future is an unfounded attack on Marineland. By extension, this is an attack against all zoos across Ontario.

Marineland is a significant employer in the Niagara area. Kiska is the main attraction. This bill is the result of the infiltration of Marineland and the OSPCA by animal rights extremists and will create unnecessary hardship for Marineland.

There are numerous other stories of abuse and maltreatment by the OSPCA, but I only have time to highlight three today to make the point that the OSPCA is out of control and needs to be reined in.

John Nyenhuis is a farmer. One summer, John Nyenhuis of Sebringville, a hog farmer, had five pigs with belly button hernias, which is a common problem in pigs, pigs which were otherwise in excellent condition and safe to eat. He called Ontario Pork, his organization, to ask their advice on how to handle the hogs in the most humane way and was advised to put the pigs on a separate small truck and take them to a local small slaughterhouse.

He loaded them up and took them to slaughter for his own family's consumption. Upon arriving at the local

slaughterhouse, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs inspectors had a look at the pigs. The CFIA inspector viewed the pigs to be in good condition, but the OMAFRA inspector felt the pigs were suffering, so he killed the pigs on the spot with a hammer and sent pictures of the bloody scene to the OSPCA and the OMAFRA veterinarian. The OSPCA charged Nyenhuis with animal abuse. He went to court. He pleaded guilty and paid a \$750 fine, and he paid his lawyer.

John transported his pigs in a proper and humane way and is one of the best hog farmers in Ontario. His veterinarian said that John runs a very well managed farm and had done everything he should to be humane to the pigs.

Gianna Tramontin, a teacher, lived in Etobicoke with her 16-year-old husky dog named Rocky. Rocky had a bed, food and water in the backyard and had been treated for some 14 years for arthritis and various ailments by the same vet, Heather Hannah. One day, while Mrs. Tramontin was at work, the OSPCA seized her dog, Rocky, and left a notice on the door. Upon reading the note when she got home, Mrs. Tramontin phoned the OSPCA, who told her that Rocky was being treated, but that was not true. Without telling Mrs. Tramontin, Rocky had been euthanized the same day by the OSPCA.

Sunny Reuter boarded her dog, Arko, in a kennel while she and her daughter went on vacation. Arco was a Turkish Akbash, a rare breed of dog that is fine-boned and slim-bodied. The OSPCA mistakenly thought Arko was a Great Pyrenees dog, a much heavier bodied breed, assumed he was emaciated, and had him euthanized mere hours before Sunny returned home. Even though they had her phone number, the OSPCA did not bother to call Sunny's sister prior to killing the dog. Upon being informed of their mistake, the OSPCA responded and threatened Sunny with criminal charges. Only after Sunny was able to produce a veterinarian's report verifying Arko's good health prior to boarding him were the charges withdrawn.

In conclusion, I would say I could go on for hours telling stories of the OSPCA misdeeds, so numerous are the accounts. The OSPCA cares not for the truth, nor for the people and the families that they terrorize—and yes, I mean terrorize. Often people decide to give up their livelihoods rather than fight the OSPCA and potentially lose everything. The people that do decide to fight, and even those that don't, often suffer severe consequences to their health and well-being.

The examples I have shared with you today are not isolated incidents, but highlight a pattern of totalitarian behaviour that has, sadly, become entrenched in the organization, as the bullies never suffer consequences for their abusive behaviour.

When organizations are allowed to make up their own rules and are given expansive policing powers, it inevitably leads to abuse. This is not the only abusive organization empowered by this government, but it is one of the worst. Prior to giving the OSPCA further powers, the provincial government needs to clean up the mess it has

created and restore sanity to the system, not reward the bullies.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's indeed again a pleasure to stand and make comments referenced by the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills.

While the member was speaking, I was thinking back about 25 years ago when I joined with a buddy and his family and we took our kids to Marineland. We had a wonderful day. As I'm sitting here today trying to remember if I saw an orca or not, I can't recall. I think I saw some dolphins. I don't remember seeing an orca. Maybe that was before Kiska, or someone else was entertaining the troops.

When I go to Florida, Fort Myers Beach, when you're walking down the beach you look out and you hope to see a dolphin, just to watch the dolphins in their feeding run just off the beach. Sometimes you see three or four of them really close to shore, and it makes the day. Kids get a big kick out of it. Sometimes when you're down there you go up to Manatee Park and look at the manatees— not as exciting, but still a wonderful creature.

When you think about the orca, and I'm reminded of when I was a city councillor for seven years—orcas being black and white, and skunks being black and white. We had an issue one time dealing with whether we should kill skunks or not. I have never received more emails than kill-don't kill skunks. PETA picked it up and put it around the world. I had more emails from California than I did from Windsor on the killing of skunks. I have not had one email or conversation about Bill 80, the OSPCA amendments.

It just shows you the public's imagination. You can latch on to something and it blossoms up into something really big and controversial, or you have this other piece of legislation that we get fixated on for a while here but I'm not sure, out in the general public, it's really capturing their imagination. I bet you if you bring in a bill that says we're going to kill skunks, you'll get a lot more attention.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Thank you for this opportunity to provide a few comments on the previous member's presentation and speech. I have to say I listened carefully for two minutes and I got lost in what he was telling us, because I have a feeling it was a repeat of a debate we did back in 2009, when we first brought in some controls for the OSPCA and animals all together.

He seemed to have a lot of complaints about that act and a lot of complaints about the OSPCA, but I never heard him offer one solution. I'm sitting here thinking, does he really believe we need to live in a lawless society? I have trouble understanding him and adding comments to this particular speech that he made.

1710

But Mr. Speaker, I have to say to you that the situation that we're in is because the government is actually bring-

ing in legislation, because we have a marine mammal that is in Marineland, and the public has decided that that's not the right place for it, and we all agree. In fact, everyone who has spoken so far agrees. In fact, all his colleagues who have spoken agree. So I really had difficulty trying to follow his direction—where we're going to go and what we're going to do—but I hope that, through all of this, we will send this bill to committee, the bill will come back here, and hopefully we will adopt it, and these marine mammals will not be brought into what I would say is storage in the future. The one that we have today, I think all of us would agree, you don't want to take it back and put it in the wild, because it's been out of the wild for so long. It makes absolutely no sense.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Yes, a valuable presentation by the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills. In spite of comments from the government side, this legislation is all about the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. I mean, it doesn't have the title “killer whale” or anything like that. I know people like to talk about killer whales and other marine mammals, but the legislation itself is designed to affect the original Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. In fact, Bill 80 is titled the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2015. It's perhaps passing strange that the government is not talking about the OSPCA.

We know that the minister will be given, in the future, undefined or unexplained regulatory powers. As the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills has indicated, it's obvious that we do need more powers in the hands of the minister to have more oversight over the OSPCA and to hold this organization more accountable.

We do know that, for example, OSPCA inspectors would be able to demand production of records. They don't need to go on-site to do an inspection—maybe that's a good thing, maybe that's a bad thing. But this is legislation that's all about the OSPCA, and I found it quite heartening that somebody stood up and talked about the OSPCA for 20 minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's an honour to have an opportunity to respond to the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills regarding his position on Bill 80. While I don't always agree with what the member states, I respect his position, and I also question somewhat the government's position, particularly their challenge that his remarks weren't related to the bill, because obviously in the title of the bill, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act—basically, it's about the OSPCA.

The OSPCA, while it provides a vital role—I don't think anyone is going to deny that we need oversight, but there are some bad actors in among the people who work with animals. But there is also a lack of an appeal process

and a lack of ministerial oversight, and some people in this province, not to their own fault, do live in fear of the OSPCA.

I can give you a personal experience. I have a really good relationship with our local OSPCA. My wife had an antiques store across the street from our dairy farm and she had a horse, and the horse was lying flat out in the field. The OSPCA inspector came to the store and saw the horse lying flat out in the field, and she right away wanted to know who owned the farm, because obviously this horse was distressed. It was a bright, sunny day; this horse was distressed. My wife walked out onto the porch, she yelled, “Hey, Velvet!”, and the horse got up. We came and fed the horse, and everything was fine. It was a learning experience for us all.

Hon. James J. Bradley: The horse was resting.

Mr. John Vanthof: But the OSPCA inspector didn't know that. These are the things we have to look at.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. I return to the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the members who spoke to this bill from Windsor–Tecumseh, Scarborough–Rouge River, Haldimand–Norfolk and Timiskaming–Cochrane.

The member from Scarborough–Rouge River asked what we would like done. We should dismiss this bill as a bad idea. It's not necessary because there is no need. Marineland takes good care of their whale.

Zoos fill an important need in our communities. They serve an educational purpose for families and children and people in general to go and see animals that they could see nowhere else. Zoos always want to have healthy, good-looking animals in a good state of health so that people get a positive impression. Anything else would be unsatisfactory.

Marineland knows what they're doing. They have veterinarian inspections regularly of their whale. It is a healthy whale. If anything, what it needs is a partner. I think what we should do is be passing a bill to buy one more whale, and that would make for a happy Kiska. So I would suggest in committee that we make that amendment to the bill, that we add a whale.

It's unfortunate that the real amendment that should happen to the OSPCA Act is—like a private member's bill I had three years ago when I first got here to Queen's Park, which would have provided oversight and accountability over this private police force. It is absolutely a wrongful thing that you would have in place within a private charity people with, effectively, police powers, yet they must do fundraising through their charity to pay their way. Clearly, that is a conflict. We would never have a policeman writing speeding tickets so he can pay his own wages. Why do we think untrained enforcers with the OSPCA, who have absolutely no oversight over their professional ability, let alone their fundraising, should have that kind of power? That's the kind of amendment that should be done.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure, obviously, to stand up to talk about Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act. I will say, though the issue of cruelty to animals does come to my office, the issue of Marineland and orcas has not. Yet, I do think that it's incumbent upon all of us, as legislators—clearly, the member from Parkdale–High Park has been an advocate in this field for quite some time and simply wants to have this debate happen.

This has been one of the strangest debates, though, I have to say, that I have ever participated in in this House. We have heard about dogs, cats, polar bears, skunks and goldfish. I really have to tell you, I honestly sometimes struggle with this kind of a debate. But I want to pull it back to the context of why we are here and perhaps we may find our way, if you put things into context.

I do want to say at the onset, of course, that the ONDP welcomes legislation that would strengthen protection for marine animals in the province's marine parks and aquariums, as well as regulate the conditions in which these large animals can be observed or utilized. Of course, we do believe in good governance, and that is part of this piece of legislation, which is good. When you have strong governance functions in place, you often have more ethical operational aspects of a business and there is an accountability as well. Governance does matter. It matters, actually, in a lot of different fields. But we're not talking about those fields today, like energy or finance.

These amendments, of course, add to the existing legislation already in place, but it's meant to protect animals subject to captivity or experimentation. We haven't really talked a lot about the research component of this legislation, and that oversight actually is very much needed in this province. The plight of one whale in one—what do you call it?

1720

Ms. Cindy Forster: Marineland, one park.

Ms. Catherine Fife: In one park, it's important, but the issue of research and the experimentation on animals across the province—that's happening behind closed doors. It's happening around the province, and I think that there have to be some ethical considerations in that.

The amendments would make the selling and acquisition or breeding of orcas for captivity prohibited in Ontario. This legislation, obviously, would also amend the Animals for Research Act, which would allow the OSPCA greater oversight over the conditions for large marine animals used in research.

I think, once again, that when we have debates in this place you can see how differently we see these issues. The previous member, who was really focused on the OSPCA and thinks that perhaps getting another whale and putting another whale in captivity is going to rectify the situation, is clearly not where we are, nor would it be, in my estimation, very ethical.

The amended act also would provide for the setting of regulations around the keeping, care and use of other

marine mammals such as walrus and dolphins. So this isn't really just about one whale; this is about shifting a whole culture around mammals and animals in captivity and creating some better oversight around the research and the experimentation, which is becoming more and more political. It's just not very open. There isn't a big pool, and people don't pay a lot of money to come in and watch the animals. The research piece is very, very key.

The expected regulations governing the existing captivity of large marine mammals—specifically this one mammal, Kiska, the only killer orca in captivity in the province—will increase the size of enclosures and limit sound exposure for the animals. We've already heard several members discuss some of those issues.

What I would really like to do, though, Mr. Speaker, is to focus more broadly on the context of this debate around the interactions of humans and whales, because there's a reason why this piece of legislation is here, and it does intersect with the way that humans see whales and the way that humans crave knowledge about whales. I think, actually, it goes back in a very true sense to our own curiosity about nature and, obviously, points to our disconnection from nature. We are living, more and more, very isolated lives, very focused on technology. We crave those experiences, but we try to get them through technology. So there is this inherent curiosity that we have, as human beings, to better understand nature. The problem is that when we interject into the process of nature, often humans mess it up pretty good, and I think we have a lot of instances of that over history, not just in Ontario but of course the world.

I think curiosity has drawn us to this issue, but the issue of whales in captivity, particularly orca whales, has been the subject of much public discussion and debate, actually, not just in Ontario but throughout North America, especially since the release of the documentary called *Blackfish*, which came out in 2013. Since then, as marine mammal theme parks increased in popularity throughout the world, there have been many examples that have demonstrated the controversy around orcas in captivity. Some members have already mentioned some of them, but you do have Wanda, the first orca in captivity, who died after one day. You have, of course, Keiko, who is the subject of *Free Willy*, who died after being returned to the wild. Ironically, just to make my point about how humans truly can mess up nature, in this instance humans were trying to teach a whale how to be a whale. It's ridiculous; there's no other word for it. Their intentions were good, but you can't unlearn what you've already learned, and certainly humans haven't gotten the point.

I see that the minister of curmudgeonry is actually leaving the building, which is probably not a bad thing right now.

Springer was the third whale and first orca returned to the wild successfully, so it can be done. Luna, another orca, returned to the wild and died.

The issues and the popularity around these theme parks have existed almost since the day the first orca was captured and displayed in Newport Harbor in California

in 1961. So this is a long-standing issue, right? The debate on whether that was a good idea for people or for whales began the next day but didn't really heat up until the 1970s. This came from the opposition to whaling, the whaling industry that had been a key part of the formation, of course, of Greenpeace and the environmental social movement; it also drove people to think about whales in captivity. You saw the slaughter of millions of whales. In fact, a report just came out, March 11, 2015, that's finally done a tally, and it's a sad stat to read into Hansard, but I think it's probably worth it.

The commercial hunting wiped out almost three million animals last century—three million. Blue whales, in particular, have been depleted by 90%, and these populations are slow to recover. People are so curious about them and want the knowledge, but these industries have been able to carry on as if these populations are not at risk.

Clearly, there's cause for concern around whale populations, and then there is this counterpoint of whales in captivity, which of course has been generated and increased in popularity because of people's curiosity. But the debate on whales in captivity raged mostly on the fringe for the next 25 years. It picked up steam in the mid-1990s with the release of the film *Free Willy*—it's already been mentioned—and the attempt to rehabilitate the orca star. We can go through the story of Keiko, the story of Springer and the story of Luna.

The story of Luna—actually I did watch this documentary. I caught it one day I was home. I watched the documentary; actually, my friend from Cape Breton was one of the film directors, documentarian Suzanne Chisholm. It was a heart-breaking documentary to watch because you want that happy ending, and yet there were so many forces at play in the story of Luna, the orphaned whale who was friendly with the Nootka Sound First Nations population. Then the government of Canada tried to capture Luna to reunite it with its pod, but the First Nations of course felt a stronger connection to the whale—it's actually hard to imagine the government of Canada having a connection with almost anything right now, particularly—and the plan to gradually lead the whale back into the ocean to reunite with the pod came of course to a tragic ending. I think we all know how this ends. Once again, human intervention led to needless suffering and the death of that whale.

It's easy to look at marine mammal parks as either worthwhile attractions that can help educate people about whales or as man-made animal prisons that exist to use the animals until they die prematurely. People are usually very strongly in either camp. People aren't usually in the middle, on the fence. They feel very strongly about that, and probably that's one of the motivations as to how this piece of legislation, Bill 80, came to this floor.

While we did hunt whales to near extinction in the 20th century, an international moratorium on whale hunting was agreed to in 1986. Actually, I remember this. This was part of the curriculum at the time because I was still in high school in 1986. Only a few remaining coun-

tries—Japan, Iceland and Norway—continue to have whaling industries, and even those face intense scrutiny for their use around legal loopholes to get around the moratorium.

While we once trapped whales en masse for our marine mammal parks, whales are no longer trapped and the viability of keeping them in captivity continues to be debated, the outcome being the improvement of conditions for captive whales.

As we collectively continue to grapple with humanity's role, if you will, on this planet and place in the hierarchy of species, we must ask ourselves constantly: Is this action making the planet better? This leads usually to a fairly strong ethical debate.

I was reading one paper on—this is why this job is so great: You just never know what you're going to be reading in the course of a day. I was reading *The Ethics of Keeping Whales and Dolphins Captive*. It's from chapter 13 of the *Performing Orca—Why the Show Must Stop*. The author is Erich Hoyt, and he had some really interesting things to say about the ethics of this issue. One of my former research positions was in ethics. His research says that the empirical data has shown that cetaceans—cetaceans?

Ms. Cindy Forster: Citations?

Ms. Catherine Fife: No, no. Anyway, whales suffer “varying degrees of stress and trauma during capture and captivity. The same may not be true of the third generation” of animals that are in captivity. “But, after weighing all the evidence, the committee concluded that whales should ‘not be subjected to the possibility of deprivation or suffering which conditions and quality of life in captivity might occasion.’”

1730

“Ethical arguments against keeping orcas captive sometimes cite the importance of culture in orcas and the intensity of family ties.” It is incredible to learn about these animals. I've always been so curious about them. I was that kid in grade 4 who brought in the National Geographic, the little plastic album that you used to have. I brought it in, and we listened to the whales. The kids were amazed that there was this communication system with these beautiful animals.

In “7 Things About Wild Orca Whales You'll Never Learn at SeaWorld” there's one really important point, and that is that females rule. I just like to say that, of course: Females rule.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Girls rule, eh?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes. I'm going to mention that tomorrow when I speak at Equal Voice about women and politics. I'm going to transition the orca debate into politics and the new environment of women and politics: Equal Voice Toronto tomorrow night at Samara. There you go. I don't have a phone number like the member from Timmins.

But anyway, “Females Rule: Resident orca societies, dominated by females, are populated by intensely social whales that travel in large stable groups centered on a matriarch, typically the oldest living female. Adult

females are easily distinguished from adult males by their dorsal fins....

“Residents travel in matri-focal units called matrilineal groups.” These groups usually consist of a reproductive female and her dependent calves and juveniles and adolescents. The boys don’t leave. They don’t leave until they get set up by the mum. That’s why they’re called momma’s boys. There’s actually a section here: “‘The outstanding feature’ of resident orca society is that neither sex wanders from the natal family and its home range.... The lifelong bonds between resident mothers and sons run deep.”

When you think about these animals in that context, it’s hard to imagine them living in isolation in a tank and having people stare at them. Over the years we’ve seen animals in captivity, and I think instinctively we recognize that there’s something fundamentally wrong about it. So of course we’re supportive of a piece of legislation which brings in some stronger oversight. I think oversight always has to be—there have to be measures of control and quality in that oversight. Even Marineland has publicly accepted and welcomed the introduction of Bill 80, saying that they meet or exceed the Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines. If that’s what they say, then there’s going to be some oversight. I think this can be done in a balanced and measured way.

For myself, though, I’m one of those people who would prefer to be out in nature, even though I grew up in the inner city. The only trees I saw for a long time when I was growing up were in Boyne River in the outdoor education programs outside of Toronto, which I was quite fortunate to actually have.

But there’s a really interesting dynamic happening now with people like myself who have a genuine curiosity about nature and about animals, and who value research, and would rather sit down and watch a documentary instead of a Disney film, if you will. Through social media, we are developing a new connection to nature which is not invasive at all. I’m following Lydia; @RockStarLydia is a shark. I’m following her on Twitter. She has 13,000 followers, which is more than some of us in this room—actually more than most of us. She’s the first great white shark that’s ever been recorded to cross the Atlantic, and then under her Twittiverse it says, “Oh, Canada eh” because we’ve adopted her, I guess.

And I’m also following Katherine The Shark, @Shark_Katharine, who has 30,000 followers.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Kind of like you.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I’m not quite a shark.

But last year, I had the pleasure of meeting this beautiful young woman in my riding and I was able to nominate her for the Leading Girls Building Communities awards that we’re able to do as MPPs. Her name is Shark Warrior Jr. She was in grade 5 last year; grade 6 this year. She is telling the story about all the good things about sharks. Of course, as a young activist, a young environmentalist, she is supportive of Bill 80, the Ontario

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I’ve said pretty much everything that I possibly could say about this piece of legislation. But I do want to say that sometimes the debates in this House are not always easy to navigate—where we are personally.

This piece of legislation, if passed—and by all accounts it will be; who could really vote against it?—should be fast-tracked. We should get it done. We should listen to the public consultation, of course, and make it stronger or adapt it to address some of the gaps in this piece of legislation.

I think, though, that what’s important to understand is the importance of biodiversity, of maintaining the viability of species and ecosystems and how our actions today impact the planet in decades to come. Today’s debate is pretty much a good point in the global warming piece as well. There are tangible ways for us to protect our environment and to protect the species in those environments. Obviously, mitigating risk is one of the foremost ways to do so.

I look forward to this piece of legislation getting to committee and ensuring that we are doing everything that we can to protect animals who are part of research and experimentation and, obviously, animals in captivity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I’m just going to relate an incident that I can recall from my childhood. My dad worked for the Ministry of Natural Resources for 40 years. One of his jobs was to transport the animals from Springwater park to the sportsmen’s show and to the Royal Winter Fair. Well, I was very fortunate that I got to go with my dad when he did that. When I look back on it now, it was very exciting for me.

Now, wolves at that time were not considered a positive animal. As you know, they were vilified. We know now how important they are and what magnificent creatures they are. I loved to go with my dad, but Jack the wolf was more like Jack the puppy dog. Basically, his spirit was broken. When I look back now and think about it, he was being fed lots, and he was being well cared for, but you could tell that his spirit was gone. He no longer was that beautiful beast that was able to roam free all over the woods.

I think it’s very important that we make sure that the animals stay where they should in the environment where they are the healthiest and where there’s a circle of life, and that as much as possible we don’t interfere with that circle of life.

I urge everyone to get this bill to the committee, and let’s get this passed and set in motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Robert Bailey: It’s a pleasure to stand and rise and reply to the remarks from the member from Kitchener–Waterloo. It’s quite interesting, the debate this afternoon. I listened to quite a bit of it. I’ve heard some stuff I’d never heard before. I guess I don’t get out much.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: You said that, not us.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Yes. Some of the books and—I don't watch a lot of those kinds of shows.

Anyway, I found it quite interesting when the member from Kitchener–Waterloo talked about the momma's boys and that the female was out trying to find mates. I could relate to that, because that's what my wife has been trying to do with my two sons. So when she said that, it made me think of that. Life actually recreates in this chamber, if you listen long enough, and you're here long enough.

Katharine the shark—I thought I had an image there for a minute. I'll have to find that book. Maybe the member from Kitchener–Waterloo can refer that to me.

1740

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm sure the library has a copy.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Maybe the library, yes. I'm just down the hall from the library.

It's been very interesting. I think all the members have had different experiences and comments, whether it's zoos or these different organizations where they do keep these animals in captivity. I know I'm torn with it; I grew up in a different era, when you didn't question these kinds of things. You went to the Shrine Circus with the elephants—

Mr. Bill Walker: You can't even have those now.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Even the Shriners have dropped the elephant show now. That's no longer going to happen.

Interjection: Barnum and Bailey.

Mr. Bill Walker: Bob Bailey is my favourite.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Yes, Bob Bailey. So anyway—

Hon. Jeff Leal: Bob, you're moving to the front row soon.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I don't know if you're going to get me in the front row. But anyway, it's amazing how lives change if you live around here long enough.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Cindy Forster: I want to thank the member from Kitchener–Waterloo for her 20 minutes of input into this bill. I think it's an important bill. There has been a lot of controversy over this issue, certainly in the south end of this province, but Marineland is not unlike other events in Niagara Falls. They have a butterfly conservatory. They have the Bird Kingdom, the Niagara Falls aviary and conservatory.

Those attractions attract hundreds of thousands of people to Niagara Falls every year. They create revenue. They support jobs—probably hundreds of thousands of jobs. Youth in our communities around Niagara have worked in those kinds of venues for many, many years. But my hope is that when this bill gets passed, and if it gets passed quickly after public consultation, it will actually be implemented.

We all know, only having sat here for a very short period of time—four years—that there were things this government has committed to do around reviewing the

CCACs that have never happened. They committed to actually reviewing the long-term-care sector, doing inspections in those nursing homes; it took seven years to actually get those nursing homes inspected. I'm told that there was not one order written as a result of those inspections, but just last night we actually watched a W5 program with respect to the abuse in our long-term-care homes.

If this government is real about this bill, then they should move forward, have the consultation and get on with business.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I want to say thank you very much for this opportunity to discuss Bill 80. I would also like to say thank you to all the members, particularly the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, for very insightful comments on our Bill 80.

When I think about everything that has been discussed today—now, going back, I would like to focus a little bit on our orca and the reason why we're suggesting our orca shouldn't be—

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: In captivity.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: —in captivity—thank you—in our aquarium here. When you look at the orca, which I had the great pleasure of seeing in the wild, and the amount of travel time that this wonderful mammal has to go through every single day, and looking back at how unfortunate it is when they are in captivity and the reflection on them—certainly I can say that it's nice to see them, but I think that as humans we will appreciate it a lot more to see them actually in the wild, which I had the great pleasure to do, as I mentioned.

Anyone travelling to Tadoussac should go and see them there. They're wonderful. They're one of the largest marine mammals in captivity, in Ontario or anywhere else. When you talked about “twice the length”—they are over twice the length and four times the mass of a beluga, the next largest mammal in captivity.

As I mentioned, they travel a lot. Orcas typically dive 500 feet or more and can swim up to 100 miles per day, the approximate distance from this Legislature to Belleville.

Certainly, as such, our proposed amendments to the OSPCA Act would immediately prohibit breeding and acquisition of orcas in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. I return to the member for Kitchener–Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks to the members from Barrie, Sarnia–Lambton, Welland and Ottawa–Orléans for their comments.

I essentially wanted to leave this debate with the ethical arguments against captivity. I want to cite again the paper by Erich Hoyt. He says that perhaps the clearest explanation of the ethical arguments has been given by former US federal biologist and chairman of the Marine Mammal Commission, Victor Scheffer.

He says: “‘At the core of humaneness,’ he wrote in the final chapter ..., ‘is the idea of kind-ness, or the idea that we and the other animals are basically of one kind.’ To Scheffer, the key is that we are all ‘part of the living animal world ... caught up together in a sort of spiritual biomass’ and therefore ‘we have the right to insist not only that animals be spared distress (pain and fear) but that they be used in ways acceptable to large numbers of thoughtful men and women.’”

“Scheffer confessed an ‘inability to deal adequately with the problem of how one learns what the general public wants from, and for, the whales, seals and other marine mammals,’ adding: ‘I myself believe that what men and women are saying today about them is, “Let them be.”’”

But the real argument is an emotional argument, and I think you’ve heard that here today—an emotional or perhaps a sentimental argument.

He says, “I believe, quite simply, that sentiment is one of the best reasons for saving not only some of these animals, but all of them.”

I think that a piece of legislation that can be put in place, as I said, to not only deal with this one animal but with others in captivity—and to address the research and experimentation on animals is also a worthwhile element of this legislation.

I hope that we can accelerate this. I think this is something that, actually, we can accomplish together in this Legislature.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there have been more than six and one-half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill.

This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned, unless the government House leader or his designate specifies otherwise.

I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Mr. Speaker, we wish debate to continue.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? I’m pleased to recognize the Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It’s a very distinct honour for me to have the chance to spend a bit of time this afternoon in the Legislature, providing my input with respect to this particular piece of legislation, Bill 80, the marine mammals act.

Speaker, I want to notify you that I’ll be sharing my time with my good friend the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

I have had the chance throughout the proceedings today to listen to members from all three caucuses on this particular bill, and to have heard so many different interesting facts and figures. We hear that often when it comes to debating different pieces of legislation in this chamber.

What I found fascinating about today’s debate and the discussion is the degree to which there is broad support

amongst members from all three parties with respect to making sure that we move forward with finding a creative way to provide additional protections, as this bill contemplates.

But I think I was actually struck by more than just the facts, the figures, the analysis—which I’ll get into a little bit, even though I know that many who have spoken before me have had the chance to provide a lot of what I’ll call technical information in support of moving forward with Bill 80. What I was struck by the most was the extent to which people have brought very personal experiences to bear in the debate this afternoon. I think that actually speaks volumes about the passions.

I know a speaker earlier this afternoon talked about how, when you’re dealing with issues relating to animals, relating to wildlife, relating to how we, as humans, interact with animals and wildlife, they can often be a very passionate discussion.

Certainly, we’ve seen over the years, when media has cast a spotlight on issues relating to some of what we’re discussing today, it certainly has caught the attention of hundreds and hundreds of individuals.

I think you’ll understand, Speaker, and certainly, again, from the debate this afternoon, we’ve heard fairly clearly that there is a great degree of support for moving forward with it. It is very balanced and responsive legislation around this particular matter.

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I think that both the current minister of correctional services and community safety—or vice versa, community safety and correctional services; I always get the CSs and the CSs confused—and also the former Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, who is here in the chamber this afternoon to hear some of this debate, both deserve a great deal of credit with respect to moving forward and showing the leadership that they have on this particular bill.

Certainly I say this, as I often say in the chamber, as the father of two young children, a seven- and a four-year-old, both girls. We have not yet had the opportunity, for example—and I know it has been discussed a lot this afternoon—to make the trek down to Marineland to see what that wonderful institution, that wonderful facility or theme park, has to offer.

I know that whenever we have had the opportunity to visit the Toronto zoo and other venues like that, there’s a great deal of very genuine excitement, not surprisingly, not just on the part of my own kids but on the part of myself and my wife and others who travel to those venues.

I believe it was the member from Ottawa South, earlier this afternoon, who referenced his own daughter, Kirsten, who he had made a commitment to a number of years ago in terms of getting out to Marineland, and he reiterated that commitment right here in the chamber this afternoon. It’s something that I definitely look forward to having the chance to do with my own daughters.

A number of others who have spoken today have talked about some of the specifics of the bill. I’ve learned

a lot today about not only the bill itself but about what we are talking about with respect to the orcas. It's fascinating information. The member from Ottawa–Orléans just went through a series of fascinating facts and points about these particular mammals. It's not something that I think a lot of people out there would understand. I don't want to repeat the entire list that was provided. We certainly have heard about the abilities that orcas have to typically dive 500 feet or more, for example. They can swim up to 100 miles per day. I heard these facts and figures, and they actually are not just interesting; I think they really and truly are fascinating.

When we have this opportunity to pass legislation in this House on a regular basis, sometimes we deal—certainly, in my own portfolio, we deal with a lot of what I'll call hard infrastructure issues. This is a matter, this is an issue, this is legislation that has really and truly struck a fascinating chord amongst the public. We've heard this afternoon that there has already been extensive debate on this. I know there will continue to be debate today. My colleague the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs will speak momentarily.

I think it definitely is legislation that deserves continued support from all members of all three caucuses here in the Legislature. I look forward to this bill passing at second reading, getting to committee for additional hearings and analysis and research that may need to be done, coming back here for third reading, for more debate and for eventual support.

Again, both the current and former ministers responsible for this particular issue, and the Premier herself, deserve a lot of credit for showing this kind of leadership. I look forward to the rest of the debate and having this legislation passed as soon as possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's really a delight to have the opportunity to get a few words on the record on Bill 80. It's about seven minutes to 6 in the great riding of Peterborough. I can just see the people—Cogeco, cable 95—they're all tuned in for this very exciting moment when they get the opportunity to see their member put a few words on the record. I want to say hello to everybody who's watching on Cogeco, cable 95, in the wonderful riding of Peterborough.

Peterborough has an interesting history with regard to a zoo. We have the Riverview Park and Zoo, which is unique, my friends, in the province of Ontario. It started with a very interesting situation. The late Ross Dobbin ran the Peterborough Utilities service. He was an engineer on the water side. In those days, the American Water Works Association would have their annual meeting in the wintertime—and you guessed it—in Florida. They used to bring them from around the country to go to Florida for their annual meeting, which was great. They'd go to Orlando or Clearwater for their annual meeting.

The late Ross Dobbin was down there for that meeting. The gift that he got from the North American water

works association was an alligator. So Ross has this alligator delivered from Orlando back to the city of Peterborough. Ross and his colleagues at the Peterborough Utilities service said, "What are we going to do with an alligator?" You know, you've got to provide a habitat for it and look after it and all that kind of thing. So it was his brain child, after consulting with the community, that we establish a zoo. The very first animal in that zoo in Peterborough was this wonderful alligator that came from Orlando, Florida. That was the starting point of a zoo in Peterborough.

Over the years, I know my friend from Kitchener–Waterloo, who knows Peterborough extremely well—the Riverview Park and Zoo is on a beautiful location: Water Street North, on your way to Trent University, right on the Otonabee River. Over the years they've expanded the zoo. I know when my kids, Braden and Shanae, were young, when they were three, four, five—

Mr. Grant Crack: Good kids.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Yes, they're excellent kids. They're now 15 and 17. We would go, Karan and I, for our picnic there every Sunday afternoon and take the kids around. It was a delightful experience. I just want to pay tribute to Karan, who did an excellent job putting together that picnic lunch. That was our first kind of exposure to the Riverview zoo.

Mr. Speaker, I know you want me to get on to talking about Bill 80. As they were a little older, we made our first trip to Niagara Falls, to Marineland. I remember the day we were there: It was hot. It was about 33 Celsius in the shade that day. But we were there and we got to enjoy Marineland, which is a terrific asset to the province of Ontario.

I'm going to have the opportunity in a couple of days, along with Minister Chan, to leave on a trade mission to China, but what's interesting about Marineland are all the people from around the world who come and visit Marineland—you know, the world comes to Marineland and Niagara Falls. It was a great experience for Karan, Braden, Shanae and I to go to Marineland.

There has been a lot of good work that has been done. The groundwork was laid by my good friend and colleague in front of me who is now the very distinguished Attorney General for the province of Ontario.

Applause.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Yes, a hand is in order for her great work. When she was Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and now in her role as Attorney General, there were numerous people who came and met in New York and really impressed upon her why Bill 80 and animal welfare is so important to the province of Ontario and indeed as the standard for the rest of the country.

There are many large cities in Canada that are home to great zoos, but we want to make sure that Ontario sets the gold standard. Animal welfare is important to us all. I know the great honour I have of being the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Animal welfare is

very important to our ag community. Let me say that the ag community of Ontario goes to the nth degree to make sure that animal welfare is of incredible importance to them each and every day as they're working on their farms.

We'll have a great opportunity, Minister Chan and I, being in four cities in China, to take the opportunity to promote the great food that is grown and processed in the province of Ontario; we know that is second to none. We want to make sure—Mr. Speaker, I know you want me to get back to the bill and not kind of meander a bit into areas that I'm so happy about—

Interjections.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I'm getting some heckling from my good friend, Mr. Walker, over there, and Mr. Pettapiece.

Easy, guys; I know you like to provide some interjections.

It's important, Mr. Speaker. It's very important that we get this bill off to committee, an opportunity for folks from right around the province of Ontario to have input. Bill 80 is of incredible importance to the province of Ontario. I'm sure at the end of the day it will get support from all three sides of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I know you're going to rise because my time is up.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Well, it is 6 of the clock. As such, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1759.

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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
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
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Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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